

# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

January, 1942

Issue No. 136

## BURNLEY "FLY-OVER" JOB BEGINS

THE plan on this page provides a simple outline of the "flyover" just commenced at Burnley—the first step in a big scheme of duplication and reconstruction designed to relieve the increasing pressure of traffic on the expanding Eastern sub-

The Burnley "flyover," which has been mooted in the Department for some years, will remove the necessity of the "down" Eastmalvern trains crossing the Box Hill-Melbourne line on the level. In peak hours, the loading of these trains has to be closely watched to minimise interference with the busy services from the Box Hill and branch lines.

Under the new scheme trains to Eastmalvern will stop at the main Burnley station on the Box Hill line, and will then turn off on to a new siding about 250 feet from the "down" platform of the Burnley station.

They will then rise to cross a bridge over the Box Hill lines, on the west side of which it will join the "down" Eastmalvern line about 1,000 feet on the "down" side of the Burnley island platform.

The "flyover" tracks will cross the Box Hill line at an angle of about 45 degrees, and, in order to conserve space, the bank carrying the new line will be built in part between brick retaining walls.

An important feature of this work is that the construction of a retaining wall on the north side of the "flyover" is designed to leave sufficient room for the future duplication of the line between Melbourne and Hawthorn, which is a major project in the Department's post-war schemes.

## Seasonal Greetings From Commissioners

THE year just closed has been marked by many fine railway achievements and to all members of the staff we extend the warmest seasonal greetings. In the new and critical development brought about by the entry of Japan into the war, railway service will be tested as never before. We have no doubt that whatever the size of the crisis the railway team will acquire itself with the same thoroughness, coolness and courage that it has so often exhibited on more peaceful occasions.

## Keep The Trucks Moving !

AN indication of the exceptionally heavy traffic handled is given by the following figures :

WEEK ENDING	TRUCK LOADINGS
Oct. 25 last	19,557
Nov. 1 "	19,530
Nov. 15 "	19,712
Nov. 29 "	19,771

These loadings are higher than any since the week ended April 9, 1938, when the total number of trucks loaded was 22,019. Incidentally, this latter figure was expanded by the heavy demand for superphosphates. Never before has the need for efficient railway operation been so great as at present. Do not let a truck remain idle even for a day. If it is empty and is not required, show it as such on your daily truck reports to Control.

It is a railwayman's paramount duty to . . .

**KEEP THE TRUCKS  
MOVING !**

## COUNTRY V.R.I. WORK HIGHLY PRAISED

INTERVIEWED last month after attending the annual meetings of the various country centres of the V.R. Institute, the General President (Mr. H. S. Sergeant, Comptroller of Stores) was unstinting in his praise for the manner in which the whole of the committees had conducted their activities during the year.

"Everywhere Mr. W. E. Elliott (General Secretary) and I went," he said, "we were most impressed by the business-like fashion in which the affairs had been conducted.

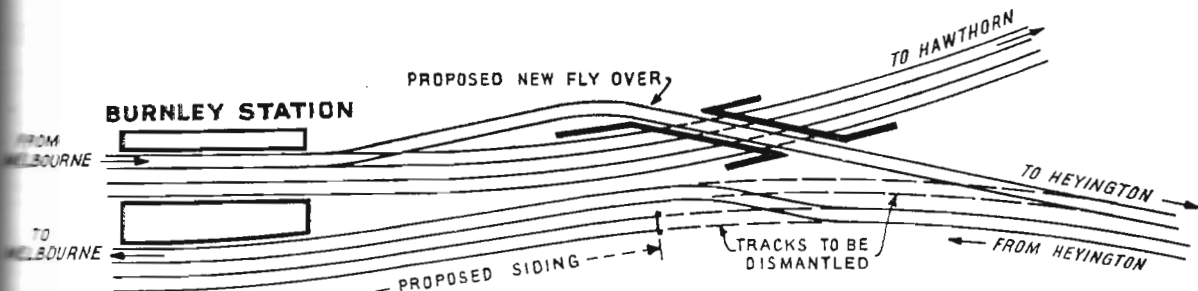
"We found the centres in a sound financial condition; membership had been maintained—in some cases, increased; classes had been well and consistently attended . . . in short, the whole of the objectives of the Institute had been achieved in a remarkably successful way."

Mr. Sergeant paid a warm tribute to the enthusiasm of the wives of members who have contributed to the success of the many enjoyable social functions. "The social aspect of the Institute" he added, "is of the highest importance, and for that reason we are especially grateful to all these ladies for their splendid work.

"I returned to Melbourne strengthened in the view that, as the primary industries are the backbone of the Nation's prosperity, so the country centres are the foundation upon which rests the success and future progress of the Institute as a whole."

## V.R. Men In Casualty Lists

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED MISSING, NOW PRISONER-OF-WAR:—Cas. Labr. H. J. Kennedy, Geelong; Lad Pfr. W. G. Scales, Jolimont; and Cas. Labr. V. Stavely, Melbourne Goods.



## Some Highlights Of Railway Year

### WAR RESPONSIBILITIES INCREASE

**T**HE year 1941 was marked by exceptional railway activity. The railway organisation was called upon for greatly increased efforts in connection with the war, and the New Year will see the Department undertaking the big added responsibility as the major co-ordinating contractor for the production of Machine Gun Carriers and component parts in Australia.

The railway financial year ending 30th June last produced the first surplus in many years, viz., £26,594. It also recorded the greatest provision ever made in any one year for depreciation, i.e., £618,823. Another important factor was the special provision as a war measure for the construction of 10 "X" class engines, 400 goods trucks, and 20 "Z" vans.

Train services have been substantially reduced in conformity with the war situation while in order to conserve motor fuel, passenger and goods road services paralleling country railway routes have been cancelled. In some instances road services previously running from country towns to Melbourne are being permitted to continue operations between their previous country termini and the nearest country railway station.

During the year there had been a steady flow of railwaymen to the colours and up to the time of going to press 1,588 had enlisted for active service in the Navy, Army and Air Force. As we have already reported with deep regret, several of our gallant men have been killed, others have been wounded or taken prisoner.

#### Gallantry Rewarded

Two railwaymen and two ex-railwaymen have been recognised for outstanding feats of valour. The former two are Captain G. H. Halliday, M.C., and Private H. P. Clark, M.M. The other two who were formerly connected with the service are Wing-Commander I. McLachlan, D.F.C., and Wing-Commander D.A. Gibson, mentioned in despatches.

The War Savings Group, inaugurated in July, 1940, has been uniformly maintained. Despite increased demands on the pockets of railwaymen, not forgetting the higher income tax, there are now more regular contributors to the War Savings Group than twelve months ago.

A conspicuous event in the year 1941 was the debut of Australia's largest locomotive, H-220, described at the official launching at Newport as "a new milestone not only in Victorian history, but in Australian history also." This great locomotive, which has been running almost exclusively on the North-Eastern line, has already proved its outstanding qualities in hauling exceptional loads over the heavy grades.

The Way and Works Branch program covered several major jobs associated with the war effort, including numerous new sidings and mechanical handling facilities and the duplication of a further section of track on the North-Eastern line.

Tallies taken of the traffic at Flinders Street suggested that the staggering of the hours of public servants and others and of school hours has spread the peak traffic to a useful degree.

Further assistance was also given by an alteration in the hours of the afternoon sessions of city picture theatres.

The Railways played a conspicuous part in the first Melbourne blackout on September 23. The widespread care and attention to all necessary details including the dimming of lights on platforms and in trains and yards, the system of outlining the platforms and steps at important stations by white lines, coupled with the heavy screening of all railway windows behind which full lighting was required, all testified to a thoroughness of organisation which would prove fully effective in an actual emergency.

### Nursery Patronage Past 150,000-Mark

**Y**EAR-old Peter Hughes, of Mentone, was a very distinguished cot-ter on November 25 at the Railway Nursery, Flinders Street station. When he was brought in by his mother at noon, he became the 100,000th patient since the Nursery was modernised and re-opened on April 21, 1938, after being closed for 10 months.

Peter spent a restful four hours in one of the sound-proofed cot-rooms and on being warmly congratulated by the nursing staff he exhibited faint interest in the celebrity he had conferred upon the institution.

Since the Nursery was first opened on June 7, 1933, a total of 155,433 children have been cared for at the Nursery. Sister M. Polkinghorne, who is in charge, said that the highest monthly patronage figure was recorded in December 1939, when 3,570 children were cared for.

### MORE V.R. ENLISTMENTS

#### A.I.F.

JNR. Clerk R. G. Beacham; Cas. Labr. T. P. Creely; Labr. V. E. Connor; Appee. C'smith. A. Dinsdale; Ptr. A. Dalton; Cas. Labr. E. J. Hougain; Labr. L. A. Harrington.

Labr. W. H. Jackson; Labr. J. McCalman; Hall Ptr. L. Maloney; Labr. J. Owens; Clerk S. G. Powell; Lad Labr. J. A. Price; Cas. Labr. A. Saultry; Labr. A. S. Scott; Eng. Clnr. R. Wilson; Poster Hanger F. Woods; Appee. Ftr. & Trnr. K. F. Young.

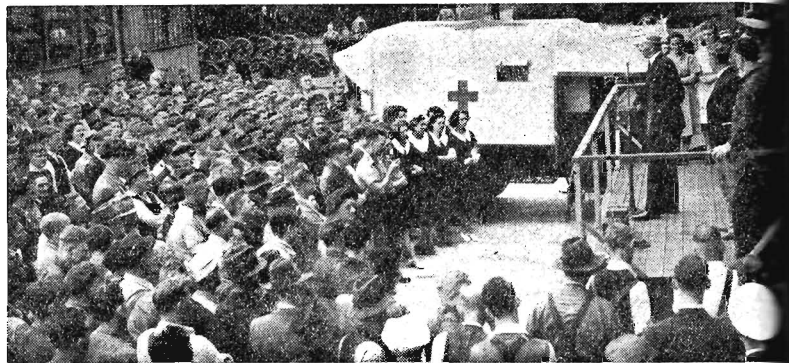
#### R.A.A.F.

Yard Ptr. V. M. Bowe; Lad Ptr. Clements; Ptrs. H. Fletcher and F. Keon; Jar. Clerks O. F. Roberts and E. S. Symes; Ptr. L. C. Sharp; Clerk W. Sprague.

#### NAVY.

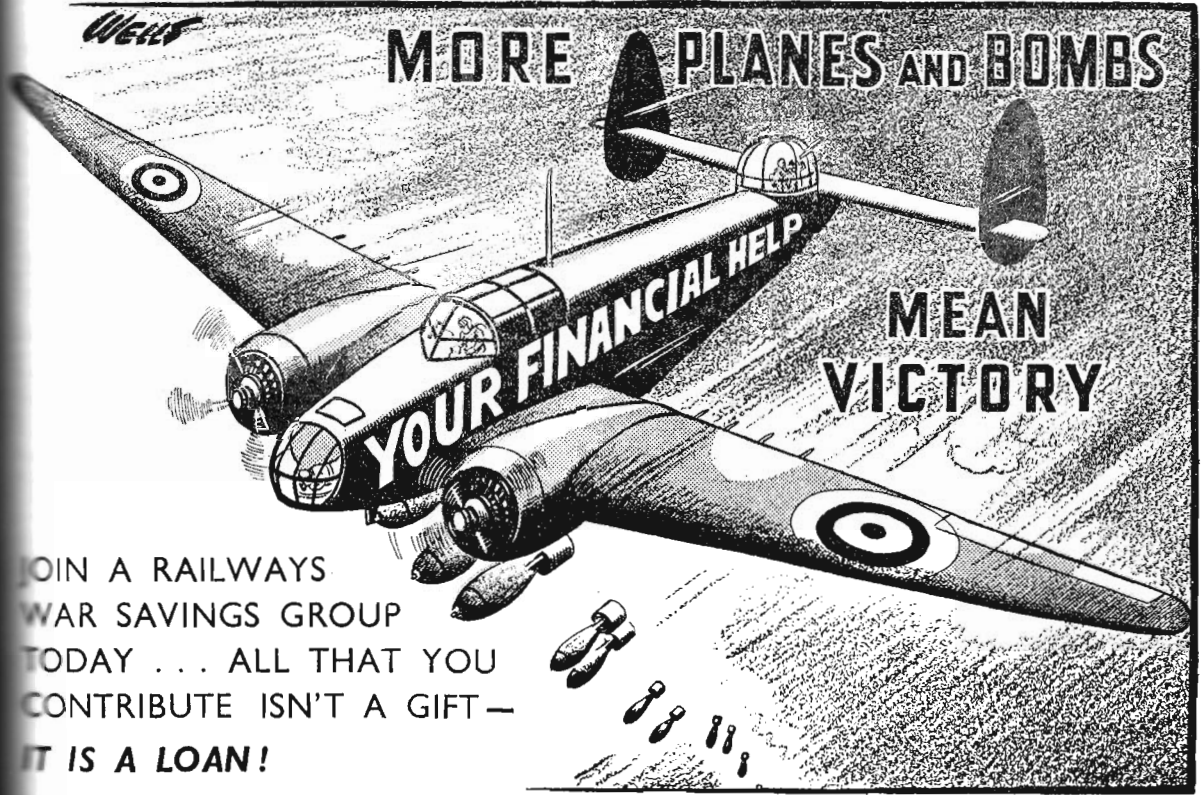
Jnr. Clerk T. W. Staley; Eng. Clnr. T. Donnelly.

## £500 MILITARY AMBULANCE GIFT



**PICTURED** above is the scene at the Newport Workshops on December 15 when an ambulance costing £500 was presented to the military authorities by the Workshops Auxiliary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Mr. Commissioner M. J. Carr (President of the Fund) is addressing the employees. The ambulance was formally presented by Mr. E. H. Brownbill (Workshops Manager and President of the Auxiliary) to Major-General R. M. Downes (Inspector-General, Army Medical Services). Also on the dais were Messrs. H. McDonagh (Sub-foreman) and A. Tevendale (Welder-Vice-President and Secretary respectively of the Auxiliary) and Messrs. J. Precious (Fitter) and J. Brown (Train Examiner, North Melbourne) representing the Combines Unions' Shop Committee.

The ceremony was notable for the stirring speeches made by the employee representatives urging every man at the Workshops to give the maximum of support to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. This ambulance—described by Major-General Downes in the course of a highly appreciative speech as "the most effective type in the British Empire"—is the fifth to be presented through the organisation of the V.R. Patriotic Fund.



JOIN A RAILWAYS  
WAR SAVINGS GROUP  
TODAY . . . ALL THAT YOU  
CONTRIBUTE ISN'T A GIFT—  
**IT IS A LOAN!**

### BIG TIMBER TRAFFIC FROM HEALESVILLE

HEALESVILLE, long known favourably as a holiday resort, is achieving a new significance as one of the busiest timber centres in the State. Approximately 400 tons of timber loaded down by road from the great forests in the Dividing Range, are loaded daily into railway trucks for transport to various destinations.

This industry has expanded rapidly in recent months and has imposed a heavy strain on the available labour on the three electric derrick cranes and one hand crane—the present means of handling this traffic from road vehicles to railway trucks at the Healesville Yard.

To reduce the amount of shunting involved in moving empty trucks to the crane for loading, a new siding 100 feet long has been constructed to the southward in the existing railway yard and along this siding an electric gantry crane will shortly be operating.

The new crane with its lifting capacity of 10 tons should dispose of heavy loads of timber with a minimum of time, and its own mobility will negate the necessity for constantly moving trucks.

### TOURIST BUREAU STAFF MOVES

IN accordance with the practice of giving officers of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau the widest possible experience, some changes have been made in the management of Interstate and Victorian Branches of the Bureau.

They include the transfer of Mr. P. A. Olney, previously Manager of the Brisbane Branch, to the control of the Eastern States Government Tourist Bureau in Perth. Mr. Gordon Peart, formerly Manager of the Eastern States Bureau, will take over the Brisbane post early in this year.

Mr. Olney has served as a tourist officer in Melbourne and Sydney as well as in Brisbane and this experience makes him particularly qualified to direct the activities of a Bureau established in Perth on behalf of the Eastern States.

Mr. J. Constable, a tourist officer from the head office of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, is now temporarily managing the Brisbane Branch. Mr. C. J. Longney, Manager of the Bendigo Branch, has been transferred to Hobart in succession to Mr. C. E. Williams, who has returned to the head office of the Bureau in Melbourne.

### Woman Debater Wins V.R.I. Contests

TO Miss Rene Murray (Typiste and Stenographer, Live Stock Agent's Office) falls the distinction of winning the only two trophies presented last year for competition among members of the Victorian Railways Institute Debating Club. Her fine efforts made her the victor in the "Best Impromptu Speech" and "Best Prepared Speech" events.

Miss Murray is a valued member of the Club's "C" Grade team competing in the Victorian Debaters' Association. As third speaker, she has the responsibility of finally rebutting the opposing side's case. Also she has to present a comprehensive review of her own team's arguments.

Miss Murray's amateur stage experience is proving invaluable, and she is rapidly developing into one of the most vigorous and accomplished debaters in the club.

At the V.R.I., Melbourne, last month, the club held its fourth annual social function at which over 60 guests enjoyed a varied entertainment. Mr. W. J. Crowl (Rolling Stock Branch) presided. For the current year, he will be succeeded by Mr. H. E. Millane (Way and Works Branch) who was Hon. Secretary last year.

Railway men and women wishing to gain an all-round experience of public speaking—from proposing toasts to active debating—should join this enterprising club.

## Pay-Roll Contributions Best Way of Helping Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund

**R**ECENTLY the total number of contributors to the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund has diminished and early this year a vigorous publicity campaign to obtain more pay-roll contributors to the Fund will be launched throughout the service.

Discussing the campaign, the President of the Fund (Mr. Commissioner M. J. Canny) said that a regular flow of pay-roll contributions at the modest rate of 6d. per person per fortnight was the most important source of income for the Fund. Largely through the money received in this way, the Fund has established a splendid record.

### Varied Disbursements

The Australian Red Cross and the Australian Comforts Fund have benefited considerably. But the Fund's disbursements had not ended there. In response to a number of special public appeals, substantial sums of money had been allotted from the Fund. Amongst these were:—

Purchase of 5 military ambulances—£2,500; British Bombing victims—£1,000; Food for Russia—£500; Greek Bombing Victims—£200.

"Now that the war has spread to the Pacific Ocean," Mr. Canny continued, "there is a greater need than ever for the Fund to be in a position to act quickly and effectively.

"It may happen that more money in future will have to be allotted to

the purchase of essential war equipment, such as ambulances, rather than, as in the past, to the provision of comforts.

"To all non-contributors, I make this very earnest appeal: Tell your

### A SOLDIER'S THANKS

**I**n a letter written immediately after his recent arrival "somewhere overseas," Corporal C. E. Askwith who, before enlisting was employed at the Newport Workshops, paid a glowing tribute to the "welcome and needful things which the troops are receiving through the Comforts Fund." Corporal Askwith continues with this very interesting observation: "From the start of the Railways Patriotic Fund until the time I enlisted in September last, I was paying 6d. a pay to the Fund. I was pleased on reading from time to time that some of this money was going to the Australian Comforts Fund to provide comforts for the "diggers" and others.

"But now that I am actually in the A.I.F. and receiving articles etc., from the A.C.F., I am very pleased that, as a railwayman, I supported the Railways Patriotic Fund."

paying officer next pay day that you desire 6d. to be deducted regularly from your fortnightly pay-roll. I recognise that there are many calls upon your pockets, but I do suggest that the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund should not be overlooked by any member of the service."

## A.I.F. MAN'S MOVING TRIBUTE TO RED CROSS

**W**E have received a cheery note from Private J. J. Hawkins, a railwayman in the A.I.F. now abroad. In acknowledging receipt of the "News Letter" he mentions that he is now in Syria, camped 9,000 feet above sea level, where he says it is very cold and at the time of writing—October 7—"we expect snow within the next few weeks."

Private Hawkins's letter contained an unusual and pathetic extract—copy of a poem entitled "Crosses" written by a digger who was subsequently killed in action.

Here is the poem, and every reader of the "News Letter" will recognise its quality:

### CROSSES

Each life has its crosses  
And a soldier gets his share  
From a trip across the ocean  
To that envied Croix-de-Guerre.

There are crosses by the censor  
Far too many, so it seems.  
There are crosses in the letters  
From the girl friend of his dreams

There's a cross that's won by heroes  
Who have faced a storm of lead.  
There's a cross when he is wounded  
And a cross when he is dead.

Then there's that small cross of mercy  
That very few may own.  
To a soldier it is second  
To that of God alone.

It's a cross that's worn by women  
When we see it, we believe  
We recognise an angel  
By the Red Cross on her sleeve.

## Railways Renewal Fund First Suggested 74 Years Ago

**I**T took many years of earnest advocacy on the part of the Commissioners to secure the establishment of a renewal fund. Actually the suggestion of a renewal fund dates back to the very early years of the Victorian Railways as is revealed in these interesting extracts from a memorandum by Mr. T. Higginbotham, Engineer-in-Chief, to Mr. W. H. Wright, Secretary for Railways, on May 22, 1868.

"I feel convinced that the Victorian Railways are maintained as thoroughly as any lines can be, and the whole cost of maintaining both the works and the engines and rolling stock is charged against the revenue of the lines in the railway accounts. As sleepers decay and have to be removed they are replaced by others of a very superior kind, and the same may be said of the fencing, ballast, etc.

"In these instances maintenance becomes renewal, and the work when renewed is far superior to the original

work; but in the case of rails, engines, and rolling stock generally, it is not possible by any maintenance, however complete, to provide that the value of the rails, engines, and rolling stock shall be as great at the end of any year as it was at the beginning.

"It cannot be right that the value of the Government railways should be depreciated by the gradual wearing out of important parts of them.

"Unless either a renewal fund be established, or so many tons of new rails are purchased each year as will represent a value equivalent to the diminished value of the rails in use, and so many new engines, carriages, etc., as will be an equivalent for the reduction in value of these articles, a depreciation in value for which no possible repairs or maintenance can provide must inevitably take place.

"To purchase rails, engines, etc., before they are wanted would evidently be a waste of money; and, in my opinion, the only alternative, if the

Government lines are to be placed on a thoroughly sound basis, is the establishment of a renewal fund, for rails, engines, and rolling stock generally to accumulate at interest, and be drawn upon for renewing these parts of the railways as the necessity for renewal arises.

"As to the amount that should be set aside annually as a renewal fund, to provide against the depreciation of the value of the lines that cannot be met by ordinary repairs and maintenance, however complete these may be, I wish to repeat that, in my opinion, a renewal fund is required only for rails, engines, and rolling stock.

"In all other parts than the rails, engines, and rolling stock, the Victorian Railways are, maintained at their full original value."

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## W. R. MAN ESCAPES FROM GERMANS

FRANCE-BOMBARDIER R. G. Stuart in the A.I.F. abroad, formerly a Clerk in the Staff Office of the Secretary's Branch, has escaped from a prison camp. In the following letter the resourceful young soldier refers to his escape.

I suppose my name appeared in the paper and you knew I was a prisoner-of-war. I wrote to you from



but don't think any of the mail really got away.

Well, I was captured by the Germans and they provided me with food and lodging for three months, but I am afraid I was unappreciative. I am back in the army. I shall proceed to relate the events of the last seven months, but for security reasons you will understand that much must remain unsaid.

On 28th April, I was captured by parachute troops in the south of France. I then spent three months in prison camps at Corinth and Salonica. I escaped from the latter and was recaptured very soon after.

### Macedonian Holiday!

Then we left for Germany by train and soon after crossing the border into Yugoslavia I left the train with two companions and walked back into the forest.

I left them soon after and spent several weeks recuperating in the hills of Northern Macedonia. It took me quite recently to reach this country and is it great to be back?

At present I am in hospital in Salonica but hope to be out soon. I had several weeks in another hospital—typhoid and jaundice—but now am recuperating quickly."

## Big Rail Black Out Plans

**W**HILST railway preparations for lighting restrictions for air raid conditions are still progressing it can be expected that at the first blast of the appropriate signal immediate action will be taken to ensure that no lights will be visible at the height at which enemy bombers might be expected to operate.

The rehearsal of the blackout in September revealed an organisation warranting the view that the first real test will not find the railways wanting.

As a result of experience with the original test, it has been found possible to increase the illumination in subways at Flinders Street and Spencer Street stations during blackouts, and it has been decided also not to renew the white lines indicating platform edges and stairways.

Under blackout conditions the lighting of all trains, both electric and steam, will not be sufficient for reading, but will be adequate for other requirements.

Lights in suburban electric car compartments are now being fitted with shades. Electrically-lit country cars are also being fitted with shades. Gas-lit cars are provided with a bypass cock, and in an emergency the quantity of gas can be immediately reduced.

All railway platforms will be equipped with specially designed shades

to give, within the immediate vicinity of the shade, light approximating to one-tenth of full moonlight. Goods yards will be blacked out entirely when the emergency arises, and the arrangement at the loco. depots and work-

**I**NSTANCES of passengers damaging and removing the light dimming shades from suburban trains have been reported to the Commissioners who, in a statement to the press last month, said:

"We find it difficult to understand the mentality of such people who should know that, in the event of enemy action, restricted lighting in trains is a vital factor in the safety of life and property.

"The practice referred to is an infringement of the railway by-laws, and anyone detected will, without exception, be prosecuted. Passengers noticing anyone interfering in any way with these light fittings are urged in the national interest to report the incident immediately at the nearest railway station."

shops will ensure that their identity will not be revealed during a raid.

Travelling under blackout conditions will be obviously different for passengers, and to ensure that they are not overcarried all railwaymen concerned have been instructed to announce station names clearly and frequently.

## FIRST AID STUDENTS WANTED—NOW!

**W**ITH 12 classes now functioning in the Flinders Street station building, railwaymen in the suburban area have ample opportunities for becoming qualified in first aid. Three classes are being held on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at times that should meet the convenience of railwaymen generally.

The classes commence at 10 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Books, bandages and instruction are free. Rail passes are issued for travel from home stations to attend the classes.

Appealing to suburban members of the railway team to take up the study of first aid, the Ambulance Officer (Mr. W. J. Blackburn) said it was impossible to over-stress its urgency and importance. "First aid has always been rightly regarded as an

essential adjunct of railway operation," he said. "But in wartime—and with Australia threatened by enemy action—it is of paramount significance.

"A moment's reflection must bring home to us all the plight of the injured—possibly ourselves or members of our families—whose sufferings may be prolonged because of lack of qualified first aid attention. In many cases, delays in attending to casualties have caused deaths.

"This must not happen here! I therefore appeal most earnestly to everyone to join. All those who have qualified in the past should take up a refresher course."

Mr. Blackburn emphasised the need for all first aid students to apply themselves promptly and assiduously to the subject. "We not only want more qualified men, but we want them quickly," he added.

## SPLENDID TEAMWORK IN RUSH TRUCK UNLOADING JOB

**V**OLUNTEERS from the Head Office and other sections of the service assisted the regular Goods Shed Staff last month in handling a big cargo at the Montague Shipping Shed and in clearing congestion at the Grain Shed. Most of the regular men also had volunteered to work long hours to meet the exceptional conditions. The total tonnage discharged by the ship was 5,250 and it was imperative that the ship be released with all speed so that it could leave on the return voyage without undue delay.

The heavy demand for railway trucks for ordinary loading throughout the State made it also highly important to have the trucks discharged and returned to traffic with the least possible delay.

Of the total of 428 trucks, 240 were discharged on four nights by the joint team, the remainder being dealt with on day shift by Goods Shed Staff.

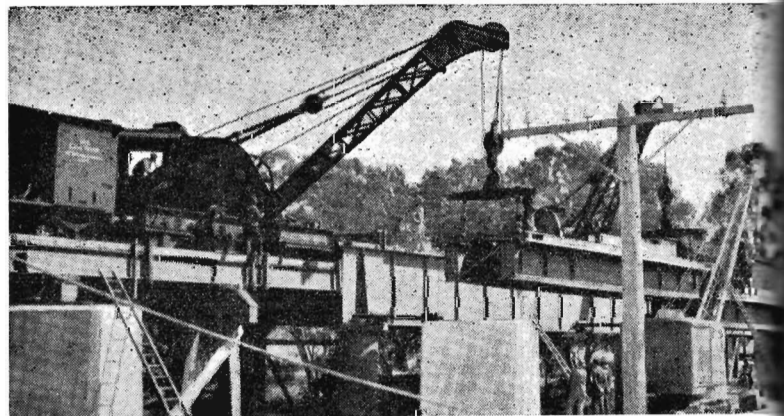
On most of the four nights there were between 60 and 80 volunteers at

trucks. With the exception of a few heavy loads requiring crane power, the whole of the trucks were cleared as fast as they were loaded.

Normally 350 trucks would be required for this job. Less than 100 were used so that 250 more trucks were made available for moving bulk wheat, briquettes, timber and other high priority traffic, and this release was of great value in keeping outside industry supplied with essentials.

The Commissioners desire all concerned to know that whilst an excellent job is being done normally they were particularly delighted with the splendid team work on this occasion.

## RAPID WORK ON GOULBURN RIVER BRIDGE



**C**ONGRATULATIONS to the staff concerned on the completion of the new bridge over the Goulburn River on Sunday, December 28. The final job—placing of the four spans in position—was done in the remarkable working time of four hours including the time taken in transporting the girders from Seymour to the bridge.

This achievement is a testimony to the excellence of the team work and planning involved in placing the superstructure in position without interfering with the normal traffic on the line.

The train carrying the superstructure arrived at the Goulburn River from Seymour at 6.50 a.m. and the first span was in position at

## More Enlistments

A.I.F.

APPEE. F. & Trnr. C. W. Bo Gardener L. H. Brooks; Machst. W. N. Bush; Labr. E. J. ham; Appee. F. & Trnr. R. Bro Skd. Labr. F. F. Clark; Appee. Ca J. D. Cooke; Labrs. H. Coxon J. P. Commins; Jnr. Clerk K. Cameron.

Repr. R. H. Disher; Lad Labr. V Eddington; Skd. Labrs. R. J. Faure J. F. Fitzgerald; Labrs. G. S. Ha and K. H. Hayman; Lad Labr. I Hoddon; Clerk C. C. Hamilton; R. R. B. Hughes.

Repr. A. N. Irvine; Clerk J. P. H Reprs. H. T. Jackson, J. M. Jamieson T. C. Jukes; Appee. B' mkr. M. Labrs. C. J. McDermott, J. D. Mi and H. M. McDonald; Lad Labr. Maggarvey; Appee. F. & Trnr. J. Mordant and B. C. Moore; R. M. C. P. Mornane; Clerk C. S. Morris Appee. F. & Trnr. J. J. Purdey; Clar. C. A. Prigg; Labr. E. A. Rodg Reprs. L. J. Rigg and J. G. Sher Skd. Labr. J. B. Stainer; Labrs. E. Weiske and L. G. Williams; Skd. Labr. G. H. Walton; Skd. L. H. S. Zoch.

NAVY.

Jnr. Clerks A. K. Hamilton and Hutchings; Lad Labr. E. G. Jackson

R.A.A.F.

Repr. J. E. Arkinstall; Jnr. C. C. H. Brury; Lad Labrs. R. T. Ca and I. P. Hourigan; Gatekeeper R. Joyce; Repr. J. A. Hoffman; Ap F. & Trnr. E. W. Ludge; Carptr. Miles; Jnr. Clerk W. C. Murp Saimkr. A. J. Neeson; Appee. Sall F. O'Dwyer; Repr. F. C. Roberts Eng. Clnr. I. A. Rands; Appee. F Trns. W. F. Stone and D. D. Thom Repr. A. L. Syrett; Eng. Clnr. M. Whelan.

## Berlin Wrong—Again!

**O**F all the cities in England that have suffered during the present war none perhaps is recalled with such sorrow—and pride—as Coventry. As the world knows, Nazi bombers on one terrible night in 1940 rained death and destruction on this historic English city.

Next day, the awful damage was revealed—and the people of Coventry grimly carried on . . . that day, too, Berlin Radio viciously gloated over "the memorable feats of our brave airmen who last night wiped out Coventry. It will never be of any further industrial use to the British."

\* \* \* \* \*

**L**AST month at the Montague Shipping Shed, our staff unloaded from railway trucks an amazing assortment of goods which had just arrived from England. There were hundreds and hundreds of cases proudly bearing the words "BRITAIN DELIVERS THE GOODS."

And the precious contents of many of those cases were impressive refutations of the lying and boastful statements from Berlin Radio, for on them were the inscriptions: "TO MELBOURNE FROM COVENTRY, ENGLAND."

work. Some of the volunteers were also utilised in the Grain Shed to assist in meeting the shortage of labour caused by the temporary withdrawal of regular men to help in coping with the work at the Shipping Shed.

Experienced members of the Melbourne Goods staffs worked in each truck with the volunteers and the latter paid a high tribute to these employes for their helpfulness and tolerance under conditions that were strange to the great majority. In numerous ways, the hints given not only facilitated but lightened the work.

Three shifts were worked in discharging from the ship into railway

7.30 a.m. Despite one break of an hour (8 a.m. to 9 a.m.) and another three hours (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.) during which "Spirit of Progress" and other trains ran through, the last span was in position by 3.30 p.m.

The four complete units were lifted off the trucks and placed on concrete piers by two 30-ton wrecking cranes which had been sent from Seymour from North Melbourne Newport on the previous night.

Some idea of the size of the span on that hot Sunday may be gained from the fact that each of the two girders providing the superstructure of each span was 51 ft. 4 ins. long, 3 ft. 6 ins. deep, complete with bracing, etc., and weighed 34 tons.

# WE HAND IT TO YOU—



For 16/- payable in 8 fortnightly deductions of 2/- from your pay. • Your country needs your help ... join a War Savings Group Today!

## HOW CHRISTMAS RAIL TRAFFIC WAS HANDLED

THE Commissioners have expressed to the staff concerned particular satisfaction with the handling under difficult circumstances of traffic during the recent Christmas-New Year holiday period. In accordance with the Federal Government's decision to restrict travel over the Christmas and New Year holidays, many country and Interstate rail services which had originally been scheduled were cancelled.

Wide publicity was given to the restricted program through the press and over the air. Passengers were

Intending passengers were asked to call at the Spencer Street or Flinders Street stations or the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau so that the train and the date on which they proposed to travel could be endorsed upon the ticket. Those offices were kept advised of the maximum number of tickets that could be issued for every regular or special train.

When the allotted complement was reached booking for the train was closed and passengers diverted to other trains on which accommodation was still available.

This arrangement, emphasised by the announcement that no unendorsed ticket would be available for travel, enabled the Department effectively to control the traffic on days—particularly December 24—on which there is usually a good deal of congestion.

Over the whole period of the holidays (i.e., from December 19 to January 2 inclusive) approximately 176,000 passengers were carried from Melbourne, compared with 166,000 in the previous year when a far greater number of special trains were scheduled.

Though this year's total is 10,000 more than that carried in the greater number of special trains that were scheduled last year, it should be emphasised that this year's passengers travelled in many trains packed to capacity and the average length of distance covered was shorter than over the Christmas period of 1940-41

The result of the emergency planning and organisation was a transport achievement that was a tribute to the team work which had brought it about. In the first two or three days following the Prime Minister's announcement regarding restricted travelling, the cancellations, rebookings and refunds involved the staff concerned at the Spencer Street station and the Vic-

### Service

In a recent address to the shareholders of Australian Cement Ltd., Mr. W. B. McCann, Acting Chairman and General Manager of the Company, paid the following tribute to the Victorian Railways:

"We are very dependent on the services of the Victorian Railways. Our relations with the Railways, as one of their largest customers, have always been excellent.

"We have been aware of their splendid co-operation and we realise they are now up against some really formidable transport problems. We are sure they will do their utmost not to inconvenience their customers."

were to undertake their journeys before or after Christmas and there was a specially advertised restriction that school children should travel before December 19.

### VACANCIES FOR LADS.

The Department is in urgent need of lads as follows:—

#### JUNIOR CLERKS

(With University Intermediate or Leaving Certificate)

#### LAD PORTERS and LADS for WORKSHOPS

(8th Grade Standard)

Railwaymen are urged to give the widest possible publicity to this matter. Lads should apply NOW, either personally or by letter (indicating educational qualifications, date of birth, height, and weight) to the Secretary for Railways, Room 100, First Floor, Railway Administrative Offices, Spencer Street, Melbourne, C1.

torian Government Tourist Bureau, in heavy emergency work and in the circumstances the job was completed with commendable facility.

## 76 Apprentices Began Last Month

**O**F the 709 lads who recently applied for apprenticeships in the Railway Service 143 were selected—and 76 commenced work on January 12. Of the remaining 67 boys, who were not successful in the ballot for the opening jobs, several have already been placed in positions and the balance will be started as opportunity offers.

The Board of Selectors, comprising Mr. J. Fowler (Staff Board) as Chairman, Mr. K. Wood (Asst. Workshops Manager, Spotswood) and Mr. L. Bloomfield (Staff Clerk, Rolling Stock) spent a busy month in interviewing candidates and examining their credentials. In addition to sittings in Melbourne, the Board visited Bendigo, Castlemaine, Maryborough, Ararat, Ballarat, Geelong, Seymour, Wangaratta, Traralgon and Mildura.

The attraction of the railway service for potential engineers was revealed by the fact that the applicants came from all parts of the State.

One lad who started as an apprentice fitter and turner obtained his technical education in a town miles from his home, and it was his practice at week-ends to go home and see his parents, covering a long distance by bicycle.

Another successful candidate hails from another remote section of the State. Here again is a story of resolute industry and courage, and the realisation of an ambition doubtless made possible by some sacrifice on the part of his parents in providing sound technical education and board in a country town many miles from his home.

There were other examples of boys travelling distances of up to 100 miles daily to secure their technical education, and of lads whose earnings from employment, such as 5 a.m. paper rounds, helped to pay for their schooling. There is a highly commendable record in the case of a boy who assisted his parents in farming duties. During four years of hard work and study by correspondence he ultimately secured his intermediate certificate.

To the new apprentices the "News Letter" extends a warm welcome to the railway family . . . .

## THOUGHTFUL ACT BY JACK LORD

**H**OW a Victorian Railwayman—Warrant Officer L. J. Lord (Clerk, Transportation Branch)—brought joy to the relatives of many Australian soldiers now prisoners-of-war in Italy was revealed recently. He is widely known in Melbourne football circles and has been overseas with the A.I.F. since August, 1940.

In November last, he was listening to the radio in the Middle East and hearing the announcement "The Vatican Now Calling Australia and New Zealand" quickly seized pencil and paper. Being a shorthand writer, he recorded 30 messages (including the names of the soldiers and their relatives in Australia) from Australian prisoners-of-war.

W/O. Lord then typed out the messages and sent them to his friend, Mr. Ken. Donald, Room 1, Head Office who, in turn, despatched the messages to the appropriate addresses, together with a letter explaining the unique circumstances under which they had been received by him. The relatives lived in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania.

Mr Donald has since received highly appreciative replies which showed that only six of the 30 messages had been heard over the air in Australia.

In one case, grateful parents called and explained that in January, 1941, they were notified their son had been taken prisoner, but nothing further had been heard of him. Their relief at knowing he was safe and well can be easily imagined.

## Big Savings From Producer Gas

**R**EMARKABLE results in liquid fuel savings are being shown by rail units which have been converted to producer gas operation. Most outstanding is the performance of the passenger mail motor which provides the Birregurra-Forrest service. The normal performance of this vehicle prior to conversion was 14.66 miles per gallon of petrol.

During the first fortnight after conversion, 132 miles were run per gallon. In the following month the mileage per gallon was raised to 246, and for the latest period for which the figures are available, a further improvement to 328 miles per gallon was achieved, representing a saving of 95 per cent of petrol.

Savings by other similar units have also been substantial, amounting to 87 per cent. on the Ararat-Maryborough run, 84 per cent on the Shepparton-Katamatite run, and 83 per cent. on the Murchison East-Rushworth-Colbinabbin-Girgarre run.

The converted A.E.C. Rail Motor on the Numurkah-Picola line also produced satisfactory results. Two additional A.E.C.'s will be converted to producer gas—one for the Donald-Woomelang line, the other for the Echuca-Tongala service.

Successful performances by producer gas units are of course dependent very largely upon the sustained interest and co-operation of the drivers, who have every reason to feel proud of the results which are being obtained on the lines in question.

## V.R.I. EXAM RESULTS

**H**EARTIEST congratulations go to the following students who gained the highest percentage of marks in the various educational classes conducted by the Victorian Railways Institute during the year 1940-41:—

**Engine Working—Junior Grade**  
A. J. Andrews ... Cleaner, Nth. Melb.

**Senior Grade.**  
H. Howlett ... Fireman, Ararat  
**Westinghouse Brake—Junior Grade**  
J. N. Knight ... Cleaner, Ararat.  
**Senior Grade.**  
T. Ekins ... Act. Driver, Traralgon.

**Internal Combustion—Engine Mechanics.**  
A. R. Ralston ... Lad. Labr., Ballarat Avenue.

**Perm. Way Constr. and Maintenance.**  
**Senior Grade—Spl. Ganger's and Foreman's Section.**

L. Thomas ... Ganger, Drouin  
**Junior Grade—Track Ganger's Section.**  
J. McKibbin ... Repr. Buckley Safeworking—"A" Division—Signalling.

J. L. Jouaneau ... Signalman, Ararat.  
**"B" Division—Train Running.**  
T. J. Shannon ... Porter, St. Kilda  
**Station Accounts and Management.**

**Jnr. Grade—Optg. Porter's section.**  
W. Prescott ... Porter, Tottenham.

**Storeman's Duties—Junior Grade**  
L. J. Vafiopulous Labr., Newport  
**Senior Grade.**  
S. Perkins ... Act. Storeman, Laurens St.

**Ticket Checking.**  
W. J. Richards... Lad Ptr., St. Kilda  
**Bookkeeping—Grade One.**  
S. Holbrook ... Clerk, H. Office  
**Grade Two.**  
J. Featherston ... Land & Survey Dept., Melb.

**English and Arithmetic.**  
C. Scott ... Lad Ptr., Ormond  
**Shorthand—Elementary Theory.**  
Miss P. Glenn Typiste, Newport  
**Advanced Theory.**  
R. G. Bishop ... Jnr. Clerk, Richmond.

**Speed.**  
Miss J. Percy ... Typiste, Secy. Bch.

**Typewriting.**  
Miss J. E. Baker Addressograph Operator, Newport

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# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

March, 1942

Issue No. 138

## AMBULANCE TRAIN IN A FORTNIGHT

### Big Team-Work Achievement

**T**HE conversion of fourteen railway vehicles into an up-to-date ambulance train in the short period of a fortnight is another fine feat deserving a high place in the record of railway war activities. The fourteen vehicles were withdrawn from service on Saturday morning, January 24, and were converted and ready for service by Friday, February 6.

This ambulance train, which is painted a moonstone grey with the Red Cross conspicuously displayed on the roof and sides of each vehicle, is the first of two to be prepared by the Victorian Railways. The remaining eight trains required by the Commonwealth Government are being constructed by the Commonwealth and other State railway systems.

The train comprises a staff car, personnel car, administrative car, dining car, nine ward cars and a brake van and, with the exception of the dining and staff cars, the interior fittings and other fittings had to be removed before each vehicle could be equipped for ambulance service.

The administrative car, previously a standard B.L. car, 65 ft. 2 ins. long,

is now partitioned off to provide a dispensary, medical store, office, waiting room, linen store and kit store.

Each of the nine ward cars—converted P.L. cars 59 ft. 9 ins. long—contains 39 standard bunks arranged generally in tiers of three and a sink for hot and cold water. There are also 36 bunks in the personnel car, whilst the staff car provides sleeping accommodation for fifteen.

To ensure the freest movement throughout the train, end communication doors have been fitted where necessary, and the many windows have been prepared to permit running under blackout conditions.

The Military authorities are very pleased with the train, and the Commissioners are immensely gratified by the teamwork and industry displayed by all members of the staff engaged on the job.

### Restrictions on Services

**T**HE necessity for conserving coal stocks which have been depleted to a serious extent by reason of inadequate supplies recently compelled the Department to restrict both passenger and goods services. The reduction in passenger services covered most of the lines throughout the State. The saving in mileage amounts to approximately 24,000 miles weekly.

Goods train mileage was also reduced by restrictions on certain classes of goods on the "down" journey and a priority system was introduced for the allotment of trucks for loading in the country.

Nominated loading days for the despatch of goods from Melbourne to certain country stations were reduced and livestock trucks had also to be rationed.

After the restrictions had been in operation for a short period the outlook for coal supplies improved, and action was taken at once to begin a progressive withdrawal of the restrictions which undoubtedly caused serious inconvenience. It will be some weeks, however, before full restoration of services can be contemplated.



Interior of the Ambulance Train showing the tiers of bunks, the windows specially painted for service under blackout conditions and the long vista of the central corridor providing for rapid communication from one car to the other.

## FORGETFUL V.R. PASSENGERS

POSSIBLY owing to war influences, the number of railway passengers who leave their belongings in railway carriages and on other railway property is steadily increasing. All articles recovered are stored for six months in the Departmental Lost Property Store—there is always a growing mountain of umbrellas, suit-cases, attache cases, clothing, fountain pens, watches and other articles awaiting disposal at the monthly auction sales.

Some idea of the increasing forgetfulness of railway patrons may be gained from the fact that, whereas 3,927 lost and unclaimed articles were sold by auction in February, 1941, the number auctioned in February this year had risen to 4,813.

Bigger prices are being paid for the auctioned items, prices approximating ordinary retail charges being readily obtainable for groceries and foodstuffs, particularly tea. At the auction sale last month 2 bags of tea

### SERVICE.

WE publish with pleasure the following extract from a letter of appreciation addressed to Mr. Commissioner M. J. Canny by the Honorable A. E. McDonald, M.L.C. :—

"I want to express to you my very sincere appreciation and thanks, and also the very sincere appreciation and thanks of my brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Lyall of Mildura, with respect to the arrangements you made for the conveying of Mr. Lyall from Mildura to Melbourne by stretcher in the Guard's van of your Mildura-Melbourne train. Both Mr. and Mrs. Lyall speak in the very highest terms of the arrangements that were made for them, and also of the very great efficiency and courtesy of the whole of the Railways employees with whom they came in contact during their journey.

weighing 10 lb. brought 30/- and the top bid for another 7-lb. bag was 21/-. The demand for bicycles was revealed by the heavy bidding for a man's bicycle which was ultimately sold for £5/5/-.

Inspection of the catalogue of items discloses that nothing has yet been invented to challenge the umbrella's supreme position as the most frequently lost and unclaimed article. Of those sold last month, 192 belonged to ladies and only 9 were the property of the opposite sex. These also were in strong demand, a parcel of 1 man's and 3 ladies' umbrellas bringing £2/-/-.

On the list for sale were no fewer than 43 suit cases, 109 attache cases and 9 wristlet watches, and 20/- was the price paid for "1 Lady's 15-carat gold wedding ring in a leather case."

## ENGLISH RAILWAY'S AID TO RUSSIA

### 1000 Trucks In 10 Weeks

A FEATURE of the British plan of assistance to Russia is the production of rolling stock to facilitate the transport of munitions from the Persian Gulf through Iran to the Russian frontier.

According to our latest information, 142 powerful goods locomotives and 1,000 trucks have been supplied. The engines, which had been converted for oil burning, are said to be giving great service.

The completion of the full order of 1,000 trucks in the record time of 10 weeks instead of 12 months—the normal period of construction under peace conditions—is a further tribute to that achievement in emergency which is distinguishing the work of the Allied democracies in the present war.

The job of producing the trucks was under the control of the Southern Railway Co. of England assisted in vital aspects of the undertaking by the other railway Companies. For instance, the L.N.E.R. provided timber

and frame details and the L.M.S.R. was also responsible for timber supplies and the stampings of standard forgings. The construction of the 1,000 steel underframes was the special task of the Southern Railroad.

Though the whole scheme was first mooted on September 5 last year, the first fifty truck sets were ready for shipment on September 20. The last left England on November 10.

Women worked with men and during the visit of Colonel Llewellyn, the Government representative who came down specially to congratulate the railways companies on the success of their efforts, a demonstration of the assembly of a truck was given and it was completed and rivetted in a little over 20 minutes.

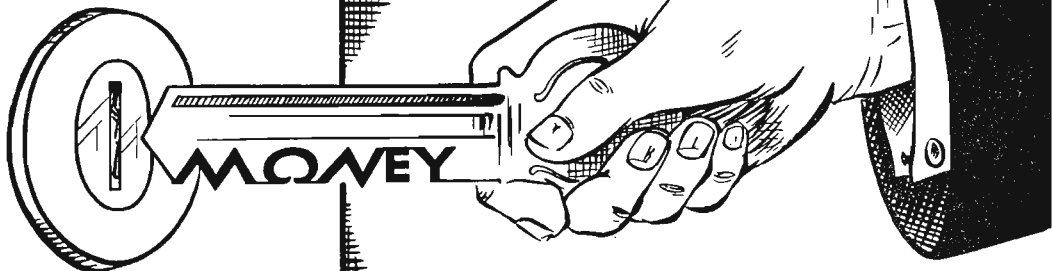
There are 1,792 parts in each of these trucks and the parts not assembled before shipment were all packed in special crates for despatch to Iran, each part being specially numbered for speed in assembly on the arrival of the shipment at its destination.

## TRENCH DIGGING AT NEWPORT



TRENCH digging, a popular pastime in many suburban gardens is an obvious necessity where large numbers are located. Many hundreds of yards of trenches on railway property have been dug by members of our services. At the Jolimont Workshops, Electrical Workshops and Train Lighting Depot, Spencer Street, at the Spotswood General Storehouse, Reclamation Depot and Oil Store, and at Newport Workshops parties of railwaymen have taken to the pick and shovel in the evenings and over the week-end. A friendly competitive spirit entered into this great volunteer effort, and one group challenged another to see which could dig the greatest length of trench in the shortest possible time. In the photograph above a group at Newport is seen busily trenching.

# VICTORY



## THE YALE KEY THAT OPENS THE DOOR

If you cannot fight, you can at least contribute your bit to Australia's War Chest.  
Don't you realise from recent developments that this is YOUR FIGHT?

## More V.R. Men in Commonwealth Jobs

Another railway officer whose services have been temporarily released to the Commonwealth is Mr. A. W. Keown, Superintendent of Refreshment Services. He now becomes Commonwealth Controller of Food Services and during his absence Mr. H. L. Kennedy, Asst. Superintendent will be acting Superintendent of the V.R. Refreshment Services.

war industries—Munitions, Aircraft and Shipbuilding. It is expected that in a few months nearly a third of a million workers will be engaged in these industries.

In his new post Mr. Keown will see that properly balanced menus of food well prepared, attractively served and economically priced are available at all hours to the men and women engaged in Australia's "second fighting line." Another of his duties will be the supervision of scores of establishments all over the Commonwealth—many working round the clock, where canteens exist or are rapidly being built.

Still another railway officer who is on loan to the Commonwealth (on a part time basis) is Mr. R. M. Harvey, engineer member of the Betterment and Suggestions Board. Mr. Harvey, who is serving with the Welfare Division of the Department of Labour and National Service, will have the important task of advising on the technical problems encountered in the planning of welfare work in munitions factories throughout the Commonwealth. These problems have been accentuated and increased by the necessity for providing for the blacking out of factories, which brings with it difficulties of lighting, ventilation and accident prevention.

### WARNING

**T**HE attention of every member of the staff is again specially directed to the paramount necessity for preserving secrecy upon any official action or event connected in any way with the war situation, including any movement of armed forces and military supplies or precautionary measures of any kind.

*We are all anxious for the safety of our fighting man. Let us prove it by holding our tongues.*

In explanation of Mr. Keown's appointment it may be mentioned that the Department of Labour and National Service contains an Industrial Welfare Section which, in turn, covers the Food Services Section and the function of the latter is to provide nutritious meals to workers in

Donald Cameron, Chairman of the Staff Board, who for some time past has carried out, in conjunction with his ordinary work, duties of Deputy Director of Manpower Priorities in Victoria in the Department of Labour and National Service, has now been released by the War Department to serve full time as Deputy Director General of Manpower for Victoria, under the new Manpower scheme of the Commonwealth Government.

During Mr. Cameron's absence his duties in the railways, Mr. Letham will act as Chairman of the Staff Board. Mr. W. H. Swaney, Clerk of the Way and Works, who was formerly attached to the Staff Board, will replace Mr. Cameron on the Classification Board. Mr. Cameron's first task will be to establish a National Service Office in each of the 39 Military areas controlled by Southern Command. He will control the granting of certificates of exemption from defence service in certain areas and the implementation of a scheme under which certain essential and essential establishments will be declared "Protected" under the List of Reserved Occupations and the engagement of Manpower in industries which are not "protected." The new National Reserve of males and females throughout the country will also place heavy responsibilities on Mr. Cameron and his organisation.

## Drive For New Payroll Contributors To V.R. Patriotic Fund

**I**N an appeal for all members of the staff to become regular payroll contributors to the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund, the Committee of Management has assembled some impressive instances of the way in which various wartime organisations have been substantially helped.

Since the inception of the Fund in August, 1940, £14,000 has already been paid out. Some of the major payments are:—

Five Motor Ambulances (General Committee 2, Ararat Auxiliary 1, Newport Workshops Auxiliary 1, Special staff contribution 1) ...	£2,500
Australian Comforts Fund—Cash and Goods ...	2,200
Australian Red Cross Society—Cash and Goods ...	2,200
British Bombing Victims' Appeal ...	1,000
Food for Russia ...	500
Air Force House, Blamey House, Navy House (£150 each) ...	450
Bombing Victims in Greece ...	200
Red Cross Society for maintenance of railwaymen or sons of railwaymen who are prisoners of war ...	300
Separate contributions by Country Auxiliaries to various local war funds ...	2,500

In addition to the amounts mentioned, many smaller payments have been made to patriotic movements. The whole of the money raised was obtained by voluntary contributions and by means of raffles, dances and functions of various kinds. At the same time, the Committee emphasises that the whole of the organising work has been done without one penny being charged to overhead or office expenses.

In thanking those members of the service who are payroll contributors to the Fund, the Committee makes an earnest appeal to all others in the Department to become subscribers. Much has been accomplished in the past, but until the war is over there will be an ever increasing need for supporting the Australian Red Cross Society, the Australian Comforts Fund and other similar bodies. The call for aid is stronger than ever.

The Committee recognises that there are many levies exacted from railwaymen and women, but in view of the nominal character of the payroll contribution—6d. a fortnight—it feels that it is within the capacity of everyone to support the Fund in the manner indicated. Non-contributors are asked to help the cause by immediately notifying their Paying Officer that they are agreeable to 6d. being deducted each fortnight from their payrolls.

In a little over twelve months, the sum of £499/18/8d. has been subscribed by the travelling public through the small collection boxes marked "LEAVE YOUR SMALL CHANGE HERE" which are placed at a number of station booking windows and Refreshment Rooms. More than 100 of these boxes have been in use for varying periods during the time mentioned.

Incidentally, it should be mentioned that these collection boxes were manufactured from material purchased by the Committee of Management by railwaymen in the sheet-metal and wood-working sections of the Spotswood Workshops who, for many months, have been generously donating their time for the manufacture of equipment of all kinds for the Australian Comforts Fund and Red Cross.

## MORE V.R. ENLISTMENTS

### A.I.F.

APPEE. F. Tnr. J. N. A. Ainsworth; Repr. R. B. Allen; Actg. Comp. G. H. Bedford; Repr. L. M. J. Bradley; Skd. Labr. H. J. Brown; Sup. Labr. R. C. Bryant; Appee. F. Tnr. W. L. Clisby; Labr. M. A. Dobson; Gardnr. G. L. V. Dunn; Labr. G. H. Dunstan; B'maker's Help C. J. Fewster.

Pnter W. H. Fratz; Asst Engr. J. M. Frawley; Actg. Repr. H. J. Free; Repr. W. H. Gilbert; Skd. Labr. A. E. Hillman; Repr. S. C. H. Homfray; Sup. Labr. F. W. Hughes; Cpr. T. Jackel; Appee. F. Tnr. N. F. Jeuvay; Repr. E. Kerslake; Clerk D. W. McTaggart; Repr. L. Mewett; Repr. E. R. Milroy; Lab. Labr. P. A. Morgan.

Sup. Labr. J. A. Nugent; Actg. Repr. A. M. Robertson; Sup. Labr. R. J. Smart; Labr. J. B. Smith; Appee. F. Tnr. R. O. Smith; Skd. Labr. R. J. Smyth; Sup. Labr. J. M. Stevens; Signwriter W. A. R. Strong; Sup. Labr. F. A. Thomson; Chairman C. O. Westcott; Repr. H. J. Wilson and Repr. W. J. Winberg.

### R.A.A.F.

Lad Labr. T. W. Ballinger; Storeman W. V. Bates; Cpr. L. J. Bennett; Repr. C. E. Binion; Clerk J. P. Carolin; Appee. F. Tnr. R. C. Cregan; Appee. F. Tnr. R. L. Dale; Lad Labr. C. F. Dart; Shift E'trician R. M. Dickinson; Clerk G. B. Dobney.

Labr. C. W. Fraser; Sup. Block Recorder L. G. Groves; Yard Porter C. L. Hughes; Shift E'trician E. C. McAllan; Sup. Lad Ptr. I. McKenzie; Clerk R. T. Mitchell; Sub-station Asst. M. C. Morton; Op. Porter D. E. Mutimer; Skd. Labr. W. R. O'Bryan; Clerk J. Purves; Labr. F. H. Thomson; Clerk S. L. Wason.

### R.A.N.

Actg. B. Room Engr. J. D. Falloon; Fireman H. Love and Sup. Jun. Clerk W. E. Walls.

### W.A.A.F.

Stall Attendant Miss M. B. Braddy; Typists Miss P. J. Conway and Miss M. F. Gair.

## V.R. Men In Casualty Lists

### DIED OF ILLNESS.

R. A. Parkinson, Lad Porter, Edinboro, died.

### PRISONERS OF WAR

L. J. Goldsworthy, Sup. Porter, Flinders Street; S. G. Jones, Lad Porter, Refreshment Rooms, Flinders Street (previously reported missing).

## BRITAIN'S CORPS OF FIRST-AID BUILDERS

**O**NE of the most remarkable organizations produced by the war is Britain's mobile corps of builders providing first aid repairs to houses damaged in aerial raids.

Many hundreds of houses particularly near railway lines on which the Luftwaffe have concentrated the hail of shells on several occasions, have been damaged to such an extent as to make them uninhabitable.

For the purpose of rendering first aid to such dwellings mobile corps of builders were organized. In each town there are "front line troops" of builders ready to be rushed to any area after the first salvo of attack. If necessary, reinforcements are provided in an exceptional emergency and the Government has released men from the Army to help in the work.

### Materials For Use

The co-operation of the Ministry of Works and Buildings is responsible for the provision of bricks and timber stored handily for immediate use in populous areas and these materials given priority in transport in urgent cases.

The work of this mobile army of repairers has removed in a great measure the psychological and material effects of the havoc inflicted by the raids of the British autumn and winter of 1940. Certainly buildings have not been restored, but extensive repairs, amounting at times to 70,000 houses a week, have rapidly removed much of the effects of indiscriminate blitzkriegs.

Just what has been achieved can be fully revealed only by pictures showing the devastating "Before" and "After" contrast; but sufficient evidence of the miracle that has been performed is contained in the statement which should stir the heart of every member of the Empire that "there is scarcely a house throughout Britain today which has not been sufficiently repaired to make it decently habitable."

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# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

April 1942

Issue No. 139

## Railways Playing Vital Part In Defence Of Australia

THE Railway Companies in the all-important matter of transport facilities have more than justified the complete confidence reposed in them by the War Office." This tribute by the late Lord Kitchener to the speed with which the English railways carried the "Contemptible Little Army" to the points of embarkation in the early days of the conflict of 1914-18 is one of the brilliant examples of the importance of railways in war.

Another was the magnificent part played by the English railways in the famous Dunkirk evacuation. In nine days, between May 27 and June 4, 1940, while continuing their ordinary schedules, they provided 620 trains for the transport of 320,000 war-worn British and French troops without mishap.

Still another example was the recent use of the urgent necessity of supplying Russia with munitions—a task which would have been impossible without the remarkable assistance of the English railway companies.

They shipped rapidly and safely 200 locomotives and 1,000 trucks—the latter constructed in 10 weeks, instead of the usual time of 12 months—for use on the line from the Persian Gulf through Iran, to the Russian frontier to facilitate the transport of munitions to the Soviet armies.

### Mass Transportation

A smoothly functioning railway system is obviously a vital necessity to any nation at war. In Australia, now confronted with warfare on her own soil, the major task of transport in the many difficult days to come will devolve upon the railway systems.

Road transport will doubtless be employed in many ways; but apart from its relatively limited capacity, road transport is very largely dependent upon imported fuel which is increasingly difficult to obtain.

The railways alone are capable of the mass transportation—the prolonged and rapid movement over long distances of masses of men and supplies on which depends the offensive power of the country. And these have to be carried at the same time as the foodstuffs, raw materials, etc., necessary for the continent's existence.

### Teamwork Essential

Here, as in other countries, efficient railway operation depends upon the closest possible co-operation of every member of the railway team. The testing time ahead—in which our success or failure will depend very largely upon transport—will give every railwayman an opportunity to play his part in the defence of his country.

## NEW ARMY WORK

### Making Parts for Surgical Instruments

FOR some time past there has been in progress a job that must rank as unique in the history of the Victorian Railways. It is the manufacture of dies and forgings for thirty different types of surgical instruments for use by the medical section of the Department of the Army.

In July last, the Commissioners were approached with an urgent request to co-operate in relieving a serious shortage of surgical instruments, including forceps for lungs, tongues, intestines, etc., scissors, mouth-gags, needle-holders and other essential equipment of a similar kind.

The work commenced with the preparation of dies, some of very intricate shape, in the toolmaking section of the Workshops. This was a remarkable job which occupied four months, though production of several types began in one month.

When the forging shop swung into production it was soon evident that the accuracy of the forging greatly simplified the finishing operations.

The program provided for the huge total of 170,000 stampings and already nearly 25,000 have been completed. The rate of production is rapidly increasing, and provided there is a continuous flow of material, it is expected that the order will be completed by June next.

This important contribution to the Nation's war effort has won the whole-hearted praise of the Army Medical Authorities, and reflects great credit on all concerned.

## BIG POST FOR SIR H. CLAPP

THE announcement of Sir Harold Clapp's appointment as Director-General of Land Transport has been received with gratification throughout the railway service.

Sir Harold's long and varied experience in transportation and the qualities of leadership he displayed during his record term as Chairman of the Victorian Railways are familiar not only to everyone of his countrymen, but they have also deeply impressed travellers from overseas.



Arnold Haskell in his *Waltzing Matilda* wrote of Sir Harold as "a constantly recurring figure in nearly every interesting project in Australia." And so, after laying the foundation of a great aircraft industry until it reached the production stage, Sir Harold takes over the complex problem of land transport of a continent at war.

Sir Harold will wield the executive power of the Land Transport Board under the Commonwealth Minister for Transport (the Honorable G. Lawson), and will have the power to rationalize all transport (goods and passenger), whether by rail or road. He will also control vehicles and roads.

In short, he will enjoy all authority which has been thought necessary to bestow so as to ensure that transportation in Australia is placed on a war basis, ready for any emergency.

## SERVICE

"The Church of England Boys' Society and the Girls' Friendly Society of this State recently completed tours to Victoria. The tours were planned months ahead, and preparations were so far advanced when the Pacific crisis became acute that it was decided to 'carry on' with the tours despite cancellations that reduced the number from sixty to thirty-seven.

"Much of the success of the tour is due to the Victorian Railways, and I will be pleased if you will convey our thanks to the officers concerned. For three consecutive years a touring party has left Sydney, and on each occasion your Department's co-operation has been much appreciated."

Letter from Rev. N. Fox, St. Michael's Rectory, Sydney.

## More War Savings Group Members

FOR many weeks contributions to the Railways War Savings Group had remained practically stationary but with the entry of Japan into the war and the consequent threat to our very existence a gratifying increase in the number of contributions has been noticed.

The steady progress in the demand for War Savings Certificates commenced about the beginning of the present year, and it is noticeable that whilst the desire for £1 certificates has increased there is an even larger demand for £5 certificates. To acquire these latter certificates deductions of a small arranged sum are made from the fortnightly pay envelopes over a period of several weeks.

The results to date are encouraging, but doubtless there are still some railwaymen who are not members of a War Savings Group. Isn't the fact that the enemy is at our back door sufficient to make us all realize that the most we can do is the least we should do?

## HISTORIC PLATE AT BRIGHTON BEACH

PEOPLE passing along the sea front at Brighton Beach scarcely notice a small metal plate on the brick wall immediately opposite the pier. Underneath the footpath at this spot is an old brick tunnel now protected at its beach exit by large gates and serving as a refuge for a boat. The plate mentioned above gives the history of this tunnel in the following words:

"This tunnel was built by the St. Kilda and Brighton Railway Co. during the construction of its railway which was opened for traffic on 21st December, 1861. A tramway to convey goods between the Pier and the Railway station runs through the tunnel."

The tunnel, which leads towards the present site of the Brighton Beach Railway station, provides an interesting footnote to the early history of the Victorian Railways. At the time when the tunnel was opened, the railway line from Brighton Beach followed its present route to Windsor and from there ran across to St. Kilda and then on to Melbourne.

Originally, the suburban terminus was Brighton, the extension to Brighton Beach and the subsequent erection of the tunnel following on the conclusion that Brighton Beach "gave promise of developing into an important port."

It is worth recalling here that in the "fifties" a train ran from Flinders Street to Cremorne (Richmond), eventually crossing the Yarra by a bridge erected in 1860 and connecting through South Yarra to Windsor.

## All Of Us Must Fight Waste!

IN these dire times the closest vigilance should be maintained to prevent unnecessary waste of any kind. The thousand and one things required by a busy railway system should be carefully used so that the Department's available supplies may give the fullest service. This is all the more important under present-day conditions, because many stocks cannot be replenished.

There is a variety of ways in which the exercise of a little more watchfulness may mean a tremendous help to the Department. One of the most precious is Oil—particularly Lubricating and Illuminating.

### Conserve Kerosene

In the coming months an increasing quantity of Kerosene will be required for the lighting of signals, country offices and lamps of all kinds, and it should be every railwayman's duty to see that not a drop is wasted. This applies equally to Lubricating Oil for locomotives and other vehicles.

In locomotive depots and workshops particular care should be taken against over-filling axle boxes and

oil caps, and also in handling of bottles and feeders.

Then there is the ever recurring and highly important subject of paper waste. True enough, an increased use of scrap paper in the preparation of drafts, memoranda, etc., is apparent, but the passion for writing directions and other communications that could be more rapidly telephoned or handled personally dies very hard.

Don't waste even Waste Paper in England to waste Waste Paper practically a criminal offence.

In January this year a campaign was launched for the salvage and collection of waste paper. To give the necessary emphasis to the importance of this event, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland were divided into twenty areas.

In each area prizes amounting to £1,000 were distributed among the councils and other civil authorities which salvaged the largest quantities, by weight, of waste paper and cardboard per head of the population.

Private sources were responsible for the gift of the £20,000 required—a remarkable demonstration of the significance of waste paper in assisting Britain's war effort.

## VISITING TROOPS' ENQUIRY BUREAU

UNDER the direction of the Australian Comforts Fund and the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, an Information and Enquiry Bureau is now being constructed on the north side of the railway administrative offices in Spencer Street, Melbourne—a site made available, free of charge, by the Commissioners.

The building is being erected for the benefit of visiting members of Fighting Services, and its value will lie in its convenience to the Spencer Street Station.

The building is being constructed of timber covered externally with hardwood weatherboards and fibro-cement sheeting. The roof will be covered with fibro-cement corrugated sheeting, whilst the walls will be lined with building board and Caneite.

The entrance to the Bureau will be from the footpath in Spencer Street and the principal room will be an information lobby, 15 ft. by 11 ft., with a counter for the staff.

On one side of the information lobby will be a small office, whilst on the northern side a waiting room will be included. At the rear, a large general office has been provided with a room and conveniences for the staff.

The building has been planned so as to avoid the destruction of the large ornamental palm at the rear.

## News Of V.R. Men In Australia's Fighting Forces

### CASUALTIES

**S**HUNTER J. E. Einsiedel, Seymour (missing, believed killed); Cas. Labr. C. D. Gardner, Wodonga (missing); Cas. Labr. W. J. Harrington, Melbourne (missing); Skld. Labr. G. Hawkins, Warrnambool (missing, believed wounded).

### ENLISTMENTS

#### A.I.F.

**C**ARPTR. E. L. Anderson; Actg. Repr. K. Bird, V. D. Bullen and J.D. Barry, Labr. R. E. Black; Skld Labr. F. J. Conroy, Repr. P. R. Clayton; Storeman E. T. Dalton; Labr. W. E. Evans; Carptr. T. Elliott; Repr. L. J. Gregory; Actg. Repr. A. J. Gunstone.

Reprs. R. A. Kane, J. D. McDougall, J. R. Mellings, P. L. Mathieson, and N. A. Martin; Appee. Brnkr. W. A. Matthews, Labr. J. J. McDonald; Appee. F. & T. R. W. Masterman; Labr. S. Oates.

Repr. C. T. Pickett; Labr. G. A. Parkhill, Sub-stn. Asst. F. A. Pick; Lad Labr. A. Parker; Labr. F. W. Smart; Clerk J. Sutherland; Lad Labr. F. A. West.

#### R.A.A.F.

Lad G. A. Esmore; Repr. H. H. Heppner, Painter H. Parker; Appee. Elec. A. J. Smith; Appee. Ftr. G. C. Tate; Labr. W. F. Ward; and Clerk L. T. Woodhouse.

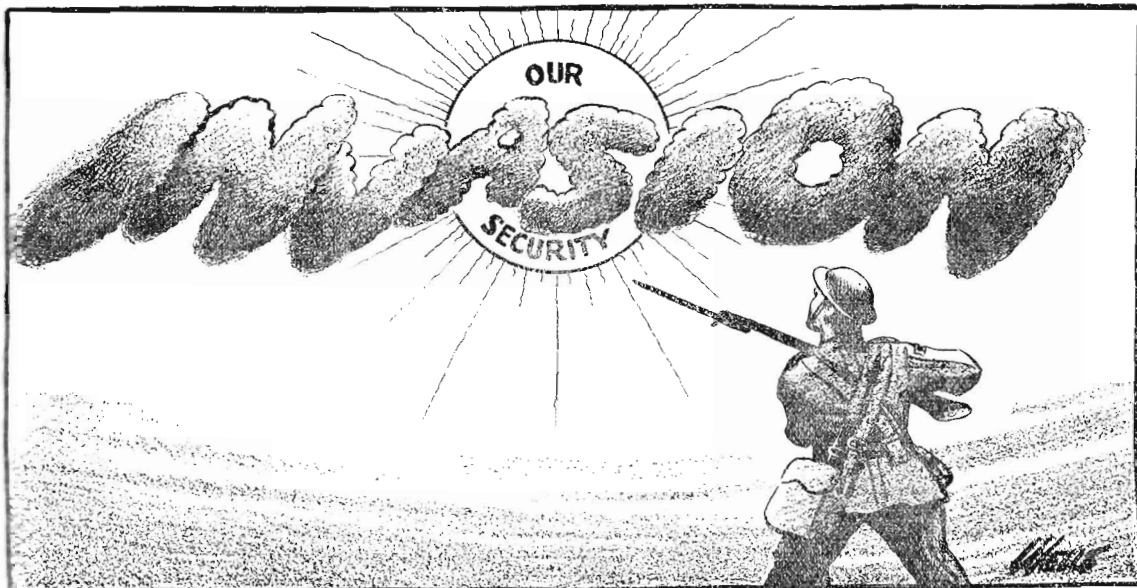
#### NAVY

Clerks K. G. Ford and H. C. McDonald; Lad Labr. M. F. Miller; Clerk A. W. Minton; Ptr. W. T. Nye.

#### W.A.A.F.

Miss M. Bennett, Junior Typist.

# CLOUDS ACROSS THE SUN



## Join Your War Savings's Group Today!

Don't the clouds on the horizon mean anything to you? What are you doing to help in the coming storm? The most you can lend is the least you can do.

## V.R. MAN'S GRAPHIC STORY OF SYRIAN BATTLE

MAJOR R. R. Gordon, formerly an officer of the Staff Board in the Head Office, Spencer Street, has some striking experiences abroad. From a long letter to a friend we make the following interesting extracts:

"We were in our Palestine camp long enough to get our equipment together when the Syrian war started. In due course we packed all we had on our vehicles—most of the vehicles had been delivered to me the previous evening and the mechanics had worked on them all night—and moved on an all day convoy drive to our rendezvous on the frontier. We were to man the Jordan Bridge just above Lake Tiberias and hold it against a very strong armoured force which was causing havoc in Syria and threatening the whole show with a flank move.

"My company was the only force available to meet it. We moved in the dark without a map over country almost unknown to me. I shall never forget that drive which was made under blackout conditions in some of the worst mountainous country I have experienced. In the darkness we could see faint outlines of the tops of the mountains directly above our heads and from the sounds below could detect the chasm on the outside of the road. The only way I could pick up the road was by getting out

in front and directing the driver a little more this way and that. At midnight we arrived at our destination minus a vehicle that had gone over the side and was recovered later.

"Towards evening most alarming news arrived of a threatened attack on us and preparations were made for blowing the Jordan Bridge and the final order to blow was left with me. Hence I had a most unpleasant evening on the banks of the Jordan battling with the plague of mosquitoes that infest this place. The position was pretty tense when I was called to a conference and told to take my Coy. to a place 25 miles into Syria to relieve a British battalion that was in trouble with the force that was threatening us.

### In Enemy's Camp

"Finally I was given two anti-tank guns and two armoured cars and moved at 3 a.m.—again over unknown country and right into the enemy camp. A short way out we were stopped by a British officer on foot. He was from the British Unit we were to relieve. The Unit had surrendered to the French late that evening and he informed us we had against us 26 tanks, a battery of Artillery, some Cavalry and a lot of infantry numbering in all about 2,000.

"Imagine my feelings—I had about 170 men under my command. Ultimately we got to a position overlooking the town concerned just after dawn. I could see the tanks scattered about, some of them on our flank, so I decided on defensive positions for the moment. We were fortunate we had done so because the tanks soon came round followed by some Cavalry. We scattered them and for some reason they did not press the attack.

"A little later some French planes came over and things happened for a while, but again no attack was made and we held our ground all day. Late in the afternoon a British Regiment arrived on the scene and it was decided we would all co-operate in an attack. This was done and was successful and at midnight we commenced our first sleep for three days.

"Then I was sent off hunting tanks towards Damascus. Our machine guns and two anti-tank guns led the final attack on Damascus. Again we experienced what had never occurred to us could happen—an attack being led by machine guns. However, it went off all right except that I had not the remotest idea who was enemy and who was us—they were all dressed alike and indeed were the same troops!"

## BIGGER DRAIN ON V. R. PATRIOTIC FUND —IF JAPS ATTACK VICTORIA

**F**OLLOWING on the recent service-wide appeal for additional payroll contributors to the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund, it was announced last month that the results could be regarded only as "fair." Many thousands of new subscribers are urgently needed, especially in view of the threat of a widespread Japanese attack on this country.

Amplifying this point, Mr. W. E. Elliott (Honorary Secretary) said that the scope of the Fund's activities was very wide. In the event of enemy action in this State, the Fund's resources would be available for assistance to members of the railway service and the general public in much the same way as victims of bombing of England and Greece were helped by earlier payments.

In addition, a benevolent fund has been created and will be supplemented from time to time. It is intended to use the money in this fund to assist cases of distress among the families of members of the railway staff who may be killed or seriously injured as a result of enemy action, irrespective of whether the railwaymen concerned have joined the fighting forces or whether they have been injured while on railway duties.

"At the same time, we must not fail to continue with the help we are giving to the Australian Red Cross, Australian Comforts Fund and other bodies catering for the needs of our fighting forces," continued Mr. Elliott.

"I, therefore, most earnestly urge all non-contributors not to waste a moment. I ask them to give the Fund their whole-hearted support by agreeing to the deduction of 6d. each fortnight from their payrolls."

### Help for A.R.P.?

Resulting from a suggestion by the Committee of the Auxiliary recently formed amongst the girls in the Refreshment Services Branch at Spencer Street, the Committee managing the Fund decided to investigate the possibility of purchasing a Mobile Canteen for A.R.P. personnel in Melbourne in the event of air raids on the city.

Should this be done, the girls from the Auxiliary have agreed to provide the canteen staff on a voluntary basis.

Experience in many parts of England has shown that through these canteens, the A.R.P. services have been greatly assisted and encouraged in their heroic fight against the Nazi air-raiders.

### Warm Appreciation

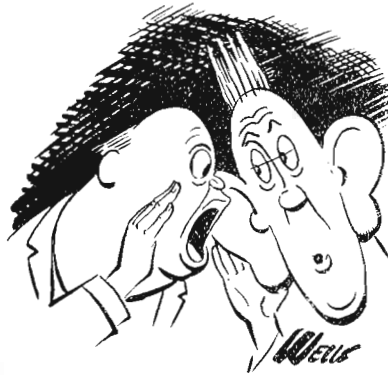
The Committee of Management thanks those officers who, after responding to the Department's recent appeal to assist in unloading trucks, donated to the V.R. Patriotic Fund the money so earned. The officers concerned would no doubt

prefer that their names be not mentioned. Nevertheless, the Committee greatly appreciates their generosity.

The Committee wishes, however, to make one personal reference by acknowledging a donation from Repairer J. C. Crossthaite, of Watchem, who recently organized an evening in his home in aid of the prisoners-of-war Fund. This donation has been forwarded to the Australian Red Cross Society. The objects of the Fund would be assisted very materially if other members of the service would follow the admirable lead of Mr. Crossthaite and arrange similar functions in aid of their former comrades who are now in enemy hands.

If forwarded to the Honorary Secretary, V.R. Patriotic Fund, Flinders Street Station Buildings, all such moneys will be duly acknowledged and applied through the Australian Red Cross Society to the purpose for which they were raised.

## RUMOURS!



Rumours here and rumours there,  
Rumoured tales are everywhere;  
East to west and north to south;  
Running hot from mouth to mouth.  
Most are silly; some are vile;  
Born and bred in hate and guile.  
Do not listen—pass them by.  
Dub each one an idle lie,  
Designed as part of Goebbels' plan  
To sow distrust in every man.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners:

## Adelaide-Darwin Rail—Road Link

**C**OMPLETION of the road gap between Tennant Creek and Birdum, thus providing road and rail communication between Adelaide and Darwin, was one of the most interesting achievements in the history of Australian transport.

The construction of the section of road required was decided on in August, 1940, and, as the wet season is due in December, the job had to be completed in under four months.

To ensure rapidity of construction in a part of Australia where the necessary labour and material were obviously lacking, the work was divided into three sections, the lower section being allotted to the South Australian Government, the centre section to Queensland, whilst New South Wales was responsible for about 100 miles of the road southward from Birdum.

The reason for this arrangement was that New South Wales could most readily send round by sea to Darwin the necessary labour, material and equipment, whilst Queensland could undertake the centre portion because Newcastle Waters in that area could be reached by a bush track connecting with the Western Queensland rail head at Mt. Isa.

With so many men engaged on the work, the problem of keeping them fed and in good health was considerable. This task was undertaken by the Commonwealth Government which provided field bakeries and kitchens at convenient intervals along the route. The necessary food was stored in mobile refrigerators, and units of the Army Medical staff were installed in hospitals ready for cases of accidents or illness.

Special arrangements had to be made for sanitation and water supply, whilst communication was by wireless telephone and by tapping the overland telegraph line.

Portions of the work frequently involved toiling right round the clock in high temperatures, and it is a tribute to Australian vigour and brains that our great trans-continental artery was completed within the time set for it.

## He Forgot!

**H**E BRUSHED his teeth twice a day with a nationally advertised tooth brush. The doctor examined him twice a year. He wore rubbers when it rained.

He slept with the windows open. He stuck to a diet with plenty of fresh vegetables. He relinquished his tonsils and traded several worn-out glands. He golfed, but never more than 18 holes.

He never smoked, drank, or lost his temper. He did his daily dozen daily. He got at least eight hours sleep each night.

The funeral will be held next Wednesday. He is survived by eighteen specialists, five health institutes, six gymnasiums, and numerous manufacturers of health foods and antiseptics.

**HE HAD FORGOTTEN ABOUT TRAINS AT GRADE CROSSINGS.**  
(With acknowledgments to "Railway Data," December 19, 1941.)



# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

May 1942

Issue No. 140

## SOME STATE RAILWAY PROBLEMS Interesting Address by The Chairman

**S**OME Problems of a State Railway System" was the title of a most interesting address delivered by the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris) before the Institute of Industrial Management at the Kelvin Hall, Collins Place, on April 7th last. In a brief introductory, Mr. Harris said that he would not attempt an explanation of how railways are or should be managed, but would indicate a few of the problems of management, and more especially those arising from State ownership.

Commencing with a survey of the early development and the modern governing the construction of the lines of railway in Victoria, Mr. Harris dwelt upon the importance of the railways as a State enterprise. Reference was made to the Commissioners enjoying a large measure of autonomy in conducting their day to day business, and the speaker then examined the financial system under which all railway revenue is paid into the Treasury and spending authorities derived from Parliament on a year to year basis.

### Railways in War

After traversing several other subjects of great interest to railwaymen, the Chairman made some pertinent references to the control of railways in wartime.

The organisation for control of railways in wartime, he said, has been discussed in detail during the past two years. Fundamentally, it is designed to ensure that the requirements of the Army will be met, the Army (through the Q.M.G.) being responsible for land movement of the armed forces.

In all planning normal operation remains under control by the Commissioners, subject to particular requirements of the Commonwealth being met.

The formation of a Commonwealth Ministry of Transport last year was followed, when Japan entered the war, by a National Security Regulation which, in effect, gave the Minister any required control of railway and road transport in war, and provided that the control would be exercised by the issue of formal orders at the discretion of the Minister.

On matters not effected by such orders, the control of State Railways remains as provided under State legislation.

Under a more recent Regulation, the powers of the Minister are exercisable through a Land Transport Board, the executive authority of which is vested in the Director-General, Sir Harold Clapp.

One aspect which has never been covered is one of financial adjustment between Commonwealth and States, associated with the execution of orders by the Minister.

It should be understood that the orders do not necessarily bring extra business to the railways, in which case revenue is earned in the normal way. Federal directions may equally have the effect of preventing normal operation to save coal, discourage public travel, or to hold equipment in reserve for particular purposes.

The only orders so far received under this Regulation cover:—

- (1) Elimination of special trains during last Christmas Holidays to conserve coal and manpower, and to limit pleasure travel;
- (2) The carriage of explosives under conditions conflicting with State Regulations;
- (3) Restriction on the consignment of tomatoes except to bona fide Canneries;
- (4) Prohibition of Interstate movement of certain articles, the manufacture of which has been prohibited in Victoria and South Australia;
- (5) Limitation of special traffic at Easter.

Orders have also been issued prohibiting civilian travel on the Transcontinental railway line at certain times, and control of priority travel on other Interstate lines has been introduced.

## PLANE SPOTTERS WANTED NOW

**O**NE of the primary objects of air raids is to disrupt productive and transport services. English Authorities recognise this, and provide against the onslaughts of the enemy by posting Plane Spotters to enable men to remain at work until danger is really imminent. The Spotters are located at vital points such as Workshops and other production and important centres.

The menace is close enough so far as Victoria is concerned to demand the immediate recruiting of volunteers for plane spotting in this department. The organisation must be State wide, each vital centre with its full number of spotters trained and equipped for their important task.

There are probably in the service many young men and youths, with good vision and the necessary temperament who have made a hobby of the study of aeroplanes and can be relied upon to identify them in flight. In addition there are older men with some experience of air raids. A combination of the two types would make an ideal Spotting Corps.

**Doubtless early warnings will be sounded over a large area when a raid is pending. The Spotters then take post at once so that their workmates will be assured of warning if the raid develops in their locality.**

It should not be difficult to secure the personnel for a small spotting army in the department. Whilst men and lads of the type suggested are most desirable, volunteers will be welcomed from other railwaymen willing to act, so that the numbers required for each section may be built up to the required level.

In a special appeal from the Commissioners, it is stated that each Spotter selected "should be acceptable to the majority working in the area covered, and an endeavour will be made to ensure this so that all Spotters may feel that they have the confidence of their workmates." It is also mentioned that "time necessarily spent in training will be paid for as straight time, but will not be taken into account for calculation of penalties."

All who are willing to act should apply immediately to their Officer-in-Charge or the Victorian Railways Air Raid Warden. British experience attaches great value to a live Spotting organisation.

## They Call Him "Mr. Clapp"

*Remarkable Exploit by ex-V.R. Man*

**L**IEUT.-COLONEL M. A. Rees, A.A.M.C. Training Wing, A.I.F., Middle East, who escaped from Greece, has had some unusual experiences. The ship in which he escaped was bombed and sunk, but prior to that event he exhibited considerable resource and courage in utilizing a railway engine for the evacuation of wounded.

Lieut.-Colonel Rees is a son of the late Mr. A. W. Rees, formerly of the Secretary's Branch. He is also a nephew of the late Mr. J. S. Rees, who for many years was Chief Clerk in the same Branch. During his studies for his medical degree, Lieut.-Colonel Rees served for a period in the railway laboratory where presumably he acquired a passion for locomotives. During his residence in Melbourne he was associated with various enthusiasts in the running of model trains.

In a letter received in Melbourne he relates how his efforts were hampered by "tens of thousands of Serbs and Greeks who were choking every available train and road but were going the wrong way. They were on the roofs and couplings and clinging to the sides."



Lieut.-Col. M. A. Rees.

Then in his own words: "We got up to a spot near Larissa and found that we were deserted . . . Station staffs and engine crews combined to bolt, and it was only by putting a guard on an engine that we held it while we filled a hospital train with wounded.

"That took all day and there were more to come the following day. The fact that 'Jerry' was coming round behind us made the work a bit exciting. However, we got the train away, but the trouble was that there

was no engine for the next day's train.

"I put my chaps on the hospital train and went down to look for an engine and found one at a place called Dhomokos nearly as big as 'Spirit of Progress.' Next morning, I found a fireman who volunteered to come with me and we lit the fire and got up steam. That took two hours.

"Then we had to do a devil of a lot of shunting, coal the engine, take on water, etc. Skipper acted as Shunter. Muir, now a prisoner, was fireman. However, away we went with a tooting of whistle. If you look at a map of Greece you will see Dhomokos, Demerle and Larissa, and you will see the stretch of line.

"We had quite a successful trip and rattled along at a snappy 40 on the way home. I managed to kill a horse by knocking it into a creek from a bridge. We had a few shots fired at us and were visited by a bomber which left us alone.

"I am occasionally addressed as Mr. Clapp now. So much for an interest in locos. in my youth. I wonder if the Victorian Engine Drivers and Firemen's Union would have me as a member."

## Big Saving In Use Of Block Tin

**S**HORTLY after the war began expectation that tin might become a very precious metal was responsible for a departmental campaign to economise rigidly in the consumption of tin and tin alloys. The basis of the restriction aimed at was approximately 40 per cent. of the 1939 issues.

Additional experiment and research will probably enable the Department to restrict its use of block tin still further but meantime, the marked drop in consumption during the past year is a most commendable achievement in difficult times.

The attainment of this saving by no means simple, as the tin content of certain bearing metals was substantially reduced about 20 years

The new researches included efficient collection and classification of all non-ferrous borings, and modification in design of rolling components so as to reduce consumption of C.A.T. (high tin) bearing metal; reduction of tin in solders and curtailment of pure tin coatings of sheet metal, etc."

The results are exhibited in the following comparison of the approximate issues of block tin for the two months ending 9/12/39 and the two months ending 28/2/42:

	Tons. C.
12 months to 9/12/39	55
12 months to 28/2/42	34
Saving . . . . .	21

This reduction of nearly 40 per cent. is highly valuable because of the capture by the Japanese of valuable tin areas in Malaya. It is all the more creditable in that during the latter period the Department undertook a heavy Defence work programme involving extensive use of the metal whilst its own railway needs were enhanced by a larger construction program and increased traffic.

## More V.R. Enlistments

### A.I.F.

L. ABR. D. A. Cole; Repr. E. A. Honeyman; U. G. Repr. Asst. T. J. Koch; Painter L. W. Patford; C. & W. Bldr. A. E. Sharp; Repr. H. A. Tate.

### R.A.A.F.

Ptr. L. C. Blackley; Appee. F. & Tnr. L. C. Bertuch; Waiter F. Butterfield; Lands Off. Asst. E. H. Clarke; Clerks T. J. Englefield and J. H. Hedger; Appee. Ft. & Trnr. D. J. Hickson.

Typewriter Mech. F. H. Leverett; Lad Lab. P. J. McNamara; Repr. V. Nunn; Carpenter R. Scarborough.

### NAVY.

Messrg. E. R. Eddy and Lad A. R. Straughair.

### W.A.A.F.

Miss M. Stephenson, Office Assistant.

## RAILWAYS DOING THEIR BEST TO SUPPLY FIREWOOD NEEDS

**I**N these tense times, the railways are being called upon to carry huge quantities of goods necessary to the country's safety. This tremendous demand on the rolling stock obviously affects transport for the ordinary needs of the community.

Among those needs is firewood in the metropolis during the winter. The special efforts that are being made to provide transport for firewood are reflected in the fact that, during the period from March 3 to April 24, 2308 trucks carried approximately

20,000 tons from the firewood districts to Melbourne. This total, of course, does not include the many thousands of tons of firewood carried to military camps.

The number of trucks made available for this traffic varies from week to week, but everything practicable is being done to ensure that as many trucks as possible are supplied having regard to the requirements for defence perishable and other urgent traffic.

**NEW POST FOR MR. C. H. HOLMES**

By his appointment as Administrative Assistant to the Director General of Land Transport, Mr. C. H. Holmes resumes active association with his former railway chief, Sir Harold Clapp.

The land transport problems of a country at war are obviously huge, and Sir Harold Clapp could ask for no more capable assistant than the man who served him so ably during Sir Harold's long term as Chairman of the Victorian Railways Commissioners.

Mr. Holmes began to acquire experience in transport as a Junior Clerk in the Victorian Railways in 1910. Some years later in the first world war, Mr. Holmes was in khaki. Before leaving Australia he secured a commission as a Lieutenant, and came through the War unscathed, returning in 1919 as a Captain, with a Military Cross earned for gallantry in the field. Resuming his career in the railways, Mr. Holmes soon gained recognition, and by 1925 he was Secretary to the Victorian Railways Commissioners. In 1926 he was appointed Chairman of the Victorian Railways Board and, in 1927, Chairman of the Victorian Railways Board and the creation of the Australian National Travel Association in 1929 he became its Director.

Under his control, the A.N.T.A. has functioned tremendously in importance and usefulness. Many valuable channels of publicity were opened up by the publicity of the matter supplied, and undoubtedly were responsible for an increasing influx of tourist travel to Australia.

Recently the A.N.T.A. changed its name to the Australian National Publicity Association. Last September, Mr. Holmes was appointed Director of the Department of Information, and resigned.

His many friends in the railway industry will congratulate him on his entry into a new sphere in which his outstanding industry, intelligence and loyalty will assuredly prove invaluable.

**List Of "N. C. Harris" Prize Winners**

It is with pleasure that the "News Letter" publishes the names of the "N. C. Harris" prize winners at the recent examinations conducted by the Victorian Railways Institute:

**DIVISION (STATION ACCOUNTS AND MANAGEMENT).**  
W. Prescott, Porter, Tottenham.

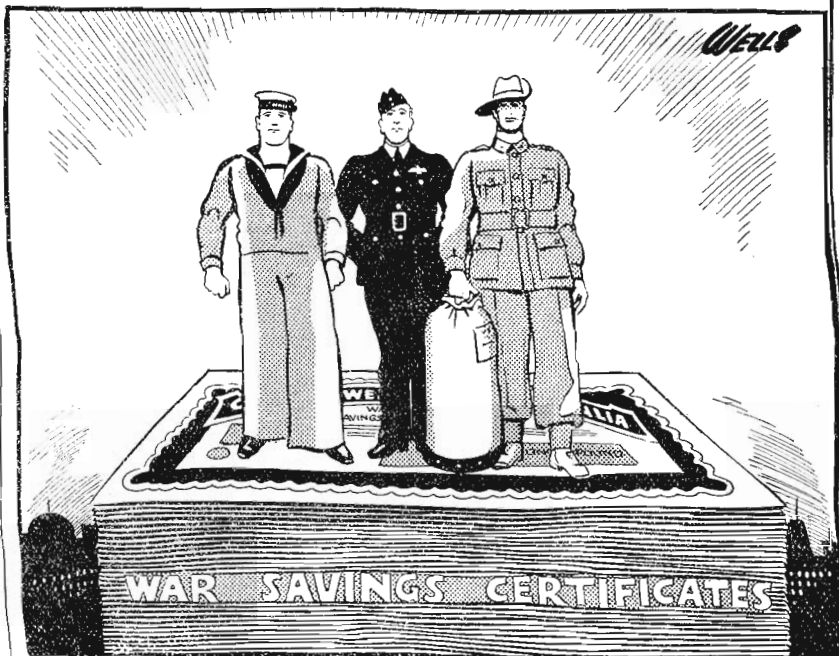
**DIVISION (SAFEGUARDING).**  
J. L. Jouaneau, Signalman, Ararat.

**DIVISION (ENGINE-WORKING AND WESTINGHOUSE BRAKE).**  
O. Greene, Cleaner, Seymour.

**DIVISION (PERM. WAY CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE).**  
L. Thomas, Ganger, Drouin.

Candidates who obtain 70 per cent. or more marks at the Annual Institute examinations in the railway subjects mentioned above are entitled to sit for the "N. C. Harris" prize, which includes English and Arithmetic.

**THEY CAN'T PROTECT YOU WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT**



Won't You Help To Provide A Solid Foundation?  
Join A War Savings Group To-day!

**V.R. PRODUCER GAS VEHICLES SAVE 1750 GALLONS A MONTH**

DEPARTMENTAL producer gas vehicles are now averaging 25,000 miles a month with an approximate saving in petrol of 1750 gallons.

The number of vehicles equipped comprises 30 departmental trucks, 5 passenger mail motors, 3 A.E.C. rail motors, 5 departmental cars, and 12 private cars. The last-mentioned are used exclusively for inspections and other official purposes. Six additional A.E.C. rail motors are also about to be equipped with producer gas units.

The departmental trucks are from 3 to 5-ton capacity, the P.M.M.'s are the small popular Dodge ("Tiger") rail motors carrying 8 passengers, whilst each of the A.E.C.'s provides accommodation for 37 passengers, and hauls one or two light trailers.

The maximum speeds obtainable with the substitute fuel are somewhat less than those attainable with petrol, but the most conspicuous feature of the alteration in the fuel is the tremendous saving in petrol.

Some of the performances of individual units reveal the value of the

innovation. Covering 3566 miles in a period of four months the P.M.M. rail motor operating between Birregurra and Forrest used only 11 gallons of petrol, equivalent to 324 miles per gallon—a reduction of over 95 per cent. The A.E.C. rail motor hauling one trailer between Numurkah and Picola has covered 4412 miles in four months, using 72 gallons of petrol, a saving in this case of 88 per cent.

A somewhat similar story can be told regarding a 3½-ton capacity road motor operating in the metropolitan area, which has used only 8 gallons of petrol over an aggregate run of 1900 miles, including a large number of short trips. Here again there was a big saving—96 per cent. Departmental sedan car No. 21 used only 5 gallons (a saving of 88 per cent.) in an aggregate run of 825 miles.

Those excellent results represent the work of many months of careful research with vehicles adapted for producer gas. The department may now properly claim to be one of the largest and most successful users of producer gas in the State.

## OVER 1000 ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS TO V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND

A SPECIAL donation to the Australian Comforts Fund of £3,000 per annum to assist with the maintenance of a Hostel . . . a "drive" for additional Auxiliary Committees' . . . the re-introduction of regular Sunday afternoon concerts for the fighting services . . . these were among important decisions reached last month by the Committee of Management of the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund.

Officials of the Australian Comforts Fund have expressed delight at the Committee's offer regarding the Hostel, and a suitable building is now being sought in Melbourne. The fact that the Hostel will be financed largely by the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund will be prominently featured on the premises, thus further emphasising to members of the fighting forces and the public generally the widespread and tangible assistance that the railway staffs are rendering.

Temporarily suspended towards the end of last year when the weather became warmer, the regular Sunday afternoon concerts for members of the fighting forces were resumed on April 12 in the Victorian Railways Institute Concert Hall, Flinders Street. With ever-growing numbers of soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces in the city at week-ends, it is expected that these entertainments will be even more successful than those conducted last year.

### 400 Hostesses

Nearly 400 Hostesses, comprising railway girls, and, on the recommendation of the Entertainments Sub-Committee, relatives and friends of railwaymen, will assist in entertaining the guests; also in preparing and serving refreshments.

Tom Lockhead, the well-known Scotch comedian, is once again the lively comper of a program in which the talented artists are mainly members of the railway service. All associated with these Sunday afternoon concerts are giving their services voluntarily, and the Committee of Management records with warm appreciation this further contribution to the general war effort.

Recognising the invaluable part that is being played by the 11 Country and Metropolitan Auxiliary Committees already functioning, the Committee of Management has deputed the Honorary Secretary (Mr. W. E. Elliott) to address a number of groups of metropolitan railwaymen and endeavour to increase this number. So far, two additional auxiliaries have been formed—

the Electric Suburban Guards and the Electric Train Drivers. Also the Princes Bridge and Jolimont Car Cleaners have decided to establish joint-auxiliaries.

Through these new auxiliaries, it is confidently expected that a large number of additional payroll contributions to the Fund will be gained. By forming themselves into auxiliaries, groups of railwaymen may decide the means by which all moneys contributed by them shall be expected.

*It is with pleasure that the "News Letter" records that new payroll contributors recently registered number almost 1,100. Of these, nearly 600 were enrolled at the Newport Workshops.*

*This gratifying result is a sequel to commendable co-operation between various Auxiliaries; the Combined Unions' Shop Committee at Newport; the Central Council of Railway Shops Committees at various metropolitan depots; and the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund.*

*It is hoped that these praiseworthy efforts will continue to be emulated throughout the service.*

## Ex-V.R. Man Goes To Washington

NOW that Lieut.-General E. K. Smart, former G.O.C., Southern Command, and now Australian Representative on the Chiefs-of-Staff Council at Washington, has arrived safely in the United States, it can be revealed that one of his staff—Lieut.-Colonel Charles W. Hicks of the Army Mechanisation School—is an ex-railway apprentice.

He thus joins the ever-growing list of former V.R. apprentices whose outstanding abilities have won recognition in many different spheres.

Many railwaymen in the Way and Works Branch will have a lively recollection of Charlie Hicks. He joined the service in 1910 as an apprentice instrument maker in the old Telegraph Branch. Just before the outbreak of the first World War he entered the Navy and later become a Lieutenant in the R.A.N. Bridging Train.

He served right through the War and on his return to Australia in 1920 he returned to the Department occupying a post in the Signal and Telegraph Drawing Office.

About 1925 he joined the South Australian Railways and subsequently he came over to Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, as a Lieutenant and was promoted to Captain, Major and Lieut.-Colonel in a comparatively short time.

## "KEEP TRUCKS MOVING" Says V.R. Soldier From Middle East

PROMINENT amongst the many Victorian Railwaymen who recently returned from the Middle East is Lieut. L. J. Lord, who is widely known in railway and sporting circles. He went through the campaigns in Libya, Greece and Syria as a member of Corps H.Q. on the staff of General Sir Thomas Blamey.

A few months ago he was transferred to a newly-created unit—the 1st Australian Movement and Transport Group—composed of men formerly employed on railway and shipping transport.

Before his departure from Melbourne last month for a battle station, Lieut. Lord gave the "News Letter" the following striking message "not," he said, "with any idea of intruding, but simply to express the viewpoint of a soldier-railwayman who fully understands the vital role of the railways in the defence of Australia."

"The success of an Army in the field depends largely upon the efficiency of its lines of supplies. No matter how efficient the Army may be, it is rendered almost impotent if there is any weakness in its line of communication.

### V.R. MEN IN CASUALTY LISTS

THE following railwaymen who were on H.M.A.S. "Perth" have been posted as "Missing": Eng. Clnr. R. H. Trimble; Clerk R. T. Clohesy; and Lad Porter T. H. Goldsmith.

"Railwaymen will, therefore, realise the responsibility resting upon them to ensure that military supplies and equipment reach their destinations in the forward areas without any delay. "A quick turnround of all vehicles" must be the motto at all railheads.

"On the manner in which you handle and despatch the supplies and equipment forward depends the success or failure of our armies to keep our shores free from invasion. Each and every man—and girl—doing an essential duty in the service of the Department is every bit as much a soldier as is the man in the front line.

"Until we in this country realise to a greater extent than we do now that an all-in effort will be required before we can hope to master our foes, no longer will we apparently continue to grope along in the dark.

"We must not fail, and provided we pull together, we will not fail. Let us therefore, to quote the words of the Empire's great leader—Winston Churchill—'Go forward together shoulder to shoulder. Each to his or her post, and do your duty fearlessly.' Above all, may I add—

**KEEP THOSE TRUCKS MOVING**

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# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

Dec. 1942

Issue No. 141

## Railway Operations In War

### CHAIRMAN'S STRIKING COMMENT

ONE of the most interesting features of the address, "Some Problems of a State Railway System" delivered before the Institute of Industrial Management by the Chairman (Mr N. Harris) recently, was his reference to railway operations under present conditions.

In the last issue of "The News Letter," some aspects of the subject were dealt with, and Mr. Harris's further comments will doubtless be of great interest to all railwaymen.

During several periods when supplies were deficient," said Harris, "it was necessary for the purpose of conserving coal, to enforce restrictions on the movement of certain classes of traffic. In applying this process the Commissioners' aim, in meeting war requirements, was to continue to move food for the community's needs, together with materials for essential industries. Permissible were given a high priority, without it they would have been essentially destroyed. Other commodities had to take their chance to a large extent according to availability of empty trucks in the locality.

### Train Frequencies Reduced

To get the most value from fuel consumed, train frequencies were arbitrarily reduced and a determined effort was made to secure more efficient use of trucks. In certain periods of this year the percentage of empty to total truck mileage was reduced from about 25 per cent., and the latter figure probably represents the best attainable under Australian conditions, with livestock playing a large part in total movement, and a large amount of empty carriage being inevitable with the carriage of coal and briquettes.

During holiday periods passenger bookings were restricted to approximately the seating capacity of trains, and whilst this caused decided inconvenience to many persons, statistics indicate little reduction in the normal amount of travel which was spread over the smaller number of available trains."

After explaining restrictions on movements of goods and livestock in 1941 and 1942 which had caused "much irritation," Mr. Harris gave the solemn warning:

"With the war liable to penetrate every part of Australia at any moment, we must expect still further limitation of movement of passengers and goods. When this happens extensive reductions in our present restricted services will be inevitable.

"At any time we may be obliged to introduce a procedure by which a person desiring to travel on busy lines may have to satisfy a representative of the Federal Department of Transport as to the reason for his proposed journey before we can sell him a ticket."

## THIS BELL HAS TRAVELLED!



ABOVE is a photograph of the now historic railway bell which was "borrowed" by some bright members of the 7th Division Supply Column in October, 1940, when they were passing through the Ballarat Railway Station. It was used as a dinner bell on their ship to the Middle East and came through undamaged during the siege of Tobruk. It was also stolen by Libyan natives and miraculously recovered during a sand-storm. Lately, it was returned to Ballarat for safe keeping, bearing on its war-scarred handle this illuminating record inscribed on a metal plate:—"The Bell that called the Boys of the 7th Div. Supply Column to Meals in Bombay, Palestine, Tobruk and Syria, 1940-42."

## MORE V. R. MEN TO COMMONWEALTH

THE Commonwealth Government is continuing to enlist the services of senior Victorian Railwaymen. Following the recent departure from the Department of Messrs. Cameron, Keown and Harvey to important posts in the Commonwealth Service, Mr. W. R. Price, Assistant General Superintendent of Transportation and Mr. J. J. Montgomery, Engineer of Special Works, have been loaned to the Commonwealth Land Transport Board for special investigation work.

During Mr. Price's absence from the Department Mr. G. Rogers, Superintendent of Train Services, will become Acting Assistant General Superintendent of Transportation, whilst Mr. Montgomery's duties will be undertaken by Mr. W. O. Brown, Metropolitan District Engineer. Mr. T. Collier, Metropolitan Superintendent, will become Acting Superintendent of Train Services and his chair at Flinders Street station will be occupied by Mr. F. D. Greene, Melbourne Goods Superintendent.

### V. R. MEN IN CASUALTY LISTS

Porter A. J. Downie (Died in Rabaul); Lad Labourer A. Moxey (Missing at Sea); Sub-station Assistant T. A. Smail (Killed in Action); App. Fitter & Turner J. M. Sadler and Labourer J. V. White (Both Missing. Believed Prisoners of War).

Mr. P. J. Maher, Acting Member of the Betterment and Suggestions Board, is another railway officer who has gone over to the Commonwealth. He is now organiser of Emergency Food Supplies under Mr. A. W. Keown, Commonwealth Controller of Food Services.

Mr. L. J. Wright, Assistant Manager of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, Collins Street, Melbourne, and other members of the Bureau staff have also been loaned to the Commonwealth Land Transport Board.

Messrs. L. Macartney, L. R. Brand, R. C. Burgess and M. V. S. Kempton of the staff of the General Passenger and Freight Agent, also Mr. G. K. Peart and other members of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau are now employed, under loan from the Department, in the transport section at U.S. Headquarters.

## QUICKER AND QUICKER MOVEMENT OF TRUCKS REQUIRED

**T**HOUGH not so conspicuous as the aeroplane, tank or other war equipment, the railway truck is none the less vital to the defence of our country. In Victoria we are far short of the number of trucks needed to meet present day demands for transport, which have been tremendously increased by direct and indirect war requirements. Materials and labour are not available to build sufficient additional vehicles to meet the situation.

The difficulty in meeting requirements is also accentuated by the fact that due to financial effects of unregulated road competition, rolling stock construction and track and yard expansion have been greatly restricted in recent years.

Present serious difficulties can, however, be appreciably relieved by ensuring that trucks are loaded to full capacity, by speeding up the loading and unloading of goods, and by keeping trucks on the move. It may be necessary in the near future to reduce the time allowed for loading and unloading in cases where a quicker clearance of loaded or empty trucks could be secured by so doing. An idle truck is a menace.

Any delays at stations deprive the nation of the use of a valuable asset and impede that steady flow of transport which is so essential to our defence.

The aim of the Department is to obtain a quicker "turn-round" of trucks in these critical times. To

this end the Director of Emergency Road Transport has promised the help of his local representatives (Transport Inspectors or Police) in securing local carriers for the more rapid release of trucks.

In addition to loading and unloading every truck immediately, railwaymen are urged to concentrate on the prompt clearance and despatch of all vehicles, aiming at an average movement of at least 35 truck miles per day.

The necessity of informing Train Control to ensure further action, should there be delay by any customer in loading or unloading a truck after he has been advised, is also strongly emphasised.

Only by the wholehearted co-operation of all concerned will the maximum use of all rolling stock be secured and the Department be enabled to play its full part in the national war effort.

## America's Champion Goods Train

**I**N recent years, competition with road motor vehicles has compelled American rail Companies to speed up their goods services and some remarkable achievements have been recorded.

The latest is that of the fast freight train, No. 39, of the Atchison Top and Santa Fe running between Chicago and Kansas City. It leaves the C. 10th Yard at Chicago at 6 p.m. each night, arriving in the Argentine Yard, Kansas City, at 7.30 the following morning. The distance is 451 miles and it is covered in 13½ hours—average speed of 33.3 m.p.h. including all stops.

When first established the train was limited to 26 bogie freight cars but a rapid increase in patronage is responsible for the size of the train growing to 50 cars with a total weight of 1,600 tons.

Huge 2-8-2 locomotives capable of hauling up to 4,000 tons on ordinary freight service over the route are responsible for the maintenance of the rigid schedule of 13½ hours, and it is the pride of No. 39 that it has put up an on time record of 97 per cent. since it commenced run.

## Invest In Second Liberty Loan

**T**O ensure the success of the Second Liberty Loan for £35,000,000 a personal appeal is made by the Prime Minister (Mr. J. Curtin) to all railwaymen to support the loan by subscribing at least £10 in cash. Recently Mr. Curtin referred to the Loan in the following impressive terms:

"By the time the loan is due to close Australia will have spent £515,000,000 on the war. You have been told that the coming weeks are fraught with grave possibilities; that warning I now repeat to you in the sternest terms. The tempo of the war is increasing. Our fighting men hourly face the supreme test of throwing all they have into the conflict. No citizen can do less.

"This Second Liberty Loan—for your preservation—must be filled, and filled speedily. Anything less spells difficulty and an impairment of the war effort. Your Government's call is to you for Australia's safety."

Railwaymen investing in the Second Liberty Loan are offered a choice of securities bearing interest at 2½ per cent. maturing in 1946-47 or 3¼ per cent. maturing in 1950-58. Subscriptions may be lodged at any Bank or Sharebroker's Office.

## WOUNDED V.R. MAN FROM TOBRUK TELLS THIS STORY

**P**ROUD to have been one of the "Tobruk Rats"—an epithet coined by the notorious Lord Haw Haw—Bombardier G. W. Maconachie, formerly of the Jolimont Workshops, recently returned to Australia on a hospital ship. For six months he was one of the heroic Imperial forces taking part in the epic defence of Tobruk, and though minus a foot as a result of a terrific German artillery attack, he has returned cheerful and well.

Bombardier Maconachie has a wholesome antipathy for the Italians—and no wonder. After being wounded, he was removed to the military hospital in Tobruk, and soon it was attacked by some Italian bombers. Fortunately he was unscathed, although he was violently thrown from his bed.

On the other hand, he has unbounded admiration for the Navy which, he said, was mainly responsible for Tobruk withstanding such terrific onslaughts from the enemy. "It was marvellous the way the warships got supplies through," he said, "but more amazing how they threaded a course through the ship-strewn harbour of Tobruk. Their timekeeping was something to arouse the envy of a railwayman!"

Asked recently if he had received any "News Letters" while overseas (a "News Letter" is sent each month to every railwayman in the fighting forces), Bombardier Maconachie exploded: "Next to food and water, mail from home," he said with some feeling, "is the one thing that keeps you going while overseas. At that period I had received no letters from home for about six weeks, and I was feeling pretty depressed, especially one day when Tobruk's heat and dust were at their vilest stage.

"Suddenly, I heard one of my mates call: 'Hey, Mac., Here's your mail.' Excitedly, I jumped up and ran, eagerly expecting an arm-full of letters from my wife, mother and other relatives. But, believe it or not, I was handed one—only one—envelope: a brownish envelope marked 'O.H.M.' I ripped it open, and to my utter disgust I found it was ONLY a "News Letter." . . .

"I flung it away as far as I could, but a little later when my disappointment was over, I was mighty glad to pick it up and read about the old days back at home."

### U.S. SOLDIERS LIKE RAILWAY MEALS

"HUH, Buddy," said an American soldier on a certain Victorian railway platform lately, "this fodder is good."

That was his homely, but heartfelt compliment to a hot meal served speedily at short notice by the Victorian Railway Refreshment Services.

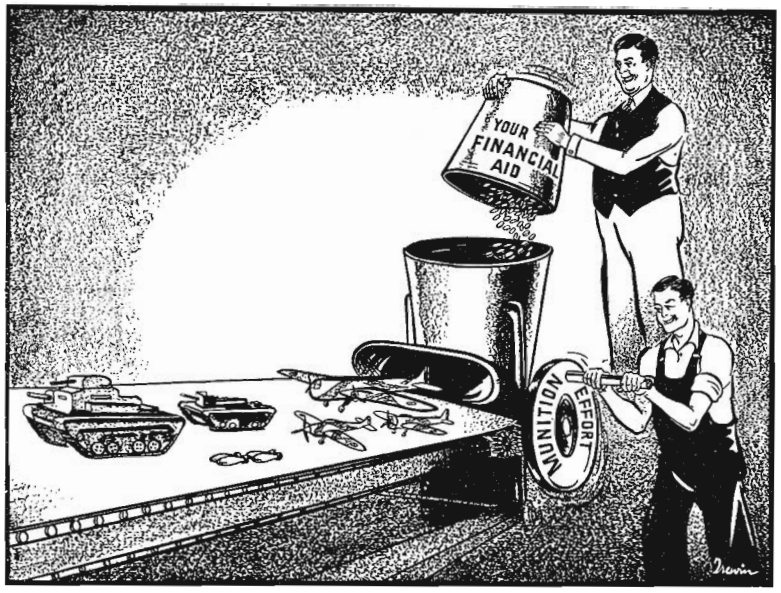
The meal consisted of a full plate of sizzling hot roast beef, a roast potato, and a full serving of cabbage. With a cup of coffee, America's favourite beverage, went two large slices of bread and butter. The fact that a large number of American soldiers had to be fed whilst transferring from one train to another called for expert attention on the part of the Refreshment Services, and it was done without hitch.

Troop movements have become so frequent in these critical times that the feeding of large numbers of soldiers in a shorter time than was ever thought possible and at all hours of the day and night is now part of the normal Refreshment Service routine.

The provision of a troop feeding station on one of the platforms at Spencer Street has been immensely helpful. Doors at each end enable the soldiers to file through and be quickly served, after which the meal is eaten at the tables waiting handily on the platform. All the service is provided by volunteers partly from various sections of the Refreshment Services Branch, assisted by volunteer ladies from the Brighton Red Cross Emergency Service.

Statistics are not always illuminating, but the fact that the Department has provided 32,000 meals for soldiers over a period of a fortnight, whilst maintaining extensive services for civilians throughout the State, testifies to the magnitude of the work that is being done by the staff of the Refreshment Services Branch.

## You Can Feed This Machine!



This consistent flow of Munitions needs not only the industry of the munition worker but your constant financial help.

**JOIN THE V.R. WAR SAVINGS GROUP TO-DAY!**

### The World's Largest Railway Ticket

THE Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (U.S.A.) claims to have sold the longest railroad ticket ever issued. It is 14 feet long and was bought by a clothing inspector for the Quartermaster Depot at Philadelphia.

It provides him with 10,000 miles of travel which he will cover in six months visiting 82 cities and riding on 18 different railways.

Incidentally, the ticket cost him approximately 26 dollars (say £8) a foot, this charge including not only the rail transport, but also necessary reserved seats, sleepers and meals on the various routes.

### FIRST AID PROVES ITS VALUE

THE value of a knowledge of first-aid was recently strikingly demonstrated in the case of a railwayman who for personal reasons prefers us not to mention his name.

He originally enlisted in the R.A.A.F. He saw valuable service in Java and recently returned to a certain part of Northern Australia just before it was raided by the Japanese.

At the end of the raid he found that he was the only uninjured man with first aid experience, and rapidly collecting a party of men who had also escaped the bombs, he organised them for help.

Their main task was to rescue several of the inhabitants who had fallen injured into the sea, and these unfortunates who were suffering from the effects of immersion in water in addition to a variety of serious injuries involving fractures and haemorrhages were laid out on the beach and under his constant directions were given first aid treatment by the party of volunteers.

Later two doctors appeared and after an inspection of the injured declared that the action of the young railwayman had saved many lives.

The doctors were so pleased with his work that they availed themselves of his services afterwards at the local hospital.

### COMPETITION FOR TREE PLANTING AND DECORATION OF STATIONS AND DEPOTS

In the annual competition for tree planting and decoration of stations and station yards in 1941, the highest number of points were gained as under :

Section	Name	Grade	Location
New work with piped water supply	Mr. W. H. B. Whitelaw	S.M.	Warracknabeal
New work without piped water supply	Mrs. E. A. Young	Caretaker	Somerton
Maintenance of Existing Trees, Gardens with piped water supply	Mr. C. A. Curthoys Mr. H. C. A. Waterman	S.M. Opg. Porter	Trentham
Maintenance of Existing Trees, and Gardens with out piped water supply	Mr. M. Petch	Porter-in-Charge	Bannockburn

Lack of space prevents reference to many other highly creditable performances. Altogether 66 railwaymen and women shared in the prizes which this year were £3 first; £3 second; and £1/10/- third prize in each of the sections of the competition in each district.

## V.R. Patriotic Fund Activities

**A**N interesting innovation in railway patriotic effort is the decision of the Ararat auxiliary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund to provide a 24-hours' refreshment service on the Ararat station platform for troops passing through in special trains when the refreshment room is closed.

To enable this to be done the Commissioners have granted the auxiliary the use of portion of one of the station buildings and this will be equipped by the auxiliary with a gas ring, and other facilities for the provision of hot tea, coffee, sandwiches, pies, hot soup and the like.

The service will be exclusively for the troops, who will doubtless greatly appreciate the kindly attention at any hour of the day or night by members of the auxiliary who are prepared to turn out to give them just that bit of refreshment, reinforced by a friendly smile, which is immensely heartening to a soldier in the circumstances.

Congratulations to the members of the Ararat auxiliary on this achievement of a new record of service.

\* \* \*

Other V.R. Patriotic Fund activities continue apace. The drive for more payroll contributors to the Fund is being steadily maintained with gratifying results. Since the drive started, 826 new subscribers have been enrolled at Newport Workshops alone and the total number of contributors now exceeds 10,000. New auxiliaries are being formed in the metropolitan area and encouraging reports of progress in the country sections of the movement are coming in.

Nevertheless there are still many railwaymen who are not contributing to this worthy patriotic effort. This must surely be through oversight as the deduction of the small sum of 6d. from every fortnightly pay could scarcely be missed. If every railwayman contributed 6d. per fortnight, the Fund would benefit to the extent of at least another £5,000 or £6,000 a year.

The Committee of the V.R.I. Patriotic Fund is particularly anxious to enrol a record number of new subscribers during the next financial year. Will all those who are not already contributing in this simple way think it over seriously, and join in helping those who are contributing regularly to this great work?

\* \* \*

*The small collection boxes placed in conspicuous places near booking offices in metropolitan and suburban stations are still playing a silent but effective part. Each collection box previously carried a small printed appeal to "Leave your small change*

*here" to help the fighting forces. Recently this was replaced by a small pictorial appeal with good effect as railway patrons are displaying an increased readiness to drop small change in the receptacles. More than £500 has already been received from these boxes.*

\* \* \*

As a result of further earnest consideration and on the best advice obtainable, the Committee of the V.R. Patriotic Fund has decided to abandon its scheme of donating £3,000 for an additional hostel as mentioned in the "News Letter" last month.

It is now proposed instead to purchase a mobile canteen to provide refreshments for members of the fighting forces either in Melbourne or at a battle station.

## THREE RAILWAYMEN PASS ON

**R**AILWAYMEN throughout the service will deeply regret the death last month of Mr. J. H. O'Connell, former lines and lighting engineer, at the age of 75.

Mr. O'Connell, who retired in 1931, left a record for industry, pertinacity and engineering scholarship which is an example to everybody in the service.

Beginning as a fireman he was determined to study, and it is a tribute to his ambitious purpose that he worked a long series of night shifts in order to devote his daytime to securing a degree at the University.

Actually, he obtained two degrees by intensive study—the coveted M.A. and B.Sc.—and it was his unique record as a railwayman to receive his degrees at the University Commencement in 1901, in the presence of the Duke of York, who ultimately became George V.

Mr. O'Connell, a qualified Electrical Engineer, transferred to the Telegraph Branch in 1904, and later was a member of the Signal and Telegraph Branch which was formed when electrification of the Melbourne Suburban System commenced. During his service in the Telegraph Branch, Mr. O'Connell was closely associated with Mr. W. Stone, afterwards Chief Electrical Engineer, in the preparation of the first reports on the electrification of the Suburban System.

\* \* \*

"THE News Letter" also records with deep regret the death of Mr. J. J. Gorby, caretaker at Flinders Street station, and Mr. David Allen, late yard foreman at Spotswood Workshops.

Mr. Gorby, who had been caretaker at Flinders Street station since 1935, was killed at that station on the evening of May 5th. He had been in the service since 1915 and was due to retire next year. He served with the A.I.F. throughout the last war.

Mr. David Allen, who had retired in 1940, died on April 24th last. He had served 42 years in the Department and prior to going to the Spotswood Workshops he had been yard foreman at Lilydale and North Melbourne.

## V.R. SOLDIER AND RAILWAY GIRL WED

**C**ONGRATULATIONS to Lieutenant Albert Taylor of the A.I.F. and Miss Jessie McNaughton who were married at Scots Church, Collins Street, Melbourne last month. Lieutenant Taylor, who has seen service in Palestine, Egypt and Syria, was formerly a clerk in the Staff Board at Spencer Street Head Office. Miss McNaughton will also be well remembered by various railwaymen for her invariable courtesy and attention as a switchboard attendant at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau.

The staff at the Bureau presented the young lady with a silver tea and coffee service and it is a tribute to her popularity that every member of the relieving staff who do temporary duty at the Bureau contributed to the gift. To Lieutenant Taylor his colleagues at the Spencer Street Head Office presented with applause a wallet of notes.

## More V.R. Enlistments

A.I.F.

CLK. J. C. Baker; Cpr. A. T. Davies; Lad Labr. J. C. Drummond; Cpr. T. H. Fyfe; Rpr. F. Kubeil; Clk. L. Miller; Blacksmith A. L. McDonnell; Rpr. D. E. Stevenson.

R.A.A.F.

Rpr. F. T. Alexander; Sup. Lbr. R. J. Anderson; Storeman H. B. Barrett; Clk. R. R. Blair; Rpr. F. E. Boylston; Porter J. W. Casson; Clk. A. E. Clozier; Rpr. F. L. G. Collins; Clk. C. Davenport; Rpr. S. H. Dixon; Clk. T. V. Dodemaide; Lad Lbr. R. Doolan; Spl. Inquiry Officer G. Duncan; Clk. A. J. Fell; App. F. & T. A. Firth; Jr. Clk. R. Fox; Sup. Lbr. Msgr. F. Gwynne; Sup. Lbr. A. Harris; Rpr. E. T. Harrop; Sup. Lbr. T. J. Hart; App. Elec. Fitter M. Hocking; App. Elec. Fitter E. J. Jenkins; Sup. Lad Lbr. A. J. Jones; Clk. S. Jongbloed; Cpr. J. Jordan; Jr. D. J. Kervin; App. Elec. Fitter J. MacRpr. K. M. Mathieson; Shift Elec. E. C. McAllan; Rpr. P. McConnell; Clk. J. A. Narracott; Rpr. W. J. Nicholson; Clk. B. A. O'Brien; L.O. Jr. A. D. K. Petrie; Jr. Clk. R. J. Phelps; App. F. & T. F. C. Plumb; Jr. D. B. R. Quilty; Rpr. A. R. Saunders; Sup. Lad Lbr. R. F. Silver; App. F. & T. R. T. Skews; Clk. A. L. F. Smelcher; App. F. & Tnr. H. E. Spicer; Office Clr. G. A. Spencer; Sup. Engine C. W. B. Sullivan; App. F. & Tnr. V. W. Stone; Jr. Clk. J. A. Taylor; App. Cpr. & Jr. L. J. Treadwell; Clk. E. Truman; App. F. & Tnr. R. W. West; Clk. A. Weeks.

R.A.N.

Jnr. Clk. A. W. Moore.

A.W.A.S.

Miss E. Eastlake, Cook (Refreshment Services); Miss M. Lambie, Office Assistant.

V.A.D.

Miss M. Alexander, Sup. Typist.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners:



# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

July, 1942

Issue No. 142

## Restrictions On Inter-State Passenger Travel Introduced

**B**Y order (under the National Security (Land Transport) Regulation) Interstate passenger travel by rail or by commercial passenger road vehicle is now under the control of the Commonwealth Land Transport Board.

The order provides that, with the exception of defence personnel, no person shall, as from 1st July, travel from any State to any other State or to or from any border station by rail or commercial road vehicle without a permit issued by the Director General of Land Transport. "Border Station" includes Albury, Tocumwal, Wallangarra and Broken Hill.

The order of priority travel is as follows, and permits will require to be held by those in 2 to 8:—

- (1) Defence personnel in uniform travelling on duty.
- (2) Persons on business of National importance associated with Defence requirements.
- (3) Persons on business of National importance, indirectly associated with Defence requirements.
- (4) Persons on essential civilian business indirectly associated with Defence requirements.
- (5) Defence personnel on Home Leave Passes and persons with good reasons for travel, i.e., urgent private business or dangerous illness and/or death of near relatives.
- (6) Persons absent from home desiring to return and giving sufficient reason to justify travel.
- (7) Persons travelling in cases where special hardship will result by prohibition.
- (8) Defence personnel on leave who pay their own fares.

The Land Transport Board will not issue priority permits for pleasure or holiday travel, for women relatives or persons wishing to visit or live near members of the forces, cases of illness, or specially good reasons are provided for school children on vacation or persons travelling for any other non-essential reasons.

All applications for permits must be made to Land Transport Board offices located at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and Spence Street Railway Station. Tickets under priority order Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4,

are obtainable seven days in advance and under the remaining priorities on the day of travel only. The possession of a permit issued by the Board and a ticket, however, is no guarantee that the passenger will be able to travel.

In observing the priorities, precedence would be given, possibly at the last moment before train departure time, to another traveller with a higher order of preference. In such cases the permit of the displaced passenger would be cancelled and it would be necessary for him to obtain another before he was eligible to travel again.

As a result of the cancellation of some of the Interstate trains (including the 6.42 p.m. "down" and the 6.50 a.m. "up" Expresses between Melbourne and Albury) and the potential full booking of the remaining trains, it is necessary to impose restrictions upon local travel by Interstate trains, as, for example, between Horsham and Melbourne.

Except for the buffet on the 4.45 p.m. (now 4.15 p.m.) Melbourne-Albury Express, buffet cars are being withdrawn to provide more passenger accommodation, but trains will stop for a suitable interval to meet refreshment needs. Many timetables have been adjusted to meet the refreshment stops and present-day conditions of loading.

It is worth mentioning as a matter of interest that travel restrictions, similar to those indicated above, have been imposed in European countries, particularly in Germany. Travel by permit only was imposed in the Reich in December last and recently the German radio broadcast that "as a result of the continual overcrowding of express trains, it is strictly forbidden to undertake journeys without urgent necessity. Those who disregard this order will be severely punished."

## 1,000th BREN GUN CARRIER COMPLETED

**I**N the following letter addressed to the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris), the Hon. Norman J. O. Makin, M.H.R., Minister for Munitions, enthusiastically records the production of the thousandth Bren Gun Carrier in the Department:

"Dear Mr. Harris,

I was delighted to be informed that your Department has produced its one thousandth Carrier, and I am glad to offer you my heartiest congratulations.

This is indeed a commendable effort and all who have taken part therein may justifiably be proud. Perhaps you would be good enough to convey my congratulations and personal thanks to all concerned.

With best wishes for the continued success of your Department's efforts.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd.) Norman J. O. Makin,  
Minister for Munitions."

To the above letter the Chairman replied to the Minister as follows:

"Dear Mr. Makin,

On behalf of the men concerned, I wish to thank you for your kind letter of 8th June.

Our staff have indeed done a good job, not only in passing the 1,000 mark in Carrier production, but in a number of other war projects—and perhaps more especially in handling a largely increased transportation load without appreciable increase in equipment.

I feel sure that your message of commendation will be greatly appreciated by the staff concerned, and I shall have much pleasure in conveying it to them.

Yours faithfully,  
(Sgd.) N. C. Harris,  
Chairman."

## WELL SAID!

**I**N a recent personal message to the staff of the Illinois Central Railroad, Mr. J. L. Beven, President of the System, gave voice to these fine sentiments—

"Obviously we have a tougher problem and a greater problem than we ever anticipated. In that problem lies our challenge, a challenge to do more than we have ever done before, to measure up to what is expected of us. The job gets harder, but not impossible. We can do it, and we will do it—and do it WELL.

We can do no less, in all honour."  
That is the win-the-war-spirit in a nutshell.

## Child's Adroit Piece In Travellers' Aid Society Competition

RECENTLY, the Travellers' Aid Society held an unusual competition for children under 13. All competitors were required to compose a little story, the feature of which was the punning on the names of Victorian railway stations whilst maintaining the narrative. The first prize was a bicycle and the winner was Albert Arnold, 20 Wymbler Avenue, East Preston, for the following effort:—

We are AVONMORE SUNSHINE, said Pa CROSSLEY. It is hot as BULLIOH, and the BOYS, DARNUM, are MELTON away and feeling SULKY and as mad as a HATTAH. WAL WAL before the place goes TOORAK and DROUIN, we MIDAS well have a picnic at the RESERVOIR, among the CLEMATIS and MUSK, and, ALBION well, MARSHALL pick BORONIA, ERICA and PENNYROYAL on the HILLSIDE.

When MARNOO, she began to RUSHALL around. She rang the BELL and told LAURIE, AGNES and DAVID, also ALEXANDRA and LEONARD BARKER. She said, "I will invite GORDON and ELAINE BRADSHAW, DONALD CAMPBELL, Mrs. THOMPSON, ANDERSON the GARDINER, GLENTHOMPSON, also DARLING DAISY HILL, and WRIGHT to an OFFICER of the Travellers' Aid Society to meet us in MELBOURNE and help us CROSS-OVER.

After a safe journey, the party was met at the country station by a CANADIAN BUFFALO HUNTER from the PRAIRIE. He had AUBURN hair and wore a GLENGARRY cap. He could not REID but DUNNEWORTHY service in driving us to the picnic.

It was ARCADIA passing across the BROADMEADOWS, a MANSFIELD, over a BROADFORD and through a FORREST of DUMOSA. We did not LINGA but PRESTON at full SPEED.

By a COLDSTREAM near the LOCK, in an AMPHITHEATRE among BALD HILLS the driver said "WAAIA." We unloaded some BAYLES of POLLARD for the horse, made camp against a ROCKBANK with a MOSSIFACE, and collected LONGWOOD from the BEECH FOREST to BYRNE. We knew that with some HAWTHORN KNOTTS it WOODBURN well.

We sighted an EMU and a CANINE BOWMAN whose ancestors fought at HASTINGS, BANNOCKBURN, CRESSY and TRAFALGAR went BOLTON out to STALKER. He did not RIDDELL it, but knocked a KANGAROO FLAT. This

## ACTING FIREMAN ALFORD'S BRAVE ACT

IT gives the "News Letter" great pleasure in recording the bravery and presence of mind of Acting Fireman John H. A. Alford on the morning of June 9 last.

Mr. Alford was acting observer on the 8.12 a.m. electric goods train from Lilydale to Melbourne and when the train was topping the hill on the "down" side of the Blackburn station, he and the driver (A. T. Stevens) noticed a little toddler, Geoffrey Franz, standing close to the outside "up" rail.

Realising that the speed of the train could not be reduced in time to avoid running over the child, Mr. Alford got out on the front of the electric locomotive and down onto the step. By holding on to the hand rail and buffer he was able to get his foot and leg across the front wheel. As the train went by this resolute railwayman pushed the child out of danger with his projecting foot. The youngster suffered a black eye and a grazed forehead, but his life was saved by Mr. Alford's readiness in the emergency.

In attempting to save this child Mr. Alford had to take a grave personal risk, knowing there was only a precarious hold and that a slip would be fatal to himself.

We salute him.

## SERVICE

THE following grateful tribute to the service on "Spirit of Progress" comes from Mrs. F. Gertrude Kumm, "Tatiara," Hopetoun Rd., Toorak:—

"Ever since I returned from Sydney nine days ago I have wanted to write to you to express to you and the Railway Authorities my grateful thanks for the splendid attention I received travelling to and from Sydney in the 'Spirit of Progress.'

"From the Conductors in the train to the Dining Car Waiters, where there were many people to cope with, the service was outstanding and was accorded with a spirit of kindness which is not often found in these sad and hurried days.

"I would like also to thank, through you, the officials at Spencer Street who managed to find me a seat on both trains through to Sydney on May 9th, after having my plane seat cancelled twice.

"I do congratulate you on the comfort of this train."

made a good lunch with some HAMMOND a BRIM from the FISH CREEK.

MYWEE did LOVAT!

Pa and a BLOWHARD NAVIGATOR from SAILORS FALLS had a tug-of-war. I expected to see the TARWIN and ran to TELFORD to WATCHEM. How they did PULLUT!

The party was MERRI and BRIGHT. We were DOOEN well and wished it never WOODEND when Pa said "HOMEWOOD be best. Are WEERITE?"

And all those NERRIM BARWON answered "YEA."

## V.R. Flagman Finds German Prisoners

A FLAGMAN working with a fellow between Creighton and Euroa was primarily responsible recently for the recapture of two German prisoners who had escaped from prison camp.

He happened to notice a strange fellow peering at him around the corner of a shed on adjacent private property. Instantly recalling that German prisoners were loose, he decided to investigate. Regardless of what might be awaiting him—his only weapon was his pocket knife—he went to the shed to find two wet and dishevelled men cowering there, one of them with a coat over his head.

In broken English one of the men asked the distance to Benalla and begged for food. Suspecting that they were the escapees required, the flagman told them he would bring them some of his lunch. Managing to keep them under observation without exciting their suspicion, he went to the nearest farmhouse and told the farmer to ring the Euroa police.

On the arrival of the police the two Germans bolted, but were quickly caught.

The flagman, who showed commendable presence of mind in the matter, might have proved a dangerous character, has three sons serving in the country abroad—one, in an tank unit, the second, a petty officer in the Royal Australian Navy, and the third, who was left behind in Germany is now a prisoner of war in Germany.

## WOMEN PORTERS IN SERVICE SOON

THE appearance of women ticket sellers and porters may be expected on city and urban stations.

Over 200 applicants have been interviewed and a number selected for special two weeks' training in a demanding, in addition to mental alertness and good physical health, personality, tact and courtesy in dealing with the public.

A well-cut uniform, tailored of blue-grey material, has been chosen by the Commissioners, and it should prove attractive.

The shortage of manpower in positions in the railways compelled the Department to seek the employment of women. To this end application was made some time ago to the Women's Employment Board for authority to employ females not only as porters, but also as car cleaners, storewomen, assistants in the railway printing works and as conductors on the Department's St. Kilda-Bray electric tram service.

# SPARE A SMALL SLICE FOR THE



## MEN WHO ARE PROTECTING THE LOAF

### BIG V.R. PATRIOTIC RAFFLE AND OTHER STRIKING ACTIVITIES

**A** FIRST Prize of an open order to the value of £35, a second prize of £10, a third prize of £5 and ten consolation prizes of £1... those are the inducements to purchase a ticket in the raffle to be drawn on August 1st to help the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund. Tickets are only 3d each and the committee of the Fund makes a strong appeal to all railwaymen and their friends to buy tickets in the raffle.

All railwaymen and particularly those who are not already contributing members of the V.R. Patriotic Fund are urged to purchase at least a book of tickets (each book contains five tickets) available for 1/-.

By enlisting the co-operation of the railwaymen in distributing tickets, etc., the committee hopes to make a big saving in stationery and other costs and to achieve an even better result than on the two previous occasions when, in each case, the profit was more than

\* \* \*

appealing to all concerned to help in making the raffle a success, the Victorian Railways Commissioner M. J. Canny, Chairman of the V.R. Patriotic Fund Committee and Mr. W. E. Elliott, energetic Secretary, pointed with thanks to the amounts that have already been distributed from the Fund in various ways.

The Australian Comforts Fund and Australian Red Cross Society have benefited in cash and goods to the extent of £4,000 and £3,000 respectively. Five Motor Ambulances, each costing £500, have been presented to the A.I.F. Cheques totalling £1,350 have been handed to Toc H, Air Force House, Blamey House and Navy House. Assistance for railwaymen or railwaymen's sons, who are prisoners of war, cost another £600, and £500 was provided for the "Food for Russia" Appeal.

Other distributions bring the total to date up to no less than £15,924. This fine achievement is all the more commendable for the reason that the money has been obtained without any overhead cost, i.e., expenses for salaries, honoraria, etc.

\* \* \*

The Sunday afternoon entertainments for Allied Forces at the V.R.I. Hall, Flinders Street Station Building, have proved so successful—indeed on occasions it has been necessary to turn soldiers away—that it has been decided to give a regular Sunday evening entertainment at the same hall.

This will be under the control of the Committees of the Newport Workshops and Sporting Auxiliaries and will commence at 8.15 p.m. each Sunday, concluding at 10.30 p.m. A variety of first-class entertainers will contribute to the programme including vocalists, dancers and others who will present many and varied novelty items.

### V.R. ENLISTMENTS

A.I.F.

**S**KD. Lbr. J. D. Carter; App. F. & Trn. A. J. Flowers; App. B'maker R. J. Forsythe; Clerk W. L. Gilbert; Lbr. J. H. Overall; Painter W. A. Stevens; App. F. & Trn. N. T. Stewart; Jnr. Clk. K. M. White.

R.A.A.F.

**A**PP. Elec. Fitter K. R. Allan; Clerk R. I. Baggott; Rpr. A. J. Beasley; Rpr. N. W. Bennie; Rpr. S. J. Bibby; App. Elec. Fitter L. J. Boyle; Painter A. M. Brockwell; App. F. & Trn. F. Burnell; App. Elec. Fitter G. Butcher; Lbr. K. J. Carter; App. Carpntr. A. L. Coates; Rpr. L. T. Cocking; Jnr. Clk. G. Cranwell; Supr. Lbr. J. I. Dawson; Jnr. Draughtsman B. S. Dixon; Jnr. Clk. M. J. Douge; Lbr. I. Driscoll; App. Blksmith. I. M. Duxson; Clk. J. S. Evans; Jnr. Clk. H. Falvey; Jnr. Clk. K. F. Galvin; Clerk. L. H. Griffiths; App. F. & Trn. L. L. Hall; Clk. M. Harford; Clk. H. J. Harvey; App. F. & Trn. T. M. Hay; App. Uphlstr. K. G. Holloway; Rpr. G. N. Holmes; Jnr. Clk. L. L. Jephson; App. Painter A. H. Lockett; Lad Lbr. C. P. Lockley; Rpr. K. Mackinnon; Rpr. J. W. Martin; Lbr. R. Murray; Sup. Lbr. C. McC. Nelson; Jnr. Clk. G. J. Norton; Rpr. G. Peters; Rpr. J. H. Richardson; Rpr. N. L. B. Riordan; Lbr. A. R. Ryan; App. F. & Trn. R. P. Slattery; App. Elec. Fitter A. J. Smith; Rpr. J. C. Symons; Lad Lbr. W. Tee; Rpr. A. T. Tregea; Rpr. E. R. G. Trew; Rpr. C. F. Vonarx; Carpntr. L. H. Wheeler; App. Elec. Fitter J. W. Wilson; Rpr. L. E. Withers.

R.A.N.

**C**LERK J. E. Anthony, Lad Porter R. P. Barber; F. & Trn. O. Barrett; Jnr. Clk. G. W. Batten; Block Recorder R. J. Carmichael; Jnr. Clk. H. S. Feben; F. & Trn. D. L. Gay; Lad Porter K. H. Hughes; F. & Trn. L. Morton; F. & Trn. R. I. White.

W.A.A.A.F.

**M**ISS E. Hickmott (Refresh. Services); Miss P. McDevitt (Office Asst.).

## Unique Feat Of Transport On Sunday Morning

ON a recent Sunday morning, the Department successfully transported a certain large and heavy piece of machinery weighing 112 tons from the metropolis to an address "somewhere in Australia."

The nature of the job called for meticulous planning. A special truck capable of carrying the heaviest load in the history of the Victorian Railways had to be provided. Furthermore, the width of the load made it necessary that all station or other platforms be kept clear of obstructions for a distance of at least 18 inches from the platform edge.

Another important feature of the operation was that no vehicle was permitted on any adjoining line or siding, whilst to ensure clearance, the load was diverted at one stage on to a section of "wrong line," i.e., an "up" line at a prominent railway centre.

The whole of the railway between the starting point and destination was reserved exclusively for the passage of this important little train, and there was not the slightest hitch in any detail of an operation which reflects great credit on all the railway staff concerned.

## MORE AND MORE TRUCKS OF FIREWOOD

IN order to relieve the firewood needs of the city, the Department is continuing to make an increasing number of trucks available for the carriage of firewood to Melbourne.

Over the four weeks May 26 to June 22—a total of 1,749 trucks carrying approximately 20,000 tons of firewood arrived in the metropolis for distribution in the city. This is an increase of 326 trucks (i.e., 3,500 tons) over the previous four weeks.

These figures include firewood brought by special week-end trains from country stations. This new plan was inaugurated over the Saturday and Sunday, June 13 and 14, when two trains of 29 trucks each, carrying a total of over 800 tons of firewood, were sent from Beaufort to Melbourne.

These week-end trains are loaded by the Forest Commission, and volunteer groups are waiting at various suburban destination stations to unload the trucks immediately on their arrival.

This speedy loading and unloading of the trucks enable a service to be obtained from them at week-ends that would otherwise not be practicable.

## Another Cheque For Ballarat Orphanage

THE Railway Carnival Committee, established in 1892 for the purpose of working for the Ballarat Orphanage, has just presented the Orphanage with a cheque for £322/2/-.

This represents the Committee's big charitable effort over the past twelve months and brings its total contributions to the Orphanage to approximately £12,000.

The Carnival Committee owes its success to the energy and enthusiasm of its members, among whom may be mentioned Mr. J. W. Dunn, a former guard, who is one of the original Committee of Management.

Another prominent figure is Mr. R. G. Caddell, tourist officer in charge of the Ballarat Branch of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, who has been secretary of the Carnival Committee for the past 25 years. During the past 12 months, Mr. Caddell has also served as President of the Committee controlling the activities of the Orphanage.

## OBITUARIES

MANY railwaymen still in the service will remember Mr. George Watson Reid who died at Kew on June 13 at the age of 82. He started in the Department as a boy of 14 and retired in 1920 as a Workmaster in the Way and Works Branch, achieving a remarkable record of 47 years of service unbroken by a day of illness.

The late Mr. Reid was an excellent railwayman, and in his passion for rifle shooting he managed to run second in the first Queen's Prize Competition to be arranged in Victoria. Among other coveted trophies for shooting about this period—the early 1880's—he also won the Sargood trophy and the Dennis Bros. trophy.

Incidentally he was a member of a prominent railway family. His father, James Reid, was an Inspector of Works in the Department. His son, Captain J. M. Reid of the 2nd Field Company Engineers, who was killed at Passchaendale in the last war, was an engineer in the construction Branch. Still another son, Mr. A. Reid, is at present in control of the photographic branch at the Spencer Street Head Office.

\* \* \*

BOWLERS and railwaymen will also regret the death of Mr. Stephen Mills, a former workshops foreman at Newport Workshops, at the ripe age of 81.

He served his time at Horwood's Foundry, Bendigo, and joined the railway workshops at Williamstown in 1889, subsequently transferring to Newport when the railway workshops were established there. He resigned from the Department in 1920.

As a bowler his reputation was continent-wide. He represented Victoria in Interstate matches and he was the Manager of a Victorian team visiting other States. He was a member of the Williamstown Bowling Club for 38 years, and won various prizes and championships.

Also under the pen-name of "Backhand" he wrote considerably on his favourite topic in the columns of "The Herald."

## WHAT IS KIKUYU

A QUESTION that might be put to one of the "Information Please" sessions on the radio is: Where is Kikuyu and what is it noted for?

The answer to the question is that Kikuyu is a large area of grasslands in British East Africa on the equator, and is noted for an extraordinary native grass which has its name from the place. This grass has been imported into Victoria and is apparently acclimatised. It has a medium value as stock food because it grows in sandy soil where other grasses will not thrive.

Kikuyu resembles buffalo grass in appearance and exhibits the tenacious development as buffalo grass, its fast surface-growing habits, and the eyes of the Chief Civil Engineer, Department, kikuyu has another name which is being increasingly appreciated as time goes on. The railway engineers have found it invaluable in binding sections of ground near bridges and river banks and thus preventing erosion.

Kikuyu was successfully employed in the extensive scheme for combating erosion on the Avon River in Gippsland, referred to in the "News Letter" a few months ago. The grass has now been planted for the purpose in special works at Tocumwal.

When it was decided upon in the Department to make use of kikuyu an initial difficulty was the securing of sufficient cuttings for planting. Whilst this aspect was being considered a piece of Departmental land in the Melbourne suburb came under our notice in quite another connection and on being inspected was found to be a small flourishing carpet of kikuyu lawn providing ample supplies for railway purpose.

## Veteran Ex-Driver's "Diamond Wedding"

WARMEST congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. William Cordwell who celebrated their "Diamond Wedding" on Sunday, June 21.

Mr. Cordwell is an old railway driver who retired over twenty years ago. During his career he was a Commissioned driver and was on the special plate on all special trains for visiting notabilities.

He drove the engine of the special train provided for the Prince of Wales (now Duke of Windsor) during his visit to Victoria. A memento of the tour is a pair of gold sleeve buttons personally presented by H.R.H. Driver Cordwell at the conclusion of his tour.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Launceston Street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers, The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

August, 1942.

Issue No. 143

## SAVE THE RUBBER !

### Striking Appeal From Commonwealth Minister For Supply & Development

**T**HE following message, dated July 7, 1942, comes from the Honorable John Beasley, Commonwealth Minister for Supply and Development :—

On July 5, acting on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, I instituted a National Appeal to the people of Australia, inviting their collaboration in the collection of scrap rubber, to be reclaimed under Government supervision for use in essential wartime supplies.

Rubber, as you are aware," continued Mr. Beasley, "is one of the basic materials required for modern warfare. Japanese action in the Pacific has resulted in a very large part of the world's raw rubber resources falling into enemy hands. In this message, I see no need to stress the serious implications of this position. My intention is to explain to you the means by which you can help the Government to alleviate it.

Material to be collected includes all types of scrap rubber, and practically all articles containing rubber, with the exception of rubber floor coverings, which contain too large a proportion of reclaimed rubber to be suitable for further use. Automobile and cycle tyres, tubes and rust bands; household articles, such as rubber mats, garden hose, hot water pipes, etc.—all these can be reclaimed for wartime use. Factory scrap, too, is needed.

As in the case of the recent drive for scrap aluminium, all municipalities and shires in Australia have been invited to set up receiving depots. Councils have been asked wherever possible to make house to house collections. Therefore, if you have scrap rubber in your home, in your shop, or in your works, ask your Council without delay how and when it should be handed over. If this can be done without waste of petrol you can help by delivering more bulky articles, such as tyres, yourself. The Councils' collections will be supplemented by various voluntary efforts. For example, on Saturday, July 25, the Boy Scout Organisation throughout the Commonwealth will commence a house to house canvass under the direct authority of local councils. Under similar authority other organisations will assist in collections.

"The immediate task before you is to go through your garages, sheds, or stores and have your scrap rubber ready for collection. You should hand over your scrap in the form in which you find it. Do not attempt to cut it up with a view to facilitating transport. This will cause additional work at the receiving depot when the scrap is sorted. If you are in any doubt whether any of your rubber scrap is serviceable, it is better to send it in than to hold it back.

The capacity of reclamation plants in the Commonwealth is very considerable. It can, and will, be extended as necessary. Bear in mind that there is virtually no limit to the tonnage of this scrap which can be converted to war purposes. The need is urgent. Lose no time in acting. Search out your scrap and get in touch with your local authority without delay. All contributions—great and small—will help to meet our requirement of rubber."

\* \* \*

The Victorian Railways are particularly large users of rubber in the form of Westinghouse Brake hose pipes, air, feed and washout hoses, rubberised transmission belting, tyres and tubes, washers, joints, gaskets, gloves, boots and many other items.

Railway Storehouses throughout Victoria will be used as collecting bases and all discarded rubber goods will be forwarded to the Reclamation Depot, Spotswood, where efficient sorting, handling, etc., will ensure scrap rubber being disposed of through the proper channels, in the quickest possible time.

It is up to each and every one of us to do our utmost to prolong the life of all rubber goods by watchful, intelligent use of every article in our care manufactured wholly or partly from rubber.

Play your part in making the salvaging campaign a real success.

## Gallant Deed At Tobruk Wins Military Medal

**W**ARM congratulations to Corporal Maurice Brown Jenkins on winning the Military Medal for a particular act of gallantry at Tobruk in December last.

Corporal Jenkins secured his decoration for his bravery in rescuing an enemy prisoner in Tobruk Harbour. The ship on which he was stationed contained prisoners and was attacked by enemy aircraft. During the onslaught the vessel sank rapidly to the bottom.

Subsequently Corporal Jenkins descended into the forward hold to remove a beam which was pinning down a wounded prisoner.

He then passed a rope around the injured man and directed the operations in hauling the prisoner to the deck, giving an example of courage, resolution and coolness which is officially described as "an inspiration to others."

Corporal Jenkins, who was a Lad Porter at Elsternwick before his enlistment, is a member of the Australian Army Medical Corps. He has been on active service since December, 1939.



Corporal M. B. Jenkins

## SERVICE

**F**ROM "The Ballarat Courier" of July 22:

"The opinion of business men who have extensive dealings with the railways, and who know the difficulties that have to be overcome by every branch of the railway service, consider that a magnificent job is being done. Here and there, one business man stated, growers are encountered who find fault when things do not go according to plan or to time-tables, and who confess to a grievance, largely imaginary, if trains are cancelled at the last minute, but the business man declared that the railway men at Ballarat are entitled to the greatest praise for the work they are accomplishing, and for the manner in which they overcome the difficulties that at first sight seem almost insurmountable."

# Problem Of Transport For War Workers

At intervals requests are made by war workers—sometimes through the daily press—for more convenient rail transport between their jobs and their homes. Every case is fully investigated, but in many instances an alteration to a service to provide a better timetable for a limited number of individuals would mean such long waits for a larger number of travellers that no suitable amendment can be made.

Two important factors in the constantly recurring problem are the various shifts worked over the 24 hours and the various distances that many persons live from their jobs. Whilst house shortage still confines some war workers to the outer suburbs, an increasing number have been able to secure homes nearer in, with consequent improvement to their transport for both day and night work.

The difficulties that confront the Department, however, are fully demonstrated in a recent investigation into the services provided for workers travelling to Richmond, Melbourne and beyond from five different stations on one outer suburban line.

The following illuminating figures were obtained from the rail travellers themselves who represent a majority of war workers from each of the five stations:

No. of Workers from each station	No. of Localities of employment	No. of different shifts	Worked in period of—
8	6	10	2 weeks
22	8	34	3 weeks
3	1	3	3 weeks
20	7	18	3 weeks
13	6	6	1 week

Here is the case of 66 war workers travelling from five different stations on the same route to jobs in as many as 15 different localities and working over as many as 34 different shifts, and all naturally desiring convenient transport.

An examination of the requirements of the workers residing in one locality disclosed that they travelled from Monday to Friday inclusive to the following stations, viz., Melbourne, Footscray, West Footscray, Montague, Richmond, Newport, Macaulay and Williamstown. Their morning shifts commenced at 7.0, 7.10, 7.30, 7.35, 7.45 and 8.0 a.m., and finished at 3.0, 3.30, 4.48, 4.50, 5.0, 5.15, 5.30, 6.5, 7.0, 8.30, 9.0 9.10 and 10.20 p.m. The night shifts commenced at 8.0, 8.15, 9.0, 10.42, 11.0, 11.15, 11.30 p.m., finishing at five different times between 6.0 a.m. and 8.45 a.m.

Obviously no railway system could provide immediate travel for such a variety of shift workers to suburbs to which the general traffic does not warrant a very frequent service, and in the majority of those cases the concerned are able to secure a reasonably convenient service to and from

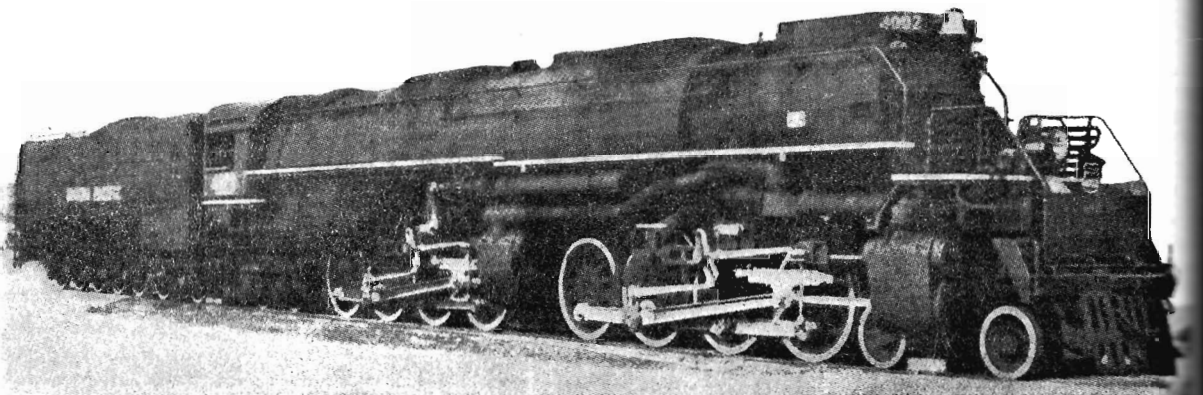
## V.R. MEN IN CASUALTY LISTS

The following V.R. men are reported "missing"—  
 Clk. J. Arthur; Storeman R. H. Davies; A.S.M. T. V. Dwyer; A.S.M. W. A. Hailes; Night Officer J. H. Walsh; A.S.M. H. W. L. Woodgate.

work. It is inevitable, however, that some long waits must occur, such as a workman finishing his shift at Williamstown at, say, 9.0 p.m. who cannot board a return train from Melbourne to Lower Fernside Gully until 11.32 p.m.

The many alterations that have been made in train services in the last year, so, however, show that the Department is fully alive to the changing demands for rail transport and the importance of meeting the requirements of the patrons as far as reasonably practical.

## AMERICAN RAILROAD CO'S NEW "BABY"



ABOVE is a photograph of America's monster freight locomotive, the single expansion articulated 4.8.8.4, built by the American Locomotive Co. for the Union Pacific Co. for long heavy hauls at high speed over the Wahsatch Mountains between Ogden, Utah, and Green River, Wyoming. The engine is designed for a speed of 80 m.p.h. and to produce "maximum power output continuously at 70 m.p.h." This locomotive is more than double the weight of Victoria's "H" class locomotive, the heaviest in service in Australia. The following comparisons between the "H" and the 4.8.8.4 will enable Victorian railwaymen to realise the size of the American railroads' new "baby."

	Victorian "H" 4-8-4	Union Pacific 4-8-8.4	Victorian "H" 4-8-4	Union Pacific 4-8-8.4
<b>WEIGHT IN WORKING ORDER (Tons and Cwt.)</b>				
Engine ... ..	146-10	340-4	220	300
Tender ... ..	113-11	194-1	68	150
Total Weight ... ..	260-1	534-5	55,000	135,375
Adhesive Weight ... ..	92-12	241-1	3	4
<b>BOILER HEATING SURFACE (Sq. Ft.)</b>				
Tubes and flues ... ..	3,613	5,185	21.5	23
Firebox, syphons and arch tubes ... ..	367	704	28	32
Total evaporation ... ..	3,980	5,889	5-6	5-6
Superheater ... ..	800	2,466	82-1	117-1
<b>TENDER CAPACITY</b>				
Water (gallons) ... ..	...	...	14,000	25,000
Coal (long tons) ... ..	...	...	9	25

## MORE VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED FOR PLANE SPOTTING

FROM the Commissioners :

The response in some quarters to the previous call for volunteers for plane spotting duty has been somewhat disappointing.

Plane spotting is recognised as necessary by all classes of workers in England and must be introduced here for the same reasons, namely, to give timely warning of the approach of hostile aircraft, as well as to maintain continuity of important activities associated with our transport system without unnecessary interruption due to "false alarms."

The spotters will take post immediately on receipt of the intimation that an air raid may occur and be ready to give their fellow workers the warning to proceed to shelter when such action is warranted.

As the system can function properly only if the staff is confident that the spotter knows his job, an assurance is given that no volunteer will be asked to serve without suitable instruction. Qualified instructors are expected to be available shortly for a special course to be held at a time and place to be decided later and the time necessarily spent in training will be paid for as overtime, but will not be taken into account for the calculation of gratuities.

### Equivalent Of Work

Time spent on actual spotting during periods of air raid warning will count as time worked.

Returned soldiers, and younger men who have keen eyesight and hearing are required to form teams of two or more men for each post, but several teams are required to maintain the service at the larger centres.

The services of those who have made a hobby of aeroplanes and who already have a knowledge of appearance of some of the types of war machines which may be accounted here, are particularly required to form a nucleus for the development of a successful organisation.

If you are willing to assist in this function, and thereby help in maintaining that spirit of resistance which is designed to destroy, inform your Officer in Charge or your Air Raid Warden at once.

Attendance at the initial courses of instruction will be restricted to Metropolitan areas located within the Metropolitan and Suburban areas, but special arrangements will be made later for instruction to be given locally at the main country centres.

## Help To Keep That Door Closed!



### Join Your War Savings Group Today!

## SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS DO THEIR BIT

**T**HOUGH little has been published in Australia regarding the war effort of the South African Railways the record is impressive. Of 70,000 employes of European origin, approximately 10 per cent. are in khaki. The majority of the remaining employes assisted by hundreds of women are largely concentrated on war activity, including the production of munitions. In order to provide the maximum activity for munitions much repair and replacement work in the Railways has been postponed.

Twenty workshops scattered throughout the Union are devoting the greater part of their time to this work. The extent of the activity may be gauged from the fact that in one workshop more than a hundred different items of war are produced ranging from nuts and rifle clips to the turrets of armoured cars.

Another depot is engaged in the manufacture of armoured cars. From still another depot aeroplane hangars are emerging in readily transportable sections, whilst railwaymen have also been engaged in making 100-foot wireless masts.

Electric generators complete with switchgear for field hospitals, gun-sights, bombs, shell-boxes, mortars, rifle butts, stereoscopes for map reading and other instruments for aerial survey, specially designed wooden rafts packed with kapok, and selected parts for ships' engines, ships' guns

and wireless—those are only some of the contributions to the Empire's war needs by the South African Railways.

Considerable ingenuity and resource have been displayed in meeting the requirements of the armoured forces. Take the case of compasses. The compass "jewel," usually a synthetic sapphire exclusively produced in France, could not be supplied, but an effective substitute was discovered in the hard stone jasper from the Kimberley mines.

## V.R. ENLISTMENTS

A.I.F.

CLK. R. Davidson; Car Bldr. E. M. Galvin; App. F. & T. E. J. Lear.

R.A.A.F.

APP. C'smith V. G. Allen; Clk. J. Bewsher; Clk. K. J. Bryce; App. C'smith K. A. Cameron; Clk. W. S. P. Cassidy; Car Patr. A. T. Coward; Sup. Lad Labr. G. F. Davey; Rpr. W. J. Delahunty; Motor Dvr. J. M. Dixon; Clk. G. L. Don; Lbr. P. A. Doody; Clk. J. Guest; Clk. E. W. P. Jones; Clk. W. G. Leed; Clk. T. H. McGlade; Jr. Clk. W. K. Murphy; Jr. Clk. V. A. Ryan; Lad. Lbr. W. Tee; Sup. Lad Engine Clr. W. G. Timms; Jr. Clk. T. H. Watt; Clk. F. J. Wright.

R.A.N.

CLk. G. W. Batten; Lad Engine Clr. H. P. Cassidy; Skd. Lbr. T. D. Garnaut; B'k'stall Att. A. Irwin; Blr. Mkr. G. T. Moss; Jr. Clk. K. R. F. Neville; Jr. Clk. W. F. Prowse; Clk. H. S. Seben; Blr. Mkr. C. J. Smith; Blr. Mkr. H. R. Stevenson.

W.A.A.A.F.

MISS M. Davies (Relief Gatekeeper).

## Here's A Chance To Help The V.R. Patriotic Fund

**T**HE Wireless Club of the V.R.I., which conducted a raffle and dance last year assisting the V.R. Patriotic Fund to the tune of £40, is holding another raffle and dance with the same commendable purpose this year. The dance occurs on Saturday, August 15, and the cost of a ticket is only 2/2d., which buys an excellent evening of dancing and refreshments.

\* \* \*

The raffle will be drawn on August 25. Tickets are only 3d. each, and first, second and third prizes are orders on city firms. All railwaymen are urged to help the good cause of the V.R. Patriotic Fund by purchasing a dance ticket and/or securing an interest in the raffle.

Which reminds us to mention again the V.R. Patriotic Fund raffle to be drawn on August 5. Prizes in this larger raffle are open orders to the value of £35, £10 and £5, with ten consolation prizes of £1. Tickets are 3d. each and every purchaser of a book of five tickets secures one ticket for nothing. Here is another opportunity to help a great cause!

\* \* \*

The establishment of further auxiliaries in the metropolitan area is gratifying evidence of increased interest in V.R. Patriotic activities. Auxiliaries have recently been formed at the Dudley Street Shelter Sheds, the Car and Wagon Workshops, North Melbourne, Laurens Street Depot, and the V.R. Printing Works.

The formation of these auxiliaries is due to the excellent groundwork of various enthusiasts among whom may be mentioned Mr. J. Kelly (Dudley Street), Mr. J. Conway (Laurens Street), Mr. J. J. Brown (Car and Wagon Shops), and Mr. Milton Gray, Manager of the Printing Works.

The Dudley Street Shelter Shed auxiliary started off well by receiving the full proceeds from a dance on July 27 by the Train Lighting Social Club. It was an excellent evening.

\* \* \*

As the result of an intensive campaign in various Branches of the Department, the number of subscribers in the V.R. Patriotic Fund has greatly increased. The apex of the effort was a personal appeal by letter from the Comptroller of Accounts (Mr. L. J. Williamson) to all non-subscribers in his Branch. The response was striking. Over 90 per cent. of Mr. Williamson's Branch are now subscribers—an achievement which earns the warmest congratulations.

## WAR EQUIPMENT TRAINS READY

**L**YING unnoticed at certain locations on the system are eight "war equipment trains," all ready for instant service in the event of any section of a railway being damaged by air attack.

Each train consists of a certain number of trucks, of which one is loaded with rail points, crossings and sleepers. Two others are filled with ashes. Another carries pile-driving plant, scaffolding and bearers. Two more contain piles, bridge materials, tools and other necessary equipment, whilst a water truck is included for the extinction of any fire at any place where water in quantity is not otherwise obtainable.

A comprehensive plan has been completed for the immediate mobilisation of the necessary staff, including first aid men if required, and for securing the requisite motive power.

The whole scheme owes much to the experience in England where emergency repair of tracks, bridges, etc., after German "blitzes" was in many instances, amazingly rapid.

With its eight trains lying in readiness, the Department feels confident of dealing with most types of interruption to service with similar speed and efficiency.

## Interesting Old V.R. Time Table

**S**OME idea of the growth of the Victorian Railways over the years may be gauged from a timetable issued for the use of employes in June, 1864.

This timetable, which is a 4-page folder 8 ins. deep by 4½ ins. wide, covers railways from Melbourne to Ballarat via Geelong, Melbourne to Sandhurst (Bendigo) and two suburban services, Melbourne to Williamstown and Melbourne to Essendon.

The timetable reveals that there were seven trains each way on week days between the young city and Ballarat and Sandhurst, and two trains each way on Sundays. The week day trains comprised three passenger, three goods and one mixed train, whilst the two Sunday trains carried passengers only.

On the Melbourne-Essendon line there were eleven trains each way on week days and three on Sundays, the last train leaving Melbourne for Essendon at 6.30 p.m.

On the Williamstown line, Newport was then known as "Geelong Junction," but heavier traffic demanded the provision of fourteen trains on week days and five on Sundays.

The first week-day train left Melbourne for Williamstown at 6.30 a.m. and the last at midnight, whilst the first train on Sundays left at 10.25 a.m. and the last at 9.0 p.m.

## VETERAN EX-V.R. MAN PASSES ON

**R**AILWAYMEN will deeply regret the death last month of Mr. J. J. Gilchrist, a former station and general service engineer of the Way and Works Department. He joined the service in 1884 as a junior clerk and draughtsman in the Way and Works Section and remained in that Branch until his retirement in 1933, achieving over that long period of years a rare record for integrity, energy and personal charm.

He was associated with some of the activities, one of them the regrading and duplication of the tracks between South Yarra and Caulfield. Just before his retirement he was on leave for a period to the Tasmanian Government for the purpose of preparing a design for the re-arrangement of the Launceston railway station.

Privately the late Mr. Gilchrist was a big figure in the Methodist Church. He was a Secretary of the Balwyn Church Trust, a Superintendent of the Sunday School and lay Treasurer of the Methodist Ladies' College. The esteem in which he was held by his Church authorities was shown by the many warm tributes paid to his work. Mr. Gilchrist leaves behind a widow, two daughters, and a son who is on active service with the A.I.F.

## Tocumwal Under Control Of N.S.W. Railways

**E**VER since the Tocumwal (N.S.W.) railway station was established in 1908 it has been under the control of the Victorian Railways. Under a new arrangement, however, the station has been taken over temporarily by the N.S.W. Railways, and this means that Tocumwal will lose the services of the Victorian S.M. James P. Birch, who has been in charge since 1935.

Mr. Birch's services are being utilised at Murchison East until such time as a vacancy arises in his class.

With the exception of the Yarram Porter W. Hall, who remains at Tocumwal to run Victorian trains, all other Victorian transportation men have been removed from Tocumwal. Work Ganger D. Cullen and other members of the Chief Civil Engineer's staff still remain to complete various jobs, whilst the Victorian locomotive staff at this station has been increased by the addition of Chargeman H. Walker, who controls Victorian locomotive movements and activities.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens Street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers, The Victorian Railways Commissioners.



# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

September, 1942

Issue No. 144

## PRODUCER GAS VEHICLES PROVE THEIR VALUE

SINCE the first experimental conversion in November, 1939, 65 motor vehicles comprising 35 departmental trucks, 14 rail motors, 5 departmental cars and 11 private cars, have been equipped with gas producers, and 13 additional vehicles, comprising trucks and vans of various tonnages, are about to be converted.

Much experience has been gained in the operation of these gas producer units, and a progressive improvement in their performances has been achieved. Over recent months the petrol consumptions of the converted fleet have reached the satisfactory averages of 50 miles per gallon for trucks and 80 miles per gallon for cars and rail motors.

The converted trucks are principally of 3 to 5 tons capacity, and their performance represents a saving of approximately 80 per cent. of the amount of petrol which normally would have been used. That is a good performance when it is remembered that all of them are employed exclusively in the metropolitan area services which, owing to the frequent stops and low daily mileages of from 15 to 35, are not favourable for gas producer operation.

For the converted rail motors the saving is naturally greater and represents nearly 90 per cent. of the amount of petrol which would have been used, while for the departmental cars the saving has been about 80 per cent.

As a safeguard against the possible exhaustion of petrol supplies for civil purposes, the Department is experimenting with electrically and manually operated blowers to eliminate entirely the need for petrol on gas producer vehicles.

While electric blowers are the more convenient, they make an excessive demand on the batteries if operated frequently, and the use of hand blowers, at present, appears to be more desirable. One of them was fitted to a 4-ton truck operating in the metropolis, and as a result the vehicle has used only 9½ gallons of petrol for an aggregate run of 1,240 miles for 8 weeks and could be operated without petrol in an emergency.

It is noteworthy that the amount of engine wear on gas producer vehicles has been no greater than that experienced with engines operating on petrol.

The Department is also co-operating actively in experiments to determine the value of low-grade wheat as a gas producer fuel. As the demand for petrol substitutes is growing every day, the results of these trials will be watched with interest.

## V.R. Hero Honoured

AT a simple little ceremony at State Government House on Monday morning, August 31, Acting Fireman John H. A. Alford was presented by his Excellency the State Governor, Sir Winston Dugan, with the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society.



Acting Fireman  
John H. A. Alford

This modest young railwayman, who was one of a number of gallant people who were honored on this occasion, earned his recognition for his bravery and resourcefulness when acting as observer on the 8.12 a.m. electric goods train running from Lilydale to Melbourne on June 9 last.

In circumstances already detailed in "The News Letter" he and the driver (A. T. Stevens) noticed when the train had topped the grade near Blackburn that a small toddler, Geoffrey Franz, was standing dangerously close to the outside "up" rail.

Instantly realising that the train could not be pulled up in time to avoid running over the child, Mr. Alford crept out on to the front of the electric locomotive, and precariously holding on to the hand rail, he was able to project his foot out over the front wheel and push the child out of danger.

In performing this act of humanity Mr. Alford ran a great personal risk.

## LONG SIGHTED BRIDGE SCHEME

THE war was an important factor in the departmental decision to reconstruct in steel and concrete certain timber bridges, the condition of which makes rebuilding or extensive repairs necessary.

Considerations affecting each decision are the increasing cost of timber and greater difficulty in obtaining beams and piles of good quality timber. Another impressive factor is that the cost of steel beams of equal strength to timber beams is about equal to the cost of timber beams in the case of 15 feet spans and less than the cost of timber beams for spans of 20 feet or more.

It is true that the initial cost of concrete piers is greater than timber piers, but as a steel and concrete bridge may be built with longer spans than a timber bridge, has a far longer serviceable life and needs less maintenance than a wooden structure, the ultimate cost of steel and concrete is cheaper than timber.

### V.R. MEN IN CASUALTY LISTS.

The following V.R. men are reported missing: Lbr. W. H. Jackson; Skd. Lbr. M. A. Warner.

Timber has also the disadvantage of being subject to fire risk particularly in certain areas, and the closest system of inspection is necessary to detect damage due to decay or termites. Furthermore, there is the important aspect, that the maintenance of timber structures, particularly on busy lines, involves greater interference with train running when they are under repair.

In connection with the reconstruction work the opportunity is being taken to rebuild to a standard capable of carrying heavier locomotives where the trend of traffic is likely to justify this course in the future.

At the moment bridge reconstruction is being carried on by special staffs, equipped with more modern field appliances, and not the least important aspect of this work is that the staffs are engaged in areas where they will be most valuable in the event of an emergency.

## RAFFLE EARNS OVER £500 FOR V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND

THE raffle drawn in aid of the V.R. Patriotic Fund on August 5 was responsible for a new peak in public response. A record number of tickets were sold, with the result that the V.R. Patriotic Fund will benefit by over £500. As each ticket only cost 3d. (a book of 5 tickets costing 1/-) the thousands of tickets that were distributed among railwaymen can well be imagined.

Discussing the success of the raffle, the results of which have already been widely advertised, Mr. W. E. Elliott, Secretary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund, said that it was almost a commonplace to send out anything from 100 to 200 books for sale and receive the butts back in good time, with, in several instances, demands for more books. All sections of the department contributed handsomely.

Particular mention must be made of the excellent work of the Auxiliaries, both metropolitan and country, all of which disposed of large quantities of tickets. The General Committee wishes to thank all who helped to make the effort a success, especially the many Supervisors who assisted in the distribution of tickets and return of butts, the results in some cases being the complete sale of all books provided.

\* \* \* \*

The Committee of the V.R. Patriotic Fund has arranged with Preston Motors to provide the chassis for two mobile canteens, one to be presented by the Committee and the other by the Newport Workshops Auxiliary. When completed and fully equipped, these canteens are expected to cost anything from £1000 to £1250 each, and will provide another striking advertisement for the patriotic efforts of railwaymen.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. T. W. McDonough, President of the Newport Workshops Auxiliary, has presented his first annual report for the twelve months ending June 30. He says that the Committee has raised approximately £1300 by means of raffles, dances, payroll contributions, etc., and has spent £500 on a fully equipped ambulance, £200 on medical equipment for Heidelberg Hospital, whilst also providing knitted goods to the Comforts Fund and canteen orders for workshops employees overseas.

As mentioned above, the Committee is also arranging for the construction of a canteen and "has adopted ten prisoners of war at a cost of approximately £520 a year." "To meet this obligation and to maintain other donations on the same scale is a pretty big job," continues Mr. McDonough, "and we appeal to you now not to let us down but to show your confidence in the committee by your continued support."

The Ararat Auxiliary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund, which, as mentioned in the June "News letter," was providing refreshments on the station platform for soldier's passing through outside refreshment hours, has been giving noble service.

An enthusiastic little band of twelve ladies is duly notified when soldiers may be expected, and turns out at all hours of the day and night to take the platform with piles of scones, buns and sandwiches and jugs of hot tea or coffee. They use a building on the Station platform, made available by the Commissioners, and equipped by the Auxiliary with heating appliances, etc. Ararat is cold in the winter and the nip of 2 a.m. is something to remember, but regardless of the time and weather these patriots bring a smile along with the food, and to soldiers passing through the kindness and friendliness of it all is splendid.

One American soldier, confronted by the free and unexpected refreshment lately said, "This is a wonderful country. Thanks a lot."

Some idea of the service is shown by the fact that in four days the ladies served refreshments to 1370 soldiers, mostly around the midnight hours.

## V.R. ENLISTMENTS

A.I.F.

CLK. W. Langan; Lad Lbr. E. W. Newton; Car & Wagon Bdr. W. G. Oxley; Car Painter W. H. Page.

R.A.A.F.

Clk. H. K. Adams; Rpr. R. G. A. Blabey; Clk. J. Brew; Jnr. Clk. K. W. Bryant; App. F. & T. G. T. Carlsson; Scry.-Man E. J. Gummow; Clk. F. H. Hill; Mchast. R. A. J. Howe; Clk. M. J. Hughson; Comp. C. W. Jensen; Clk. J. F. Jordan; Comp. P. K. Ludgate; Crpnt. H. M. McNamara; App. F. & T. R. G. McKennish; Lbr. W. Mitchell; Asst. Mgr. L. G. Randle; Rpr. J. N. Sullivan; Rpr. A. R. Tobias; Clk. F. G. Walbran; App. F. & T. J. T. Watt; App. F. & T. O. O. Westrup; Jnr. Clk. A. R. Woodward; Lad Lbr. W. A. Zimmer.

R.A.N.

Senr. B'stall Att. R. N. Button; Msgr. N. L. Barchan; Jnr. Clk. F. J. Hyrons; Clk. A. Keele; Jnr. Clk. K. D. Ryland.

W.A.A.A.F.

Miss M. Doig (Store Attendant).

A.W.A.S.

Miss B. Pleydell (Office Asst); Miss H. Sullivan (Office Asst).

## Over 4,000 V.R. Men On War Activities

OVER 2,400 railwaymen are serving in the Army, Navy and Air Force. More than 300 are on loan to the Commonwealth Government, engaged on various war activities and 1600 are exclusively employed in the production of munitions.

Those 4300 men represent approximately 17 per cent. of the total railway staff. The absence of that large number from the Service is being keenly felt because of the great increase in railway business. The effects will be further accentuated during the coming months when enormous quantities of live stock, wheat and war material will have to be removed.

The significance of the position is revealed by the fact that some time ago the Commissioners were compelled to apply for the release from war service of 270 men comprising 100 enginemmen, 30 transportation employees and 200 experienced laborers for godshed and workshops. That is the minimum required to enable the department to give effective service.

## TALKING OF SLEEPERS...

EVERY now and then somebody asks why old sleepers cannot be sold for firewood. The answer is that when more than 300,000 sleepers are renewed every year, all old sleepers serve a further useful purpose in relieving a portion of the department's needs in other directions.

In the past many old sleepers were sold to the public at prices ranging from 3d. to 6d. each. They were, however, only disposed of in districts where they were released. When it is remembered that old sleepers normally weigh a ton, this was cheap fuel.

During the coal strike in 1924 when coal stocks had to be rigidly conserved, all old sleepers were used as fuel for locomotives. At the present time war circumstances—particularly the shortage of timber cutters—have greatly restricted the use of sleeper renewals.

As the supply of new sleepers is seriously reduced, the track staff is concentrating on getting the utmost life out of every sleeper, consistent with safety. The life of a sleeper ranges from 12 to 30 years, according to the timber and the district of origin, but each one is being closely watched and removed from the track only when it has lived its life.

Even then, of course, the retired sleeper is not condemned to be burned. It may start a new, but less conspicuous, career as a fence post, a lining for a drainage floor for pig shelters, coal storage or revetment of air raid shelters.

## STAGGERING HOURS OF LONDON WORKERS

THOUGH peak travel in London provided transport problems long before the present war began, it was not until recently that any widespread attempt was made to stagger the working hours of the thousands of workers concerned.

With co-operation and good will inspired by the Government, some measure of success has been achieved. A typical example is the area covered by the London and South Eastern Regional Board. Under the direction of the Board 35 separate groups were formed, each composed of factory inspectors, welfare officers and representatives of the management and work-people of about 1000 different firms. Each group had to consider the transport position in its area and was asked to vary working hours in order to spread the traffic.

In every case the proposal regarding new working hours was submitted to the employees, and whilst it was admitted that earlier starting times in London winter would involve individual hardships it was almost unanimously agreed that the alterations would provide for the great majority, by waiting, less crowding and quicker journeys.

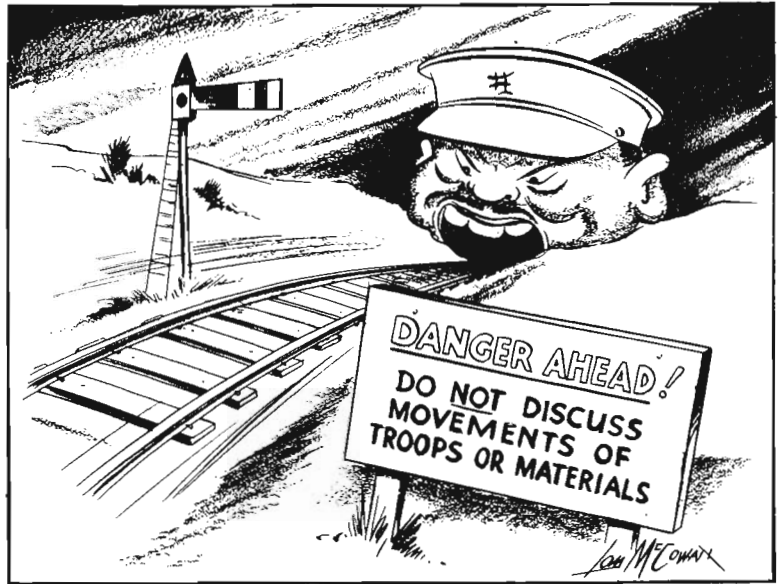
### Starting Times Spread

There are now over 22 "staggered hours" schemes in operation in the area of the London and South Eastern Regional Board. Instead of the old practice of "clocking in" at the one time, starting times are spread over a period of 90 minutes without, of course, any addition to the length of the shift, but with substantial benefit to the various forms of transport concerned.

In one East London group, for example, although no change has been made in the number commencing work at 7 a.m., 3000 now start at 7.15 a.m.—an entirely new time in the area. Also 2514, instead of 5514, commence at 7.30; 3556 in place of 4556 at 7.45 a.m.; and 2067 in place of 3067 at 8 a.m. Whilst no alteration has been made in the 8.30 starting time of 900 employees, 870 have seen the virtue of beginning the working day at 8.15 a.m.

These results have proved so beneficial that the London Chamber of Commerce has suggested staggering the hours of all large firms and blocks of offices "where more than 500 are employed" in the central metropolitan areas of the "City," Holborn and Westminster.

## Stop! The Jaws Of Death Are Ahead



## EX. V.R. CLERK'S BRILLIANT AIR ACHIEVEMENTS IN EUROPE

**PILOT** Officer A. J. Rayment, recently awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal for gallantry in action, is another ex-V.R. man who has crowded a lot of excitement and dangerous duty into various air raids over Europe. He was in the famous raid on the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prince Eugen in the English Channel, and took part in attacks on Essen, Lubeck, Danzig and the Renault Works in Paris.

In a letter to a relative he makes the following graphic reference to the attack on the Renault works:—

"We took off into a leaden sky and at first did not expect to be able to see much of the target, owing to low visibility and occasional heavy rain and sleet. On the way down to the English Coast, the sky broke up more and the visibility increased to fair . . . . After leaving the French coast where we positioned ourselves, the moon went behind some convenient clouds and gave us a black covering all the way to the target.

"Well, we were about 5 minutes away from Paris, when three flares lit up ahead of us—someone had got there first. We did several runs over the target, so Alan could pick out the choicest spots and watched flares light up as they dropped from other aircraft arriving. By the time we were due to attack the sky was one mass of flares and Paris was lit up like day. How on earth there were no collisions I don't know, because aircraft were everywhere. Wellingtons, Hampdens and 4-engined jobs shot pass from all directions and

the old bus kept jumping about in the slipstreams of other air-craft. We went down to 2,000 feet and started our run-in, picking our way between flares.

"Bombs from other aircraft were bursting everywhere and buildings and materials were thrown up into the air. It was lovely. Alan gave a few corrections and then after a short silence—sang out 'bombs gone'. Looking down, I saw all six go off and also felt the explosions which shook the old bus. We straddled a block of buildings with the bombs and blew them to fragments. The last bomb in particular—went into a large two-storey building, lit the inside up just as though the lights had been turned on and then slowly, it seemed, the whole thing lifted off the ground and collapsed in smoke and fire.

"We closed the bomb-doors and climbed up to watch the fun. A big gasometer which got a direct hit burst with an explosion that could be heard in the aircraft and a nearby 65,000 K.W. Power-plant went up with blue flashes as the current shorted through the works. Unfortunately, our petrol was getting short so we had to make for home, but we had the satisfaction of leaving the place blasted to the ground.

As we reached the French coast again I looked back and could see the fires and flares still burning. We went up through the Straits of Dover in broad moonlight so that the white cliffs and Calais were perfectly visible."

## THESE V. R. SOLDIERS ENJOY "THE NEWSLETTER"

RAILWAYMEN serving abroad continue to record their thanks for the regular receipt of "The Newsletter." Here is an extract from a letter from Warrant Officer V. C. Rose, who, before enlistment, was a Clerk in the District Superintendent's Office, Geelong.

"Am dropping you a line to thank you for the issue of the Victorian Railways 'News Letter' which bobs up for me at all sorts of odd times. Some numbers I have recently received have chased me all the way to here from the Middle East.

"Where I am now, of course, I cannot tell, but sufficient to say the "Mice" dwell here and there is practically a daily visit from Togo. However, believe me, he does not get it all his own way and is most shy of a high flyer. There are a number of Railway boys in this unit—Johnnie Old, C. T. Humphries, G. M. Landrigan—and they would like to be remembered to their Railway friends."

Warrant Officer Rose says in conclusion that he would be glad to hear from any old railway friends. His address is: W.O. II. V. C. Rose, 2/4 Aust. Hy. A.A. Bty., A.I.F.

Another railwayman who is grateful for the receipt of the Railway journal is Private A. K. Lobley, previously a booking porter at Langi Logan.

"I was quite interested to read," he says, "of the V.R.'s latest contribution to the war effort, viz., the making of surgical instruments. Belonging to a hospital unit I appreciate the importance and technical skill required of such an undertaking."

## A Little Wayside Tale

THE following anecdote comes from a railway outside Victoria.

Three men were waiting on a station for a train. As it was delayed they made several journeys to the bar and periodically asked the S.M. when the train was likely to arrive. When it did arrive the trio were feeling rather bright and decided that they would have one last round.

Just as they were finishing, the station bell rang and the Guard blew his whistle. As the train started off two of the party scrambled through the last door of the last carriage leaving the third member on the platform yelling with laughter.

Approaching him the S.M. said in a puzzled tone: "Here, you have been pestering me for an hour as to when the train was leaving and now your two friends have caught it and you are left behind."

"Sh-sh, not a word to anyone," came the reply: "Those two idiots came to see me off!"

## Mr. Randle's Big Promotion

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. P. A. Randles, who has been appointed by the Government permanent Chairman of the State Wages Boards. Mr. Randles, who will now relinquish his post as State Secretary of the Australian Railways Union, can look back on over 20 years' active work in Railway Union activities.

After some years as organizer, he became State Secretary of the Union in 1938, succeeding the late F. W. Sear. A competent, popular worker, he has served as Vice President and President of the Trades Hall Council, and Vice President of the Australian Labor Party.

His appointment by the Government is a tribute to his wide industrial knowledge and long familiarity with Arbitration Court and Wages Board methods.

## Feeding The Soldiers

THE number of meals served to soldiers by the Refreshment Services Branch during 1941/42 provide formidable statistics. No fewer than 311,433 meals were supplied in that period to troops in transit by special train.

Of that total 204,892 meals were eaten in the country and the remaining 106,251 at metropolitan stations.

The record for one week only was 35,000 meals, and one station "somewhere in Victoria," which normally has not the biggest demand for refreshments, served the highest number during the year, viz., 39,000 meals.

The V.R. meat pie, which has always been a succulent item in the menu of the hurried traveller, including the soldier, has also become increasingly popular. This is revealed by the fact that in the twelve months ending June 30 last the department disposed of over one million and a half—actually 1,286,668 dozen.

That represents the soaring peak of pie production in the history of the railways. The nearest pinnacle is 87,845 dozen which were consumed in the year 1940/41.

## SERVICE

IN a letter to the Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. V. J. Webb, General Sales Manager of the Associated British Empire Films Pty. Ltd., 251a Pitt Street, Sydney, records his appreciation of Victorian railway service.

"From time to time Officers of your Department have been particularly courteous and helpful by co-operating with our Melbourne Branch Manager, Mr. Hilyard, in regard to the urgent despatch of Interstate consignments. I desire to bring this matter under your notice, and to express to you our sincere appreciation, and the writer's personal thanks coupled with those of our Melbourne Branch Manager, Mr. Hilyard, for the continued courtesy and service that has always been exemplified by your Officers.

## THREE VETERAN EX-RAILWAYMEN PASS ON

THE "News Letter" records with deep regret the death on July 30 of Mr. James Conlan, a veteran ex-railwayman who was noted for his attention to the job and rigid accuracy in detail during the whole of his 48 years in the department.

Mr. Conlan, who was born in Ireland and was a native of County Meath, joined the railways as a Clerk in 1881. Ten years later he became Stationmaster and at relatively short intervals he was promoted to Supervisor of Weighing, Goods Superintendent and Metropolitan Superintendent, reaching the post of Superintendent of Goods Train Service in 1919.

Subsequently he became Acting General Superintendent and afterwards Outdoor Superintendent from which he retired in 1926.

A genial, kindly man, to whom training was both his lifework and recreation, Mr. Conlan had hosts of friends. He was widely and respectfully known throughout the railway service.

\* \* \* \*

THE death, at the age of 59, of Mr. A. P. A. Burdeu on August 5 removed an esteemed railwayman who had won a unique reputation in private life for his study and care of aborigines. He was president of the Australian Aborigines League and Secretary of the Aborigines Uplift Society, exhibiting in both functions a steady devotion to a cause which covers a multitude of services to the natives.

Another of his activities, continuing up to the time of his retirement, was the Federation of the Salaried Officers of the Railways Commissioners (Victorian Division) in which he had served as president for nine years.

He joined the Accounts branch of the Dept. as a clerk in 1897, transferred to the Rolling Stock nine years later and occupying important posts at Stawell, Maryborough, Ballarat and Melbourne. When he retired in 1939 owing to ill health, he was senior clerk in the Train Running Room.

\* \* \* \*

ANOTHER old railway identity, who passed away on August 6, was Mr. Patrick Thomas Meares, ex-Staff Officer of the Transportation Branch, who retired in 1936 after nearly 30 years' service in the Department.

Mr. Meares, who was born in 1871, joined the railways as a clerk in the Transportation Branch and after some experience at country stations he came to the Head Office and for the next 12 years was closely associated with Transportation Staff matters. In 1923 he was appointed Assistant Staff Officer in the Transportation Branch and twelve years later was promoted to Staff Officer.

Many hundreds of officers and employees in that Branch (and some high placed in other Branches) passed through his hands, and many remember gratefully the kindly help given by "PTM"—as he was widely known—in their younger days.

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# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

October, 1942

Issue No. 145

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL REPORT Record Revenue and Surplus

**T**HE revenue which amounted to £14,614,836 and the surplus (£649,347) were both records in Departmental history.

This is not a ground for jubilation as the war was the main cause. Principal factors were heavy defence traffic, the greater spending power of the community owing to increased employment and higher earnings, the diversion to rail of a large amount of business owing to the petrol shortage, the restriction of competitive road motor transport and limited Interstate shipping facilities.

Working expenses were £2,629,387 more than last year. The increase included £440,000 for higher salaries and wages due to cost of living adjustments and awards of the Arbitration Court; an increase of £975,000 in the contribution to the Railway Renewals and Replacements Fund; £64,000 for Commonwealth Payroll Tax; £82,000 for special A.R.P. expenditure; £200,000 for higher cost of materials including coal; £3,000 for writing off the balance of the original cost of plant and equipment which is being replaced at Newport Power Station; and £31,000 for the Department's half-yearly contribution to the Commonwealth War Damage Fund.

The balance of the increase (£80,000) was incurred in earning the additional revenue of £3,284,616. This remarkable result was due to a substantial portion of the additional traffic (particularly passenger and high grade goods business) being carried on ordinary trains at relatively little extra cost. It is a striking illustration of the fact that greater volume of traffic particularly the more payable classes, is the logical means of improving net revenue and emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the railways against arterial road competition.

The improved position enabled financial provision to be made for undertaking all arrears of depreciation which had accrued since 1st July, 1937.

As normal replacement work cannot readily be carried out in wartime, it is most important to have funds readily available when required for post-war employment of this type. For the same reason the Commissioners

urge that advantage continue to be taken of temporarily inflated revenues to divert further large sums into the Renewals and Replacements Fund.

### TARPAULINS.

Shortage of suitable canvas has resulted in the depletion of the stock of tarpaulins and a serious deterioration in the condition of available supplies. A supply of lower-grade canvas has now been obtained from abroad and the Department is about to undertake the manufacture of replacement covers.

### COMPETITIVE TRANSPORT.

Practically all the long distance road services, both passenger and goods, remained in operation until about the middle of the year, but subsequently under National Security Regulations all services considered to be a non-essential duplication of other facilities were prohibited unless they were being operated with producer gas, in which case they were permitted to run until they could be diverted to essential work. The prohibition resulted in the withdrawal of practically all passenger services operating between the metropolis and country and seaside resorts and in certain cases restricted the operations of such services in country districts where rail facilities were available. In several cases railway and road services were satisfactorily co-ordinated.

Attention is again drawn to the probability of import post-war developments in commercial aviation. Many individual interests will doubtless endeavour to establish air services and in the absence of effective control a recurrence of what happened during the early growth of road transport,

(Continued on next page)

## "H" CLASS ENGINES

### Great Performance

**C**ONSPICUOUS among the heavy traffic on the north-eastern line are the fast goods trains hauled by the "H" class engine between Melbourne and Wodonga.

The "H" locomotive first went into regular service on Feb. 17, 1941, and prior to July 2, 1942, ran six single trips weekly on this line. On one trip it was attached to the 8.10 a.m. passenger train from Melbourne to Albury, but the other five runs were devoted to goods work at night hauling between 700 and 800 tons on each journey.

Under its new exclusively goods assignment the "H" makes 5 trips weekly in each direction between Melbourne and Wodonga covering an excellent weekly aggregate of 1870 miles.

These important trains cover the distance of 187 miles in a little over 6 hours, or about 30 m.p.h. a high average speed for heavy goods traffic over a busy line with heavy ruling grades, and mainly single track.

The high standard of availability and excellent road performance speak well for the men to whose care this engine is entrusted.

## VICTORIAN BRANCHES OF TOURIST BUREAU CLOSED

**O**WING to war conditions it was decided last month to close the Victorian branches of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau. Accordingly the Bendigo branch was closed on September 19 and Ballarat, Geelong and Mildura branches will cease to operate after October 3. Even though these bureaux were rendering a valuable public service the local authorities concerned recognised that the acute manpower position left no alternative.

The first Victorian country branch was established at Mildura in 1935. The Ballarat office began business in 1939, Bendigo in 1940, and the Geelong branch of the Bureau last year.

Local bodies in each centre enthusiastically assisted the Department in the operation of the Bureaux and at their own cost provided the Office accommodation. They have been assured of our intention to re-establish the bureaux as soon as this step can reasonably be taken.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL REPORT—Continued.

i.e., uneconomic duplication, expansion and eventual contraction or failure, may be expected. It is not the Commissioners' conception that air operations should be restricted or controlled merely for the sake of conserving business to other forms of transport, but they suggest that legislative action be taken to ensure its development to an orderly and economic plan based on its usefulness to the community.

### COMMONWEALTH CONTROL.

Although Commonwealth control over rail transport has so far been exercised through the Land Transport Board only to a relatively limited extent it is having an appreciable influence on railway revenue in respect of Interstate traffic. The priority system for passenger traffic, which operated as from 1st July, aims at substantially reducing non-essential travel on Interstate lines.

### STAFF.

2,481 railwaymen have joined the armed forces and 29 have lost their lives. 313 other men have been loaned to the Commonwealth Government and approximately 1,640 are directly engaged on the production of munitions, armaments and defence tools. Owing to the shortage of manpower the number of female employes has increased from 883 to 1,590, or 80 per cent.

### RAILWAYS PATRIOTIC FUND.

The total amount raised in cash and goods now exceeds £18,000, which has been disbursed in the purchase of 5 army ambulances and in donations to the Aust. Comforts Fund, Aust. Red Cross, British Bombing Victims' Appeal and other war charities.

### ROLLING STOCK CONSTRUCTION.

Eleven "K" class locomotives, and 341 general service trucks specially equipped for the carriage of wheat in bulk, were completed. The construction of six "X" class locomotives was commenced and progress was made in the construction of three modern tram cars for use on the St. Kilda-Brighton line.

### COAL CONSUMPTION.

The consumption for the year was 423,236 tons of large and 158,770 tons of small coal. The supplies virtually balanced this consumption but having regard to the current rate of consumption the position of the coal reserve has deteriorated. Due to price increases in Maitland coal and proportionate increases in the price of State Mine coal, the average issuing rate for large coal, i.e., 32/10d. was 5/5d. more than last year, whilst for small coal the rate increased by 5/- to 26/1d.

### SERVICE.

The Commissioners said that the standard of service during the year in handling the abnormal volume of traffic would inevitably have given cause for criticism under normal conditions. Many country passenger trains have been crowded, and late running has regrettably been the rule rather than the exception. Goods deliveries have in some cases been delayed and services have had to be restricted. These deficiencies, of which the Commissioners are fully conscious and which have been tolerated by their patrons without overt complaint, were created by the difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies of coal by preference having to be given to military requirements, and to some extent, by shortage of manpower and rolling stock, as well as by the restricted lighting conditions. They said they were grateful for the manner in which the position is being accepted by the public.

## Keeping Grass Low At Newport Power Station



PRIOR to the commencement of the present war it was the practice for a gang of men to burn off the large area of ground adjacent to the Newport Power Station. Apart from the cost this was attended with some risk.

At the beginning of the war, the accidental advent of three stray sheep, one of which had been injured by a passing motor car, suggested to Mr. J. Tulloch, Engineer-in-Charge, that sheep would be a more profitable and effective means of keeping the grass down to safety level. Accordingly seventeen ewes were secured by the Department, and with the three original animals did an excellent job of eating down the grass. The whole lot was sold subsequently at a profit to the Department.

Each year since, sheep have been turned loose on the grass and have kept it low before the summer arrives. They have fully justified the investment. In the picture above Mr. Tulloch is shown feeding his pets.

## BIG CONCESSIONS IN SUBURBAN FARES FOR DEFENCE FORCES

SINCE the early days of the war the armed forces have had the benefit of substantial concessions in fares for country travel.

On September 14 last the benefits were extended to suburban travel.

The new concessions, which are available to all men and women of the pay strength of the Australian, British and all allied forces in the Commonwealth, provide for half single or return fares with a maximum of 9d. first class and 6d. second class between any two suburban stations on the same line.

When the journey involves travel over two individual lines the maximum charges apply to each line. Thus a soldier travelling from Broadmeadows to Sandringham pays a maximum return fare of 1/6d. first class and 1/- second class.

Arbitrary concession fares which are considerably less than the ordinary fares apply to travel between stations in the suburban area and certain country stations adjacent to the outer suburbs.

In addition, commencing on the first of this month members of the defence forces who are "living out" can obtain monthly tickets at half adult fares for travel on suburban and electrified country lines between stations nearest to their residences and their defence force locations. To secure this concession it will be necessary to present at the booking office a form of certificate obtainable at suburban stations which must be signed by the applicant's commanding officer, or other authorised officer.

A couple of examples of the concessions are shown below:—

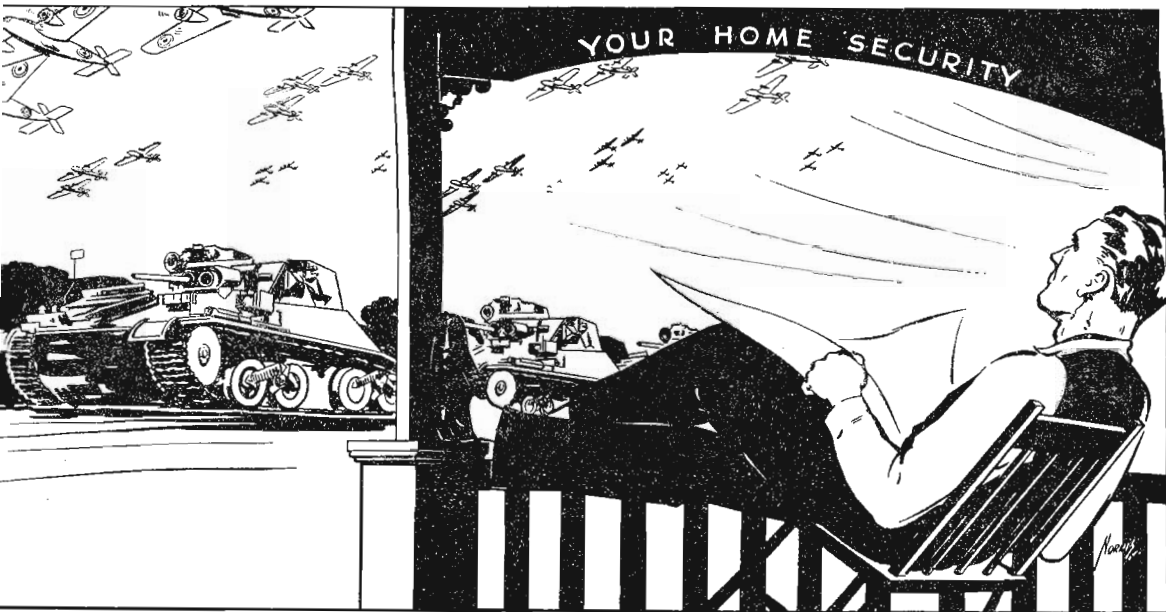
	Day Return		Monthly	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Caulfield to Melbourne—				
Ordinary Fare	1/2d.	1/-	24/6	19/-
Military	7d.	6d.	12/3	9/-
Dandenong to Melbourne—				
Ordinary Fare	2/11½	2/3½	36/-	26/-
Military	9d.	6d.	18/-	13/-

## Mr. V. Manderson Retires

WITH great regret we record the passing of Mr. V. Manderson, the popular Boiler Inspector, who has retired. Officers and employees of the workshops and locomotive department expressed their deep regret at his departure last month, and in token of their regard for his character and ability they presented him with a suitable inscribed chiming clock and smoking stand, accompanied by some crystal ware and an umbrella for his wife.

Mr. Manderson joined the service in 1898 and in 1900 became an apprentice Boilermaker, subsequently being promoted to Boilermaker, Leading Hand Boilermaker in 1911 and Sub-Foreman (1921). He became Boiler Inspector in 1923.

# Good To See—But Are You Helping To Pay For Them ?



**JOIN A WAR SAVING'S GROUP TO DAY !**

## V.R. AMBULANCE TRAVELS FAR

PRIVATE D. A. Shortt of the Army Medical Corps, who was an orderly on one of the ambulance vehicles presented to the Army by the Committee of the R. Patriotic Fund, tells an interesting story of the vehicle's travels. It was sent to Syria during 1941 and covered some thousands of miles, all sorts of country from desert to its extreme heat to mountains covered with snow and ice. Subsequently it was sent to Palestine and for a period of 4½ months evacuated 3000 patients. Later it was in India and Ceylon, covering in the latter a further 3000 miles and evacuating an additional 2000 patients. Private Shortt paid a warm tribute to the Ambulance's value. During eight months of active service it covered 7000 miles without ever being needed for a major repair, nor was there any necessity to change any of the original tyres. \* \* \*

The Newport Workshops Auxiliary is justifiably proud of the success of its patriotic rally at the Yarrville Football Ground on Sunday, Sept. 14. The main feature of the afternoon was a football match between teams from the Newport Workshops Annexe and Fitzroy Gas Works Annexe, the Newport eighteen kicking 11 goals behind to Fitzroy's 6 goals 12.

During the afternoon community singing, contributions by individual artists and bright music by the Newport Workshops Band provided an

excellent program of entertainment, and there were also speeches from the Mayor of Footscray (Cr. J. A. McDonald) and others. Admission was free, but a collection for the Prisoners of War Fund yielded £24—an excellent result, considering the dismal weather. The whole afternoon was under the care of Mr. A. J. Tevendale, the popular and energetic Hon. Secretary of the Newport Workshops Auxiliary. \* \* \*

Ararat loco men get an honorable mention in this column for the formation of a social club, which has the purpose of providing recreation for the wives and families of its members and devoting all profits to patriotic efforts.

The new club started off with a sports carnival at the Ararat Oval on Saturday, Aug. 15, and at the end of a happy day was able to announce that £60 had been handed over to the Ararat Auxiliary's Canteen Fund. A big program of events at the Oval included a football match between teams from the Ararat Loco Shed and the Stawell Woollen Mills. (Results: Stawell 9-9; Ararat 7-5); a 1-mile bicycle race and an exhibition baseball match by a specially invited team of American soldiers.

The Americans, who had one of their number broadcasting the various points of the game, were entertained with other visitors at luncheon, dinner and a dance and were the guests of various Ararat residents over the week-end. Full of gratitude for the reception, they whimsically inquired on leaving whether this sort of hospitality was the usual thing in Australia.

## New Cars For Brighton - St. Kilda Tramways

THE first of the three new tram cars destined for the St. Kilda-Brighton line is expected to be in service about the middle of the present month and the remaining two will be running before the close of the year.

Each car is of steel construction 45 feet in length, and the total seating accommodation is 48.

In equipment and design these trams include features that are new to Australia. In every respect they are up-to-date. One interesting aspect is the tapered front of the car with a "Vee" windscreen which greatly assists the driver's vision.

Another important improvement is the illumination inside the car. Diffused lensed lighting concentrates the lamps rays within a limited area. The shade of the lamp which possesses an upper section of the dense white glass enamel, prevents the light spreading out under the ceiling where it would be of little value.

Pneumatically controlled side entrance doors will immensely increase the comfort of the centre smoking saloon in wintry weather.

There are also half drop metal framed windows, metal framed ventilating glass frames above side windows, and safety glass partitions between the centre smoking saloon and the non-smoking saloons at each end of the car. Another advantage is that the entrance steps have been built a little nearer the ground.

## Work Of Women In S. African Railways

AS over 9000 men in the South African Railways are now on active service there has been an increased demand for women, not only for clerical posts, but also in the transportation, engineering and other sections normally reserved for men.

The appearance of women in South African railway workshops is no longer novel. Clad in dungarees and caps, they operate a variety of machines, and are trained as welders.

Some of the tasks they perform range from the delicate and intricate handwork involved in assembling compasses, to the rapid production of components with the aid of semi-automatic special purpose machine tools.

Coil winding, repairing telephones and testing ear pieces are further duties handed over to female operatives, who are also engaged in spray painting, a job previously monopolised by men.

In the various war activities undertaken by the South African railways, many women are demonstrating their ability in the manufacture of gun sights, skilfully turning the small parts for the sights, shaping the parts and milling the eye-pieces for dial sights, producing bomb parts, turning striker heads, drilling suspension lugs and welding fins on to bomb cases.

They have replaced the stewards in the dining cars of the air-conditioned expresses between Cape Town and Johannesburg, and the conductors on the railway motor buses. Owing to the absence of the majority of the photographic staff on military service women are also developing, printing and enlarging photographs.

The extent of the revolution that the war has produced is revealed by the fact that qualified women graduates have entered the architectural department, whilst others are busily using compass and rule in the drawing offices.

The acute manpower position in Victoria is responsible for a similar feminine invasion of positions hitherto filled by men. Before the war goes very much further qualified women will doubtless be found in many more jobs previously considered exclusive to men.

### V.R. ENLISTMENTS

#### R.A.A.F.

ACTG. Patr. G. E. Mason; Jnr. Clk. R. F. Mayberry, Sup. Jnr. Clk. R. L. Reed; Jnr. Clk. N. J. Toohey; Comp. R. A. Willison.

#### R.A.N.

Clk. J. A. Carolan; Lad Lbr. F. Harrison; Jnr. Clk. E. H. Hicks; Sup. Jun. Clk. P. L. Lemaire.

#### A.W.A.S.

Miss A. M. Bennett (Comptometrist); Miss E. Eastlake (Cook); Miss N. L. Gedling (Office Asst.).

## DISPOSING OF LIGHT STEEL WASTE

THE announcement by the Minister for Munitions (Hon. N. J. Makin) last month that preliminary approval has been given to plans for the recovery and disposal of steel turnings and shavings is of considerable interest to the department.

The Department has sold quantities of light steel turnings from time to time, but the sales have never been large enough to keep pace with the steadily growing quantity of waste material.

Two firms are understood to be discussing the installation of electric furnaces which would readily treat this scrap. As indicated by the Minister for Munitions, the provision of a machine for the briquetting of the turnings was also under consideration by the Munitions Department.

It has been suggested in the press that the Japanese have been purchasers of this class of scrap. This is not correct. Actually the Japanese were specially interested in pressed tin clippings which they invariably obtained elsewhere.

## MYSTERY OF "CORRUGATED" RAILS

ONE of the mysteries of railway work which has defied accurate solution through the years is known to railway engineers as the "corrugated or roaring rail."

Recently a questionnaire on the subject was sent out by the American Railway Engineering Association to the executive engineers of several railroads in the United States, but it elicited nothing of any value.

It was stated however that "corrugations occur under all conditions of track, ballast, and traffic on tangent and curves, up-grades and down where steam is worked and where the train is "coasting" although it does not prevail under all of these conditions on any one road." Corrugation is said to be "most prevalent on curved track, at the foot of grades where the speed is high and a tangent track where the gauge is wide."

Again the American Transit Association, investigating similar conditions on street railway tracks, came to the conclusion that the primary cause is "overloading of the rail surface and that the resulting flow of the surface metal, rather than abrasive wear, is the chief element in the formation of corrugations, this progressive flow being caused by synchronous wheel pounding added to the aggregate of those stresses which the rail is called on to bear."

Generally no special action is taken to eliminate corrugations, but two railroad companies and some street railway organisations in the United States have been using grinding machines for the purpose of restoring the surface of the rails affected.

## IMPROVED AIR BRAKE OPERATION ON STEAM PASSENGER TRAINS

OCCASIONALLY a jolt is experienced when passenger trains are being brought to a stop. This arises from the difficulty in controlling the slack coupling action caused by slight variations in individual brake operation on cars comprising the train.

The slack action usually occurs serially and increases as it reaches the end of the train. The slack may close up, causing a buff; or it may be extended producing a tug. It is the change from one of these conditions to the other that produces the jolt and is often difficult for the Driver to control.

To entirely obviate this slack action during air brake applications and releases, it is necessary that the slack condition be kept constant or changed as slowly as possible. With this object in view the release of the brake on the van or rear vehicle of the train is being retarded in relation to that of the other cars and locomotive.

Under existing conditions the normal release period of all air brakes on trains, including the locomotives, is approximately 8 seconds. On all "CE" vans and the Parlor Car of "Spirit of Progress" this period is being increased to approximately 2 seconds and the slower release of the rear vehicle brakes will have the effect of keeping the draw gear of the train in tension during the release period of a two or more application stop, provided that each subsequent brake application is made within 2 seconds after the previous release is commenced.

This arrangement will enable Drivers, when stopping their trains, to keep the draw gear in tension throughout the whole stopping period from the initial brake application until the stop is completed.

The retarded release feature will function after all air brake applications. To avoid delays in shunting movements from this cause the hand release valve is attached direct to the air brake cylinder and can be used to accelerate the release when required.

Since the release of the brakes on the rear vehicle will be delayed to approximately 25 seconds it follows that in order to avoid shocks when starting trains or re-accelerating within this period drivers must take particular care to gradually stretch the coupling slack.

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# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

November, 1942

Issue No. 146

## Victorian Railways' War Record WIDESPREAD ACTIVITIES

It is a commonplace that no national war can be undertaken without the aid of a vigorous and effective railway system, but that statement implies innumerable tasks only dimly realised by the man in the street. In the case of the Victorian Railways it means far more than the business of carrying troops, their equipment, ammunition, food and the endless necessities of war, impressive as that responsibility has become. Actually it includes the construction of terminals, sidings, transfer yards, train crossing facilities and loading appliances, not to mention the production of military equipment, ammunition, aeroplane construction, etc.

Just prior to the commencement of the war in 1939 negotiations were entered into between the Railways Commissioners and the Department of the Army for the manufacture of components for and assembly of Bren Machine Gun Carriers and on the outbreak of hostilities the work was given an added impetus.

The construction of these carriers, which has proceeded rapidly, is a high grade precision job. Each carrier contains hundreds of separate parts, and at the time of writing over 1350 of these armoured fighting vehicles have been handed over to the Department of the Army.

### aiding Aircraft Production.

In aircraft production the department has been responsible for a substantial part of the modern bombers. Many thousands of tools and various parts of components of planes have been manufactured. Men were specially selected from the Victorian Railways to go overseas to study the production of Beauforts, and on this nucleus a large organisation has been built.

In the Shell Annexe machines and equipment have been adapted and utilised for the production of 3.7 in. anti-aircraft shell and many hundreds of thousands of shell cases have been produced. Among other miscellaneous items which the facilities controlled by the railways have made possible is the manufacture of parts of anti-aircraft 25-pdr. guns, parts of naval engines, thousands of parts for naval cranes, air screw checking tables for aircraft and patterns for parts of shell-rolling lathes.

Other activities in which the department's co-operation was sought were the installation of plant in a cotton factory, the manufacture

of marquees, tents, tent flaps, saddle covers, and the process of rot-proofing miles of hessian.

Still another outlet for railway energy and skill is the manufacture of dies and forgings for thirty different types of surgical instruments in use by the medical section of the Army. Twelve months ago an urgent request was made to the department to relieve the serious shortage of forceps, scissors, mouth gags, needle-holders and other essential surgical equipment. This task involved intense activity in the tool making and drop stamping sections, and remarkable progress has been made.

This job occupied four months and when forging was commenced the accuracy of the forging greatly simplified the finishing operations. The first programme provided for 170,000 stampings and was completed a few weeks ago.

The fitting out of special trains for particular defence services is another interesting chapter in the railways wartime history. Two recruiting trains to handle enlistments for the Empire Air Scheme were made ready for prolonged tours of the State. Another fine railway performance was the conversion in a fortnight of fourteen railway vehicles into an up-to-date ambulance train consisting of a staff car, personnel car, administrative car, dining car, nine ward cars, and a brake van. Each of the nine ward cars, converted from passenger carriages, contains 39 standard bunks arranged in tiers of three.

Deserving mention, also, are eight "war equipment trains" ready for instant service in the event of any section of a railway being damaged by air or other attack.

## V.R. AIRMAN'S ACHIEVEMENT

HERE is a portrait of Bruce Davenport, one of the modest young airmen, who has already put an impressive record behind him.

Bruce, who was a clerk in the Refreshment Services section of the Accountancy Branch, joined the R.A.A.F. in 1940, first going to Somers where he was "top of the school." Later on he joined the Elementary Flying Training School in Rhodesia where again he topped the flight.



He came second for Rhodesia in his "Wings" exam and was appointed Sergeant-Pilot. He was then transferred to England

for special training in aerial navigation. When in England he frequently visited the Ruhr in charge of a bomber, and on one of these return flights his plane was badly hammered. Realising that there was a doubt about his reaching the English Coast, he directed his crew to bale out, which they did.

He managed to make land but crashed, his plane catching on fire, and he was badly burned.

The latest news of him is that in the examination for the selection of six instructors he was second only to one man who had 6 months longer experience at the fighter station. It is just possible he will return to Australia as an instructor.

A safe and speedy return to this young "veteran" of the air. He reached 21 on September 30 last.

These trains are lying unnoticed in locations convenient to important lines. Each one consists of a certain number of trucks. One is loaded with rail points, crossings and sleepers. Two others contain ashes. Another carries pile driving plant scaffolding and bearers. Two more are fitted with piles, bridge materials, tools and other necessary equipment, whilst a water truck is included for use in any area where supplies of water are not assured.

(To be concluded in next issue).

## Farewell to Mr. J. M. Ashworth

MR. J. M. ASHWORTH, who retired from the post of Chief Civil Engineer on March 7, 1939, but was specially retained for the purpose of developing a scheme for future passenger transport in the Melbourne and Metropolitan area, as well as the re-arrangement of the Melbourne Goods terminal, finally severed his connection with the department on September 30 last.



At a happy farewell function attended by the Commissioners and Heads of Branches on October 7 the veteran engineer was presented with war bonds and a piece of plate, and heard tributes to his personality and fine railway record by the Chairman (Mr. N. C. Harris) supported by the Secretary for Railways (Mr. E. C. Evers).

To these complimentary references Mr. Ashworth responded in suitable terms and gave some interesting reminiscences of his earlier years in the service, when belltoppers and frock coats were the order of the day among the supervisors.

Mr. Ashworth, who is now 69, actually served the department for two months over fifty years. He began as an engineering student in 1889, became a draftsman in 1894 and an engineering assistant in 1903. The beginning of 1905 saw him a roadmaster (now road foreman) and six years later he was Assistant Engineer for Maintenance. Engineer of Maintenance in 1921, he was appointed Asst. Chief Engineer of Way and Works in 1924, and attained the premier position in his Branch in 1928.

### SERVICE.

THE following letter from Captain P. F. Henry, private secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Victoria (Sir Winston Dugan) has been received by the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris) —

"His Excellency the Governor wishes me to convey to you his warm thanks for the excellent and most satisfactory railway arrangements which you were good enough to make in connection with his recent tour to districts in the north of the State. These arrangements, as well as the courtesy and attention of all your officials, contributed in no small measure to the comfort in which he was able to carry out his visits to the various centres, and he will be glad if you will kindly convey to all concerned his appreciation and thanks for their valuable co-operation in ensuring the success of his tour."

## V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND BENEFITS IN MANY ORIGINAL WAYS

MR. J. C. Crossthwaite, a V.R. repairer stationed at Watchem, deserves a special reference for his ceaseless activities on behalf of war charities. Last month he forwarded to the Secretary of V.R. Patriotic Fund (Mr. W. E. Elliott) a cheque for £21/2/- to be included in the fund for assisting prisoners of war.

This sum, which was cordially acknowledged by Mr. Elliott, was the result of a special vaudeville entertainment which Mr. Crossthwaite had not only organised, but in which he had figured as producer, whilst he had also appeared in one or two comedy items during the program. It was a great evening and the organiser's only regret was that owing to the bad weather the takings at the door were somewhat less than he had expected.

Up to date the concert party controlled by this enthusiast has raised over £100. As this is being written, Mr. Crossthwaite is raffling a sheep in aid of the V.R. Prisoner of War Fund. As he had already sold over 100 tickets at 1/- each, this Fund will ultimately benefit by another £5 at least.

\* \* \*

Talking of these special efforts on behalf of the V.R. Patriotic Fund reminds the "News Letter" to mention two other remarkable contributions to the Fund. One was a cheque for £2/14/0 forwarded by Mr. W. Nancarrow of the Accountancy Branch, Spencer Street Administrative Offices. Among his garden treasures is a large daphne bush and during the past winter he sold daphne at 3d. a piece in the office. A little arithmetic will reveal that he must have conducted a brisk trade, and he gets a vote of thanks from the "News Letter" for his enterprise.

\* \* \*

An equally warm tribute is due to a number of junior girls, also in the Spencer Street Offices, who make a small regular collection among themselves. Up to date they have handed over £2 to the Fund. These particular references are made in the hope of inspiring additional individual efforts on behalf of the same fine cause. Though the V.R.I. Patriotic Fund has collected the impressive sum of £20,358/4/1 over the two years, it can never have enough money. More and more is needed to assist the Red Cross and Comforts Fund, Prisoners of War Aid Fund and to provide ambulances and other equipment on the various fronts.

\* \* \*

The Sunday afternoon entertainments conducted by the V.R.I. for the benefit of Allied Forces in Melbourne have won the profound admiration of Sergeant F. W. Pearce of the Armoured Fighting Vehicles H.Q. who comes from New South Wales. In a

letter to the Secretary of the V.R. he records "the sincere gratitude of the Boys (and Girls) of the fighting forces for the wonderful efforts put up by your members to bring us the Sunday afternoon entertainments."

As a member of the N.S.W. General Railway Staff and Institute for nearly twenty-three years, he fully appreciates the work of the many good people who sacrifice their "leisure" hours to organise, practice and deliver the show for the Boys. Just now when heavy troop and equipment movements impose a heavy drain on already sadly depleted railway staffs, that sacrifice is doubly fine."

\* \* \*

It might interest readers of the "News Letter" to know that up to October 7 no less than 71 Sunday afternoon entertainments had been provided for the defence forces, and we have yet to hear of a vacant chair at any one of these.

## 5000 NEW TARPULIN ARE ON THE WAY

LAST month the tarpaulin shop commenced the job of manufacturing 5000 new tarpaulins—4750 replacement and 250 additional for use in the wheat traffic.

Assuming that sufficient labor is available and no higher priority demand is made on the shop, the order should be completed before the close of the financial year.

For a long period the department has been unable to supply tarpaulins for all purposes of railway transport as supplies of canvas have been unobtainable. Naturally there has been serious deterioration in the existing supply and only heavy and frequent repair has kept a diminishing number reasonably serviceable.

The shortage arose from the fact that the main flax-producing countries have been overrun by the Germans. An additional factor is the increased demand for flax canvas for tents by the Allied Nations.

As disclosed by the testing machine at Newport, the supply of canvas recently acquired by the department is not of pre-war standard; but it is hoped that during the next few months some supplies of Australian flax canvas of better quality will be available.

Pending a sufficiency of new tarpaulins, the Department is no longer able to guarantee that any goods consigned at the owner's risk will be covered by a tarpaulin, or by one which is waterproof. In these circumstances the Department cannot accept liability for loss, injury or damage caused by such consignments by the absence of coverings.

# ROOM FOR YOU AT THE END OF THE QUEUE!



## Take Your Place and Contribute to the Austerity Loan!

### WORKERS BEHIND THE WAR LOAN

THE following appeal for contributions to the Austerity Loan comes from Mr. A. D. Road, Organising Secretary, Victorian Division War Loans and National Savings Campaigns:

One of the most gratifying features of the £100,000,000 War and Austerity Loan campaign has been the manner in which all branches of the Labour movement have supported it.

Workers everywhere appreciate all made to them by their Government and their leaders. This is shown in the tremendous increase in war savings groups in factories and plants, and in the response to appeals for increased production and full support for the Austerity Loan made by the fighting services units now visiting munition works and industrial organisations throughout the Commonwealth.

The Government is particularly gratified with this result, because it was obvious from the start of the campaign that the Prime Minister's desire that the £100,000,000 loan should be "everybody's loan" could not be realised unless all groups of salary and wage earners made up their minds to take a full share in the most vital loan in Australia's history.

There is, of course, no reason why everyone should not subscribe to the loan.

*For the privilege of allowing our money to fight for our self-preservation, Australia offers us Austerity War Bonds with either 2½ per cent. interest for five years, or 3½ per cent. for sixteen years.*

Those of us who can't afford to buy £10 bonds outright can buy them by instalments—£1 down and £1 a month for nine months for each bond.

Let us remember also that, even while our money fights for us, we still maintain our hold on it. If an emergency makes it imperative for us to regain the use of money invested in the £100,000,000 War and Austerity Loan, bonds or stock are readily saleable at current market prices. The Commonwealth Bank, or our own bank, will arrange this for us.

Loan applications may be made through any bank, savings bank, money order post office or sharebroker. There is no need to wait until the official opening of the loan on November 3 before we apply for bonds or stock. Interest commences from the date of application.

Let us, then, get into this national savings and lending with a will. Let us encourage our families, our neighbours, our mates at work to get behind the Government in its determination to go full out on the war savings front. Let us all have a personal stake in victory.

### "OVERLAND" NOW CARRIES MANY MORE PASSENGERS

**O**WING to the acute coal shortage in South Australia, sleeping cars were withdrawn from the "Overland," commencing with the services from Melbourne and Adelaide on the night of Monday, September 28.

This important change has been responsible for one appreciable advantage—an increase in the passenger accommodation.

With the removal of the sleepers, the necessity for running extra divisions and "double heading" on the Ararat and Serviceton section has practically been eliminated and this has resulted in a substantial reduction in train mileage (approximately 1300 per week) and a consequential saving in coal consumption.

Previously an average "Overland" express of ten cars included four sleepers, one first class and five second class sitting cars, with a capacity for 488 passengers.

In the present average train consisting of two first-class and eight second-class sitting cars, accommodation is provided for an additional 184 passengers.

## Ambulance's Excellent Year

FIGURES supplied by the Ambulance Officer (Mr. W. J. Blackburn) reveal that first aid has become an increasingly important subject with railwaymen. Despite the fact that a considerable percentage of qualified first aid men are now in the army, the number of corps entered for this year's competitions was 56, two more than last year, whilst the number of individuals who entered this year was 296 as compared with 228 in 1941.

### FIRST AID CHAMPIONS

**BRILLIANT** teamwork won for North Melbourne Loco. No. 3, the first prize in the finals of the State Ambulance Competitions held at Lilydale on October 29. Accountancy No. 1 was second, and Maryborough No. 1, third. In the Novice Corps Section, Ararat No. 2 was first; Electrical Engineering Branch, second; and Newport No. 3, third. The prize for the best improvised stretcher was won by Benalla No. 1.

The results in the Senior Individuals were: 1st, P. Delmenico; 2nd, H.W. Jones; 3rd, R. Klemke. Novice Individuals; 1st, F. L. O'Brien; 2nd, H. P. Ward; 3rd, J. Richards.

At a social function in the evening, the results were announced by the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris), who presented the medals with warm congratulatory words. Mr. Commissioner R. G. Wishart referred to the high standard shown in the competitions, and a special toast proposed by Mr. L. C. Bromilow (Acting Manager of the Publicity and Tourist Services) underlined for all present the valiant work of Ambulance Members serving with Defence Forces on various fronts.

In the annual District Competitions in first aid which were completed on October 7 the following teams were successful in the districts shown in brackets:—Maryborough No. 1 (Ballarat); Ararat No. 2 (Geelong); Benalla No.1 (N. Eastern); Bendigo Trans. No. 1 (Bendigo); Dandenong (Eastern and S. Eastern); North Loco. No. 3 (N. Suburban); Jolimont Guards (S. Suburban).

Both the Bendigo Trans. No. 1 and Jolimont Guards are novice teams. Novices were even more conspicuous in the individual results, five of them achieving first honors in the Ballarat, Geelong, North Eastern, Bendigo and South Suburban Districts. The winners were respectively J. S. Wunhym (Ballarat Loco.), I. J. William (Geelong Loco.), H. Ward (Seymour Loco.), J. Dorbie (Bendigo N. Workshops) and J. Richards (Trans., Spencer St.)

In the North Suburban and Eastern and South Eastern Districts two senior men R. Klemke (N. Melb. Loco.) and P. Delmenico (Elec. Fitter, Dandenong) scored the highest points.

## NEW SECRETARY FOR THE A.R.U.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. J. J. Brown who was elected last month by an overwhelming majority to the job of State Secretary of the A.R.U.

Mr. Brown is only 30 years of age and is one of the youngest men directing the activities of large industrial unions. He joined the department as a supernumerary lad laborer in 1926 and became a boilermaker's help three years ago.

An excellent speaker Mr. Brown has been a conspicuous member of the A.R.U. since he became a member of the State Council of the Union six years ago. This year he was elected vice president and is the youngest to hold that position. He also represents the Victorian branch on the Australian Council of the A.R.U. and is one of the delegates of the Trades Hall Council to the A.C.T.U. Congress.

### Right—On The Level

THE examiner was questioning the candidate for the position of engine driver.

"You are driving an engine down a steep incline at an excessive speed. What do you do?"

"Make a brake application," said the candidate.

"Doesn't act," shot back the examiner.

"Put brake handle into emergency position".

"Does not reduce speed sufficiently", went on the examiner.

"Reverse the engine and turn on steam", said the candidate.

"The wheels refuse to grip the rails".

"Pour sand on the rails".  
"Sand is damp and won't pass through the pipes".

The examiner put the question with an air of triumph. "Now what do you do?"

"Let her rip. We've reached the level now".

— "North China Daily News".

### V.R. ENLISTMENTS. A.I.F.

APP. B'maker I. B. Dowler; App. F. & Tar. L. J. Dunkley; App. B'maker J. J. Jones; Lbr. K. A. Richards.

### R.A.A.F.

Clk. L. C. Allen; Clk. T. H. Bowen; Clk. J. Brennan; Clk. R. J. Cox; Storeman E. D. Dale; Sup. Jnr. Clk. D. N. de Burgh; Jnr. Clk. W. J. Ellis; Sub-Station Asst. S. Groves; Clk. R. H. Harris; Upholsterer E. S. Levens; Sup. Jnr. Clk. G. E. McGrath; Jnr. Clk. A. L. Ockenden; Jnr. Clk. B. F. O'Donnell; App. F. & Tnr. K. J. Rodda; Clk. E. P. Taylor.

### R.A.N.

Shift Engr. A. N. Goff; Jnr. Clk. K. Lalor; Jnr. Clk. K. M. Lindner; Sign-writer W. I. Peterson.

### A.W.A.S.

Miss W. E. Steel (Comptometrist).

## Quick Removal Of Turbo-Generator

IN the excellent time of 3 days the Electrical Engineering Branch removed one of the 12,500 k.w. generators which had given excellent service over 23 years at the Newport "A" Power Station. This big effort was brought about by the necessity for providing a site for the new 37,500 k.w. turbo-generator and erecting it in the shortest possible time.

The principal parts of the generator were the alternator rotor, alternator stator, low and high pressure steam cylinders, south and north condensers, and low and high pressure steam spindles.

Some idea of the size of the task involved can be obtained from the fact that the alternator stator weighed approximately 48 tons; each condenser 45 tons, the bottom half of the low pressure steam cylinder 34 tons, and the alternator rotor 18½ tons. The other pieces ranged in weight from 8 tons to 15 tons in the respective cases of the top and bottom halves of the high pressure steam cylinders.

The dismantling, which was undertaken by the maintenance staff of the Newport "A" Power Station, commenced at 8 a.m. on August 28, and the principal parts of the machine were removed by 6 p.m. on August 30.

Coincident with the removal of the heavy parts all auxiliary plant was also removed and by 8.0 a.m. on August 31 the whole of the turbo-alternator, with the exception of two medium sized bedplates embedded in the concrete foundation, were taken away.

Before the old turbo-generator was removed much preparatory work was carried out by the technical staff. Principal parts were numbered and after weights and dimensions had been checked arrangements were made with the Transportation, Way and Works and Rolling Stock Branches for the transport of the machine to the site where it will be held as a stand-by for future emergency service.

Thanks to the excellent co-operation of the branches concerned, the whole job was carried out without a hitch. 16 trucks were required, including one of 60 tons capacity, and the special schedule was rigidly adhered to. The tracks were shifted and strengthened by the Way and Works, which also provided temporary foundations for the plant on the storage site. Great assistance was also provided by the Rolling Stock branch with the powerful new 60-ton wrecking crane.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens Street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers, The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

# The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

December, 1942

Issue No. 147

## Victorian Railways War Record

### REMARKABLE STORY CONCLUDED

**L**AST month the "News Letter" commenced a short survey of the Railways War Record, outlining the activities in connection with the production of Bren gun carriers, bombers, anti-aircraft shells, special parts for anti-aircraft and 25-pdr. guns, naval mines and shell-turning lathes. Reference was also made to the manufacture of dies and forgings for thirty different types of surgical instruments and the equipment of an ambulance train and other special trains. This month the "News Letter" completes a story that, though necessarily brief, is sufficiently informative to reveal to some extent the massed energy, concentration and skill of a well-organised service under war-time conditions.

Little more than a general reference can be made to the big program of defence work done by the Way and Works Branch. For many months this Branch has been engaged on numerous important and, in some cases, technically intricate tasks.

Bridges have been strengthened and rebuilt by special staffs in areas where they will be of most value in the event of emergency; workshops and a storehouse for the Department of Aircraft Production and an annex for Shell Production have been constructed.

Platforms, ramps, sidings and transfer yards with the necessary rail connections and modern handling appliances have also been completed in situations of military importance. These included the provision of additional train crossing facilities for military purposes on arterial lines, to increase the capacity of the single tracks. Some idea of the work involved may be obtained from the fact that over 50 miles of new track have been laid down in connection with this scheme.

The Electrical Engineering branch of the railways has also played its part in numerous valuable ways. During the last 18 months many important tasks involving design, manufacture, testing, repair and installation of a variety of equipment, have been carried out for the Army, Navy and Munitions Dept.

These works include the provision and installation of moving target units and armoured fighting vehicle ranges, the manufacture of 25kVA generating sets and 4kW engine-driven battery charging sets. The construction of searchlight electrodes, overhaul and repair of turbines and auxiliary plant

### SEASONAL GREETINGS FROM COMMISSIONERS

***A**NOTHER year of high achievement in the Department is closing and we cannot let the opportunity pass without cordially thanking all who by their loyalty and good service have been responsible for our splendid record. At the same time we extend to each and every member of the staff and their dependants our best wishes and warmest seasonal greetings with the hope that 1943 will bring peace and victory to the Allied cause.*

on British, Australian and American Naval vessels, the development and manufacture of a variety of electrical instruments—mainly ammeters and voltmeters for army requirements—have also been undertaken.

Worthy of a place in this record of achievement is the Refreshment services Branch, which provided during the year 1941-42 no fewer than 311,433 meals to troops travelling by special trains through the State. The peak effort for one week was 35,000 meals. Those figures are additional to millions of meals served in the ordinary way to troops and civilians travelling by regular trains.

(Continued in next column)

## Death of Sergt.-Observer Dangerfield, D.F.M.

**T**HE "News Letter" records with deep regret the death of Sergeant Observer R. D. Dangerfield, D.F.M. He was killed on the night of October 24 last when his plane in which he was one of the crew crashed just prior to landing, 400 yards from the aerodrome in England.



Sergt.-Observer  
R. D. Dangerfield,  
D.F.M.

"Dick" Dangerfield, who joined the railways as a supernumerary junior clerk in the Melbourne Goods in January, 1939, and was subsequently employed in the Transportation Staff Office, Spencer Street, joined up with the R.A.A.F. in January, 1941, when he was just two months short of 19. After training in Australia he left for England in October, 1941.

He played a valiant part in all the big Lancaster raids since the formation of that air arm, and in October this year received the Distinguished Flying Medal for outstanding work as an Observer.

The full story of the efficient work of the Transportation and Rolling Stock Branches in moving large numbers of troops, and vast quantities of munitions and supplies, often at very short notice, cannot be told here. It is sufficient to say that, despite the fact that enlistments and the loan of men for important posts in the Commonwealth service have meant seriously reduced staffs, the Branches have met all demands and without material detriment to normal business.

Reference should also be made to the activities of the V.R. Printing Works which has undertaken a vast mass of war work, also often at the shortest notice, to the complete satisfaction of everybody concerned.

Some idea of the staff position may be gained from the fact that 2,400 are now serving in the Army, Navy and Air Force, 300 are engaged on various war activities for the Commonwealth Government and 1,600 more men are exclusively employed on the production of munitions.

## AN AUSTERITY AMBULANCE COMPETITION

LACK of space permitted only a brief reference to the finals of the Ambulance Competitions last month.

Instead of holding the competitions at Mt. Evelyn, which would have meant using a steam train, arrangements were made to use the Municipal reserve at Lilydale, which is adjacent to the station. Even the "special" electric train from Melbourne to Lilydale, provided for the competitors, served as an ordinary train for the latter part of its journey.

The modest midday luncheon for competitors and officials, which was formerly provided in a marquee at Mt. Evelyn, was further reduced this year to a simple buffet snack outside the refreshment room, thus simplifying the task of the catering staff.

At the dinner in the Refreshment Room at Spencer Street in the evening, the winners were announced and the prizes presented by the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris).

### Satisfactory Progress

Very satisfactory progress has been made in first aid since last year's competitions. At June 30 last, 4,670 of our staff had qualified in first aid, and since that date a further 500 have been examined for full certificates, 245 being first year students.

Furthermore, there are now 242 holders of the coveted 8th year Gold Life Membership medal, an increase of 13 on last year's figure, whilst 469 (33 more than last year) are the proud possessors of the fifth year Silver Efficiency medal. An excellent record, indeed!

Keen interest was taken by the Army Medical officers who witnessed the competitions, especially the stretcher making, and on a recent Sunday at their request some members of the Benalla Corps gave a demonstration in stretcher making and improvised work before officers and N.C.O.'s from an A.M.C. training depot.

One of the officers present at the competitions was Lieut.-Col. Rees, a son of Mr. A. W. Rees, formerly well known in the Secretary's Branch in the Head Office at Spencer St. He gave a most interesting address at the dinner and emphasized that the best relief for a shocked or injured soldier was a cigarette and a cup of hot, sweet tea.

Dr. McAree who also spoke, referred to his long record of judging at the competitions, and suggested jocularly that he had been doing it long enough to justify the presentation of a gold pass!

## RAILWAYS NOT THE BOTTLENECK IN THE FIREWOOD PROBLEM

WHILST it is generally admitted that the cause of the firewood shortage in the metropolis is the lack of labour for cutting the fuel, there is still an occasional inference in press and other public statements that the railways are responsible for the shortage.

There is no justification for this surmise. During the past winter, when the firewood shortage became acute, the Department notwithstanding the unusually heavy requisitions for trucks urgently and essentially needed for war transport, met overall 80 per cent. of the demands for trucks for the carriage of firewood.

On July 3, this year, it was made known that additional "empties" could be supplied for the transport of firewood to the metropolis, but this opportunity to meet the acute situation that was obviously developing was not fully availed of as when the trucks were available, the firewood that would otherwise have been moved was not there to be loaded.

In view of the general anxiety about the provision of firewood for the winter of 1943, it must be explained that on October 1, the Commissioners made it clear that they could transport increased quantities of firewood, and that because of approaching live stock and wheat traffic it was necessary for

every effort to be made there and to use the available rail transport to the fullest effect.

It was also emphasized that so long as coal supplies permitted, the Department would continue the running of week-end firewood trains, provided the trucks were released on Sunday.

The desirability of forwarding as much firewood as possible from areas nearer Melbourne was also stressed in order that a quicker turn-round of trucks could be obtained, thus enabling the maximum quantity to be brought to the city in the time available.

During the four weeks ending October 24, 613 trucks were provided in response to orders for 657—equivalent to a 93 per cent. supply, and more could have been done at week-ends.

Apart from the movement of firewood for ordinary civil requirements a considerable proportion has been and is still being supplied to various military camps.

### V.R. MAN IN GERMAN PRISON CAMP



In the above picture of Australian prisoners of war in a German prison camp, will be seen Lance Corporal F. Zeis (on the right end of the middle row) who was captured in Greece in 1941. L/Corporal Zeis, who before enlistment was a clerk in the Rolling Stock branch, Geelong, is a son of Chief Transport Despatcher H. A. Zeis, at Spencer Street Head Office.



AT all times, but especially at this time of year, we think with pride and gratitude of you and the service you are rendering our country.

We trust that it will not be long before a just and lasting peace is established, with you safely back among us.

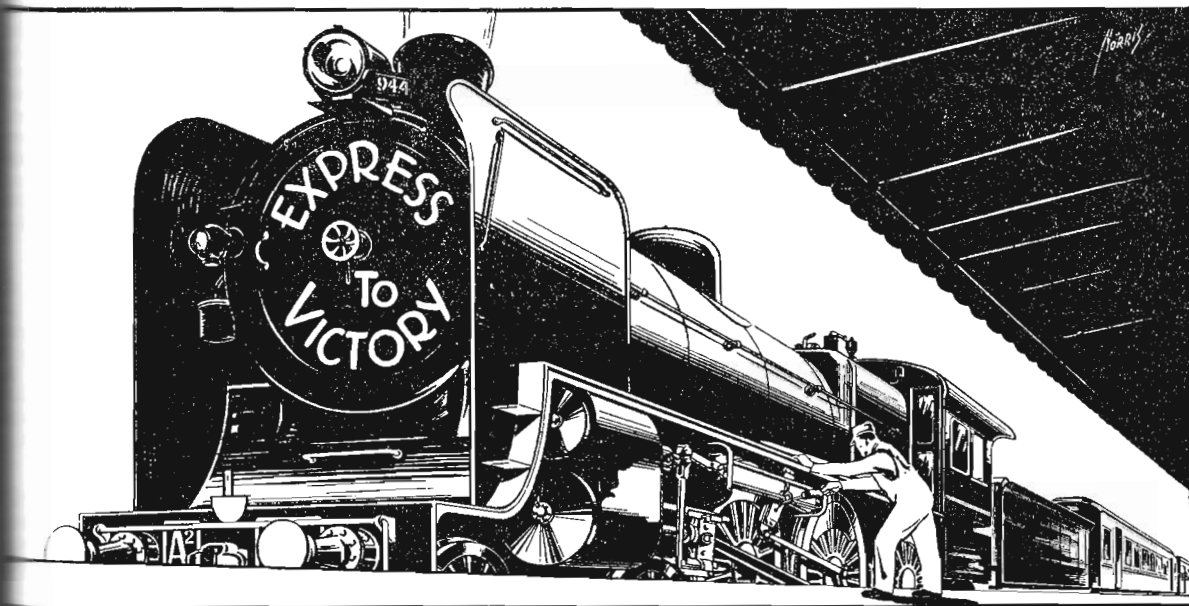
*McHarn* Chairman

*McHarn* Commissioner

*McHarn* Commissioner

December, 1942.

# BE A PAYING PASSENGER ON THIS TRAIN—



**By Investing In The Austerity Loan Now!**  
**Special Arrangements For Purchase Of Bonds By Instalments**

## DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSPORT OF LIVE STOCK

The acute coal position and the necessity to give priority to the transport of fat stock have prevented the supply of trucks for the carriage of store stock to sales including to market, although in order to assist producers, up to 400 trucks per week have been allotted for the carriage of stock across country for graziers wishing to re-stock their holdings.

From September onwards particularly, the situation demanded that available trucks for live stock to Newmarket sales be reserved for stock, the priority of which is closely related with war requirements.

Regarding out-loading trucks from market, all requisitions for trucks consignments purchased at the sales are now being met.

The position is reviewed each week and the supply of trucks adjusted to the changing conditions as they

require the fullest practicable co-operation between the Department and the graziers and others concerned is necessary now more than ever to ensure satisfactory movement of fat stock and the general stock traffic.

### SERVICE

**O**UR ability to provide service of the kind that we like to give has been seriously interfered with by wartime conditions. Curtailed services, late running and uncomfortable crowding of trains, delays to goods in transit—all the outcome of these abnormal conditions—have caused railway users considerable inconvenience. That they are putting up with the inconvenience with very little complaint is proof of their sympathetic understanding of our problems and difficulties.

We are grateful indeed for this helpful attitude on the part of our customers. In return, it is up to us all to give the best service of which we are capable within the conditions that limit us.

If our response includes courtesy and cheerfulness—service with a smile—we need have no fear of losing the reputation, built up over the years, of which we are justifiably proud.

It has constantly been emphasised that early marketing is necessary to spread the traffic; and that loading of trucks to full capacity; marketing by the shortest rail journey and postponing as long as possible the movements of stock are required to assist in relieving the admittedly difficult situation which has arisen.

### V.R. MEN IN CASUALTY LISTS.

CAS. Labr. J. W. Hayward (Killed in Action); Bkg Porter C. C. P. Nye (Killed in Action); Storeman A. E. G. Myers (Missing); Skd. Labr. N. W. Greenhatch (Prisoner of War).

### V.R. ENLISTMENTS

#### A.I.F.

APP. B'maker J. P. Hogan; Office Asst. L. A. Robertson; Clk. H. R. Scown.

#### R.A.A.F.

Jnr. Clk S. E. Allsop; Clk L. S. Andrew; Clk. W. Austin; Lad Labr. I. W. Ballinger; Ftr. & Tnr. L. A. Batty; Clk A. G. Bersey; Clk E. J. Bryant; App. B'maker R. W. Butler; Office Asst. S. F. Butler; Clk H. Dacy; Clk. A. N. Fankhauser; Clk. R. F. Featherstone; Lad Labr. L. D. Fisher; Clk J. C. Flanagan; Lad Labr. B. O. Graham; Clk. B. L. Hall; Clk. F. M. Harris; Jnr. Clk. S. M. Holbrook; Jnr. Clk. L. J. Mangan; Clk. A. D. McLeod; Jnr. Clk. A. W. Moore; Jnr. Clk. R. L. Myers; Clk. R. J. O'Brien; Clk. K. T. Owen; Clk. A. J. Russell; Lad Labr. R. J. Sheedy; Clk. K. N. Smith; Lad Msgr. K. T. Strachan; Jnr. Clk. N. J. Trahair; Clk. W. J. Tratt; Clk. A. R. Wearne; Clk. J. J. Williams; Lad Msgr. K. Willoughby; Fitter's Asst. R. H. Wilson; Jnr. Clk. R. R. Wilson.

#### R.A.N.

Lad Labr. R. J. Mowat; Jnr. Clk. J. D. Passmore; Jnr. Clk. N. J. Robins.

#### W.A.A.A.F.

Miss I. Matthews (Waitress).

#### A.W.A.S.

Miss A. Borbach (Counter Hand).



## MORE RAILWAYMEN SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND

WITH the growth of its responsibilities as the war spreads and quickens, the V.R. Patriotic Fund is naturally in need of more assistance. At present less than 50 per cent. of the railway staff are contributing the modest 3d. per week through the payrolls and it is felt that many more railwaymen would do their bit for this worthy cause if they only realised how much can be done to provide comforts for the lads who are laying down their very lives for our salvation and how little is involved—3d. per week.

This is how some of the monies contributed to the V.R. Patriotic Fund since it was first opened in 1940, have been distributed, and there is no gainsaying the worthiness of the activities that have so far been assisted, viz. :—

Australian Comforts Fund—Cash and Goods ...	£ 4,000
Australian Red Cross Society—Cash and Goods ...	3,000
Australian Red Cross Society for maintenance of railwaymen or sons of railwaymen prisoners of war ...	800
Five Motor Ambulances for A.I.F.	2,500
Air Force House, Blamey House, Navy House and Toc H. ...	1,350
British Bombing Victims' Appeal	1,000
Food for Russia Appeal ...	500
Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian Churches Soldiers' Welfare Organisations ...	450
Contingency Benevolent Fund ...	450
Country Auxiliaries (contributed to local war funds) ...	3,000

That is a formidable record in itself; but now that the Committee administering the Fund has agreed to pay to the Australian Red Cross Society £1 a week for every railwayman or son of a railwayman who is a prisoner of war, and also render temporary assistance to the dependants of railwaymen who have been killed or seriously injured when the dependants are in need of help, it becomes obvious that increased demands on the Fund involve increased contributions.

Whilst the Fund benefits by window collection boxes, special individual donations and the proceeds from raffles, concerts and other entertainments, it is the steady inflow of contributions from the pay envelopes which provides the money for the big payments listed above.

More subscribers are needed to keep the Fund going as could well be expected from such an organization as the Victorian Railways service, and during the coming year the Committee, which is representative of all grades in the service, urges all employees who have not yet authorised the deduction of 6d. per pay from the

payrolls to do so. Just think what it means to provide comforts for fellow railwaymen who are war prisoners, or for the dependants of the less fortunate who have been killed in action.

Let us start a fresh drive and help the Fund reach a new apex in 1943. Your local paying officer will on application obtain the requisite form for you to sign. Then you will have no further trouble and while you will not miss the 6d. per pay you will be doing a great service to a very worthy cause.

### 5th Birthday of "Spirit of Progress"

"SPIRIT of Progress" completed five years of service on November 22 last. Each year has demonstrated the increasing patronage of this popular train as the following figures will show :—

	No. of Passengers			
	"Spirit of Progress"	Melb. to Albury	Daily Average	Albury to Daily Average Melb.
1st year (1937-38)	102,493	277	106,655	292
2nd year	109,850	301	112,521	308
3rd year	123,896	339	132,632	364
4th year	139,946	381	147,110	401
5th year	151,693	414	153,657	420

In the last year (Nov. 1936—Nov. 1937) of the "Sydney Limited" which immediately preceded "Spirit of Progress" 88,086 (or 241 per day) travelled by that train from Melbourne to Albury, whilst 92,964 (255 per day) travelled from Albury to Melbourne. It is interesting to note that more people travelled in the direction of Melbourne than towards Sydney.

It is also worth mentioning in connection with the birthday of the "Spirit of Progress" that on every anniversary of the train's first day of service the S.M. at Spencer Street station has received an anonymous card showing a drawing of the express, and a design of a birthday cake with the appropriate number of candles on top.

This year the drawing arrived on time and it again showed the cake with five candles alight, the figure "5" in a special coloured box over the plume of smoke issuing from the invisible chimney of the locomotive and "Birthday Greetings" written below.

## "THE BATTLE OF THE GAUGES"

IT is interesting to recall that the 4 ft. 8½ in. railway gauge was adopted as standard only after much controversy. The Great Western Railway between London and Bristol opened in 1841, and also other railways to the west of England and in South Wales, which ultimately became part of the Great Western Railway undertaking, were originally constructed "Brunel's gauge" of 7 ft. 0½ in.

When this broad gauge met the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge adopted by the Stephenson's, as it did at Gloucester, a public controversy—which came to be known as the "battle of the gauges"—began as to the respective merits of the two widths, and was afresh whenever new railway construction was put in hand.

In 1845, a Commission was appointed by Parliament to determine the vexed question, and as a result of its report, a Railway Gauge Act was passed forbidding the construction without Parliamentary sanction of any railway of other than 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge for the conveyance of passengers.

At the time of the Commission's deliberations, there were 1,901 miles of narrow and 274 miles of broad gauge track in existence, with conversions of gauge at ten points. Although conversions to narrow gauge were undertaken from 1858 onwards, broad gauge construction actually went on until 1877.

Sentiment played a considerable part in delaying the progress of conversion. The fine performance of such broad gauge expresses as "The Flying Dutchman" and reluctance to scrap unconvertible stock, which included many of the famous "Black Duke" locomotives, helped to delay the ranks of the die-hards, and it was not until 1892—a mere fifty years ago—that the last of the broad gauge in England disappeared.

The 7 ft. 0½ in. gauge was not the only departure from the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge. Approximately 100 miles of what is now the London and North-Eastern Railway was originally constructed to a gauge of 5 ft. In Scotland, lines were laid to both 4 ft. 6 in. and 5 ft. gauges. In fact, there were at least a dozen different gauges in Great Britain when the standard gauge was first adopted.

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