

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

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Issue No. 148

HIGHLIGHTS OF RAILWAY YEAR Excellent Performance of Staff

THE year just closed proved to be one of the most striking in Victorian railway history. War activities were responsible for an unprecedented call on the skill, energy and resources of all sections of the service, and what might be termed the everyday functions of the railways were fully tested by the exceptional demands of the times. War commitments promise continued heavy responsibilities for the railway in 1943.

Reference was made in the November and December issues of the "News Letter" to some of the notable railway activities during the year, including the manufacture of a wide variety of war requirements, and the highly commendable work of the operating staff in transporting (concurrently with heavy civilian traffic) huge numbers of men in the Forces and quantities of war equipment and supplies to the complete satisfaction of the Defence authorities.

Financial highlights of the year ending June 30 last were the revenue (£614,836) and the surplus (£649,000), which, although largely the result of the war, were both records in departmental history. The improved financial position enabled all arrears of depreciation which had accrued since July 1, 1937, and which amounted to over £1,000,000, to be overtaken.

Conserving Coal Supplies

Civil rail transport has been affected to a considerable extent by the necessity for conserving coal supplies, and the preference which has been given to military requirements. This has led to overcrowding and delays to passenger trains and deliveries to goods, but the inconvenience has been accepted with little or no complaint by railway patrons, most of whom have understood something of our difficulties.

The demand on trucks for war and other essential services has been very heavy, so much so that the slack season was conspicuous by its absence. In another part of the "News Letter" reference is made to the outstanding results achieved in goods operation. An important development during the year was the introduction at the direction of the Commonwealth Land Transport Board of a priority system for Interstate passenger travel. The plan, impartially administered, has worked reasonably well.

As an indication of the extent of the Department's direct interest in the war, 1,600 men are now engaged exclusively on the manufacture of munitions, whilst approximately 2,500 are serving with the Army, Navy and Air Forces.

As recorded from time to time with deep regret, a number of gallant railwaymen have been killed in action or are missing, some have been wounded, and others are prisoners of war. Two railwaymen, Corporal M. B. Jenkins and Sergt. Observer R. D. Dangerfield, were decorated. Corporal Jenkins received the Military Medal for particular gallantry at Tobruk, and Sergt. Observer Dangerfield, who was killed in a crash soon after he was honoured, won the D.F.M.

Reference should also be made to Acting Fireman J. H. A. Alford, who was awarded the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society for bravery in saving a child's life on the rail track near Blackburn.

War Savings Subscriptions

There was a conspicuous increase in the number of subscribers to the War Savings Group, and everything points to many additional contributors joining up during 1943.

The marked increase in railway activities coupled with an actual shrinkage of staff indicates that the great majority of railway men and women have good reason to be proud of their performance during the past year. Extensive overtime has been worked cheerfully and well over a long period and vacancies have been hard to fill in the normal way.

In the circumstances considerable help has accrued from the growing employment of women in a variety of spheres. Already we have large numbers engaged on Aircraft Production, Storekeeping, Car Cleaning, Ticket Checking and on Porters' duties generally. Towards the end of the year steps were taken to extend the field to ticket selling and to additional workshop functions.

EX-V.R. MAN BECOMES WAR CORRESPONDENT

SHORTLY joining the war correspondents on the North African front is Mr. Richard Hughes a former member of the staff of the Publicity and Tourist Services, and an ex-editor of the "V.R. Magazine" and the "V.R. News Letter."



Mr. Hughes left the Department in 1933 to join the staff of the Melbourne "Star" now defunct, and from there transferred to the "Daily Telegraph" in Sydney, where for a considerable period he was chief of staff of the "Sydney Sunday Telegraph."

Subsequently his paper sent him on a wide tour abroad including Japan and the United States, and his attractive word pictures of the men and events he encountered in those countries found many interested readers in Australia.

On his return to the Commonwealth, he was engaged as a special writer on many important journalistic missions and was a frequent visitor to Canberra, Melbourne and other capitals.

His appointment as an "accredited war correspondent" in a situation which is almost certain to provide some picturesque "copy" is another brilliant step-up in his career.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS

A.I.F.

CLK. F. A. Ferguson; Lad Lbr. M. J. McCheyne.

R.A.A.F.

CLK. H. A. Brown; Storeman J. A. Chautem; Clk. P. T. Donohue; Jar. Clk. R. W. Driver; Jar. Clk. R. G. Dunning; Comp. L. J. Fittell; Jar. Clk. K. F. Ford; Jar. Clk. G. L. Green; Clk. H. B. Hansen; Clk. G. N. Hingston; Clk. J. E. Hogan; Clk. W. G. Hough; Clk. T. A. Howe; Clk. S. J. M. Kennett; Jar. Clk. R. J. Lamb; App. F. & T. R. W. Lawry; Lad Msgr. M. G. Lewis; Jar. Clk. E. A. Millard; Clk. L. R. O'Brien; Rpr. W. J. Plumb; Clk. L. W. Pollock; Lad. Lbr. M. C. Reid; Clk. H. L. Roach; Clk. F. J. Roberts; Clk. E. W. Seedsman; Jar. Clk. F. White; Painter R. J. Williams; Jar. Clk. K. J. Wilson.

R.A.N.R.

Jnr. Clk. W. A. Baird; Lad Ptr. L. J. Chiswell.

Construction Of New Siding At North Melbourne Will Relieve Congestion

THE provision of additional siding accommodation on the Spion Kop area at North Melbourne, which will be shortly undertaken by the Department, will greatly relieve terminal congestion and facilitate the quicker release of locomotives from arriving goods trains. Another important result that will be achieved is that trucks containing perishables will be more readily placed for delivery. It is estimated that with the improvement to be effected the capacity of this section of the Melbourne Yard will be increased from 410 to 767 trucks or over 87 per cent.

The insufficiency of receiving roads at North Melbourne at present throws undue pressure on the Melbourne Yard. A number of the 13 sidings now available at North Melbourne are too short for the length of freight trains being run today. The consequence is that with the available sidings incoming train loads have to occupy in many cases two sidings instead of one, which not only involves heavy delays but also increases cost of operation.

On a busy day, up to 120 freight trains arrive in the Melbourne Goods Yard within 24 hours, and at the height of the peak 12 long trains arrive in one hour. That is real railroading and reflects the importance of the railways in the life of the community, especially in wartime.

Sometimes, however, up to 15 trains are held back north of Dudley Street for periods of hours at a stretch. As many as ten trains have been held up on the Coburg, North-Eastern and Northern goods arrival lines, whilst three or four more have to stand idly on the sidings at North Melbourne until they can be received in the Yard.

It will well be understood that when the trains are banked up in this way locomotives become locked in and compelled to stand idle, and this results in engines being late supplied for outgoing trains with consequent late running on outward and again on inward journeys. A 4-weekly tally over a recent month revealed that the engine standing time amount to 150 hours a week. If adequate facilities had been available at least 75 per cent of this waste time would have been avoided, thus enabling the Department to give all round better service.

The rush period of the traffic is between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., and it is then that the limitations of the Melbourne Yard as it is today are most pronounced.

It is expected that with the additional sidings to be provided and the extension of the Dyon Road bridge and other alterations—a job that should be completed in about six months—many of the difficulties now associated with the reception and release of important goods trains, will be overcome and better service will be given the patrons of the Department.

Women In Light Engineering Work

EVIDENCE as to the possibilities of women being employed in light engineering work was lately given to the Women's Employment Board by Mr. E. H. Brownbill, Manager of the Newport Workshops and Assistant Controller of the Newport Aircraft Area, in an inquiry into the wages and conditions of women in the aircraft industry.

In the opinion of Mr. Brownbill who has been in a position to study the work of many of the women over the past two years, they are generally doing a splendid job. They are adaptable, quick and conscientious, and on the work so far allotted them they are in most cases giving as high a performance as the men.

The first female recruits in this area were employed on inspection work and on stores; but the range of activities for women has been expanded to include a wide variety of repetition work including rivetting, drilling, heat treatment and other jobs throughout the area. As a result of their ex-

perience from 30 to 40 per cent. have advanced to the grade of assembler which approaches that of a "tradesman."

Girls are particularly competent in light drilling and rivetting and some are handling drilling "jigs." Others are engaged in brazing and soldering, and it is quite likely that they will ultimately be employed on welding.

Others are performing in a very competent manner intricate assembly work.

One aspect of female labour that impressed Mr. Brownbill in these various tasks was the general eagerness to do a good job, occasionally exhibited by signs of distress if a girl "has spoilt anything."

There are now about 300 women in the aircraft section at Newport, and if the pressure for aircraft production continues it is not unlikely that ultimately 500 or 600 will be employed.

STRIKING RECORD IN TRUCK TRANSPORT

FOR the week ending November 21 last, 20,001 trucks were loaded by the Victorian Railways. The next highest totals on record are 19,700 truck loads for the week ending November 14, 1941, and 19,700 truck loads in January last year.

But for limitations of manpower and coal owing to the reduced supplies available for railway purposes, the volume of traffic would have been considerably higher.

A good portion of the previous season's wheat has been carried in the last two months. Elevators have to be emptied by early in December and large quantities of bagged wheat removed from siding frontages made to special stacking sites in the country to make room for the new harvest. The amount of wheat loaded in the month of November last was over 2 million bushels more than during the same month of 1941.

REMARKABLE GOODS TRAIN PERFORMANCES.

THE following interesting little table reveals the great improvement in goods train services that was achieved in November last.

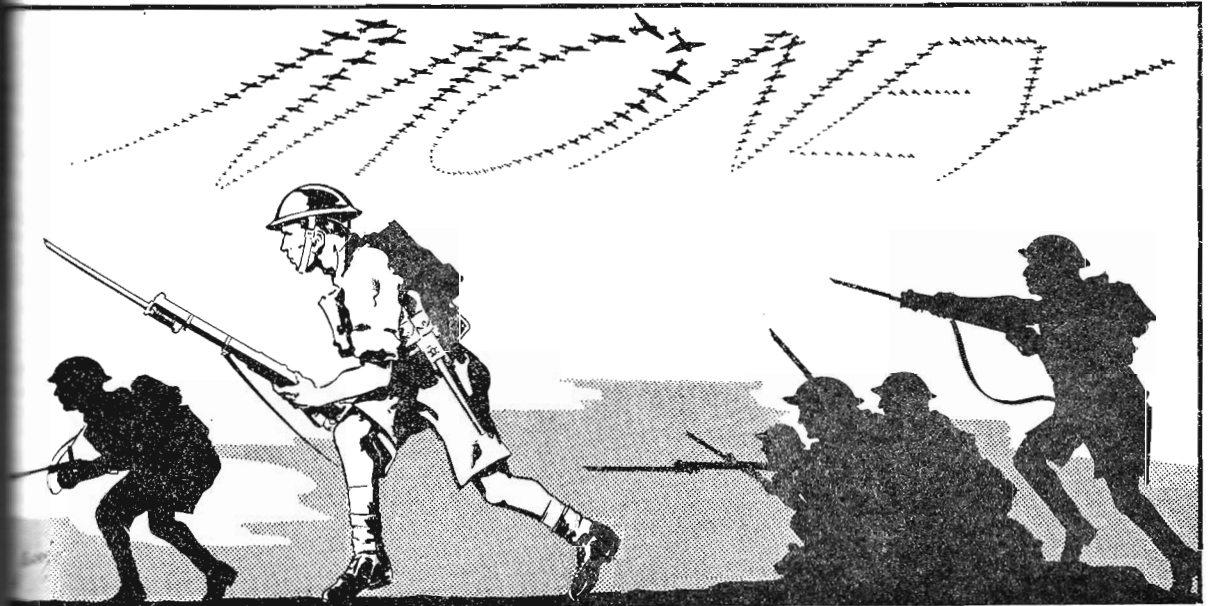
	Nov., 1942	Previous Best & date obtained	Per cent. end-ing
Average miles per truck per day	35.5	31.6	5/2.3
Ton Miles (Contents) per truck per day	227	219	3/2.4
Gross Ton miles per goods train hour	5,320	5,322	31/8.4
Gross goods load per mile	505	493	26/9.4

Those headings are standards by which operating efficiency in goods working is measured and the results shown reflect the highest credit on all concerned. They are all the more valuable for being achieved at a time when it was imperative in the national interest that the best possible results be obtained from the available rolling stock and equipment.

Factors in the record results have been the closer attention given by staff to obviating delays to trucks and trains and the increased co-operation of railway truck users in loading trucks to fuller capacity and releasing trucks more promptly.

The Commissioners are delighted with the excellent results achieved and seek the co-operation of the truck and railway users in obtaining better results in the New Year. It would be a further striking contribution to the National war effort and help to further enhance the reputation of the Victorian Railways for prompt and efficient service.

THE BEST "UMBRELLA" FOR OUR FIGHTING MEN!



A Suggested New Year Resolution: "I will pay 1/- a week into the V.R. War Savings Group."

A U.S. WAR CORRESPONDENT CONTRIBUTES TO THE V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND

ONE of the interesting stories of the war concerns the receipt of £1 by the V.R. Patriotic Fund from Mr. L. B. Sebring, War correspondent in Australia for the New York "Herald Tribune." When Mr. Sebring was visiting in South Australia, a newly tanned friend there promised him kangaroo skin. After the correspondent had departed for a northern address the skin was forwarded by rail addressed to Mr. Sebring in Melbourne. As it was claimed it duly came into the possession of the Claims Agent who immediately communicated with Mr. Sebring. The latter forwarded 10/- with the suggestion that if the skin was good it might be mailed to his home in the United States.

It was then found that the skin would have to be tanned, and the firm which it was submitted declared it would cost much more than ten shillings offered. However, as a gesture to the representative nation to which Australia owes much, the firm agreed to tan the skin for 10/-. On receipt of this information Mr. Sebring forwarded the £1, and as a token of his gratitude the money has gone to the Patriotic Fund. Not the least important feature of the story is that the skin, when properly tanned, will be sent to America packed under the personal supervision of officers in the Claims Agent's division.

The V.R. Patriotic Fund benefits considerably from the collection boxes attached to the windows of suburban railway stations. People drop the small change from their fares into these boxes and since they were first installed a total of £721 has been secured. Mostly comprising coins to the value of 6d., 3d. and one penny, the money has also included an occasional French 5- or 10-centime piece, coins from most other European countries and—curio of curios—a rare fourpenny piece, about the size of our 3d. It is dated 1836 and bears on one side the profile of William IV.

* * *

Near one of these boxes lately Mr. W. A. Marshall, V.R. Road Motor Driver, picked up a 10/- note. He handed it into the S.M. at the suburban station and it was duly sent on to the head office. It is the practice of the Department to keep lost money for 6 months and if it is unclaimed return it to the finder. In this instance the money was not claimed and was duly returned by cheque to Mr. Marshall. That good railwayman handed it to the V.R. Patriotic Fund establishing in that nice gesture a precedent that other finders of lost money who receive it back in due course would do well to follow.

* * *

In this record of generosity the name of Miss I. Llewellyn of Brighton deserves a place. Some time ago she bought a return ticket from her station to Melbourne, but being unable to use it claimed for the return of the money. This was done, but the lady forwarded the amount to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Impressed by the cordial note of thanks which she received from the Secretary (Mr.

Help to Finance The War

DURING the past year, the number of subscribers to the V.R. War Savings Group increased by nearly 30 per cent., easily the greatest improvement since the War Savings plan was inaugurated in June, 1940. The face value of certificates purchased is now approximately £50,000. That is a useful performance but we must strive for an even higher achievement.

When thousands of young Australians are on the battle fronts risking their lives in their country's cause, the least that can be expected from those in exempt occupations or otherwise unfitted for active service by age or disability is an assurance that our fighting men shall not want for anything they need. Keeping them amply munitioned demands millions of money poured out regularly and fully—for railwaymen a steady contribution in connection with the purchase of War Savings Certificates and Loan Bonds.

W. E. Elliott)—she had frequently contributed much larger sums elsewhere without ever previously receiving that personal note which counts so much—she has since sent along further instalments to the V.R. Patriotic Fund—the latest being a postal note to the value of 5/- as a "Xmas box."

Talking of seasonal thoughts we must not forget to mention the kindness of a number of Powers machine girls in the Accountancy Branch. Usually about Christmas they give each other small gifts, but this Christmas decided to forego this pleasure and hand over the money they had intended spending among themselves to the Sun Toy Fund which is now better off by £62.0. Well done, girls!

ANOTHER V.R. MAN ENTERS POLITICS

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. Clive Stoneham who has been elected member for Maryborough in the Victorian Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Stoneham, who is 34, has been an employe of the railways since May, 1924, and but for short periods at the Windsor railway station and in the office of the Ambulance Officer in Melbourne he has served as a clerk in the Maryborough railway station.

An excellent speaker, a practised debater and an enthusiast in municipal affairs—he is now mayor of Maryborough—Mr. Stoneham is the third V.R. man in recent years to achieve a place in Australian politics.

The other two are Mr. A. S. Drakeford, Minister for Air and Civil Aviation, and Senator R. V. Keane, Minister for Trade and Customs, in the present Federal Cabinet. Mr. Drakeford was formerly an engine driver and Mr. Keane worked for many years in the Accountancy Branch.

V.R. CASUALTIES, MISSING, PRISONERS OF WAR.

Signalman H. D. Oppy (killed in action); Ck. R. Milgate (missing); Lad Ptr. E. M. Kroschel (prisoner of war). The following are missing, believed prisoners of war: Lbr. A. W. Barton, Lbr. R. E. Connor; Shunter G. Dickenson; Ptr. H. L. Matthews.

"News Letter" Appreciated By V.R. Men Abroad

THE "News Letter" continues to receive letters from railwaymen serving abroad, all of them appreciative of the topical and interesting news which it contains and which generally reaches them in due course.

For instance, Supernumerary Laborer W. A. Jacobson, late of the North Melbourne Loco., and now a proud member of the R.A.N.V.R., tells us that "the whole time I've been on active service the V.R. 'News Letter' has reached me in all sorts of ports—foreign, home, and even been transhipped at sea."

Ex-Operating Porter H. A. Tyson, who is also in the Navy, and whose ship took part in some of the Solomon's operations, records the regular receipt of the "News Letter."

A. W. Ferguson, formerly acting fireman, and now a Sergeant Air Gunner in the R.A.A.F., who has also travelled widely, has not received the "News Letter" so regularly, but hopes that the paper will pick him up at his now distant address.

He incidentally mentions that he has visited Christchurch (N.Z.), Colon (Central America), Norfolk (Virginia), New York and Halifax, and adds that "I'm certainly looking forward to the successful conclusion of this war, when I'll be able to take my place once more with my mate in the cab. Working on the footplate certainly gets in one's blood."

MR. A. H. CADD ON LOAN TO COMMONWEALTH

THE services of Mr. A. H. Cadd, Chief Clerk, Electrical Engineering Branch, have been sought by the Commonwealth for important work in connection with the war effort, and he has been loaned for a period of three months. He commenced his new duties on November 2nd last. During Mr. Cadd's term with the Commonwealth, Mr. A. E. Seabridge will be acting Chief Clerk of the Electrical Engineering Branch.

Because of Mr. Cadd's wide and intimate knowledge of electricity supply matters throughout Australia the Deputy Director-General of Munitions, Mr. N. Brodribb, asked for his services to act as personal assistant to the Controller, and to inaugurate and supervise the clerical organisation.

Realising the vital importance of electricity supply in the prosecution of the war and manufacture of munitions, the Commonwealth Government has recently, under National Security Regulations, established an organisation to provide adequate and continuous supplies of electricity where required throughout the Commonwealth.

The Controller of Electricity Supply is authorised to standardise, ration, acquire, and control output, and is responsible for securing supplies of materials, plant and labour necessary to ensure the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity.

BIG WAR EFFORT OF AMERICAN RAILROAD

THIS extract from a pamphlet issued by Mr. J. L. Beven, President of the Illinois Central Railroad (U.S.A.) is worth reading closely by every Victorian railwayman. It reveals the formidable result of a great co-operative effort in the purchase of American war bonds:

"Up to the middle of July some 93 per cent. of the Illinois Central's 37,256 employes had subscribed for war bonds. Monthly payroll deductions totalled \$283,671. On a yearly basis these would account for purchases totalling \$3,404,052. Cash purchases otherwise, including pre-campaign deductions, were reported to total \$1,788,924. Combined, these indicate a total year's purchases aggregating \$5,192,976 (£1,579,530), a sum not far short of 10 per cent. of the railroad's total payroll in 1941.

"I want to pay a sincere tribute of approval to the personnel of the railway labour organizations, who went to bat in great style for this essential patriotic enterprise and assured its success."

More Railwaymen Joining The Colors

THE loyalty of the younger members of the Victorian Railway service has been demonstrated by the fact that up to the end of December over 2,500 men have joined the colours. Although the Department is making every effort to release as many men as possible for active service, there will necessarily be many cases where some young and active men have to be denied the privilege of "doing their bit." These are men who cannot be easily replaced and whose absence may affect the efficiency of the service.

Factors that have assisted the Department in the mounting manpower problem are the working of longer hours and the employment of women in an increasing number of grades.

The women who are already employed and who have shown a very keen interest in their work have helped to fill the gaps made by previous enlistments and call-ups in the Transportation Branch; but with the utilization of additional women in the Transportation and other Branches and the engagement of lads still under military age, the Railways should be in a position to continue to render efficient service.

REMOVING BRICKS FROM "PROTECTED" WINDOWS

TO improve the working conditions in the rooms on the lower floor of the Spencer Street head office the half of the brickwork in the window which was erected in the early part of last year, is now being removed. Ventilation will be distinctly more effective and natural lighting should be better for the staff.

The bricking up of the window was carried out at a very critical time in accordance with the general scheme of staff protection against the effects of possible air raids.

About 40 per cent of the bricks are being removed from approximately 100 windows on the two floors concerned.

THIS IS SERVICE.

THE Chairman (Mr. N. C. Hart) recently received through Colonel Newman, Director of Railway Transportation, Department of the Army, Melbourne, the following tribute to Victorian railway service written by the Commanding General of certain American soldiers passing through the State:

"I should like to express my appreciation of the quality of the service rendered at railway stations during the recent movement of a large formation, and of the efficiency displayed by the civilian personnel engaged in supervising, preparing and distributing our meals.

I should esteem it a favor if you would convey my gratitude to the officials of the Australian Railways who co-operated in this movement. The courtesy and efficiency of their staffs in the preparation and rapid feeding of large numbers of our men under difficult conditions were notable.

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

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ACCOUNTANCY AND STORES BRANCHES' EXCELLENT WAR RECORD

ALTHOUGH the work of the Accountancy and Stores Branches is necessarily lacking in the dramatic achievements which appeal to the eye and the ear of the average onlooker, both of those essential sections of Victoria's greatest industry have nevertheless been responsible for a record of loyal and efficient service, often under difficulties scarcely appreciated by the outsider.

At the outbreak of war the staff of the Accountancy Branch was approximately 600—510 males and 90 females. Since then 220 male clerks have gone off the strength—181 to the service and 39 to Commonwealth departments, and they have been replaced by females. At the same time the costing of a large volume of production work has been undertaken.

To bridge the gap in numbers and efficiency of this staff it has been necessary to reduce the normal range of railway statistics and accounts. It has also become necessary to work a considerable amount of overtime. Despite work to the amount of £4,000,000 already been undertaken for the Commonwealth and the costing accounts alone have been tremendous.

Responsibilities

In addition to these functions which attained record levels, the Accountancy Branch has accepted other responsibilities in connection with the fortnightly deductions from pay envelopes for Income Tax, War Savings Certificates, Patriotic Fund, and each one an activity involving a good deal of work.

Not less impressive is the performance of the Stores Branch.

It will be realised that providing for the normal peace requirements of a big industry like the railways is a formidable job for any supply department; but in war the difficulties of purchasing our needs increase enormously. Yet despite its much greater responsibilities the Stores Branch has repeatedly adapted itself to changing conditions.

This Branch also is associated with many war activities such as Machine Gun Carrier Section, Shell Annexe, and a wide range of unusual requirements, while the costing section of the Branch has

repeatedly undertaken important high grade work for the Army and the R.A.A.F.

During the twelve months prior to the outbreak of war stocks of key items were increased substantially. That wise course has been of striking value in maintaining continuity of work, which would otherwise have been unattainable. With a few notable exceptions, such as coal and boiler plate, work has rarely been held up for long through lack of material.

Whilst the necessity to obtain priorities, authorities to purchase and other formalities greatly complicated normal procedure, the Branch has secured the co-operation of directorates and firms (who, of course, have difficulties of their own) concerned with the supply of railway material.

Some of the wartime routine activities of the Stores Branch include unusual shipping arrangements, the advance forecasting of requirements of many classes of material, the over-landing of coal supplies and the provision of charcoal for the Department's gas producer rail and road vehicles.

The Branch is, in fact, a large wholesale and retail emporium—its importance being gauged by the fact that the value of the stores and supplies issued last financial year reached £3,365,941, while the value of the stock held at 30th June last was nearly 1½ million pounds.

V.R. CASUALTIES, MISSING, PRISONERS OF WAR.

VANMAN R. Geldart (killed in action); **Shunter J. E. Einsiedel** (previously reported missing now reported drowned as a result of enemy action); **Sup. Porter R. M. Woolhouse** (died of wounds); **Clerk K. E. Milgate** (missing); **Clerk J. J. Chute** (prisoner of war).

Another V.R. Man Wins the D.F.M.

PILOT Officer Clive William Miller, who joined the R.A.A.F. in May, 1940, is another railwayman who has won the coveted Distinguished Flying Medal. The decoration is the re-



ward for outstanding courage and tenacity as pilot of a Catalina aircraft somewhere on the Australian fighting front.

It is stated that in numerous raids on enemy bases he persistently pressed home his attacks to the full. Pilot Officer Miller joined the railways as a supernumerary lad messenger in 1933, and in the following year became a junior clerk. As a clerk subsequently he served in the office of Mr. B. Kelly, Commissioners' Representative, Transport Regulation Board, exhibiting exceptional intelligence and industry in everything he undertook.

SERVICE

GOOD railway work, which he has been in position to notice and appreciate, is cordially referred to by the Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies, K.C., M.P., in the following letter to the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris) received just before Christmas:

"My dear Chairman

I am sending this note to let you know of my keen appreciation of the efficient and courteous service which has been rendered to me during the past year by your officers in the Canberra-Sydney booking office.

Probably no men have worked at greater pressure, but invariably they have been most helpful, and even in the face of unavoidable cancellations and alterations they have dealt imperturbably with the situation. I would be grateful if you would let them know that their assistance has been fully appreciated.

I would like to add a word of praise for the stewards on the "Spirit" dining car; they have coped magnificently with many difficulties and they have my sincere admiration.

With kind personal regards and with my best wishes for Christmas and the coming year to you and the whole of the Victorian Railways organisation.

I am,

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.) Robert Menzies.

96 Apprentices Begin New Careers

THE attraction of the railways as a field of employment to young ambitious lads below military age is still very strong. A total of 627 boys recently applied for apprenticeships. 192 have been selected as suitable and 96 of them, chosen by ballot, commenced work on January 11. These include 33 apprentice fitters and turners; 22 electrical fitters; 10 moulders; 9 boiler-makers and the remainder are distributed over various trades embracing blacksmith, carpenter, boilermaker, coppersmith, interlocking fitter, locksmith, painter, patternmaker, sailmaker and tinsmith and sheet metal worker.

The Board of Selectors, comprising Mr. J. Fowler (Staff Board) as Chairman, Mr. K. F. Wood (Asst. Workshops Manager, Spotswood) and Mr. F. S. Kent (Staff Officer, Rolling Stock) interviewed lads in Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong, Bendigo, Maryborough, Ararat, Horsham, Traralgon, Wangaratta and Mildura.

Horsham was included in their itinerary for the first time because of the number of local applicants.

Several interesting stories were heard of the tenacity of boys determined to get the necessary education to qualify for a place in Victoria's largest industry.

One lad, who was employed as an assistant operator at the local movie theatre at night, travelled 126 miles a day to his technical school, and had only time at night to snatch a meal before commencing his job in the picture theatre. Nevertheless, he found time in his busy day to study

and won his intermediate technical certificate in his first year.

Another successful applicant hails from Chinkapook in the Mallee, 250 miles from Melbourne. Acquiring the necessary education in the Bendigo School of Mines compelled him to board in Bendigo. It is a striking comment on the present war situation that in order to help his parents with the harvest he has had to defer entering the railways until later in the year.

To the new apprentices the "News Letter" extends a sincere and hearty welcome to the railway family and the hope that they will have success and happiness in their new sphere. As they enter upon the work for which they have been selected they should realise that there are great opportunities for useful service in the railways, and valuable prizes for those who are prepared to apply themselves earnestly. We feel sure they will find that their fellow employes will be willing and eager to help them, and that ultimately they will have the same pride in the service that the older members of the staff have.

REMARKABLE XMASTRAVEL FIGURES

DESPITE the fact that fewer trains were available from Spencer Street and Flinders Street stations over the Christmas holiday period, 18,335 more passengers were carried to the country in 1942 than in 1941—15,192 more from Spencer Street and 3,143 from Flinders Street.

This increase was due largely to petrol rationing and to the rigid control of bookings for each train, which induced a desirable spread of the traffic over a number of days. Only 60 special trains were scheduled, compared with 156 in 1941, and most of them were loaded to capacity. It is worth noting here that the actual mileage involved in the special trains closely approximated that authorised by the Land Transport Board. The difficult task assigned to booking clerks was carried out very creditably.

On Thursday, December 24, a total of 20,695 passengers left Spencer Street in 37 trains, an average of 559 per train, whilst 9,247 departed from Flinders Street station in 20 trains—an average of 462 per train. On Christmas Day, 32 trains starting at Spencer Street carried 13,009 passengers to various country destinations, the average being 406 in each train. The

tally from Flinders St. was 6,265 in 15 trains giving an average of 417.

Some of the trains carried exceptionally heavy loads, due to service leave travel, the volume of which could not be estimated.

Restrictions on petrol and on country rail travel coupled with hot weather stimulated a marked increase in suburban passenger movement.

Throughout the holidays indicated, the transport of these great crowds was completed without any serious hitch or delay—another example of first-class team work on the part of all concerned, which has been a source of much gratification to the Commissioners.

SH-H !

*If you've news of our munitions,
Keep it dark.*

*Ships or plans or transportation,
Keep it dark.*

*Lives are lost through conversation—
Here's a tip for the conversation,*

*When you've private information,
Keep it dark.*

THREE POPULAR MEN LEAVE THE SERVICE

AT the beginning of the year the familiar figures departed from the Spencer Street Head Office. Chief Inspector Grieve of the Railway Special Inquiry Division, Mr. "Harry" Johnson, Officer-in-Charge of the correspondence room in the Secretary's Branch and Mr. James J. Meares, who for about 13 years was in charge of holiday and special time tables in the Transportation Branch.

Chief Inspector Grieve, who was leaving to take charge of the area of the C.I. Branch with headquarters at Flinders Street, came to the Department in 1929 and has had control of the special inquiry work of the Department directing the spread activities of a staff of 50.

Inspector Grieve has been a member of the C.I. Branch for 25 years.

One outstanding feature of Mr. Johnson's long and honorable career is a record of 51½ years' service under no less than 25 Commissioners.

He was only a boy of 12 when he started as a supernumerary in the Telegraph Branch on Derby Day, 1890. After brief periods in the old Telegraph Branch and Yard Inspector's office, followed by eight months in private employ, he entered the Secretary's Branch and remained there continuously until retirement at the beginning of the present year.

He was appointed a permanent officer in 1897, and took charge of the correspondence room in April, 1913. On his departure he was presented with a cheque, the gift of colleagues in the Secretary's Branch.

Mr. Meares started as a clerk in 1897 and was transferred to the District Supt.'s office at Flinders Street in 1913. Subsequently he spent about seven years as Station clerk, Flinders Street, from which he was transferred to the old Transporting Bureau, thence to the train division.

On his departure from the Department he was presented by Mr. Rogers, Acting Asst. Supt. of the Transportation, with a case of pipes for himself and a piece of crystal ware for Mr. Meares.

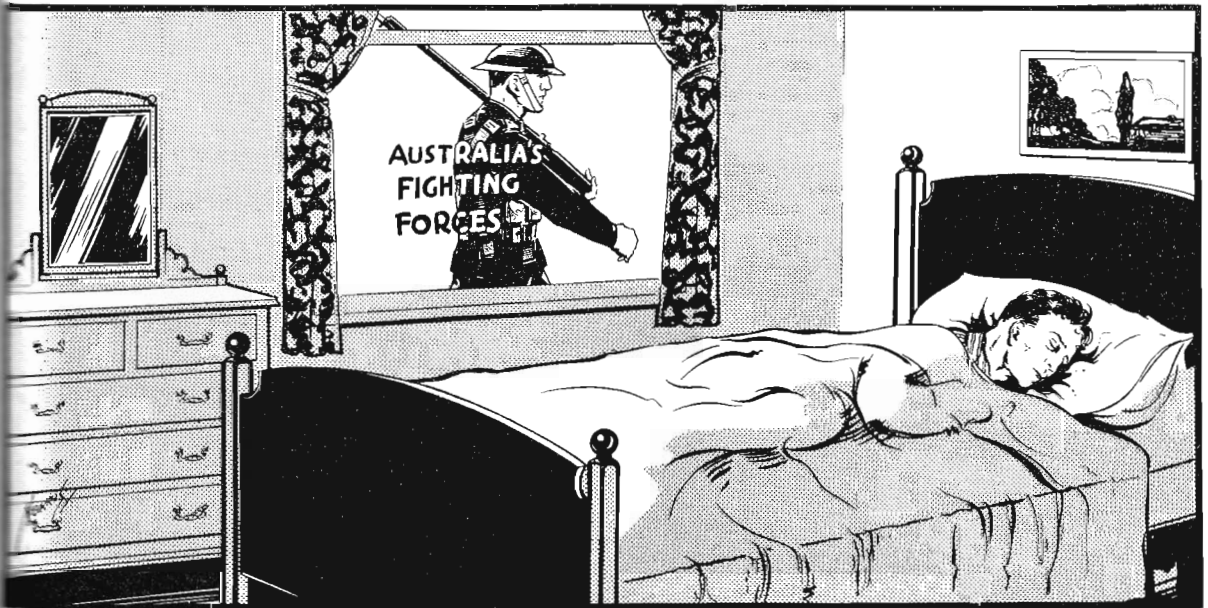


Chief Inspector Grieve



Mr. "Harry" Johnson

HOW IS IT WE SLEEP SO EASILY ?



Let Us All Help To Pay For This Protection. Join The War Savings Group To-day

MORE CONTRIBUTORS WANTED FOR V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND

THE V.R. Patriotic Fund Committee is starting the New Year by making another appeal to those members of the railway service who are not contributing to the Fund.

A printed circular signed by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. J. Canny, and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. E. Elliott, conveying a good deal of information regarding the work of the Committee, has been forwarded to every member of the Service. The Committee has taken the opportunity to provide on the back of the circular a form of authority to enable regular deductions for the Fund to be made from salaries and wages. All non-contributors are urged to sign this form, and it is hoped that there will be a considerable increase in the present number.

The Committee, which has already distributed funds amounting to over £7,000, is maintaining the high purpose of reserving every penny received for its main objects, viz., (a) comforts for Australian soldiers, sailors and airmen, (b) Red Cross equipment such as ambulances, leg splints, etc., (c) an amount of £1 per week for every railwayman, and (d) assistance where required to dependants of railwaymen who have been killed or seriously injured.

The whole of the money contributed to the Fund is used for the patriotic purposes indicated above; which is to say that no charge whatever is made

for expenses of the organisation. The many hundreds of railwaymen who are not members are earnestly urged to start their New Year well by authorising the deduction of 3d. a week from the fortnightly pay envelope.

* * *

To assist the Patriotic Fund the Committee has decided to stage a number of dances at the V.R. Institute at intervals of about a month. The first was held on Boxing Night, the second on Saturday, January 30, and arrangements are being made for similar events on February 27 and March 6. Admission is only 2/6d., including tax, and provides for a pleasant evening of modern dances from 8 p.m. to 11.45 p.m. with a good orchestra and refreshments. The Committee expects by this means to raise at least £200 for the benefit of the Fund by the close of the present year, and all who are interested should come along and help the good cause.

* * *

A few weeks prior to Christmas, a donation of £200, was made to the Australian Comforts Fund for the purchase of Xmas hampers for members of the Australian Fighting Forces. Over 600 hampers, each one containing a Xmas pudding, condensed milk, tobacco and other attractive items, were sent to various remote addresses

both on land and sea. Each hamper contained a special card indicating the source of the gift, and many of these are now being returned to the V.R. Patriotic Committee. They all warmly echo the sentiment of a nursing sister on a hospital ship who wrote with concentrated feeling the two simple words, "Grateful thanks."

* * *

Just before the close of 1942, the V.R. Patriotic Committee arranged a little evening for the benefit of the large number of voluntary helpers who have given their assistance during the year. It was decided that any costs involved should be shared by individual members of the Committee and a very delightful evening was the result. It was highly appreciated by the 90 people present, and among the events was the disposal of a Christmas cake made and presented by Mrs. S. Jones of Murtoa.

* * *

This lady's husband and six sons have joined the colours. Two sons are prisoners of war, and in gratitude for the £1 a week provided for one lad out of the V.R. Funds—he was previously employed in the V.R. Refreshment Rooms, Flinders Street—she cooked this great cake. It was admirably regarded by many present and realised the sum of £1 10s. Mrs. Jones was forwarded a receipt for this amount and informed that the money would be earmarked as contribution to the Australian Red Cross Society's "Prisoners of War" Fund.

Valiant V.R. Soldier Passes On

THE "News Letter" learns with deep regret of the death in New Guinea of Corporal V. R. G. Thomas, an A.I.F. veteran and ex-railwayman, who had seen considerable service in the field ambulance in the Middle East, Syria and Tobruk. It was his fate to be killed on the day after his long and loyal service had won him promotion to the rank of Corporal.

Corporal Thomas, who has one brother also serving in New Guinea and another qualifying for a commission in the Air Force, had the distinction of being the first child to be born in Chillingollah, the Mallee area where his father spent some years in farming.

The boy's own early inclination was towards railway work, and he served for over two years as a supernumerary track repairer at Mathoura, N.S.W. In October, 1941, the "News Letter" published a lengthy extract from a letter by him, detailing his experiences as a stretcher bearer in the Middle East.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS

R.A.A.F.

JNR. Clk. J. G. Beagley; Clk. T. E. Dewar; Lad Msgr. K. Ford; App. Crpnr. N. J. Harper; Jnr. Clk. A. R. Hibbins; Clk. S. J. Howe; Super. Car Painter J. L. Kent; Clk. H. F. O'Brien; App. F. & T. W. B. Treweek, Jnr. Clk. N. J. Wadsworth.
R.A.N.—Jnr. Clk. W. A. Walsh.

V.R. AIRMAN IN THE NEWS

FLYING Officer "Dick" Roe is again reported in the press for his cool, skilful work in the big blitz on a Japanese convoy at Lae last month.

A war correspondent mentions how he attacked an anti-aircraft gun and sent the crew scampering.

Just as he cleared the gun he saw a Japanese medium bomber on the ground and set it ablaze. Next he headed for a Japanese transport from which a Bofors type gun was becoming a nuisance.

Roe flew down and attacked the gun from about the same level. Lifting his plane over the ship he saw that the gun crew had bolted. He finished up his day by sinking two Japanese barges on the seaward side of the transport.

Flying Officer Roe is a railwayman. He joined the Rolling Stock Branch as a supernumerary clerk in 1934 and enlisted in the R.A.A.F. in 1940. Subsequently, he was sent to England where he was a member of a night fighter service. In this part of his career he had his first experience of the Beaufighter plane and returned to Australia as an expert Beaufighter pilot.

FLASH BUTT WELDER'S STRIKING RECORD

SINCE the installation of the flash butt welder at Spotswood in August, 1936, over 100,000 welds have been made. Up to date, only two faults have been detected, and these were due to invisible defects in the rail itself. This is surely a remarkable record.

Welding greatly increases the life of the rail, and just as greatly reduces maintenance by the elimination of about 80 per cent. of mechanical joints.

The standard length for the heavier welded rails is 270 feet, and old 80-lb. rails destined for a new life are usually welded into 200-foot lengths. Again, 100-foot has been commonly adopted for welded 60-lb. and 75-lb. rails.

The longest lengths of welded rails on the Victorian system are on the Geelong line between Newport and Laverton. The lengths are, respectively, 4,748 feet and 4,321 feet. Rails of standard length were first thermit welded into lengths of 225 feet, which were then thermit welded again on the track. They have been down seven years.

The possibilities of flash butt welding have been realized in other Departmental activities. Bridge rails and joists are now extensively welded. It has been the general practice for some years to lengthen rails unfit for further use on the track by the same convenient process and use them as iron telegraph posts. Recently, 1,200 telegraph posts were produced in this way.

Commonwealth Minister's Christmas Tribute

NOT the least of the activities of the Power House and Workshops' staffs at Newport is the amount of urgent repair work done for naval and merchant vessels. It is impossible here to detail the jobs, often involving emergency attention, which have been completed to the satisfaction of all concerned, but the achievement shared in the tribute from the Hon. Norman J. O. Makin, Minister for the Navy and Munitions.

In a Christmas message circulated widely throughout Australia the Minister writes appreciatively as follows:

"Concerning ship repair work, a message has been received from the British Ministry of War Transport expressing appreciation of all that has been done to minimise delays to merchant shipping, and stressing the importance of quickening the movements of our shipping as a means of bringing nearer final victory in this war.

"These messages are a source of deep gratification to me, and I feel it a privilege to be able to pass them on to all who have contributed in any way to the shipbuilding and repair side of the Australian National War Effort.

V.R. EXAM. RESULTS

WARM congratulations to the following students who gained the highest percentages of marks in the educational classes conducted by the Victorian Railways Institute during the year 1942:—

Engine Working—Junior Grade.	
I. Milley	Cleaner, Benalla.
Senior Grade.	
J. Gladstone	Fireman, Yarram.
Westinghouse Brake—Junior Grade.	
J. G. Day	Cleaner, Bendigo.
Senior Grade.	
P. Confeggie	Fireman, Warrnambool.
Internal Combustion—Engine Mechanics.	
J. V. Williams	Dependent V.R. Member.
Permanent Way Construction and Maintenance.	
Junior Grade—Track Ganger's Section.	
K. Nener	Repairer, Carlisle.
Senior Grade—Special Ganger and Road Foreman's Section.	
D. G. Hampson	Platelay, Special Ganger, Doyle, Flin.
Safeworking—"A" Division—Signalling.	
E. W. Frank	Porter, Castlemaine.
"B" Division—Train Running.	
L. Tuohy	Shunter, Melbourne Yard.
Station Accounts and Management	
Junior Grade—Operating Porter's Section.	
F. Bateman	Op. Porter, Nagambie.
Storeman's Duties—Junior Grade.	
J. G. Amos	Labr. Stores, Maryborough.
Senior Grade—	
W. R. Carter	Storeman, Dimboola.
Ticket Checking.	
Miss M. L. Willson	Ticket Checker, Flinders St.
Bookkeeping—Grade 1.	
J. Murphy	Jnr. Clerk, Newport.
English and Arithmetic.	
C. Scott	Lad Porter, Ormond.
Shorthand—Elementary Theory.	
Miss V. Harding	Jnr. Clerk, Electricity Commission, Melbourne.
Advanced Theory.	
Miss V. Fletcher	Dependent V.R. Member.
Speed.	
W. J. S. Kirkpatrick	Jnr. Clerk, Melbourne Goods.
Typewriting.	
Miss E. Wilcock	Jnr. Typist, Branch, Newport.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

March, 1943

Issue No. 150

FOG SIGNALLERS WANTED!

WINTER will soon be on us and the question of safeguarding trains during fogs is already demanding the attention of the Department. From the aspect of safety, as well as from the point of view of facilitating the running of trains during fogs, it is imperative that a large number of signals in the metropolitan area be manned by fog-signalmen.

Normally the manning of the various fog signalling posts throughout the metropolitan area is achieved without much difficulty, but this year the situation will be complicated by the absence of men who are usually available for this particular duty.

Some of those men are now members of the fighting forces, others are engaged on work from which they cannot be released, and from a preliminary survey at least 100 additional men will be needed to be available as required as fog signalmen.

The Commissioners therefore appeal to railwaymen generally who reside within reasonable distance of railway stations and particularly members of the clerical staff, who are working a day shift to volunteer for this important duty.

The crisis through which our country is passing demands that we all do our utmost to assist in whatever manner we can, and railwaymen who respond to this appeal will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are assisting in the safe and expeditious transport of thousands of men and women engaged in the manufacture of munitions, aircraft, etc.

In a normal winter, the necessity of manning fog signalling posts in the early morning occurs only infrequently—last year there were only a few occasions when widespread manning of fog posts was required. It is possible, of course, that more frequent calls will be necessary this year.

Volunteers, who are accepted for fog signalling duty, however, will be expected to undertake such duty whenever required during the winter of 1943, and they will be paid in accordance with the Award of the Victorian Classification Board, the present rate for actual fog signalling being double ordinary rate.

Volunteers should apply through the Head of their Branch to the General Superintendent of Transportation (Room 54) from whom any further information desired may be obtained.

HONOUR FOR GALLANT AIRMAN

NAMING aerodromes after gallant airmen who have lost their lives or are reported missing is an original honor which has been introduced by the Headquarters, North Western area of the R.A.A.F.



Flight Lieut.
P. H. R. Hodge

One of the first names to be perpetuated in this way is that of Flight Lieutenant P. H. R. Hodge, a former Victorian Railwayman, who is believed to have been killed in a raid somewhere north of Australia. An aerodrome in the Northern Territory now bears the name of Hodge.

In a letter to the airman's bereaved mother, the Secretary of the Casualty Section, Department of Air, says that Flight Lieutenant Hodge "has served his country with conspicuous ability and loyalty" and he adds the hope "that in your present anxiety you will find some consolation in the knowledge that the name of your son is remembered with gratitude and pride by his fellow members of the Air Force."

The late Flight Lieutenant Hodge, who was 29 years of age, joined the Department as an Apprentice Fitter and Turner in the Signal and Telegraph Workshops in 1929. He completed his apprenticeship in 1934, and resigned from the Department to enter the Air Force in the following year. His brother, Mr. W. Hodge, is Officer-in-Charge of the Transportation Stores, Flinders Street, and another brother, Mr. J. Hodge, is a fitter at Newport Workshops.

Another V. R. Man For Commonwealth

ANOTHER compliment to the Victorian Railway service is the selection by the Commonwealth Defence authorities of the Departmental Ambulance Officer, Mr. W. J. Blackburn, for special work over a period of three months. The task for which Mr. Blackburn has been engaged will involve duties for which he is particularly fitted. Whilst serving he will hold army rank as Captain in the A.A.M.C.

He joined the Department in 1916 as a clerk in the office of the Auditor of Receipts, and was transferred to the ambulance organisation as assistant to the late Mr. V. E. Southwood in 1938. On the death of Mr. Southwood two years later he was appointed to take over the control of all first aid and ambulance activities in the Department.

Mr. Blackburn won his first corps competition in 1923, and conspicuous among his later successes as corps leader were 5 Victorian championships and 1 Australian Championship, which his team secured in 1935.

Always an enthusiast in first aid, he has worthily carried on the work of his predecessors and has been responsible for a marked increase in first aid activity on the part of railwaymen.

During Mr. Blackburn's absence from the Department his assistant, Mr. K. W. Mackenzie, will be acting Ambulance Officer.

SERVICE.

AT the annual meeting of shareholders of Australian Cement Ltd., the Chairman (Mr. W. B. McCann) paid the following handsome tribute to the Victorian Railways—

"One other matter to which I wish to refer is to acknowledge in your name the service extended to us by the Victorian Railways. We are, of course, very large freight customers, and have some understanding of the problems connected with transport, both road and rail, but we have been forced to admire the manner in which the Railways—and that means the men who work in the railways—have organised and catered for our trade in spite of formidable difficulties. Our service reputation could not be sustained without the co-operation which has been so freely extended to us."

A tribute of this kind is most gratifying to railwaymen especially as it comes from a highly efficient industry, well acquainted with wartime disabilities.

HERE'S A FEAT OF TRANSPORTATION

SULPHURIC and nitric acids, which are of first importance in the production of munitions, are highly corrosive chemicals, and special corrosion resistant ware is necessary for their handling in the course of manufacture.

One of the materials used for this ware is a special cast iron containing a high proportion of silicon, which makes it resistant to corrosion. Unfortunately, the high silicon content also makes the cast iron extremely brittle, and this brittleness provides a special problem of rail transport because careless handling or jolting may cause fractures in the pipe or other vessel employed for the carriage of the acid.

The varying shapes, sizes and weights of the special fittings, which weigh from 18 lb. to 9 cwt., are very costly to produce in silicon iron—the average cost of a fitting is £25—and serious losses of material, time and transport may occur through careless handling.

The response has been splendid. In the transport of this ware through two and sometimes three States, only two cases of damage have been reported over a period of fourteen months. One consignment of 40 pipes, valued at £800 and weighing nearly 5 tons, was carried a long distance by the Victorian Railways and was safely delivered at its destination.

NEW ACTIVITY OF ELECTRICAL BRANCH

ANOTHER chapter in the Victorian Railways' war record is provided by the activities of the Electrical Workshops, Spencer Street. In addition to their normal function these shops have become involved through the war in the manufacture and repair of several varieties of electrical apparatus and instruments for the Commonwealth Government.

When asked if it could provide 200 instruments for battery chargers the Electrical Engineering Branch

promptly said it could and immediately entered on the necessary preparations.

Death of Driver J. P. Howard

DEEP regret will be felt by all railwaymen over the unfortunate death of Driver James Patrick Howard in the collision at Murchison East in the early morning of February 8.

Driver Howard, who was 49 years of age and leaves a widow and child, joined the Department in 1916, and in the following year enlisted for active service abroad.

Invalided home on account of enteric fever, he resumed duty towards the end of 1919.

Among his hobbies he had a reputation as an expert billiards player.

One of the stories current about his ability tells of his meeting in a Shepparton hotel a stranger who fancied his own skill with the cue. Howard offered to play the newcomer and give him 50 in a 100. This was disdainfully declined and the two agreed to start from scratch.

The stranger broke the balls, but was merely a spectator for the rest of the game, as his opponent ran out with an unfinished break of 100.

These involved some changes. Extra space and staff were required for the new activity. The space for machinery and benches was provided almost overnight. Extra skilled staff was not so readily obtainable, but when the manufacture of jewellery was declared a non-essential industry the branch was able to enlist the services of skilled watchmakers and jewellers for the delicate adjustment work associated with the production of voltmeters, ammeters and other electrical instruments.

The production of 3-inch, 4-inch and 6-inch voltmeters and ammeters grew steadily. Orders for about 6,300 of the 3-inch instruments, which are particularly interesting because of the comparative simplicity of their design, are official testimony to the success of the efforts of this section of the Department. To date 2,000 instruments have been completed.

In addition to the manufacture of instruments, important jobs carried to date or still in hand are the provision of moving target carriers for armoured fighting vehicle ranges for the Air Force, alterations to aircraft instruments, the assembly and testing of battery charging sets, and the manufacture of 25 kVA rotors.

With the increasing demand further space will be required and the Munitions Department has decided to erect an annexe on an area of land adjacent to the present workshops, to be controlled by the Chief Electrical Engineer. The organisation of this industry in the Department has developed smoothly, thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of all concerned.

One feature of the work which calls for complimentary mention is the introduction of female labour for a variety of skilled tasks in the manufacture of these instruments and electrical apparatus.

Looking recently at several girls over their jobs under the special prepared fluorescent lights which give them close illumination without heat, it was difficult to believe that one of them engaged on adjusting the balance of voltmeters and ammeters was really a dressmaker, whilst another equally absorbed in armature winding was recruited from a sales counter of a prominent departmental store.

FOUR APPRENTICES WIN SCHOLARSHIPS



G. H. Smith.

G. N. Murphy.

T. S. Calwell.

L. C. Rolls.

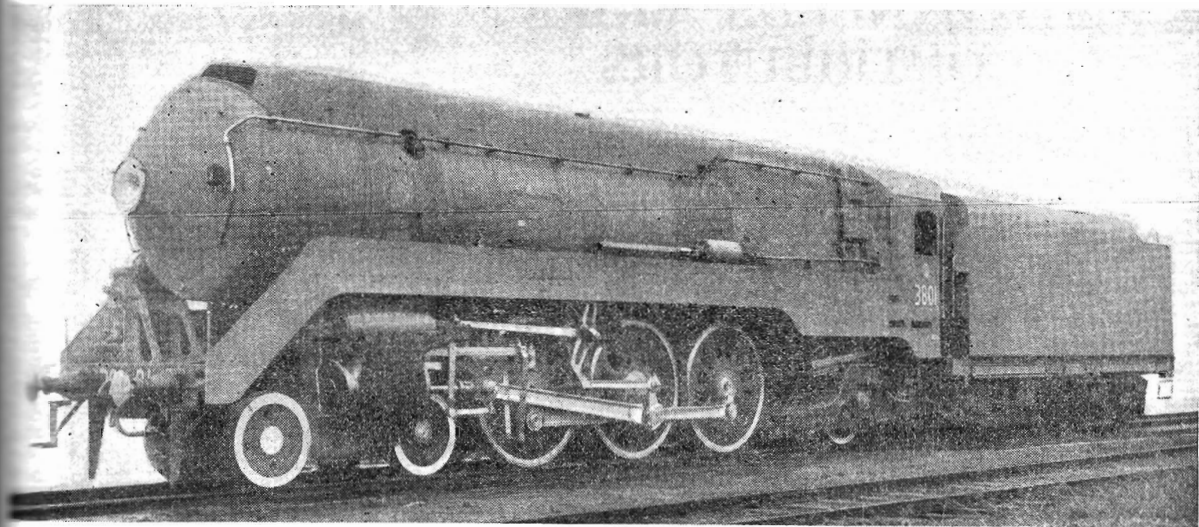
AFTER interviewing the seven apprentices who obtained the best results in the annual Scholarship Exam. in 1942, the Commissioners decided to allot the most coveted prize, viz., a free place at the University to Apprentice Electrical Fitter G. H. Smith of the Electrical Branch.

Apprentice Smith, who is about 2 months short of 20 years of age, has been working for the past year as an apprentice in general electric fitting and repairs of electrical equipment at the Spencer Street Work-

shops of the Electrical Branch. In the Scholarship Examination he achieved an average of 81.2 per cent of the marks.

G. N. Murphy, T. S. Calwell and L. C. Rolls, who have been selected for Diploma Courses in Mechanical Engineering at the Melbourne Technical College, are all Rolling Stock apprentices at Newport Workshops. Rolls is a little over 19, and the other two about 18 years of age. All have had experience in the erecting, production shops and other sections of Newport.

Striking New Locomotive of N.S.W. Railways



THE latest impressive addition to the locomotive fleet of the New South Wales Railways is the "C.38" class express passenger engine, a recent picture of which is mounted above.

For the benefit of Victorian railmen, the following details are given of the new engine (which is of the 4-6-2 or "Pacific" type, moderately streamlined) together with a comparison with the V.R. "S" class. It should be noted, however, although these figures show the "S" class engine to be the heavier of the two, this extra weight is almost entirely accounted for by its larger tender capacity of 68 tons of coal and water compared with 45 tons for the "C.38" engine.

	"C.38"	"S"
Tractive effort	36,200 lb.	41,000 lb.
Driving wheels	5' 9"	6' 1"
Axle Load		
Engine	22 tons 7 cwt.	23 tons 10 cwt.
Tender	21 tons (4 axles)	17 tons 8 cwt. (6 axles)
Total weight of engine and tender fully loaded	196 tons	222 tons
Boiler pressure	245 lb.	200 lb.
Cylinders	2 of 21½" dia. by 26" stroke	3 of 20½" dia. by 28" stroke
Heating surface	47 sq. ft.	50 sq. ft.
Water capacity	7,000 gals.	13,000 gals.
Coal	14 tons	8½ tons

One of the most striking features of the new engine is its boiler pressure of 245 lb. per square inch, which is the highest so far adopted by any railway system in Australia.

The boiler is of all-steel construction, with a barrel of high-tensile steel to reduce weight, and it incorporates a "Belpaire" type of firebox with a combustion chamber and five 3-inch diameter arch tubes.

A steam drier is fitted in the dome, and there is a multiple regulator in the smokebox with the regulator valves on the saturated side of the superheater header. Thirty-six superheater elements are provided.

Particular attention has been given to the design and construction of all steam pipes and passages, so as to ensure a free and unrestricted flow of steam from the boiler to the cylinders, the object being to reduce to a minimum the difference between boiler and steam chest pressures.

V.R. CASUALTIES AND PRISONERS OF WAR.

Junr. Clk. J. A. Gilpin (killed in action); Porter R. H. Crane and Cas. Labr. V. J. Eldridge (previously reported missing, now prisoners of war).

The locomotive frame or bed is a one-piece steel casting 43 ft. long, and weighs 19 tons. Cast integral with the frame are the cylinders, valve chambers, main air reservoirs, air pump bracket, and the smokebox saddle.

The engine incorporates the "Walschaert" type of valve gear, air-operated reverse gear, the "Laird" type of crossheads with detachable slippers, roller bearing axleboxes fitted to all the locomotive and tender wheels, the self-cleaning type of smokebox, a radial buffer with wedge adjustment between the engine and tender, and "Box-pok" pattern wheel centres

which have been introduced on the coupled and trailing truck wheels. This type of wheel centre is cast with a web of box section and cored holes to reduce weight, in place of conventional spokes, and it is stronger than the standard type.

The air brake equipment is Westinghouse A-6-ET, and a 7-in. cross-compound air compressor and A-6-P pedestal type brake valves are fitted. A special feature of the tender air brake is the variable load equipment by means of which the cylinder pressure of the brake is controlled by the level of water in the tender tank, thus permitting an increased braking force with a full tender. Similar equipment is installed on the tender of our "H" class engine.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

CLK. J. F. Cleary.

R.A.A.F.

Lad Labr. H. Aldridge; Lad Lbr. D. R. Banks; Lad Labr. A. G. Bignell; Lad Labr. J. Bird; Clk P. T. Boniface; Lad Labr. R. J. Crew; Clerk R. J. Eddy; Clk. R. G. Finch; Painter W. L. Foley; Clk. H. J. Ford; Clk. T. K. Francis; Clk. J. C. Furphy; Lad. Labr. E. F. Gibson; Sup. Clk. R. A. Gugger; Lad. Lbr. A. G. Hamilton; Sup. Lad. Ptr. R. A. A. Harry; Lad. Lab. V. Hennessy; App. Crpntnr. A. E. Kennedy; H. B. Langlaid (mgr. H'dressing Saloon); Lad Labr. C. J. Little; Clk. A. S. Morison; Lad Labr. J. H. Oman; Sup. Junr. Clk. W. E. Petterson; Lad Labr. J. P. Ryan; Lad Labr. J. S. Stowe; Lad Labr. J. J. Whelan.

R.A.N.

Clk. F. C. Bennett; Sup. Clk. A. L. Crosthwaite; Lad Labr. M. J. Gray; Sup. Junr. Clk. J. L. Marks; Lad J. J. Smith; Clk. W. E. Smyth; Lad Labr. W. S. Whelan.

THE V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND STILL NEEDS MORE CONTRIBUTORS

DURING the present war, the Australian Red Cross has received handsome assistance from the Spotswood Workshops Auxiliary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Some time ago, volunteers at Spotswood Workshops, working in their own time, completed many big orders for the Red Cross, including such equipment as leg irons, leg splints, bedside lockers, footrests, overbed tables and cases for the transport of Red Cross supplies. In January last the Red Cross asked for 1,000 canvas covers for deck chairs urgently required for military hospitals in the North. A group of patriotic workers readily agreed to do this work which involves cutting canvas into lengths, folding and crossing the ends prior to machining and punching the holes for inserting and rivetting the necessary brass eyelets. The job, which was commenced on January 30, was completed last month, some of the volunteers working on Saturday mornings, whilst others belonging to the clerical staff at Spotswood did their bit after 5 p.m.

* * *

Spotswood Auxiliary has had some notable workers, not the least of whom is Mr. H. McWilliam, a carpenter now in the aircraft shops at Newport. Mr. McWilliam, who attended to the comforts section on the Spotswood Auxiliary Committee, which in itself involved time and labour in forwarding letters, parcels and canteen orders, etc., to the various fronts, made it his particular job to organise and supervise the knitting of socks, pullovers and other woollen garments by the wives and female relatives of the Spotswood staff.

He personally secured the supplies of wool through the Secretary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund (Mr. W. E. Elliott) and directed the activities of the enthusiastic little army of helpers, which is now continuing its notable record under the direction of Mr. G. Bolt, an upholsterer at Spotswood.

* * *

Newport Workshops Auxiliary is recruiting a concert party for the purpose of entertaining troops at Victorian camps. Some talented railwaymen have enlisted for this valuable service and the enthusiasm and ability revealed at the first try-out in one of the rooms of the V.R. Institute on Sunday, February 14, promise many happy moments for the soldiers who will have the pleasure of listening to them. Other railwaymen are cordially invited to join

this generous effort. All interested are asked to write to Mr. A. Tevendale, the Secretary of the Newport Auxiliary, c/o Workshops Manager, Newport.

* * *

Ararat Auxiliary is preparing for a concert on Sunday, March 7. A special program has been selected and rehearsed, and it is expected that the concert will be an outstanding success. Another activity now engaging the attention of the Ararat Committee is the organisation of a Queen Carnival. The Queens will represent the V.R. Patriotic Fund, the Comforts Fund, the Girls' Friendship League and possibly other patriotic bodies will also be represented. The Ararat Committee has done excellent work and like that of other keen war workers its energy is to be highly commended.

* * *

The all-round appeal for additional contributors to the V.R. Patriotic Fund has resulted in an increase in the number who have authorised the deduction of 6d. from every fortnightly pay envelope. Nevertheless, many railwaymen in regular work are still absent from the V.R. Patriotic lists and it is to them that the Committee continues its appeals for no more than a trifle of a regular 3d. a week.

Vic. Railwayman's Good Record

MR. Archibald Walker, of the Transportation Stores Division, Flinders Street, deserves a complimentary reference because he is the only active railway officer with the rank of Squadron Leader in the Air Training Corps.

The appointment came as the result of his devotion to military training during his leisure hours over a considerable period, and the task allotted necessitated working every night and each week-end for several months.

The Air Training Scheme which has expanded rapidly, is entirely voluntary, and Mr. Walker is one of the volunteer enthusiasts who receive no payment whatever for their services. Under this plan youths from 16 to 25 years of age are prepared for service, each one going through an extensive course including Morse identification of aircraft, general service knowledge, theory of flight and navigation under the control of volunteer school teachers, engineers and other professional men. On Saturday afternoons drill, physical training and organised games are the order of the day.

As administrative head of No. 14 Squadron, Mr. Walker controls the whole of this training in the Northcote and surrounding district covering a large portion of the Northern area.

Mr. Walker, who joined the railway service in 1920, has been attracted by military activities since he was 14. He enlisted as a private for active service in the last war, and was in camp completing his training when the Armistice was signed.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL (U.S.A.) NOW LIMITS HOLIDAY TICKET SALES

THE Illinois Central System of Chicago has adopted the practice over holiday periods of limiting the ticket sales to the space available. In a recent statement covering arrangements for passenger services over the recent holiday period (December 15 to January 10 inclusive), it was announced that "coach travellers will have to have reservations, which may be made in the same manner that space is ordinarily reserved in sleeping cars."

"Train travel over the holidays is always very heavy," the statement continues, "and this year the demand will be far greater than ever because of military movements, furlough travel, essential war business, and rationing of gasoline and tyres."

"In order that those who must travel on the Illinois Central during the holidays may do so, and to enable such travellers to plan their trips with confidence and complete them as planned, the Illinois Central will extend the coach reservation plan to all passenger trains from December 15 to January 10 inclusive.

"Only persons holding reservation cards as well as railroad tickets will be allowed to board trains. When no space on any train is reserved, no more tickets will be sold for that train on the date. Telephone lines are unusually busy, and travellers are urged to go to ticket offices in person, if possible. Coach reservations may be made through any Illinois Central ticket office, and passengers are advised to purchase tickets when reservations are made. Reservations not obtained within established time limits will be cancelled.

"The need of our armed forces will of course come first in the making of reservations. In addition, we expect to be able to take care of all necessary travel. Travellers who cannot postpone their trips until after January 10 are requested to do so."

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

April, 1943.

Issue No. 151.

NEW PEAKS IN TRUCK TRANSPORT

Fine Organisation Revealed

SOUND organisation and the close co-operation of all concerned have enabled the Department to handle efficiently very heavy traffic over the past few months. As evidence of the sustained transportation effort brought about by war conditions, the Commissioners stated that between December 1, 1942, and March 11, 1943, the total truck loadings reached the high figure of 272,285, over 14,000 more than for the same period of 1941-42 and 44,000 more than in 1940-41.

Also since October 1, 1942, the total trucks loaded per week (with the exception of the Xmas holiday period) have ranged between 18,900 and 27,715—a record for sustained truck transportation over such a long period.

The achievement in haulage at the busiest period in the railway year is further shown by the transportation between January 1 and March 8 of a total of 64,087 tons of superphosphate, compared with 71,920 tons last year. As the quota allotted by the Government this year is only about one-fifth of last year's traffic, a greater proportion of the total tonnage to be dispatched has been handled this year.

In the case of firewood, an equally interesting story can be told. During the 9 weeks (January 4 to March 7) an average of 476 trucks—an aggregate load of 5,500 tons—has been delivered weekly in the metropolitan area in addition to 160 trucks weekly for defence purposes.

Special Firewood Trains

Special trains at week ends have been run when requested to give the most assistance in a transport situation made more difficult by the substantial Defence demands and the necessity for carrying great quantities of both bagged and bulk wheat. Never before has anything like that quantity of firewood been carried during a wheat season.

The wheat carried during the period from November 23 last year to March 11, when the weekly wheat loadings averaged 1784 trucks, amounted to 12½ million bushels (12¼ million bushels of bulk wheat and over 5 million bushels of bagged wheat).

How much the transport of the bulk wheat is appreciated is demonstrated by the following letter to the Chairman (Mr. N. C. Harris) from

Mr. H. Glowrey, Chairman and General Manager of the Grain Elevators Board. This letter, to which Mr. Harris has replied in appropriate terms, runs as follows:—

"This Board recognises the magnitude of the defence commitments that your Department has had to meet in addition to its ordinary traffic during the past three months.

However, the fact that your Department has, in addition to meeting such heavy defence requirements, transported away from country elevators since the current season opened, no less than 10½ million bushels of bulk wheat of the present season's crop, as well as a substantial quantity of the preceding harvest, calls for special commendation.

My Board, therefore, directed me to convey to you its very sincere appreciation of the co-operation and very efficient services that have been rendered to this Board by the officers and staff of your Department, in regard to both the transportation of the wheat and the construction of the necessary siding facilities."

All indications point to a continuance of heavy goods traffic in the future. In addition to substantial defence demands and the carriage of larger supplies of firewood for Melbourne's winter needs approx. 1800 trucks per week of bulk and bagged wheat—more than during the peak of the wheat season—are expected to be hauled by 31st October next in order to clear up existing stocks in the country. The bulk wheat has to be removed to make room for next season's yield and the bagged wheat to save it from the ravages of mice and weevil. The overlanding of large quantities of coal for railway use is also likely to be continued.

This is a formidable task but the Commissioners are confident that the continued co-operation of the staff will result in our maintaining that high standard of performance which is so necessary for effective participation in the war.

V.R. MAN IN HUON GULF VICTORY

HERE is a portrait of Flying Officer Richard Roe, who took part in the amazingly successful attack on the Japanese convoy in Huon Gulf at the beginning of last month when the whole of the Japanese fleet of 22 ships—3 cruisers, 7 destroyers and 12 transport—was sunk.



Flying Officer,
Richard Roe

Flying Officer Roe contributed his bit to the victory, and according to a press report "returned with a big dent in the belly of his aircraft where it had been hit by flying debris".

In an attack on an enemy convoy at Lae in January Flying Officer Roe had another big day wrecking a anti-aircraft gun, setting ablaze a medium Japanese bomber and sinking two barges.

Before being transferred to the Northern front he had been a valiant member of a night fighter service in England and came to Australia as an expert Beaufighter pilot.

He joined the Rolling Stock Branch as a supernumerary clerk in 1934 and enlisted in the R.A.A.F. in 1940.

SERVICE

THE following letter addressed to the staff at the Hughesdale station records the simple gratitude of two afflicted fellow Australians'

"Gentlemen,
"We would like to take the opportunity of expressing in some slight manner our grateful thanks and appreciation to you all for the helpful consideration which you have shown to us as we come through your station on our train trips. It is very much appreciated by us both. It has cheered us upon our journey through life to always receive such help from each of you, not forgetting the gatekeepers at the crossing.

We have always been most fortunate in making friends everywhere we go. You are very busy people at the railway station and have much responsibility upon your minds which only adds to our gratitude.

It is not easy for us to put it into cold type which seems so empty when we would like to express the warmth of our hearts. If you can read between the lines and realise the physical handicaps we are under we feel sure that you will know in part how much we appreciate all your united help and kindness.

Sincerely,
Blanche John (Totally blind),
Robert A. Reid (Totally deaf,
and nearly blind)."

New Railway Bridges at South Yarra

BIG UNDERTAKING BEING PLANNED

INITIAL plans are now being prepared for the replacement of the present two railway bridges across the river at South Yarra by three new bridges, each designed to carry two lines of track. The proposed bridges are technically known as "plate girder deck bridges" considered to be the best type to meet the special conditions. Among other improvements the plans will provide for increased waterway for the Yarra and the elimination of the always dangerous "dog leg" turn in Alexandra Avenue, which will be straightened at this point. This will assure an easier run for the motor traffic which now has to take the utmost care in negotiating the turn.

An entirely new bridge will be constructed on the Church Street side before the other two bridges are replaced. When that bridge is finished it will carry all Caulfield line traffic and the Brighton line traffic will be temporarily diverted to the bridge now carrying Caulfield traffic.

On the completion of that job and the construction of a new bridge to carry the Brighton traffic, the old centre bridge will be demolished and rebuilt to carry the Caulfield traffic in conjunction with the bridge just constructed on the up stream side.

The bridge carrying the Frankston-Gippsland services was erected in 1884; but the Brighton-Sandringham structure dates back to 1860, and its erection is associated with some interesting early railway history.

Old Cremorne Railway

Before the construction of this bridge a railway ran from Melbourne to Hawthorn (then spelt Hawthorne) and a short branch turned off at about the present site of the Richmond station and terminated on the north side of the river at Cremorne, a popular recreation resort of that period.

At that time railway traffic to Brighton was carried *via* St. Kilda, from which the railway line took a northward loop over to Windsor. With the completion of the bridge across the river at South Yarra in 1860, the line from Cremorne was continued through South Yarra to connect with the St. Kilda-Brighton line at Windsor, the loop between the latter station and St. Kilda being ultimately abandoned.

Touching the opening of the new section of line on December 22, 1860, the *Argus* of December 24, 1860, had this to say:—

"Trains ran between Flinders Street and Chapel Street every 40 minutes from 6.50 a.m. to midnight and the great proportion were well patronised. The evening trains, although consisting of many carriages, were completely crowded. Punctuality was observed as far as the imperfect arrangements for an opening day would allow and no

mishap occurred. The locomotive could not pass under the Brighton Co.'s bridge at Chapel Street without a reduction in the height of the funnels, but on this being effected the traffic worked with tolerable smoothness. By the opening to Prahran the half-hour trains to Cremorne have been discontinued. Swan Street, however, will be served as efficiently as heretofore, inasmuch as there has been an increase in the number of the Hawthorne trains."

The "Brighton Co's bridge at Chapel Street" was on the site of the present bridge crossing the railway line at Chapel Street, Windsor. It is worth noting also that Swan Street and Chapel Street, and not Richmond and Windsor, were apparently the official titles of those particular stations in those days.

All Railwaymen Should Read This

IN a notification sent to the Secretary for Railways last month by Sir Harold W. Clapp, Director General of Land Transport, "persons going on leave" are informed that if they make interstate journeys for non-essential reasons, especially by Services other than rail, permits will not, in future, be issued to them to return to their home State by Rail and the Board will not accept any responsibility for delays which may be occasioned in this connection.

This direction has been inspired by the fact that there have been instances of railwaymen travelling interstate on leave by boat and then applying for a priority permit for return by rail to their home town. This is rightly regarded as non-essential travel and the Commonwealth Land Transport Board has decided to end it.

Victorian railwaymen who may be considering the possibility of an interstate holiday should remember the new restriction and also the further statement by the Director General that "the question of the restriction of the non-essential travel by air and sea is receiving consideration by the Commonwealth."

DEATH OF COLONEL HAROLD NEWMAN

VICTORIAN railwaymen learned with deep sorrow last month of the death of Colonel Harold Newman, Director-General of Transportation in the Army, after a very short illness. An able, courageous railwayman who had devoted himself to the tremendous task of directing Army transport in Australia in the present war, Colonel Newman won the esteem of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

In a tribute to Colonel Newman the Hon. F. M. Forde, Minister for the Army, said that by his death the Army had lost an outstanding officer. Large scale troop movements had made his work increasingly onerous, but his experience and conscientious spirit had enabled him to perform his work with the utmost efficiency.

The Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris) said Colonel Newman was an exceptionally able railwayman and a fine soldier, and his death was a great loss in both spheres.

Colonel Newman was born in Goulburn (N.S.W.) in 1889 and joined the New South Wales Railways in 1905. After 25 years service he was appointed Secretary for Railways. He served for 2½ years in the first World War during a good deal of which he successfully commanded a railway operating unit on the Dunkirk-Dieppe section in France.

Though the demands of duty in the last few months left him little opportunity for recreation he had always taken a keen interest in sport. In his youth he was a prominent member of the Eastern Suburbs Rugby club in Sydney. He was always regarded as a pioneer in radio research.

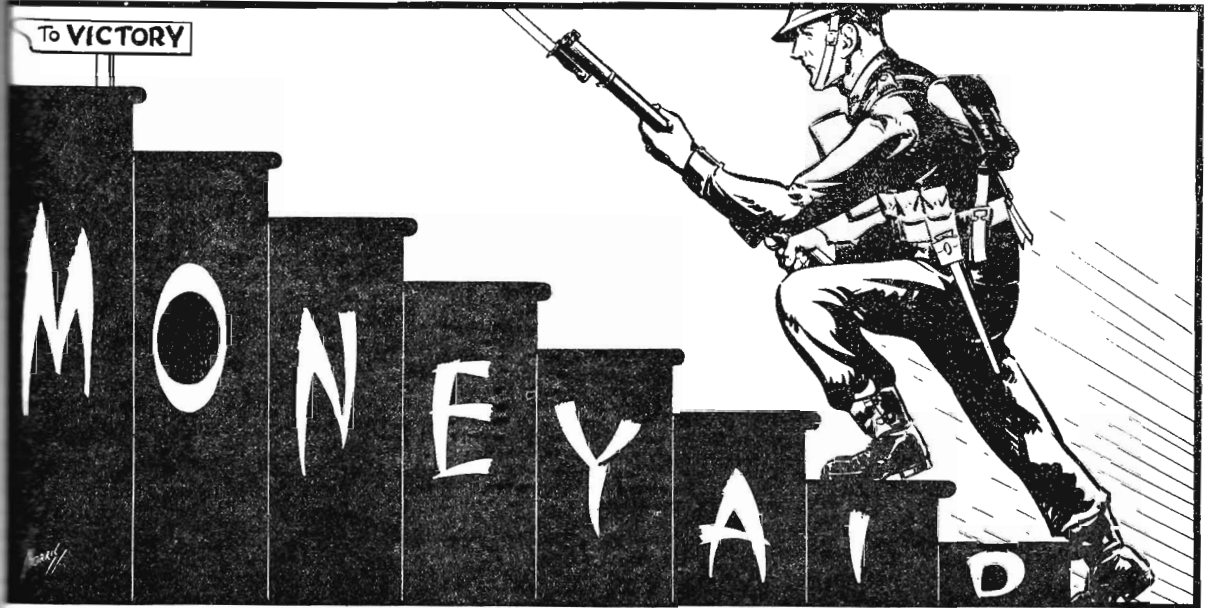
SHERLOCK HOLMES AGAIN

RECENTLY the heavy bronze nameplates on the electric locomotives of the Metropolitan Railway service in London were removed and used for scrap.

Among the great figures commemorated in the titles of the locomotives were three famous politicians, Gladstone, Burke and Disraeli; two poets, Milton and Byron; one architect, Sir Christopher Wren, one scientist, Michael Faraday; one actress, Sarah Siddons, and one artist, George Romney, while Oliver Cromwell and John Hampden were also remembered.

And standing up boldly on the locomotive was the name of the imaginary celebrity—Sherlock Holmes. How Conan Doyle's famous detective came to remind thousands of passengers of his seeming immortality in the front of a railway engine was probably make a very interesting story.

STEPPING STONES TO VICTORY



Buy a Bond in the Third Liberty Loan

(See Insert for Group Purchase of Bonds)

ANTS, RATS, BIRDS BOTHER THE DEPARTMENT

THE recent discovery that bees had taken up residence in a cable box at Goornong and affected the operation of the Electric Staff System, recalls other instances in which insects, animals and birds have interfered with Railway services.

Probably the most persistent and troublesome of these pests is the energetic black sugar ant. He finds that the relays used in the signalling system are kept comfortably warm by the electric current which operates them.

Not content with nestling outside the case, he bores through some unsuspected crevice and wanders around the inside mechanism until he gets caught between the moving contacts. That, of course, ends his quest but it also temporarily ends the operation of the equipment and holds up trains. This recently caused inconvenience to racing "fans" travelling to Flemington.

Rats are also high up among the departmental "hates". Apart from their predations in offices and sheds, they burrow into the troughing which houses the signalling wires in search of knowledge or food. Once inside they never look back and in their forward scamper gnaw at everything impeding their progress. Chewing the insulation off the wires and causing short circuits is all in the day's work to them, and in their eagerness to go places they have been known to bite through copper wires and the lead covering of cables.

In country districts signalling equipment also has attractions for the sparrow, "the gate crasher" of the bird world, and even bats and beetles have been found high up on signal masts, their dead bodies providing proof of the cause of train running delays.

In one instance, an innocent opossum which had climbed a structure supporting the overhead wires in the suburban area ventured too far out across an insulator and contacted the high tension supply wires. The result was a charred body and inconvenience to passengers through train delays.

A short time ago the telegraph services to the North-Western District were dislocated. The aerial lines near Ballan checked the flight of a wild duck travelling at a low altitude. The duck was caught in the wires and its last act was to entangle the wires and cause interruption to the telegraph service.

A frequent seasonal pest is the magpie which finds the aerial telephone wires where they are attached to the poles most convenient for holding together its nest built of sticks and pieces of wire. Those pieces of wire cause further interruptions to communication. During the nesting season a constant watch must be maintained to prevent nest building in these unauthorised places, because the magpie is a fast worker.

In an endeavour to overcome this trouble the Department has placed wire-netting ready-to-use nests at the top of the poles away from the wires and in many instances the magpies have taken advantage of the departmental kindness and brought up happy families.

A novel type of interference with Railway telephone communication by birds recently occurred near Wangaratta. The trouble was spread over a week but lasted only about 15 minutes each day and always just before sunset.

Eventually, it was found that hundreds of starlings were alighting on the telephone wires, and the weight of the birds caused the wires to sag and contact an adjoining wire. The birds were apparently on a migratory flight and, after a short spell at this convenient resting place, continued their journey onward into the night.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

Jnr. Clk. A. T. Beeby; Lad Labr. J. J. Rowsell; Lad Labr. L. L. Trevillian.

R.A.A.F.

Msgr. J. L. Atkins; Lad Labr. R. Ballinger; Jnr. Clk. V. D. Bateman; Jnr. Clk. W. J. Cowey; Jnr. Clk. M. Dempsey; Lad Labr. B. P. Edwards; Lad Labr. R. E. Franks; Jnr. Clk. P. Hayes; Lad Labr. H. F. Macdonald; Jnr. Clk. J. F. McDonald; Jnr. Clk. A. J. R. McNeill; Lad Labr. D. A. O'Donohue.

R.A.N.

Jnr. Clk. G. C. Baudinette; Lad Labr. K. W. N. Niddie.

MANY GOOD WORKERS FOR THE V.R. PATRIOTIC FUND

IN the January issue of the "News Letter" reference was made to the generosity of Miss Llewellyn of Brighton, who had contributed to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Having since learned of the total amount raised and of the excellent use to which it is put, the lady has forwarded another £1 to the Fund. Miss Llewellyn is the daughter of Mr. W. Llewellyn, a retired examining officer in the Rolling Stock Branch.

The mention of her first donation in the "News Letter" caught the eye of Mr. J. C. M. Rolland, an old friend of her father and a railway enthusiast who has long been interested in the activities of the Victorian and other railway systems.

For many years Mr. Rolland annually sent a cheque for 5 guineas for competition by V.R. Institute students in the annual examinations. Inspired by Miss Llewellyn's gift Mr. Rolland has now mailed to the Secretary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund a cheque for £1/6/0 representing 2 years' subscription on the basis of 3d. a week as contributed by railwaymen. He wishes to be regarded as a regular subscriber, too! This gesture by an "unofficial railwayman" should be an inspiration to those many hundreds of railwaymen who are not yet contributing to the Patriotic Fund.

Just before Christmas, the V.R. Patriotic Committee sent through the Australian Comforts Fund 600 hampers for distribution among members of the Australian fighting services abroad.

These hampers contained a good selection of refreshments assured of a welcome by our defenders—particularly a Xmas pudding, condensed milk and tobacco, and with each hamper went a card indicating that the remembrance was from the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Since those hampers were distributed in all sorts of odd places in the fighting areas—on aerodromes, and ships, in the desert and jungle—warm cards of acknowledgement have continued to pour in from the fighting men.

One card from Flight Lieut. A. E. Kuring serving with the R.A.F. in the Middle East says, among other nice things. "You certainly do show the way to any organisation I have struck here or anywhere else, and your praises are loudly sung by all." Flight-Lieut. E. J. Allison of the R.A.A.F., Middle East, mentions his grateful thanks and adds: "I also collected eleven other hampers for distribution to various units on this station and I can assure you that all the lads were quite thrilled with the gift". Among the acknowledgements from members of the A.I.F. we commend the simplicity of the note from Private C. R. Chapman, somewhere in Australia, who subscribes himself: "I am a grateful soldier".

Recently the Newport Workshops Auxiliary enlisted the talents of several railwaymen in a concert party for camp entertainment, and that party made its debut with great applause at the Royal Park camp on Monday, March 1. For two and a half hours the little squad of entertainers which included a couple of excellent comedians, several musicians and a juggler, gave the boys of their best and the response was tremendous.

Major Archer, the camp commandant, congratulated Mr. A. Tevendale, the Secretary of the Newport Auxiliary, and declared that the performance of the concert party was equal to any yet seen and heard at Royal Park. This was a highly appreciated compliment, particularly when it is remembered that March 1st was the first public appearance of the Newport party, and may be regarded as a stepping stone to higher achievements in the future.

Transport of 20-Foot "Fire-Killed" Logs

THOUSANDS of tons of mountain ash "fire-killed" in the bush fires of two or three years ago but valuable for case making and other purposes, have recently provided a transport problem for the Department.

These logs are "straight sticks" and in order to make them suitable for transport, they are cut into approximately 20-foot lengths varying in diameter from 12 inches to 18 inches. Wet or dry their smooth surface make them extremely slippery and even when they are stowed with care they are liable to move with relatively light jolts.

Until recently, it was the practice to stow the logs higher than water level in 16-ton and other 4-wheeled trucks of larger capacity, as they are much lighter than green timber.

Although the timber was securely lashed it frequently happened that some logs on the top would work out of position in transit, with the result that the truck would have to be removed from the train at a wayside station to have the load adjusted.

This was not only a potential menace to safe operation, but caused delays to the train and the truck which under present day conditions it is imperative be avoided wherever possible.

To ensure the safe carriage of this big timber, the Commissioners recently decreed that "fire-killed" logs about 20-ft. long in 16-ton or higher capacity 4-wheeled trucks must be loaded only up to water level, except where the end of each log has a grip in the end of the truck."

Vic. Tourist Bureau's Excellent Record

THE value of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau on Collins Street is revealed by the increasing number of travellers who are making use of its facilities.

There is a steady stream of people entering the doors of the Bureau and the extent of its service is shown by the fact that in the busiest month of the year—December last—no fewer than 86,000 passenger journeys were booked—10,000 more than in December, 1941. Owing to the restrictions on interstate travel, the bookings for New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia were greatly reduced. Of the total journey 82,000 were made within the State.

It is interesting to note that during December accommodation of the limited number of guest houses available at Victorian resorts was arranged through the Bureau for 3,500 people, representing over twice the number booked in December, 1941.

Actually, since the Bureau introduced the holiday booking service in 1936, full holiday arrangements have been made for a total of 99,000 persons.

Despite the heavier service demanded of the Bureau it is functioning efficiently. The staff has been considerably reduced. Females who have replaced the males are doing a particularly good job.

U.S.A. HAS ITS TRUCK PROBLEM

EXPERIENCE in the last war, plus the activities of "U" boats on the east coast of the United States in the present one, has driven a large sea-borne traffic on to the railways, with consequences to the truck position which are receiving much attention from the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Consignees are being urged to unload freight cars "immediately upon arrival and not take advantage of the full measure of free time allowed."

As an indication of their earnestness, 700 representatives of industrial and mercantile concerns in the New England area have decided to police their own activities so that practices "tending to create railroad car shortages" can be stopped.

These practices include "the holding of cars longer than required for loading and unloading, using the cars for storage purposes and paying demurrage charges rather than hiring overtime labour" to empty or to railway trucks promptly.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

May, 1943.

Issue No. 152.

BRITISH TRANSPORT IN WAR . . . !

A Remarkable Story Revealing The British Railwayman's Courage and Resource

TRANSPORT GOES TO WAR." That is the title of an astonishing, most revealing booklet on some of the magnificent work of Britain's transport utilities—rail, road and canal—during the present war. It is a thrilling human document disclosing in cleverly written verbal pictures the plain, undemonstrative heroism of the transport worker in situations testing to the full his devotion and resource. The "News Letter" takes pride in quoting substantially from an excellent literary achievement which pays special tribute to the work of the British railwayman. Here follows the impressive opening piece :

It was on Liverpool's bad night of the 3rd-4th May, 1941, the middle of the bad week. The moon was in its first quarter. The Luftwaffe must have heard that some interesting cargoes were in the Mersey at that time. On the railway down Breck Road there is a signal-box, and the signalman got his first tip that something unsavoury had been when he heard the familiar scream, and the next moment was blown off the top of the signal-box steps down the embankment. An ammunition train which was standing in the sidings had been caught, and the contents were going off wagon by wagon.

Injured in the leg by his fall, the signalman crawled up to the damaged signal-box. The glass had gone but the telephone looked sound. The line was dead ; it was down and out. So he limped outside to get help, and especially with the idea of having the people in the neighbouring houses warned and removed, before the full blast of the bombardment started. Meanwhile other volunteers had been called to go to the yard.

A Well-Balanced Team

There were a shunter, a couple of goods guards, a driver and a fireman—every representative and well-balanced team when you study it. A young shunter used to chasing trucks, adept and quick among the signal wires and points, with eyes at the back of his head for the sudden on-coming train, is by nature a man who likes a bit of excitement; there is a ready-for-anything reliability about guards, a

touch of the jack-of-all-trades in them ; drivers are precise and expert, trained to be unflurried ; and if, as one suspects, there is more temperament in firemen, it is of the go-anywhere, do-anything kind.

Heroism in Darkness

Up the siding, using the lines of wagons in the siding as a screen or a system of deep trenches, these men went in the darkness towards the exploding train. It was not a matter of single shells going off—some of the men say, anyway, that there were sea mines in the wagons—but truck loads at a time. Which wagon was going up next? Three other men, working from another direction, met the party. One of the guards, as one would expect, took the lead. The driver and fireman brought an engine up, the guard began uncoupling the burning wagons as a push from the engine slackened the couplings—rather a nice shunting operation this—and the engine drew the wagons off.

The other guard went up to the damaged and empty signal-box to see what could be done about the points, for the signalman, as we have seen, was out on his own job. The guard had never set points in his life and the interlocking system is like a chess problem for those who do not understand it. He studied the diagram in the box and, at last, he hit upon the right combination. And so for the rest of the night the team worked, isolating the explosions, getting out whatever could be moved where the track was left. Bombs are bad enough, but this is like working in a barrage.

They got 70 wagons of foodstuff safely out. In the morning, they saw they had been working on the edge of a crater, if you can call it that, 120 yards long. The official record begins with the narrative of one of the party, a model of understatement :—

" I wish to report that on the morning of May 4th whilst on Home Guard duty, the Goods Guard clerk came down to the lamp room " (where the engine and wagon lamps and the shunting lamps are stored) " and told us he had been informed that the ammunition train at Breck Road was on fire and asked for volunteers to try and save it. Myself and the undermentioned therefore proceeded, with caution"

Map Shows Difference

So transport is in the battle At first sight, there might not seem to be a large difference between transport in peace time and transport for war. A glance at the map soon puts an end to this impression. Look at the roads and railways. A military strategist would laugh at them. It is true they were adapted for war requirements, and maintained and improved in some cases with the possibility of war in mind. But the last thing they were planned for was modern war. They were built for the habits of free commerce and for pleasure. Before the war, charabancs thronged the towns and took holiday-makers in thousands to the sea. Buses and trams went further and further out into the country to bring in to their work people who had gone

(Continued next page)

BRITISH TRANSPORT IN WAR—(continued)

there for pleasure. Traffic ran for the sacred week-end and the sightseeing tour.

It is not intended to deride the sacred passenger, but merely to point out the consequences of giving him his halo. If the passenger was sacred, the goods had to be profane. What happened to the goods? Were there any? There were. Millions of tons of them in a year, leaving the ports and arriving at them, not to mention the factories, the warehouses and the mines. On the railways, merchandise traffic was always the greater and more important; but so skilfully was it planned and so cunningly moved that the passenger might reasonably have supposed the railways existed mainly for his benefit.

First Act in Battle

And here we come to the first act in the battle of transport; the reversal of that order. Deliver the passengers, yes; deliver the workers and the troops, of course; but, above all, deliver the goods. That is what September, 1939, meant to British transport. Today, you stand in the corridor of a train which is already an hour late because, when you get down to it, you have lost your halo. Coal, ore, steel, sugar beet, timber, meat, even soap flakes, wire netting and boot polish have become more important than you. The battle requires the constant speed, the continuous flow, faster loading, faster turning round, faster unloading, an acceleration of work and process. You were standing about today on a draughty platform or a wind-swept street, looking in despair at the clock, not because the confusion of war had muddled transport and made it forget its record-breaking traditions, but because, in fact, it is breaking records far more important than the old ones.

Entertain all the posters which used to delight the passenger in the days when he had his halo, the tendency to co-operation between the young and older form of transport was already working before the war. The far-seeing knew it was the only way, and the war has confirmed that direction decisively. When road and rail worked together on the civilian evacuation and after Dunkirk, they were simply developing a technique which had already existed before the war, but one which became vital during the blitz and in the dispersal of industry that has followed.

In London, where road and rail formed one complete pool, the railway companies would ring up the bus control officer in the middle of the night at his underground post and call for help.

There have been astonishing notices—astonishing, that is, in the light of pre-war history—in which bus com-

panies ask their passengers to go by train, and railway companies ask the passengers to go by bus.

These are not veiled hints to the passenger that nobody wants him. The true explanation is, once more, that transport is at war, not with itself, but with the common enemy; and that, as the flow of goods changes and increases at the ports, as the new factories get to work and the old ones expand, road and rail have to work together and relieve each other of the new strains. Men are called up, once idle cross-country lines are congested, petrol is more and more reserved for those who can show they are doing war work and working with the team.

Co-operation is inevitable. The process which began with evacuation has gone on. It is useless getting the goods into the ports unless they are taken out of the ports; it is useless filling the factories and making new ones unless the workers are taken there and brought back with as few hours of travel as possible to add to their overtime."

(To be continued.)

Fine Achievement Of Another V. R. Airman

HERE is a recent photograph of Pilot Officer Ronald T. Cargill, still another young railwayman who has brought honor to his country and himself. In the final examination under the Empire Training Scheme in Canada he came first out of 485 trainees examined, a Canadian being second and a New Zealander third.



Pilot Officer
Ronald T. Cargill

Following this success he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant Observer and subsequently received his commission. Some idea of his progress may be gauged from the fact that he enlisted in the R.A.A.F. only in January last year and departed for Canada in May.

Pilot Officer Cargill, who is 21 years of age, joined the department in 1938, and until his enlistment was located at the North Melbourne loco sheds.

He is a son of Sergeant F. Cargill of the A.I.F., previously employed at the Newport loco storehouse. Sergeant Cargill is a veteran of the last war in which he fought with an English regiment.

READ WHAT FIRST AID MEANS

A big crate of defence material fell on a railwayman in the Melbourne Goods Yards the other day, severing his right hand and badly smashing his left wrist. But for the presence of an expert in first aid the injured man might have lost both hands.

Realising the danger of delay in controlling the haemorrhage, the first-aid man quickly applied a tourniquet to the right arm, bandaged the severed stump and applied a suitable dressing and support together with provision of a tourniquet to the crushed arm. He then wrapped the shocked man in rugs and coats which were quickly obtained and sent him off to hospital in a commandeered motor vehicle in the care of two men, who were advised what precautions to take to prevent any further injury to the patient en route.

The whole job of preparing the man for hospital took 6 minutes, and in 15 minutes after the accident he was receiving medical care. His left hand will be saved—a result which he owes to the skill and experience of the first-aid man who attended him.

The episode is mentioned here to emphasize once more the value of first aid. Every railwayman should be expert in first aid, and to the hundreds of men in the service who have not the ability to face emergency situations which is derived from knowledge, the "News Letter" appeals to join one of the classes being formed.

Classes will commence at the end of next month and all intending to join are requested to get in contact with the Ambulance Officer, Spencer Street Station, for further particulars and advice.

V. R. ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

JNR. Clk. H. N. Doodt; Clk. N. J. Graham; App. B'smith P. J. Johnson; B'maker C. D. Kelly; App. F. G. V. Squires; B'maker R. K. Street; App. F. & T. J. Yowart.

R.A.A.F.

Lad Labr. K. W. Austin; Jnr. Clk. R. Bakes; Jnr. Clk. C. A. Bryan; Lad Labr. N. L. Cornish; Lad Labr. K. C. Davey; Jnr. Clk. J. E. Davy; App. F. & T. D. Donnelly; Jnr. Clk. C. G. Eastham; Jnr. Clk. J. Elmer; Jnr. Clk. M. J. Fahey; Jnr. Clk. K. A. Hamanson; Sup. Lad. Labr. W. McAuliffe; Clk. A. Morrison; Jnr. Clk. R. G. Munro; Sup. Jnr. W. H. Oliver; Jnr. Clk. B. J. Reilly; Jnr. Clk. E. J. Ride; Jnr. Clk. M. P. Rodd; Lad Porter F. G. Swindley; Clk. J. Taylor; Jnr. Clk. K. N. Taylor; Clk. R. W. T. Young; Sup. Labr. K. J. M. Williams; Jnr. Clk. A. E. Watson; App. B'smith W. Young.

R.A.N.

Lad Labr. W. E. Betts; Lad. Labr. G. L. W. Cass; Jnr. Clk. R. A. Fuller; Lad Labr. A. McR. Harper; Lad Labr. T. A. Lowry; Jnr. Clk. H. J. McKee; Lad Labr. A. M. McLean; Lad Labr. A. K. McMillan; Lad Labr. R. M. Namara; Lad Labr. I. Nicholson; Lad Labr. W. J. Poilard; Sup. Jnr. Clk. J. Wilson; Jnr. Clk. A. R. Winstone.

NEW PLANT AT NEWPORT "A" POWER STATION EXPECTED TO BE READY THIS MONTH

WORK on the replacement of the existing plant at Newport "A" Power Station has gone so far forward that the first installation comprising one 37,500 kW. Parsons turbine and two pulverised fuel fired boilers should be ready to begin operation this month. The two boilers—each of 187,500 lb. per hour steaming capacity—will supply steam at 400 lb. pressure and 750° F. to the Parsons turbo-alternator, which generates direct at a transmission voltage of 20,000 volts.

This installation is a distinct improvement on the original plant, which consisted of comparatively small (10,000 lb. per hour) stoker fired boilers which supplied steam at 200 lb. pressure 600° F. to Parsons turbines of 12,500 kW and 14,000 kW capacity. The turbines generated energy at 20,000 volts which was stepped up by transformers to the transmission voltage of 20,000 volts.

The new plant was selected after extensive investigation in Europe and America some time ago by the Chief Electrical Engineer (Mr. H. P. Col-

It will not only provide an increase in generating capacity at an important part of the power supply situation in the State, but will improve the reliability of the Newport Power Station and achieve a marked saving in black-out, the importance of which need not be emphasized at the present time.

The cost of this first stage of the replacement scheme was estimated at £500,000, but war conditions have considerably increase the expenditure. Much of the plant was obtained from overseas, and the Department is fortunate in securing it without appreciable loss due to enemy action.

Construction Difficulties.

Erection of the plant involved considerable difficulties. Even in peacetime a power house of this size demands careful planning and execution. Under war conditions the task was greatly complicated by difficulties in obtaining labour and material as required.

The completion of the new installation will add another chapter to the impressive record of Newport "A" Power Station.

Designed by the celebrated engineers, Messrs. Merz and McLellan, and placed in operation between 1918 and 1922, Newport "A" has operated continuously since that time. During certain years prior to the Electricity Commission's supply system, it provided for increasing industrial power of the metropolis, supplying power to the Melbourne City Council and the Melbourne Electric Supply Systems—two demands met by the State Electricity Commission's plant at Yallourn.

The story of the new installation cannot be complete without some reference to the extensive preparations of the Way and Works Branch of the Railways.

Construction on the boiler foundations commenced approximately 2½ years ago. On account of the extremely heavy loads all foundations for the main structure or heavy machinery were carried down to solid rock, in many cases 20 feet below surface level.

One of the most interesting features was the replacement of the existing turbine by the new one. The turbine was thrown out of use, and dismantling commenced on August 28, 1942. By September 3, all machinery had been removed and the work of dismantling the existing turbine foundations was commenced.

Within a period of nine weeks covering continuous work of 24 hours a day, the Way and Works Branch demolished the old foundations, excavated to solid bluestone rock and erected the massive new concrete and steel foundations on which the new machine now rests.

The demolition of the old concrete blocks and excavation in concrete and bluestone to a depth of more than five feet involved the despatch in 27 days of 51 railway trucks of broken concrete and bluestone, some of which was removed in pieces estimated to weigh as much as 12 tons.

The placing of the steel frame and the erection of the complicated formwork, which had been prefabricated at the Spotswood Workshops, was completed in fast time and was followed by the pouring of the concrete. Above ground level alone these two foundation blocks between them weigh almost 800 tons, equivalent to approximately 60 fully-loaded railway trucks of sand, cement and stone. The completed turbine foundations were available for the contractors approximately one week ahead of the scheduled time.

"N. C. HARRIS" PRIZE WINNERS.

THE "News Letter" announces with pleasure the winners at the examination conducted recently by the Victorian Railways Institute for the "N. C. Harris" Prize.

"B" DIVISION (Safeworking).
Mr. M. W. Isaac, Operating Porter, Traralgon.

"C" DIVISION (Engine Working and Westinghouse Brake).
Mr. J. G. Day, Cleaner, Bendigo.

"D" DIVISION (Perm. Way Construction and Maintenance).
Mr. H. P. Sexton, Repairer, Mincha.

Owing to the illness of one of the candidates, the result in the "A" Division (Station Accounts and Management) was not available at the time of going to press.

Many Helping The V.R. Patriotic Fund

SPOTSWOOD Workshops Auxiliary, which has manufactured over £1,000 worth of equipment for war charities, recently decided to ask all employees in the shops to subscribe any amounts they can afford over and above the regular deduction of 3d. a week from the payrolls, for the purpose of assisting further war charities in the metropolis. Up to the time of writing 460 have signed up and the Auxiliaries' first major objective is the provision of a number of beds at a cost of £25 each at the Rockingham Convalescent Home at Kew.

The Rockingham Home is under the control of the Australian Red Cross Society, which has been asked by the Government to make provision for convalescent service men who are discharged from service hospitals, but are still unfit to return to their units. The Electric Running Depot Auxiliary (electric suburban drivers and guards) is also contributing towards the cost of several beds at Rockingham and the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund Committee is assisting in equipping and modernising the home.

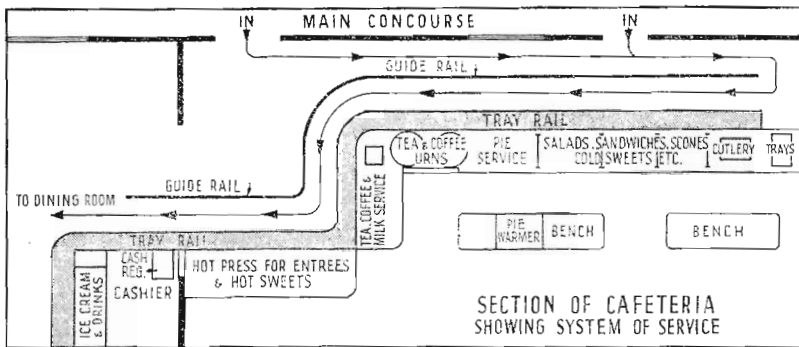
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Wireless Club is another organization which can be warmly commended for its help to Victorian Railways charities. For the past two years it has donated the profits of its August dance to the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund, which has benefited to the extent of approximately £86. The proceeds of its August dance, as well as a cheque from a special raffle to be drawn about the same time, will be further welcome contributions by this Club.

* * *

A number of girls in the Powers Division of the Accountancy Branch are earning the right to complimentary reference in this column. Some time ago they gave £2 to the Fund. The other day they handed over another £2, and the Fund may expect further contributions from them. This generous effort should inspire other railway groups to help the patriotic cause. Whilst much money is annually collected by the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund Committee the total is never enough to meet the constantly mounting needs. More and more money is wanted to provide comforts for the lads who are offering their very lives for us. All those who are not contributing to this great effort are urged again to authorise the deduction of 6d. from their pay envelopes. Fill in the necessary form of authority to deduct this small amount from the payroll and start contributing to the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund forthwith. Forms are available at every depot throughout the State.

SPENCER STREET DINING-ROOM TO BE CONVERTED INTO MODERN CAFETERIA



OWING to the shortage of staff it has been decided to convert the dining-room on the main concourse of the Spencer Street station into a modern cafeteria. This will be available to the public shortly and a refreshment service will probably be maintained during the conversion period.

Following arrangements which have been under consideration for some time the interior of the kitchen attached to the dining room will be substantially altered to provide for a long self-serving counter on which will be stacked trays, cutlery, salads, cold sweets, scones, sandwiches, pies, entrees and other light refreshments.

Running parallel with the counter will be a guide rail, and patrons entering the cafeteria through the doors, as shown in the plan above, will walk in queue along the

guide rail, turning in at the northern end to pick up the necessary tray, cutlery and refreshments set out further along the counter.

After obtaining these and tea, coffee or milk which will be available, the customer will present his tray to the cashier at the end of the counter for the assessment of the cost. After payment he will pass into the present dining room to eat his meal. After completing it he will leave by the exit which is the present entrance door to the dining room. Customers requiring ice cream or fruit juice drinks will obtain them at a separate counter.

Facilities for the heating of pies, entrees and hot sweets and for the quick preparation of salads, sandwiches and other light refreshments will assure a speedy and efficient cafeteria service which should meet the needs of the travelling public.

America's Last and Latest Streamline

THE present war has temporarily suspended the production of streamline trains in America, and it is interesting to note that the last of these trains to be completed, the Panama Limited of the Illinois Central Railroad running between Chicago and New Orleans, is probably the most luxurious up-to-date in service anywhere.

Drawn by 4,000 h.p. Diesel electric locomotives the train consists of air-conditioned sleeping, lounge, observation and dining cars, and a car except the dining car includes some sleeping accommodation. The actual sleeping cars provide built-in bedrooms, drawing-rooms, rooms and open section accommodation, and an automatic dial telephone system connects sleeping cars with the dining lounge and observation cars.

Individual radio receiving sets are available for passengers in the observation, lounge and dining cars, and a public address system permits announcements in public spaces throughout the train. Another feature is the instalment of train speed indicators to enable passengers to learn just how fast the train is moving.

And it does move, covering 921 miles between Chicago and New Orleans in 18 hours—2 hours less than previously—giving an average speed of 51.3 m.p.h.

The equipment for the train is ready before America's entry into the war, and the appearance of the wonder on the rails has the special wartime value of releasing for military needs several passenger cars and steam locomotives.

SERVICE.

THE following tribute to the work of suburban station staffs comes from Mrs. V. E. Ross, of the Secretarial Services, Strand Building, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne—

"Gentlemen,

I should like to congratulate you on the efficiency and courtesy of your staffs at Mentone and Aspendale stations. Recently, on leaving Mentone station, I found that I had left a suitcase in the train which was on to Aspendale. I explained this to the official at Mentone, and he told me that the train had been run to a siding at Aspendale, but he would telephone through and have a message made for me. Finding myself on a bus going through to Aspendale, however, I went straight on to Aspendale station myself, and there I met the official, who I think was actually on duty at the time, got on a bus and went quite a distance down the siding where the train was standing on a siding, and returned with my suitcase in time for me to catch the train back. The Stationmaster at Aspendale, too, was most kind, and the train for half a minute while I got my ticket for me.

With many thanks for your Department's courtesy in many ways.

Yours faithfully,
V. E. Ross

YES, WE DO WANT IDEAS

SINCE its inception over 20 years ago the Betterment and Suggestions Board of the Victorian Railways has considered 44,000 suggestions submitted by railway employees. Over 7,000 of these suggestions, or approximately one-sixth, have been adopted, and awards ranging up to £400, and including a number over £100, have been paid.

Many ideas for the elimination of waste have been accepted. Waste is the Department's greatest enemy. It works in the oddest corners, sometimes undiscovered for years until some bright eye suddenly discovers its presence and reveals a simple method for avoiding it. There may be in any Branch of the railways some method or system which has become wasteful in the use of material or manpower.

The Betterment and Suggestions Board particularly wants to hear from employes who have ideas in any direction affecting the efficiency of the service.

Those and more ideas are wanted—more and more recruits to the small army submitting thoughts and sug-

gestions are especially welcome, and every employe who contributes a "brain wave" is assured of full consideration with the utmost secrecy by trained railwaymen.

All ideas may be sent under direct cover to the Board and not through ordinary Departmental channels. The original letter detailing the suggestion never leaves the Board, and only a typed copy of the idea bearing a number instead of a name is sent out when reports are required. If requested by the suggestor, all communications between him and the Board will be forwarded to his private address. This system, rigidly followed through the years, gives all possible protection to suggestors.

Under present conditions there is more reason than ever for railway men or women to search for some method of improvement or saving no matter how small it may seem, and to send the idea at once to the Betterment and Suggestions Board, Railways Administrative Offices, Spencer Street. Liberal awards will be paid for any ideas that are accepted.

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

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JUNE, 1943

Issue No. 153.

BRITISH TRANSPORT IN WAR!

ANOTHER EXTRACT FROM A SPLENDID RECORD

WHAT have been the main actions in the battle of transport in Britain? In the opening phases action followed prearranged plans which had been worked out to the last detail. The first crisis came with the handling of the first enormous evacuation of school children, invalids and business firms which packed the trains and crowded the roads in September, 1939, then, mobilisation and the moving of the B.E.F. with all its equipment to the ports of embarkation. A lull followed. The buses and trains went back into normal service. The Sitzkrieg was on. For the public the transport problem sank to the dimensions of the bother about petrol coupons, and was symbolised every Saturday night by Jack Warner's long-sighted warning, "Mind my bike."

Transport itself has painful memories of the Sitzkrieg. There were the dealings with the dirty-faced Luftwaffe. There is an All Clear day in the blitz; there was no All Clear for weeks in the great frost, there has been no All Clear in the black-out.

Dunkirk was the next action. The trucks were not in this, but all the trucks of England and many of the trucks in France were affected in that week. It was probably the greatest unmeditated railway move in history. And here transport had to break old regulations and give up habits, and had to improvise.

Timetables Ignored

In the offices, the clerks had to re-write timetables and invent new bus routes and train services, to get the trucks and soldiers distributed. Some of the clerks have been astonished by their own timetables. And when we say timetables, we are not thinking of the railway or the bus companies' timetables; we are thinking of the mass of timetables behind the timetables, the hieroglyphics you see written up in the locomotive sheds, the drivers' timetables, the yard manager's office, the timetables of the big garages.

The next action was more complex. The war was declared the map of Europe had become like a man beginning a somersault. Traffic tended away from the eastern ports to the western ports in order to lower the risk to shipping and to save ship's time on the Atlantic cargoes. By the fall of France, transport had completed our somersault in a

hurry. England rolled heavily over on to its western side and then stood on its head. It was no longer possible to send many convoys up the Channel because the Germans held the other side—not many convoys; still, as this was being written a London crane man was heard to turn down New Zealand cheese in a pub because "he couldn't stand the sight of the stuff"; he'd been unloading hundreds of tons of it.

But that isn't a fair picture. England rolled the best part of her weight to the west. Look at the air-raid figures. Instead of spreading like a fan from the south and east, from London and Southampton (which had become dangerous), the system had to be put into reverse and spread from the Scottish and the western ports over the island. Think of that in terms of re-organisation to begin with. It is a major operation. Branch lines carrying ten times more traffic than in peacetime, happy little junctions turned into little hells, lorry drivers working along unaccustomed routes—that is the sort of thing that has happened. And, in justice to all concerned, it should be added that that is the sort of thing for which preparations had been made. So far as could be foreseen, the pre-war plans covered diversions of traffic both from east to west, and also from west to east, but these plans could only be completed and adjusted in the light of experience.

Significant Change

Now that we have glanced at the main actions in the Battle of Transport, it is as well to see what happened at headquarters in September, 1939, and what has happened since. For an important and significant change has taken place. Before the war, transport was under private control, today it has been reorganised as one body geared to the war machine.

The pre-arranged plan for railways came into operation two days before war was declared. The four main line railway companies and the London Passenger Transport Board, with a number of other companies, were placed under the control of the Minister of Transport, who appointed as his agents the Railway Executive Committee.

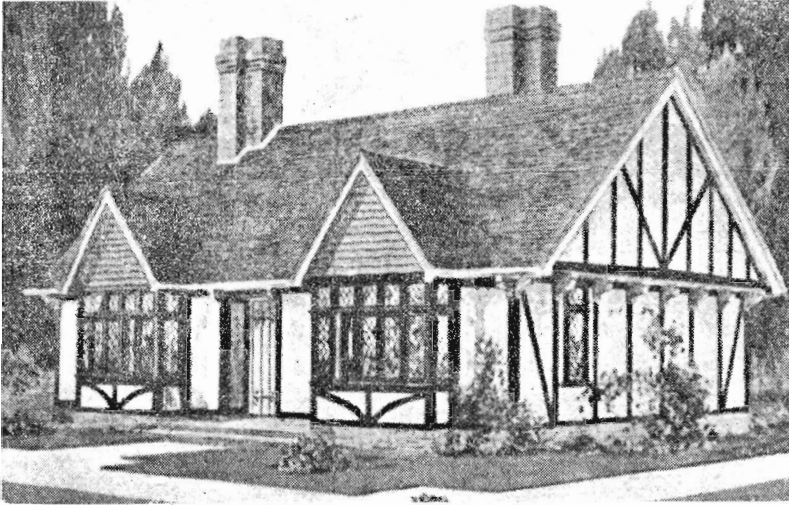
Emergency Organisation

Similarly, on the day war broke out the necessary steps were taken to bring into action the Emergency Road Transport Organisation. This scheme based on the area organisation of the Ministry of Transport for the licensing and control of commercial road vehicles had been planned during the days of peace with the help of the Road Transport (Defence) Advisory Committee, consisting of leading men in the road transport industry with representatives of the railways and of the workers.

On the roads the problem was more complex: there is little organisation among the road hauliers. Road transport is not in the hands of a few big companies; the 150,000 heavy lorries in the country are worked by 60,000 independent operators. Road transport had to be organised so that petrol was saved and so that lorries and passenger vehicles too were used for national purposes.

(continued on page 3)

BIG RAFFLE FOR TUDOR BUNGALOW BUILT BY VOLUNTEER LABOUR



ONE of the biggest efforts for the assistance of patriotic funds is the raffle for the Tudor Bungalow near Lake Wendouree, Ballarat, shown above, which is being undertaken jointly by the Ballarat Patriotic Fund Council and the Victorian Railways Patriotic Fund, the two funds sharing equally in the proceeds. This remarkable prize, which should be readily saleable or should let at £2 a week, is the handsome donation of the Master Builders of Ballarat and the local building Trades Unions, the Builders supplying the material and the Unions contributing the labour. Tickets, which are 1/- each, will be available for sale until July 20, and results will be published in the daily papers on July 31.

In order that the respective Funds will receive the full sum invested, no commission will be paid on the sale of tickets nor will any other expenses be permitted. The value of the prize, coupled with the fine purpose for which the whole raffle has been organised, should induce every railwayman to secure at least one ticket for himself and assist in the sale among his friends, and it is hoped that every railwayman will do so.

The Bendigo Auxiliary has given an impetus to the undertaking by agreeing to distribute 3,000 tickets, and other V.R. Patriotic Committees will similarly help. Railwaymen can secure tickets through their auxiliaries in their own depots or their supervisors, or direct from the Honorary Secretary to the V.R. Patriotic Fund (Mr. W. E. Elliott), Railway Station Buildings, Flinders Street.

* * *

The Ararat Queen Carnival, organised by the local auxiliary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund, concluded on April 30, too late for reference in the last issue of the "News Letter." Owing to the spirited work of local railwaymen and women, the Railways Queen was first in the competition, second and third places going respectively to the Girls' Friendship Club Queen and the Comforts Fund Queen. Over £1,600 was raised.

THESE FIGURES DO TALK!

SOME idea of the demand for meals on "Spirit of Progress" may be gained from the fact that for the 28 days ending 10th April last, 4,798 No. 1 dinners and 837 No. 2 dinners were served on the train, or approximately 201 meals on each outward trip to Albury.

The number of No. 1 dinners (which cost 4/-, one shilling more than the charge for the No. 2 dinner) is easily a record for the service, and is 652 more than the number provided over the same period last year. Also there was an increase of 135 customers for the No. 2 dinner.

On the "up" journey from Albury demands for breakfasts reached the formidable figure of 6,172—858 more than last year—and on one day, April 4, the record number of 302 breakfasts, surpassing the previous record by 10, were consumed by hungry passengers from Sydney. This requires no less than seven sittings.

The desire for refreshments on the buffet car of the Albury Express has also grown substantially, the number of services for the 4 weeks mentioned being 22,514 as compared with 18,180 over the same period last year.

DYNON ROAD NEW SIDING NEARLY READY

THE six new tracks providing additional siding accommodation in the Spion Kop area at New Melbourne will shortly be ready for use. The average length of each new siding is 1,750 feet, so that the Department will have approximately two additional miles of tracks to assist in relieving congestion in the Melbourne area, which has been greatly accentuated by the large increase in goods traffic under war conditions. The additional sidings will practically double the existing accommodation in the Spion Kop area.

As explained previously in "News Letter," the more powerful engines and increased length of trains carrying goods and materials vital to the national life emphasise the need for longer sidings so as to facilitate the making up of outgoing trains and the reception of incoming trains, an important factor in the latter being the quicker release of engines. The need for longer sidings is felt not only in the Melbourne Yard, but at many important country stations.

What can be gained by the release of locomotives on a busy day in the Melbourne Yard when up to 120 freight trains arrive in 24 hours as many as 12 long trains often demand attention in the peak hour—will be conceived. Locomotives burning up coal and losing in standing an average of approximately 150 tons a week which should be employed getting on with transport jobs, is one part of this remarkable story.

Another aspect is the delay towards loading. Sometimes as many as 15 long trains are held up near Dudley Street for long periods, to ten or a dozen trains have been waiting on the Coburg, North-Eastern and Northern goods arrival sidings whilst others have been kept standing on the sidings at North Melbourne awaiting entrance into the Yard.

The new sidings will be completed early in August, and it is expected that they will be an important factor in increasing the availability of engine power and reducing delays to outgoing trains.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

JNR. Clk. T. A. Carey; Jnr. Clk. A. Wood.

R.A.A.F.

Msgr. L. Aarons, Jnr. Clk. C. E. Campbell; Jnr. Clk. C. N. G. Clk. P. G. Coldrey; Jnr. Clk. Cook; Clk M. D. Heron; Jnr. E. J. Kenealy; Jnr. Clk. T. K. Keenan; Jnr. Clk. L. E. La Gruta; Painter Mackay; Lad Labr. C. J. T. McFarlane; Lad Labr. H. W. Moodie; Lad E. L. Peers; Clk. J. A. Sexton; Clk. J. F. Slevison.

R.A.N.

Lad Labr. R. F. Paley; Lad K. T. Share.

BRITISH TRANSPORT IN WAR

(continued from page 1).

This was the first enormous phase of the strategy of transport and the war laid before the war stood up to the test well. Each industry had got on to an efficient basis to meet new conditions; good use was being made of railway trucks, roads, canals and ports and the many and varied demands of the war were successfully discharged.

In the latter part of 1941, however, the changed conditions and the increasing tempo of war-production called for further action. In August, 1941, a new agreement was made and Sir James Anderson became Controller of Railways and Chairman of the Railway Executive Committee with Sir James Anderson, of the Great Western, as Deputy Chairman.

This Committee with its teams of technical experts is in almost constant session. It issues directions for the master and places before him the needs of the railway managements. It is, in fact, the brain and nerve centre of an elaborate system of control. Working directly under it is the Central Operating Conference, a body which never meets in the ordinary sense, but confers every morning of the week, Sundays included, by telephone. These telephonic sessions last barely half-an-hour—never more—each time that the conference works. Every morning produces a fresh crop of problems. They may concern a traffic diversion, a local shortage of locomotives, a big traffic movement. Whatever it is, the question is examined in its broadest aspects and the decision is crisp and final. Under the R.E.C., also, is the Central Wagon Control. Through this organisation the railway chiefs are in a position to ascertain each day the numbers of wagons available.

Control of Vehicles.

On the roads, the Government decided that there must be a fleet of vehicles under Government control and that much, if not all, of the long distance movement of Government traffic by road must be arranged through one channel.

The aim of the second strategic move was to co-ordinate and develop, spread the burden and to keep pace with production. For this purpose committees of experts were appointed—The Inland Transport War Council to advise on policy and the Central Transport Committee to co-ordinate the demands of Government departments and plan large-scale movements. These committees are aided with three decisive facts: that transport is working under a greater strain than ever before; that it cannot be increased because new locomotives and lorries cannot be made except at the expense of munitions; that hundreds of new factories are in full

Testing New Generating Plant For Newport "A" Power Station

THE erection of the new boiler and turbine plant at Newport "A" Power Station is now nearing completion, but before being commissioned it is essential that every item shall be checked and carefully tested. The layman can only have a very hazy idea of the enormous amount of work involved in an installation of this kind.

In the first instance, all high tension cables and switches both for main and auxiliary services are tested for continuity and then subjected to a high potential test of at least 40,000 volts or approximately twice working pressure.

All auxiliary cables, oil switches, air break switches and the control wiring, of which some miles have been installed, are tested for insulation resistance, while care is taken to see that each control wire is properly connected to its appropriate terminal.

In connection with the operation of the boiler plant, 20 large motors ranging from 130 to 35 h.p. and 27 small motors from 3 to 1 h.p. have been installed, and each motor must be tested for insulation, resistance and correctness of rotation. About 50 per cent. of motors turn in the wrong direction when first started.

All control switches must also be tested and their protective devices accurately set to assure adequate protection for their motors. On the turbine side 4 large motors ranging from 450 to 60 h.p. and 7 smaller ones must be similarly treated.

The main steam and feed water valves on this installation are all

motor operated and the complicated system of reversing switches, clutches, indicating lights and safety devices attached to each valve must also be patiently checked and set.

Over 100 instruments comprising draught gauges, electrical thermometers, pressure and vacuum gauges, reporting gauges, and efficiency meters must have their calibration and settings checked before the plant is started up.

After motors are tested for direction, each auxiliary is run up to speed and its performance recorded.

The boiler furnace is dried out with a light fire and then a moderate steam pressure is raised to enable a strong caustic soda solution to be circulated so that all traces of oil can be removed from the inside of the boiler. This process takes approximately 48 hours and when the boiler cools down sufficiently a thorough internal inspection is made. Once again steam pressure is raised, this time to full value to enable safety valves to be set. At the same time the operation of the pulverised fuel burners and dampers is checked and necessary adjustments made.

While initial tests are being carried out on the boilers, all turbine auxiliaries are checked, then lubricating oil is circulated through the turbine bearings for approximately 48 hours. When high pressure steam is available, the turbine is run for approximately a week at 65 per cent. rated speed, and with the alternator short-circuited to enable the latter to be dried out. When this is satisfactory the turbine is run at full speed and the alternator excited to full voltage. The machine is then "phased out" to ensure that all connections are correctly made. This is probably the most critical test of all.

When the boilers and turbine are in ordinary running commission, it is necessary to adjust feed water regulators, various alarm and safety devices, pressure relief valves and flow limiting orifice plates. It is also important to keep under continuous observation the performance of lubricating systems and bearings throughout the whole equipment.

After the plant has proved satisfactory, it will be subjected to the final acceptance trials lasting the best part of a month. These comprise tests for boiler and turbine efficiency, maximum and minimum rating and general performance.

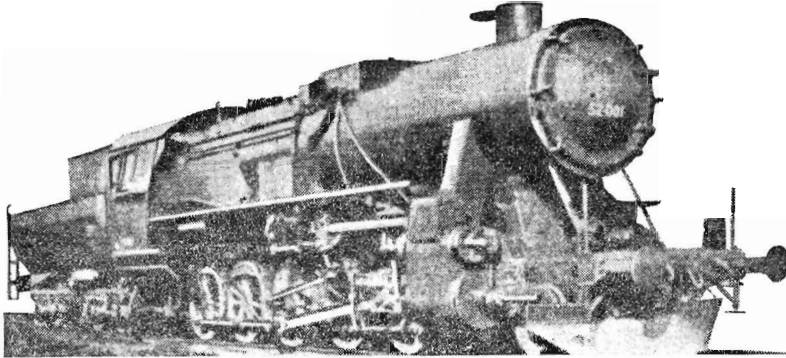
V.R. CASUALTIES.
Porter-in-Charge D. T. Andrew (missing).
Eng. Ctr. R. H. Baker (missing, presumed dead).

production. The job increases; the tools do not increase.

The task of the strategy of transport in Great Britain therefore is to see that the trains, the lorries and the canal boats are used for essential purposes only. Cross hauls have to be cut out, as much as possible; even the long hauls must be cut when alternative goods can be found nearer to the sources of supply. There must be quicker turn round of vehicles, as there is of ships at the ports.

Such are the lines upon which inland transport has been organised for war, and the strategy its commanders have developed. To test the growing organisation—a test severe both for the headquarters staff and the front-line works—came the blitz . . .

GERMANY'S AUSTERITY LOCOMOTIVE



GERMANY'S new austerity goods locomotive, now being mass-produced under the control of the Minister for Armaments and Munitions, will be of interest to all railway engineers.

This engine, which is illustrated in the picture above, was evolved jointly by all the German locomotive works in conjunction with experts of the German Ministry of Transport with a view to simplification in the interests of speedier construction and the saving of materials. It is claimed that of the 6,000 components needed for the manufacture of a goods engine of previous design, roughly 1,000 have been eliminated entirely and 3,000 of the remainder have been modified.

A great saving of time and material is said to have been obtained by die-forging large sized components, such as connecting rods and coupling rods, and by eliminating such accessories as smoke deflector plates, sand boxes, head lamp brackets, the bell and a number of hand rails and handles. Moreover, the feedwater heater has been eliminated together with a number of other devices that are not essential to the operation of a locomotive.

As a result, 26 metric tons (of 2205 lb. each) of materials and 6,000 working hours have been saved in the manufacture of each locomotive.

The design of the tender contributed largely to this saving of materials, for, despite the fact that the water capacity has been increased from 5,750 to 7,500 gallons and the bunker capacity from 8 to 10 tons of coal, the weight of raw materials used in the new unit is only 26 tons as compared with 40 tons for the previous type.

It appears that a striking saving has been achieved in the use of non-ferrous metals, as only 484 lb. of copper is used in the new locomotive, whereas the old design embodied the use of 15,428 lb.

It is also claimed that the special constructional methods which all the locomotive works are organising will

enable these austerity locomotives to be manufactured in half the time normally required, and as a result the output is expected to be very high.

Similar economies in the construction of German goods wagons have been responsible for a reduction of 35 per cent. in materials and 25 per cent in working hours, and it is stated that in future only two types of goods wagons are to be built.

New Spencer Street Cafeteria Opened

THE new cafeteria on the main concourse of the Spencer Street station, details of which were published in our last issue, was opened on May 25, and since that date the popularity of the new refreshment room has been steadily growing.

The opening day saw the whole system working without a hitch. People in search of a meal came in steadily through the entrance doors, picked up the necessary trays, plates and cutlery, selected what they required—salads, rolls, sandwiches, sweets, hot pies, or were served with steaming, appetising entrees by one of the three white uniformed girls at the special hot press—and then moved to the pay desk where a smart cashier rapidly assessed and collected the cost.

Then the customers took their trays into the dining room, ate their meals and disappeared through the exit door at the end, whilst staff quickly picked up the crockery to be thoroughly washed and returned into the racks again.

The smooth introduction of the new system reflects great credit on all concerned in planning and operating it; and genuine praise is due also to the staff who made and installed the new equipment with so little interruption to the Refreshment Services.

COAL MUST BE SAVED

COAL is vital to the national existence. It is required for munitions, transport, for gas, and when circumstances connected with the war make increasingly precious, it becomes imperative for all concerned to seek means to avoid unnecessary waste.

Waste is ever with us. It is caused by carelessness, thoughtlessness, and practices and in a hundred other different ways. It lurks in the intentions waiting to spoil the good record of the conscientious railwayman. And it can only be avoided by a coordinated effort on the part of all concerned.

Much can be done by intelligent team work among the operating staff. Enginemen can save a great deal by watchful economies in everyday train running.

They can do a great deal more if they get the full assistance of signmen and station staffs. Every unnecessary stop to a train, electric or steam-driven, means additional energy and waste of coal.

For instance, if a signalman is slow in giving the right of way to a heavy train, it may result in the engineman losing the momentum of his train which was required to take it over the next gradient.

Result of Slackness

Even a little slackness here certainly mean extra coal to restore speed when the tardy signal for progress is given. It involves far greater waste if it causes a train to stall on a gradient and compels the train to break it into two to get it over the top.

The foregoing is only one of the possibilities ahead of a train en route on putting up a good performance. Slowness in opening crossing gates may be another trouble, causing delay and increased coal consumption.

Transportation men can help in avoiding unnecessary checks or delays to trains by giving "all clear" signals promptly, by having van drivers ready at stations, and by giving detailed accurate particulars of shunting work performed at stations ahead. When a train is detained in a station yard, the driver should be advised how long the delay is likely to last.

Summed up, the railways' present coal problem can be greatly helped by co-operation—whole-hearted and earnest—by every one associated with the operation.

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, 1943

Issue No. 154.

THE BRITISH RAILWAYMEN'S WAR

Another Extract from the British Transport War Record, "Transport Goes to War"

SIX hundred thousand men—and women too, nowadays—work on the British railways. There are 20,000 route miles of track. The railways, as the largest partner in modern transport, have to carry the heaviest tonnage of the war. The railways took the brunt of the great migrations from the cities in September, 1939, and during the air raids the railways took most of the troops who landed from Dunkirk, and faced heavy punishment from the blitz. But these were only the dramatic moments; their main and growing daily war-work is the carrying of troops and munitions, keeping pace with the ever-growing deliveries of the convoys and the war-output of the factories. All this in addition to their normal work of maintaining regular services everywhere for passengers and freight, and carrying mails, parcels, newspapers and the thousand and one items necessary to the nation's daily life.

You see in the coal traffic, for example, the kind of problem which tested the strength and ingenuity of the railway companies. Much of the coal which used to come down from the north by sea before the war now comes by rail. But in that first winter of the war the worst winter for many years, 1,500 miles of track were blocked by snow and the points were immovably by ice. The house-keeping was down to a sack of dust and the long-distance passenger service had to be cut in Northumberland and Durham in order to get the "coal specials" through. The "coal specials" were run at the rate of one a week, and since then the rate has gone up to 450 per week.

"Coal Specials" Move

Down on the permanent way, you stand in the sweetish toffee-scent blowing down in the cold from the sugar beet factory, the "coal specials" move by in what is like a permanent procession. They fan out to the midlands, to the furnaces, to the docks for the loading of ships. You see them coming up the main line as you stand on the scene in the control tower of a great marshalling yard further north on all the lines from Crewe to Ashford to the Cardiff yards. It has given the railway companies something to think about in the first years of the war. You will never see a railwayman to believe that coal

One of the many things the English nation is not quite honest about is the famous business of "muddling through." It we really muddled all the time we should not get through. Things like the evacuation scheme were excellent pieces of pre-war planning. One million, three hundred thousand people were got out of London in the early days of the war, and 1,500 special trains—not one of them in our crowded Bradshaw, but all of them invented—carried those people away. We happened to be moving an army about also. We happened to be dealing, too, with the summer holiday traffic.

And more. We have to think of this evacuation—in which everything on wheels in England joined—not only as the removal of men, women, children, hospital patients and lunatics. But out with the people went the contents of museums, pictures from the art galleries, office furniture, school furniture, the files of businesses and the tin boxes of the Government departments. It was nothing to see rows of school desks standing in the loading bays of the goods yards, as if waiting for a class. And besides all this there were small items like a couple of scores of trains getting the food out of the Thames warehouses. And the carriage of the large rush-loads of cement, sand, brick and steel for the building of air-raid defences.

Most of us remember that by the first December of the war we were no longer sitting in total, silent darkness in the carriages, and the largest cuts

in the passenger services had been put back. (We are now about 25 per cent. below pre-war.) That Christmas, the old Christmas specials ran as usual, 1,500 of them. The 45 mile an hour speed limit went, and though the record breaking runs were not restored, there was a respectable start-to-stop 50 miles an hour in their place. The restaurant cars came back, having served among other things as evacuation offices; but some things went for the duration. A large number of the steamships. Many of those white-decked boats have become hospital ships or have put on the camouflage of minesweepers. The appreciation of the troops has often been expressed in vociferous cheers.

"See All Blinds Drawn"

But for the refined and rather cuttingly clear accents of the lady station-announcers telling him to "See all blinds are drawn," the passenger of those days might have forgotten the war. The drivers, the guards, the shunters, the men in the signal-boxes outside, contending with the black-out, would have disillusioned him. For the driver the black-out means that the landmarks have gone, for he does not drive only by the signals. He has to know what stations he has passed; he confirms his position by the lights of a town, by the electric signs, the lights of the outlying factory. The dimmed lighting of the war-time platform, with its dismal white line and uncertain ending, makes it harder for him to know when to lower his speed and when to stop. And he is shut into his cab now by the tarpaulin which smothers the once friendly glare of fire and smoke which the engine threw up in the sky.

(Continued on next page)

BRITISH RAILWAYMEN'S WAR

(CONTINUED)—

One has the impression that what a railwayman's wife would have to say would fill a book, since the war. For there is a shortage of drivers and firemen and guards—there is a congestion of traffic. The man you are talking to is a goods driver, and he may be up to six hours late from Carlisle. That means he is forced to stay the night here; and if he continues his journey tomorrow he will be two nights away from home, perhaps three, instead of one. Tomorrow, if his luck is out, he may hear the call for a volunteer to take another train on. So, though "the more you do, the more you have to do," you "carry on."

A large part of the ordinary railwayman's war effort is just this volunteering and carrying on, though he may just have come through a normal 10-, 12-, 14-hour stretch. Somehow, away from his home, arriving in some small place when shops and cafes were closed, he has to try and find food. Like the roadmen, the drivers and guards have had trouble about rations, though they are better off than they were. And at the end of these goods trains, held up for hours on a side line, sits the Guard alone by his stove, trying to make a Wild West magazine last the journey, and feeling, especially when the Alert goes, that he alone at the tail of the train is the special target for the bomber. If you have seen a burnt-out guard's van on a siding you will understand the feeling.

All On During Blitz

All these men have been on during the blitz. A dispute exists between drivers and guards as to who hears the sinister grunt of the enemy plane more clearly. There is the driver who went into Plymouth under a bridal arch of searchlights, and was very surprised to discover the fires of Plymouth on his left when they should have been on his right. He had been diverted to a line which was strange to him and had no pilot driver with him who knew the road. (That is one of the air-raid problems: the English railways are well provided with alternative routes—a good legacy of the competitive days—so that, if a line is bombed, detours are fairly simple to arrange; but drivers who know those routes have to be got out, and that is often difficult.)

Whatever official plans exist for dealing with parachutists and the plane which pursues trains on the line, the drivers have many ingenious private ideas of their own. One fantasy which recurs is the picturesque one of "luring the bomber to the mouth of a tunnel." In fact, driving in the raids is not picturesque. The old 15-mile-an-hour limit in Alerts had to go—it is 30 now, but very much at the driver's discretion—for it reduced the system to chaos and congestion; the driver knows the dangers.

Engines have gone into craters and have somersaulted down embankments; they have been known to take a fallen footbridge on the cab. One driver was going towards Preston during the day-time when his train was machine-gunned and bombed. A train cannot dodge. In his own words:

"Soon after passing Stoke Hammond I heard a rattle of machine-gun fire and I noticed bits of something flying from our train. I warned the fireman and accelerated. Then I shut off steam with the doors closed and blower shut off, so as to throw out a smoke screen, because the plane started to bomb. Three bombs exploded on my side, 80 feet to the left. The engine rocked. I thought we were on the floor" (i.e., derailed).

But he was not. He got through.
(To be continued.)

Death of Commonwealth Railways' Secretary.

THE "News Letter" records with deep regret the death last month of Mr. T. H. Moyes, Secretary of the Commonwealth Railways, and a former member of the Transportation Branch of the Victorian Railways.

He joined this Department as a Junior Clerk in 1904 and transferred to the Commonwealth Railways in 1912, early demonstrating his administrative qualities as Senior Clerk at the South Australian end during the construction of the East-West Trans-Australian railway.

In 1918, he became Chief Clerk, serving in various branches, and over the period 1926-31, his ability and experience were utilised as Secretary of the North Australian Development Commission.

He had been Secretary of the Commonwealth Railways since May, 1940. A keen sportsman, he devoted his early leisure to cricket, rowing and swimming. In later years, he was an ardent motorist and spent many happy hours on the golf links.

BIG PRESENTATION AT NEWPORT WORKSHOPS

THERE was a large gathering at the Newport Workshops on June 9 when the Newport Patriotic Fund Auxiliary presented the Salvation Army with mobile canteen units, each of them being in the vicinity of £800 and each being a dedication place reading "Dedicated to our Work Mates who gave their lives in our Fight for Freedom."

Mr. Commissioner R. G. Wiseman, who represented the Commission, in the presentation, spoke in warm appreciation of the generosity and patriotism which make these valuable gifts possible. He instanced that its establishment in September, 1941, the Newport Auxiliary had subscribed over £2,500, and that this represented a substantial proportion of the £30,000 which had been subscribed to date for the V.R. Patriotic Fund.

V. R. CASUALTY.

The "News Letter" greatly regrets announcing that Pilot Officer W. Lawrence, who before enlistment was Porter-in-Charge at Craigieburn, is missing (believed dead).

Mr. E. H. Brownbill, Manager of the Newport Workshops, also added congratulations and emphasised how desirable it was for "all of us to do safe jobs" to do something for the war with "not so safe jobs."

Mr. A. Tevendale, Secretary of the Newport Auxiliary opened the proceedings with a few suitable words. Mr. R. McDonough, the President, made the presentation and Mr. G. Precious, Chairman of the Commonwealth Unions Newport Shop Committee, also spoke. They expressed their gratification at this practical contribution to their comrades in the battle and reminded the gathering of the need for continuing their good work.

Major Palmer of the Salvation Army in a very happy speech made some interesting and amusing comments on experiences among the troops in the areas in the Middle East and elsewhere. He expressed his deep gratitude for the generosity which had made the presentation possible, and promised that the same would be used to the fullest extent for the comfort of troops in forward areas.

COMPETITION FOR TREE PLANTING AND DECORATION OF STATIONS AND DEPOTS.

IN the annual competition for tree planting and station yards in 1942, the highest number of points were gained as under—

Section	Name	Grade	Location
New work without piped water supply	Mrs. H. Williamson	Caretaker	Woori Yallah
	Mr. G. T. Williamson	Sup. Repairer	"
Maintenance of existing trees and gardens with piped water supply	Mr. J. J. Harrington	Porter-in-Charge	Lethbridge
	Mr. F. J. Byrnes	"	"
Maintenance of existing trees and gardens without piped water supply	Mrs. J. Sullivan	Caretaker	Kotta
	Mr. W. H. Sullivan	Ganger	"

Fewer entries were received this year—for instance, there was only one entry throughout Victoria for the Section: New Work with piped water supply. This is explained by the fact that owing to the longer hours worked staffs have less time to devote to this competition, as well as by the adverse seasonal conditions towards the end of last year, and the closing of the Departmental Nursery at Flemington Bridge, the supply of trees, shrubs, etc.

SELECTED TEAMS IN FINE A.R.P. DEMONSTRATION

UNDER the direction of Mr. G. S. Scott Overhead Superintendent of the Electrical Branch, and in the presence of the Chairman (Mr. N. C. Harris), the Commissioner R. G. Wishart and many railwaymen, a remarkable A.R.P. demonstration was given by selected teams on the east side of the garage building, Batman Avenue, last month.

The program was broadly divided into fire fighting and rescue events, and the various teams displayed marked ability in handling the problems set them.

The running out of lengths of hose; the replacement of a burst length of hose; the attacking of fires; the methods of dealing with incendiary bombs (non-explosive and explosive); the extinguishing of oil fires with sand and an exhibition in which Mr. Scott's original "Ned Kelly" protection outfit (made of fireproofed hessian packed with fireproofed slagwool) showed its value, were all carried out very efficiently before the crowd of interested spectators.

Expert First Aid Work

The first aid displays, which were most successful, were particularly interesting because of the inclusion of the team of several female members of the staff. The expert handling of patients—one presumed to be suffering from a fractured left thigh and a lacerated scalp, and the other with a compound fracture of the left leg, a simple fracture of the right collar-bone and abrasions to the hand—drew applause from the many men educated in first aid methods.

Outstanding events were the rescues carried out by selected squads. The method of lowering an unconscious patient by means of a ladder from a roof, the lowering of patients in the Boatswain's Chair, and the more difficult job of getting quickly to the ground in a stretcher from a small second-floor window a patient with a fractured pelvis and another with a fractured leg were revealed with a skill disclosing marked skill. A rather humorous episode during this demonstration was the temporary suspension in mid-air of the patient whilst a camera recorded the episode.

The whole demonstration greatly impressed all present, and congratulations are due to Mr. Scott (Area Warden), Mr. J. G. Goodman, Secretary A.R.P. Emergency Organisation, and Messrs. P. Robb, G. Kitchen, A. McLean and C. N. Johansen, responsible for the training of the various squads. The Commissioners subsequently inspected a number of well-made models of aeroplanes made by Mr. N. Hankin and used for lecture purposes in the Aeroplane Spotters' course.

V.R. Men In Construction Of Military Railway, Syria



General Sir Harold Alexander inspecting Guard of Honor at historic opening of Railway at Dog River, Syria.

IN Syria, there is a small grim place called Dog River which has a great historical significance to Australian railwaymen. On the rock wall overlooking the new section of railway line in this locality the inquisitive stranger will read this memorial tablet:—

"Near this spot on 21.12.42, the last spike was driven in the Beyrout-Tripoli railhead by the C-in-C., M.E.F., General Hon. Sir Harold R. L. G. Alexander, G.C.B., C.S.I., D.S.O., M.C., thereby completing the link between London and Cairo. This section of the line was built by the Australian Construction Group during the year 1942."

It was a tremendous job because the line mostly hugs a coast distinguished by frequent "high rocky outcrops plunging almost sheer into the sea."

In their section the Australians (including many Victorian railwaymen) excavated 35,000 cubic yards of limestone alone, and had to construct

15 major bridges ranging up to 300 feet long and 90 feet high crossing wadis which are dry in summer but are impressive torrents in winter.

The railway from Beyrout to Tripoli, which was completed in 12 months, was responsible for a picturesque contrast in working methods, the most modern mechanical grabs being employed beside woven rush baskets "little changed from those used by road builders 2,000 years ago."

The whole of this land, through which the railway passes, is soaked in history. General Alexander, who drove the first train from Beyrout to Dog River for the opening ceremony, could have seen on the walls of some of the gorges almost invisible hieroglyphics left by ancient armies side by side with rough, but eloquent signs of the passing of Napoleon's soldiers and of some of our own forces in the first World War.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS

A.I.F.

App. Sailmaker C. E. Bartlett; Jnr. Clk. A. C. Fielder; Jnr. Clk. N. C. Lang; App. B'maker E. L. Mills; Sup. Lbr. R. J. Rowe.

R.A.A.F.

Jnr. Clk. K. Baynes; Jnr. Clk. A. H. Birt; Jnr. Clk. J. K. Carney; Lad Lbr. M. George; Jnr. Clk. G. L. Hamilton; Jnr. Clk. D. N. Livingston; Jnr. Clk. R. W. McDougall; Jnr. Clk. T. McHugh; Jnr. Clk. A. R. Powles; Lad Lbr. N. J. H. Ray; Jnr. Clk. A. F. Sykes; Jnr. Clk. D. P. Stanes; Jnr. Clk. K. J. Wakeman; Lad Lbr. N. L. Walters.

R.A.N.

Jnr. Clk. E. Cummins; Jnr. Clk. D. P. Hamilton; Sup. Lbr. E. A. Merrifield; Jnr. Clk. T. M. Sheehy; Sup. Lbr. A. J. Skinner.

R.A.N.R.

Jnr. Clk. K. E. Dixon.

Mentioned In Despatches

AMONG the 48 Australian airmen serving overseas, who have been mentioned in recent despatches, are two former employes of the rolling stock branch—Flight Lieutenant K. O. Woodward of Hawthorn, and Pilot Officer K. Millgate of Maryborough.

Flight Lieutenant Woodward joined the clerical staff in October, 1921, and entered the Air Force in November, 1939. Before proceeding abroad he did a paymaster's course in Melbourne.

Pilot Officer K. Millgate became a supernumerary clerk in June, 1935, and enlisted in the Air Force in December, 1940. It is regretted that he has been reported missing after valiant service in the Middle East.

Are You In The Raffle For The Tudor Bungalow ?

IN the next issue we hope to publish the name of the winner of the raffle for the Tudor Bungalow in Ballarat. Tickets costing 1/- each will be available for sale until near the end of July, and those who have delayed taking a chance should do so at once. The response already has been heavy, and the Committee of the V.R. Patriotic Fund desires to thank all members of the staff who have given their assistance. Great enthusiasm has been shown. In many cases railwaymen asking for more tickets for sale demanded more than double the number of books that had originally been forwarded to them. There are other instances, too, of railwaymen who have sent for further supplies two or three times. Particularly noticeable is the request for tickets from three railwaymen now serving in New Guinea. They had seen the reference to the raffle in "The News Letter." The Committee specially urges all those who have sold tickets to return the butts to the Secretary (Mr. W. E. Elliott), Flinders Street Station Buildings, without delay.

* * *

Two outstanding instances of generosity on behalf of the V.R. Patriotic Fund can be recorded this month. In the first case a quantity of firewood is the basis of the story. The firewood was delivered in trucks at Tooronga, and as there was nobody to unload the fuel, the station staff volunteered to do the job in their own time. This gesture not only released the needed trucks for use elsewhere, but also brought the volunteering staff a cheque for £1/1/- for their work. This they declined to take and handed it over to the V.R. Patriotic Fund.

In the second instance a member of the staff at Spencer Street Station picked up a purse containing £3 over six months ago. He promptly handed it over to the Department. As it was unclaimed after three months, the money was refunded to the finder, but he refused to take it. He donated it to the V.R. Prisoner of War Fund, declaring that there are many good fellows in enemy prisons who needed the money more than he did.

* * *

All railwaymen who are not contributing to this fund might well take note of these examples and add their mite for the relief and succour of their erstwhile workmates who are now in enemy hands. If you are not a contributor to the fund, sign a payroll deduction form immediately or write to the Hon. Secretary, V.R. Patriotic Fund, Flinders Street Station Buildings, who will arrange for deductions to be made.

TWO POPULAR V. R. MEN PASS ON.

MANY railwaymen and a past generation of football followers will deeply regret the death at Geelong last month of Mr. W. E. Busbridge, a former employe of the Department.

"Buzzy," as he was known to thousands, was a brilliant half-back and follower for Essendon about 30 years ago. He was a powerful unit in the famous ruck trio—Busbridge, Belcher and Cameron—the last named popularly known as "Ernie" still serving the Department as principal timekeeper at Newport.

"Buzzy" played in many State teams and his reputation for fairness was evidenced by the overwhelming vote cast in his favour by football fans in a competition to select the best and fairest player in the League.

He joined the service as a lad labourer in 1900, and worked at the North Melbourne Truck and Loco. Shops before becoming an engine driver in 1912. Afterwards he was transferred to Geelong, and in later years when he could only watch football from the grandstand he exhibited considerable skill as a golfer. His sterling character and sportsmanship earned him a wide circle of friends.

* * *

THE death last month after a long illness of Edward Christopher Irwin, removed an exceptional personality from the Transportation Branch.

Joining the Department as a junior clerk in 1909, he was located in the Goods Train service division when he enlisted in the A.I.F. He was associated with train control when it was re-organised in 1923, subsequently filling the position of Train Despatcher until 1937, when he was transferred to the office of the Assistant General Superintendent of Transportation.

For the next six years he was engaged on the important work of analysing results of goods train operations throughout the State. It was in this latter sphere that his capabilities became most widely known and appreciated.

The large assemblage at the funeral bore striking testimony to his popularity.

Retirement Of Mr. James Finnegan

THE retirement of Mr. James Finnegan, a popular V.R. Ganger who started in the service at Portland and finished up at Moorabbin, is a reminder that he is a son of James Finnegan, associated with the celebrated laconic message "Off again, on again, gone again. Finnegan."

This message, which has a wide circulation, is understood to have come from Mr. Finnegan Snr., when he was working in the Western District.

That veteran is still alive, and if he is on deck in another two and a half years, he will have reached the full century of life. He continues to be reasonably active, and what is even more interesting, his wife, aged 90, is also sturdily pottering about in their little home at Middle Brighton.

Mr. Finnegan, Snr. (also a James) is a native of Ireland, but Mrs. Finnegan, Snr., hails from Creswick. James, Jr., has three big sons fighting in the present war.

FEEDING THE DEFENCE FORCES.

FOLLOWING is a day's programme by the Refreshment Branch feeding members of the Defence forces travelling through the State. The figures shown are additional of course to large numbers of troops travelling in ordinary trains. For obvious reasons the names of the stations are indicated by letters:

Station	No. Fed	Time
A.	150	8.0 a.m.
B.	50	11.10 a.m.
C.	150	12.15 p.m.
D.	500	12.53 p.m.
E.	150	3.31 p.m.
F.	450	5.32 p.m.
G.	1,200	5.45 p.m.
H.	50	6.10 p.m.
I.	150	7.5 p.m.
	2,850	

The great majority of that total of 2,850 meals in one day was prepared at very short notice. It is unusual for the Refreshment Branch to be informed at 6 o'clock in the evening that some hundreds of men require breakfast at some station, comparatively remote from Melbourne, during the night or early next morning.

So far, the order, however, has always been met. Sound organization and in many cases the magnificent aid of voluntary help enable a large number of men to be fed in very quick time.

On a recent Sunday, when 2,000 were provided for over 2,000 at six different railway stations between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. the rush work of serving at three stations was undertaken by these ladies. A party from Brighton were always on call raced into Spencer Street to see that a body of men were promptly served at 11.15 a.m.

These ladies have many times come at most inconvenient hours to help preparing and serving meals to troops on special trains, and always undertake the work of clearing up and washing afterwards. Without their aid the service desired by the Navy and Army would often have been impossible.

SERVICE :

IN a long report to the Controller of Defence Foodstuffs the Tomato Transport Committee, appointed in September last year to consider all the problems in the transport and delivery of something like 1,600,000 cases of tomatoes for canning, pays the following tribute to the railways:—

"The Committee was faced with a very formidable task in arranging for the handling of such substantial quantities of highly perishable product by rail transport, and in connection it desires to place on record its appreciation of the manner in which the Victorian Railways carried out this very difficult and complex transport programme.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

AUGUST, 1943

Issue No. 155

BRITISH RAILWAY COURAGE EQUAL TO THE TERRORS OF "THE BLITZ."

THE full story of what British railwaymen did during the blitz will be an enormous one when it is written. The awards for gallantry are simply pointers to dozens of courageous acts which are on the records, and these in turn point to hundreds of others. In the following further extract from that remarkable narrative, "Transport Goes to War," we get some further vivid pictures of British railway courage.

Here is one. Up at Crewe they and the aircraft going over with their monotonous deliberation, and they missed Coventry was in trouble when the Controls reported that there was no telephone communication with that city. The only thing to do was to send someone down into the raid to find out.

This fortunate man was the stationmaster of the nearest junction, not a young man. You picture him, true training, putting on his stationmaster's cap—for railwaymen on duty as it were, on parade—and travelling down that unhealthy loop on the plateau of a light engine to find out what had happened. They were soon at the edge of the first crater. What the order of events was after that is not exactly clear. It never is very clear in a raid. You find yourself in the middle of a number of personal narratives dictated to the Inspector and written out in pencil on pieces of exercise paper. Here is the fireman on the raid: "Whilst proceeding towards Coventry on the return at 12 o'clock ex Leamington with Driver I heard shouting from an A.R.P. warden who had climbed on to the railway line and informed us that a bomb had demolished two houses and he was under the impression that the Main Line had become obstructed."

Red Light Ahead.

"Obstructed" turned out to be a mild word for that impression. The driver and fireman decided that they could go on, but with caution, and after a while they saw a red light ahead. It was the tail light of a goods train on the same line. They stopped. I then experienced the dropping of High Explosive and Incendiary bombs." Now bombs are not pro-

vided for in the Regulations, the Bible of railwaymen, but tail lights and a hostile signal are. They are provided for in one of the most sacred and elaborate rules of the profession, a rule so important that many can recite it by heart. It is called Rule 55.

Rule 55 reads like the regulations governing an irregular verb, and has defined every conceivable variety of circumstance in which a train may be held up by a signal. Continuing to experience heavy bombing, the fireman got down from the engine, walked along the line to the signal-box and performed his duty. He "proceeded to carry out Rule 55." That was the last time Rule 55 was carried out at those signals. A bomb screamed down and blew the signal-box to pieces.

Let us turn to a curious document.

It is a printed card, headed "Staff History." Underneath are several names. They begin: "Acting Station Foreman, Coventry, commended for prompt action during raid on Coventry, November 14-15th . . ." The aftermath is instructive. How long does it take for a railway to recover from a night like that? Well, Coventry station was closed on Friday and Saturday the 15th and 16th, but they ran trains to Leamington and Birmingham on the Sunday.

And now to a few things that happened on the night of April 16th, 1941. After the fire raid on the city, this was one of London's worst. Here is one of the Stationmasters looking back on his experiences.

The stationmaster is a heavy, grey-haired man, with a grave, yet humorous look and a hard hand-grip. Nothing would perturb him, you would say, and after April 16th, nothing could. They were getting out one of their heaviest passenger trains of the evening, when the warning went: the stationmaster was on the platform talking to the guard.

(Continued on next page)

"Battle for Australia" Impresses Large V.R. Audience.

IN the presence of a large and representative body of railwaymen, Mr. Ivan Menzies' striking revue, "Battle for Australia," was staged in the Concert Hall of the Victorian Railways Institute, Flinders Street, Melbourne, on Monday evening, July 5.

This remarkable revue, which was originally presented before His Excellency the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and members of both houses of Parliament at Canberra, has the high purpose of revealing in a series of effective scenes the necessity for team work in industry and public relations in order to win the war and provide a new and more enlightened world.

Characteristic of the general tenor and atmosphere of the revue was a realistic scene in an underground shelter during a London air raid in which a spirited discussion on what would follow after the "blitz" greatly impressed the audience.

Another admirable scene, which might almost have been called a "slice of life," pictured a family argument which, due to a spirit of co-operation, had a happy ending. Among other things the audience found merit in "White Antics" in which all the white ants of the latter-day mind, such as Fear, Hate, Greed, Rumour, were excellently portrayed.

The audience greatly appreciated the chance of seeing a production full of sound lessons to the thinking man, and in an appropriate speech at the close Mr. Commissioner R. G. Wishart thanked Mr. Menzies and his artists for a very interesting and stimulating evening.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

LAD. Lbr. W. A. Veale.

R.A.A.F.

Jnr. Clk. G. E. Cook; Lad Lbr. M. J. Flynn; Jnr. Clk. H. Gallagher; Lad Lbr. J. McD. Hastie; Jnr. Clk. F. W. Hastings; Lad Lbr. J. J. Kennelly; Lad Lbr. J. Laird; Jnr. Clk. J. D. Mahoney; App. Sailmaker J. R. Mudford; Clk. W. H. L. O'Brien; Jnr. Clk. K. J. O'Halloran; Jnr. Clk. W. J. Pyke; Crpnr J. W. Slings; Jnr. Clk. H. G. Way; Jnr. Clk. P. J. Wilson.

R.A.N.

Lad Lbr. R. L. Cassell; Moulder R. G. H. McAlister; Lad Lbr. A. W. McKenzie; Lad Lbr. T. A. Smith; Lad Porter R. Watson.

British Railways Courage—continued.

"I came back at once to the office and before I got there a bomb fell. There was a soldier down below in the hairdresser's, and when the warning went he got out of his chair saying 'I'm going to see whether I can do anything.' He got to the top of the stairs and the bomb blew his head off and killed a porter."
"They," says the stationmaster quietly, "were the first dead men I saw."

The raid went on. There is an important signal-box outside the station. The stationmaster went to see how the signal-box man was getting on. In a raid the signal-box is about as sheltered as Nelson's Column. The signal-box man gave the thumbs-up signal; the stationmaster went away, not knowing that the man who put his thumbs up was wounded seriously by splinters in the chest and that an old man of 52 years' service was carrying on.

"Well, that's how it went. The stuff was falling thick. I saw one of our men coming off the bridge in the light of the flames, so I went up to meet him. Quite calm he was, 'If you're going on the bridge, sir' he said, 'take care you don't trip over that time bomb.' I laughed, didn't take him seriously. 'I'm serious,' he said."

There was a time bomb on the bridge. So he gave orders to clear the station and the road outside—a little fussed too, about clearing the road, for the law is the law, and the road did not belong to the railway company—and then waited for the morning, when expert help turned up.

The stationmaster got through to headquarters.

"'You'll have to close,' they said to me. 'We've cleared one line.' I told them. 'Let me run one train. Let me run that little local over the bridge.' 'You can't do that' they said. 'Yes, I could. I'd like to. To keep the station open.'"

He argued and argued with them, until at last they said: "All right. You can run a short one if you like."

"And," says the stationmaster with a touch of mischief and pride, "we did. We can say now that we didn't close down on April 17th. We ran a short one."
(To be continued)

WAS HE ?

THE charge against the man in the dock was one of being drunk on railway premises and refusing to quit. A railway porter was called and gave his evidence.

"I wouldn't like to say the prisoner was inebriated, sir, but what I do say is that when I saw him he was dropping coins into the letter box and looking up at the station clock above and murmuring something about losing more weight—From "The Best Railway Stories," quoted in the "Railway Gazette."

BIG APPOINTMENT For Mr. T.R. COLLIER

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. T. R. Collier, Acting Superintendent of Train Services, who has been appointed Deputy Director of Railways and Road Transportation in the Department of the Army with the rank of Colonel.



Mr. T.R. Collier

Mr. Collier has been released from the Victorian Railways at the urgent request of the Commonwealth Government, and will bring to his new sphere the advantages of his outstanding ability and wide experience in railway transportation.

Like many other prominent railwaymen in responsible posts, he started from the lowest rung of the ladder, entering the Department in 1910. Subsequently, he worked up through the positions of Operating Porter, Asst. S.M., S.M., Train Despatcher, Asst. District Supt., District Supt. to Metropolitan Supt. to which position he was appointed on May 1, 1940.

As a railway officer he has shown the same cool, resourceful leadership which was conspicuous in his fine war record (1915-1919), from which he emerged as a Lieutenant wearing the coveted Military Cross and Bar.

Mr. Collier was succeeded as Acting Superintendent of Train Services by Mr. F.D. Greene who moved up from the post of Acting Metropolitan Superintendent. The latter job is being undertaken by Mr. J. S. O'Haire previously District Superintendent, Ballarat, who was replaced by Mr. L. Norwood, Assistant District Superintendent at Ararat. Mr. R. F. Stanistreet, S.M. from Wodonga, has taken over Mr. Norwood's duties.

This Crane Can Lift!

ONE of the Department's latest acquisitions is a 30-ton gantry crane now performing impressive lifting feats at Kirwan's siding in the Melbourne Yard.

Its ability in recently lifting a 24-ton casting and a 25-ton case of lathes is not indicative of its full capacity for on a test it easily raised a load of railway rails weighing 37½ tons.

The new crane is electrically driven and has a 50-foot span. It operates on a 380-foot runway in a newly widened yard with a double siding, and it will be invaluable on busy days when exceptionally big loads require rapid handling.

DEATH OF MR. ANDREW WILLIAMS, A.I.C.A.

THE "News Letter" records with deep regret the death last month of Mr. Andrew Williams, A.I.C.A., formerly Comptroller of Accounts, who retired from the Department on August 1937, after 48½ years of valuable service.

Mr. Williams, prior to succeeding Mr. T. F. Brennan as Comptroller of Accounts in December, 1936, was Assistant Comptroller for 15 years.

He was a man of high courage and unflinching energy. He was the possessor of a well ordered and highly trained mind and in the field of Government Accounting was a well known and highly respected and knowledgeable expert.

In this respect, his name will be associated with many creations and improvements in Railway Accounting methods. Among the most important of these was his work in planning and introducing the system of District Accounting, which automatically enabled the operating results of the Railways to be available to the Comptroller much earlier than was formerly possible.

GROWING VEGETABLE FOR UNCLE SAM

THE necessity for growing vegetables in the United States has been the subject of innumerable press articles and broad casts. Vegetables for immediate consumption and home canning are demanded in large quantities and the progressive Illinois Central Railroad is to the fore with a plan to be in overcoming the potential national shortage.

The Illinois Central recently announced as many of its employees who can to set up victory garden plots on the roof of way or on adjacent railroad property and the I.C. is gratified by the fact that over 1,000 of these plots have already been allotted.

It is the intention of the Comptroller to offer 30 prizes ranging up to \$250 dollars for the best kept and highest yielding vegetable gardens, and particularly all gardens for competition must be submitted to Mr. R. E. Barr, Comptroller, in charge of traffic in the I.C., before September 30 next.

The particulars required include photographs of the gardens at the peak of production together with diagrams showing arrangement of varieties of vegetables and figures indicating costs and yields.

There will be three qualified judges, and it is presumed that they will personally inspect the gardens in which the camera has most favourably reported before making their final decision.

NEW RANGE FOR TRAINING AIR GUNNERS

AN interesting development which will go into operation very shortly is the new range for training air gunners, which is at present being installed somewhere in Victoria.

This range will give air gunners practice in firing at a rapidly moving target, similar in shape to the wreckage of a Japanese Zero. The layout is such that the target approaches the turrets in a manner similar to a fighter coming up on the tail of a bomber, and the speed of the target can be varied up to a maximum of 40 m.p.h., which would present the difference in speed between a fighter and a bomber.

The gun turrets will be set up on stands, which are designed to rock and swivel the whole turret just as if it were a plane in the air.

The motors on the turret stands together with the points on the track are controlled from a desk situated in the control room, overlooking the whole range. The position of the various apparatus is also indicated on the desk.

The vehicle carrying the target is similar in design and operation to the vehicles in use in the A.A.F.V. ranges, which are "somewhere in Victoria," which have proved so successful in training personnel for armoured fighting vehicles. In this case, however, the vehicle is armoured as it is not possible to protect it by embankment at all points on the range.

The motor, the performance of which has been checked and found to be excellent, is of 30 H.P. and has been specially built to fit in to the relatively small space available in the vehicle.

The vehicles have no mechanical brakes and are retarded by means of electric braking. This is accomplished by using separately excited motors in the motor and the acceleration and braking are controlled by means of an ordinary tramway controller.

The control is extremely flexible and simple, and the braking is most effective. It is understood that there are some other installations in the field, but this is probably the most complete. It will give excellent facilities for the training of air crews, and it is possible to carry out the training continuously in all kinds of weather and even at night.

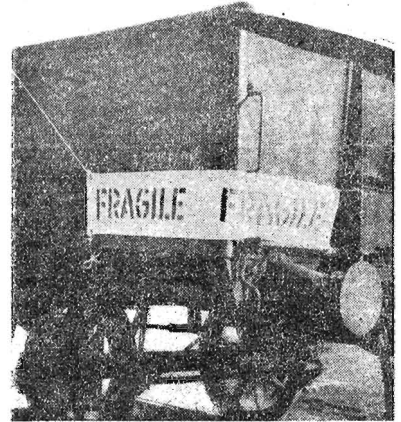
The installation was made under the general supervision of the Department of the Interior on behalf of the R.A.A.F. The track work has been carried out by the Country Roads Board and the Way and Works Branch of the Railway Department. The target vehicles were built at the Electrical Workshops at Spencer Street, and the whole of the electrical equipment has been obtained and installed by the Electrical Engineering Branch under the supervision of Mr. G. H. McDonald, Assistant Chief Electrical Engineer, who developed a similar scheme for the A.A.F.V. ranges.

Making "Fragile" Conspicuous

"FRAGILE" is a word of great significance to the railwayman. Displayed on a truck it means that the load has to be handled with conspicuous care, and that every effort must be made to prevent any damage to the consignment during shunting operations.

Formerly the nature of such a load was indicated to train staffs by the word "Fragile" on paper strips pasted on the truck. This system had obvious drawbacks. For one thing, the strip was quickly damaged by weather, and there was the further difficulty that when the truck was required for other consignments the strip had to be removed.

Nowadays, a "Fragile" consignment is indicated in the accompanying picture. Calico strips stamped "Fragile" are tied firmly to the truck in the manner shown. The sign has the virtues that it is not only strong and relatively weatherproof, thus ensuring its being used again and again, but it can be immediately removed.



SPECIAL GRATES FOR ENGINES BURNING LITHGOW COAL

NORMALLY locomotives in this State are fired with Maitland coal for passenger services and Wonthaggi coal for goods services, but since early in 1941 the Department has found it difficult to obtain its full requirements of these classes of coal. As a result Lithgow coal has been used in increasing quantities. Indeed over the past 12 months approximately 40 per cent. of the total coal used on our locomotives has been obtained from this source.

The Lithgow mines are situated about 100 miles west of Sydney, and coal from that area is brought overland to this State. To minimise haulage it is used principally in the north-eastern and northern districts.

Compared with Maitland coal, Lithgow coal has a lower heat value and is slower burning. An additional disability is that during combustion it produces a large quantity of fine ash which unless regularly removed, impairs the steaming ability of the locomotive by restricting the supply of air to the fire bed.

Early experiments indicated that while this could be efficiently done on engines fitted with the shaker type of grate, some difficulty was experienced when burning Lithgow coal on the fixed Rosebud grates, as fitted to all our "A" and "D3" classes of engines, because the small circular apertures in them did not permit disposal of the ash while running.

The excessive quantities which accumulated in the fire bed considerably affected combustion resulting in frequent cleaning of fires, poor steaming and a high coal consumption.

It was therefore apparent that engines of those classes regularly using Lithgow coal required either shaker grates or a different type of fixed grate that would enable the fire bed to be kept free from excessive ash accumulations.

Owing to the time involved in fitting shaker grates, the necessity to provide quickly some more satisfactory method of burning quantities of Lithgow coal, and the uncertainty as to how long the present rate of supply to Victoria would last, a fixed grate was devised that could be quickly fitted at Locomotive Depots and would be able to burn other classes of coal used in this State, if required.

This has wide slots instead of the small round holes of the Rosebud grate, and this form of grate is now being fitted at the rate of about 6 engines per week in the districts where Lithgow coal is used.

The new design of grate enables better and cleaner fires to be maintained when using Lithgow coal, with a reduction in the quantity of coal consumed and an improvement in the steaming of the engines.

SERVICE

THE following tribute to the good work of the driver of the rail motor between Heathcote and Heathcote Junction comes from the Rev. Henry G. Jones of 42 Barcelona Street, Box Hill:

"I am writing to express the very warmest appreciation of the mechanical ingenuity, pluck and devotion to duty of the young man who was driving the motor car when the journey from Heathcote began. When we were still some miles from Kilmore, the engine refused to function; but the young motorman soon discovered that, if he stood in a precarious position outside and kept priming the engine the motor would work well enough. He therefore stood outside in the icy wind and drifting Scotch mist for a long time, kept the motor moving, and made it possible for us all to catch the Albury Express, which was held for us at Heathcote Junction."

"People are ready enough to complain when anything is wrong. It gives me, therefore, all the more pleasure to convey to you this message of deep appreciation. I hope you will let the young man know that his action was much admired, and that you will also convey our thanks to the thoughtful official who was responsible for holding the express so that we might join it at Heathcote Junction."

V. R. Patriotic Fund Activities

FIFTY-TWO members of the staff of the Jolimont Workshops are now on active service in the Army, Navy and Air Force, and the Jolimont Workshops Auxiliary is striving to send them all parcels at periods of every 2 or 3 months. Recently 30 parcels were sent away, each one weighing up to 11 lbs and containing a variety of good things such as canned fruits and vegetables, butter, chocolate and cocoa and tinned meat. It is the hope of the Committee that sufficient funds will soon be available to assure a regular issue of comfort parcels to all members of the Jolimont staff on service. The committee is financing this issue by special efforts in the shop, but it could obviously do much more if every member of the staff was a regular contributor to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. The contribution of 6d. a pay deducted from the pay envelope is trifling enough to be almost invisible, but in the aggregate it helps amazingly in providing distant colleagues with comforts which are a real message of cheer from home.

* * *

As this issue of the "News Letter" was being printed when the raffle for the Tudor Bungalow was drawn in Ballarat, the name of the winner and the winning number will be published in the next issue. Although the actual number of tickets sold was also not available when this was written, it can be safely stated that the number of people aspiring to become owners of the Bungalow was tremendous. Of the amount raised by the V.R. Patriotic Fund, 50 per cent. goes to that Fund, the remainder to the Ballarat Patriotic Fund which sponsored the original appeal. A feature of the raffle was that no commissions or other expenses were permitted, though numerous railway men and women worked nobly in disposing of tickets.

* * *

The reference to the Tudor Bungalow raffle in the "News Letter" aroused immense interest among railwaymen serving in the various forces. One of them who secured 11 tickets is Driver R. N. Beatty of the 1st Australian Air Transport Supply Platoon, "somewhere in New Guinea" who wrote in warm terms of the Comforts Fund and Red Cross. "Some time ago," he explained, "I was sent to hospital with a touch of fever. As soon as I was admitted I received an issue of cigarettes and matches and regular issues whilst I was there. There is a regular issue from the Comforts Fund each month, always items that are necessary and sometimes items that could not be obtained otherwise." "The Comforts Fund," he concludes, "also does a lot of other things for our benefit and it would almost take a book to describe them all."

Mr. W. Nancarrow of the Accountancy Branch, Spencer Street Administrative Offices, whose activity last winter in selling the blooms of a flourishing daphne bush to various ladies in the Department and contributing the proceeds to the V.R. Patriotic Fund, was mentioned in this column has sent along another cheque for £2/10/- raised this winter in the same original way. Mr. Nancarrow charges 3d. a piece in the office and at the time of writing is doing a very brisk trade. Again our thanks to him for a very fine effort.

RESTRICTION IN V.R. USE OF TIN

Exhaustive tests have been made to determine the extent to which tin content of solder can be reduced. Previously solders containing as high as 66 per cent. of tin were employed, but it has now been found possible to limit the Department's solder needs practically to two types respectively containing 40 per cent. and 34 per cent. of tin.

During the depression years further reductions were made and the additional savings were quite considerable.

With the outbreak of war the tin position was again closely reviewed and early in 1940 a fresh campaign began for the purpose of conserving the Department's existing stocks of tin and tin alloys, and reducing the consumption of block tin. At that stage research was conducted principally into the efficient segregation, collection and reclamation of all non-ferrous borings and scrap. The result of this particular activity is that 93 different segregations of non-ferrous borings and scrap are made, and a large percentage is being re-used. Attention was also devoted to the modification in design of rolling stock components to reduce consumption of tin.

Reductions In Two Years.

Despite increased demands on the Department, including an augmented construction program and heavy defence orders all involving the use of tin, the Railways were able to achieve during 1941 practically a 40 per cent. reduction on the quantity used in 1939 and during 1942 almost a further 25 per cent. reduction on the amount used during 1941.

This splendid achievement is being followed by other efforts to save tin in future. For instance, many locomotive bearings have been redesigned to reduce the quantity of bearing lining metal and in some cases white metal bearings are being replaced by gun metal. Netting of luggage racks is now being copper oxidised instead of tinned. Also in order to save the solder involved the manufacture and repair of footwarmers has been discontinued for the time being.

"SPIRIT OF PROGRESS" ADVERTISED IN U.S.A.

ONE of the most consistent advertisers of the Victorian Railways in America is Mr. M. P. Adams, an Australian journalist and lecturer who has been touring the United States for some years delivering illustrated addresses on the topographical, industrial, and social aspects of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Adams, who was formerly associated with the "Bulletin" and "The Sporting Globe" in Australia, is an ardent admirer of "Spirit of Progress" and during his last trip to Australia two or three years ago he secured a short moving picture showing the famous train in motion and sections of the interior.

In a letter to the "News Letter" he says that he has exhibited the pictures all over the great Republic. In fact, it is part of his regular program, and accompanied by his pungent verbal footnotes it has undoubtedly served to make Americans better acquainted with the progress of railroading in the continent "down under."

HERE'S A STRIKING COINCIDENCE !!

COINCIDENCE is responsible for some dramatic encounters. Consider the case of Major J. Bailey and Lieutenants Bert Guyot and Vic. Edwards. All of these officers joined up in November, 1939, and all of them were workmates, Major Bailey being an upholsterer and the other two carbuilders in the Jolimont Workshops.

The circumstances of the war took Major Bailey to Syria and other parts of the Middle East. After considerable service he returned to Australia with the 9th Division.

Lieutenant Guyot joined the A.A.M.C. and went "up north" and Lieutenant Edwards, M.R.A.F., was busily engaged in his job further south.

Thousands of miles separated the three soldiers and there seemed only a million-to-one chance on their encountering each other before the war was over. Nevertheless, the other two of the three friends met unexpectedly again on a train returning to Melbourne from Sydney. There was astonished greetings and warm handshakes all round.

They hadn't seen or heard from each other over a period of 3½ years.

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, 1943

Issue No. 156

BRITISH RAILWAY BOYS SHOW THEIR VALOUR!

Further Striking Stories Of Cool Courage In "The Blitz"

JUNIOR members of the railway staff absorb the traditions of the service very quickly, and the British official records are full of instances in which youths have behaved with the same coolness and gallantry as men who have grown grey in the service. At Bordesley Junction, England, they will tell you the story of the young G.W.R. engine cleaner who saved the wagons from a blazing shed in one of the earliest German raids on Britain. The warning sounded at 9.50 p.m. on the night of August 26th, 1940, and shunting operations were suspended.

It was soon evident that the way buildings and the wagons inside were in danger from a hail of incendiaries, and this eighteen-year-old cleaner, who had less than two years' service, went outside and began dealing with the bombs, using his hands and feet to cover them with sand. He was still tackling the incendiaries when he was approached by an examiner and the depot master's

"Can you drive a locomotive?" he asked. He told them he could. "Right," they said. "We want someone to take engine 7758 alongside the goods shed and get the wagons clear. What about it?" Without hesitation, the lad volunteered, although by this time the shed was burning from end to end and bombs were still falling. Four times he made the journey, with the examiner acting as shunter, and each time succeeded in drawing a number of wagons to safety. On his first journey he was accompanied on the footplate by the depot master's son, but on the remaining trips he went alone. The engine footplate on the offside was too hot for him to touch, but he carried on until the wagons on all three roads next to the shed were clear of the fire. "But for his courage," says the official report, "it would not have been possible to save the wagons from destruction."

More Records Of Bravery

Flicking over the pages of these official records, you get a series of striking impressions of the battle that was fought against high explosives and incendiaries in every blitzed town and goods depot throughout the country. You read of the two

shunters at Swansea saving a fitting shop from destruction by tackling the flames with buckets of water and rubbing handfuls of sand into the burning woodwork. In the record of the same raid, there is the story of the woman telephone operator at the main railway exchange, who refused to leave her post though the windows had been blown out and the building was rocked by a series of explosions from bombs which were burning within 30 yards.

In these accounts of brave and ingenious action by the men on the station and the line, one is apt to forget the work that is done in the offices of the companies. When one reads the detailed reports of how the railway offices in places like Liverpool, London, Glasgow or Bristol tackled their problems after the air raids, one is amazed at the patience, the resourcefulness and the stamina of ordinary men. Those people in the offices worked day and night. Worked? No, they fought. Fought with pen, typewriter, telephone. They scribbled out their messages and gave them to the despatch riders like men in the front line.

Fine Work In Offices

None of the railwaymen who have seen the sheds fired, the trucks burning, the stations closed and the tracks up, is likely to under-estimate the mutilation a bomb can do to a railway. But all know that, if the aim was to disorganise our transport system totally the blitz was a failure. We have seen the human side. What about the material side of the struggle?

The railways were prepared for this blitz and for worse. Each morning a file is put on the area manager's desk telling him of every "incident" that has occurred in his district during the previous 24 hours. These files are beginning to bulge, but when you look at the times

you will see over and over again that in six hours, eight hours, twelve hours, most of the services were normal again. This means that the engineering parties were out during the Alert itself, working in the dark or by the light of the searchlights, and sometimes while the bombs were still falling. Despatch riders were taking the messages back when the telephone lines had gone, for shrapnel frequently cut the wires. Travelling cranes have been waiting under steam, heavy timbers for trestles and girders of every variety are loaded on to wagons waiting to move to the repair of bridges.

The repair work on the Underground in London was often of a spectacular nature. Only about a third of the London Transport track can be repaired at night, and the first difficulties occurred when the inspection gangs went into the Tube stations and had nowhere to put their tools and equipment because the platforms were filled with shelterers. On the open tracks, owing to the urgency of keeping the passenger service going in the London area, the repair work had to be done after black-out. The men groped their way to the scene by the light of hand lamps, or often in complete darkness if the raid was on; and there might be no "scene," no "mess," but something far more sinister: the report of an unexploded bomb.

Unmentionable Horror

But, if there was a mess, it was anything from a slewed-up track to a pierced tunnel in the Metropolitan Railway with a road crater or ruined building above. A train might have been caught in a station. Girders from the station had fallen on to the last coach; or it might have run into the twisted rails. The gangs and the engineers turned up on a scene of blood and human horror unmentionable in its details, but they had to forget their human emotions, and force themselves on to the technical problems.

At Moorgate, when the old station was burning, they could do nothing till the gutted warehouses, which rise on either side of the line, were shored up; indeed a good deal of London Transport's work was done under the menace of unsafe walls. On some delicate jobs the

(Continued on next page)

BRITISH RAILWAY BOYS' COURAGE

(continued)

men worked and slept on the spot, the nightly raid recurring, until the incident was cleared up.

Here is an example of what was done by the engineers with a big mess. One night in north-west London a patrolman on the tracks heard an H.E. scream down and saw it strike the electric conductor rail on a viaduct about 100 yards off. The blow was a glancing one. The bomb veered off and fell on the soft ground where it went very deep and then exploded. The explosion took a large bite out of the viaduct. The patrolman ran off down the line—the men know these dangerous rails by heart in the dark—and got on the phone to the engineers. The time was somewhere before midnight. The flying squad came up at once with its equipment. The engineers looked at the mess. There was one slightly encouraging aspect to it; an adjoining viaduct had not been damaged, so the first job was to divert the high tension cable and to get some sort of service going over the other viaduct.

To do this, they constructed a "cross over" on the track 200 feet long, reversed the automatic signalling, and passengers were in fact taken across the next day. And as the passengers crossed and recrossed, the engineers got to work on the injured viaduct. Steel cables were tied to the remains of the arches and a locomotive heaved at them until they fell; then a special train which carried an electric compressor was shunted up and ten heavy pneumatic hammers began smashing down the brickwork. Lorries took the bricks away and the men then started to excavate to find a new solid bottom for the bridge.

Where the ground was still weak, they rafted it with steel rails and concrete, a trestle bridge of two spans was built on to this raft, and what is called by the profession "a timber thrust member" was introduced to take the thrust of the undestroyed arches of the viaduct. The construction was now ready once more to take the trains. And it has taken them. Hundreds of thousands of passengers have gone over that bridge since, and all they would notice is that the train slows down a little as it goes over. Look at the result of this operation: trains running the next day on an adjacent, diverted line; the whole job done and full services restored in 14 days!

The repair of viaducts, bridges and tunnels has taken place all over the country; and many of the feats seem spectacular. They are. But they were anticipated. Organisation and material had been placed at key points to deal with these things. Brains have defeated the bomb.

(To be continued)

V.R. CASUALTIES.

The "News Letter" greatly regrets announcing the following casualties among V.R. men serving in the defence forces

Pilot Officer K. Milgate, R.A.A.F. (Clerk). Previously reported missing, now presumed killed.

Sergt. J. R. Wilson, R.A.A.F. (Jnr. Clk.). Previously reported missing, now presumed killed.

Sergt. M. G. Smart, R.A.A.F. (Lad Ptr.). Killed.

Pte. R. J. V. Smith, A.I.F. (Lbr.).

Died, Prisoner of War.

Sergt. D. T. Andrew, R.A.A.F. (Porter). Missing.

Sergt. H. K. Smith, R.A.A.F. (Clerk). Missing.

Electrical Engineer's Good War Record

HERE is the latest photograph of Colonel H. C. Foulkes, member of the Electrical Engineering Branch who has had a successful career in the present war.



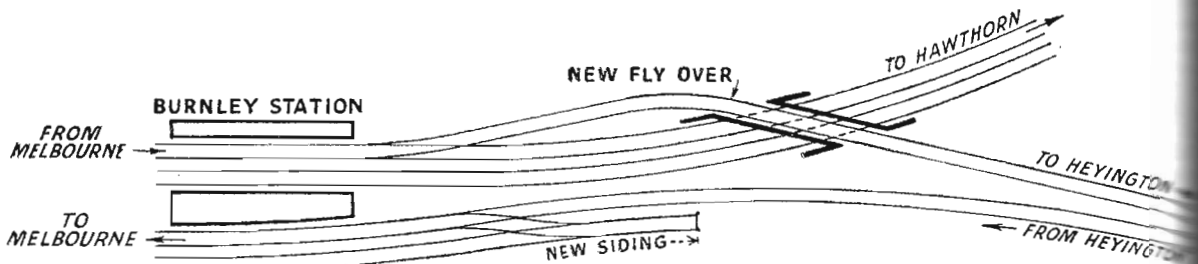
Colonel H. C. Foulkes

When the war broke out he was Testing Assistant in the Electrical Branch, and being immediately granted leave from his job, he spent some time in Australia as a major in command of an Aircraft Squadron. Embarking for the Middle East in 1940, he was quickly promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in charge of the Signal Training Battalion, which has only been partly trained in Australia.

Then posted to command the Division Signals he returned to Australia, only to get ready for further experiences and knotty communication problems in New Guinea. In that terrible country he naturally developed an affection for air travel. In tribute to the plane he said the other day that it took him 11 days to cross the Owen Stanleys on foot but only 45 minutes when he was flown to undertake a new command.

Colonel Foulkes, who was promoted to that rank when achieving the responsible post of Chief Signal Officer of the 2nd Army, refers in complimentary terms to the "News Letter," which he declares has helped him in "all sorts of strange places even at Myola on the top of the Owen Stanley Range."

BURNLEY "FLYOVER" NOW IN OPERATION



THE plan above reveals in simple outline the lay-out of the new Burnley "Flyover," which was completed last month.

The advantage of this "flyover" is that it obviates the delays formerly entailed by "Down" Eastmalvern line trains having to cross the "Up" Box Hill-Melbourne track on the level.

Under the new arrangement "Down" trains to Eastmalvern turn

off the Box Hill line about 250 feet on the "Down" side of the Burnley station, on to a new track which ascends on a grade of 1 in 40 to cross a bridge 21 feet above the Box Hill lines. On the other side of the bridge the track descends on a grade of 1 in 30 to join the present "Down" Eastmalvern line about 1,000 feet on the "Down" side of the Burnley island platform.

The "flyover" crosses the Box Hill line at an angle of about 15 degrees, and the bank carrying the line to the "flyover" has been confined in part, between brick retaining walls.

The value of the "flyover" was quickly demonstrated by the improvement in the timekeeping on the Box Hill and Eastmalvern line during peak periods.

Bungalow Raffle Helps V.R. Patriotic Fund

As already announced in the daily press, the winning ticket for the raffle for the Tudor Bungalow in Ballarat was No. 105741, which was bought in Ballarat by Mrs. J. Baird of Bentleigh, only a couple of days before the drawing. Mrs Baird, whose husband is in the A.I.F., is the sister of Mr. E. Prebble, a fitter at the Ararat Loco. who has been closely connected with the Ararat branch of the V.R. Institute for many years. The Institute Committee at Ararat is largely responsible for the formation of the Ararat Auxiliary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund, and Mr. Prebble has exhibited particular energy in assisting in the various functions arranged from time to time.

* * *

A total amount of £4,673 was raised at the raffle and of that sum £1,114/7/-, representing 50 per cent. of the value of the tickets sold by railwaymen, will go to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Regarding the winning ticket a most interesting story is told of how Mr. H. Gale, Inspector of Accounts in the Accountancy Branch, decided becoming the owner of the Tudor Bungalow. On an official visit to Ballarat on the Tuesday before the drawing, Mr. Gale, who had been accompanied by a friend to buy a couple of tickets in the raffle, decided to secure them in Ballarat, including an extra one for himself. He called at the Red Cross Club in Ballarat where 3 books each containing 20 1/- tickets were on the counter. The first tickets in those 3 books were respectively numbered 105701, 105721 and 105741, and Mr. Gale asked whether he would take those tickets or 3 tickets in the first book. He was the young lady that he wasn't fussy about the thereupon tore off tickets 105701, 105721 and 3. If he had followed the other suggestion, he would have had 105741, which was subsequently sold to the winner, Mrs. Baird.

* * *

Indication of the increased patriotic activity in the Department is the fact that from September 1, 1940 to July 31, 1943, a period of 2 years and 11 months, a total of over £33,000 has already been raised by the V.R. Patriotic Fund. This exceeds by £10,000 the total amount raised during the four years of the First Great Bazaar—from August, 1914, to November, 1918.

* * *

The "News Letter" has pleasure in commending to the attention of railwaymen the big event produced at the Savoy Theatre, Melbourne, on Sunday, September 12, by the Newport Auxiliary Concert Party. The show, which is under the direction of the Organiser and Manager, H. Tevendale, of the Newport Workshops, is offering a great program in which will be seen and heard the Newport Hawaiian Band; Miss Alice Ellis, soprano; the Campbell Bros., comedians and musicians; Witherton, magician; Percy Thomas, lightning sketch artist;

Something To Read And Remember!

RECENTLY a soldier approached a railway porter to whom he was a stranger and inquired: "When is the next troop or equipment train going to" Greatly to the soldier's surprise he got this verbal smack between the eyes. "You have no right to ask such questions. Even assuming I know I wouldn't tell you."

The incident is recorded here in grateful appreciation of the porter concerned and also as an example of the manner in which we railwaymen should deal with such questions.

As directed in the striking poster, a reproduction of which is published here, railwaymen should never discuss

with anybody movements of troops or materials. V.R. men are particularly requested to observe the final line of the poster:

DON'T TELL WHAT YOU KNOW EVEN TO TROOPS.



Railwaymen!

THROUGH YOUR JOB YOU OFTEN POSSESS INFORMATION OF TROOP MOVEMENTS

DON'T TELL WHAT YOU KNOW EVEN TO TROOPS

BY-LAW OFFENCES ARE INCREASING

DURING the past seven months, approximately 21,000 By-Law offences have been reported to the Department by the checking staff. That figure represents nearly 100 per day.

The record is formidable, and when it is remembered that the Department can only check as far as its limitations of staff permit, the increased frequency of detected offences is a matter for grave concern.

The commonest are smoking in non-smoking compartments, travelling first-class on second-class tickets, travelling on a transferred ticket or without any ticket at all, and endeavouring to reach or leave the platform by other means than the wicket gate.

Although it is obviously impossible to police every train, the employment of an experienced plain clothes staff in regular checking on trains to

supplement the checks at station barriers has proved its value. Checks on trains have always the virtue of surprise, and whilst passengers who are continuously offending might be inclined to consider that they can with impunity smoke in a non-smoking compartment or travel in a first-class compartment on a second-class ticket, there is always the chance, as many offenders have discovered to their cost, that they will one day be detected and will have to face a suburban court with the prospect of paying a fine and suffering the additional ignominy of publicity.

The Department is also taking every measure possible to lessen the activities of vandals who find some inexplicable pleasure in smashing railway carriage windows, slashing the cushions of carriage seats, or in stealing electric light globes.

Some passengers are developing the habit of taking short cuts to and from platforms, ignoring the wicket gates and in instances crossing railway lines at the risk of their lives. These offences have been decidedly prominent in the number of cases brought up before suburban courts recently and offenders have been made to feel that they are indulging in an expensive pastime.

Lyle Angus, impersonator; and "Mickey" Morgan, the Newport Shops whistling wonder. Proceeds of the concert go to the V.R. Patriotic Fund, and subscriptions for the evening are 2/- each with no extra charge if the subscriber wishes to book a good seat early at Glen's!

YEAR'S RECORD IN FEEDING THE SOLDIERS

FOR the 12 months ending June 30th last, the Refreshment Services Branch provided 435,632 meals for military personnel travelling on special trains in Victoria. That tremendous figure exceeds the record for the previous financial year by 124,199 meals, and is striking evidence of the magnitude of the work the Refreshment Branch is being called on to do during the present war. Over 120,000 meals in 1942-43 were supplied in Melbourne alone, the remainder being eaten by hearty, hungry soldiers and other service personnel at country stations.

In the following table in which the names of the stations involved are indicated only by letters, some remarkable fluctuations in the demand for meals are shown over the two years compared:

Station	No. of Meals	
	1941-42	1942-43
A	15,967	75,910
B	24,075	41,175
C	33,357	37,801
D	20,503	35,384
E	25,810	35,107

The magnitude of the work of preparation, often undertaken at very brief notice, can well be imagined. The rapid serving of meals is another remarkable achievement, and in this respect grateful acknowledgment is made of the magnificent assistance regularly provided by volunteers at some of the busiest stations throughout Victoria.

Permanent V.R. Men Exempt From Jury Service

EVERY permanent employe of the Victorian Railways is exempt by law from jury service. This fact is apparently not known by many railwaymen, as an increasing number have been summoned to act as jurymen.

When this has occurred the employe concerned has been obliged to bring the matter under official notice, resulting in application for his exemption being made by this Department to the Sheriff.

This waste effort by employes and all concerned can be avoided if the police or other officials who compile the jury list are advised, when they call at an employe's home, that he is a permanent railway official.

Inspection of jury lists is an added precaution. The places and times at which this may be done are indicated by notices at Court Houses, Post Offices, and Municipal Halls early in March each year.

OBITUARIES

THE "News Letter" greatly regrets to record the death within a few days of each other last month of two old Rolling Stock identities in the persons of Mr. Matthew O'Doherty and Mr. S. C. Jones.

Mr O'Doherty, who was 76 when he died, retired from the Department in 1930. He entered the railways as a messenger in 1882, and four years later was appointed a clerk spending the whole of his career in the Rolling Stock Branch in the Head Office, Spencer Street.

When he retired he was senior clerk associated with the Superintendent of Locomotive Running, and he leaves behind him many warm memories of his sincere genial nature and his sparkling Irish tongue.

Outside his job he was a keen cricketer and for many years played with the Footscray Cricket Club, subsequently serving his club as a coach. It is recalled that he dropped the "O" from his name, at least on official occasions, always using the initials "M.D." on documents. There are still former colleagues who are surprised to learn that his surname included the extra identifying "O."

Mr. S.C. Jones retired in December, 1939, when in charge of the clerical staff at the North Melbourne Workshops, and left behind him many vivid recollections of his industry and vigour.

He had an excellent record as a bowler, frequently appearing in Victorian championships. He was a J.P. of many years' standing, and he was also an authority on tropical fruit growing and other agricultural subjects. From time to time he lectured on fruit growing, making use of a highly interesting set of slides. At the time of his death he was in charge of a Military ordnance store near Brisbane.

WHAT ARE V.R. MEN ON SERVICE DOING?

THE thousands of V.R. men on the home front naturally want to know what their fellow railwaymen on active service are doing. Some of them have gained decorations and these achievements have been reported from time to time. Many others have undoubtedly done great work and we would certainly like to hear something of their experiences. The "News Letter" would welcome any interesting communications regarding these men. Address letters to the "News Letter," Room 98, Railway Administrative Offices, Spencer Street, Melbourne.

V.R. ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

Lad Lbr. R. R. Gurney; Jnr. Clk. A. F. Peel; Lad. Lbr. H. B. Robinson.

R.A.A.F.

Lad Lbr. A. R. Jones; Lad Lbr. L. M. Kelly; Asst. F. & Turner L. A. Murphy; B'smith G. I. Wilson.

R.A.N.

Lad Lbr. J. S. Bertram; Lad Lbr. E. W. Blake; Lad Lbr. A. J. Eart; Jnr. Clk. L. J. Ffrench; Jnr. Clk. D. S. T. Gribble; Lad Lbr. S. R. Jephson; Lad Lbr. W. R. Kidd; Lad Lbr. B. J. Malone; Lad Lbr. A. W. McKenzie; Lad Lbr. M. T. Negri; Lad Lbr. J. R. Sheers.

W.A.A.F.

Miss E. V. Crabb (Storewoman).

Additional Water Supply At Serviceton

ONE of the problems facing the Department in the past was ample water supply at Serviceton where the locomotives of both the Victorian and South Australian systems terminate their respective journeys and must be rewatered for their return runs.

As there are no permanent rivers or streams in the Serviceton catchment areas and impounded storage reservoirs.

Originally one 10,000,000-gallon storage reservoir was provided and the exception of drought years met the requirements of the small steam engines and the traffic of those days.

In 1916, an additional reservoir of 10,000,000 gallons capacity was constructed, and for some time satisfied all demands. By 1939, however, the previous consumption of water had been more than doubled by the increase of traffic involving the use of high powered engines, and in dry years it was again necessary to haul water to Serviceton in trucks.

This emergency service was required particularly from January, May, 1939, and from August, 1940, to January, 1941, when the reservoir was empty. Last June the water level was down to 5 feet 0 ins., but followed in July and increased the depth.

The heavy increase in traffic brought about by the war on a main arterial line has now more than trebled water requirements at Serviceton, and it is for that reason that an additional reservoir of 10,000,000 gallons capacity was put under construction. This has been completed and it is anticipated that with normal traffic the Department's water problem at Serviceton will be solved for some years.

SERVICE.

THE following tribute to railway service in an emergency comes from Mr. W. E. Housman of the Assessment Branch, Taxation Department, Sydney.

"Allow me to encroach on your valuable time in order to congratulate you on the efficient manner in which the officers of your Department carry out their duties.

Recently I arrived in Wangaratta from Sydney by express and I was able to get to Harrierville as soon as possible in order that I might see my mother who was on her death-bed. I approached Mr Wilson, Assistant Stationmaster at Wangaratta, to see if he could help me in any way as there was no conveyance to Harrierville until 9 p.m. He asked me to wait until he had cleared the platform and he saw what could be done.

He went to a lot of trouble after he had closed his office, to get me to the car. He arranged with the Police to allow the driver extra petrol, and he obtained permission for him to drive the 66 miles.

It is actions such as this that restore one's faith in human nature."

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

OCTOBER, 1943

Issue No. 157.

AFTER THE WAR—WHAT?

The Drive Against Inflation In Relation To Post-War Conditions

WE are winning the war, but we have yet to win the peace. Peace means something more than the waving of flags—and cheers. It means the return of hundreds of thousands of fighting men to their jobs and the parallel conversion to peace-time endeavours of industries now engaged exclusively on war production. To make that peace safe from the troubles and terrors of the depression that followed the last great war we have to guard ourselves against the threat of conditions that foster inflation. In the following article, reprinted from "U.S. Steel News", July, 1943, we get a far-sighted American view of the situation which every Victorian railwayman should read and ponder upon:

A year ago our country was obsessed in the gigantic task of training and equipping armed forces to pit against our Axis foes. There was little time to speculate on what might happen after the war. We had the war to win first.

Today, though final victory has not yet been achieved, our military power has grown so great that the eventual outcome of the war is no longer in doubt, and it is only natural to give some thought to the peace that will follow.

Preparations for peace are, in fact, imperative. We have just learned the bitter lesson of adjustment to war conditions without being adequately prepared, and the transition to peace will be equally difficult—unless we are ready for it.

What are some of the problems that the advent of peace will bring?

The one that comes immediately to mind is the re-absorption of a large part of our population from war-time pursuits to peace-time pursuits.

By the end of this year, according to a bulletin of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, two-thirds of the nation's production, employing 10 million men and women, will be devoted directly to the manufacture of war goods. An obvious query is how soon and to what extent this production can be converted to peace-time products, and what proportion of the war workers can be retained in employment.

And this is only part of the problem. The number of men in our armed forces is expected to total more than 10 millions by the year's end. When they return to their jobs, as most of them will, will there be work for them to do?

The danger of entering a period of peace unprepared was forcibly demonstrated by our experience after the last war.

Prices of goods had risen sharply during that war, and it was generally expected that they would recede after the armistice. There was, in fact, a short period of hesitation in business with the advent of peace, but this was followed by a boom and a runaway advance in prices which ended abruptly in the primary post-war depression of 1921.

Then came another period of inflation, this time in the securities markets, and a devastating collapse in 1929, followed by the paralyzing depression of the 30's.

No one wants a repetition of this sequence of events or anything like it. Preparations for peace must be made, even though all possible effects of the present world upheaval cannot be foreseen.

Perhaps the best hope for a successful change-over from war to peace lies in the dynamic strength manifested by the American people in the nation's war effort.

Our job was to convert our industrial capacity from peacetime to war production and, at the same time, to train and equip millions of armed men.

The speed with which this was accomplished is one of the miracles of modern times. It is a tribute not only to the ability and ingenuity of those who direct our industries and our armed forces, but to the drive and determination that have actuated all patriotic Americans, whether on the war front or on the industrial front.

Everywhere the confidence born of individual achievement, whether on the field of battle or in industry, will give our post-war world a vibrant spirit of initiative and enterprise. And to this will be added the experience and training in technical and mechanical operations which millions

will have gained both in the armed forces and in war production.

This combination of individual confidence and competence is one of the factors counted on by those who predict post-war prosperity. Other favorable influences which they cite are the accumulated demand for peace-time goods not now purchasable and the growth of popular savings, notably in the form of War Bonds.

In other words, the American people will not only be ready to buy the products of industry, but will have the funds to pay for them.

It is pointed out too that much of the equipment of industry, as well as of our transportation systems, will be worn out and will require replacement.

All this may come to pass as prophesied, and, if so, present anxiety over the immediate transition from war to peace may be unwarranted. However, experience has shown that world economic and political conditions are so complex that no certain predictions can be made, and it is, therefore, best to be prepared for all eventualities.

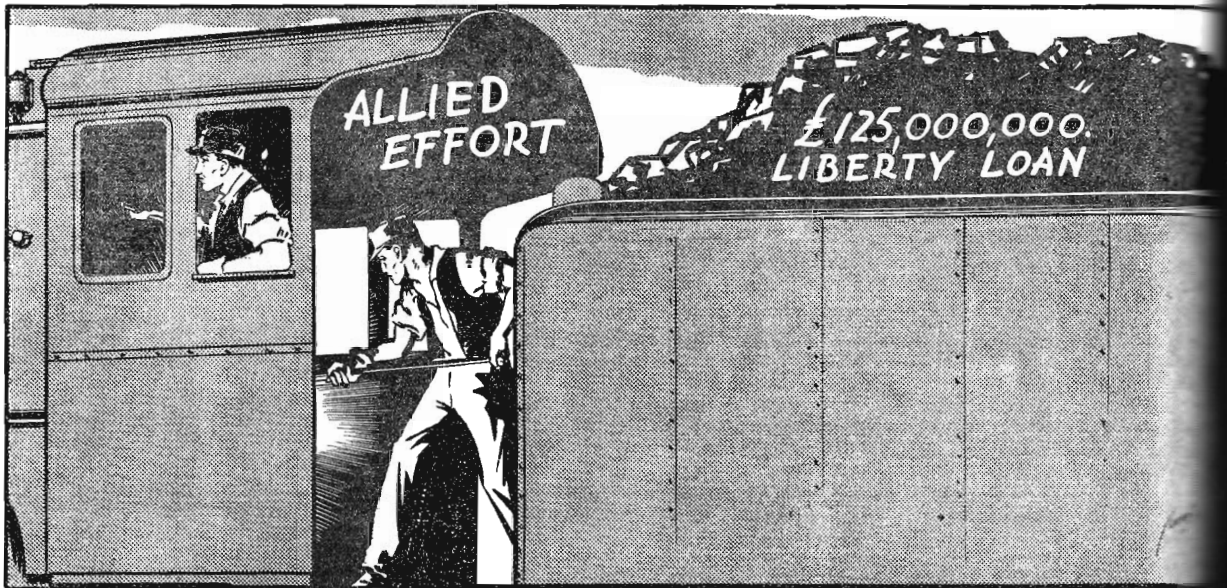
Much will depend on the length of the war and the attitude of individual Americans towards efforts to restrain price inflation.

The conditions that foster inflation inevitably arise in a war, because employment and consumer buying power rise and the available supply of consumer goods diminishes. With more money in their pockets and fewer goods offered for sale, people are tempted to bid up prices.

It is for this reason that the Government established the rationing system and set ceilings on the prices of certain products. This danger also helps explain the importance of buy-

(Continued on page 3)

There Must Not Be A Shortage Of Fuel For This Effort



JOIN THE RAILWAYS' GROUP SCHEME FOR THE PURCHASE OF BONDS

Big Traffic Restrictions

THE temporary stoppage of coal supplies combined with depleted stocks of coal compelled the Commissioners to make the expected curtailments of rail transport. Drastic reductions were made in country passenger and goods services on September 8 and in live-stock service on September 13.

Under the new arrangements main and branch line passenger services were reduced by approximately 50%. Many of the main line services were reduced to a schedule of 3 and 4 days a week and others were eliminated altogether.

To limit passenger traffic to the available accommodation on the restricted services Victorian passengers travelling out of Melbourne are now required to have their tickets endorsed at a Booking Office with the train and date of travel. No ticket is available for travel on any train other than that for which it is endorsed.

There are now no reserved seats except on Interstate expresses and Mildura trains. The sleeping car has been withdrawn from the Mildura line and only one sleeper daily is permitted on The Overland.

The widespread restrictions include parcels traffic, and the luggage allowance for Victorian journeys has been limited to 56 lb.

Goods are accepted at the Melbourne Goods Sheds only between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. daily, and trucks which become available for loading at country stations are being allotted in priority order

for various classes of traffic. Certain commodities are not being accepted for carriage unless for defence services.

Because of the prospects of increased coal supplies from N.S.W. the Commissioners have taken action to ease the restrictions in the case of live stock traffic, wheat and certain classes of goods such as empty containers, and several passenger trains have been restored where the circumstances justified it.

The drastic nature of cuts which had to be made immediately in train services emphasizes the danger of abnormally low coal reserves.

The Department has incurred heavy expense (the cost last financial year being over £200,000) by over-land coal for many months in an effort to improve this position, but has consistently suffered by not receiving a due allotment of the supplies brought by coastal shipping. No other user of coal in Victoria, except the State Electricity Commission, has had to make any sacrifice of this nature.

In order to conserve to the maximum extent the limited reserve now remaining considerable quantities of firewood are being burned on locomotives.

Whilst improved deliveries of coal may permit further withdrawals of present restrictions, it is clear that some of the restrictions must continue to operate for many weeks.

RETIREMENT OF Mr. FRANK BOADLE

AFTER 43 years service in the department Mr. Frank Boadle, District Rolling Stock Superintendent at Ballarat, retired last month. Mr. Boadle was actually due for retirement in September last year but his service was extended another 12 months.

Mr. Boadle, who joined the department at the close of last century as an engine cleaner, gained promotion through the grades of fireman and driver to the important post of Brake Inspector in 1923. Five years later he became a Depot Foreman and in 1932 he was appointed District Rolling Stock Superintendent at Ballarat, remaining there until September last year when he was transferred to Ballarat.

Mr. Boadle will be remembered by all who knew him as one of the 100 per cent. railwaymen whose hobby was the service in which he worked. He had a real pride in the locomotives with which he was intimately associated through his career.

Always a kindly administrator, he was exceptionally successful in gaining the co-operation of his staff. He believed too in solving his own problems and was responsible for many valuable innovations in Victorian railway practice.

After The War—What ?

(continued from page 1)

War Bonds. If, instead of attempting to buy scarce goods and thereby driving up prices, you put your money into War Bonds, you will be withholding your funds until such time when the supply of goods is again be normal.

In fact, what the individual American does now to help fight inflation probably affect his chances of getting a job after the war more than any other one factor.

You can't bid up prices when goods are scarce and expect them to be there when goods again become plentiful, as they will after the war. When prices start to decline, buying stops in anticipation of still further declines. With fewer orders, production falls off too, and men and women are thrown out of employment.

These are conditions that create depressions, the worst results of inflation. But there are other consequences equally to be feared. In a runaway advance of prices, wages always lag behind. In the extreme depression that occurred after the last war in Germany, housewives waited at the factory door for their husbands' envelopes so that they could get to the stores before prices rose further.

The skyrocketing of prices brought German people to the point of buying the equivalent of 50 million dollars (at the old rate of exchange with the mark) for a nickel cup of coffee, and 35 trillion dollars (\$5,000,000,000,000) for a \$35 suit of clothes.

The present campaign to control inflation in our own country is, therefore, of vital importance. It requires the participation of both government and industry, but its success depends on the individual—the wage earner, the business man, the householder, the farmer.

What each one of us does now to influence the price line will have a far-reaching influence on the kind of a world we shall have after the war.

V.R. CASUALTIES.

The "News Letter" greatly regrets announcing the following casualties among V.R. men serving in the defence forces: Lieutenant W. F. Houston, A.I.F. (Porter). Killed in action. Sergeant R. E. Windley, A.I.F. (Car Cleaner). Killed in action. Private G. A. Windebank, A.I.F. (Engine Cleaner). Killed in action. Sergeant F. J. Matthews, R.A.A.F. (Cleaner). Killed in action. Private C. R. Beckman, A.M.F. (Laborer). Died of illness.

NEW MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

IN a cordial little scene in the Minister's room at the Railway Head Office, Spencer Street, last month the Commissioners and Heads of Branches said goodbye to the retiring Minister for Transport (the Hon. H. J. Hyland, M.L.A.).

Mr. Hyland, who had been officially associated with the Department for 5½ years, expressed his appreciation of the help he had received during that period. He declared that there was the happiest association between him and the railwaymen whom it was his pleasure to meet.

The Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris) replied in suitable terms emphasising that the Commissioners had greatly appreciated Mr. Hyland's help and co-operation, particularly during the war period.

Mr. Hyland is the first Victorian Minister for Transport to possess a first-class engine driver's certificate, and numerous railwaymen will probably recall the fact that on the official debut of Victorian's giant "H" class locomotive Mr. Hyland was in the cab and drove the engine for some distance in the Newport yards.

Following Mr. Hyland's official departure the Commissioners and Heads of Branches had the unique experience of being introduced within a few days to two new Ministers for Transport—Mr. W. Barry, M.L.A., who was Minister in the short-lived Cain Government, and Mr. J. A. Kennedy, M.L.C., who succeeds him in the new Dunstan Administration.

SERVICE.

IN a letter dated September 13 last, Mr. Herbert C. Hayes of Merlynston, records his appreciation of good railway service in a sudden family bereavement.

"Last Wednesday, September 8, I received an urgent telegram notifying me of my father's death at Hamilton. Under present restrictions it was not possible for me to reach Hamilton until late on Friday. As the funeral was at 2 o'clock Thursday I was at my wits' end. Approaching the A.S.M. at Merlynston about 3 p.m. last Wednesday, I stated my position. He at once rang Spencer Street and ascertained that a goods train was leaving Ararat for Hamilton, Thursday morning at 3.30 a.m. and that I could travel on same, providing I could get a seat on the "Overland" at 7 p.m. Wednesday evening. He then rang the head of that department and explained the position. They at once booked me a seat. On my reaching Ararat at 11 p.m. the Ararat shunters making up the Hamilton goods took me to their room where a fire was made and a cup of hot tea given me. And at 3.25 a.m. they put me in the van of the Hamilton goods and I arrived in Hamilton at 8 a.m. Thursday morning. The kindness and consideration which I received is really beyond any thanks that I can offer to your staff and I feel it my duty sir, to let you know, what I do really think and feel."

TRAGIC DEATH OF V. R. AIR PILOT

IT is with the deepest regret that the "News Letter" records the tragic death of Flight Lieutenant Richard Henry Roe, a valiant railway man who was killed in the crash of an aircraft at the Civil Defence Day at Flemington last month.

Crashing after a thrilling dive at 300 m.p.h., Flight Lieutenant Roe and his companion, Pilot Officer J. N. Harris, were instantly killed.

The irony of his fate was that he had survived many thrilling experiences in actual conflict to come to an end in a civil defence demonstration.

Flight Lieutenant Roe, who was a clerk in the Rolling Stock Branch of the Department, enlisted in the R.A.A.F. in 1940, and had an excellent record as an expert Beaufighter pilot in England, where he had been a member of the night fighter service.

Returning to Australia, he was posted to the Northern Australian front where he took part in several attacks on the Japanese.

In the aerial onslaught on a Japanese convoy in the Huon Gulf in March last when the whole of the Japanese fleet—3 cruisers, 7 destroyers and 12 transports—was sunk, he returned, according to a press report, "with a big dent in the belly of his aircraft where it had been hit by flying debris", indicating a very low level attack.

Two months previously he had survived a "big day" wrecking an anti-aircraft gun, setting ablaze a medium Japanese bomber, and sinking two barges.

Flight Lieutenant Roe, who joined the Department in 1934, was 26.

3 Months' Firewood Record

HERE are the numbers of trucks of firewood hauled to Melbourne during the 12 weeks prior to the introduction of the restrictions brought about by the critical coal situation.

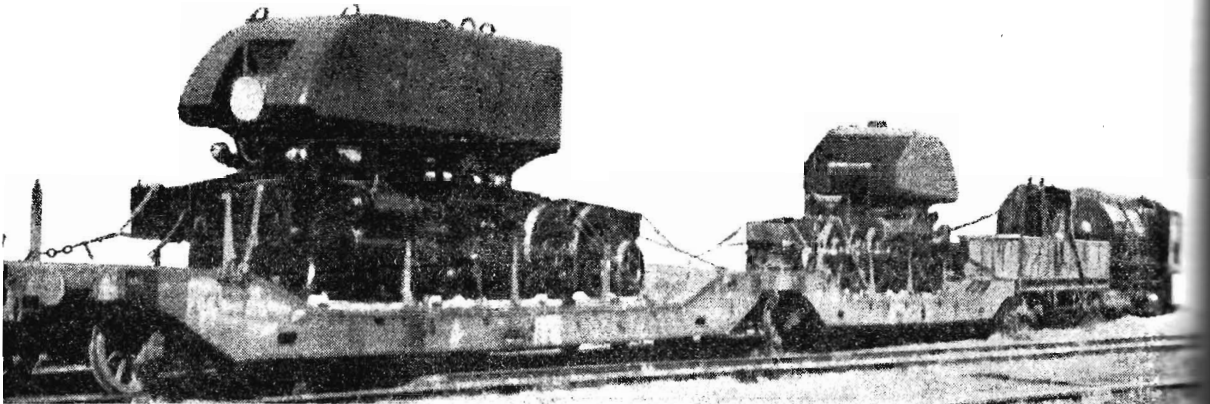
Week Ending	No. of Trucks	Week Ending	No. of trucks
20/6/43	606	1/8/43	790
27/6/43	659	8/8/43	810
4/7/43	703	15/8/43	921
11/7/43	671	22/8/43	903
18/7/43	845	29/8/43	811
25/7/43	913	5/9/43	798

That gives a weekly average of 786 trucks, and allowing approximately 11 tons to each truck, it will be seen that the Department has been transporting through the worst part of the winter an average of more than 8000 tons a week.

The total amount of firewood carried from the firewood areas to the metropolis for civilian use in the 3 months mentioned was 100,000 tons, and this record has been achieved, despite all the abnormally heavy demands on the railways brought about by the war including the transport of large supplies of firewood for service requirements.

One of the tragic consequences of coal shortage is that the above excellent figures have now been cut in half at the very time when firewood is most needed.

FIRST GARRATT ENGINE COMPLETED AT NEWPORT



THE first of the Garratt Locomotives to be constructed for the Commonwealth Government was completed at Newport Workshops last month. In the above picture the Garratt, which is built for service on a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, is seen loaded for transport on a long journey "Somewhere North".

It will be noticed that two engine units of the Garratt were loaded on trucks, but the boiler section was fitted with 5 ft. 3 in. bogies which were removed when the broad gauge portion of its journey was completed.

Twenty-two other Garratts are to be constructed by the Department which will also undertake the construction of 300 flat wagons for service on a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge. The following technical particulars of the Garratt engine will interest railwaymen—

Axle Load	...	8 tons 10 cwt.
Cylinders	...	4—14½ in. x 24 in.
Piston Valves	...	8 in. dia.
Maximum Valve Travel	...	6 in.
Maximum Cut-off	...	80%
Coupled Wheels	...	4 ft.—0 in. dia.
Working Pressure	...	200 lbs. per sq. in.
Tubes	...	184—½ in. dia.
Flues	...	28—5½ in. dia.
Heating Surfaces—Tubes	...	1054 sq. ft.
Flues	...	481 sq. ft.
Firebox and Arch Tubes	...	163 sq. ft.
TOTAL	...	1698 sq. ft.

Superheating Surface	...	315 sq. ft.
Grate Area	...	35 sq. ft.
Tractive Effort at 85% W.P.	...	34,420 lbs.
Adhesive Weight	...	68 tons
Factor of Adhesion (Tanks Full)	...	4.4
Bunker and Tanks Half Full	...	4.05
Bunker and Tanks Empty	...	3.68
Water Capacity	...	4200 gals.
Coal Capacity ("Water Level")	...	6 tons
Total Weight in Working Order	...	119 tons
Weight per Foot Run Engine Unit	...	2.163 tons
Weight per Foot Run Total Wheel-base	...	1.545 tons
Length over Buffers (Q'land)	...	85 ft.—9½ in.

The locomotives were designed under the supervision of Mr. F. Mills, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the V.A. Railways, and among the engineers, draughtsmen and women who completed the design in very rapid time were Messrs. W. H. Rogerson, A. Richards, M. H. Mayer, E. Turnbull and T. Parkinson of the V.R.R.S. Branch.

Whilst many of the parts including frames, cylinders and motion were made by the Victorian Railways, the boiler and many other components were supplied for assembly at Newport under contracts let by the Commonwealth.

V.R. Patriotic Fund Activities

THERE are still less than 50 per cent. of the railway staff contributing to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. Heavy demands are made on the fund and the Committee in control has frequently declared that it can make excellent use of every penny contributed. Railwaymen who are not members of the Fund ought to ask themselves whether they are unable to spare 3d. a week. That is all that is required from each member—and it will not be noticed when deducted on the contributor's order from his pay envelope.

The V.R. Patriotic Fund is one of the most deserving of patriotic efforts involving many hours of voluntary labour by railwaymen and women all over the State, and the least they can expect is the unanimous support of their fellow members. As an indication of what the Fund is doing it may be mentioned that the Committee recently distributed £1400 among the following good causes:—

Red Cross Prisoner of War Fund	...	£550
Comforts Fund	...	£550

Free French Division of Aust.

Red Cross	...	£100
Air Force House	...	£50
Blamey House	...	£50
Navy House	...	£50
"Toc H"	...	£50

Regarding "Toc H" the Secretary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund (Mr. W. E. Elliott) recently received a cordial letter of thanks from Mr. J. S. McCreery, the Hon. Treasurer of "Toc H", conveying their gratitude to the Donald railwaymen and telling them that they proposed earmarking their donation of £5 for the purpose of providing free meals to servicemen on Xmas Day.

Another appealing cause for which the V.R. Patriotic Fund is asking for help is the provision of Red Cross parcels for service railwaymen who are prisoners of war in various parts of the world. Among more than 10,000 postcards recently received from prisoners of war in Japanese hands were several from V.R. railwaymen, and the Committee is now arranging that these men should be included in the Red Cross scheme of forwarding to each one 3 parcels a fortnight. The charge for these 3 parcels is £2, and as there are now 51 V.R. prisoners to be assisted, it

will be seen that the cost of providing for those far away soldiers in need of many physical comforts is £2,650 per annum. The silent appeal of the unfortunate fellow Australians should induce V.R. men who are not contributing to their own fund to contribute immediately the necessary deduction from their pay envelopes.

ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

APP. F. & Tnr. K. M. Cahir; App. F. & Tnr. A. N. Dorman; Lad Lbr. M. J. Hoskings; App. F. & Tnr. Middleton; App. Elec. Fitter R. Milne; Lad Lbr. L. M. McPhan; Lbr. E. W. Pitson; Lad Lbr. B. S. Lbr.

R.A.A.F.

LAD Lbr. R. W. Curtis; Lad Lbr. L. E. Connop; Lad Lbr. A. Dunstan; Lad Lbr. R. F. Hearns; Ck. W. Hickey; Jnr. Ck. A. E. Moran; Lad Lbr. J. L. K. Myers; Lad Lbr. Plymin; Lad Lbr. B. T. Pridmore; Lad Lbr. J. W. Roberts.

R.A.N.

LAD Lbr. S. Cook; Car & Wagon F. T. Hooper; Lad Lbr. S. Moncks; Car & Wagon Bldr. K. R. O. Jnr. Ck. J. T. Sheehy.

A.W.A.S.

MISS R. Forrest (Typiste).

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

NOVEMBER, 1943.

Issue No. 158.

Highlights Of "Annual Report" REVENUE GREATEST IN RAILWAY HISTORY

THE gross revenue, amounting to £17,120,223 was the greatest in Victorian Railways history and exceeded the previous record of last financial year by over £2,500,000. The surplus of £787,703 was another record, exceeding the record surplus of 1941-42 by £138,356. The additional revenue was due to war conditions including heavy defence movements, great expansion of industry, diversion to the rail of a large volume of passenger and goods business due to the severe rationing of petrol for private and commercial use, and restricted Interstate shipping facilities.

The working expenses, £14,118, were £2,435, 625 more than last year. The increase included the following:—

Higher salaries and wages due to cost of living adjustments	£500,000
Increased overtime to the staff as a result of manpower shortage...	£76,000
Increase in contribution to the Railways Renewals and Replacements Fund ...	£300,000
Provision of reserve for deferred ordinary maintenance ...	£400,000
Reserve for accrued staff leave	£285,000
Higher prices for coal (including cost of overlanding from New South Wales) ...	£249,000
Writing off cost of sections of dismantled lines (Yannathan-Triholm and portion of the Nowingi-Millewa South line) ...	£144,000
Greater expenditure on tarpaulins due to unavailability of canvas in the previous year ...	£110,000
Increased war damage insurance premium ...	£38,400
Increased Commonwealth Pay Roll tax ...	£30,800

The balance of the increased expenditure (£302,425) is more than accounted for by the cost of earning the additional revenue, viz., £2,505,387. This striking result reveals the increased efficiency of our operations and the influence of volume of traffic upon railway costs and net revenue. The increase in passenger and goods business which meant for the most part more heavily loaded carriages and trucks and increased loads of goods trains, was carried without a proportionate increase in train mileage. This emphasises the importance of carrying such traffic to the rail under war as well as war conditions.

The greater efficiency in handling goods traffic is shown by the fact that despite the large number of special military trains run with comparatively limited loads, the increase

of 18.2 per cent. in gross ton mileage was handled with an increase of only 13.6 per cent in train mileage. Factors contributing to this satisfactory result were the increased truck and train loads previously referred to, the avoidance of unnecessary train mileage and the quicker release and movement of trucks to secure their greatest possible use. Without this gratifying performance the railways would not have been able to handle the record traffic.

With the additional provision of £300,000 the total contribution to the Railway Renewals and Replacements Fund was £1,800,000. The imperative need for setting aside such a large sum from the record revenue for inevitable renewals and replacements is only too apparent. The wear and tear on the rolling stock equipment and tracks is obviously far greater under the present abnormal conditions than in a normal year, and when current maintenance work cannot be done deterioration of the property proceeds at an accelerated rate. A huge amount of rehabilitation work involving very heavy costs will therefore have to be undertaken as soon as conditions permit—possibly as part of a post-war reconstruction scheme. A program of railway improvement works has been submitted to the proper authorities.

Foremost in this program is the unification of gauges which (as it affects various States) is primarily a matter for the Commonwealth. Other important items include the relaying of main line tracks, replacement of obsolete or worn-out locomotives and other rolling stock, modernisation of workshops, bridge renewals, and improvements in Metropolitan passenger transport facilities.

COMPETITION.

Due to conservation of petrol and motor accessories road competition was only fractional by comparison with other years. Most of the road services engaged on long-distance routes ceased entirely and those operating on producer gas were generally provided only intermittently.

Existing and new interests will doubtless seek to re-establish competition after the war both by road and air, and it is therefore necessary for a post-war policy to prevent the development afresh of unregulated and destructive competition. The Department does not desire to retard road or air services merely because railways are established, but considers that the proper economic sphere of each means of transport should be defined so that undesirable duplication will be prevented and expenditure by the community on its transport facilities will not be disproportionate to the benefits derived.

STAFF.

At 30th June, 2867 officers and employes had joined the armed forces and 58 had lost their lives. 451 men have been loaned to various Government Departments and approximately 1,650 are directly engaged on the manufacture of munitions, armaments and tools for war purposes. The number of female employes is 1,824, of whom 806 are engaged in positions previously filled by men or boys. The total permanent and supernumerary staff was 25,557. When the total time paid for is converted into ordinary time units the average strength of the staff was equivalent to 28,756 full time individuals working 6 days per week, an increase of 1,252 over the previous year. The amount dis-

(Continued on next page)

Highlights Of "Annual Report" (continued)

Reference To Coal Position

bursed in salaries and wages was £8,670,724 compared with £7,786,251 in 1941-42 and £6,661,939 in 1940-41.

RAILWAYS PATRIOTIC FUND.

The total amount raised now exceeds £31,000. During the past year three mobile canteens were purchased from the funds whilst further donations were made to the Australian Red Cross, the Australian Comforts Fund and other movements associated with the war effort.

ROLLING STOCK CONSTRUCTION.

Five "X" class and three "K" class locomotives were completed during the year. Two 60-ton wrecking cranes, 20 standard goods vans, 3 tramcars for the St. Kilda-Brighton line and 147 general service trucks for the carriage of wheat in bulk were also constructed. Preparations for the construction of two 7-car suburban trains were also taken in hand.

COAL CONSUMPTION.

Coal consumption amounted to 462,338 tons of large and 151,914 tons of slack coal. There was a small decrease in the stocks of slack coal and a substantial retrogression, viz., 42,407 tons in the stock of large coal. Every opportunity has been taken to urge the claims of this Department with the Commonwealth Coal Commission and with the State Coal Committee for increased supplies of coal but with little success. In order to supplement inadequate deliveries of coal by coastal shipping, the Department overlanded 263,500 tons or 63 per cent. of the total obtained from New South Wales, the additional cost being £188,000. Other consumers who are considered to have received an undue proportion of sea borne coal did not overland their supplies because of the substantially higher costs involved, and their experience that their needs have been substantially met without such a sacrifice. (Since the close of the year drastic reductions had to be made in the train services because of the critical level to which the stocks of Departmental coal had fallen.)

TARPAULINS.

The normal stock is about 17,500. At the beginning of 1942-43, the number in service was only 16,153, and although 4,561 were manufactured so many old covers had to be condemned that at the close of the year the stock had fallen to 13,688.

When canvas, now on order from Great Britain, is delivered, an active program of replacement will be undertaken.

SERVICE.

The Commissioners expressed their gratification at the excellent services rendered by the staff generally during the year. Only by sincere effort could the record volume of business have been handled so satisfactorily by a staff including many relatively inexperienced men and women.

Many sections of employes, including those engaged in workshops and in traffic operations cheerfully worked the substantial amount of overtime required to offset the manpower shortage.

TWO MORE D.F.C.'s FOR V.R. MEN.

THE D.F.C. has been posthumously awarded to Flight Lieutenant Richard Henry Roe, the valiant young V.R. pilot who was accidentally killed in a civil defence day demonstration at Flemington in September last. Flight Lieutenant Roe was formerly a clerk in the Rolling Stock Branch and enlisted in the R.A.A.F. in 1940. He had an excellent record as a Beau-fighter pilot in England. In Northern Australia, he took part in several attacks on the Japanese exhibiting audacity and cool judgment in onslaughts on convoys at a very low level.

Another V.R. man to win the D.F.C. is Flying Officer James Kearney who has also been conspicuous in aerial attacks in which the squadron led by him destroyed nine aircraft and damaged five. During one engagement lasting half-an-hour Flying Officer Kearney shot down one fighter and destroyed two others. This gallant young airman entered the Accountancy Branch as a clerk in 1933 and joined the R.A.A.F. in 1940. Subsequently, a flying instructor and staff pilot he started operational flying in 1942.

ENLISTMENTS.

A.I.F.

SKD. Lbr. W. Allen; App. B'maker B. F. Baillie; Lad Lbr. W. J. Whitford.

R.A.A.F.

Jnr. Clik. J. E. Jarick; Lad Lbr. J. J. Kellow; Jnr. Clik. J. A. Magill; App. F. & Tnr. K. W. Pang; Lad Lbr. G. C. Pearce; App. B'smith L. J. Sutherland; App. C'smith N. J. Sutherland; App. F. & Tnr. K. R. Stewart; Lad Lbr. K. D. Stuart; App. F. & Tnr. G. E. Teasdale; App. F. & Tnr. A. J. Thomas; App. C'smith H. J. Tyson; Lad Lbr. W. Unstead.

R.A.N.

Jnr. Clik. J. B. Downs; Jnr. Clik. R. R. Russell.

A.W.A.S.

Miss I. V. Bond (Jnr. Typiste).

Mr. Brownbill Succeeds Mr. May As Asst. Chief Mechanical Engineer.

A HANDSOME canteen of cuttings was presented to Mr. H. N. May when he retired from the position of Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer last month. At the farewell meeting in the room of the Chief Mechanical Engineer (Mr. A. C. Ahlston) warm tributes to Mr. May's quality and personality were paid by Mr. Ahlston, Mr. Brownbill (the new Asst. Chief Mechanical Engineer), Mr. Dickinson (Chief Clerk of the Rolling Stock Branch) and other speakers.

Mr. May was first associated with Messrs. Merz and McLellan in the electrification of the suburban system and on completion of that tremendous undertaking Mr. May remained with the Victorian Railways as workshop manager at Jolimont. Subsequently he was appointed superintending engineer at Newport, and in 1933 he was promoted to the post of Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer.

Whilst associated with this Department Mr. May had been responsible for many valuable innovations. Particularly outstanding was his magnificent pioneer work in regard to lubrication of locomotives and rolling stock which brought about immense economies in operation and maintenance.

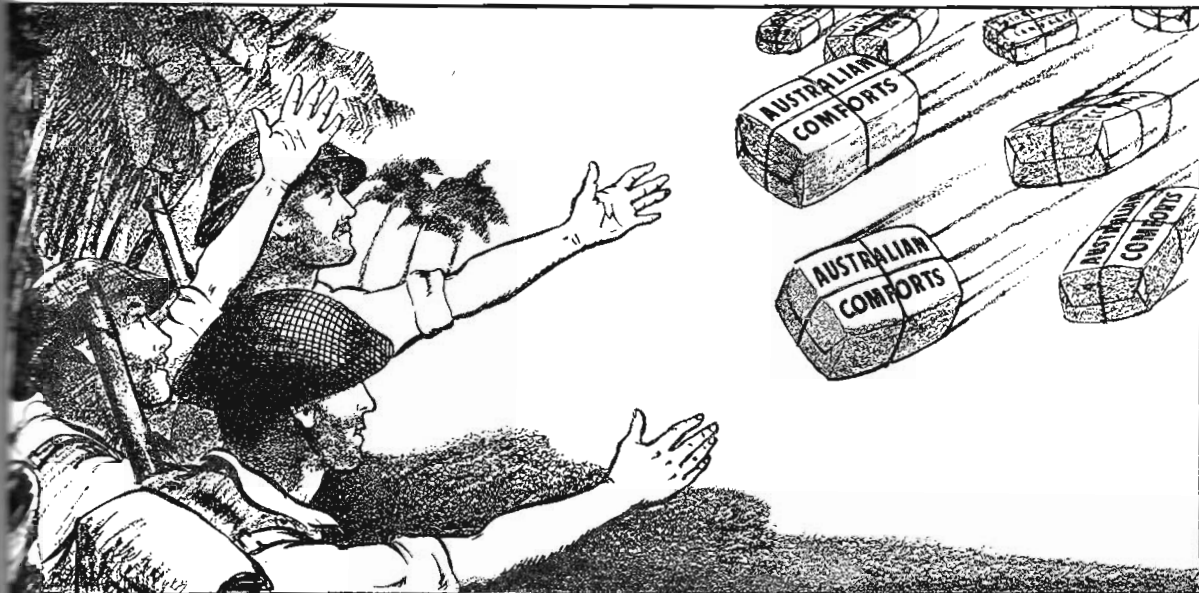
Mr. E. H. Brownbill, who succeeds Mr. May, is only 42. He joined the Department as an engineering assistant in 1925 after a brilliant career at the University, where he secured the coveted honour of Master of Mechanical Engineering. He has had wide experience in the planning and management of workshops and also in locomotive operation. His investigations into locomotive design some years ago led to substantial improvements in engine performance and train running generally.

The new workshops manager at Newport is Mr. R. H. Y. Ross, who joined the Department as an apprentice fitter and turner in 1927. For three years he was workshop manager at Bendigo, and for two years prior to his recent promotion he was Supt. Loco. Maintenance. He is an engineer with an excellent record, and in March of last year was on loan to the Commonwealth Land Transport Board in Queensland for a period of three months.

V.R. CASUALTIES.

The "News Letter" greatly regrets announcing the following casualties among V.R. men serving in the defence forces: L.A.C. G. C. Adams (Repairer) and N. J. Harper (App. C & Joiner) Killed in accident; Sergeant F. O'Dwyer (App. S'maker), Missing; and Corporal M. J. Hoskins (Repairer) Died on active service.

BOMBARDMENT AT CHRISTMAS



Are You Contributing ?

Join the V.R. Patriotic Fund which is providing Comforts for V.R. Fighting Men.

STRIKING RESULTS IN AMBULANCE COMPETITIONS

WARMEST congratulations to the Maryborough No. 1 First Aid team which won the first prize in the senior teams event of the V.R. Ambulance Competitions held at Lilydale on October 21. This achievement is the more commendatory for the fact that a Maryborough team has been competing for a period of over twenty years during which they were very successful in the finals but never gained the coveted trophy. North Melbourne No. 3 was second in the Senior final, third place going to Melbourne Goods No. 1.

In the finals for the novice teams Ararat North No. 2 was first; Seymour No. 2, second; and Ballarat North No. 1, third. In the Senior individuals F. L. O'Brien, of Newport Workshops, scored most points, the second and third places going to R. Jenke, of North Melb. Loco., and Mitchell, of Newport Workshops. Mitchell also achieved first place in the Novice Individual event, beating Richards of Spencer St. and J. C. [unclear], of Maryborough, who were second and third.

The prize for the best improvised stretcher went to Maryborough No. 1. At a happy social function in the evening the prizes were presented by Mr. Commissioner R. G. Wishart, who expressed the gratification of the Commissioners at the high standard of performance exhibited by teams and individuals during the day, and also the marked interest and enthusiasm displayed in First Aid throughout

the year. Mr. Wishart had a fitting word of solace for those who had been defeated—in some cases by very narrow margins—and he also paid tribute to the "Old Guard" of V.R. First Aid—the 258 individuals who wear the 8th year Gold Medal. A number of these veterans who were present were asked to stand up and were very warmly applauded by the gathering.

References were made during the evening to the fine compliment paid to the V.R. Ambulance organisation by the Director of Army Medical Services in requisitioning Mr. W. Blackburn for a period of 6 months to undertake educational work in stretcher building and first aid. Mr. K. W. Mackenzie, Assistant Ambulance Officer who took charge during the absence of Mr. W. Blackburn, was also complimented on the good work he had done.

The large audience listened attentively to interesting and instructive comments on the day's work by Adjudicators, Drs. McAree, Sloss, Shiell and Lieut. Col. Rees. Dr. Harbison, who also adjudicated, was unfortunately unable to attend. The evening, which was under the competent chairmanship of Mr. M. A. Remfry, General Superintendent of Transportation, included excellent musical items contributed by Mr. Roy Ogilvie (piano), Mr. Ted Forbes (vocalist), Mr. Tom Lockhead (comedian), and Mr. Gordon Craig (xylophone soloist).

During the evening, Mr. L. C. Bromilow, Acting Manager, Publicity and Tourist Services, announced that Mr. Charles Mitchell of Lilydale, who for many years has taken a keen interest in the Victorian Railways Ambulance Competitions, had decided to present to the Department for ambulance purposes about 7 acres of land, to be known as the "Blanche Mitchell Gift."

This land is close to the old competition site at Mt. Evelyn, adjoins the railway line and has access both by rail and road. It is ideally situated for Ambulance Competitions and has a wonderful growth of young timber admirably suited for stretcher building.

This striking act of generosity on the part of Mr. Mitchell will be appreciated by every railwayman, and we shall look forward to seeing him and Mrs. Mitchell at many future competition finals.

Excellent work and a keen competitive spirit were exhibited by the way, in the District Competitions in First Aid which were completed on September 29. The following teams were successful in the districts shown in brackets: Ararat No. 2 (Geelong); Benalla No. 1 (North East); Maryborough No. 1 (Ballarat); Bendigo No. 1 (Bendigo); Dandenong (Eastern and South Eastern); N. Melb. Loco. No. 3 (North Suburban); Melbourne Goods No. 1 (South Suburban).

Providing Comforts For Fighting Men

FOR some time past auxiliaries of the V.R. Patriotic Fund have been sending through city firms hampers or canteen orders to railwaymen in the fighting forces. Following a suggestion from the Spotswood Workshops Auxiliary the various committees combined, and sufficient commodities are now being purchased through the Railways Refreshment Services to provide 520 parcels for Christmas. This new plan assures a better parcel than would have been secured under the old arrangements, because the committee is able to save the cost of packing, etc. Some idea of the wealth of pleasure awaiting our fighting men who received parcels is shown by the following list of contents:

½ lb. tin plum pudding,	tube tooth paste
½ lb. tin biscuits, tin of fruit,	tube shaving cream, handkerchief,
½ lb. chocolate,	writing pad and envelopes,
pkt. raisins & nuts,	pencil,
pkt. cigarettes,	chewing gum,
tooth brush,	Steam rollers.

All the various auxiliaries are doing well, some notably so. We take special pleasure in commending the work of the Bendigo Auxiliary which recently received from Mr. H. H. Krohn, Hon. Administrator of the Australian Comforts Fund, Melbourne, a warm letter of thanks for "your magnificent contribution of £100 for Xmas hampers." Mr. S. C. Ellis, the Secretary of the Bendigo Auxiliary, informs us that in the recent Bungalow raffle "Bendigo's share of money was £178." "This money," he adds, with other in hand enabled us to also donate £120 to the Red Cross Junior Appeal."

Still another Auxiliary has been formed—this time among the office staff of the Electrical Engineering Branch. It will be known as the "Railways Electrical Engineering Branch Hospital Auxiliary." It will be affiliated with the V.R. Patriotic Fund and is proceeding to raise money in various ways to provide comforts for the patients in the Australian General Hospital at Heidelberg.

Appreciation of the work of the Australian Comforts Fund comes from no less a figure than General Sir Leslie Morshead, former G.O.C., 9th Division, who in a recent letter remarked:

"We were generously and regularly supplied with all sorts of comforts, selected with a full understanding of what was most needed and appreciated. A.C.F. too, was equally thoughtful and generous in providing every conceivable form of equipment for games and amenities generally."

"And the A.C.F. was well served by its representatives and their staffs. All were keen and enthusiastic, always on the lookout to be of help and service to the troops, whether in the field, in camp or on leave. During active operations they were always to be found well forward."

OBITUARIES

THE service lost an excellent officer in Mr. P. Nicholas who died suddenly on October 24, aged 50 years.

Mr. Nicholas, who completed a brilliant educational course by becoming a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering in 1915, first joined the Melbourne City Council Engineering staff, subsequently entering the Electrical Engineering Branch of the Department as a supernumerary draftsman.

Passing through the various grades of engineer, he reached the position of officer in responsible charge of the office section dealing with 1,500 volt overhead equipment, the 20,000 volt underground cable system and electrolysis investigation and mitigation. He was the Department's representative on the electrolysis technical sub-committee and contributed largely to the success of its work.

In other electrical problems in the Branch his advice was frequently sought, and for some time prior to his death he took an active part in the educational side of the Air Training Course.

Mr. Nicholas served in the 1st A.I.F. and was discharged on account of severe wounds. During the years 1925-27, he secured extended leave abroad with the Westinghouse Electrical and Mfg. Co., East Pittsburg, the Illinois Central Railroad, Chicago, and the Metropolitan Vickers Electrical Co. Manchester, England.

* * *

THE "News Letter" also records with deep regret the death of Mr. Norman J. P. Broome, Coal Salesman for the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi.

Mr. Broome, who died with tragic suddenness following a game of tennis, was only 49, and from boyhood was associated with the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi, where his father, the late Mr. G. H. Broome, was Manager for many years.

Mr. Norman Broome joined the Mine Manager's office as a junior in 1912, and from 1915 until the Armistice he was on active service in the first Great War from which he returned as a Captain in the 2nd Tunnelling Co., A.I.F.

A man of genial personality he will be missed by a wide circle of friends outside as well as inside the Department.

* * *

Another deeply regretted loss last month was that of Mr. Garnet O. J. Welsh, officer in charge of the suburban timetables in the Transportation Branch at the Spencer St. Head Office, who died after a long illness.

Mr. Welsh joined the Department as a junior clerk in 1906, and served some time at Ballarat before being transferred to Flinders St. where he commenced a long career as a guards roster clerk.

The work of guards' rostering calls for extreme accuracy and care, and Mr. Welsh exhibited his capacity for this job both in the Metropolitan Superintendent's office and in Room 75, Head Office, to which guards' rostering was later transferred. He then took charge of this room, following the retirement of Mr. L. H. Barrett.

A pleasant, quiet man with great capacity for work, Mr. Welsh will be greatly missed by his colleagues. He was only 53 when he died.

GALLANTRY OF FLT. L. DUDLEY MARROWS WINS BOTH D. S. O. AND D. F. C.

FLIGHT Lieutenant Dudley Marrows of the R.A.A.F., a former member of the Stores Branch at the Spencer Head Office, recently made the "batteries" in the daily press for a remarkable feat of gallantry and cool courage in the Bay of Biscay. He has been awarded both the D.S.O. and D.F.C.

He was in control of a 30-hp 4-engined Sunderland flying boat, a unit of an Anzac Squadron, and on patrol at 4,000 feet the tail gunner Pilot Officer Jensen, saw a cluster of black dots which on further investigation proved to be six Japanese fighters approaching at high speed.

The nearest cloud cover was 10 miles away, but before that protection was reached the Junkers were seen attacking from all angles. Two on the Sunderland were quickly knocked out. The port float and the starboard float were shot away. Finally, after an unequal battle of 1 hour 45 minutes with a single engine afire, Flight Lieut. Marrows found his riddled Sunderland rapidly losing height.

Perfect Landing

Still under fire, he made a perfect landing in a cross wind into an 15-foot swell, and he and the crew distributed themselves in three dinghies.

The plight of the crew can be imagined when two of the dinghies had been damaged by cannon splinters, burst and the occupants were hauled into the remaining dinghy. Now carrying a load of eleven men the dinghy was not a fit vessel to face the Bay of Biscay on a night.

Nevertheless, Flight Lieut. Marrows and his companions achieved the miracle of keeping it afloat, expecting that their rescue might be delayed they decided not to touch the emergency rations for 48 hours.

At 3 a.m. they heard an aircraft head and firing flares were ultimately reported to a warship which rescued them after one of the most remarkable experiences in the history of a rescueable force.

Flight Lieut. Marrows has been standing for U-boats for some time. Recently he was in control of a Sunderland which sank a German submarine in a sensational action.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER, 1943.

Issue No. 159.

"UNDER THE BLITZ," THE GOODS GO THROUGH

Another Striking Extract From "Transport Goes To War"

IN previous issues the "News Letter" has published extracts from "Transport Goes To War," giving vivid pictures of British passenger trains working "under the blitz." We now come to the less spectacular, but more vital performances of the goods trains which carried on regardless of enemy interference. In the following piece taken from a chapter eloquently headed "The Goods Go Through" we are asked to look at the traffic which goes through a certain English north-eastern junction in the course of a day.

It is not the largest or most important junction in the north. It does not compare with the great marshalling yards. Yet there are miles of sidings there. Most of the goods traffic filters through this place without having to be shunted and marshalled. But the little that is left has to be sorted out according to destinations, and this "little" may amount to over 6,000 wagons in 24 hours! The traffic is 100 per cent. on 1929 and 30 per cent. on 1939, and there's a train going by up and down every 13 minutes of the 24 hours. Ten years ago there was a train only every 23 minutes. These are not passenger and goods expresses, the railwayman's dream, but very slow moving trains, continually stopping.

Can't Stop Talking

The movements of the trains are governed by Train Controls on various systems. You can see how it is that at war-time the men in these Controls can't stop talking. The station-announcer giving out her 250 trains every day, telling people to pull down the blinds, and telling Mr. So and So that his wife and children are waiting for him on No. 5 platform where he will hear something to his advantage, and a strong silent woman compared to the Control men.

Considering the babel in the controls, it is a surprise to find that the signal-boxes, which sounded so loud, are, in fact, silent places. The men stand in silence before the long row of levers. They are mostly grey-haired men, with a youngster at the phone, easing himself into the proper air of bowed, and most priestly discipline. They stand relaxed, inert shoulders bowed,

but dead still and watchful in the smoky railway light.

A bell rings. They take a step forward and both hands go to the lever, trying it first as if to be sure of their grip (but actually testing, if it is free, for on the interlocking system, you cannot be sure that your lever

SEASONAL GREETINGS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

*I*N extending to every member of the staff and their dependants our warmest seasonal greetings and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, we have pleasure in again expressing our cordial thanks for the loyal service of all who have been responsible for a year of record achievement. We trust that the coming year will see an end to the present world conflict and a glorious victory for the Allied arms.

will respond), and then they heave. When that lever is over, they move down the row and pull its fellow and there is (to the stranger) something alarming in the random way they seem to pick their number. But casual as the action seems, there is always a perceptible pause of consideration as they step to the place. Then they step back and stand there relaxed and slumped, heads bowed again, waiting until a voice says, something like, "Got that 13?" and once more these peculiar watchers step forward to the long steel row of levers with their red, white and blue markers. The boy there is writing the log. Presently he will go to the signal school to learn the mysteries of the cult on a model railway.

The trains go by. The smoke boils over, clouding the window of the signal-box. There are six men in that box. The head man is having his lunch. "How has the war affected you? you ask. He is a large man, rather proud of his waistline. "Ye can see for yourself," he says, giving a caress to his corporation. But, seriously, he says, it isn't bombs or fire-watching or even Hitler that gets you down. It's the blasted black-out. The black-out is a thing which makes you think of a lot of words beginning with a "b."

By day, the signalman sees the train pass. He identifies it. It confirms his decisions. He has only to look from the illuminated graph with its changing lights, from the theory of the thing, so to speak, to the reality.

By night, working under dimmed lights that are virtual darkness and with sacking for a black-out on the windows, he is a different man, as stiff and alert as a listening sentry. At night the signalman gives the impression of someone listening for a pin to drop. He can't see the speed of the passing train; can't be sure of its length; isn't certain when it has passed the points. The graph is there above him, but the eye cannot confirm it. He's like a man doing chess in his head.

Moods and Temperament

The great railway stations are places of moods and temperament. One moment they are intense, exciting, hurrying, noisy. You have to shout because of the noise of the steam and the more melodious clank of the engines. In twenty minutes the whole scene has emptied. A station which had six trains in it has none and is like a funnel with two holes of murky sky at either end. The numbers of people have thinned to next to nothing, the bookstalls are deserted, luggage stands about on the platforms, the air is stale and exhausted. There is an atmosphere of aftermath and collapse. If you have seen the 800 cups and saucers piled three high and six deep on the long counter of one of the large junctions, waiting for the siege of sailors and soldiers to charge out of the middle-night trains, you get an idea of the empty moments of the railway. And while you gaze

(continued on next page)

The Goods Go Through

(continued)

at that depressing sight—clank-spit, clank-spit, along crawls a goods engine pulling its chain of empties, with their gossiping wheels. This gives to the station, in the dead hours, its final note of desolation.

But step across to the goods station, the station which as a passenger you never see. Platforms again, a bay with the lorries and carts for local deliveries and the crosstown work, wagons at all the platforms. There is no smoke or steam. The coal and oil smell is not there nor the wave of warm air from the buffet. The goods station smells and sounds are different things: To begin with the smell. What is it? It is the warehouse smell. Some infusion of packing case wood, the tang of dunnage, fruit, boot polish, or too much raspberry (from the tins of chemical) or fish or bacon. It smells like the back room of a grocer's or ironmonger's shop.

Then, the place is quieter than the passenger station. There are no engines here. These lines of wagons have been shunted in and the furious little shunting engine has left them. At the end of each platform is a list of towns, and on signposts all the way up the train are other names of stations. Goods for Oxford go up there, Bristol there, Cirencester there, all kinds of stations you have never heard of—and it is nothing for a company to have a thousand stations on its books—and those wagons are a train due out in a few hours' time and made up in station order. You'll meet that train shunting off a wagon or two somewhere down in the west country.

Scores of Girls

The dominating noise is the jaunty sound of the hand trolleys or the rumble of the crane. Scores of girls in dungarees and with very solid shoes are pushing the trolleys from one wagon, up the platform, to a pile of goods waiting to be transferred. There is nothing but the noise of these trolley wheels. At every wagon a gang is working. A gang consists of five people. A checker, a caller-off and three porters. The women are the porters. The checker has a little pulpit with his list clipped to it, by each wagon; he looks too pernickety for a bookmaker, but like someone starting an open-air meeting, perhaps of a religious nature—shall we say, 'The Railway Truth Society?'—with a small and faithful audience. The caller-off is the man who knows his geography: the geography of England and the changing geography of the trains and the platforms.

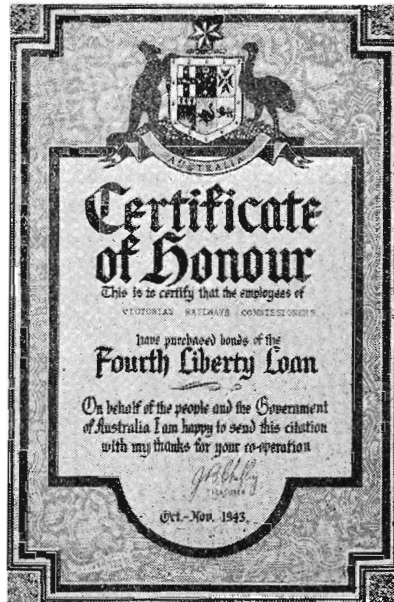
Out come the rolls of wire netting, the peculiar parts of military equipment—what are they? Bits of Bren guns? Radiolocation instruments? The nose bands of a Spitfire?—crates of fish, dog biscuits, a set of school desks travelling from Essex

Have You An Idea About You?

to Wiltshire for some evacuated school. Here a girl is taking on too much, trying to tip a heavy packing case on to her lorry; a man spots it, turns round and gives her a hand, silently, and she goes off. No one speaks much. There may be laughter from behind the cases at the end of the train, but on the job there is a preoccupied silence.

GOOD WORK IN THE LIBERTY LOANS

CONGRATULATIONS to the Bendigo North Workshops Committee for its fine efforts on behalf of the 3rd and 4th Liberty Loans. In the appeal for the 3rd Liberty 111 employes took out bonds to the value of £1,900, an average of £17 per subscriber. Determined on surpassing this effort for the 4th Liberty Loan, the Committee induced 117 subscribers to sign up for a total amount



Above is a reproduction of the Certificate of Honour from the Commonwealth Government expressing appreciation of numerous railwaymen's assistance in helping to fill the 4th Liberty Loan.

of £2,340, which represents £20 a subscriber. Way and Works staff in this district, who asked for the privilege of subscribing through the workshops, deserve to be commended for their help also. Both of the drives were conducted by the Workshops Committee, of which Mr. Vic. Hosking is President and Mr. E. Sonneman, Secretary. The indefatigable Mr. A. C. Ebdon acted ably as Organiser and Loan Secretary.

APPROXIMATELY 850 suggestions are received annually by the Betterment and Suggestions Board for the improvement of the Service. That represents an average of about 70 ideas a month, but a much larger contribution should not be beyond staff numbering 25,000. The war has brought innumerable problems, and should be a patriotic duty to assist the Department in the elimination of War's greatest product—Waste.

Waste is everywhere. It is visible in elderly methods, in systems and practices that have only the virtue of precedence. It is responsible for extravagances in the use of materials and manpower, and its cost to the Department must run into a substantial sum every year. Alert eyes will discern wasteful habits—they may call for the simplest remedy—but it is essential that suggestions for improvement be directed to the Betterment and Suggestions Board. Don't hesitate in submitting an idea for improvement.

The Board desires to hear from railwaymen who have suggestions for improving the service. Liberal awards are paid. Amounts up to £400 have been earned by employes who have reported particular "brain waves."

One merit of this scheme is that the person submitting a suggestion can be assured of his identity remaining known only to the Board. Ideas are not sent through Departmental channels, but direct under cover to the Board. The original letter detailing the suggestion remains in the possession of the Board and only a typewritten copy of the idea, which bears a number for filing purposes, is sent out with an opinion on the suggestion is required. If necessary, all letters between the Board and the suggestor will be mailed to his private address. The system assures all possible protection to suggestors.

All ideas should be sent to the Betterment and Suggestions Board, Railway Administrative Offices, Spencer Street, and will be carefully investigated. Send in—and keep on sending in—any thoughts you may have for improvements.

ENLISTMENTS.

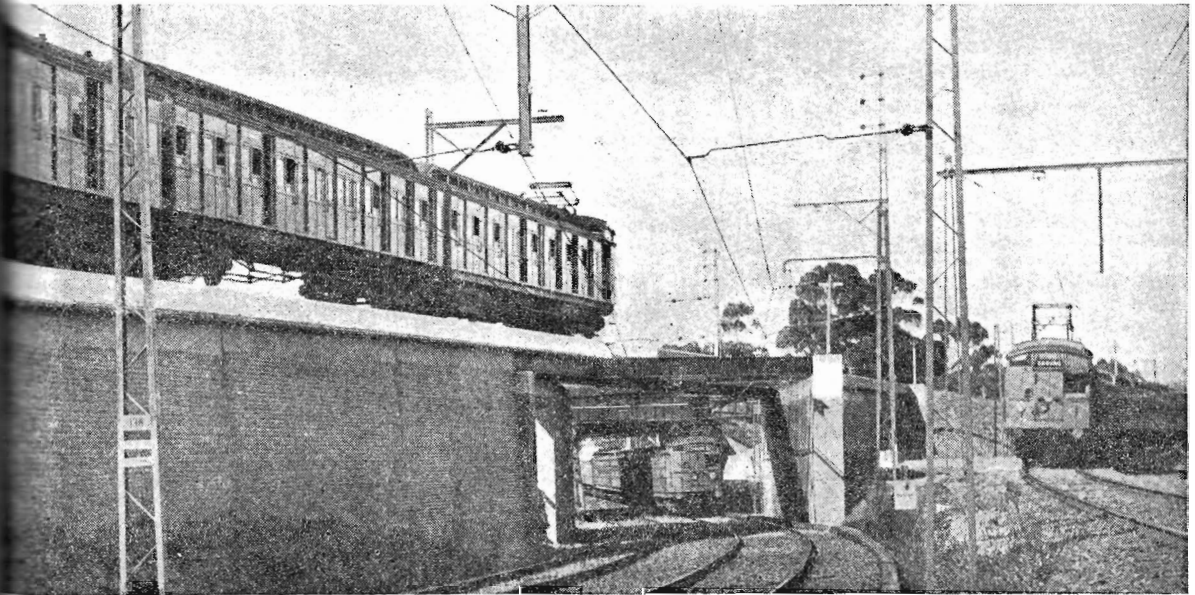
A.I.F.
SPRINGMAKER T. J. Farr :
Lbr. K. S. Hand ; Spring-
M. R. Robinson.

R.A.A.F.
Lad Lbr. D. W. Black ; Clk. R.
Coghill ; Lad Lbr. I. G. Sirl ;
W. C. Watkins.

R.A.N.
Jnr. Clk. J. W. Herdman ; Jnr.
R. A. Hipgrave ; Lad Lbr. B. Keene ;
Jnr. Clk. J. C. Martin ; Jnr. Clk.
Stenning.

A.W.A.S.
Miss A. Bayly (Stenographer).

BURNLEY "FLYOVER" PROVES ITS VALUE



THE above picture shows the new Burnley "flyover" with a train bound for Eastmalvern passing over the bridge. Below in the centre of the picture is a train running on the Box Hill line to Melbourne, and on the right, also destined for the city and beyond, is another train from Eastmalvern.

The "flyover," which was recently constructed to eliminate the crossover difficulties and delays with "down" Eastmalvern trains at Burnley, has resulted in a considerable improvement in train running on both the main line and the branch lines. In the following table showing the late running for a period of 6 days prior to the completion of the "flyover" and for a period of 6 days after the value of the "flyover" is clearly shown:

Eastmalvern line	Before	After
"Up" trains		
Daily average per train run ...	1.5 mins.	.9 mins.
Morning peak " " ...	1.3 mins.	.8 mins.
Box Hill line		
"Up" trains		
Daily average per train run ...	1.4 mins.	1 min.
Morning peak " " ...	1.0 mins.	.6 mins.

The actual improvement in train running on these lines is not the only benefit for which the "flyover" is responsible. Better timekeeping has also resulted all along the routes concerned, particularly across the viaduct to the Coburg terminus, and in the handling of traffic at Nos. 6 and 7 platforms at Flinders Street.

Big Sum Distributed By V.R. Patriotic Fund

THE full record for the V.R. Patriotic Fund for the year ending 30th September contains very interesting figures. The total of payroll contributions by V.R. was £6,600 and the amount received from Balls, Dances, Commissions, etc., conducted by the Central Committee and Metro. Auxiliaries reached the formidable sum of £175. Proceeds from Booking Window Collection Boxes were £250 and Donations to the General Fund totalled £168.

Payments during the year were as follows:—

Australian Red Cross ...	£500
U.S.S.R. Division ...	£100
Adoption Prisoners ...	£758
Free French Section ...	£100
"H" Organisation ...	£200
Australia/China Co-op. Assn. ...	£200
Missions to Seamen Patriotic Fund ...	£200
Ararat Pat. Fund Council ...	£1114
Ararat Comforts Fund ...	£1257
Hostel, Ballarat ...	£400
Force House ...	£200
Money House ...	£200
Way House ...	£200
Churches Soldiers' Welfare Organisations ...	£300
Blankets for Russia ...	£100
Day Appeal ...	£100
Payment Chassis Mobile Canteen purchased by Ararat Auxiliary...	£338

An excellent record and all the more impressive for the fact that all the incidental expenses covering printing, stationery and postage and including the purchase of materials for the manufacture of articles donated to the Australian Red Cross Society amounted to under £60.

* * *

The Bendigo V.R. Patriotic Fund Auxiliary is exhibiting commendable energy. The Secretary (Mr. S. C. Ellis) tells us that his Auxiliary is providing two and three dances a week in addition to a Ham Raffle and Euchre Evening every fortnight. The Auxiliary has recently raffled a pair of blankets, a £5 War Savings Certificate and a 40-piece dinner set. The prize for another raffle is a bedroom suite recently presented to help the good cause. A children's pantomime and a Sunday band recital were also listed for last month, and the good fellows associated with this branch are now concentrating on the production of barrows, gondola prams and other toys to be raffled next Christmas. Not the least of the activities was an "Ugly Man" contest decided last month. It caused immense interest

and provided a nice dividend for the Patriotic Fund.

Some of the staff of the Locomotive Depot Auxiliary, North Melbourne, thought that a dance would help the Patriotic Funds and under the direction of Messrs. T. Conboy, Secretary, J. Bolger, M.C., J. Howlett, L. Lawton, G. Noone, J. Field and T. Zock, the evening came off in the North Melbourne Town Hall on November 3 last. It was so well organised and advertised among local railwaymen and their friends that over 200 were present and a cheque for £13/8/10 was handed to the Secretary of the Patriotic Fund. Another dance is now being arranged. Railwaymen who intend to be present should watch the "Weekly Notice" for the day of the event.

* * *

Recently we recorded the generosity and honesty of a railwayman who picked up a purse containing £3, and on its being unclaimed handed the money over to the V.R. Patriotic Fund. The other day Mr. G. B. Rickaby, clerk at Camberwell, picked up a 10/- note. When after a suitable interval no owner appeared to take the money Mr. Rickaby sent it into Mr. Elliott, Hon. Secretary of the V.R. Patriotic Fund. It has gone into the Fund and Mr. Rickaby has been suitably thanked for his thoughtful act.

RECORD TRAFFIC FOR MELBOURNE CUP

ONCE again the skilful co-operation and diligence of every railwayman concerned has been responsible for transporting a huge crowd without mishap or delay to the Melbourne Cup. Actually the number carried by rail—60,135 to Flemington and 65,558 on the return journey—was a record for all time and the achievement is all the more meritorious for the reason that the job of transporting the majority of racegoers from Flinders Street and Spencer Street stations on a Saturday was undertaken during "peak" conditions for ordinary suburban traffic.

The number of racegoers carried last Cup Day was nearly 10,000 more than the previous "high," the nearest figure being 56,955 in 1920.

This is the second year that the Melbourne Cup has been run on a Saturday, but last year's attendance was affected by bad weather.

This year, fifteen 8-car trains did 51 trips (42 from Flinders Street) to the course, and in the return from Flemington nineteen 8-car trains completed 45 trips, nine of them terminating at Spencer Street. In the return service from Flemington 13 trains were despatched between 5.30 p.m. and 6 p.m., and 11 trains between 6 p.m. and 6.35 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES FOR V.R. SERVICEMEN

SOME Victorian railwaymen serving on the various battlefronts are taking advantage of the excellent correspondence courses provided by the Victorian Railways Institute. The subjects available by correspondence cover a comprehensive field of railway education. There are complete courses in:

Engine working, Westinghouse Brake. Station Accounts and Management. Ticket Checking. Safeworking. Telegraphy. Permanent Way Construction and Maintenance. Storeman's Duties. Driver-Foreman (or both in Fitter-Foreman) Combined Course. Arithmetic. English. Shorthand. Works Foreman's Course.

Each course is free to V.R. men who are members of the defence personnel, and though the service is necessarily prolonged by the relative slowness of the mails and the student's distance from Melbourne, each is able to pursue his study at his leisure with a reasonable assurance that he will be able to take each step in the course under the careful eye of the expert instructor.

V.R. men in the fighting services who want to improve their railway knowledge in this way should get in touch with the Secretary of the V.R. Institute, Flinders Street Station Building, Melbourne.

Tragic Death Of Sapper McKenzie

THE cruelest irony of war is that which befalls a man who has survived innumerable dangers under fire only to lose his life in some relatively unimportant way far from the front. Last month, the "News Letter" reported the tragic end of Flt. Lieutenant Richard Roe, who after many air fights in Britain and New Guinea, died in the accidental crash of an aircraft at the Civil Defence Day at Flemington.

Now comes the news of an equally sad loss—the accidental death of Sapper W. J. McKenzie through being run over by a motor truck outside Adelaide.

Sapper McKenzie had served his country for 1,010 days. He had originally gone overseas with the 2nd Railway Construction Corps, and spent some time in England where he received his driver's certificate. He was in London during the height of the "blitz" and like thousands of others he had many narrow escapes. Afterwards he went to Syria with his unit, and on the recall of Australian forces to the homefront he returned to the Commonwealth.

He was only 27 years of age and joined the Rolling Stock Branch of the Department in 1938, subsequently qualifying as a locomotive fireman.

OBITUARIES

THE "News Letter" regrets to record the death on 8th November of Mr. Albert Horton, who up to his retirement in 1939 was Engineer-in-Charge of the Newport "A" Power Station.

Mr. Horton was originally selected by Mr. Charles H. Merz, the consulting engineer for the Melbourne suburban electrification scheme, to come to Australia to represent him on site during the construction of the Power Station. With the commissioning of the plant, he was appointed in 1918 to the position of Engineer-in-Charge.

During the absence abroad of the Chief Electrical Engineer, Mr. H. P. Colwell, in 1937-38, Mr. Horton acted as Assistant Chief Electrical Engineer. The successful operation of the Power Station at Newport for many years is a testimony to his engineering qualities.

All railwaymen who knew him had the warmest regard for his character and ability.

The "News Letter" also regrets the death on 14th November of Mr. Arthur North Rees at the age of 78.

For many years up to the date of his retirement in 1930, the late Mr. Rees was widely known in the Head Office, Spencer Street, and throughout the wholesale merchandise business field as a capable Officer-in-Charge of the Stores and Materials Accounts section of the Accountancy Branch. During this long and responsible period he controlled the passing of accounts for stores purchases.

He possessed a keen sense of humour and an unruffled temperament. Also he was a source of great inspiration to hundreds of junior clerks who received their early training under his watchful eye. Among the old colleagues who will be sorry to hear of his end must be counted many of the aforesaid juniors who are now filling responsible senior positions in the Accountancy Branch.

EX-V.R. MEN DECORATED

TEMPORARY Captain John Kubale, a former member of the Electrical Engineering Branch, has been awarded the M.B.E. for gallantry and distinguished service with the British Army in the Middle East.

Captain Kubale, who was born in Melbourne in 1903, was appointed an apprentice electrical fitter in the Signal and Telegraph Branch in 1921 and after making rapid progress through the grades of Drafting Engineer, Assistant and Assistant Engineer, he secured three years' leave to enlarge his knowledge and experience with the General Electric Co., the General Signal Co. and the Illinois Central Railroad in the U.S.A.

In 1930, he was granted furlough leave and became manager of the Brakes Ltd., England, with which firm he remained until joining the Royal Engineers. He was then signed from the Department in 1935.

Captain Kubale, who has been with the British 8th Army for the past three years, is a cousin of Mr. L. Kubale, a typist in the Chief Electrical Engineer's office.

Another ex-V.R. man to be decorated is Sergeant Harry James of the 2nd/32nd Battalion of the A.I.F., who now wears the ribbon of the D.C.M. and M.M. on his tunic for fine work in the Middle East and New Guinea. He was also in the Electrical Engineering Branch, serving for a brief period in 1937 as an Assistant Low Tension Lineman.

SERVICE.

IN the following letter addressed to the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris), Mr. F. Mills, Controller of Locomotive and Rolling Stock Construction, Commonwealth Munitions, Railway Building, Flinders Street, Melbourne, says handsomely in tribute to the work of V.R. railwaymen in the construction of the first Garratt locomotive, particulars of which were published in the "News Letter" of the October issue.

"The first Garratt locomotive was built in your Newport Works and is now in regular service on the Queensland Railways. This locomotive, very little prior running and without load test hauled a full load from Brisbane to Rockhampton, a distance of 397 miles over rather difficult track. Throughout this initial run the locomotive gave an excellent performance, and without trouble of any kind."

"This performance reflects the best credit upon your Workshops since only first-class workmanship could have produced such a result. In the absence of my Director, Mr. J. A. Ellis, I shall be grateful if you will convey to all members of staff concerned, his very keen appreciation, which I share to the full."

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