

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

JANUARY, 1946

Issue No. 184.

HIGHLIGHTS OF "ANNUAL REPORT"

Various Factors Responsible for Reduced Revenue

THE gross revenue in 1944/45 was £15,352,493, which was £622,141 less than the revenue for the previous year, and £1,768,000 less than the record revenue in 1942/43. The surplus was £207,013, compared with £448,136 in 1943/44. The decrease in revenue occurred almost wholly in goods business, and was largely due to active operations in the Pacific war zone moving progressively away from Australia. Other factors were the almost complete failure of the wheat harvest, the restrictions that had to be imposed on goods traffic owing to the coal shortage and the priority necessarily given to the removal of live stock, at reduced charges, from drought-stricken areas. Passenger business was slightly greater than in the previous year, the reduction in war traffic having been more than offset by an increase in travel by the general public following the easing of travel restrictions and the partial restoration of a few passenger services.

Working expenses were £12,914,088 (£381,807 less than in 1943/44). The principal factors causing reductions were:—

Decreases.

Contributions to Railway Renewals and Replacements Fund ...	350,000
Railway Accident & Fire Insurance Fund ...	36,827
Expenditure on air raid precautions, etc. ...	7,368
Provision for arrears of leave and deferred maintenance ...	37,771
Way and Works maintenance	187,776
War damage insurance ...	33,918
One day less in year ...	25,000
Lower average fuel prices ...	24,000
Value of abolished assets written-off ...	20,000
	£722,660

Against these were certain increases, viz.:—

	£
Rolling Stock maintenance ...	143,042
Increased supplies of tarpaulins ...	108,000
Miscellaneous operations (increased business) ...	14,745
Wages awards ...	114,000
Net decrease ...	£342,873

The balance of the decrease in expenditure (approximately £39,000) is more than accounted for by the reduced volume of goods business. Although the reduction in operating costs was disproportionate to the fall in revenue, the fact that the abnormal increase in traffic in the earlier years of the war was handled with relatively small additional expenditure now precludes operating costs being reduced in anything like the same ratio as the downward trend of revenue.

The total contribution to the Railway Renewals and Replacements Fund was £700,000—£350,000 less than in the previous year. Whilst £700,000 might be sufficient to take care of wear and tear in a normal year, the business in 1944/45 was more than normal. Apart from that fact, it was very desirable that advantage be taken of the buoyant revenue to make additional provision for arrears of renewals and replacements which will have to be undertaken, at costs greatly exceeding original costs, immediately the necessary manpower and materials are available.

Reference has been made in previous reports to the unsatisfactory position throughout the State regarding freight charges arising from pre-war competition. These rates, which were necessarily related to intensity of road competition at each particular place, are not only a very costly means of protecting the State's greatest asset, but have resulted in serious rating anomalies causing irritation and dissatisfaction on the part of railway users. It will be the Commissioners' aim to correct these anomalies by reverting to a rational and reasonably uniform rating structure when there is a definite assurance of effective protection from selective competition. Without this, stabilized railway rates would merely play into the hands of competitors and result in the loss of much of the business that was conserved by the Commissioners' ability to meet them, as to rates, upon their own ground.

Post-War Works.

The serious depletion of technical staff and inability to secure the release of any appreciable number of men has retarded the planning of post-war works. Nevertheless a considerable

amount of preparatory work has been done, and certain of the works for which approval of the Commonwealth Co-ordinator General of Works has been indicated can be commenced as soon as men and materials are available.

Shortage of sleepers has caused considerable concern. In recent years sleeper supplies have averaged only about 350,000 per annum, but nearly three times that number will be required annually in the next 10 years for post-war works and for deferred renewals and replacements.

Competition.

Land transport continued to be subject to National Security Regulations, and road competition was kept in check by the ruling of the Commonwealth authorities that long-distance road motor operations should not be permitted, except in cases of "inescapable necessity." However, considerable relaxation of this rule was evident, notably with regard to goods traffic between Melbourne and Geelong, and to perishable products for the metropolitan markets. In addition, unauthorised road operations persisted to some extent, mainly in connection with the cartage of wool from the country to Melbourne and Geelong. However, the diversion of traffic from the railways was small when compared with the losses from competition in pre-war years.

An immediate increase in competition, particularly for live stock, fruit and other perishable commodities, can be expected when National Security Regulations are fully withdrawn. Under the existing State law, no restriction is imposed upon the carriage of these commodities by road, and extensive carrying rights are also possible.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

essed by primary producers. It is considered that the law should be amended to bring all long-distance road transport under control of the licensing authority.

The Commissioners also recommended that intrastate air transport should be brought within the ambit of existing transport legislation.

Much scope exists for the expansion of road and air services, but their real value to the community lies in their development as complementary and not as competitive services.

The Report again directs attention to the essential nature of railways which cannot be supplanted by other forms of transport. With the further development of the country and in the light of the lessons of the war, the role of the railways must become increasingly important and the need to maintain them in a healthy, vigorous state cannot be over-emphasized. This condition can be assured only by public support and effective control of competition.

Rolling Stock.

Construction work was confined mainly to Australian Standard Garratt locomotives. Valuable work, however, was also done in constructing ocean-going tugs for the Commonwealth Government.

New rolling stock, completed during the year, comprised 15 workmen's sleepers, 3 "Z" vans and 129 trucks equipped for the carriage of wheat in bulk.

Coal Supplies.

Coal, or the lack of it, has been a source of constant anxiety. The situation would have been a great deal worse if a substantial portion of the Department's supplies had not been overlanded at a net additional cost during the past two years of £324,000. During that period no less than 58 per cent. of the large coal requirements had to be obtained overland. The coal was a vital national want and it is considered that it would have been only equitable for the Commonwealth to relieve the railways of a much greater share of the cost, especially as the overlanding of the coal enabled other users to receive more Maitland or Victorian State Mine coal at prices far below those paid by the Department for coal from Western N.S.W.

In addition, this sacrifice operated to our detriment in the allocation of seaborne Maitland coal without which our passenger trains cannot maintain their schedules. Compared with 273,100 tons (large coal) in 1940/41, the Maitland supplies amounted only to 67,853 tons in 1943/44 and 121,860 in 1944/45. This severe limitation not only involves heavy expense but also loss of operating efficiency.

The consumption of coal for the year was 552,141 tons, costing £1,029,592. Of this, large coal represented 404,083 tons at an average rate of 38/10d. per ton and small coal 148,058 tons at the average rate of 33/1d.

During the winter of 1944, coal supplies were supplemented by burning firewood on pilot engines. Approximately 40,000 tons (costing £42,500) were consumed, saving roughly 13,500 tons of coal. This represented an extra expense of £16,200, apart from the heavy additional cost of haulage and handling.

Salaries and Wages.

The amount paid was £8,828,090, which was £142,355 less than the amount disbursed in the previous year.

Service.

The Commissioners again gratefully record their appreciation of the excellent work of the great majority of the staff during the year. In the face of difficulties created by shortage of coal and qualified manpower, and of conditions irritating to public and employes alike, the loyalty and zeal of the rank and file of the staff deserved special commendation. Though overtime work was not as extensive as in recent years, it was generally undertaken willingly and cheerfully.

Branches of Vic. Govt. Tourist Bureau Reopened

BRANCH Offices of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau have been reopened at Ballarat, Bendigo and Mildura, whilst the Geelong branch will be reopened as soon as suitable premises are available. The Ballarat office is again in the charge of Mr. R. Caddell; Mr. W. Sherriff has returned to his old post at Mildura, whilst the Bendigo branch is under the care of Mr. F. Schroder.

Despite the restricted train services these offices are dealing with many enquiries, not only from local residents but also from visitors regarding accommodation and interesting features of the locality.

For local residents who desire to travel, accommodation may be booked without fee and, in addition to rail travel, reservations may be made for air or road journeys.

The full value of the branch offices however will not be manifest until coal supplies are again sufficient for restoration of train services and peace time concessions.

It is anticipated that the Sydney branch office in Martin Place will reopen this month. Other Interstate offices will follow as soon as conditions permit.

OIL-BURNING ON LOCOMOTIVES

COAL for locomotive purposes has been in short supply for some time, and the Victorian Railways have therefore been forced over an extended period to use vast quantities of firewood and to investigate the use of substitute fuels. Brown coal as mined contains so much moisture that it will not produce steam quickly enough when burned in locomotives. Wood and coke enable services to be continued with difficulty but cannot be used during the summer season because of the fire hazards associated with them.

Oil is another form of fuel which can be successfully burned in locomotives and has the advantage of running fire hazard, but at present prices its cost for train operation is very high.

Trials with an "A2" engine have just commenced and full goods loads have been handled between Melbourne and Seymour with an oil consumption of approximately 850 gallons for the round trip.

The firebox of a locomotive specially built for oil burning possesses characteristics somewhat different from the ordinary coal-burning type.

For example, coal normally forms a layer over the grate, thus restricting the free flow of air, but when burning oil the air openings in the grate may be considerably reduced, and this can be readily allowed for in the design of the grate when it is known that oil will be burned. With a locomotive in which the grate is designed for coal burning the same result is obtained by spreading broken firebricks over the grate.

Firebox volume and length to allow sufficient space for the combustion of the oil before it strikes any obstruction are also important, and this is probably the greatest difficulty that the Department will have to overcome in its experiments on the "A2" engine, which has a narrow firebox and comparatively small firebox volume.

Contact of oil flame with the firebox sides causes rapid erosion, and to prevent this a firebrick lining has been introduced which reaches from the grate to the brick arch and also covers the tube plate under the arch.

The oil storage is provided by a 1,300-gallon steel tank, which is carried in the coal bunker and from which pipes lead through regulating valves to the burner which fires through the firedoor. The burner of the flat jet type operated drops the oil on to a jet of steam which vaporises it and carries it forward to meet the air coming up through the grate and with which it becomes intimately mixed and then burns.

Although the loads have been successfully hauled, further adjustments will be necessary before the performance is as good as that obtained with coal.

1945 : The Department's Most Difficult Year

THE year just concluded was easily the most difficult in railway experience mainly due to persistent shortage of coal. The shortage culminated in a crisis last month, when the Department had to introduce further drastic restrictions in both passenger and goods train services. The passenger service was necessarily reduced to a bare skeleton, whilst goods transport was practically confined to absolute essentials only.

At the time of writing, the Department was faced with a most difficult problem in endeavouring to maintain goods services for foodstuffs and fuel until coal supplies again come to hand.

A new peak of public inconvenience was reached and intending passengers patiently adjusted themselves to the kindest Christmas in the history of Victorian transport.

The Rolling Stock Branch had a busy year. The end of the war necessarily meant that much of the activity concentrated on the production of munitions, etc., could be transferred to railway needs.

New Type Of Sleeping Car.

Full size models of accommodation in a proposed new type of sleeping car are creating much interest. Single sleeping cabins will be incorporated in the proposed new sleeping cars, and there will probably be at least 10 in each car, although some two-berth cabins will also be included. The unit "H.220" has continued to demonstrate its immense value. Since it was first placed in fast goods work between Melbourne and Wodonga in July, 1942, on five days a week, this engine has covered 270,000 miles.

A novel job at the Newport Workshops was the construction of workers' sleeping cars with four separate bunks and comfortable bunks and other conveniences in each car.

The transition from war to peace activities was marked by a congratulatory letter from the Minister for Munitions (The Honorable Norman Makin) to the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris) complimenting the Department on "the splendid achievement in the production of over 4,000 Machine Gun Carriers." "I would like you to convey to all those concerned," he added, "my good wishes and the thanks of the Commonwealth for their very great assistance to the Munitions programme in this connection." The Carrier of course was only one of a number of important projects entrusted to the V.R. about most of which similar comments have been received.

An outstanding undertaking in the Way and Works Branch—the recon-

struction of the Cremorne Bridge—is proceeding steadily and after twelve months' work the staff concerned are able to see the results of their close and concentrated efforts—the appearance of a massive abutment and pier in place on each bank, whilst preparations are well advanced for the construction of the pier in the river itself.

No. 1 Platform, Flinders Street Station, was extended by an additional 70 feet, giving it an overall length of 2,097 feet. This will greatly facilitate the handling of a substantial parcels traffic.

In the Electrical Engineering Branch, the "highlight" of 1945 was the completion of the first stage in modernising the steam-raising and generating plant in the Newport "A" Power Station. Preparations are in hand for the second stage of the work involving the replacement of 6 of the existing boilers and one turbo-generator by two new boilers of greater aggregate capacity and a large turbo-generator similar to the latest which has achieved substantial savings in black coal.

We deeply regret to record that during the year several railwaymen were killed or died on active service, and more were wounded. Many are now returning, and plans have been made for their re-establishment in the Department.

Railwaymen in Honor Lists.

During 1945 six railwaymen appeared in the Honor Lists. They were Flying Officer K. A. Richards (bar to his D.F.C.), Flying Officers W. R. Courtis and J. T. Byrne, and Pilot Officer H. W. Tinning, who each received the D.F.C., and Lieutenant A. D. K. Sullivan, awarded the M.C. In addition, we had belated advice that Major E. B. Thurman had earlier gained the M.M.

With the cessation of hostilities, arrangements were made for closing the V.R. Patriotic Fund at the end of the year. The total of the Fund was close on £70,000, and the distribution of this big sum, contributed through the war years by Victorian Railway employes, not only brought comfort and pleasure to many of our fellow-railwaymen on service, but also assisted the major auxiliaries (Red Cross and Comforts Fund) substantially.

SERGEANT H. A. COOKE WINS THE M. M.

CONGRATULATIONS to Sergeant H. A. Cooke, who has received the Military Medal for gallant conduct in an attack on an airstrip at Tarakan in May last year.



Sergeant
H. A. Cooke

Sergeant Cooke enlisted as a Private in the 2/24th Infantry Battalion in July, 1940, and at the end of the same year left Australia for the Middle East. After a period of training in Palestine, he moved up into the Western Desert and took part for six months in the defence of Tobruk. Subsequently he returned to Palestine, was engaged in occupational duties in Syria, and again returned to Africa where he fought in the battle of Alamein.

Returning to Australia in 1943, he was posted to Queensland for special jungle training in February, 1943, and in August of the same year left for Milne Bay and all the new hazards of warfare around Lae and Finschafen. He was wounded at Finschafen, but rejoined for service in Tarakan in May last.

Sergeant Cooke, entered the Department as a lad labourer at Newport in 1936. Subsequently he was transferred to Benalla Loco. Depot as an engine cleaner, and he has now resumed his old job. He is 26 years of age and excepting a couple of short periods in hospital, has seen 5 years of war service.

SERVICE

THE following commendatory letter, comes from Group Captain C. Eaton, Officer Commanding, Southern Area, R.A.A.F.:

"Recently my daughter, Sister Aileen Eaton, arrived in Melbourne from Broome, via rail from Perth. On arrival at Spencer Street it was found that her trunk was missing. Recently your Inwards Parcels Office informed me that the trunk had been located at Wagga and returned to Spencer Street.

"From enquiries I have made I found that the trunk was not marked or addressed correctly by our Service in Perth.

"The trunk was not locked and it bore an old Wagga label. On receipt of the trunk it was found that all contents were correct.

"I now wish to express my sincere thanks to your officials for their very efficient work in locating the missing luggage."

MODERN AMBULANCE EQUIPMENT VAN

AN Ambulance Equipment Van has just been completed for swift emergency service. This motor van has been specially designed for the purpose of rushing First Aid staff and equipment to any station or place within a reasonable distance of the metropolis, and in case of serious accident should prove of immense value.

The vehicle is of the 4-wheel drive type capable of negotiating rough or uneven country. Painted grey, with the simple monogram "V.R." in cream, black-outlined letters, and showing on the front an illuminated glass panel sign with the word, "AMBULANCE" flanked on each side by a Maltese Cross, this striking looking vehicle will reveal its purpose to all who see it. The overall length is 18 feet, the length of the main body is 12 feet 6 inches, the width 8 feet and the maximum interior height is 6 feet 3 inches.

Much careful thought and ingenuity have been employed in making the utmost use of the space in the body of the car. Along the right-hand wall are 6 portable First Aid cabinets, the bottom 3 sliding out and the top 3 ready to be lifted out if required. Forward of these and underneath a

half-drop window in the front of the vehicle is a rug cupboard with a table top.

The left-hand wall of the car is double. Against the inner wall is a seat 8 feet long for the use of the staff. Above the seat are cupboards for stowing a dozen folded stretchers and in the space between the seat and the outer wall are 3 medical equipment cabinets, illuminated for night use, which can be reached from the outside by raising three hinged panels. These panels then provide a canopy above the medical cabinets. Carried on the cabin roof for attaching to the right-hand side of the van, is a tarpaulin which has a spread of 30 feet. When supported on posts at the outer end it will provide good protection from the weather.

A glass sliding panel in the front wall enables the staff to communicate readily with the driver. Two doors with fixed glass panels form the back of the van, to which is attached a folding step. Underneath are further lockers for flood-lighting and other equipment.

The van also contains a stainless steel tank capable of holding 12 gallons of cold water and 2 Thermo urns, each of 3 gallons capacity, for hot water and tea.

MAJOR BALLARD'S INTERESTING RECORD

THIS ubiquitous 'News Letter' of ours has followed me to almost every country where I have been in service during the war. I recall that once even in the mountains of Greece my bundle of mail included a copy of the 'News Letter'."

Thus wrote Major G. St. V. Ballard, S.I.D., H.Q., SACSEA, in a very interesting letter just received.

Major Ballard, who enlisted from the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau in 1940, subsequently saw service in the Middle East with the 7th Division, A.I.F. Detached from his unit, he was posted to the Intelligence Corps, and he says: "Our first great adventure was Athens and the long weary trek back and escape to Crete."

Followed the Syrian campaign and then to Cairo "to train for my commission." "There, in an atmosphere of parade-ground bashing, starched uniforms, white tabs, gleaming brasses and Egyptian sun, we qualified . . . somehow."

The beginning of 1942 saw Major Ballard on his way to the Japanese war. After spells in Melbourne and Brisbane he was then transferred to Darwin, where he sat waiting for the invasion which never came.

In 1944 he was appointed Liaison Officer with General MacArthur's

Advance Headquarters in British New Guinea, then in Dutch New Guinea, and finally in the Philippines. Subsequently, he became Liaison Officer at Lord Louis Mountbatten's Headquarters, South East Asia. He was located at Kandy, Ceylon, and made an official tour of India, calling on Mr. H. R. Gollan, Australian Trade Commissioner at Delhi, and on Sir Iven Mackay, High Commissioner for Australia in India.

At the conclusion of his well-written and colourful letter, which is too long to quote at length here, Major Ballard expresses his interest in immigration to Australia and declares that he has been approached on this subject by a great number of British servicemen.

"Being deeply impressed with our vital need for increased population and an ardent believer in a vigorous progressive immigration policy for Australia," he continues, "I have taken every opportunity to lecture to Units on the advantages of living in Australia, and have talked to servicemen on the matter wherever I have come across them—in trains, at airfields, in camps, transit depots, and hospitals. It is most encouraging to observe the interest of the young British servicemen in the prospect of making a new start in Australia."

End of "The Boomerang"

AWAY back in 1941, Miss Mary Kenry (now Mrs. Blundell) of the Secretary's Branch had the bright idea of keeping the lads who had enlisted from the Branch regularly advised regarding the doings of their colleagues, not only in uniform, but also those at Head Office.

When Mrs. Blundell left the service in August, 1942, the job of keeping the boys in touch was carried on by Mr. G. L. Rayment.

The letters to the lads became more comprehensive as further members of the Branch enlisted, and after a few months the duplicator had to be brought in to assist. The letter was then christened "The Boomerang," and at intervals of 5 weeks it has gone out to about 30 members of the Secretary's Branch regularly, recording all the interesting personal and other matters that a railwayman on service wishes to know.

No reader remote from Melbourne could be other than interested in the news that So-and-So had received his "wings" or that Somebody Else "is a daddy." These breezy personal items are interspersed with news of the lads overseas, and occasionally there were breaks into verse contributed by a member of the staff.

Altogether, 33 issues were prepared for distribution and all concerned are deeply grateful to Mr. Rayment for keeping this news service going with its consistently agreeable, glad-to-see-from-you note.

The final issue this month will be of much larger size and contain some unusually interesting close-up comments by Flying-Officer K. A. Richardson, D.F.C. and Bar; Lt.-Col. Gordon, Pilot Officer Stuart Anderson, and Sergeant Ron. Smith and others.

Death of Lieutenant W.R. Grieve

Included in the party of 28 who were killed when a Douglas transport plane crashed on a mountain near Wide Bay, New Britain, was Lieutenant W. R. Grieve, who, before enlisting was a clerk in the Accountancy Branch.

Lieutenant Grieve, who was 25 years of age, joined the Army in January, 1941, and after securing his commission served for some time in Melbourne, subsequently being transferred to Townsville and then to the Towers, where he was with an aircraft battery. His transfer to New Britain followed.

Lieutenant Grieve was a son of Sub-Inspector Grieve, now in charge of No. 5 Area of the C.I.B., with Headquarters at Flemington, and formerly Chief Inspector of the Railwayways Special Inquiry Division.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

FEBRUARY, 1946

Issue No. 185

67 NEW APPRENTICES JOIN THE SERVICE

Strong Preference for Trade of Electrical Fitter

NEARLY 450 applications were received for the 67 vacancies for apprentices in the permanent service of the Department. The most popular trade was that of Electrical Fitter, no fewer than 154 boys nominating that as their first preference. The grade of Fitter and Turner held second place with 111 applications. Of the woodworking trades, that of Carpenter and Joiner was most popular, 109 of the applicants selecting that as their first choice. Of the 67 vacancies, 25 were for Fitter and Turner, 12 each for Electrical Fitter and Boilermaker, and 5 each were for Car and Wagon Builder and Carpenter and Joiner. Two Springmakers and two Painters were required, but there was only one vacancy in each of the grades of Blacksmith, Interlocking Fitter, Weighbridge Fitter and Tinsmith and Sheet Metal Worker.

Of the applicants, 109 were already employed in the Department as Supplementary Lad Laborers or Lad Porters.

The Board of Selectors, which comprised Mr. J. Fowler, Member of the Staff Board; Mr. G. Brown, Superintendent of Locomotive Maintenance, Ballarat Stock Branch; and Mr. A. G. Fair, Assistant Engineer, Way and Works Branch, interviewed the metropolitan and nearer country candidates at Melbourne, and lads in the more distant parts of the State were interviewed at Geelong, Ballarat, Ararat, Maryborough, Bendigo, Wangaratta, Karaligon, Seymour, Mildura and Werriham. Because of the relatively few applicants from that district, Werriham has only been on the Board's itinerary once in recent years, viz., 1942, whilst Mildura also was visited for the first time for several years.

Selection Covers a Month

Selection commenced on Monday, 15th October, and continued daily until Wednesday, 28th November. Those who passed the medical examination subsequently sat for an educational test, with the exception of lads already qualified.

The successful lads commenced their services with the Department on Monday, 7th January. One Fitter and Turner and one Boilermaker have been allotted to Ballarat Workshops for the first portion of their course, and one Fitter and Turner and three Boilermakers to Bendigo Workshops. Thirty-six of the boys are from country districts.

Many of the lads interviewed at country centres had to travel long distances to school. One lad of 16 years, selected as Fitter and Turner,

travelled 40 miles each day to and from school, and held an Intermediate Technical Certificate. Two other boys interviewed at Wangaratta travelled from Myrtleford to Wangaratta each day by bus, a distance of over 30 miles in each direction, and were sitting for their Intermediate Technical Certificates. Some of the boys helped their parents with farm work before leaving for and after returning home from school.

One Lad Builds Motor Car

One lad, selected as a Fitter and Turner at Mildura, submitted a set of 6-8 spanners of various sizes which he had made during his spare time, whilst another—selected as a Tinsmith and Sheet Metal Worker—had practically finished making a small motor car 9 feet long. He had the chassis completed and had almost finished the bodywork, the whole machine being driven by a motorcycle engine.

SERVICE

THE following little complimentary note came to the Commissioners from Mr. R. M. Poole, Greenwald, Victoria:—

"I have much pleasure in sending you this letter to show my high appreciation of the courtesy, assistance and attention of your staff during my many trips to Melbourne lately from my home town, Greenwald.

"From S.M.'s to the youngest Porters and Clerks this applies, and particularly to the staffs at Port Fairy, Warrnambool, Geelong and Melbourne. There is little room for complaint."

NEW RAIL MOTORS

ONE of the first steps towards improving passenger services is the Commissioners' recent decision to acquire a number of modern rail motor vehicles for use on branch lines.

In connection with this decision, Mr. Commissioner R. G. Wishart and Mr. E. H. Brownbill, Asst. Chief Mechanical Engineer, recently visited Tasmania and inspected a rail motor which provides a daily service on the Emu Bay Railway between Burnie and Zeehan—a distance of 88 miles over mountainous country of striking scenic beauty.

This vehicle, which has run over 200,000 miles, has given excellent service. The power unit and the driver's cabin are mounted on the front bogie, and are separated by an air space from the main body of the car, which is best described as a semi-trailer supported at one end on the power bogie and at the other on a trailing bogie. This construction almost entirely eliminates engine vibration and noise from the main body of the car.

The gears are of the electro magnetic epi-cyclic type and produce extremely smooth and silent gear changes.

The seats are of tubular construction, leather upholstered over sponge rubber, and the close attention which has been paid to the design of seat and back is responsible for very comfortable seating. The capacious luggage racks are of rectangular tube construction.

The first of the vehicles to be obtained by the Department will be generally of the same design as that operating on the Burnie-Zeehan line. They will have seating accommodation for 40. The power will be supplied by a Diesel engine of about 100 h.p., and will be operated from either end.

GREAT WORK BY TIMETABLING, ROSTERING, PRINTING, DUPLICATING AND DESPATCH STAFFS IN RECENT TIMETABLE CHANGES

IT is probably not realised by the average railway patron—nor indeed by many railwaymen—that the reductions in services due to the stoppage of New South Wales coal supplies early in December and immediately prior to the Christmas-New Year holidays, involved an immense amount of work by the staff of the timetabling and rostering divisions, and in the printing, duplicating and despatch offices. The alterations in timetables had to be made at very short notice and demanded much overtime working even in the actual holiday period. The small army of experienced men and women who were engaged on this emergency work acquitted themselves magnificently, and it is due to their loyalty, specialized knowledge and industry that the vast number of alterations in timetables were made without a hitch.

When the first restrictions became necessary early in December, work had just been completed on a normal seasonal issue of the working timetable embodying all amendments and adjustments that had been made up to 1st December. Anticipating that sufficient coal would be available to enable the scheduling of some additional trains to assist in meeting public requirements during the Christmas holidays, a special timetable had been prepared to cover the period December 20 to January 8 inclusive. The substantial stoppage of coal supplies forced the cancellation of this timetable. Instead, it was necessary to develop in record time special timetables to operate from December 3 curtailing the existing passenger, mixed and goods services, and even then further drastic curtailments had to be imposed from December 21.

Rapid Timetable Changes

A new timetable issued on December 5, which reduced the weekly steam passenger mileage by 13,000 miles, had a very brief official life. On December 10 the weekly passenger mileage had to be further cut down to 28,720 miles, and with the additional curtailments operating from December 21, the weekly passenger mileage in the country was brought down to the greatest "low" in living memory, viz., 17,328 miles.

With the prospect of a resumption of work in the New South Wales coal mines early in the New Year, still another timetable, operating from January 7, providing for a partial restoration and bringing the weekly passenger mileage up to 29,000 miles, was issued on January 2, and was followed by yet another covering the restoration on Sundays of "Spirit of Progress" and "The Overland." On January 27, there were further alterations to the timetable substantially restoring the service prior to December 3.

Suburban alterations were equally drastic and sudden. At any time amending suburban timetables is an intricate and difficult task owing to the frequency of the service and the efforts to provide convenient connections. Like the country timetable,

a normal re-issue of the suburban timetable had been prepared, embodying all the alterations made during the previous 12 months. This was to operate from December 3. It became necessary to suspend this timetable and prepare an entirely new one, operating from the same date, and providing for a 10 per cent. cut during the peak periods. This was followed by entirely new timetables restricting week day and Saturday timetables by 25 per cent. during both peak and off-peak periods, and reducing Sunday services from 60 to 35 trains.

Power For Suburban Services Reduced

All of these changes were in operation as from December 16, and were designed so that the Sunday service could be supplied with electric power from brown coal at Yallourn, whilst week day and Saturday services could be met by one generator at Newport Power Station with assistance from the State Electricity Commission.

As in the case of the country timetables, these extensive alterations to suburban timetables called for a maximum of concentration, patience and care. To make adequate reductions to keep within permissible coal consumption whilst still providing convenient connections where possible, would have been an outstanding problem for any timetabling men, even apart from the limited time available for the work. Just as much involved in each of the changes were the rostering staffs, whose job at any time is extremely exacting, and then followed the printing and duplicating so that the operating men would know what was expected of them, and so that station staff and enquiry offices could give correct information to the public.

Each new timetable required the closest study and demanded separate issues of new rosters and docking sheets for train crews and yard operation—all in the shortest time—altogether a monumental achievement which in the aggregate performance under conditions of great strain and pressure again establishes the Victorian railwayman's genius for service on critical occasions.

THOUSANDS OF TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES AT VIC. GOVT. TOURIST BUREAU

THE long queues waiting outside the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau prior to and during the recent Christmas and New Year holidays were a vivid testimony to the demand for rail transport. Further evidence was the tremendous number of telephone calls. The special telephone service that has been installed for the rapid handling of calls to the Bureau was fully tested and it is of interest to note that during the three weeks, December 10 to 30 inclusive, over 82,000 enquiries were recorded.

The biggest week was in December 10-16, when there were 28,479 enquiries, the great majority being about the threatened reduction of train services. In the week, immediately preceding Christmas, just on 28,000 appealed for information, the score for the following week being just a little short of 26,000.

Many Calls On Christmas

Boxing Days

Below are shown the number of enquiries received in a week, including Christmas Day and Boxing Day—normally two quiet days; but the exceptional heat probably provided an increased thirst for information regarding services to the seaside—

	No. of Enquiries
Monday Dec. 24	4,962
Tuesday „ 25	3,404
Wednesday „ 26	3,220
Thursday „ 27	3,740
Friday „ 28	4,551
Saturday „ 29	3,483
Sunday „ 30	2,535
TOTAL	25,911

The biggest daily total was on Friday, December 14, when 5,800 enquiries were made. The record figure to that was the 4,962 on Monday, December 24. On Friday, December 28, just on 1,000 enquiries were received in the two hours, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Lieut-Colonel Gordon Returns OUTSTANDING WAR PERFORMANCE

RECENTLY returned to service in the Secretary's Branch at the Head Office, is Lieut.-Colonel Roy R. Gordon, a man of outstanding record in the war.

Always an enthusiastic soldier, he was a Major in the 6th Battalion (The Royal Melbourne Regiment) when war broke out. Determined on active service, he dropped to the rank of Captain to join the A.I.F. in May, 1940, and was Company Commander in the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion in the Middle East. Promotion to Major came after taking part in the Syrian campaign, and he was selected to do a course at the British Staff School, Haifa.

Whilst he was completing his training there his unit was transferred to Java.

He returned from the Middle East in July, 1942, and was in charge of the First Australian Army Staff College until December, 1943. Promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, he took command of his original A.I.F. unit, which was subsequently involved in heavy fighting in New Guinea.

Many Hard Fights

Of this period of his career, Lieut.-Colonel Gordon speaks very interestingly, mentioning that during the campaign his battalion "had many hard fights over the most damnable country and under the filthiest conditions imaginable.

"We had many wild dashes along the coast to cover river crossings, support attacks, hold rows and rows of hills and miles of rivers. In the course of these events we had an experience of the kind of tropical storm you read about.

"The particular river we were holding at the time rose 15 feet over its banks in 20 minutes. We lost practically everything we had except men. When it was all over our positions ceased to exist; where they had been had become the middle of the river.

"Shortly after, I received orders that the Battalion would change from a Machine Gun to a Cavalry role. It took place literally overnight and thereafter we spent all our time in the mountains, chasing Japs over the worst terrain you could imagine, in mud and slush and rain that gives me the horrors to recall. No doubt you have seen in the films, pictures of Australian troops in New Guinea. They do not in any way undergo the tremendous hardships of fighting in the jungle.

"The things you might miss in them are the dead, the almost superhuman efforts to get the wounded over the mountain trails, and doctors operating on the wounded under filthy conditions 200 yards from the enemy

lines—as was done in our case for a week at one stage. On one occasion during three surgical operations at night, one man's job was to remove the moths as they fell into the innards of wounded men. It's amazing how men live through such ordeals."

Lieut.-Colonel Gordon concludes his arresting narrative with this handsome tribute to the Australian soldier:

"I never cease to wonder at the superlative courage of the Australian soldier. Whatever his faults, he simply cannot be surpassed as a fighting man. No doubt in later years the strain of these campaigns will tell on those who survive. One can only hope that the people of Australia will remember these men who have fought always with that seeming smiling casualness which has concealed their dogged tenacity and valour on many heroic occasions."

Varied Achievements of "Trooper" Preston

STOREMAN J. W. Preston, of the Stores Branch, Spotswood, who is widely known as "Trooper" Preston, is one of the few people in the community who has proved the qualities of the mouth-organ as a serious musical instrument.

Mr. Preston has been connected with mouth-organ bands for 30 or 40 years. With the late Mr. G. Oldham, he founded the Imperial Mouth-Organ Band, which won several competitions and was once placed a close second at South Street, Ballarat, for the Championship of Australia.

Recently he revealed his ability as a soloist over a commercial radio station, sharing the prize for the best item of the night—a notable performance for a veteran of 68 years. Also, he has been included in those flashes of autobiographical reminiscence widely known as "Fifty and Over" from the same radio station.

Mr. Preston, who in his prime played football at Geelong in prominent junior clubs, wears the Queen's Medal and three bars for fine and honorable service in the Boer War. He was a Trooper in Thornycroft's Mounted Infantry—a connection which earned him the title by which he is affectionately known.

Owing to the manpower shortage, he is still working at Spotswood, though he officially retired in March, 1942. He began in the Department as a casual hand in 1907, re-sleepering and ballasting on the Geelong line. After further activities in the Way and Works Branch he transferred to the Stores Branch in 1915.

5,750 PROSECUTED FOR BY-LAW OFFENCES IN 1945

A small army of 5,750 was prosecuted last year for offences against the railway by-laws. Of that number 2,440 were caught by the checking staff without tickets, and substantial fines impressed on the offenders that it is cheaper to pay their fares.

The number found with second-class tickets in first-class carriages amounted to 638, whilst 510 were travelling with expired tickets.

The Department's determination to prevent smoking in non-smoking compartments resulted in 410 facing the magistrate to their disadvantage, and again there was a large number—640—who were detected trespassing or indulging in the dangerous practices of cycling on footpaths or crossing railway lines at unauthorised places.

Those concerned in the following other offences were also duly punished:

Unauthorised entry to stations	390
Wrong name and address	131
Assault, offensive behaviour, insulting & offensive words	108
Travelling over age on child's ticket	95
Using transferred tickets	87
Opening doors of moving trains	39

The increased number of offenders who gave the wrong name and address (99 were prosecuted for this offence in 1944) is a tribute to the vigilance of the checking staff, which has developed special methods in tracing people who seek this foolish way of escaping detection.

Fines as high as the following were inflicted with costs:—

	£	Costs
Travelling without a ticket	4	7/6
Riding bicycle on pathway reserved for pedestrians	4	10/-
Travelling on transferred ticket	3	£1
Travelling on expired ticket	3	12/6
Breaking electric light globes	3	15/-
Assault	3	£2/2/6
Obscene language	3	7/6
Offensive words	2	5/-
Crossing line at unauthorised place	2	7/6
Wilful damage (or 7 days)	2	£2
Holding door open	2	5/-
Boarding moving train	£1/10/-	12/6
Leaving carriage on wrong side	15/-	4/-
Smoking in non-smoking compartment	15/-	7/6

RETIREMENT OF FOUR PROMINENT V.R. MEN AFTER GOOD RECORDS OF SERVICE

THE recent retirement of Mr. David Flynn, Works Inspector, Mr. J. J. E. Garbett, Signal and Telegraph Supervisor, and Mr. Charles Blee, Special Officer, in the Signals and Telegraph Division, have deprived the Way and Works Branch of three valuable officers.

Another capable officer who has also retired is Mr. R. E. Hodge, Workshops Foreman at Jolimont.

Mr. Flynn, who actually reached the retiring age in August last year, but who was retained on special duties until December 31, originally entered the Department as an Apprentice Carpenter in 1899, and after some years as Carpenter and Leading Hand Carpenter, became a District Works Foreman. He was appointed a District Works Inspector with headquarters at Flinders Street in 1941.

As a young man he was a popular footballer in the North Eastern Association. He was secretary of the Seymour Football Club, for which he was a prominent half-back.

Mr. Garbett, who was appointed a Signal and Telegraph Supervisor in 1942, had spent over 30 years in the service. He started as a Fitter in the Signals and Telegraph Division, became an Electrical Fitter in Charge in 1921 and a Foreman Artisan in 1940. He was Signal and Telegraph Supervisor of the North-Eastern District on his retirement.

Mr. Blee began as an Apprentice Instrument Maker in 1897, and twelve years later was an Electrical Fitter. He became a Foreman in 1916, and a Special Officer in 1935, serving regularly as the Signals representative on the daily train running conferences with the Metro. Superintendent. He also acted as the Signals representative on Boards of Enquiry and was the examining officer of outside staff belonging to his division.

As a young man he was a well-known athlete. He was a member of the champion eight of the Yarra Yarra Rowing Club, and during a Christmas Carnival at Rutherglen he stroked four crews to victory. He was also a speedy bicycle rider, winning a 20-mile road championship conducted by the A.N.A. Further, he was a member of a Field Artillery tug-of-war team, which won a special trophy.

Mr. Hodge, entered the Department as an Apprentice Fitter and Turner in 1898 and after over 30 years' experience at both Newport and Jolimont Workshops became Foreman at Jolimont. He was associated for 25 years with the Federation of Salaried Officers, in which he was a Vice-President and Federal Councillor. He was also President of the Salaried Craftsmen's Branch, and Officers' representative on the Foremen's Classification Committee.

PRIZEWINNERS—V. R. I. NOVEMBER EXAMINATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS to the following students who secured the highest percentage of marks in the annual educational examinations conducted by the Victorian Railways Institute:—

Shorthand—Elementary Theory—
W. Passmore, Actg. Office Asst.,
Newport.
Shorthand—Advanced Theory—
I. G. Wearne, Jnr. Clerk, Transportation Branch, Spencer St.
Shorthand—Speed—
Miss J. Withers, Typiste, Room
100, Spencer Street.
R. O. Darby, Clerk, c/o Metro.
Supt., Flinders Street.
Typewriting—
Miss P. Joy, Clerk, Newport
Workshops.
Engine Working—Junior Grade—
G. W. L. Patterson, Cleaner,
Ararat.
Senior Grade—
J. Wood, Fireman, Geelong.
Westinghouse Brake—Junior Grade—
K. Harding, Lad Laborer, Geelong
Senior Grade—
C. V. Welsh, Fireman, North
Melbourne.

Internal Combustion—Engine Mech.—
D. Elliott, App. F. & T., Newport
Workshops.
Perm. Way Construction & Maint.—
T. R. Mayne, Carpenter, Ballarat.
Safeworking—'A' Division (Signalling)
C. R. Wright, Clerk, Castlemaine.
F. J. Blencowe, Clerk, Melb. Yd.
'B' Division (Train Running)—
R. G. Jenkins, Shunter, Melb. Yd.
Stn. Accts. & Management—Grade 1
A. J. Nicholson, Porter-in-Charge,
Buckrabanyule.
D. F. Smith, Clerk, Footscray.
Stn. Accts. & Management—Grade 2
J. W. Robinson, Supy. Lad Porter,
Flinders Street.
Storeman's Duties—Junior Grade—
E. Maguire, Actg. Storeman,
Class 2, Dimboola.
Senior Grade—
F. Grant, Storeman, Tocumwal.
Ticket Checker's Duties—
M. F. Jones, Lad Ptr., Newmarket.

Two Fine Soldiers Resume Work in Dept.

NOW serving as a Fireman at Seymour is Captain Frank Cramb, who was one of the little party of technicians and specialists evacuated from Singapore the day before the capitulation. The ship in which he left was bombed and sunk by the Japs. Several on board were killed, but after being in the water for 4 hours, Captain Cramb and others were rescued and taken to Sumatra, subsequently reaching Australia.

Captain Cramb, who is 31 years of age, and entered the Department as an engine cleaner in August, 1937, enlisted in July, 1940, as a private in a Signal unit attached to the 8th Division and was in the first batch of troops to reach Malaya early in 1941.

At his evacuation from Singapore, Cramb was a Lance-Sergeant, and after his return to Australia in March, 1942, he received his Commission as a Lieutenant in L.H.Q. Signals, stationed at Melbourne. He went to New Guinea in 1943. His specialty was telephone line construction, and he was one of a party that in the short period of six weeks extended the telephone line from Morobe to Lae—a distance of 100 miles—over some of the roughest jungle country in that part of the world. His promotion to the rank of Captain occurred last year.

MR. ALEX. D. PITCHER, another railwayman who has returned to the service after 5 years in khaki. He first entered the Department as an engine cleaner in 1938, and enlisted in the A.I.F. in 1940 as a private in the 17th Machine Gun regiment.

This unit was absorbed into the 2nd Armoured Division, and apparently revealing good soldierly qualities, Private Pitcher was promoted to Sergeant. In September, 1941, he gained a Commission in the 14th Armoured Regiment, and in August of the following year he became a Captain. He served in various parts of Australia, including 18 months in Darwin.

On the disbandment of the Armoured Division, he was specially trained in infantry fighting in the Jungle Warfare School at Canungra, (Qld.).

He was drafted to New Guinea and after serving as second in command of one Company of the 2/5th Battalion, he was given command of another and fought right through the Arara to Wewak campaign.

He is now a fireman at North Melbourne Loco. Depot.

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INTERESTING COMMENT ON THE COAL SITUATION

IN a recent statement, the Commonwealth Coal Commissioner declared that the amount of New South Wales coal supplied to the State of Victoria had increased from 1,152,800 tons in 1938 to 1,481,740 tons in 1945. Although those figures may suggest that the Victorian Railways benefited considerably during the war years, the fact is that the total quantity of coal supplied to the Railways has not varied to any material extent in spite of the large increase in both passenger and goods traffic. The following figures showing the quantities of coal purchased by the Department from Victorian and New South Wales mines reveal the actual situation.

Financial Year.	From Victorian Mines. (tons).	From N.S.W. Mines. (tons).	Total (tons).
1937/38	206,899	338,291	545,190
1938/39	207,116	292,100	499,216
1939/40	164,285	256,716	421,001
1940/41	192,953	383,591	576,544
1941/42	181,455	404,391	585,846
1942/43	146,627	416,858	563,485
1943/44	113,764	406,954	520,718
1944/45	114,153	440,024	554,177

Increased coal consumption was, of course, essential to the handling of the exceptionally heavy rail traffic in connection with military operations over the later war years, but despite this, the total quantity supplied shows relatively little increase compared with 1937/38.

Although the total amount of coal purchased from New South Wales increased over the period indicated by approximately 30 per cent., the quantity allotted to the Victorian Railways in 1944/45 from Victorian mines—mostly from Wonthaggi—was little more than half of that consumed in 1937/38.

In recent years, N.S.W. supplies included a large proportion of Lithgow coal, which, in addition to being of inferior quality—its calorific value is only 85 per cent. of Maitland coal—had to be brought from N.S.W. by rail at greatly increased cost. Its use also entailed loss of operating efficiency.

On the other hand, the desirable Maitland coal used normally on our more important trains, fell sadly from 273,100 tons in 1940/41, to only 67,853 tons in 1943/44, and in 1944/45 to 121,860 tons.

In the last two years, no less than 58 per cent. of the large coal used by this Department had to be overlanded at heavy cost, from N.S.W. But for this action not only this Department, but industry generally, and the

life of the Victorian community, would have been in sore straits. The overlanded of New South Wales coal was of decided advantage to other Victorian users, as it enabled them to obtain a greater proportion of the seaborne Maitland coal at prices far below those paid by the Department for poorer coal.

The position to-day is that the quantity of Maitland coal that is being received is only sufficient for "Spirit of Progress," the Albury and Mildura Expresses, and "The Overland," instead of the customary forty-five regular trains.

RETIREMENT OF Mr. D. W. BELL

EVIDENCE of the popularity of Mr. D. W. Bell, Electric Running Superintendent, was conspicuously revealed on his retirement last month when he received as a token of high esteem an inscribed gold watch from the Jolimont Branch of the A.F.U.L.E., bearing the striking words: "To A Man From The Men," accompanied by a handsome handbag for Mrs. Bell.

At a subsequent send-off by the officers of the Rolling Stock and Transportation Branches, at which Mr. H. L. Dickinson (Chief Clerk of the Rolling Stock Branch) presided, Mr. G. E. Burnell, Superintendent of Locomotive Running, presented Mr. Bell with inscribed gold sleeve links and a travelling bag, whilst a travelling bag was also handed over for Mrs. Bell. The warm words commending his high virtues as a railwayman and a man emphasised—if any emphasis were necessary—the regard which was felt for him by his associates throughout the Department.

Mr. Bell started his railway career as a lad at Newport in 1898 and became an engine cleaner in 1900. Ten years later he was an engine-driver, and

Gallant Railway Lad Wins The M.M.

CORPORAL Frederick George Gardner is another young railwayman who has brought credit to himself and his country by winning the Military Medal for outstanding



Corporal
F. G. Gardner

gallantry and initiative when in charge of a platoon at Tarakan (Borneo).

Gardner, who is only 20, has crammed a lot of valiant service into his young life. He entered the Department as a Lad Laborer at the Newport Workshops in 1941. Determined to get in to khaki at the earliest moment, he enlisted in the 2/24th Battalion (9th Division), and after training at Watsonia and Bathurst, found himself in New Guinea in 1943.

He started off at Lae and saw active service at Sateberg near Finschhafen and other places under fighting conditions which test the stamina of the strongest men. He and his unit subsequently took part in the recapture of Borneo.

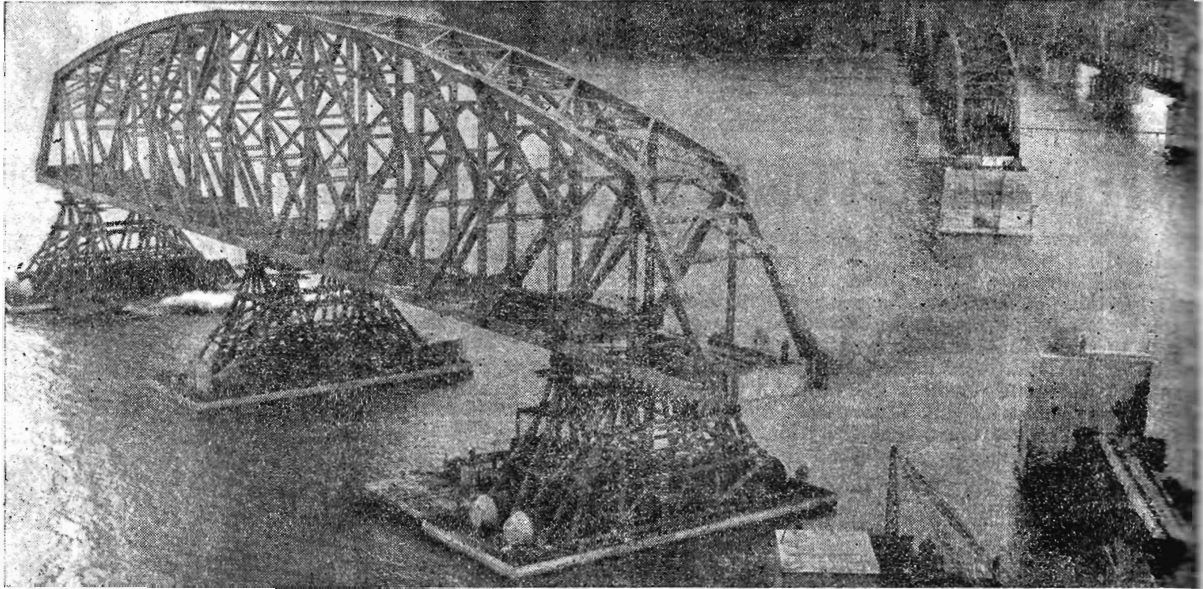
He is now at the North Melbourne Loco. Shops, learning the art of engine-cleaning. Good luck to him!

soon after the electrification of the suburban services transferred to it. In 1931 he was promoted to the post of Assistant Electric Running Superintendent, and became Superintendent two years later.

During the subsequent years his earnestness, his fairness and the marked ability with which he carried out all his duties made him an important member of the big railway team responsible for the smooth running of the suburban electric services.

Mr. Bell was a "100 per cent. railwayman," which means that railways were his hobby and his life. He proposes to enjoy his retirement in Brisbane, which he considers the most attractive of Australian capitals.

NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE OVER HAWKESBURY RIVER, N.S.W.



No. 2 span (457 feet 1 in.) of the new Hawkesbury Bridge turned at approximately 45° showing piers with bearings and trusses already erected. The present bridge may be seen in top right hand corner.

AS the present railway bridge over the Hawkesbury River, about 30 miles North of Sydney, is not suitable for the increased speeds and loadings demanded to-day, the Way and Works Branch of the New South Wales Railways is constructing a new bridge about 200 feet on the Western side of the present structure, and involving tunnels on both sides of the river. The bridge will consist of 8 spans—two of 445 feet 8 inches, four of 347 feet 6 inches, and two more of 147 feet. Its total length when completed will be 2764 feet, and considering the engineering problems involved, it can be regarded as one of the greatest railway bridge works in Australia.

The completed bridge will be supported on piers, five founded in the sand and ranging in depth from 178 feet to 183 feet 7 inches, two on the southern bank, and one on the northern bank founded on rock. The piers are built on large rectangular caissons each 51 feet long by 29 feet wide, with eight steel dredging tubes. Cone tops are bolted to each of the dredging cylinders to permit of compressed air filling the cylinders for floating the caisson upstream, to a dock where the construction of the reinforced side walls is commenced, and concrete is placed inside the walls between them and the dredging cylinders.

The weight of the concrete sinks the caisson to a depth that enables it to be floated on to the pre-determined site. Here the caisson is lowered on to the silt, the cones are removed from the top of the cylinders and open dredging commenced until the bottom or cutting edge enters the sand 170 feet approximately below high water spring tide level.

After the caisson has been founded, 9 feet of concrete is placed through the dredging cylinders and cutting edge chamber to act as a seal. Sand is then poured down the cylinders on to the concrete seal to a height of 75 feet, where an intermediate concrete seal 15

feet thick is constructed. To reduce the load on the bottom of the caissons, the intermediate space is filled with fresh water to the depth of 70 feet. Another seal or cap of 15 feet closes the top of the caisson on which the pier is built.

The bridge is planned to have a clearance of 40 feet above high water mark and as the maximum height of the largest spans is 75 feet, some difficulty was experienced in selecting a site on shore where a crane could service the erectors on the top boom 115 feet above high water mark. An erection area was excavated on the southern bank of the river and three docks were provided to enable pontoons to be floated under the completed trusses at low tide. To lift a truss to the necessary height of 40 feet above high water spring tide, steel lifting towers were erected.

Some idea of the size of the whole undertaking may be gathered from the fact that three punts each 100 feet long, 40 feet wide and 8 feet deep were required to float the 445 feet span into position, and two punts were necessary for each of the 347 feet spans. Each of the supporting piers founded in the sand weighs approximately 15,550 tons, and when carrying two full trains on each track, the total load will be about 19,000 tons.

Big Post for Former V.R. Apprentice

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. J. C. Kubale, M.B.E., A.M.I. Mech. E. A. M. I. E. E., M.I.R.S.E., who, at the age of 43, has been appointed Chief Engineer with Metropolitan-Vickers-GRS. Limited, England.

Mr. Kubale joined the staff of the Victorian Railways early in 1919 as an apprentice Electrical Fitter at Newport Signal Shops.

Recognising his ability, the Department granted Mr. Kubale 3 years leave to go to America for experience. For a period of 3 years (1925-28) he was with the General Electric Co. at Schenectady, the General Railway Signal Co. of Rochester, and various railroads. On his return to the Department he was appointed Assistant Engineer in the Chief Electrical Engineer's Branch.

In 1930 he was given a further period of leave to take up a position in England. He decided to remain there with Metropolitan-Vickers-GRS. Ltd. and resigned from the Victorian Railways.

As a Major in the Royal Engineers (British Army), Mr. Kubale served for over four years in the Middle East and Italy, and in 1943 won the M.B.E. for his service in the Western Desert.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS FOOD FOR BRITAIN APPEAL.

HELP YOUR HUNGRY KITH AND KIN.

RETIREMENT OF MR. J. TULLOCH, ENGINEER-IN-CHARGE, NEWPORT "A" POWER STATION.

MR. J. Tulloch, Engineer-in-Charge of the Newport "A" Power Station, recently retired from the Department after almost 36 years' service, most of which was spent at the Newport Power Station. He served his apprenticeship as a Fitter with Robison Bros., Melbourne, Ship Builders, Repairers, and General Engineers, and subsequently went to England, where he gained valuable experience with the Wallsend Shipway Company, Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the installation of turbine plant in ships. He was engaged on construction work on the first "Mauretania," and took part in the trials of the turbine plant installed in this ship. He joined the Department in 1910 as a Fitter in the Rolling Stock Branch, where after a few years he became a Leading Hand.

When the Newport Power Station commenced commercial operations in 1918, Mr. Tulloch was appointed to the position of Shift Engineer, and three years later he became Maintenance Engineer, his experience with Parsons's turbines being of special value. During subsequent years at the Power Station he demonstrated on many occasions his ability to plan and control the successful carrying out of intricate repairs and maintenance on turbo-alternator and other plant.

An excellent example of this may be quoted in connection with a turbo-alternator on which serious vibration occurred.

The contractor's representatives endeavoured to overcome the trouble, but without success. Mr. Tulloch, however, advised sending this rotor to Messrs. Thompson's Engineering & Pipe Co. Ltd., Castlemaine, and personally supervised the machining of the spindle. This had a completely satisfactory result, and the rotor is still in good condition.

During the recent war period his experience was used on many occasions in the carrying out of emergency plant repairs on vessels of the British American and Australian Navies, including the second "Mauretania."

In 1923 Mr. Tulloch was granted a special monetary award by the Department for a suggestion regarding an improved condenser tube cleaner for use at Newport Power Station.

In 1936 he became Assistant Engineer-in-Charge at the Newport Power Station, and in 1939 he succeeded Mr. A. Horton as Engineer-in-Charge.

TO help relieve in some small way the desperate plight of the people of Britain, the Commissioners, in conjunction with the Lord Mayor's Food for Britain Appeal, have set aside Thursday, March 14th, as a Grand Appeal Day within the Department.

For six years of war the people of Britain withstood never-ending terrors and hardships. Their staunch resistance until they and their Allies could gather strength saved us—and the rest of the world—from life-long domination by cruel foes. Yet with victory long since won, hunger strikes as deeply as in the darkest days of war. The very essentials of existence are in short supply.

There could be no worthier cause, and the co-operation of railwaymen, whose response to deserving appeals throughout the war years was so magnificent, is again confidently sought. Subscription lists will be circulated throughout the service, and all will have an opportunity to make a contribution.

This is the chance for every railwayman to show in a practical way his gratitude to the people of Britain for the magnificent part they played during the grim years of war.

BE GENEROUS, FOR EVERY PENNY YOU GIVE MEANS A LITTLE LESS HUNGER FOR BRAVE AND WORTHY KINSMEN.

SERVICE.

HERE is an appreciation of good service from Mr. L. Little, Redlands, Mt. Macedon, forwarded recently to the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. N. C. Harris).

"Since being released from the Army nearly two years ago, to work my farm near Gisborne, which I have now sold, I have received the utmost help and courtesy from your Station-master, Mr. Faull, and his staff at the Gisborne railway station during this difficult period. I therefore wish to express my appreciation of the services of these men, a "service" which can be of great value to the men on the land if carried out in the same helpful and cheerful spirit as Mr. Faull does."

His many friends in the Department will wish him the best of health in his retirement, which he will spend, with Mrs. Tulloch, at Wonboyne, on the south coast of New South Wales, where he will be able to pursue at least two of his favorite pastimes, viz., fishing and shooting.

STRIKING NEW BOOK OF INSTRUCTIONS ON THE WESTINGHOUSE BRAKE.

A new Book of Instructions for the maintenance and working of the Westinghouse Brake has been issued. It is divided into three sections governing the description, maintenance and manipulation respectively of the brake equipment on locomotives, cars, vans and trucks. All component parts of present-day air-brake equipment are fully described and illustrated, 71 illustrations being used for this purpose. A special feature of the illustrations is the use for the first time in this departmental text book, of separate colors in the more intricate devices to indicate clearly the principles of operation. This enables all concerned to understand easily their design and operation.

As proper maintenance of the air brake equipment is essential for safe and efficient operation, particular care has been given to existing instructions in this regard, including details of the attention to be paid to each part of the equipment, together with standard operating tests to ensure efficiency.

The final section of the book contains instructions governing the preparation of locomotives for service, train examining and brake testing of departure trains, and train handling and brake manipulation in running. The latter feature has been specially explained in simple narrative form to assist engineers to handle various types of trains in the most efficient manner.

The new book, which has been written and compiled by Mr. F. P. Archer, the Brake Inspector, is a great improvement on the previous edition of the Book of Instructions which was printed in 1917. A tribute to the high standard of the new book is paid by Mr. J. White, Manager and Chief Engineer of Westinghouse Brake (A'asia) Pty. Ltd., who, in a recent letter, remarked:—"Only those who have attempted the compilation of instruction books of this kind have any conception of the amount of work involved, and I would like to congratulate you on the very fine job you have made of the new book."

I know of only one other Instruction Book which compares with it—and that lacks the color prints you have been able to include. A further tribute should be paid to the staff, who were engaged on this job in the V.R. Printing Works. They have been responsible for a fine piece of printing, particularly in the colored illustrations, which are such a feature of the book.

British Railways Suffered 14,000 "Bomb Incidents" In War

"BRITAIN'S Trains Kept Running" is the title of an unusually interesting article describing how the British railways kept running despite the German "blitz." This article, which appeared in a recent issue of "The Railway Age" was written by Mr. W. K. Wallace, Chief Engineer of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway. He mentions that the railways suffered the astounding total of 13,891 "bomb incidents" divided amongst the various Companies as follows:—

Company.	No. of Bomb Incidents.
London, Midland and Scottish	3,108
London & Nth. Eastern	3,123
Great Western	1,467
Southern	4,453
London Passenger Transport Board	1,740

The geographical position of the Southern Railway was, of course, responsible for its receiving the maximum of attacks, and for the same reason the Great Western received the least. The relatively small number of incidents for the London Passenger Transport Board is explained by the fact that the tracks of this company are in "subways, either deep or shallow."

Preventing Tubes Under Thames Being Flooded

To prevent the deep level tube lines under the Thames being flooded during an attack, special water-tight doors were provided on each side of the river to shut off the tunnels, and during an "alert" the doors were closed and the lines under the Thames were closed to traffic. Naturally this caused serious inconvenience, but no other means of guaranteeing safety could be devised.

Some idea of the number of bridges within reach of the German Air Force may be obtained from the statement that the London, Midland and Scottish Railways Co. alone has 10,384 bridges over, and 15,375 bridges under the lines.

"Although the great majority of bridges could be repaired by using rolled steel beams," says Mr. Wallace, "there were some of larger span, and some situated over rapid or deep rivers, and so located as to be of extreme importance in the British railway network, that could not be repaired with these beams. To provide for the rapid repair or replacement of these bridges, four 120-ft. War Office spans, designed for end-launching, were obtained and one was stored by each of the mainline companies. Fortunately the enemy did not hit any of these important bridges, so that the emergency spans were not required and, in fact, were subsequently released for service in Europe."

The railways concerned made tremendous efforts to protect special points, and Mr. Wallace states that in addition to providing splinter-proof and blast-proof protection for the staff at

large, elaborate concrete shelters were constructed for "key" men. One of the types of shelters decided upon had a heavily reinforced concrete roof four feet thick with a 4-foot layer of earth or sand covering an inner concrete shell 2 feet thick. The side walls were similarly in three layers—3 feet of concrete, 3 feet of sand or earth, and then 18 inches of concrete. The floor was 3 feet thick and all of the concrete was heavily reinforced in both directions. Another type of shelter of lesser strength and thickness was also provided. A feature of this shelter was an emergency ventilating plant slightly above atmospheric pressure, so as to prevent the entry of poison gas, if it should be used.

One striking feature of a most interesting article is that at the onset of war, ultra-high speed trains were withdrawn and timetables drastically recast to restrict speeds to a maximum of 60 m.p.h. with permission to run up to 75 m.p.h. "only to make up time." These changes were made to "increase the traffic carrying capacity of the lines and for the purpose of reducing track maintenance, particularly on curves."

Successful Suggestions Pay

SOME time ago a railwayman saw that the cost of work which was being undertaken around him could be reduced considerably by a simple alteration in method. He did the proper thing. He mailed his idea to the Betterment and Suggestions Board at the Railways Administrative Offices, Spencer-street. Its merit was such that it was adopted.

This railwayman duly received a cheque from the Department, but that was not the only payment. As the economic value of his suggestion increased, he was further rewarded. He is not the only one who has been similarly recognised for an idea that has proved of greater value than was originally anticipated.

Obviously there are other economies and alterations to established methods awaiting discovery. There is possibly one just under your eye. Look around you and if you see any method or practice that could be improved or abolished, send your suggestion to the Betterment and Suggestions Board, Railway Administrative Offices, Spencer Street.

SALE AND BAIRNSDALE TO OPEN TOURIST BUREAUX

LAST month, Mr. L. C. Bromilow, Manager, Publicity and Tourist Services, visited Sale and Bairnsdale at the request of the Council and Chamber of Commerce respectively, to discuss the question of developing and publicising those two Gippsland centres as Tourist resorts. Mr. Bromilow first called in at Sale and spoke to a meeting of about 50 prominent citizens, including the Mayor and several Councillors, emphasising the necessity for improved amenities and service to tourists. Sale wanted to be on the tourist map and bring its attractions before the world outside.

The visitor quickly removed from the minds of his hearers any feeling about tourist trade being a "side line" when he produced formidable statistics showing among other things that the tourist traffic in America was responsible for a pre-war annual expenditure of 868 million dollars "out of America," whilst the people of England spent £32 millions travelling outside Britain.

Department to Contribute to Cost

At the end of an enthusiastic meeting it was agreed to establish a Sale District Tourist Bureau, the cost of which will be provided locally. Mr. Bromilow promised that the Department would contribute towards the cost of an illustrated folder revealing the tourist beauties of the surrounding district, and would also assist in other ways.

Mr. Bromilow was equally well received by the Bairnsdale Chamber of Commerce, where it was decided along a similar address by the visitor followed by a general discussion. The Bairnsdale should make itself better known to the tourist public, not only in Victoria, but in the other States of the Commonwealth. To this end the Tourist Bureau to be controlled by a local committee and staffed regularly by "an intelligent and attractive person" is to be shortly established, while again the same Departmental assistance that would be given to Sale was promised.

In due course Mr. Bromilow will visit other Victorian centres with a view to stimulating the Tourist industry in conjunction with local bodies.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

APRIL, 1946

Issue No. 187

Commissioners' Reply To Recent Criticism Of Railway Policy

PROMINENCE has recently been given in a provincial newspaper and also a motor journal to singular theories concerning the economics of transport. Remarkable for the loose thinking that they exhibit, they are unlikely to carry weight with thoughtful readers, but may lead the unwary into tortuous and profitless by-paths.

The gist of the articles, which are based on sweeping criticism of railway policy, is that the people should be allowed freedom of choice of transport, and that the revenue from motor vehicles in the form of registration and licence fees, petrol tax, etc., is more than sufficient to pay for the expenditure on roads, and also to meet all railway deficits. The statements also contain the inference that because railways "make a deficit" and are "tax free," they contribute nothing to the national income.

Lack of space does not permit us to quote in full the Commissioners' replies, but their comments on the principal contentions can be briefly summarised.

"Freedom of choice" of transport would result in widespread duplication of facilities, depriving existing services of business that they are capable of handling, and so weakening their capacity to provide satisfactory service. Not only railwaymen, but motor operators themselves, realise the dangers, and strenuously object to unnecessary duplication where their own services are concerned.

Motor Contributions To Cost Of Roads.

Information is not available to determine the cost of existing roads. However, a commission in Victoria in 1932 reported that the contribution by motor vehicles towards road expenditure for the preceding 21 years was not more than 18 per cent. of the total, and that nearly 70 per cent. of this contribution came from private cars. The loan liability of the Country Roads Board has since been reduced by only £640,000 and still stands at approximately £9 million. The loan liability of municipalities has not, it is believed, ever been published.

The claim that motor revenue could pay all road costs and also railway deficits is based largely on the amount of revenue obtained from petrol tax. This is not collected from road users

only, but from railways, air services, fishermen, and users of petrol in stationary plant in factories, workshops, etc.

In any case, if motor revenue were used to meet railway deficits, it could not be used for other purposes to which it is now being applied. The national economy could not benefit by the suggested manipulation of revenue. Other revenues—excise duty on beer, spirits and tobacco, and sales and entertainment taxes—are in a similar category.

With regard to the contribution by the railways to the national income, the position is that about 45 per cent. of this State's revenue is derived from railway earnings, and that "national income" (however defined) would be practically non-existent if railways were not available to carry the commodities upon which business and industry are primarily based.

As to the railways being "tax free," the national finances could not be improved by a book-keeping entry describing as a tax some portion of the earnings paid into consolidated revenue. A parallel would be to require a man who is buying a house to pay rent to himself.

Everyone must agree that there is plenty of useful scope for motor transport in many spheres, and the comment of the "News Letter" is that it is regrettable that some of its spokesmen, in their enthusiasm, are apt to disregard all economic, and even common sense considerations.

LOYALTIES

*I*N all of us there is room for many loyalties . . . to country, to home and family, to political and spiritual beliefs, to our jobs and workmates. None of these need clash. Without discarding any, we can hold steadfastly to them all.

At no previous time in railway history has there been greater need for loyalty to the job. The grave problems of the immediate future . . . affecting railway business and

EPIC VOYAGE BY RAILWAYMAN

RECENTLY resumed with the Department is Mr. J. W. Roberts who holds a Navy Commendation Card for outstanding service rendered in the Mediterranean.

During the war Mr. Roberts was a gunner with the Royal Australian Navy, and at the time of winning his commendation was one of a naval detachment on a 14,000 ton merchantman, the "Sydney Star," bound from England to Malta in troop convoy. Soon after passing Gibraltar air attacks began and continued until night.

Then at 3 o'clock in the morning, off Pantellaria, a 16-inch torpedo from a German "E" Boat caught the merchantman forward, blowing a hole in the side nearly 70 feet by 40 feet, most of it below the water line. Whilst clearing the ship, volunteers were called for to remain behind to try and bring the ship into Malta, 125 miles distant, and Mr. Roberts was one of 28 selected.

Again they were subjected to incessant air attacks, but somehow, in one of those epics of seamanship which the Navy achieves with so little publicity, the 28 brought the wounded vessel to Malta. By the time they berthed the bows were awash, but speedy repairs saved her. For his part in the exploit Mr. Roberts received the Navy Commendation Card and monetary awards.

Mr. Roberts, who is now 35, joined the Department in 1937 as a Storeman at Bendigo North Workshops. Enlisting in the R.A.N. in 1940, he has seen practically every part of the globe.

railway employment . . . cannot be solved by technical improvements alone. Public faith in the railway staff will play at least as important a part in determining the outcome when the full force of competition, now rapidly developing, has to be met.

We can ensure this public faith only by proving to the limit of our ability, that the interests of our patrons are our first consideration.

BIG IMPROVEMENTS IN SLEEPER ACCOMMODATION

GREAT improvements in the sleeping accommodation for express travel between Melbourne and Adelaide are now being planned by the Victorian and South Australian Railways. The demonstration model being constructed in Adelaide contains samples of various types of modern sleeping accommodation. The model will be exhibited in both Melbourne and Adelaide in the hope of ascertaining the reactions of the public.

One type of single-berth sleeper is the "roomette," a compartment 7 ft. 3 ins. long by 3 ft. 4 in. wide, containing a single bed folding into the wall, a comfortable upholstered seat, a wash basin, and other attractive fittings. "Roomettes" have proved very popular in America, a large proportion of travellers being prepared to pay the extra charge for the comfort and privacy.

An alternative type of single-berth sleeper has an upper and lower berth located as usual, but with partitions

arranged to isolate the two into separate compartments.

For comparative purposes there is also a compartment of the Pullman type with two sleeping berths, one above the other, while a de-luxe cabin that has been under consideration provides a private compartment containing, in addition to two beds folding into the wall and the necessary chairs and wardrobes, a shower bath and toilet facilities. Another de-luxe example for a family of three comprises three beds—one folding and two of the conventional

type—with private toilet facilities.

Some of the earliest jointly-owned Victorian and South Australian sleeping cars are definitely overdue for replacement, and, to some extent, this will involve the introduction of single berth accommodation. Consideration will then be given to adapting one or more of the old units to test the demand for second class sleepers.

The ultimate types of sleeping cars will be decided after the merits of the designs referred to above have been fully examined.

Two V.R. Engineers to Investigate Use of Pulverised Brown Coal

FOR the purpose of fully exploring the possibilities of pulverised coal as a locomotive fuel, two V.R. Engineers, Messrs. W. O. Galletly and W. H. Chapman, left Australia by air for England last month. These two officers who will join the Commonwealth Scientific Mission now in Europe, will make their investigations in Germany where pulverised brown coal has been used successfully for many years.

Prior to the war, a number of locomotives had been operating in Central Germany on brown coal. Dr. Wagner, who was Chief Mechanical Engineer of the German State Railways at this period, had declared that the results, both technically and economically, had been very gratifying.

It is anticipated that Messrs. Galletly and Chapman will be able to obtain such information and equipment as will enable the Department to proceed with the use in locomotives of Victoria's immense resources of brown coal.

In addition to visiting Germany, they will study the latest developments in design of locomotives and rolling stock in Great Britain and America.

Mr. Galletly, who is an Engineer in the Rolling Stock Branch, has had considerable experience in workshops as well as in locomotive tests. He joined the railways as an Apprentice Fitter and Turner in 1920, and gained a scholarship covering a Diploma course at the Melbourne Technical College. Mr. Chapman entered the Rolling Stock Branch in a similar capacity in 1935 and became an assistant Engineer in 1943 after gaining an Expert Certificate in Mechanical Engineering.

RETIREMENT OF MR. H. L. DICKINSON, CHIEF CLERK OF ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

MR. H. L. Dickinson, retired last month after 48 years' valuable service to the Department. At a well-attended farewell at which Mr. A. C. Ahlston, Chief Mechanical Engineer, presided, and numerous complimentary references were made to Mr. Dickinson's qualities as an official and a man, he was presented with a bicycle, a very handsome silver tea service, and a travelling bag for Mrs. Dickinson. It is Mr. Dickinson's intention to bike around the country in his retirement. In earlier years he freely used this mode of transport.

Mr. Dickinson entered the Department on November 1, 1897. The date is significant for the fact that on that day or just about that time several other eminent railwaymen began their careers. Among these may be mentioned Mr. Commissioner M. J. Canny, Mr. E. C. Eyers, Secretary for Railways, Mr. D. Cameron, Chairman of the Staff Board (now on loan to the Commonwealth Government) and Mr. C. G. Walker, Supervisor of Road Transport. Another contemporary, who subsequently left the railways for a political career, is the Hon. R. Keane, Minister for Trade and Customs in the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Dickinson worked first in the Accountancy section of the Rolling Stock Branch, and for five years served in the running sheds at North Melbourne, Port Melbourne, Ballarat, and other railway centres. He then returned to the Head Office, Spencer Street, where he became Branch Statistician and took charge of staff employment. During the First Great War he was in charge of the Branch

Staff Office, and was subsequently senior personal clerk to the then head of the Branch, Mr. A. E. Smith.

In 1920, Mr. Dickinson had the big job of applying the working conditions prescribed in the new award of the Railways Classification Board, and was associated with all aspects of this class of work until he became Chief Clerk in 1929. During his career in the Department, investigatory missions took him to every State of the Commonwealth except West Australia, and in 1927 he was sent abroad to study railway methods in England, Canada and U.S.A.

Mr. Dickinson expects to be busy in his well-earned retirement as he was in his official life. He has always been active, always industrious, always fair. As a young man he was a member of the Melbourne Harriers' Club and once competed in a 10-mile cross-country championship. Mr. Dickinson also hiked considerably, notably over the Alpine country in the North-East of the State.

Mr. Dickinson has been succeeded as Chief Clerk of the Rolling Stock Branch by Mr. O. Keating, previously Clerk in Charge of the Staff Office. Mr. Keating, who joined the Railways as a Junior Clerk in July, 1910, and was subsequently Personal Clerk to the Chief Mechanical Engineer (Mr. A. C. Ahlston), has had wide railway experience. He is a J.P. and President of the V.R. Military Band.

In the First Great War he was a Sergeant in the 23rd Infantry Battalion, and devoted attention to duty which won him the Meritorious Service Medal.

REPAINTING SUBURBAN CARS KEEPS 60 MEN EMPLOYED

THE process of giving suburban cars a fresh complexion keeps 60 men busy at the Jolimont Workshops throughout the year. Normally each car in the suburban fleet is repainted every three years, but the roof, which is subjected to the full force of the sun, is repainted every 18 months. In the event of deterioration in the body of a car before it is due for repainting, it is retouched where needed and returned to service.

In 1930, the paint period between shoppings was extended from 2½ to 3 years by putting an extra coat of hard finishing varnish on the exteriors, and turning the cars periodically on the Northcote loop so that both sides were exposed to the north for equal periods, as this side weathered much more than the south side.

Prior to this time, the practice was to put on two coats of car brown, two coats of varnish, and an extra coat of hard finishing varnish after the priming, stopping and filling operations. Cars were painted in train formation of a six-car train on each of four roads, and all of the operations from washing down to the final cleaning up were performed without moving the cars. When a train was finished it was taken out and another one took its place.

In 1931 the "spot" system was introduced under which each car was dealt with individually. When first placed in the shop it was stripped, washed and burnt off on No. 1 spot. Four days later it was moved along to No. 2 spot on the same road and another car brought into No. 1 spot to take its place. After receiving body work attention for four days on No. 2 spot, it was moved on to No. 3 spot, where painting commenced. Further painting operations were completed on Nos. 4 and 5 spots, until it reached No. 6 spot, where it was finished off, fittings restored and the car cleaned ready for return to service. It thus took 24 working days to pass a car through the shop, and, as four roads were used, one car went in and one went out of the Paint Shop every working day.

As a result of satisfactory tests, two coats of enamel were substituted for the coats of car brown and varnish in 1935, and a marked improvement in wearing qualities of the exterior resulted.

In 1936 a change in color was decided on, and the present two-color scheme of moonstone grey and suburban red replaced the old drab brown. Advantage was also taken of the improvement in painting materials to supersede the enamel previously used. This was the original use of synthetic enamel and later each major paint manufacturing company supplied its own brand.

Synthetic enamel has proved very satisfactory on the exteriors of rolling stock as the movement of the cars

largely eliminates the tendency to "chalk," which is experienced on stationary structures.

When the interiors of cars became travel stained and scarred, the old varnish was taken off with varnish remover and the woodwork scraped clean prior to re-staining. It was then covered with clear synthetic enamel in place of the old varnish. Clear synthetic enamel was also used to cover the aluminium lettering to prevent it deteriorating.

In 1942, with its shortage of manpower and materials, the reconditioning of the interiors of cars was discontinued, and this enabled the "spot" moves in the Paint Shop to be reduced from 4 to 3 days, thus reducing the number of cars in the shop from 24 to 18, whilst maintaining the same output of one car per working day.

At the same time synthetic enamel became unprocurable and a wartime substitute was used which did not have the same lasting qualities.

Now, however, the work of reconditioning the neglected interiors has again started and synthetic enamel is coming back on the market. For the next few years the Paint Shop will be busy renovating the interiors of cars and removing the wartime enamel from the exteriors.

He Didn't Know His Man

HE was 6-ft. 3-in. in height, and was somewhat demonstrative in demanding a job at a certain railway office.

A small, quiet railway clerk rose to give him attention and answer any questions. Looking down at the clerk with all the affected generosity of one who could look over most human beings in the world, the inquirer said, reassuringly, to the clerk: "It's all right little fellow, don't be frightened."

The little fellow smiled slightly as he told the other where to obtain information about his case, and the big chap went out looking as if he had been magnanimous in not being really rude to the modest clerk before him.

If he had known that the clerk had faced all sorts of perils as a Flight Lieut. in the recent war and had been rewarded for his valor with the D.F.C. and Bar, the tall inquirer might have been a little less confident perhaps.

Demand for Meals on "Spirit of Progress" Increasing

THE demand for meals on "Spirit of Progress" continues to grow. During the 28-day period from February 10th last to March 9th, 6079 dinners were served in this heavily patronised express train—an all-time record, by the way, and bringing the total of dinners from July 1st, 1945, to March 9th, 1946, up to 50,928.

The breakfast figures are also impressive. Over the period mentioned the total was 57,825—an average of 236 per day, surpassing the previous maximum for the year 1943/44 by 18 meals per day.

The increasing popularity of the "Spirit of Progress" dinner is shown by the fact that dinners now have to be served in five sittings, viz., 6.40 p.m., 7.25 p.m., 8.10 p.m., 8.55 p.m., and 9.40 p.m., and, as shown in the following figures, the average per day has leaped from 94 in 1939 to 207 over the period referred to above.

Year	Daily Average No. of dinners
1938/39	... 94
1939/40	... 100
1940/41	... 128.
1941/42	... 153
1942/43	... 191
1943/44	... 198
1944/45	... 197
1945/46	... 207

(to 9.3.46)

On both the "up" and "down" trips "Spirit of Progress" also provides a substantial number of light refreshments.

The breaking of records is by no means a primary objective, but the maintenance of a high standard of service under those conditions reflects great credit on the staff concerned.

Death of Mr. W. G. McCracken

THE "News Letter" regrets to record the death last month of Mr. W. G. McCracken, Stationmaster at Maryborough, at the age of 64.

Mr. McCracken, who would have been due for retirement in December next, had gathered a wealth of experience in the Transportation Branch which he entered as a Porter in 1898.

He was subsequently Block Recorder, Signal Porter, Operating Porter and Assistant Stationmaster. He became a Stationmaster in 1912 and served in this capacity at Chillingollah, Eltham, Beech Forest, Craigieburn, Broadmeadows, Dunolly, Heidelberg, Terang, Donald and Warrnambool, before being promoted to Maryborough in 1938.

A cheery, energetic officer, he revealed his great interest in railway work by submitting to the Betterment and Suggestions Board a number of suggestions for which he was duly rewarded.

Second Member of Quirk Family "Mentioned in Despatches"

IN August, 1944, the "News Letter" reported that Mr. Gerald Quirk, at present with Black Rock Tramways, had been Mentioned in Despatches. Now comes the news that his brother Bob, a clerk in the Spotswood Accounting Office, has been similarly honored for service with the R.A.A.F. in the Celebes.

One day last April Bob crowded a lifetime of adventure into a few short hours. At the time he was wireless air-gunner on an Air-Sea Rescue Catalina Flying Boat which was supporting R.A.A.F. Liberators bombing a Japanese destroyer in the Soemba Straits.

Two of the bombers were shot down and the crew forced to bail out. The Catalina promptly landed to rescue the survivors from the water and was engaged on its mercy errand when a Zero appeared out of the sun and shot it to pieces. Two of the crew were killed. Bob and the remaining members drifted for two-and-a-half hours

in a rubber dinghy before another Catalina came to their rescue.

But the adventure was far from over. As the Flying Boat took off, two twin-engined Irvings roared in to attack. The regular air-gunner was on other duty in the plane, so Bob grabbed a gun and opened a withering fire, which kept the Japanese at bay until the slow-flying Catalina was able to take cover in the clouds.

For his courage and presence of mind he was Mentioned in Despatches notification of which came three days before he resumed duty with the Department and five days before his twenty-third birthday.

In addition to Messrs. Bob and Gerald Quirk, there are two other brothers who have seen active service, one of them being Rev. Fr. Bernard Quirk, for three-and-a-half years a P.O.W. in Changi prison. They are the sons of Mr. Matt Quirk, Traffic Branch, Head Office. Sincerest congratulations to him and his courageous sons.

HIGH HONOUR FOR MR. W. BLACKBURN

MR. W. Blackburn, V.R. Ambulance Officer, is now the proud possessor of two inches of black silk ribbon which have a special significance for him. They are part of the riband of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of which he was recently appointed a Serving Brother—a high honour indeed.

The official notification comes from The Grand Privy in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, St. John's Gate, London. It reads as follows:—

"Sir,

"I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty the King, the Sovereign Head of the Grand Privy in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, has been graciously pleased to sanction your admission as a Serving Brother of the Order of St. John as from 22nd November, 1945, the date of His Majesty's Sign Manual.

"An announcement of this honour will, in due course, appear in 'The London Gazette.'

"I am directed to invite your attention to the enclosed Memorandum of Instructions and to forward for your information a copy of the last Annual Report of the Chapter-General.

"Owing to the difficulties in obtaining the materials required for the manufacture of our Insignia, it has been decided not to issue any Insignia for the present. I have therefore been directed to send you two inches of the riband of the Order, which is enclosed herewith."

Congratulations, Mr. Blackburn!

THE PASSING OF MR. W. J. JOHNSTON

WITH deep regret the "News Letter" records the passing of Mr. W. J. ("Billy") Johnston, Foreman-in-Charge of the maintenance of electrical equipment in sub-stations supplying power from Newport Power Station to the electrified system.

Mr. Johnston's death seven months before the date due for his retirement, terminated a valuable service of 45 years. He commenced duty in the former Telegraph Branch transferring as a foundation member of the Electrical Engineering Branch, formed in 1913. He was associated with the old steam power station at Spencer Street, later replaced by Newport Power Station.

To a very wide circle of friends, Mr. Johnston was known for his friendliness and willingness to help others. "The most obliging of men—nothing was too much trouble" is one description given of him, and many availed themselves of his long experience and wide knowledge for assistance in their work. Apart from fishing his hobby was his job.

He is survived by a widow (formerly Miss H. Ashworth, who was a typiste in the Electrical Branch), a daughter, and four sons, one of whom is still serving with the R.A.A.F. Another of his sons, Jack, who was a former employe of the Department, qualified as a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering while in the service.

To the late Mr. Johnston's widow and family the sincerest sympathy is extended.

Fine Effort by Spotswood Workshops Auxiliary

THERE was a big attendance at the luncheon interval at the Spotswood Workshops recently when Mr. Commissioner M. J. Canny handed over to the Vice-President of the Legacy Club (Mr. F. Borwick) on behalf of the Spotswood Workshops Auxiliary, a cheque for £77, representing the undistributed balance of the Auxiliary's patriotic operations.

Mr. Canny, who was accompanied by Mr. L. J. Williamson, Hon. Treasurer of the V.R. Patriotic Fund, and Mr. E. T. G. Newton, Acting Hon. Secretary of the Fund, spoke in most complimentary terms of the efforts of the Spotswood Auxiliary which he declared should feel proud of its patriotic record. During the war the Legacy Club received nearly £1,000 in donations from the Central V.R. Committee and its Auxiliaries, and he expressed the opinion that as Legacy concerned itself so earnestly and efficiently with the needs of deceased Servicemen's children, it was the logical body to receive whatever was left over on the winding up of the Patriotic Funds. It gave him particular pleasure to assist in the function that day as the Spotswood Auxiliary also obviously had a high regard for Legacy's fine work.

Mr. G. Papworth, President of the Spotswood Auxiliary, was in the chair and there was great appreciation for the singing of "The Deathless Army" by Mr. J. Stewart, accompanied by Mr. O. Fischer, both of whom are employed at the Spotswood Workshops.

During the war the Spotswood Auxiliary contributed for patriotic purposes approximately £5,000, made up of £1,100 in cash, £3,798 representing the value of bedside tables, leg irons, folding chairs, etc., by voluntary workers for the Spotswood Manual Effort on Saturday mornings and £90 the value of woollen garments donated to the Australian Comforts Fund. A fine effort, indeed.

THE ONE UNALTERED DEPARTURE TIME.

THE partial restoration of train services on March 11th was responsible for one interesting alteration. For the first time in half-a-century the 4.30 p.m. train to Warragul was altered to Flinders Street at 4.35 p.m. With this alteration only one country train now leaves Melbourne at the time that it has done for over fifty years, viz., the 6.30 a.m. from Melbourne to Geelong.

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Issue No. 188

"Gangs Have Been Sent To Restore Damaged Lines"

FINE STAFF EFFORT IN WESTERN DISTRICT FLOODS

TO the fertile lands of the Western District the March rains, up to 13 inches in 4 days, brought desolation, with people drowned, live-stock lost, towns marooned, bridges washed away, roads and railways badly battered by the swirling torrents of flood. As the rivers rose supplies were dropped from the air and Army "Ducks" rushed to the scene. With no gas, no electricity, and strangest of all no fresh water, a large area was cut off from the rest of the world, isolated behind shattered roads and twisted railway tracks. At the height of the floods a brief news item reported "Gangs have been sent to restore the damaged lines." To the normal reader the simple statement meant little—after all line repairs are part of the Railway job—but behind it lies a story of that dogged service in emergency which has long since become part of the Railway tradition.

Late on the night of March 15th it became apparent that the torrential rains were bringing grave danger of flood. At once throughout the Western District the organization for fire and flood came into operation and gangers forsook their beds to patrol threatened parts of their line. Soon reports were coming back in ever-increasing numbers, with a speed and accuracy ensuring there would be no trains blundering into danger. "Track at 151 miles 75 chains in risk of washaway." "Culvert 198.36 unable to cope with drainage. Water coming across line." "Bridge at 181.67—water two feet below beams and rising 4 inches hourly."

The messages brought action. The radio broadcast warnings to the public, train cancellations and latest bulletins. Trucks came forward to the area loaded, in anticipation, with sleepers, ballast and tools. Workmen were assembled by special messengers calling from door to door among railway track men. Camp sites were selected for the reinforcements who would be needed. Not a moment must be wasted now or later.

Amid the blinding rain, with rivers all rising, the work of protection began—even of repair and restoration—with snags removed from around bridge piles, culverts cleared, channels dug in the sodden earth, temporary repairs effected in washaways. Hot and sweating in the icy downpour men with picks and shovels fought the elements. Here at work were the men "sent to restore the damaged lines." The railways were in action.

For nearly four days the rains beat down with a tropical intensity. Then suddenly they died away to let a watery sun break through on a scene of desolation never before known in

those green and pleasant lands. Rivers had become seas, pastures had turned into lakes, houses had floated away, hay stacks were beaten flat to the ground and in the whirlpools swirled bloated sheep and cattle. Roads were impassable; telegraph lines and fences lay tangled together at the bottom of thickly piled debris; trees and stumps littered ploughed paddocks; crops were torn away leaving the earth bare.

Already the railway technicians were out along the lines taking stock of the damage. A survey revealed gross destruction and the utter impossibility of traffic getting through at certain places for the present. Train services on certain lines were cancelled and the race to restore the tracks without loss of a single hour was on in earnest.

Manpower was needed now. Throughout the area officials recruited casuals to assist the normal gangs in their vital work. Many a spectator, come to watch the fun, found himself with a shovel in his hand digging steadily from daylight to dark and too weary to wonder even how it all happened. To the lay eye the task looked impossible. Embankments five and six feet high, containing thousands of tons of earth and ballast, were scattered over an area of several acres. Near Port Fairy, rails lay like writhing snakes on the ground in a twisted mass stretching away into the distance. Long straight tracks corkscrewed out of place to lie deep in foetid mud or beneath feet of water, in places still running furiously. But to the staff it was all part of the day's work and calmly, with obvious unconcern, they began the giant task of restoration. At an almost unbelievable speed yet with no apparent hurry, confusion gave way to order, and wreckage to system.

The tracks were cleared in sections, the rails built up with sleepers and earth. To get the trains running was the immediate object so temporary repairs were effected, to be made permanent later. One by one the lines were restored to their normal height by sheer human effort, with sleepers pushed beneath the rails to hold every advantage won, and earth from the ballast trucks shovelled in to consolidate it. Working forward was necessary most of the time, the ballast train following the men as soon as there was something resembling a track to carry it. Chains of line had slipped aside and must be slewed back into position, sometimes a distance of twenty or thirty feet.

A number of workmen were in Army greens, fighting the mud again as they did in the jungle. Their service to the community seemed doomed to take place in the mud and slush. "There's no one shooting at us here, though" said one of them simply.

It was all hard slogging, but pattern slowly emerged. And then, just as some real semblance of order had been achieved, down came a second flood with as much as five inches falling in two days. Fortunately the whole area was not affected this time, but in many places the hard labor of days was scoured away once more in the torrent. For a time the men who had built Order could only watch helplessly while Chaos wrecked their efforts. The rain stopped. The work began again.

Now, as before, speed was the essence of the labor. Along the track patrolled the foremen and gangers to plan operations and show their men how best to handle difficulties.

(Continued on page 2)

Staff Efforts In Western District Floods—continued.

Engineers forgot the meaning of sleep. In deep consultations were discussed the best means for knocking an hour off a big job. For on speed depended so much—real help for the flood victims, distribution of food supplies, and the resumption of normal life in the flooded communities.

The railway bridges stood up well to the unprecedented conditions and there was only one major delay due to the weakening of a bridge. This was between Milltown and Heywood, where the bridge piles remained in place, but were dangling without foundation. At this bridge was performed one of the outstanding feats of the whole restoration when Mr. R. S. Miller, District Engineer, Geelong, made an inspection. Stripping off his clothes, with a rope around his arm fastened to the bridge, he plunged into the swift running waters. In turn he clambered down each of the eight piles (some of them twelve feet below the surface of the flood waters), to the bed of the stream and after investigation of each pile was able to determine to what extent undermining of support had occurred and how best to restore stability.

Bank washaways meant the construction of several temporary bridges, the largest being on the Henty-Casterton section where a bridge was built up on a criss-cross of railway sleepers—nine "pigsties" with about 60 sleepers in each.

With the confident steady progress the time set for restoration of services dwindled rapidly with whole days knocked off the original estimates.

"Most services throughout the Western District will be restored on Monday" the Commissioners were able to announce within a matter of days.

The gangs "sent to restore the damaged lines" had added a most creditable chapter to the Railway story of Service.

PER TRAIN—PER FOOT !

THE fact that people have to stand in peak hour trains engages the pens of many more than the inhabitants of Melbourne. The degree of crowding in London has provoked humorous comment, as is shown by the quip in the "London Evening News": "Do you travel up to town by car?" and the reply: "No, by train on foot!"

Recently when a Londoner wrote to a newspaper asking "Surely there is some method of getting sardines out of their containers without key-openers?" London "Punch" answered pertly, "On the Underground, for instance, they use sliding doors."

V.R. MEN REGRET DEATH OF SENATOR R. V. KEANE

THE death in Washington of Senator R. V. Keane, Minister of Trade and Customs, is especially mourned by Victorian railwaymen. It was in this Department that "Dick" Keane first began his career and at the time of his death he was well known personally by very many railwaymen.

Senator Keane, who was 65 years of age, joined the Department in 1897 as a clerk in the Accountancy Branch. Always keenly interested in Union affairs he was granted leave in 1923 to take up the office of A.R.U. President. Later he became Secretary and in 1925 resigned from the Department to devote his time fully to Union activities.

In 1929 he was elected to Federal Parliament as member for Bendigo, representing that constituency for 2 years. In 1937 he stood successfully for the Senate and 4 years later he was appointed Minister for Trade and Customs in the Curtin Ministry. Throughout the war years he was given important Government assignments, including missions to the United States on lend-lease affairs, and the administration of rationing and price control.

Senator Keane died on the job. Tributes from all over the world testify to his esteem and popularity. His genial personality and grip of world affairs will be keenly missed by the Government he so ably served.

Re-opening Of Further Branches Of Vict. Govt. Tourist Bureau

A further step in the restoration of tourist activities is the re-opening this month of the Sydney branch at 28 Martin Place, which has been closed since 30.6.42.

Mr. A. E. Williams, who was previously in charge of this office, is again in control, and Mr. R. Poole who was for some years a prisoner of war in Singapore, will be his assistant.

Although facilities for tourist travel are still limited, conditions are rapidly changing, and in the meantime, the Bureau will be of service to other patrons. Foundations thus restored will be of special value when competitive conditions return.

Another Branch of the Bureau will be re-opened in Geelong this month. It will be located temporarily at the City Hall, Geelong, and will be in charge of Mr. J. Constable, who has already had experience as relieving manager in various branches.

V.R. ROAD TRANSPORT MEN SET FINE EXAMPLE

ONCE again the Victorian Railways Road Transport men have set an example to drivers throughout the State. For the 1944-45 year 57 drivers received awards in the National Safety Council's "Freedom From Accidents" Competition: 48 of them come from the Transportation Branch, 5 from Refreshment Services, and 2 from the Electrical and Way Works Branches.

In presenting the men with their medals, bars and certificates at a representative gathering at Balaclava Avenue last month, Mr. Commissioner Wishart warmly praised their efforts which reflected credit not only on themselves, but on the Department. To be free from accident, on continuous driving over a period of 12 months, was no small feat, said Mr. Wishart, but that some of the recipients had been five, ten and even fifteen years without accident was a truly fine performance. They had well earned the thanks and congratulations he extended on behalf of the Commissioners.

National Safety Council's Plans For Greater Safety Sense.

Congratulations were offered by Mr. R. S. Forbes, Secretary of the National Safety Council, who briefly outlined a few of the Council's plans for instilling a greater safety sense in all drivers and pedestrians, now the relaxation of wartime restrictions was bringing a new flood of cars on the roads.

The competition has been running for 15 years. Five drivers have won hundred per cent. results for the whole of that time and qualified for the Bar-brooch. They are Messrs. E. R. Fleiner, L. J. Freston, R. H. W. P. L. Keating and L. J. W. Theirs is, indeed, a most creditable performance.

For the ten-year Gold Medal Messrs. D. D. Garlick, J. McInerney, S. E. Icely and P. Wallace qualified, and for the 5-year Silver Medal Messrs. C. Bardsley, H. Chisholm, J. W. E. Green, C. J. Stonehouse and D. H. Bertram.

Twenty two drivers earned a bar on their previous medal, representing a further year of safe driving. There were 2 qualifications for the Blameless Driver Certificate, issued annually during the first four years of road safety.

It is anticipated confidently that the present year results will be equally worthy of praise and to the men behind the wheels go best wishes for good luck—and safe driving.

PRIME MINISTER THANKS NEWPORT STAFF ON AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION

THE following letter of warm appreciation of the services of the staff at Newport associated with the production of aircraft during the war was recently received by the Premier (the Hon. J. A. Cain, M.L.A.) from the Prime Minister, the Hon. J. B. Chifley:

When it was decided early in 1939 that Beaufort torpedo-bomber aircraft would be manufactured in Australia as a function of the Commonwealth Government, it was realised that the success of the project would depend largely upon the co-operation of the Victorian, New South Wales and South Australian Governments, which had agreed to provide experienced engineers and certain production facilities to enable major components of the aircraft to be produced at the principal workshops of their respective railway systems.

Seven years have elapsed since that decision was made, and the railway workshops at Newport have contributed vitally important assemblies—rear fuselage, tail plane, rudder, fins and elevators—for 700 Beauforts and 364 Beaufighters. They have also assisted in establishing production of Lincoln heavy bombers in Australia, supplying components to be incorporated in aircraft yet to be assembled.

At no time during the war years was it necessary to question the high standard of the workmanship built into those components nor were deliveries of complete aircraft ever delayed by the lack of assemblies produced at Newport.

My Government pays grateful tribute to the aircraft workers whose enthusiastic co-operation made possible that magnificent achievement under war-time conditions, and who helped to give Australia an industry that must rank high in the defence economy of the nation in the future.

In adjusting the aircraft manufacturing capacity to the greatly reduced needs of peace however, it has been found that the manufacturing and assembly activities associated with the Government aircraft programmes can be handled most economically and most conveniently by being concentrated in the extensive workshops established in Victoria and conducted by the Beaufort Division of the Department of Aircraft Production. This has enabled that Department to withdraw from the aircraft area workshops at Newport, releasing space which it is understood will be used in rehabilitating the railway system.

Throughout the period when aircraft work was being carried out at the Newport Workshops, there has

been the fullest co-operation in every way with the assembly plants.

"On behalf of my Government and of the people of Australia generally, I desire to place on record my appreciation of that co-operation as expressed in the achievements of the men and women controlling and carrying out the aircraft work at Newport, without which the fine record of production from the Beaufort Division workshops would have been impossible of attainment. The gesture of the Victorian Government in making possible the use of the Newport Workshops facilities for the production of aircraft parts is also acknowledged with gratitude.

"I shall personally appreciate it if you will convey the thanks of the Commonwealth Government to all those who were associated at Newport with the war-time production of aircraft, and particularly to Mr. A. C. Ahlston, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Victorian Railways who, as Victorian Area Controller for the Beaufort Division, so ably controlled the operations at Newport, and who also contributed materially to the success of the Beaufort Division activities generally."

EX-SERVICEMEN'S WAR GRATUITY.

HAVE you lodged your application form for your gratuity? If not, do so NOW.

Forms are obtainable at all Post Offices.

Victorian Railwayman in Victory March.

TO a Victorian Railwayman has come the great honor of representing Australia in London at the Victory March. He is Mr. H. J. O. Stringer, engine cleaner at Geelong Loco.

Mr. Stringer, who is 24 years of age, joined the Department in 1938 and enlisted with the A.I.F. early in 1941. He saw extensive service in England, the Middle East and New Guinea. A keen cricketer he was a member of the A.I.F. Cricket team and played regularly in the United Kingdom.

A particularly fine type of young Australian, Mr. Stringer takes with him the best wishes for a good trip from all Victorian Railwaymen who feel that in addition to representing Australia in general, he represents the Department in particular.

A VETERAN RAILWAYMAN PASSES ON.

MANY railwaymen who remember his genial, generous qualities will deeply regret the death last month of Mr. George Brown, a former Stationmaster in the Department, who retired in 1924.

Born at Inglewood in 1864, he entered the Department in 1882 as a Porter at the station in his home town. On the opening of the railway line from Dimboola to Serviceton in 1887 he was appointed Stationmaster at Kaniva, then the centre of an area in which wild ducks were plentiful and kangaroos roamed in herds.

Afterwards he saw service at Knowsley, Cobram, Sunshine, Murtoa and Dimboola, finally retiring as Stationmaster at Warrnambool.

Described as a railwayman who dedicated his heart and soul to his job, Mr. Brown never found any work too hard or too long. His main interest was the running of trains. One of his sons, Mr. L. C. Brown, entered the Department and became General Metropolitan Manager of the Refreshment Services before he resigned in 1941, whilst his three daughters all married into the Service. Their husbands are Mr. R. Naylor, Storeman at Ararat; Mr. G. Wilson, Assistant Stationmaster at Essendon, and Mr. N. Ferguson, Stationmaster, Glen Iris.

Another son, Mr. Alwyn Brown, who was in the Stores Branch, transferred to the R.A.A.F. some years ago and reached the rank of Squadron Leader, serving as Movements Officer in California during the recent war. Still another son, Mr. Geo. Brown, who was previously an Engineer on the submarine H.M.A.S. "Oxley," is now Maintenance Engineer at Yallourn.

BIG INCREASE IN EASTER TRAFFIC.

A greater number of passengers travelled by train from Melbourne this Easter as compared with those carried over the same period last year. The total this year was 78,441: that of last year, 69,238.

There were big increases over the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of this holiday period and only a small decrease on the Saturday, as is shown by the following figures:

	1946	1945
Wednesday ...	12,266	10,776
Thursday ...	32,091	27,128
Friday ...	22,109	18,431
Saturday ...	11,975	12,903
Total ...	78,441	69,238

DEATH OF MR. L. T. BREARLEY, FORMER ENGINEER OF TESTS

THE "News Letter" records with sorrow the death last month of Mr. L. T. Brearley, formerly Engineer of Tests at Newport, at the early age of 49.

Mr. Brearley, who was an Englishman, entered the Department in 1927 and retired in 1934 owing to an affection of the eyes.

His departure from the Railways was deeply regretted at the time because of his outstanding ability, his initiative and his generous, inspiring personality. As Engineer of Tests he had been largely responsible for the substitution of ingot iron for wrought iron, and in conjunction with manufacturers, for the introduction of "Bescom" steel in rolling stock construction—alterations of considerable value to the Department.

Mr. Brearley had an interesting career. His early years were spent mainly around steel works in foreign countries, chiefly in Russia. He was just 18 at the beginning of the First

Great War and the German legions were commencing their gigantic swing through Belgium and Northern France with the intention of overwhelming the French and British Armies. Young Brearley heard the call for service and enlisted in one of the Naval Brigades thrown in to improvise a defence of Antwerp.

When this effort proved hopeless and Antwerp fell, Brearley escaped to Holland and was interned. After some time in internment he escaped and was stowed away in a British merchant ship. On his return to England his eyes, which were already giving trouble, prevented his undertaking any further active service.

He worked closely with his father, who is well known as the originator of stainless steels. Despite his disabilities, Mr. Brearley was extremely well informed and keenly observant. He always displayed a lively interest in men and affairs, in art and in literature.

RETIREMENT OF DINING CAR CHEF, MR. GEO. COMBE

THE many thousands who have travelled on "Spirit of Progress" and have appreciated the excellent dinners provided on that train will be interested to learn that Mr. George Combe, the chef responsible for so many of those meals, recently retired. Actually he was due for retirement last year, but stayed on to enable a successor to be trained.

Mr. Combe had spent 23 years in the Department—7 years at Geelong Refreshment Rooms before he was transferred to the responsible post of chef at the Dining Car Depot. He was a careful, diligent cook whose achievements in the kitchen were greatly appreciated on "Reso" trains.

He was chef on the Royal Train during the visit to Australia of the present Governor-General, the Duke of Gloucester, in connection with the Victorian Centenary celebrations in 1934. A greatly cherished memento of that visit is a watch bearing the royal crest which was presented to him by His Royal Highness.

Mr. Combe, whose retirement will be brightened by the thought that two sons in the A.I.F. (who were prisoners of war in Malaya for 3½ years) have returned in good health, departed from the Depot with a standard lamp and a wallet of notes presented to him from the Refreshment Services staff, with highly complimentary remarks by the Supt. of the Branch (Mr. A. W. Keown).

Geelong Auxiliary's Patriotic Effort

THE Geelong Auxiliary of the V.R.I. Patriotic Fund made a conspicuous effort during the war by raising over £3,800 for patriotic funds. Congratulations to the President of the Auxiliary, Mr. A. G. Holden, and his fellow workers for a record of steadfast endeavour over the war years.

The fund, which was started on September 1, 1940, and closed on December 31, last, received £1,361 from voluntary deductions from pay-rolls. A fortnightly dance in the V.R.I. Hall, yielded a total of £910, a monthly raffle of works of art produced £815, and £449 was raised by functions organised by the Ladies' Committee.

Many charities connected with war services benefited by regular distributions from the Fund. The principal gifts were as follow:

Geelong Red Cross	...	1,062
" Branch of A.C.F.	...	1,003
" Fighting Forces Hostel	...	389
" Soldiers' Lounge	...	357
" Rly. Sub-section of R.S.S. & A.I.L.A. to assist necessitous Railway ex-Servicemen who served in War	...	322
Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund	...	164
Geelong Branch of Y.W.C.A. War Service Appeal	...	157

Sundry smaller gifts were made to Geelong Servicemen serving in the war, and other deserving activities.

PATRONS REQUIRED FOR V.R.I. CHORAL SOCIETY

THE Victorian Railways Institute Choral Society wishes to announce that it is now in a position to offer patrons Subscribing Membership. Since January, 1941, when Dr. A. P. Ehrenfeld took the position as Conductor, the choir has shown so much improvement that it is felt that at least two concerts can be rendered each year by the Society.

With the improvement in choir performances, plus the support of subscribing members, it will be possible to render works of a higher standard and thus give added pleasure to those who have already heard the choir's work.

In January, 1941, the Society had a membership of 40, but at the present time the number on the roll has increased to 85, which definitely shows that the Society is gaining ground, and if the choir's work is of a criterion, its members have also gained greatly in musical knowledge.

Its distinguished conductor, Dr. Ehrenfeld, has studied under some of the best tutors in Europe. He is a Doctor of Laws as well as a Doctor of Music, speaks eight languages fluently, and is a most pleasant personage. Interest in music being shown, he will go to no end of trouble to help.

It is hoped that many railwaymen and their friends will avail themselves of the opportunity of supporting this Institute activity and become Subscribing Member of the Choral Society for the small sum of Ten Shillings and Sixpence per year which will entitle the member to two tickets for each of the Society's Concerts.

The first Concert will be held on Saturday, August 31st, in the Assembly Hall, Melbourne, to be followed by another on either November 30th or December 6th in the same Hall.

Further particulars can be obtained from the President, Mr. J. S. Morcom, at 31 Turner Avenue, Glenhurst, MY.210, Ext. 1567, or the Secretary, Mr. W. Southey, at 97 Grange Road, Alphington, MY.210, Ext. 1993.

A COMPLETE ANGLER.

THE average fisherman finds an elusive fish in the Autumn, but Mr. A. V. Collatz, Caretaker at Head Office never fails to bag a good haul. For the last 20 years he has visited Bairnsdale during the month of March and his invariable success as an angler has lately been hailed in the columns of the "Bairnsdale Advertiser."

This year's best catch returned a 9 lb. bag, with no specimen under 1 lb. His heaviest bream was a 4-pounder in 1941.

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

JUNE, 1946

Issue No. 189

V.R. REHABILITATION SCHEME JUSTIFYING ITSELF Commissioner's Policy Warmly Commended

WITH the demobilisation of the Navy, Army and Air Force, former railwaymen are returning to the Department, older, more mature, and sometimes weary after up to six years of war service. Most of them are eager to take up their former jobs, but a number have new ideas. Many others are joining the Department for the first time. All come within the ambit of the Railways Rehabilitation Section, set up to help ex-servicemen re-establish themselves in civilian surroundings. The section has now been functioning for over five months and the results achieved have been very satisfactory. Ex-servicemen's organisations have warmly commended the Commissioners' rehabilitation policy. A most gratifying feature has been the wholehearted co-operation of the employees' organisations.

The keynote is personal touch. Every ex-serviceman returning to the Department is interviewed individually, his war experiences are discussed, his wishes considered and his rights and privileges explained. After he takes over his job a watch is kept on his progress and social adjustment, and, if he brings to light any difficulty, efforts are made to straighten it out. Many returned men do not need help and others are reluctant to ask for it, but it is the aim of the Rehabilitation Section to see that the right kind of assistance is given where help is needed. A study of a few typical cases shows clearly that results are being achieved.

Take the case of "Bill Smith." Before enlistment Bill was a Number-1 in the Melbourne Yard. He enlisted at the age of 20, saw service overseas, and after 4 years returned to the Department. He was placed as a handover but did not like the work so he sought the advice of the Rehabilitation Section concerning a transfer. In this he was wise for he might have regretted and later regretted his rashness, but he appreciated the friendly atmosphere of the Rehabilitation Section.

With the co-operation of the Staff Office, Bill was promised a transfer to a station close to his home, with promotion as soon as he got that safe-working certificate he is studying for. In the meantime he was placed in another job which he found more congenial. Bill, now happy, promises to become a good railwayman and an asset to the Service.

A more complicated case was that of Repairer "Bob Jones." Bob left the Army with several disabilities arising from war service. From his war neurosis came severe headaches and unaccountable pains in the legs. He was obviously unfit to resume duty as a Repairer, and because of the pains in his legs he could not do much walking.

The Branch placed him on cleaning and light laboring.

He complained to Rehabilitation that the work did not suit him and a Liftman's position was found for him, but he lasted there less than a week. Rehabilitation again sought and found the co-operation of a Branch Staff Officer, and now Bob is assisting Carpenters, happy in his job and doing well.

Ex-prisoners of war, as might be expected, present a variety of problems. "Frank Brown," a Booking Clerk, is typical. After years of privation he emerged into the world of freedom to find himself nervous, unsure, a textbook case of inferiority complex. He did not want to go back to work until

he felt more sure of himself and was prepared to remain away, without pay, for months.

After a talk with the Rehabilitation Officer, however, he agreed to give work a trial, and steps were taken to see that he was suitably placed. The officer in charge is sympathetic, and Frank is allowed certain liberties, but the standard of work he is producing is completely satisfactory. Now very much better, he is making a good comeback.

Inter-branch transfers have been arranged where possible to suit the wishes or needs of returning men. Repairer "Robinson" was a Motor Driver in the R.A.A.F. for 5½ years, a portion of which he spent in Malaya, Java and Tarakan. Medically discharged on account of a back ailment, he was unable to resume duty as a Repairer. Light duties not involving much lifting or bending or long sitting was the Medical Officer's prescription—and such jobs are hard to find.

"Robbie" was a real problem, and in the end Rehabilitation sent him to the Vocational Guidance Centre, where he was aptitude-tested and found to have a high mental standard. Rehabilitation looked around and found the only position which appeared to suit the case—Robbie was placed as a Bookstall Attendant, and now has a new interest in life. Many similar cases are recorded in the Rehabilitation Register.

Although the core of Rehabilitation is situated at Head Office, the organisation extends throughout the State. Local Rehabilitation Committees have been set up at the larger centres representative of the administration, ex-servicemen of both the '14-18 and '39-45 wars, and employees' organisations. The committees consider ex-

(Continued on Page 3)

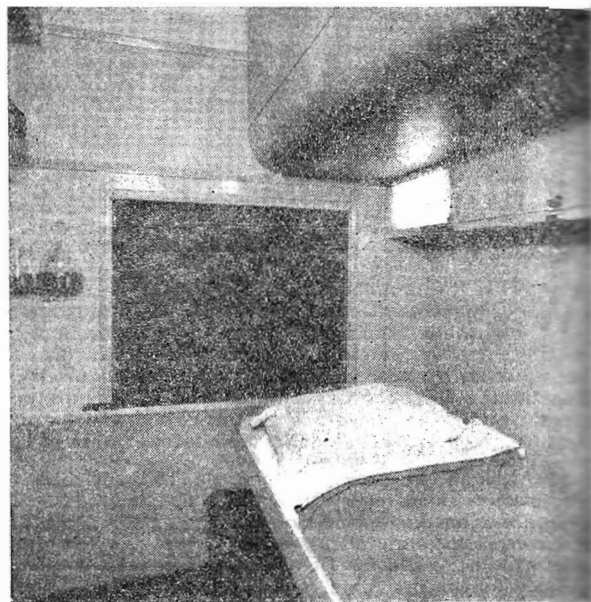
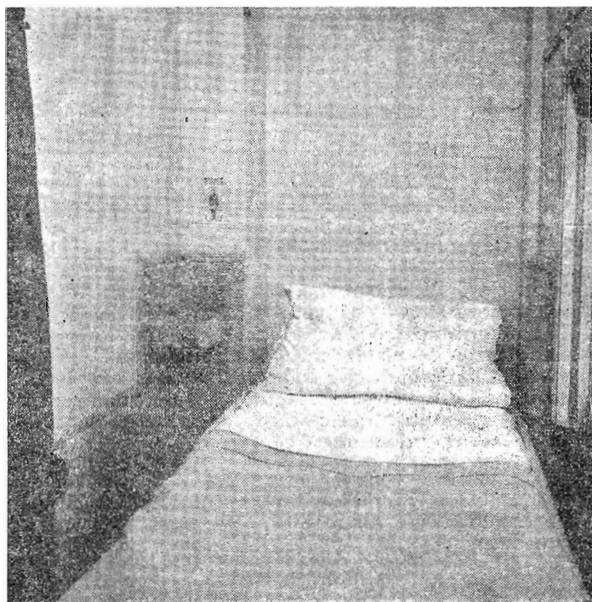
LOST - £1,000,000

DON'T let any of us imagine that the railways can lose a million pounds without it hurting. It represents wages for 3,000 men; it would buy great quantities of material and equipment for railway betterment; it could mean the difference between efficient service, capable of satisfying and pleasing our patrons, and a deteriorated service which would open the door wider still to competition.

A million—and more—can easily be lost unless all of us make up our minds to show the public that we want their business—and that we deserve it.

No complicated rules are needed for this. By making it plain to our customers that we are out to please them, that each of us personally is trying, to the best of his ability, to give them the kind of service that we ourselves would expect to get, we can be pretty sure of holding business and revenue that otherwise would be lost.

New Sleeping Compartments Attract Wide Interest



Above are shown the interior (left) of the much favoured "roomette" and (right) the comfortable looking interior of the lower single-berth compartment.

NOT since "Spirit of Progress" first appeared has such keen public interest been shown in railway improvements as in the model sleeping compartments displayed at Spencer Street station last month. Built at Islington Workshops, S.A., the demonstration model was mainly adapted from types examined in the U.S.A. by Mr. F. H. Harrison, C.M.G., C.M.E., of the S.A. Railways, but it included novel types of single berth compartments developed in Victoria.

Certainly the sleeping compartments on view offer comforts of a most attractive order. De-luxe cabins, upper and lower single-berth compartments, a roomette and, for comparison, a Pullman type sleeper and a six-seat compartment were on display. Carpeted floors, air-conditioning, hot water and fluorescent lighting brought a final touch of attractive up-to-dateness to them all.

With its two beds folding into the wall, lounge chairs, wardrobes and—surprise of the lot—a shower bath, the de-luxe cabin for two produced never-ending "Ohs!" and "Ahs!", especially from the female visitors. Next door, the three-berth de-luxe cabin was described by one wit as being for "the honeymoon couple and HER mother."

The visitors were asked to indicate their preference as between the "roomette" and the single-berth type compartment for the sleeping carriage of the future. Voting was taken seriously and at times, around the ballot box, discussion on the relative merits of the sleepers developed into a wordy battle. In the end the roomette carried the poll.

For five days the exhibition was open for inspection, nearly six thousand people availing themselves of the opportunity to view the ultra-modern

production. All were enthusiastic in their praise.

"This is moving with the times," said Sir Harold Clapp, Federal Director of Rail Standardisation, "These improvements are really developments in 1946 on what 'Spirit of Progress' did in 1937.

"Rolling Stock is built not only for to-day or to-morrow; it is built for 30 years from now. These ideas are modern, just as 'Spirit of Progress,' built 9 years ago, was modern. Give the public this type of service and they will see to it that the trains are always full."

Here are a few samples of comments by other visitors:—

"An advance on anything we have ever had," said a Melbourne business executive. "For a man travelling on his own the roomette appeals to me greatly. When with the wife, nothing better than the de-luxe compartment could be imagined."

A housewife, in town for a day's shopping, remarked wistfully, "It would be a holiday just to travel in it." The typiste who followed her was breathless with it all. "Isn't it marvellous" she asked, "Wouldn't I just love a trip in the de-luxe cabin!"

The soldier was more circumspect. "Bit better than a troop train," he

volunteered. One visitor, very frank and genial, was the only one to show any doubt. "Personally I like to have someone to talk to when I travel, so I prefer 2-berth compartments, even sitting up all night. The roomette is tempting, though."

When sleeping carriages of progressive designs are running on the Victorian and South Australian systems, travellers by train will not only be able to relax, but also to sleep in comfort.

JUST A WORD FROM YOU

ARE we using too much of some valuable material? Is there a way of saving it? Are there other economies in the great business of running trains or improvements that you feel could be effected for the benefit of the Service? In short, has anything caught your eye—a procedure or a method heavy with tradition and long practice—which is just too old and labored for the present times?

If you have detected something that calls for alteration and will save time or money, report it at once to the Betterment and Suggestions Board, Railway Administrative Offices, Spencer Street. Your suggestion will be treated as strictly confidential, and after investigation it is shown to have merit, you will be suitably rewarded.

Rehabilitation Scheme

(Continued from Page 1)

servicemen's troubles and desires, and matters which cannot be settled on the spot are referred to the Rehabilitation Section.

In addition, Welfare Officers—returned servicemen with distinguished war records—travel when possible to meet the men on the job and get a first hand knowledge of individual problems.

THE Commissioners have now approved of ex-servicemen who are due for promotion but have been unable to qualify therefor owing to absence on war service, being paid, by way of allowance, the rate for the higher position until they have been given a reasonable opportunity to qualify.

This will benefit a large number of operating grades who are not promoted until they obtain certificates.

Any ex-serviceman with a complaint or query concerning his re-establishment should get in touch at once with his Local Committee if there is one, or if not, see or write to the Rehabilitation Officer, 4th Floor, Railway Offices, Spencer Street, Melbourne. He can be assured that his problem will be considered sympathetically and thoroughly.

Mr. Mountjoy's Success

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. F. P. Mountjoy, who has been appointed Chairman of the Transport Regulation Board in succession to Mr. A. J. Fraser, who held the position for nine years.

Mr. Mountjoy, who is 51 years of age, became Secretary to the Transport Regulation Inquiry Board which was constituted under the Transport Regulation Act in 1932. He remained Secretary throughout the public inquiries in 1933, and gave valuable assistance in the preparation of the report presented to Parliament. On the formation of the Transport Regulation Board in 1933 he was appointed Secretary.

Mr. Mountjoy has an impressive war record. He fought in the First World War from Gallipoli to the Armistice, and gained a commission on the field. He was also mentioned in despatches. Incidentally, his predecessor, Mr. Fraser, who has just been elected a Senator in succession to the late Senator R. V. Keane, Minister for Trade and Customs, is a veteran of the First World War, having, in the course of his lengthy service, been awarded the M.C. at Messines.

Mr. Shea's Address On Standardisation Of Gauge

BBROADCASTING over the "National Forum of the Air" recently, Mr. F. J. Shea, M.I.E., Aust., Director of Mechanical Engineering in the Railways Standardisation Division of the Department of Transport, made some impressive points in favour of the standardisation of the Australian railways.

In the recent war, he explained, lack of standardisation had been responsible for some highly embarrassing situations. "Our departmental files are packed with evidence of the jamming and disorganisation produced by our 15 break-of-gauge points—particularly at Port Pirie, Albury, Tocumwal, Terowie, Wallangarra and Clapham. Despite every endeavour by a harassed and overworked railway staff, the grim truth is only too apparent—these break-of-gauge points practically controlled our entire wartime land movement—and the only thing that we could do was to limit the tonnage transported to what could be jammed, dragged or pushed through these bottle-necks."

The difficulties, of course, were increased by the lack of shipping and the limitations of other land transport dependent on imported fuel, but Mr. Shea made it clear that several crises of transport that occurred were solely due to the break of gauge. It was no fault of the railwaymen concerned, he was at pains to explain.

"I have nothing but admiration for the Railway officers and staff who worked so loyally and strenuously in an endeavour to overcome the obvious defects of a system for which they were not responsible. They, like myself, realize only too well what a different performance they could have given had they been freed from the deadly menace of break-of-gauge."

The disability is summarised in two comments that can now be revealed. The first comes from a telegram from the Quarter-Master General to the Minister for the Army and includes these statements: "New South Wales and Victorian Railways obliged to refuse all loading to relieve what is now a complete blockage due to an endeavour to force through terminals and transhipping stations more than they can absorb in any circumstances. To help in present emergency have deferred movement approximately two Army trains per day into Brisbane."

Somewhat later General Sir Thomas Blamey, Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Army, declared in a letter to the Minister for the Army that "the serious congestion on rail routes had made it necessary to reduce the Services demand for rail haulage." In other words, the timetable for military operations had to be modified, and, but for the presence of powerful allies, the result might easily have been fatal to Australia.

Summing up, Mr. Shea declared that "our railways handle each year 532,000,000 passengers and 39,000,000 tons of freight, many times the volume

handled by competitive transport. Failure to make them a more effective instrument in our future defence planning must obviously be accompanied by the development of alternative transport systems, and, on present indications, these will undoubtedly use mainly foreign equipment, and certainly foreign fuels. Is it not fundamentally unsound to pour Australian capital into the hands of foreign industry in return for costly transport equipment, which can only handle at best a very limited portion of our transport needs, and which will undoubtedly again be crippled by the first impact of war?"

In that paragraph Mr. Shea puts a question which competitive transport cannot answer to the satisfaction of the community.

STRIKING TOURS TO CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

ON June 11th the first of a series of parties will leave Melbourne to discover the quality and color of Central Australia. A variety of special tours has been arranged by the Department with Bond's Tours, of Adelaide, and they will be continued at intervals through the winter, the last leaving Melbourne on September 17th.

The itineraries, which have been carefully planned, cover four alternative programmes of travel, the longest providing a run through to Darwin and return, a total distance of over 2,000 miles. Alice Springs, which achieved considerable stature during the war, is the railhead for all the tours, and cars which have been specially equipped for travel in the interior will be joined there.

A feature particularly appealing to business men in need of an original change is that several tours will be wholly camping trips. The prospect of living in the open and sleeping in tents comfortably equipped, with the cuisine of a special chef for a succession of warm, sunlit days, will have a particular attraction, as indicated by the brisk booking for the tours.

The first tour of a fortnight is a striking overture to those that follow. It will take a full party of 15—each party is limited—through the MacDonnell Ranges and then parallel those ranges for some 200 miles with ever-changing vistas. It will then cross the MacDonnells and pass through some fine cattle country to the Hermannsburg Mission Station. The unique oasis of Palm Valley follows, and from there the party will turn to the remarkable gash in the ranges known as Standley Chasm.

AN EMINENT ELECTRICAL ENGINEER PASSES ON

THE "News Letter" greatly regrets to report the death, at the age of 47, of Mr. David John Nolan, General Manager of the electricity undertakings of the Sydney County Council, who, before his transfer to Sydney, revealed himself as a brilliant young engineer in the Electrical Branch of the Victorian Railways.

Mr. Nolan, who was born in Melbourne, became an apprentice electrical fitter under the Engineer of Signals in the Department in 1915. In that and the following year he was awarded the first prize for Railway apprentices at the Working Men's College, and in 1917 he won a Commissioners' Scholarship.

After completing his Diploma course, Mr. Nolan applied for a transfer to the Electrical Branch, and in 1920 he joined the Engineering Division of that Branch as Engineering Assistant.

Mr. Nolan was the first of the engineering graduates selected by the then Chairman of Commissioners, Sir Harold Clapp, to obtain experience abroad. From 1922 to 1924 he was in America, firstly with the General Electric Company on their test course, and later with the St. Louis Power and Light Company, where he obtained valuable experience.

On his return to the Electrical Branch of this Department at the age of 27 he was placed in charge of the engineering division of Head Office, dealing with power station design.

In this responsible position, Mr. Nolan displayed a breadth of vision and understanding seldom found in men of his age.

In 1926, when Mr. W. H. Sawyer, a leading consulting engineer from U.S.A., was appointed by the Government as a Royal Commissioner to report on the State Electricity Commission of Victoria, Mr. Nolan was associated with him as technical assistant.

He joined the Sydney County Council in 1928 and continued his rapid progression—from Power Superintendent to Commercial Manager, then to Deputy General Manager, and finally to General Manager.

A man of outstanding ability in the technical, commercial and administrative sides of his profession, Mr. Nolan served the Commonwealth Government during the war in several responsible and confidential undertakings, among which might be specially noted his work as Personal Adviser to the Minister for Supply and as Chairman of the Allied Supply Council.

During his Sydney career, he became President of the Federal Institute of Cost Accountants, and for a time was Managing Director of the Clyde Engineering Co., N.S.W.

His passing is a very definite national loss.

RETURN OF SANDRINGHAM-BLACK ROCK-BEAUMARIS BUS SERVICE



RAILWAY buses are running again between Sandringham Station, Black Rock and Beaumaris, via Beach Road. Suspended in 1942 because of the fuel shortage, the service has been missed by local patrons, and its return is greatly welcomed.

The opening day (May 13th) saw 460 passengers. Within the week 7,600 people had availed themselves of the new service, and patronage is still growing. As many as 1200 people have been carried on one day.

Four buses are employed on the route, each with seating accommodation for 22 passengers. As an experiment, one of the buses has been equipped with two doors, one near the driver for those joining the bus, and one at the rear to be used solely for exit (see photo above). This innovation should facilitate unloading.

The Department now operates three bus services in the suburban area. The other two are the East Camberwell-Deepline-East Kew and the Hawthorn-Kew (off-peak) services.

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH IDENTITY RETIRES

WITH the retirement last month of Mr. E. A. Classen, the Department has lost one of its most kindly men.

A stalwart of the Accountancy Branch, to which he transferred from the Telegraph Branch in 1900. Mr. Classen had at the time of his retirement the longest permanent service in the Department—49½ years. His fund of anecdote and reminiscence is therefore extremely interesting.

Mr. Classen, who is a former V.R.I. councillor, and still an ardent supporter of Essendon Football Club, intends to devote his new-found leisure to looking after his fine garden at Hawthorn. His giant zinnias are something to be marvelled at, and for many years have brought appreciative comment from all passers-by.

Before his retirement a wallet of notes was presented to him on behalf of members of the Branch by Mr. L. J. Williamson, Comptroller of Accounts. Sincere tributes to his loyal service were given by Mr. Williamson and by the Asst. Comptroller of Accounts, Mr. A. Cameron.

His happy personality and perpetual willingness to give advice and assistance will be sadly missed in the future.

Death of Veteran Railwayman

WITH the death of Harry John Cadwallader at the age of 81, the Department loses a valued link with the past.

The late Mr. Cadwallader retired in February, 1921, after 45 years' railway service. He was then District Superintendent at Geelong. Many members of the Department received their early training under his guidance, and the news of his passing has been received with widespread regret.

"He was small in stature but his heart was big," is the general description given of him.

During his retirement, Mr. Cadwallader never lost touch with his old friends in the service. At least annually he would pay a call to Head Office, and his visits were greatly appreciated for he brought with him a charming old-world courtesy that was a delight.

He is survived by a son and a daughter to whom sincerest sympathy is extended. Their father was a railwayman of whom the Department will always be proud.

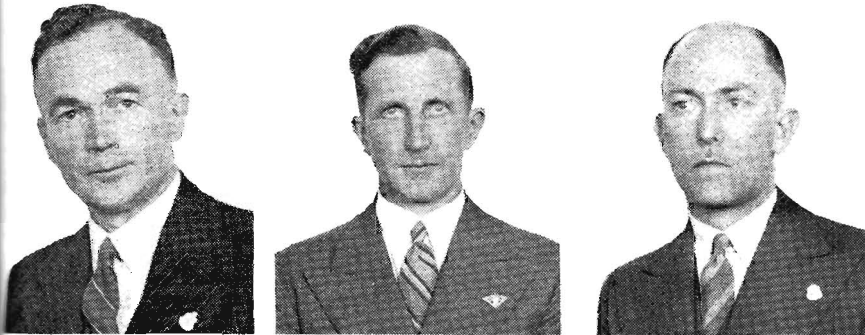
Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens Street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers, The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

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JULY, 1946

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IN THE BIG JOB OF REHABILITATION



Shown above are the Rehabilitation Officer, Mr. L. G. David (left), a veteran of the first Great War and his assistants, Mr. R. R. Gordon (centre) and Mr. K. Woodward (right) both of whom rendered conspicuous service in the recent war.

*PROVISION
HAS NOW BEEN
MADE FOR THE
TRAINING OF
EX-SERVICEMEN
IN CERTAIN
ENGINEERING
TRADES*

NATIONAL Security (Trades Dilution) Regulations recently issued provide that ex-servicemen who have had training and experience during the period of the war in specified engineering trades are eligible to apply for employment in those trades as Probationary Tradesmen or Trainee Tradesmen.

The trades specified are—
Blacksmithing,
Boilermaking,
Electrical,
Engineering, and
Sheet Metal.

The Regulations are administered by Local Engineering Trades Committees located in Melbourne.

Ex-servicemen employed in this Department who are eligible and desire to be considered should apply to the Secretary, Local Trades Committees, 27 Collins Street, Melbourne, and applications must be made within six months of the date of discharge or before 21.9.46, whichever is the later.

Probationary Tradesmen. If the Local Trade Committee is satisfied that an adult member of the Forces who has had training and experience during the period of the war in one of the trades specified could, within a period not exceeding 12 months, acquire the skill necessary for the performance of work ordinarily performed by a recognized tradesman, the Committee may, on the application of that member, authorize his employment as a probationary Tradesman.

Trainee Tradesmen. If the Local Trade Committee is satisfied that a member of the Forces who—

(a) has had training and experience during the period of the war

in one of the trades specified; and

(b) is certified by a Regional Training Committee to be eligible for training benefits under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme; could, within a reasonable period, acquire the skill necessary for the performance of work ordinarily performed by a recognized tradesman, the Committee may, upon the application of that member, authorize his employment as a Trainee Tradesman for the purpose of undergoing a course of training in an industrial establishment.

Probationary Tradesmen and Trainee Tradesmen are paid a rate not less than the appropriate tradesman's rate of pay.

To the extent that Probationary Tradesmen and Trainee Tradesmen are required by this Department, the Commissioners will be prepared to give favourable consideration to applications from railway ex-servicemen whose employment has been authorized as Probationary or Trainee Tradesmen by the Local Trade Committee. It is suggested that ex-servicemen whose employment has been so authorized should immediately notify the Departmental Rehabilitation Officer, Room 225, Railway Administrative Offices, Spencer Street.

“A Very Brave Man”

“**C**APTAIN Cashman is a very brave man” declared one of the Japanese on trial as a war criminal at Darwin.

The story of Capt. Cashman's treatment is not a happy one. Captured by the Japanese in Timor early in 1941, he was handcuffed in solitary confinement for over 12 months, fed only on three rice balls and a cup of water each day, and tortured with the infamous “log treatment,” once for three hours.

Beatings and bashings with a rifle butt were the least of the punishments inflicted on him in a fruitless endeavour to force information. On one occasion sleep was refused him for three successive days.

Before enlistment Capt. Cashman was a clerk in the Accountancy Branch. He was well known in V.R.I. tennis circles, and as an inter-state table tennis player with the Railway team. Last November the story was told in the “News Letter” of his rescue from a mountain in Bali where he had been dumped by the Japanese.

Capt. Cashman joined the Dept. in 1936, enlisted in 1941 and went to Timor as a member of the Allied Intelligence Bureau in 1942. He came back to Australia in 1943, returning to Timor early in 1944, and was captured during this assignment.

Following his discharge, he is on extended leave to study Architecture at the Melbourne University. The whole Department wishes him the success he so greatly deserves.

Mr. D. Cameron, Chairman of Staff Board, Resumes After Notable War Service

MR. Donald Cameron, Chairman of the Railways Staff Board, whose services were loaned by the Commissioners to the Commonwealth Government in February, 1942, to assume the important post of Deputy Director-General of Manpower in Victoria, resumed his railway duties a few days ago.

When asked to comment on his experiences in the Manpower Directorate, Mr. Cameron said that the task of organizing man and woman power in Victoria during the critical war years involved many forms of control not previously experienced in Australia. To cope with the tremendous volume of work his staff had increased from one typiste to a total staff of over 800 and 43 branch offices throughout the State.

It involved, *inter alia*, the responsibility for determining who should be permitted to enlist or called up for defence service; who should be allotted to the Civil Construction Corps; the direction of persons from low priority undertakings to high priority work; the determination of which undertakings should be "protected" and granting or refusing permission for releases or terminations from protected establishments and the handling of suspensions of staff in the latter places.

Among other activities of the Manpower Directorate were the establishment and control of the Victorian Section of the Australian Women's Land Army, and the recruitment of labour for countless undertakings and sections of industry, including the provision of thousands of males and females for seasonal work such as fruit picking and food processing.

During his term of office Mr. Cameron said his organization had handled over 250,000 applications to be recommended for release or granted seasonal leave from the defence service on occupational grounds.

Prior to vacating his Manpower position Mr. Cameron received many letters of appreciation from the Commonwealth Government, the Director-General of Manpower and representatives of business firms and industrial organizations.

He said that the outstanding impression of his term of office was the splendid way in which the vast majority of men and women in Victoria had accepted the restrictions imposed on them by the National Security (Manpower) Regulations in the interests of the war effort, and the splendid co-operation he had received from representatives and members of industrial organizations, both on the employers' and employees' side, not the least of whom were Victorian railwaymen and their leaders, who had consistently done a great job.

He was proud to have been so closely associated with the nation's effort in which he had been assisted

by many railwaymen and retired railwaymen, and earnestly hoped that the same spirit of loyalty and co-operation between all sections would prevail in helping to meet the many problems which are undoubtedly involved in "Winning the Peace."

VICTORY DAY BUSY FOR V.R. AMBULANCE MEN

VICTORY Day was a busy one for men of the Victorian Railways Ambulance Division. With typical forethought they had set up posts at strategic points around Flinders Street Station before celebrations began, and were able to render prompt assistance.

64 people were treated during the day, mostly for shock. Prompt first aid prevented later complications. Some of the casualties, including one man who fell on an iron spike fence, required further attention in hospital.

In addition, a considerable number of railwaymen qualified in ambulance work directly assisted the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade throughout the whole day at various stations in the city.

V.R.I. SPORTS SECRETARY RETURNS

BACK to the job after 6 years war service is Mr. R. M. Kydd, Sports Secretary of the Victorian Railways Institute. With his return the sporting activities of the Institute, dormant during the war years, are once more fully geared to provide railwaymen with healthy exercise during their leisure hours.

Although he has been absent for such a long period, Mr. Kydd has not in any way lost touch with sporting affairs. His service has been with Amenities on A. M. F. Headquarters, in which branch he rose to the rank of Major. Altogether Mr. Kydd has spent 9½ years of his life in uniform, having served abroad as a signaller with the First A.I.F.

Mr. Kydd returns with enthusiastic plans for V.R.I. sporting activities. The institute caters for practically every type of sport played—football, cricket, tennis, golf, boxing, wrestling, physical culture, table tennis and bowls. Ample facilities are available, and any railwayman interested in joining a club associated with the V.R.I. should contact Mr. Kydd at 3rd Floor, Railway Buildings, Flinders Street.

COLLATING RAILWAY HISTORY

THE story of Victoria since the 1850's is linked inextricably with the story of her railways. To collate our railway history from its beginning is the temporary assignment of Mr. L. J. Harrigan, a member of the Electrical Engineering Branch now attached to the Secretary's Branch.

Mr. Harrigan is well equipped for the task. A member of the Historical Society of Victoria and vice-president of the Victorian Branch of the Australasian Railway Historical Society, he is an authority on Victorian railway history, especially during the early years of railway development. His articles have appeared in various journals, and his "History of the Suburban Railway Companies of Melbourne 1854/79" was featured in serial form in the monthly magazine of the Railway Historical Society.

He is also well informed on general Victorian history, and has delivered lectures on the development of various towns.

Mr. Harrigan joined the Department in 1914. After service with the Navy in the First Great War, he returned in 1919 and for the next 27 years was located at Newport Power Station. In recent years he has been stationed at Flinders Street.

The results of his researches will be of historical value, and of great interest to all railwaymen.

North Loco. Win Commissioners' Cup

NOVEMBER last saw the triumph of the V.R.I. Cricket Association after 5 years' absence due to the war. The finals have now been played and North Melbourne Loco. become the proud holders of the Commissioners' Cup, after defeating Spotswood Workshops in a keenly contested game.

The victory of North Loco. in its first year of the post-war era is particularly gratifying to the team of porters, for Loco. were the winners of the Commissioners' Cup on the last occasion of its presentation in 1910.

Many well-known personalities in first-grade cricket first came to the pads in this competition. Tom Matthews, Leo O'Brien, Len Marshall, Ron Todd and Ron Baggot immediately spring to mind, the first two attaining "Test" fame. It is interesting to recall, too, that the Secretary of the Victorian Cricket Association, Harry Brereton, was previously a playing member of the Railway Association.

Already our cricketers are planning for the revival of interstate matches early next year and have their eyes on the "Mick Simmons" Cup which they have won on four occasions in the eight years of its existence.

V.R. Engineers Investigating Use Of Brown Coal In Locomotives

MESSRS. W. O. Galletly and W. H. Chapman, the two V.R. Engineers who left Sydney for England on 19th March with the purpose of investigating the use of pulverized brown coal in locomotives, are now in Germany pursuing their inquiries. Among the reports which have been received from these two officers was a graphic description of their run from Sydney to England—11,895 miles in 57 hours—by the same Lancastrian airliner which was lost on its return trip to Australia. They left Sydney at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, 19th March, and were in London's airport (Hurn) at 4.20 p.m. on Thursday, 21st March.

With the exception of some unfavourable weather between Perth and Colombo, during which they encountered a bad air pocket that almost jolted everybody out of their bunks, they appear to have enjoyed an uneventful journey.

Leaving Melbourne in the autumn and reaching England at the beginning of the spring, after encountering the heat and humidity of Colombo and Karachi, followed by lower temperatures when crossing the Mediterranean, via Malta and Sardinia to France with its snow-covered mountains, certainly gave the travellers a wide variety of climates.

Valuable Contacts

With the assistance of the Victorian Agent-General (The Honorable Norman Martin) and Mr. A. E. Turner, Managing Director of the Department's Inspecting Engineers in London, Messrs. Galletly and Chapman quickly made valuable contacts. Unfortunately there appears to be little prospect of their entering the Russian occupation zone in Germany—where the main deposits of brown coal are found and exploited.

On the other hand, they learned that pulverized brown coal is used to some extent in the Hamburg and Cologne areas. Nevertheless they are still hopeful of bringing their inquiries to a successful conclusion, especially as the three principal locomotive builders—Krupps and Henschel in Western Germany, and Borsig near Berlin—will be accessible to them.

Our officers, who are accompanied on the Continent by Messrs. Baragwanath and Finlayson of the State Electricity Commission, have been attached to the Civilian Officers Section of the Military Government. They have been put into uniform with the rank of Colonel, this being the only means by which they can move freely and without anxiety as to accommodation and food.

V.R. MAN HIGHLY COMMENDED BY U.S. NAVY

LIEUTENANT James A. Carolan, R.A.N.V.R., a good railwayman, was not unnaturally proud when he received from the Secretary of the Naval Board, a congratulatory note stating that a document received from the Commander, Seventh Fleet, "had been read with pleasure by the Naval Board."

This document from Admiral T. C. Kinkaid, Commander of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, reads as follows:—

"From: Commander Seventh Fleet.

To: Lieutenant James A. Carolan, R.A.N.V.R.

Via: Australian Commonwealth Naval Board.

Subject: Commendation.

"1. Commander Seventh Fleet expresses appreciation for your outstanding service while attached to the Operations Division of Seventh Fleet Staff from October, 1942 to 4th September, 1945. By your initiative, energy and devotion to duty you have contributed materially to the success of our forces during their advance from the initial amphibious operations in New Guinea through the successful campaign for the Philippines.

"2. You performed your duties in a highly capable and co-operative manner. For your excellent service you are hereby commended.

"3. The Australian Commonwealth Naval Board is requested to make this commendation a part of your official record.

(sgd.) T. C. KINCAID,
Admiral, U.S. Navy."

Lieutenant Carolan, who entered the department as a supernumerary in 1933 was transferred to the Melbourne Goods in 1936, after serving as a lad porter at several suburban stations. He joined the Navy in 1942 and is still on service. He is only 28 years of age.

A YOUNG GRANDFATHER.

IS this a record among railwaymen? At the age of 43 Mr. Cyril Russell of the Accountancy Branch has become a grandfather!

Maybe there are younger grandfathers in the service—but the "News Letter" has yet to hear of them.

"I'm making up lee-way" says Mr. Russell. "My father was 58 when I arrived in the world. He was born in Bourke Street back in 1845."

Mr. Russell's grandfather, incidentally, was assistant to Hoddle in the original survey of Melbourne, so the new arrival is linked strongly to early Victorian history.

Mr. W. R. Price, Asst. Supt. Of Transportation, Returns

MR. W. R. PRICE, Assistant General Superintendent of Transportation, who was loaned to the Commonwealth Land Transport Board in 1942, has now returned to the Department and is engaged on special work.

During the absence of Mr. M. A. Remfry, General Superintendent of Transportation, on sick leave, Mr. George Rogers, who took over Mr. Price's job after his departure for the Commonwealth post, is Acting General Superintendent of Transportation; and Mr. Frank Greene, previously Acting Superintendent of Train Services, is relieving Mr. Rogers.

The many problems of transportation and time-tabling that come under the eye of the Superintendent of Train Services are now engaging the attention of Mr. S. O'Haire who for a long period has been Acting Metropolitan Superintendent. Mr. O'Haire's successor at the Metropolitan Superintendent's table is Mr. R. Hosking, Acting Goods Superintendent.

57 OIL BURNING LOCOMOTIVES

FIFTY-SEVEN steam locomotives are being converted to oil burners at the rate of five per week. They will consume 350,000 gallons of oil per week, and will save a considerable amount of coal. Oil burning engines are now running between Melbourne and Ararat, Benalla, Bendigo and Geelong, and will soon be conspicuous along other routes. At the end of last month twelve oil burners were in service. The first class of engine to be converted is the "A2" Walschaert and later the "C" class will be included in the plan.

Oil storage depots, each with a capacity of from 36,000 to 72,000 gallons, are being established at North Melbourne, Ballarat, Ararat and Geelong. The capacity of the fuel tank of the locomotive is 1500 gallons, which is sufficient to provide for a return trip (passenger service) from Melbourne to Ararat, Bendigo, Benalla or Sale, without refuelling.

In order to obtain the required firebox volume and length of flame, the burner has been mounted at the forward end of the ash pan. A steel floor has been substituted for the grate on which there is a two-inch refractory lining with six openings through which air is supplied. A firebrick wall is provided against the back plate of the firebox up to the level of the bottom of the firehole, and firebrick side walls are fitted to a line about the foundation ring level. The length of the brick arch has been reduced by one row of bricks.

Very satisfactory operating results are being obtained from the oil-burning engines already in service.

Charity Activities At Mt. Buffalo National Park

BRIGHT had a big day recently when a new verandah and sun room for the local hospital were opened, and complimentary references were made to the generosity of the staff and visitors to Mt. Buffalo National Park in providing the additions.

Mr. E. J. Delany, the Secretary to the hospital, made a particularly warm reference to "the wonderful support given the Institution" by The Chalet. The addition, which would cost £750, must be recognized as a fine asset to the hospital.

That, however, is not the only contribution to the hospital from The Chalet, which during the past 12 months has distributed over £1,000 in various charitable directions. The full record is as follows:—

Bright Bush Nursing Hospital (new verandah and sun room)	£750
Endowment of cot in same hospital by Mt. Buffalo skiers and guests	50
Donation to Austin Hospital, Heidelberg	125
V.R. Patriotic Fund	25
Wangaratta District Hospital	47
Prince Henry's Hospital, Melbourne	6
Youth Welfare of Australia	23
	£1,026

The guests and the staff at Mt. Buffalo National Park are regular contributors to this fine charitable activity, and the Sports Committees have helped considerably.

The Sports Committees collect a nominal amount from each guest every week. After prizes have been purchased for winners of various competitions, the balance of money is handed to the Manager to send to the Bright Hospital or other nominated charitable organizations.

SERVICE

THE following letter commending the fine work of the Department in transporting superphosphate to the country comes from the Honorable W. G. McKenzie, Minister of Agriculture.

"I am advised that some 326,000 tons of superphosphate representing 90 per cent. of the State quota has now been despatched to Victorian farmers, and considering the difficulties from the coal shortage and other factors, this position is most satisfactory."

"On behalf of my Department and myself I desire to convey to you our appreciation of the services given by your Department in the transport of the fertilizer and particularly of the extra efforts extended in the past two months to enable the superphosphate to be on hand in time for the cropping programme.

Yours faithfully,
(signed) W. G. McKenzie,
Minister of Agriculture.

MR. JACK PRETTY, VETERAN OF BOTH GREAT WARS BACK AGAIN

FOR the second time in his career Mr. Jack Pretty has resumed with the Department from Army service abroad. After seeing action in France and Belgium with the 1st A.I.F., he first returned to the Railways in 1919.

The second World War saw him once again in uniform. Now, after five years' service, he has come back to the Secretary's Branch at Head Office.

Mr. Pretty, who commenced full-time military duty in April, 1941, was attached to Movement Control where he rose to the rank of Lt.-Colonel. Early last year he was posted to New Guinea as A.Q.M.G. First Aust. Army, and later became Acting Colonel (Movement and Transportation) with that Headquarters.

His responsibilities included movement of troops and supplies to the areas where the Nip was being doggedly wiped out: Aitape, Wewak, Jacquinot Bay, Green and Emirau Islands and Bougainville. Railwaymen who were serving in those parts at the time have a particular appreciation of the size of the task.

Command of 8th Movement Control Group, Lae, a spell in Brisbane, and a transfer to Morotai followed.

Back with the Railways now, Mr. Pretty hopes sincerely that his soldiering days are over. Two wars are more than enough for anybody.

FINE EFFORT OF NEWPORT CAR SHOP COMFORT FUND

ONE of the notable efforts of the war was the creation of the Newport Car Shop Comfort Fund for the benefit of car shop men who were away on active service. Over the war period the organizers raised £300 and sent 302 parcels, in addition to a large number of books and magazines to their colleagues in the fighting forces.

Recently the closing of the Fund was celebrated at a dinner followed by an evening at the Tivoli. One hundred, including 22 servicemen were, present at the dinner; and the absence of one old friend, Billy O'Rourke, who was killed in action in 1942, was indicated by a vacant chair, draped in the White Ensign, which held the place of honor.

At the end of the dinner, Mr. Alf. Brookman, the Secretary of the Fund, was presented by the ex-servicemen with a leather kit bag as some recognition for his good work in his job. Suitable gifts were also made to the President (Mr. A. J. Terry) and to the committee (Messrs. F. Brown, J. English, J. Thomson and W. Hockin).

RECENT RETIREMENTS

OVER forty years' driving is the record of Mr. Fred Hosking who retired recently at the age of 65.

In January, 1906, Mr. Hosking took control of his first engine. Stationed in turn at Ballarat, Boort and Donald, he spent the last 24 years of his service at Bendigo, and as far as most locals can remember has been a familiar figure on the Melbourne-Bendigo run.

Mr. Hosking's plans for his retirement are indefinite. After covering so many thousands of miles a year for so many years a good rest has been well earned.

The wishes of the whole Department go with him for long life, peaceful days and good health.

* * * * *

TWO recent retirements from the Sawmills. Spotswood Workshops, were Messrs. Robert Harsley and Jack Shine, with 101 years of railway service between them.

They were both born in 1877, and retired officially in 1942 at the age of 65. Proving that you can't keep good railwaymen down, they stayed on to help relieve the wartime staff shortage, and despite their advanced years have been able to perform a full day's work.

Mr. Harsley, with 54 years of service, has in his day supplied useful suggestions to the Betterment and Suggestions Board, and awards gained by him include one for £8 and another for £5.

RAILWAYMAN'S SPRINTING SUCCESS

THE many Victorian Railwaymen to hit the headlines in the world of sport have been joined by Mr. Harry Tullett of the Newport Boiler Shop. Harry gave a fine performance by winning the sprint double at Bruthen—the 1946 Bruthen Gift (130 yards) and the 75 yards handicap.

Off 10½ yards he registered 12.4 seconds for the Gift. Twenty yards from the tape he was almost caught but meeting the challenge with a terrific burst of speed he went on to win by a yard. In the 75-yard handicap he started from the 6½-yard mark and clocked 7½ seconds.

It was his first win for seven years. Always a consistent runner at athletic meetings, he was repeatedly beaten out of a place. His victory is all the more meritorious for the way in which he has persevered.

Harry, incidentally, is a son of Mr. Bert Tullett, popular caretaker at Flinders Street.

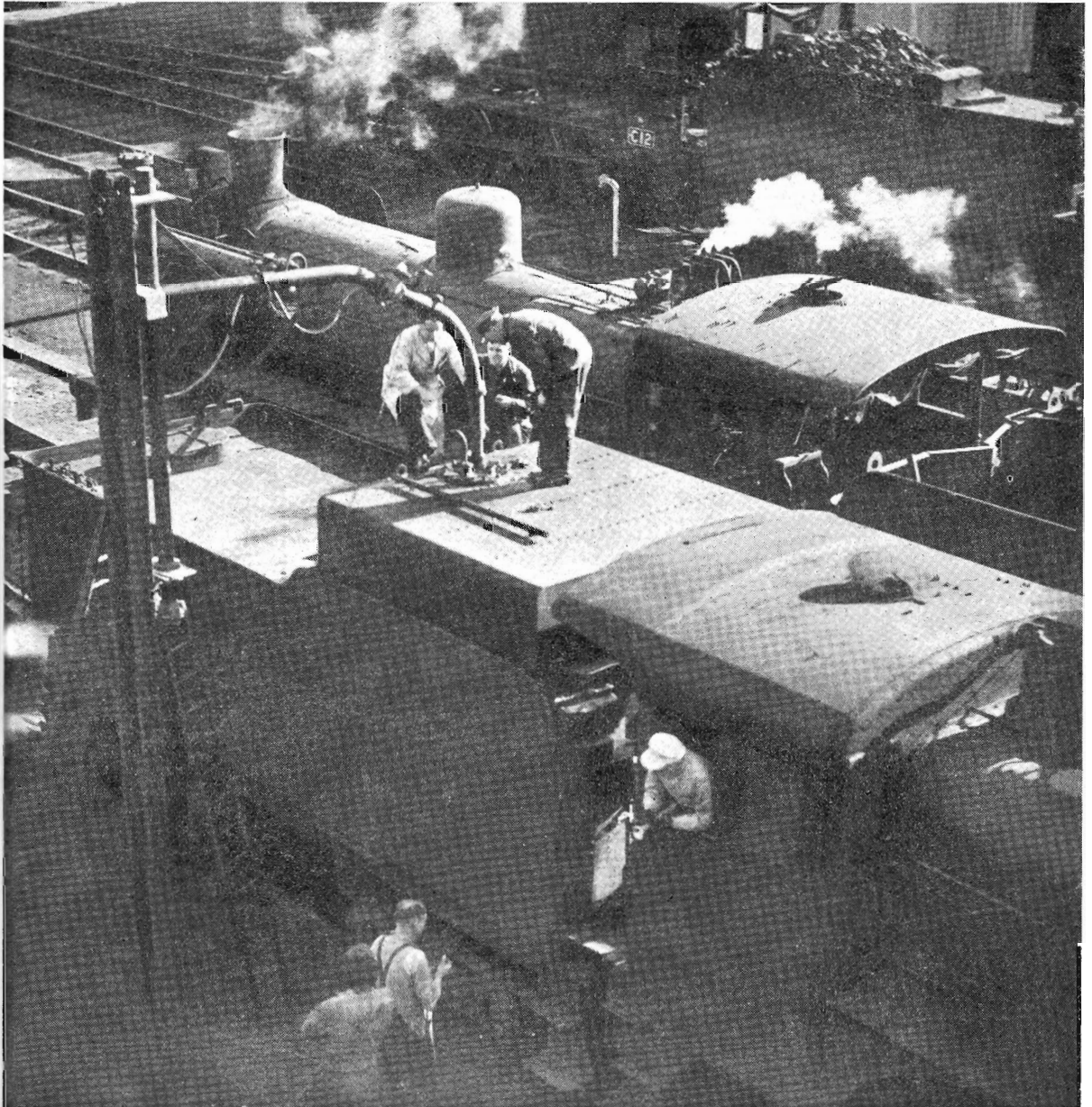
Wholly set up and printed in Australia at the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laursen Street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers, The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

AUGUST 1946

Issue No. 191

FUELLING AN OIL-BURNING LOCOMOTIVE



In the above picture an oil-burning locomotive is shown being fuelled at North Melbourne.
At July 26, 31 locos. had been converted from coal to oil-burning.

HANDS OFF ROAD TRANSPORT!

A STRIKING poster has lately been widely distributed by road motor interests. It bears the bold caption—"Hands Off Road Transport"—and suggests that the "Local Member" be asked what he is doing about it. The poster depicts the dead hand of red-tape officialdom being restrained by a virile arm from touching the attractive motor vehicles which constitute the foreground. The impression is created that influences are at work to destroy road transport, and that therefore the aid of Parliament should be invoked.

No suggestion exists in any legislation passed by this State that motor transport should be strangled, by regulation or otherwise. No responsible person has ever suggested that it should suffer this fate, or that its full development in its proper economic sphere should be retarded. It is another matter, however, to ask that road transport—and especially commercial road transport—should be untouchable, or, in other words, that it should enjoy a special immunity from all restraint or control. Practically every business is subject, necessarily, to some form of discipline.

When, as in the case of motor transport, the business is conducted not on private property but on highways provided mainly at the cost of the public, including private car owners; when if permitted unfettered freedom it could starve the railways which are the backbone and sinews of this country's industries; and when by its effect upon the railway asset it could threaten the solvency of the State, it would surely be a strange reversal of democratic practice to allow it to be a law unto itself.

Yet that can be the only interpretation of the slogan: "Hands Off Road Transport." It implies the abolition of the existing transport laws, much less exacting in this State, by the way, than in other States of the Commonwealth. It advocates, in essence, reversion to jungle law and transport anarchy.

"Tooth and Claw" Competition

The truth probably is that established road operators (as distinct from the sellers of road vehicles) are no more amiably disposed than the railways towards the reintroduction of "tooth and claw" competition. Those who have followed the proceedings of the Transport Regulation Board know how strenuously these operators have contested the claims of others for freedom to assail their business. It is possible, of course, that road operators (like many other people) regard unfettered competition as objectionable only when it is directed against themselves, and no doubt considerable agreement exists amongst the motor transport industry generally that the railways are fair game.

Fortunately, in the large body of public opinion there is a pretty clear realization that the people's chief revenue-earning asset cannot be injured without some injury to the community generally. The right of the State to control private competition for public revenue is not therefore likely to be readily relinquished because of sectional propaganda.

The extent of the control, however, may well be influenced by the quality of railway service, and unquestionably the demand for better and still better service will be progressive. Aside from the limitations now imposed by the lack of coal, there can be no doubt about the ability of the railways, given time to recover from their wartime injuries, to meet the most exacting demands. The energies of skilled and experienced technicians and operating men are being turned to improvements which now completely refute any charge of railway lack of modernity.

Faster trains, running express to the important centres; comfortable rolling stock, air-conditioned and embracing the latest features of design; de luxe

sleeping accommodation for the overnight traveller; high-powered, speedy diesel units for appropriate services—these, and more, are among the many post-war improvements planned to hold railway business. On the goods side, rapidity of delivery, combined with safe transit, is engaging special attention. Research and experiments are being made as to the possibilities of the use of containers, with a view to both greater expedition and less risk of damage.

Road transport interests have always made much capital out of instances of goods damaged when in the care of the railways. Some damage at times is inseparable from any form of transport, even if the transport is only the movement of an article from one room to another. Nevertheless, even isolated instances of damage can lose friends and business more easily than any other fault in service, with the unpardonable exception of incivility.

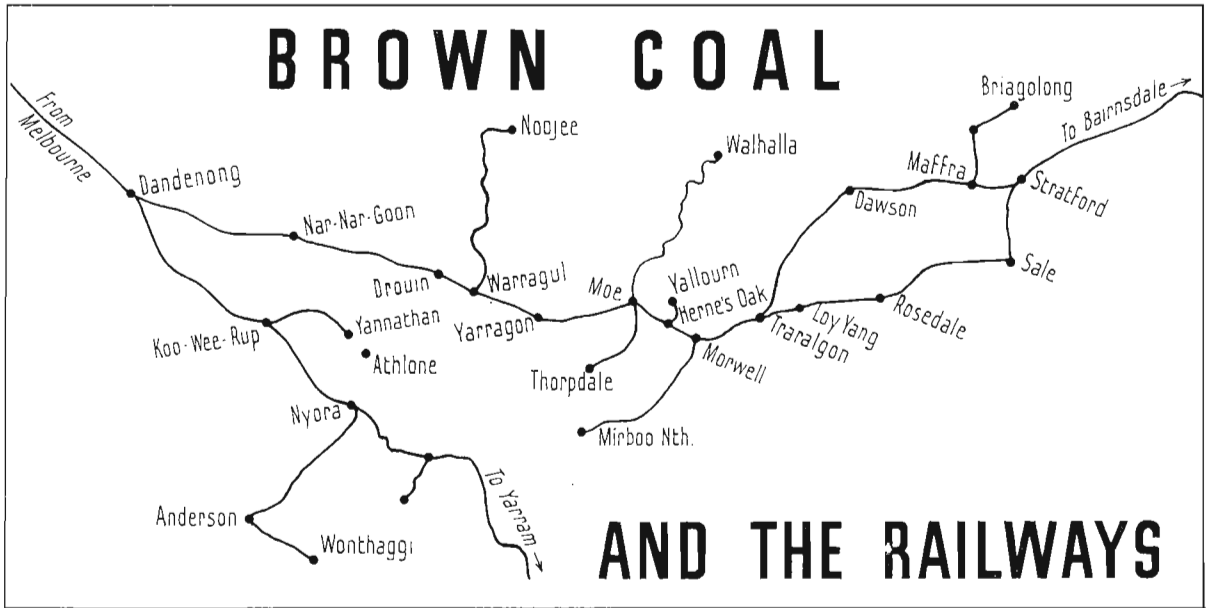
Abnormal War Conditions

The increase in damage to goods that occurred under the hectic and abnormal conditions of the war years was partly due to dearth of experienced men, but it was largely due also to the lowered standard of packing adopted by consignors. The former cause is being taken care of as quickly as possible: the latter is still a common condition, and while it remains so railwaymen must accept greater responsibility and exercise greater care. No excuse must be provided to lend weight to the propaganda of our competitors.

Just now, at a time when the railways have not yet fully emerged from the severest ordeal in their history, and while lack of coal continues to prevent them from demonstrating their full capacity for service, covetous eyes are everywhere upon their most attractive traffic. In the long run, reason and economic forces must prevail, but great harm can nevertheless be done by any doubt, whether created by subtle propaganda or by any falling down or slackening on the job, that the railways cannot carry out the tasks entrusted to them efficiently and with complete satisfaction to their patrons.

The magnificent work done by the railways during the war should be proof enough of how expansive their capacity is and how the staff can rise to the occasion. Public memory in such matters, however, is notoriously short-lived. Not past records, but future performance, by technicians, operating men, and the rank and file of the staff alike, must be more than ever depended upon to conserve the traffic which the railways must have to maintain their efficiency for the essential tasks that they, and they only, can perform.

The big job of relaying the track between Maryborough and Mildura with 80-lb. rails is now within sight of completion. About 12 miles between Maryborough and St. Arnaud are being relaid with 80-lb. rails which have been released from the Bendigo line. The 75-lb. rails which are being removed from the Mildura line will be used in relaying portions of the track between Traralgon and Maffra.



DEPOSITS of 27,000,000,000 tons of brown coal lie along the Latrobe Valley of Gippsland: sufficient to meet local fuel requirements for another thousand years. Much of it can be won by "open cut" methods. 800 million tons still remain in the State Electricity Commission's Yallourn Open Cut alone, and open cuts can be made on extensive fields south-east of Morwell and near Loy Yang. To investigate possibilities of further brown coal development in Victoria, a Cabinet Sub-Committee was appointed last year and in its recently published report it suggests that Victoria can, and should, develop its brown coal fields until the State becomes independent of all outside sources.

"The Government, by initiating and directing a vigorous development of the State's brown coal resources" states the report "can contribute substantially to placing Victoria in a most favourable industrial position."

The plans now being considered by the State Electricity Commission for the future of the coal-fields are of considerable interest to the Railways. Transport is the Department's business and senior officers are maintaining a close liaison with officers of the S.E.C. to ensure that transport facilities will not lag behind productive capacity. As new fields are opened and increased output obtained, the Railways must be ready to handle the heavier traffic, with new lines laid and all necessary facilities in the right place at the right time.

No definite programme has yet been crystallized for future production, but a tentative scheme is emerging under which a substantial portion of the face of Gippsland will be remodelled. As the sphere of operations extends, the townships of Yallourn and Morwell will be removed.

A long section of the main Gippsland line may be engulfed, calling for a considerable deviation, while the branch from Herne's Oak to Yallourn is already under sentence and will be dis-established by about 1954. By that time a new line is to be built between Moe and Yallourn and this will probably be extended later past the Maryvale Paper Mills to join the main line near Traralgon.

Plans for construction of a new line to connect Yarragon and Athlone are also being investigated. The present line between Yarragon and Dandenong has the disability of a 1 in 50 ruling grade. Construction of this new line would ensure reasonably level running for the journey, allowing much heavier loads to be hauled. The Athlone-Koo-wee-rup branch line would be strengthened to carry the increased loading.

As the plan develops, the Department will have to provide for an additional track or long loops between Dandenong and Caulfield, two additional tracks between the Cremorne Bridge and Flinders Street Yard, and others in the outer suburban area to give more direct access to the main briquette depots which the S.E.C. may need to establish.

Later, the limitations of existing track capacity may involve the Flinders Street Viaduct and further construction between Spencer Street and Newport.

We stand, in fact, on the threshold of highly important developments. History is being made and we are essentially part of it.

Suggestions of the Cabinet Sub-Committee directly affecting the Railways Department were that brown coal be used in locomotives in substitution for N.S.W. black coal and that Newport Power Station operate exclusively on brown coal.

At present Messrs. Galletly and Chapman are abroad investigating developments in the use of pulverized fuel. Tests carried out in 1923, 1924 and 1925 showed that pulverized brown coal was a practicable fuel for locomotives. Whether it can be used economically on a large scale is still to be determined. In any case further trials will be made as soon as possible.

Newport Power Station is partly equipped and the large boiler now on order will be capable of burning pulverized briquettes.

An interesting conception in the Cabinet Sub-Committee report is that gas production from brown coal be adopted throughout Victoria, perhaps even from a plant located in the Latrobe Valley, with the gas piped to Melbourne under pressure.

The Committee satisfied itself that for general industrial use brown coal could be substituted for the present fuels.

The future is certainly fraught with interest.

UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS OF CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN TOURS

THE first of the series of tours to Central Australia and Northern Territory left Melbourne on June 11, and from Alice Springs covered some 400 miles by motor bus to the west, embracing Haast Bluff, Palm Valley and Standley Chasm.

The camping equipment was of a high standard and included two-person tents with canvas-lined floors, and for each person a wire stretcher, mattress, blankets, even sheets and pillowslips, in a cosy sleeping bag. A large canvas awning was erected from the side of the bus for meals, and the passengers were seated at tables on comfortable folding chairs, whilst the amenities and meals were excellent.

The new Administrator of the Northern Territory, after inspecting the equipment, said it was the finest camping outfit he had ever seen, and he would do all possible to assist in the further development of the project.

It was the unanimous opinion of the tourists that it was one of the happiest and most unusual holidays ever spent, and several have already announced their intention of taking another tour in the Centre or the North next year.

Sister Francis, Superintendent of the Bush Nursing Association of Victoria, who was a passenger on this

tour, admits that she was frankly startled by the unique colouring and beauty of the scenery through which they passed, particularly the Standley Chasm which exhausted all her superlatives.

The comfort of the tour—the attention which every passenger received—even the facility of being able to send telegrams by radio at any point of the trip—and most of all the glorious blue, cloudless skies and the freedom from sand flies, mosquitos and other "crawlies" were all conspicuous in this lady's memory of a remarkable holiday.

She was so impressed by her experience that she is proposing to see more of this continent as a member of a tour right through to Darwin next winter.

Warm compliments on the tour also come from another passenger, Mr. S. O. Smith, who refers in glowing terms to the "beautiful McDonnells," the grandeur of Palm Valley which "cannot be adequately described or pictured" and the Standley Chasm, the "most inspiring thing I have ever seen."

After mentioning the expert organization, the equipment, the drivers, cook, the "two bonny hostesses, the tucker and the way it was served," he says, "What a heritage we have in Central Australia only those who have had such an experience as we enjoyed can realize."

MR. V. F. LETCHER RESIGNS FROM THE SERVICE

WARM congratulations to Mr. V. F. Letcher, formerly Manager of the Publicity and Tourist Services in the Department, who was recently appointed Secretary of the Department of Aircraft Production.

Mr. Letcher had been on loan to the Commonwealth since July 1939, when he was appointed Administrative Superintendent to the Aircraft Construction Branch of the Department of Supply and Development. Subsequent developments took him to the position of Assistant Secretary to the Department of Aircraft Production, and in 1942 he was appointed a Member and Secretary of the Aircraft Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Essington Lewis.



Mr. V. F. Letcher

Mr. Letcher's vigorous personality and administrative ability won him the high regard of all with whom he was associated during the tremendous war activities, and he probably cherishes above all the opinion of Mr. Lewis who in 1944 expressed his "keen appreciation of the very able and efficient manner in which you have fulfilled all the onerous duties which have fallen to your lot during your association with Australia's aircraft manufacturing effort."

Mr. Letcher started as a Clerk in the Transportation Branch of the Railways Department in 1911 and was transferred to the Secretary's Branch in 1913. He became a Special Officer in 1925, and after a visit to America in 1926 to enlarge his experience, he was appointed Chief Clerk, which position he occupied until his appointment as Chairman of the Betterment and Publicity Board in 1935. Later his functions were extended and he became Manager of the Publicity and Tourist Services. Mr. Letcher was 54 last month.

Popular V.R. Electrical Engineer Visiting England

LAST month Mr. A. C. Stockley, Substation Engineer in the Electrical Engineering Branch, departed on leave to visit his parents in England, and whilst there he will investigate some of the latest developments in electrified rail transport on the other side of the world.

This is the second time that Mr. Stockley, who is an Englishman by birth, has visited Britain. He first returned to England in 1927 and was absent for 18 months. Most of this time was spent with Metropolitan Vickers Ltd. For a short period in 1937 he was on loan to the Grain Elevators Board, acting in an advisory capacity on electrical work.

Mr. Stockley, who is a graduate in Electrical Engineering of the London University, joined the Department as a Draughtsman in 1921. He advanced rapidly through the posts of Electrical Engineering Assistant, and Assistant Engineer to his present position which he has held since 1938.

He is a very popular and efficient officer, who served in the first world war, and in the recent war devoted most of his spare time as a voluntary instructor assisting aspirants to qualify for service in aircrews. Mr. Stockley, who is only 46, will be absent about 8 months.

CAN WE BEAT THIS?

BELIEVED to have held a G.W.R. season ticket longer than any other passenger, Mr. W. Bowen Hamer, of Rhayader, Radnorshire, has been travelling daily from his home town to Builth Wells and back for nearly 64 years. Since April 1882, he has been catching the 10.54 a.m. train from Rhayader and returning from Builth Wells by the 6.21 p.m. train. Mr. Hamer, who is in his 80th year, is a member of the legal profession and the author of "Radnorshire in History, Topography and Romance"—"Railway Gazette, February 1, 1946."

Is there any railway patron in Victoria, or in Australia for that matter, who can beat Mr. Hamer's record?

RESTORED TO SERVICE...REMARKABLE CASE OF N.S.W. RAILWAYMAN.

THERE is an inspiring tenacity of purpose shown in the case of Stephen Ewart Moore, a Car Trimmer in the Electric Car Workshops, Chullora, N.S.W. Originally employed as an Apprentice Carriage Trimmer, he joined the R.A.N. in September 1939. He was then 19, and it was his fate during his subsequent service in the Navy to have the major portion of his right forearm blown off by a bomb explosion. His arm was amputated just below the elbow joint.

Following the amputation, Moore, who was on a hospital vessel lying in Halifax Harbour, Nova Scotia, was reading a magazine article describing the means by which "amputees" were being restored to the occupations in which they worked prior to their disablement. Excited by the possibility of being artificially equipped to resume his old job he said to himself "What a Canadian can do, I'm sure an Aussie can."



Mr. Moore shows how he can use a saw

Discharged from the Forces, he resumed his duties in May 1943, wearing an artificial forearm attached to the stump of his arm. The artificial forearm has a socket so designed that the various tools of his trade can be inserted in the end and used as required.

The N.S.W. Railways Dept. co-operated with the Repatriation Dept. and Moore by adapting the tools to the socket. One operation—hair teasing—called

for some experiment and trial. The ordinary trade tool was unsatisfactory and it was ultimately found that an everyday kitchen fork was most adapted for the work. The fork is now used when Moore is stitching by machine.

At the time of his return to duty no shears were available. Shears of any kind were difficult to obtain, particularly left-handed shears which Moore required. As the Red Cross Society, Repatriation Department and other people outside could not gratify his need, the N.S.W. Railways Dept. made a pair of left-handed shears which has met all requirements.

Thus fully equipped for a vigorous and useful career again, Moore did so well by persistent practice and devotion to duty that in twelve months after his return to the bench he was certified as a competent tradesman.

His work and output are now well up to the average—an achievement for which the encouragement and help of officers and workmates are partly responsible, but which also owes a great deal to his own perseverance and courage, enabling him again to pull his full weight in the community.

His record can do so much to encourage others that the Films Division of the Dept. of Information, Commonwealth of Australia, has taken a movie of him at work. This is to be exhibited throughout the Commonwealth.

V.R. Men Join U.N.R.R.A.

THREE Victorian railwaymen have left Australia to join United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, South West Pacific Area. They are Messrs. R. Wilson, E. Pidd and T. Dawes of the Rolling Stock Branch, and for the next twelve months their railway knowledge will be at the disposal of UNRRA in the task of rehabilitating battered China. Their headquarters will be at Shanghai.

Messrs. Wilson and Dawes have been selected as Locomotive Inspectors and Mr. Pidd as Car Repair Instructor. All the positions carry a commencing salary of £1000 per annum plus various allowances and full living expenses.

In securing their services, UNRRA has obtained efficient and experienced men. Both Mr. Pidd and Mr. Wilson have thirty years' railway training behind them and Mr. Dawes has twenty-eight. All have served at a number of Victorian locations.

Qualifications needed for appointment were high. In addition to sound technical knowledge the requirements included "ability in improvising methods where facilities are limited," good training and intelligence; tact, friendliness, resourcefulness, judgement and excellent physical condition.

The medical examination was an ordeal in itself and the three appointees lost count of vaccinations and inoculations inflicted on them.

Mr. Wilson has promised to drop a line to the "News Letter" occasionally, so railwaymen throughout the State will be kept informed of the duties—and maybe adventures—of their colleagues abroad.

Railway News of The Month . . .

IN his latest report from London, Mr. W. O. Galletly, who with Mr. W. H. Chapman has been investigating in Germany the possibilities of brown coal as a locomotive fuel, states that he concluded a 7½ weeks' visit to that country on June 22.

During their stay in Germany, Mr. Chapman had to be operated on for appendicitis, but is now well on the way to recovery.

In pursuit of their information, visits were paid to Bad Oeyenhausen, Herford, Bielefeld, Hildersheim, Göttingen, Cologne and Essen in the British Zone, and to Frankfurt, Munich, Nuremberg and Kassel in the American Zone.

They made contacts with several prominent German engineers who could help them in their inquiries. Among these were Dr. Wolff, Chief Mechanical Engineer at the Borsig Locomotive Works, and Dr. Wagner, formerly Chief Mechanical Engineer of the German Railways, who is now living in retirement in a German country village. In all, they covered 6000 miles, mostly in army utility trucks.

* * * * *

Mr. P. J. Maher, who was released for special service with the Commonwealth Government during the war, first with the Munitions activities of the Department of Labour and National Service, and subsequently on the finance side of the Department of Supply and Shipping, has resumed duty as acting member of the Betterment and Suggestions Board.

* * * * *

There was no improvement in the coal situation during July, and restrictions on passenger and goods traffic still operate. On several occasions stocks of small coal were so low that restrictions on suburban electric services seemed inevitable, but the eleventh hour arrival of additional supplies enabled cuts to be averted. Assistance from the State Electricity Commission at weekends has also been of great value.

* * * * *

Further improvements in the Newport "A" Power Station involving the second stage of the replacement of the old plant are in hand. Tenders have recently been accepted for the supply and erection of two new boilers and accessories and a turbo-alternator and accessories at a cost of over £820,000. More than £300,000 of this amount will be spent in Australia. The first stage of the modernization programme costing £674,000 has been in service since July 1943. The estimated fuel savings have been more than realized and the almost continuous operation of this plant has contributed enormously to the efficient maintenance of suburban services.

* * * * *

These figures talk! From the beginning of the war up to June 30 this year, the Refreshment Services Branch had supplied, often at very short notice, nearly 2 million meals for members of the three war services—Navy, Army and Air—of Australia, America and other Allied countries. The biggest individual performance was 521,761 meals at Wangaratta. 320,200 meals were provided at Ballarat, 243,746 at Seymour, 241,846 at Ararat, and 193,977 at the Grill Room, Spencer Street station. At the special refreshment station on No. 8 platform, Spencer Street, 122,468 meals were provided over the war period.

* * * * *

All ex-members of the Railway Construction and Maintenance Group, R.A.E., A.I.F., are advised that a reunion will be held at the Prahran Drill Hall, at 7.30 p.m. on August 17. All those who wish to attend should please send a notification and 7/6d. to the Secretary, Mr. E. G. Bartram, 11 Hart's Parade, Auburn, E.3.

An all-time record of firewood transportation was reached during the month. For the week ended July 7, 1051 trucks of firewood were brought to the metropolitan area. Many of the locomotives hauling the loads were themselves fuelled with firewood.

LOST AND FOUND—£1000!

DISTURBING the calm of the railway **L**ost Property officers is a difficult proceeding, but the man who left behind £1,000 in notes last month made a creditable attempt.

He had come down from Shepparton to transact business in Melbourne, bringing with him £1,000 in bank-notes. However, the anticipated deal did not take place.

On the trip home he alighted at Seymour for refreshments, taking along his money with him in a kit-bag. After the train had left, Mrs. A. Ruben, wife of the Railways Refreshment Room manager, noticed the kit-bag lying under one of the tables. To her amazement, investigation showed that it contained a large sum in cash.

The Claims Agent was immediately notified and, in due course, the lucky traveller received a cheque for £1,000.

Although this is the largest sum ever retrieved by the Department, hundreds of pounds are returned to passengers each year. For the month of June alone there were fifty individual sums paid back, ranging from threepence to ten pounds.

Women are the most frequent offenders, some of them making a habit of leaving purses in trains. But no woman has ever walked off and left £1,000 behind her—it took a man to think of that one.

SERVICE.

WARM appreciation of the Department's service in transporting superphosphate is expressed in the following letters from Mr. M. A. Cuming, General Manager of Commonwealth Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd., Melbourne, and Mr. C. S. Joss, Branch Manager of Cresco Fertilizers Ltd., Geelong.

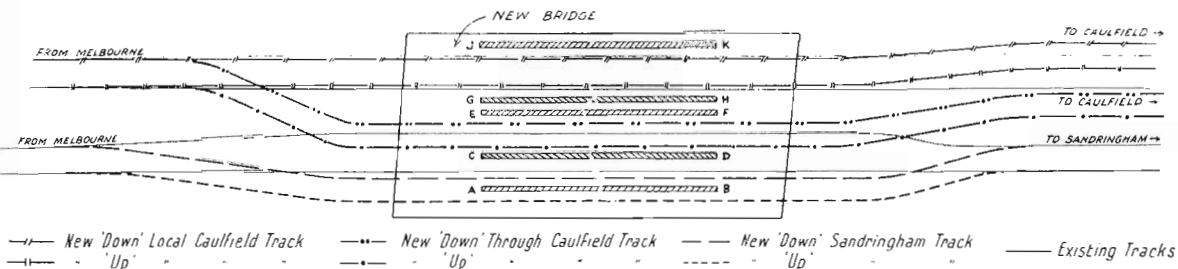
"We want to express to you our keen appreciation for the services provided by your Department," writes Mr. Cuming. "We know that exceptional difficulties have been met and overcome by all concerned, and we shall be pleased if you will express to your officers our thanks for practical assistance and friendly courtesy in a job well done."

Mr. Joss is equally complimentary, "Early in the year I was very doubtful as to whether it would be possible to get supplies out in time, and I must take this opportunity of thanking you for having co-operated so closely with this Company to enable us to fulfil our obligations to the Primary Producers."

Another tribute to the Department's performance in transporting firewood comes from Mr. W. T. Pennell, General Secretary of the Fuel, Ice, Chaff and Grain Merchants' Association of Victoria.

"We feel that you are doing all that is possible to assist us," Mr. Pennell remarks. "The effort of your Department recently when the trade was feeling the pinch was, indeed, a tangible contribution despite the many difficulties that we know you have to contend with at the moment, and we fully realize that firewood is not the only commodity that has to be handled."

EXPLAINING STAGES IN CONSTRUCTION OF CREMORNE BRIDGE



ABOVE is shown a diagram indicating the changes in track, etc., that will follow the construction of the new Cremorne Bridge at South Yarra. The first section of the bridge providing a new "up" Sandringham line across the Yarra and Alexandra Avenue was recently completed and the first train ran over it on June 2. Welded rails, each over 500 feet in length, were laid over this section. The new "down" Sandringham track has just been completed.

The hatched sections of the diagram represent the

girders of the old bridge, and for the time being the existing girder A-B has been moved adjacent to girder C-D.

Subsequent operations in the rebuilding of the bridge will be as follows:

- Remove the existing "down" Sandringham track.
- Remove existing girders A-B, C-D and E-F.
- Construct new "through" Caulfield bridge and tracks.
- Remove existing Caulfield bridge girders G-H and J-K together with existing tracks, and construct new "local" Caulfield bridge and tracks.

NEWS FROM THE V. R. INSTITUTE

RAILWAYMEN at Dimboola recently gathered to pay tributes to the sterling work of Mr. W. Suter who has retired from the Railways Department after 45 years' service. For over 20 years he had worked at Dimboola and had been closely associated with the erection of the local Institute building which was opened in January 1940, and at the time of erection was valued at £1100. When Mr. Suter took charge of the job of securing a building in 1936, the prospects were not very encouraging, but his personal approach and his popularity with local railwaymen turned the effort into a striking success. No wonder loud cheers greeted him at his farewell, and every man concerned contributed with pleasure to the handsome inscribed watch which he received from the members of the Institute. He was also presented with a clock and a handbag for Mrs. Suter.

"Hundreds crowded out at Boxing Finals" was the streamline heading in the "Sun News-Pictorial" referring to the 1946 V.R.I. amateur boxing and wrestling tournament held in the V.R.I. Concert Hall on July 5. One hundred and twenty contestants, including several from country districts, boxed and wrestled their way to the final stages, and although entries were received from the majority of leading Athletic and Gymnastic Clubs in the State, members of the V.R.I. Gymnasium carried off 5 boxing and 7 wrestling finals. For the first time in the history of the Institute—and probably for the first time anywhere—a perpetual trophy for the best loser in the open division of boxing at the V.R.I. mid-season competitions is to be provided, the cost being met by members. The trophy is a tribute to the memory of Frederick Lonergan, a prominent member of the V.R.I. and Gymnasium and of the V.R.I. Boxing team in pre-war days, who lost his life as a P.O.W. in Ambon.

Fifty-five railway golfers turned out to the "Get-together" at the Australasian Golf Links on Sunday, June 23. In carrying off the trophy for the best net stroke score over 18 holes, the Comptroller of Accounts (Mr. L. J. Williamson) proved his ability

to control the small white ball. Trophies for the first and second nine holes were won by Mr. R. Sullock (Clerk, Coburg) and Mr. F. Heath (Signalman, Mentone) respectively. As a result of the success of the "Get-together" the V.R.I. Golf Association has been re-formed with an enthusiastic Committee.

President is Mr. F. Findlay (Ballarat North Shops) with Mr. T. MacPherson (Accountancy Branch, Head Office) Honorary Secretary.

The Commissioners' Cup Competition conducted by the V.R.I. Football League has entered on the second round and approximately 100 railwaymen are to be seen playing each week on the Royal Park ovals. Spotswood Shops, recently defeated for the first time, and North Loco. appear to be racing for the premiership, although Car and Wagon Shops and Melbourne Yard are close up. The finals at the end of August should provide keen and interesting games.

Asst. Supt. of Melb. Yards Retires

MR. H. F. Blake, Assistant Superintendent, Melbourne Yards, has retired from the Department after 49 years' service.

He first came into the Railways in 1897 and in turn occupied the grades of car cleaner, block recorder, number taker, shunter, leading shunter, goods guard, and yard foreman. In 1932 he became Yard Supervisor and in 1940 Asst. Supt., Melbourne Yards.

Every phase of Yard work was known intimately by Mr. Blake for, at sometime or other in his career, he had active and practical experience of the duties involved.

In his young days he was a keen footballer and sterling full-back of a Brunswick team. He was well known, too, in local cricket circles.

Swimming became his main enthusiasm later, followed by motoring. In the days when petrol was plentiful his week-ends were devoted to long country car trips.

Mr. Blake is looking forward to a lot of trips now that he has plenty of leisure, and he anxiously awaits the lifting of petrol restrictions.

BIG RAILWAY DIFFICULTIES IN FIREWOOD TRUCKING

BRINGING firewood to Melbourne this winter has been one of the Department's really difficult tasks. Under normal circumstances the firewood traffic is handled without undue strain, but this year various factors, headed by lack of coal for locomotive use, have complicated the position.

The demand for firewood in Melbourne has never been greater. Absence of briquettes and coal for household use; gas and electricity restrictions; and employment of wood fuel in industry, have all added their quota to the difficulties. An abnormal quantity of firewood has been demanded, a greater quantity than may ever be called for again.

Up to the end of June, the Railway response was an average of 2630 trucks of firewood each month being brought to the city. A higher total was prevented by coal shortage combined with large priority movements of superphosphate and export foodstuffs. An increasing number of trucks is now becoming available and for the week ending July 6 alone, 1051 trucks were received at metropolitan firewood sidings. This all-time record is all the more remarkable for its being achieved under most trying conditions, for the Department was obliged to use wood fuel to keep many of its locomotives moving.

Between May 31 and June 11, a total of 35,000 tons of export flour and 7,550 tons of export dried fruits was transported to the seaboard. There were also substantial quantities of fresh and canned fruits, condensed milk, seed, agricultural machinery and canned meat.

Bearing in mind the exceptionally heavy traffic handled this year and the acute shortage of coal, the quantity of firewood that has been brought to Melbourne undoubtedly represents a very creditable performance.

Tragic Deaths of Transportation Officers

WITH deep regret the deaths are recorded of two fine Transportation Branch Officers—Mr. Michael Kavanagh, Station Master, Ararat, and Mr. Tony Cudmore, Senior Train Controller at Head Office.

Both died in tragic circumstances. Mr. Kavanagh received injuries in a street accident, and Mr. Cudmore collapsed while playing a friendly game of cards at his home.

Mr. Kavanagh was in the final year of service before retiring. In 46 years' railway experience behind him he had served all over Victoria and had been at Ararat for the last 10 years. One of the outstanding Station Masters in the service and a kindly and efficient officer, he will be sadly missed by railway patrons and staff alike.

Mr. Cudmore was only 51 at the time of his death. Joining the Department in 1912 he was a clerk until enlistment in the 1st A.I.F. He served in France and Belgium with 1st Aust. Light Railway Operating Company and was a survivor from the torpedoed H.M.A.S. "Ballarat."

On his return to duty he was appointed Station Master. In 1926 he became one of the original train control officers, rising to Senior Train Controller and frequently acting as Chief Train Controller. His breezy personality, never-failing good humour and outstanding efficiency contributed to his immense popularity.

In the passing of these two valued officers the Branch and the Department have suffered a severe loss.

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH TRIBUTE TO P.O.W.'s

AN inspiring gesture, in the finest railway tradition, has been made by members of the Accountancy Branch. From popular subscription they have presented gold watches to each of their four colleagues who were prisoners of war. Messrs. Austin Daly, Doug. McFadyen, Laurie Miller and Jack Cashman are recipients of the gifts and they were deeply touched by the spontaneous token of appreciation.

"You really can't thank people properly for that sort of kindness," says Mr. Miller on their behalf. "It comes too close to the heart. We are grateful, not only for the gift, but for the privilege of working with such a fine lot of fellows."

There was no public presentation. Messrs. Daly, Miller and Cashman received their watches in the seclusion of the Comptroller of Accounts' office. To Mr. McFadyen, who is still in Heidelberg Military Hospital, Mr. Williamson paid a personal call.

All four were prisoners of the Japanese. Jack Cashman's story was told in last month's "News Letter," and Laurie Miller's experiences will be told next month. Doug. McFadyen is undergoing skin graft operations on tropical ulcers contracted while in Japanese hands. Austin Daly—who rose to the rank of Major—will be returning to the Department shortly.

Good wishes tendered to them from the Accountancy Branch are supported by the whole Department.

Prize Winning Apprentices at 1945 Annual Exams

IN the annual and supplementary examinations for apprentices held at the Newport Technical College, Metropolitan Technical Schools, and at the Schools of Mines at Ballarat and Bendigo, first prizes were given by the Commissioners for the highest marks in the senior courses to G. L. Baynes (Electrical Fitter, 3rd year), A. B. Henderson (Fitter and Turner, 2nd year) and D.H. Cowden (Fitter and Turner, 1st year), all apprentices in the Rolling Stock Branch.

First prize winners in the intermediate course were L. R. Ingram (Electrical Fitter, 3rd year, Elec. Engr. Brch.), R. J. Doull (Car and W. Builder, 2nd year, Rolling Stock Brch.), and E. W. Ludge (Fitter and Turner, 1st year, Way and Works Brch.).

In the junior course cheques went to D.F. McMahon (Fitter and Turner, 3rd year, Rolling Stock Brch.), W. Fairfull (B'maker, 2nd year, Way and Works Brch.) and L.J. Patterson, (Car and W. Builder, 1st year, Rolling Stock Brch.).

G. D. Hall (Carpenter), A. Webster (Moulder), and R. N. Deed (Painter), were the leading apprentices in the Melbourne Technical College exams; P. S. George (Fitter and Turner), scored in the Ballarat School of Mines, and the first prize in the Bendigo School of Mines class went to F. J. Roberts (Fitter and Turner). All of these apprentices are in the Rolling Stock Branch.

Wednesday, September 11, will mark the re-appearance of the Annual Railway Ball, after a lapse over the war period. The function will be held at the St. Kilda Town Hall and a gala night is in store for the large number expected to attend.

Table reservations may be made at the V.R.I. Office, Flinders Street Station, or the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, Collins Street, at an inclusive cost of 12/6d. single.

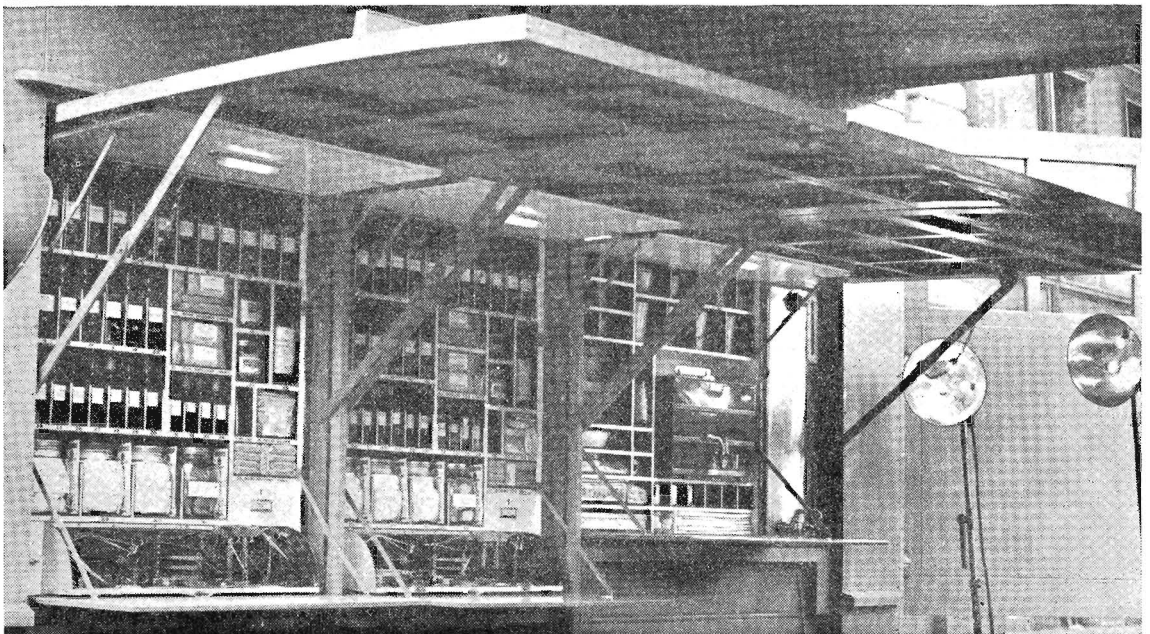
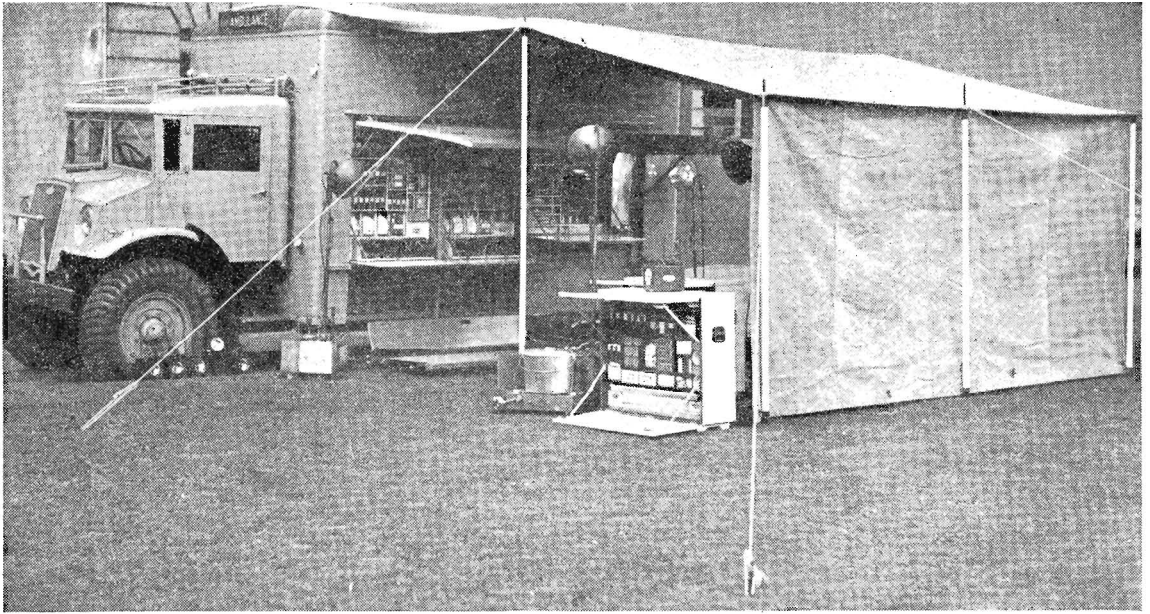
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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

SEPTEMBER, 1946

Issue No. 192

NEW V.R. AMBULANCE EQUIPMENT VAN



Two views of the new V.R. Ambulance Equipment Van. Top—Extension of canopy forms an emergency operating theatre. Below—A close-up of cabinets showing surgical instruments, etc.

(Description on page 3).



. . . . those gallant Victorian Railwaymen who gave their lives in the Second World War and whose courage flames before men as a beacon to light the path of duty

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|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Adams, G. C. | Einsiedel, J. E. | Kofoed, R. C. | Ralph, W. D. |
| Allen, K. E. | Ellen, W. J. | Korschel, E. M. | Rands, I. A. |
| Andrews, D. | Englefield, F. J. | Kraemer, J. R. | Raymer, A. N. |
| Archer, C. J. | Evans, D. D. | Ladlow, A. T. R. | Redpath, W. S. |
| Armstrong, N. G. | Fahey, M. J. | Lapsley, R. E. | Richardson, H. S. G. |
| Ayers, R. J. | Fartch, N. L. | Larsen, L. T. | Riordan, W. D. A. |
| Baker, R. H. | Forbes, R. G. | Lawley, R. H. | Roberts, E. L. |
| Barton, A. W. | Forster, J. | Lawrence, W. | Roberts, W. H. |
| Beckman, C. R. | Galvin, K. F. | Lillis, A. G. F. | Roe, R. H. |
| Bendle, J. W. | Geldart, R. | McCarthy, J. | Ryan, W. A. G. |
| Blake, A. H. | Gilpin, J. A. | McGlade, T. H. | Sanders, W. J. |
| Bodie, R. L. L. | Gordon, W. G. | McGrath, G. E. | Schultz, W. R. |
| Booth, W. | Greaves, J. N. | McKenzie, H. D. | Seater, H. J. |
| Borham, E. J. | Grieve, W. R. | McKenzie, W. J. | Slavin, W. |
| Boyd, S. I. | Groves, R. B. | McLean, J. W. | Smail, T. G. |
| Bradford, R. W. | Haden, J. | McMahon, J. W. | Smart, M. G. |
| Brady, A. J. | Hall, L. L. | McQueenie, K. W. | Shimmen, C. F. |
| Breen, A. F. | Hancock, L. G. | Matthews, F. J. | Smith, J. |
| Broderick, J. J. | Handley, R. H. W. | Miller, M. F. | Smith, M. C. |
| Burge, J. J. | Hardy, H. J. | Millgate, K. | Smith, R. J. V. |
| Butler, R. W. | Harper, N. J. | Morgan, F. | Smith, S. E. |
| Carey, J. V. | Harrison, R. O. | Morgan, L. G. | Spink, A. |
| Carrick, A. F. | Hawkins, G. | Moxey, A. | Tait, S. P. |
| Carson, J. | Hay, E. A. | Mutimer, D. E. | Taylor, D. J. |
| Chalmers, F. | Hayward, J. W. | Neeson, A. J. | Thomas, V. R. G. |
| Clancy, P. L. | Hedger, J. H. | Nippard, D. F. | Trickey, W. J. |
| Clarke, R. | Henwood, F. N. | Nye, C. C. P. | Trimble, R. H. |
| Cleary, J. P. | Hocking, G. E. | O'Brien, M. J. | Vaughan, E. A. |
| Clement, C. | Hood, A. E. | O'Dwyer, F. | Walsh, R. L. |
| Clohesy, R. T. | Hoskins, M. J. | Oppy, H. D. | Warner, M. A. |
| Coates, A. L. | Hourigan, I. P. | O'Rourke, C. T. | Webb, G. |
| Collett, C. H. | Houston, W. F. | Parkinson, R. A. G. | Wells, A. E. |
| Colson, K. | Hughes, C. L. | Peel, A. F. | White, W. J. |
| Connolly, M. A. | Jackson, W. H. | Peoples, J. T. | Williams, J. P. C. |
| Connor, R. E. | Jeffery, P. T. | Phelps, G. M. | Wilson, J. A. T. |
| Cook, K. T. | Johnson, H. H. | Pitson, E. W. | Wilson, J. R. |
| Cowey, W. J. | Killingbeck, G. G. | Porter, W. R. R. | Windebank, G. A. |
| Dangerfield, R. D. | Kinghorn, A. A. | Price, J. A. | Windley, R. E. |
| Dickenson, G. | Kerris, J. L. | Prince, L. R. | Wishart, H. P. |
| Downie, J. A. | Kinnersley, F. H. | Quigley, G. G. | Woolhouse, R. M. |
| Dwyer, T. V. | Knight, F. B. | | Yensch, G. A. F. |

NEW V.R. AMBULANCE IS A MINIATURE HOSPITAL

EARLY in 1943 the Commissioners directed that a properly equipped ambulance vehicle be provided for use in the event of a serious train accident. Much of the detailed planning devolved on the Ambulance Officer, Mr. W. Blackburn, who visualized a special ambulance with surgeons' instruments and medical stores, one that could be used as a base for a good deal more than first-aid. Looking round for ideas, he made an inspection of one of the Electrical Engineering Branch's electrical overhead emergency wagons, and in the disposition of tools and equipment laid out for quick use, he saw the basis of an answer to his problem.

Mr. Blackburn drew up a rough design which the Chief Medical Officer and Officers of the Rolling Stock and Electrical Engineering Branches converted to a technical reality. The plan was approved by the Commissioners, and to-day the completed job is ready for instant use—a miniature hospital on wheels, equipped with every conceivable medical requirement from sticking plaster to complete surgical kits, and designed to carry a staff of eight trained ambulance men.

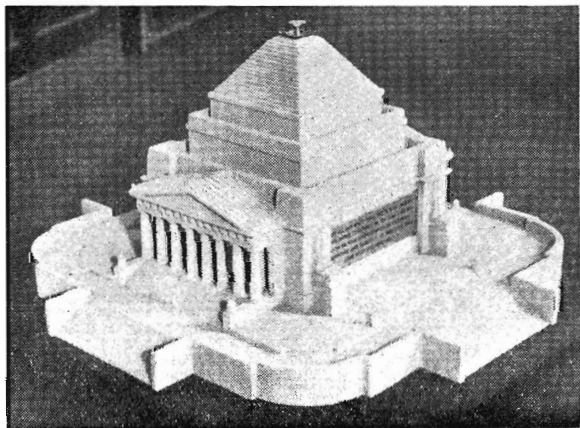
The body of the ambulance is no ordinary body—it has been built on the chassis of a Lease-Lend "Ford" 3-ton truck, 4-wheel drive. One wall lifts from the outside in three flaps, forming a roof. It discloses three cupboards, two of which are identical and contain dressings, drugs, antiseptics and complete emergency medical kits, including amputation saws, artery forceps, probes and scalpels. The third cupboard holds basins, sterile towels, soap, a three-gallon container of boiling water and various vessels.

Being on the outside of the van, the three cupboards are easy of access and permit a number of doctors to operate simultaneously. All bottles are numbered, instruments fit into clips, and no item is concealed behind any other item.

Inside the ambulance, in readily accessible cupboards, are a variety of medical stores. There are six portable cabinets, each containing first-aid requirements, which can be carried direct to casualties; a dozen stretchers; large numbers of splints; spine-boards; blankets; towels; supplies of bandages; extra dressings; and compartments for hot water and tea.

Over the whole ambulance a canopy can be erected, enclosing it within its own tent. Lighting comes from six reflector lamps as well as from lights built into the van. A large number of portable hand lights are carried.

Immediately on arrival at the scene of an accident the ambulance could be brought into use with a team of trained ambulance men administering first-aid, and medical officers giving treatment to casualties.



"MUSEUM PIECES"

THE light that beats upon railway rating policies has lately been fiercer than ever, because of the view held in some quarters that therein lies the prime deterrent of decentralization.

There is a dearth of data to support this view. The theories which so far have been advanced are based either upon misconception of these policies, or upon the discovery of some defunct example, now of interest only as a "museum piece" in the gallery of ancient wrongs.

An influential provincial newspaper has recently featured one of the discoveries in this interesting, if fruitless, antiquarian work. Described as a "glaring anomaly"—and it must be conceded that on the surface, at any rate, the description seems to be justified—the instance recalled from the limbo of forgotten things was that in which a Ballarat firm found it profitable to send its consignments to Melbourne and have them trucked back through Ballarat to a western district destination, instead of railing them direct.

We can neither affirm nor deny the authenticity of this fragment from past history. Any records of it, if they ever existed, have long since succumbed to the corruption of moth and rust. The memories of the Department's greybeards are no more helpful. Yet, past instances of the kind are not inconceivable. The vicissitudes of railway rates have been many and varied. Over the years, expedients have had to be adopted from time to time to obtain or hold railway business. Nor are we yet in the enviable position from which it could be asserted that the days of rating expedients are gone forever, or to be quite sure, either, that we will not again be outwitted if we should have to adopt them.

Remarkable Model of Shrine of Remembrance

SHOWN in the next column is a photograph of a model of the Shrine of Remembrance, the fine work in his leisure of a railway carpenter, Mr. J. V. Martin, of the Signal and Telegraph Division of the Way and Works Branch.

The model is one of several that have been carefully built by Mr. Martin and distributed around the club-rooms of the R.S.S.A.I.L.A. for use in Anzac Day ceremonies. The first was presented to his own branch of the League at East Malvern, and one has been sent to England where, it is understood, it will be exhibited at Australia House.

All carpenters, professional and amateur, will appreciate the patience and skill of the craftsman responsible for this model. It comprises over 160 different pieces of timber, and is built accurately to scale (1/8th of an inch to the foot). Every piece has been prepared by hand and the sand finish in each case was also applied by hand after the model had been covered with a suitable preparation.

Mr. Martin, who joined the Department in 1913, is a veteran of the First Great War. He enlisted in the A.I.F. in October, 1916, and saw the conflict out to the finish.

TWO V.R. BROTHERS WIN M.I.D.

SOME two years ago the "News Letter" told the story of V.R. motor omnibus driver R.N. Beatty, who received Mention in Dispatches for valuable army service in New Guinea.

Now his brother Gordon, also a railwayman, has been notified that he, too, has been awarded the M.I.D.

Before the war Gordon was employed on line repairs at Raywood. Enlisting in the R.A.A.F. in 1940 he saw service in Borneo, rising to the rank of Warrant Officer. He returned to the Department last January, and is now attached to the Special Inquiry Division.

His citation reads:

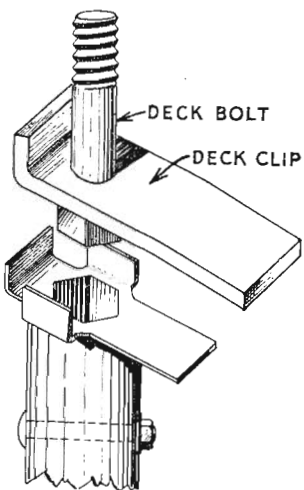
"During his service with No. 93 Squadron, W. O. Beatty has set an outstanding example to both N.C.O.'s and men of all units in No. 86 Wing. This was particularly noticeable during the unit move by sea when he carried out duties far in excess of what was required of him, under the most adverse conditions.

"On several occasions, he used a great deal of initiative and took charge of bodies of men, adapting himself to duties normally carried out by quite senior officers. He has earned the respect of both officers and men, and was invariably selected for duty requiring good organization."

Congratulations, Beatty brothers—you both did a grand job.

There is Still Room for New Ideas

The illustration alongside shows a time-saving gadget which brought its suggestor not only an award,



but also the satisfaction of having contributed to the better working of the Department.

It is used for replacing clips and bolts on the underside of the decking of bridges over electrified lines in the suburban area.

The clip and its bolt must be held in place from underneath whereupon an employee up above puts the nut on the bolt and screws it up.

Because of the live wires underneath the bridges,

the job had to be done at night, when power was off and a scaffold could be safely erected over the track. It occurred to the suggestor that a mechanical "hand" to hold the clip and bolt could be operated by a man standing on the ground. He therefore made the claw-shaped tool, shown in our illustration, and attached it to a light oregon pole 14-ft. long. The bolt and clip sit snugly in the claw and can be lifted into place on the underside of the deck, where they are held firmly in position until the man on the bridge screws up the nut.

This is another case of an ingenious railwayman using his brains to simplify his work and help the Department. The Betterment and Suggestions Board would like to hear from many more like him.

Railway Standardization Agreement Bill Passed

THE Railway Standardization Agreement Bill has passed all stages in the Federal Parliament. In Victoria, it provides for the conversion to the standard gauge of 4 ft. 8½-in. of all the 5-ft. 3-in. gauge lines, and the 2-ft. 6-in. gauge line from Upper Fern-tree Gully to Emerald; in South Australia, the conversion of the 5-in. 3-in. gauge lines and of the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge lines of the South-Eastern and Peterborough divisions; the acquisition by N.S.W. and conversion of the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge Silverton Tramway from Cockburn, South Australia, to Broken Hill; the construction of a new standard gauge line from Bourke to Barrington in New South Wales; the conversion of the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge lines from Port Augusta to Alice Springs and from Birdum to Darwin, and the construction of a new standard gauge line connecting Alice Springs with Birdum.

Queensland and Western Australia are not included in the Agreement, but it is understood that the Commonwealth Government proposes to negotiate further with these States.

The estimated expenditure under the plan included in the Agreement will be £70,434,596, based on costs ruling at the end of 1944. The cost of the conversion and new construction of lines between Alice Springs and Darwin, estimated at £19,563,900, will be borne wholly by the Commonwealth, while the States of Victoria and South Australia will contribute 75 per cent. of the cost of new locomotives and rolling stock required in their respective States. This represents a payment of £8,462,768 in the case of Victoria, and of £3,684,064 by South Australia. The balance of the cost (£38,723,864) will be shared, half by the Commonwealth and the other half by the three States concerned, on a per capita basis of population.

The agreement will require to be ratified by the Parliaments of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia before it becomes effective, and even then the date of commencing work in any particular State is a matter for determination by that State. This was necessary to avoid interference with priority works such as housing and irrigation.

Another Young Grandfather

MR. Cyril Russell, who was mentioned in the July "News Letter," has a rival claimant for the title of Youngest Grandfather in the Department. He is Mr. Alf. Gresham, Train Examiner at Warragul, who became a grandfather in 1940 at the age of 41—two years younger than Mr. Russell.

But as Mr. Gresham is now 47 and Mr. Russell is only 43, the title stays clear—unless a younger contender can challenge. The "News Letter" would like to hear from him, if he exists.

In his prime, incidentally, Alf Gresham was a famous V.R.I. athlete, undefeated Featherweight Boxing Champion of the Institute from 1917 to 1920, and Railway Interstate Champion in 1917, 1919 and 1920.

His grand-daughter has a railway grandfather on both sides of the family, her paternal grandfather being Train Examiner Bill Oliver, now retired.

AS from May 1, 1946, all clocks of the L.M.S.R. and L.N.E.R. have shown the correct time. Previously it had been the practice in both railways to maintain their clocks outside stations a minute or two fast, whereas those inside were kept at the right time; the object was to hasten the tardy traveller and so assist the on-time despatch of trains. Under the new arrangement the practice of the L.M.S.R. and L.N.E.R. becomes uniform with that of the other railways and London Transport. Railway Gazette, 10/5/46.

RAILWAY FAMILIES

The McFadyens

FROM time to time the "News Letter" hopes to portray some of the innumerable railway families in the Department's service. Here, for a start, are Mr. Duncan McFadyen, A.S.M., Hawthorn, and his daughter Margaret, clerk in the Transportation Branch, Head Office. With a marked family resemblance they make a handsome pair of railway-folk.



Mr. D. McFadyen. Miss M. McFadyen

Head Office. With a marked family resemblance they make a handsome pair of railway-folk.

Mr. McFadyen has been with the Department for over thirty years. He was stationed at Nyora and Avenel before being transferred to Hawthorn in 1933. Golf and tennis are his sporting interests. "Sometimes," says his daughter, innocently, "he gets around to digging the garden."

Margaret, who has five years' Departmental service, studied a business course with Stott's Business College, Hawthorn, qualifying in shorthand, typewriting and book-keeping. Last month an important event occurred in her life—she became twenty-one years old.

The Michells

THE Michells, of Seymour, are another railway family. Father, Mr. T. J. Michell, is an engine driver, his son, Mr. A. K. Michell, who was a prisoner of war, is now a fireman, hoping to become a driver also, whilst a daughter, Miss F. B. Michell, is a waitress in the Refreshment Rooms, Seymour.



Mr. T. J. Michell. Miss F. B. Michell.

Mr. T. J. Michell joined the Railways in 1913, and after serving successfully at Bendigo, Traralgon and Warragul, he became a fireman. That was in 1920. He was promoted to driver in 1937, and during the war was on loan to the Commonwealth Railways for periods of 3 and 4 months in 1941 and 1942.

His son, Mr. A. K. Michell, who was born in 1915, is one of the valiant Australians who has survived the horror of solitary confinement in a Japanese prison. Enlisting in 1940, he was one of the thousands who were captured at the surrender of Singapore. He was first taken to Changi on Singapore Island, and was transferred to another prison camp from which he escaped. For over three months he was hidden and helped by some kind Chinamen, but was caught again by the Japs.

For this offence he was tortured and sentenced to a year's solitary confinement, being taken out each day for ten minutes to have a bucket of water thrown over him.



Mr. A. K. Michell.

Despite those indignities, the indescribable filth of the surroundings and the very meagre fare—a bowl of rice only—which killed many hundreds, young Michell had the spirit and the health to survive. Weighing 13½ stone when he enlisted, he ultimately returned to Australia weighing a little over 6 stone. He is now a healthy young Australian again waiting eagerly to take his place as a locomotive driver.

NEWS FROM THE V.R. INSTITUTE

THE Railway Ball for 1946, to be held at the St. Kilda Town Hall on September 11, promises to be the outstanding railway social event of the year. It is the first Ball held by the Institute since 1939. During the war years the V.R. Patriotic Fund Committee held three successful dances, but very many of the staff were away on active service.

This year it is hoped they can put in an appearance and enjoy themselves at what is really their function. Table reservations can be made at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, 272 Collins Street, Melbourne, or at the Institute. The 'phone number is MY. 210, extension 1109.

* * *

Building plans are being drawn up for considerable extensions to Institute premises at various country centres and immediately building restrictions ease, improvements and alterations are to be carried out.

Railwaymen in country areas are becoming increasingly Institute-conscious, and the two most recent centres to seek formation of a local branch are Murtoa and Warrnambool.

A couple of months ago, Council representatives visited Murtoa to discuss ways and means of installing a branch. An enthusiastic meeting was held and already the sum of close on £100 has been raised locally for the project. Such keenness is very heartening to Council members.

Within the next few weeks a visit will be made to Warrnambool.

In the sporting world, the female members are showing a strong desire to join in V.R.I. activities. The Council is endeavouring to organize facilities for them, especially in the summer pastimes of tennis, soft-ball and swimming. Any girls who are interested should get in touch with the Sports Secretary, Mr. Kydd. His telephone number is MY.210, extension 1109.

* * *

The Grand Final in the football competition for the Commissioners' Cup is to be played on Wednesday, September 11. Final four in the competition, which has been fought hard and fairly, were Spotswood Shops, North Melbourne Shops, North Loc., and Melbourne Yard.

To perpetuate the memory of that well-known V.R.I. footballer, Jack Carey, who perished on H.M.A.S. "Perth," the League intends to award an annual trophy to the highest goal-kicker in the competition. It will be called the "Jack Carey Memorial Trophy," and will for all time keep fresh the memory of a fine player and gallant gentleman.

* * *

Cricketers are already oiling their bats and brushing moth-balls off their pads in preparation for the cricket season which begins this month. Annual meeting of the V.R.I. Cricket Association is being held on September 23, and teams are invited to send their representatives along.

RETIREMENT OF MR. A. J. WARD

WITH the retirement last month of Mr. A. J. Ward, District Engineer, Ballarat, the Department loses a capable and a popular officer. Particularly throughout the Ballarat District he is well known for his unruffled calm, never-failing sense of humour and keen wit.



Mr. A. J. Ward

Mr. Ward, who was born in 1881, trained in England before joining the Department as a draughtsman in 1907. Appointed to the permanent staff in 1913, he was stationed for a time at Melbourne before becoming Works Master, Ararat, District Engineer, Arden Street; and District Engineer,

Bendigo. He was then appointed to the post of District Engineer, Ballarat, and he has lived there for over 21 years.

A keen golfer, Mr. Ward is treasurer of the Midlands Golf Club, and he intends to devote much of his new found leisure to Club activities.

Popular with all railwaymen throughout the whole district, he will be greatly missed.

Mr. W. E. Coombe Resigns.

FOR some time before the war Mr. W. E. Coombe, of the Train Services section, was engaged on the preparation of rail time-tables for the mobilization of Defence forces and their strategic deployment throughout Australia.



Mr. W. E. Coombe

Immediately hostilities began he took up full-time duty with Movements Section of the Quartermaster General's Branch at Army Headquarters, Melbourne. His railway training proved extremely valuable in the national emergency, and he was utilized in various staff appointments associated with movement plans and administration. He rose rapidly to the rank of Colonel with "Q" Movements, Allied Land-force Headquarters.

During the concluding stages of the war he was a member of the Australian Military Mission to South-East Asia Command, serving for two months on Lord Louis Mountbatten's H.Q. at Kandy and Singapore. His duties were in connection with surrender arrangements, and repatriation of Australian prisoners of war and internees recovered from Malaya, Siam, French Indo-China, Java and Sumatra.

Subsequently he supervised arrangements for the transfer of Japanese from New Guinea and New Britain to Japan.

Last July Mr. Coombe returned to the Department. Now he has resigned to take up an executive appointment in the post-war activities of the Campaigners for Christ, an undenominational organization which performed valuable welfare work for the troops.

The Department's best wishes go with Mr. Coombe in these new and worthy duties to which he has chosen to devote his life.

Because of the War, no Council elections have been held by the V.R.I. since 1942. An election is to be held now, and for the seventeen positions on the Council there have been thirty-five nominations. The enthusiasm of some of the younger nominees is making the veterans look to their laurels, and keen interest has been aroused among members.

UNTIMELY DEATH OF POPULAR GOODS FOREMAN

All railwaymen who knew him will deeply regret the passing last month of Senior Goods Foreman, Mr. A. E. Jukes, who fell between the platform and a moving truck at Spencer Street and was so badly injured that he died in the ambulance on the way to hospital.

Mr. Jukes had a career of 36 years in the Service. He was always associated with Goods Sheds, first in Melbourne, then at Bendigo, Horsham, Stawell and other country centres, returning to Melbourne as a goods checker in 1918. He was promoted to Sub-Foreman in 1922, Goods Foreman in 1925, and three years later, reached the post which he held at his death.

The simplest appreciation that can be recorded of this valuable railwayman is that he knew his job thoroughly and did it nobly. No job was too big, none too small for his careful attention. He was respected by all, and will be deeply missed.

V. R. MAN HAS OPERATION —JAPANESE TYPE

BACK on the job again is Mr. Laurie Miller, of Terminal and Eastern Accounting Office, who had the misfortune to be a prisoner of war of the Japanese for 3½ years.



Mr. L. Miller

"Churchill" the Japanese called him. "Probably because of my big nearly-bald head" suggests Mr. Miller. "for I certainly had 50 cigars."

Among his varied experiences, one of the most interesting—and unpleasant—was his treatment by Japanese surgeons.

Developing a hernia from heavy work, he became useless to his captors, who arranged an operation to make him fit once more.

"They informed me I would be operated on next day," he says. "When I arose from my mat in the morning I was refused my bowl of rice and given a bucket of water to have a bath. The temperature was 11 degrees below freezing point so I wasn't very happy about it."

"After 'bathing' I was put in the care of two Nip guards and taken on a tram to the Public Hospital. People who think Public Hospitals in Melbourne are full would appreciate a glance at this one in Osaka—a city of 3 million people.

"Eventually two Jap. doctors arrived and examined me. I was taken then to the operating table where my legs were tied down with rope and my arms entwined around metal bars above my head. The two Nip doctors dressed in leather aprons then 'went to town,' cut a piece out of the stomach wall, and sewed me up again, much to the delight of the spectators, male and female, who were allowed to watch. No anaesthetic was given, of course.

"After the operation I was put on the floor on a hessian stretcher—without blankets. It was cold. I stayed there until some of our fellows were sent to collect me and take me back to camp."

"I got better in due course," concluded Mr. Miller, thoughtfully.

TALKING OF RAILWAY MEN AND WOMEN

MR. T. R. COLLIER has resumed duty as Acting Superintendent of Train Services, after nearly three years' service as Director of Transportation in the Army. Mr. Collier, who had the rank of Colonel in the recent war, had a fine record in the First Great War also, serving from 1915 to 1919, and emerging as a Lieutenant with the M.C. and Bar. He entered the Department in 1910, and the value of his work as a transportation officer is revealed by his rapid advancement.

* * *

Dr. A. W. Bowman, who has retired from the position of Chief Medical Officer of the Department, has been succeeded in this post by Colonel Max A. Rees, of Murrumbidgee, who was recently attached to the staff of the Repatriation Commission in Melbourne.

Colonel Rees, who was a very young member of the First A.I.F., gave sterling service with the Army Medical Corps in the recent war in Libya, Greece, Crete, Syria, Borneo and Australia. Colonel Rees is a son of Mr. A. W. Rees, who was previously a senior officer in the Secretary's Branch, and a nephew of Mr. J. S. Rees, for many years Chief Clerk in that Branch.

* * *

Mr. R. M. Harvey, a member of the Betterment and Suggestions Board, who is also a member of the National Safety Council of Australia, has received the following nice compliment from Mr. E. J. Phelan, Acting Director of the International Labour Office, Montreal, Canada:

"I have the honour to inform you," says Mr. Phelan, "that the Governing Body of the International Labour Office at its 98th Session (Montreal, May 1946) decided to appoint you for a period of three years as a member of the Correspondence Committee on Accident Prevention."

"It gives me great pleasure to inform you of the Governing Body's decision."

"Communications and documents relating to the future work of the Committee will be sent to you in due course by the International Labour Office."

Congratulations, Mr. Harvey.

* * *

Everybody who knows Mr. E. J. Alley, one of the popular figures at Newport, will wish him health and happiness in his retirement, which recently occurred, after over 40 years in the Service.

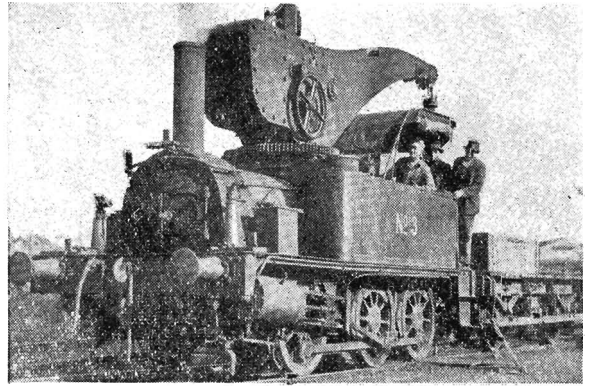
Born on July 30, 1881, Mr. Alley joined up at the beginning of 1906 in the Rolling Stock Branch, and when he ceased work in the Newport Shops, was a Leading Buffer Repairer. Also a soldier in the First Great War, which he saw right through from 1916 to the Armistice in 1918, he was further known for his abilities as a footballer.

For some years he was the brilliant centre half-back for the Williamstown Club. Many old football "fans" will remember "Nigger Alley," as he was called, and declare that at the peak of his career, he was in "a class on his own."

* * *

"Blind Woman Disappears," was the heading to an unusual press story last month. It was stated that "while her husband was shopping in Parramatta, she wandered away and has not been seen since." Whilst a special metropolitan police search was scouring Sydney for her, she had by some means boarded the Sydney-Melbourne express. She was discovered on "Spirit of Progress" by the Stewardess, Miss J. S. Pullen, who quickly realizing the lady's distress, looked after her on the journey and, on arrival, led her to the Travellers' Aid Society. Furthermore, the police were communicated with and every attention was given

Newport's First Locomotive Still Running!



Old "526Z"—today No. 3 Crane

THE first locomotive built at Newport Workshops is still in operation. Thousands of railway workers at Newport see it every day, but few realize that little No. 3 Crane, puffing its obsequious way through piles of spare parts and rusty scrap, was once a proud passenger locomotive—and the first constructed at Newport.

Newport No. 1—originally "526Z" in the Departmental register—made its initial run on June 30, 1893. It was as pretty as a picture, all green, with highly polished brass boiler mountings and a shining copper cap on its funnel.

Colloquially it was a "motor engine," designed to operate with a driver only, without fireman. A passageway connected the driver's cabin with the corridor through the carriages.

Ready for the road, "526Z" weighed 24 tons. Its tractive power was 7,542 lb.

For eleven years it was used on passenger runs, and it was then converted to a combined steam crane and shunting engine—No. 3 Crane. It gave sterling service at North Melbourne Loco. for many years, and is now working solidly at Newport Workshops, the place of its birth.

Driver Mick Naughton looks after it these days, so old "526Z" is in capable hands, for Mick has been firing and driving for 31 years in every corner of Victoria.

Since that day back in 1893, when it began operation, a further 538 locomotives have been built at Newport. Like "526Z" all have been a credit to those who built them, and a tribute to the skill and efficiency of railwaymen at the 'Shops.

to the lady before she was returned to her friends in Sydney. Congratulations to Miss Pullen. She gave an exhibition of service which was highly appreciated by all concerned.

* * *

After thirty-six years' Railway service, Mr. R. I. Dowsett, Skilled Labourer in the Plumbing Section at North Melbourne, retired during August. He was given a farewell lunch by his fellow workers, and many tributes were paid to his wide popularity. As a token of esteem he was presented with a wallet of notes.

RAILWAY NEWS OF THE MONTH . . .

THE shortage of coal and the success of the oil-burning 'A2' locomotives have decided the Commissioners to convert all the 'C' class locomotives (26) to oil-burning.

When this plan of conversion is completed, the Department will have 82 locomotives burning oil, and will be saving approximately 2,500 tons of coal each week.

This is only a temporary expedient, because it is the Commissioners' intention to reconvert the engines for coal-burning when adequate supplies can be relied upon, as the cost of oil fuel is very high.

It is not anticipated that any further increase in the number of oil depots will be required. All present and early future demands in this way will be met by the present oil depots at North Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong and Ararat.

The use of upwards of 5,000 tons of firewood weekly is relieving the demand for fuel on country lines, but with the coming of summer and an inevitable increase in the fire hazard, firewood will have to be withdrawn progressively in the near future.

* * * *

The coal position was responsible for a 50 per cent. cut in South Australian rail services last month. This decision affected the running of "The Overland," which was cancelled between Adelaide and Melbourne on August 6, and between Melbourne and Adelaide on the following night. Up to the time of writing, no further cuts in this important interstate service are contemplated.

* * * *

All the departmental engineers who were associated with the construction of the 'A2' class locomotives, one of the most useful and reliable engines in the departmental fleet, will be sorry to hear that the first of this class was recently broken up. It was No. 878 'A2' launched in December, 1913. During its life it had covered 782,599 miles, an average of over 23,000 miles a year.

* * * *

Further improvements in rail service will be achieved when 18 modern Diesel rail motors are delivered.

The Department recently ordered twelve 100 h.p. Diesel rail motors and another tender has just been accepted for six 150 h.p. Diesel motors and six trailers. The bodies, trailing bogies and underframes of these vehicles will be manufactured in Victoria, the power equipment being constructed in England.

The power units for the smaller cars should begin to arrive in March next, and there is a good prospect of subsequent sets following at monthly intervals.

* * * *

An extensive rolling stock construction programme is being carried out. Work at present in hand, or to be undertaken in the 1946-47 year, includes three 'K' class locomotives, four 'X' class and twenty 'N' class. For country services 20 passenger cars are to be built. Truck construction covers 690 'GY' trucks, 200 louveres and 100 'NN' (Hopper) trucks. Forty 'Z' vans are also to be built. Suburban services are to be augmented by two new 7-car passenger trains. In addition, eleven cars of two suburban passenger trains begun under the 1945-46 programme are nearing completion. Among these will be an experimental provision of strap-hangers for the benefit of standing passengers. If, as expected, the public reaction is favourable, their provision will be extended in suitable types of cars.

Inspection of the Kulwin and Robinvale lines carried out last month by Mr. Commissioner Wishart and Branch Officers revealed that a bumper season is

assured, all parts of the Mallee being green with young wheat. A heavy task will soon face the Department in the transport of wheat from the Mallee. In this connection the grave coal shortage and the impossibility of using firewood fuel in summer months are causing serious concern.

* * * *

It was made clear last month that although the duplication of the Eastmalvern railway line was part of the post-war programme, the job would not be undertaken early in 1947. Two other tasks which would receive prior attention were the duplication of the Alphington-Heidelberg section of the Heidelberg line, and the Ashburton line. Many other improvements are included in the long-range post-war programme. Among them is electrification of the Geelong line; the provision of heavier rails between Sunshine and Ararat; provision of additional double tracks between Jolimont Yard and South Yarra and between Jolimont Yard and Camberwell; the reconstruction of the Richmond station; and additional tracks, platforms and pedestrian subways at Flinders Street and Princes Bridge. The relaying of the Bendigo line has been in progress for some years.

* * * *

Every person who has enjoyed the novel experience of participating in one of the Central Australia winter tours which were inaugurated on June 11, has returned home a self-appointed publicity agent for this form of holiday. The superlatives are unanimous; there is not a dissenting word in the floods of comment, both written and verbal, that have reached the organizers of the tours, and the rapidly growing public interest in this form of holiday is shown by the fact that several people have already booked for a run into Central Australia next year!

New Commonwealth Railways Butcher's Vans

RECENT additions to the rolling stock of the Commonwealth Railways are two up-to-date travelling butcher's vans, wherein railway employees working along the 1,049 miles of railway between Port Augusta (S.A.) and Parkeston (W.A.) can buy a joint, a pound of chops, or whatever other meat is available, just as if they were shopping in the capital cities.

These refrigerated vans are attached to the mixed supply trains generally known as the "Tea and Sugar" trains, one van serving the men between Port Augusta and Cook (513 miles) and the other providing fresh mutton and steak between Cook and Parkeston. A butcher travels with each van and serves his customers in a special cutting shop, taking what he requires from a refrigerating chamber capable of accommodating the carcasses of 60 sheep and 4 bullocks. A cash register records each sale. There is also a customers' compartment and a section reserved as living quarters for the travelling butcher.

The principal feature of the vans, however, is an engine room containing a 6-8 H.P. Lister engine and Coldstream refrigerating unit. This ensures a regular supply of fresh meat, and is a vast improvement on the previous system of attaching to the "Tea and Sugar" train a combined butcher's shop and killing pen in which the animals were slaughtered as required en route.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

OCTOBER 1946

Issue No. 193

AGAIN THEY'RE GOING TO THE SHOW !



Discontinued during the war years, the Royal Agricultural Show was revived last month with immense success. From the opening day, September 19, to the final, September 28, over 320,000 passengers were carried by the fast electric service from Flinders Street and Spencer Street to the Showgrounds.

The Growth of Safe Working

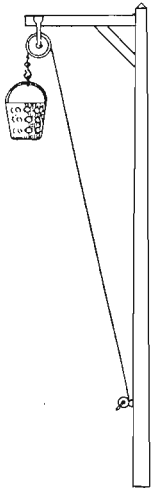
PART I.

IN August, 1889, "by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons" the Regulation of Railways Act came into operation. It marked the official acceptance of the safeworking principles which had grown up in Britain over the preceding 60 years and specified three highly important provisions which must be made for the safety of the public: adoption of the block system, installation of interlocking points and signals, and fitting of continuous brakes to all passenger trains.

The Act was tardy, for these safeworking principles had been evolved, although not generally adopted, more than twenty years previously.

Railways, in their early conception, were merely an extension of the coaching idea, with rails replacing the macadam road and steam engines replacing horses. In fact, on the Stockton to Darlington railway, opened in 1825, passenger coaches were horse-drawn, the Company's sole steam engine (Stephenson's "Locomotion No. 1") being employed to haul coal trucks.

By 1830 the Company had acquired several locomotives and their efficiency made it clear that the horse-drawn rail coaches were doomed. Their use, too, involved definite safeworking requirements, and primitive signals came into existence. Tradition has it that the first railway signal ever used was a candle placed in the window of a stationmaster's house as an indication for trains to stop.



A Fire-basket Signal

A torch waved from side to side meant "proceed" with an up and down movement signifying "halt." On a hill, where ascending and descending trains were liable to meet, a pole with a projecting arm and chain-pulley supporting a fire-basket was erected. The basket hoisted high authorized a train to ascend, and when lowered permitted traffic down the bank only.

A number of similar signalling methods came into being by mutual agreement, and they were quite effective for the small traffic over the line.

The year 1830 is highly important in railway history, for in September of that year the Liverpool to Manchester line was opened. It was the first "real" railway, operated entirely by steam locomotives, and the pattern for all future railways. Safety of passengers was an aim of the Company right from the start, and before running began, the Directors laid down various rules including instructions that trains travel at low speeds when passing high embankments, or when approaching watering points "more especially when other trains are at the watering places at the same time."

As the Company grew, so did a variety of safeworking ideas ranging from provision of signals to the decision to take greater precautions during twilight and dusk by sending out "a pilot engine with a good coal lamp affixed to the tender to meet the train of carriages that leaves Manchester at half-past four, and to return in advance of the train, to the increased safety of passengers."

There were no precedents for these early Companies to work from, and no safety principles other than those taken over from the road coaches and adapted to railway usage. But a nebulous safeworking system soon began to emerge, an essentially railway system, based on commonsense and conditioned by railway experience.

(To be continued.)

RETIREMENT OF MR. T. D. DOYLE

ALL railwaymen who have enjoyed the courtesy and admired the efficiency of Mr. T. D. Doyle, Rolling Stock engineer, will wish him happiness and contentment in his retirement which occurred



Mr. T. D. Doyle

last month. A large number of officers who have been associated with Mr. Doyle through the years, attended his final hour in his Branch when Mr. A. C. Ahlston (Chief Mechanical Engineer) supported by Mr. E. H. Brownbill (Asst. C.M.E.) and others, made complimentary references to the career of a fine railwayman, and presented him with a portable wireless set, an attache case and two books to add to his technical library.

Mr. Doyle entered the Department in 1903 as a fitter, passed through the grades of draughtsman and assistant engineer until he was appointed an engineer in 1918. During his career he was closely associated with the preparation of designs for the "C," "N," "K," "X," "S" and "H" class locomotives and the cars of "Spirit of Progress." In 1927 he greatly enlarged his experience by travelling to America, where he was able to study the latest developments in locomotive and rolling stock construction. In his leisure he proposes to devote his time to carpentry and gardening.

Mr. Doyle has been succeeded by Mr. A. M. Hughes who has previously been in-charge of the locomotive design section of the Rolling Stock Drawing Office and, indeed, has been employed in this activity since 1920. He entered the Department as an apprentice in 1913 and during the First Great War served with the 4th Division Artillery from 1916 until peace was declared.

English Locomotives Being Converted for Oil Burning

THE statement is often heard that coal supplies in Great Britain are just as difficult as in Australia.

Recent advices from Britain indicate that railway reserves have been depleted to about six days' consumption, but that special trains can still be run to meet holiday traffic. Very little in the latter direction has been possible in Victoria since Easter 1941.

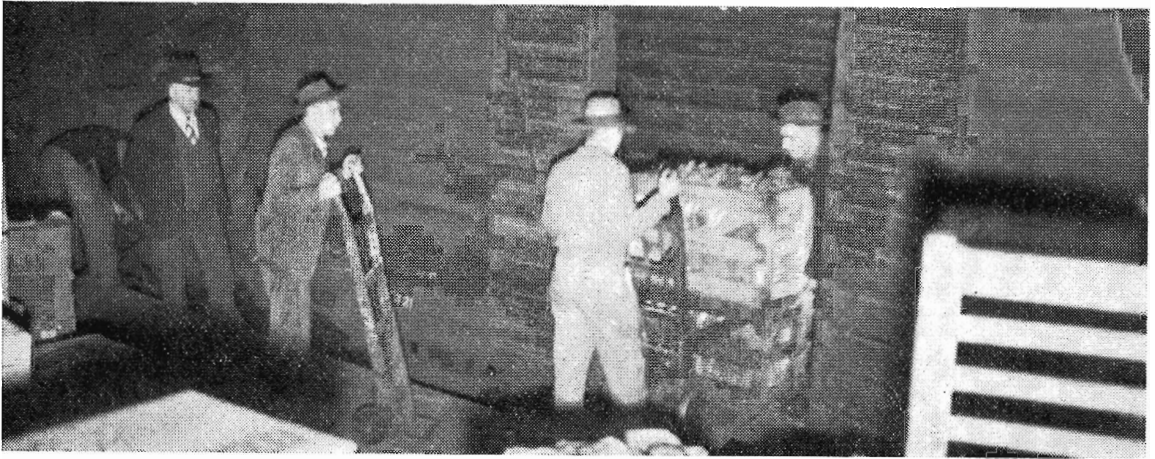
The British Government has requested the railway companies and other industries to partly change over from coal to fuel oil so that a reserve of coal may be built up for next winter. At July 24 last, the Great Western Railway had converted 10 locomotives of a programme of 50.

The British Government hopes to save 3,000,000 tons of coal by burning 2,000,000 tons of oil, and it is intended to subsidize those who co-operate.

Neither in Great Britain nor in Australia is there any parallel to the burdens which the Victorian Railways have been obliged to carry in respect of the wholesale use of low-grade substitute fuels such as firewood.

BEHIND THE RAILWAY SCENE :

In the Perishable Shed, Melbourne Goods — 3 a.m.



Unloading Rabbits in the Perishable Shed, Melbourne Goods.

MELBOURNE is sleeping. A fine web of lights stretches across the suburbs, and the sky glows yellow-red. You can almost see the stillness, broken only as the city stirs restlessly to the metallic clang of an all-night tram or the whirr of a passing motor. In a few hours Melbourne will wake up hungry. The million will be demanding meals and to supply them a tiny corner of the city is wide awake and very much on duty.

It is 3 a.m. in the Perishable Shed of the Melbourne Goods. Already platforms are stacked high with foodstuffs: butter and eggs, cheese and bacon, honey and fruit, beans and celery. Since midnight, men have been unloading, for perishable goods brook no delay. This is market-day, too, and motors are drawn up outside waiting to collect goods as soon as they are discharged. Many of the consignments lying in the trucks at the moment will be unloaded, collected and sold in the market-place before dawn.

To-night—or, rather, this morning—there is a large arrival of poultry and the noise in the Shed is deafening. An indignant rooster can make an infernal racket, and all these roosters are indignant. Many of the crates have been placed on the outside loading ramps, but the row goes on, deadening even the noise of the shunting trucks.

In a month anything from 20,000 to 30,000 tons is taken from the trucks by a staff which fluctuates in number depending on the work to be done, but which aggregates about 450 man days a week.

One portion of the Shed smells very sweet. That's because of the oranges. Hundreds of boxes are piled around, the yellow skins showing through the slats in the cases. But the scent of the oranges goes unheeded by the sorters who are busy men with work to do.

They inspect the contents of the trucks in their particular area and direct where the various commodities are to be stacked. The men who do the unloading are winding in and out of the piles of goods like so many ants. The tally checker flutters from spot to spot. Tally checkers are a worried race, who never cease mumbling "... fifty-six, fifty-seven, fifty-eight ..." with intense concentration. To speak to a tally checker in the middle of his count is a dangerous proceeding. A grubby notebook bent back in the middle and a stub of pencil, with which he regularly scratches his ear, are the indispensable equipment of the tally checker. The smooth functioning of the whole system depends on his speed and accuracy.

Like the sorter, who is oblivious to the scent of the oranges, the tally checker apparently finds no beauty in the array of smoked hams. They look fine, though, lying there in golden rows, very firm and very tempting. Next to them are a dozen cases of eggs from Lancefield, and a box of ripe tomatoes. The morning air has a hungry nip and visions of a Gargantuan breakfast are inevitable—perhaps topped off with some of those huge amber cheeses over in the corner.

At the moment some of the men are unloading pineapples from Queensland. A lot of fruits come here from other States, over 90 tons every week from South Australia, about 750 tons from New South Wales, and 700 tons from Queensland.

A lot of market-garden produce is carted direct to the Victoria Markets by the growers themselves, but in the Shed now are hundreds of bags of beans, consignments of peas, and a stack of pumpkins. By midday some of them will be cooking on the stoves of Melbourne housewives. Cases of celery and crates of lettuces will help to make a tasty salad, with maybe some of the rock melons there for dessert.

The Goods Foreman, though, does not seem to be thinking of lunch just yet. As he walks down the platform everybody—unconsciously—works a trifle faster. He stops here and there to inspect a truck, gives a brief direction to a tally checker. The work is coming along very well and the rake should be cleared any minute from now.

Outside in the Yard another batch of trucks is waiting to replace the empties. Soon they will be run in, doors thrown open, light globes on flexible leads taken into the dimness of the louvres, and ramps run across from truck edges to the platform. From their depths will come more food—from every part of Victoria, and from Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia.

There will be fruits and dairy produce, vegetables and poultry, all to "Perishable Shed, Melbourne Goods"—meals for the million coming to town on the railway network.

RAILWAY NEWS OF THE MONTH . . .

A substantial and valuable addition to the rolling stock of the Department will be the construction of 20 steel carriages of the type which comprises "Spirit of Progress."

Six are about to be taken in hand and the first will be completed, it is anticipated, early next year.

Each unit will be constructed of the celebrated Corten steel, and there will be the same double panes of unbreakable glass in the windows, the same comfortably pitched seats with disappearing armrests, and all the other "Spirit of Progress" innovations including air conditioning, the skilfully diffused illumination with a concealed reading lamp for each passenger, and the special rubber cushions in the four-wheeled bogies, friction draft gear and automatic couplings to remove vibration.

The only change contemplated in these cars will be in the present washroom accommodation at each end of the car. A partition will divide the lavatory from the washroom, and each convenience will be entered through a separate door.

In order to facilitate the running of oil-burning locomotives from Melbourne to Serviceton an oil tank with a capacity of 12,000 gallons has been provided at Dimboola.

This new arrangement increases the number of oil depots to five. At the time of writing the others are at Ararat and Geelong, each provided with six tanks (total 144,000 gallons), North Melbourne and Ballarat three tanks each (total 72,000 gallons).

From the time they were first put into commission up to the end of June last, the four "S" class locomotives had covered a total mileage of 3,941,467 miles. "S.300," which began running in March 1928, broke the million mark with 1,082,050 miles.

"H.220" also put up a remarkable performance—318,608 miles in little more than 5 years and with only one thorough overhaul. "Heavy Harry" makes 5 return trips every week between Melbourne and Wodonga.

Many of the "A2" class locomotives passed the million mark, and "E" and "Y" types are also consistent "millionaires."

During the course of a recent interview with the Commissioners, representatives of the United Women's Movement were informed that in addition to taking prams and go-carts that could pass through the doorways into ordinary compartments in the off-peak periods, there is the additional facility of the "ringer" compartments near the centre of many suburban sliding-door trains which could be used for the carriage of prams, etc. Station staffs can help anxious mothers with young children in prams by advising them where to wait for the arrival of the train and then helping with the loading of the pram.

Recently radio-telephonic communication was established between Mt. Buffalo National Park and Mt. Hotham on trial. Frequently in the past, snow storms and gales have interfered with the ordinary telephone service between Mt. Hotham and Harrierville and there have been occasions when bitter winter weather has isolated the mountain resort. With the installation of radio-telephony the staff at the Chalets at Mt. Buffalo National Park and Mt. Hotham are now able to communicate with each other independent of the weather or the condition of the line over which normal telephone communication is maintained, and in the event of damage to the line to either of these resorts the staff at the other will be able to relay any messages required.

Mt. Hotham is also the headquarters for communication of the Ski Club which, with its wireless equipment, is able to send or receive messages to or from the various huts on the mountain slopes.

The D.A.P. Canteen at Newport, which provided excellent service to hungry workers engaged on aircraft production during the war, was re-opened last month as a cafeteria for Newport railwaymen. With three races for the quick provision of hot or cold meals it is capable of feeding 400 at a sitting.

Mr. A. W. Keown, Superintendent of Refreshment Services, retains an affectionate regard for this Canteen for, as Controller of Food Services in the Commonwealth Department of Labour and National Service over the war years, he was closely associated with the planning and general layout of the building.

V.R. Man Represents Victoria in National Quiz Contest

FIRST of the four Victorians selected to represent the State in the Australian Championship of the 2nd Security Loan £1,000 Quiz Contest is Mr. George Morris, Signwriter at Newport Workshops.

Scoring 19 out of 20 in the initial series, he answered 5 out of 5 questions correctly in the State elimination.

Mr. Morris is no newcomer to the Quiz field. Over the last six years he has been a "regular" and is well known for his successes on various radio programmes. Last December he organized a Railway quiz team from Newport Workshops which, in "Two-Station Quiz," decisively defeated a team entered by the employees of a Melbourne manufacturing company. For a time Mr. Morris was the "Champ." in 3 A.W.'s "Beat the Champ." programme of general knowledge and held the title when the session ended.

Joining the Department as an apprentice Car Painter in 1915, Mr. Morris was appointed Signwriter in 1924. Among his most interesting jobs have been the decoration of trains for the Duke of York on the 1927 visit and the Duke of Gloucester for the 1934 tour. The famous "VR" monogram and the gold wings on "Spirit of Progress" engines are also the handwork of this versatile railwayman.

Ambulance Competition District Events Decided

CORPS and individual winners of the 1946 District Ambulance Competitions will compete in the Final Competition which will be held at Lilydale on Thursday, October 24.

With 432½ points, North Melbourne Loco. No. 2 headed the Senior Corps event, followed by Benalla No. 1, Newport Workshops No. 2, Ararat No. 2 and North Melbourne Loco. No. 1. In the Novice Corps event, Ballarat North No. 1 topped the list, followed by Newport Workshops No. 1, Seymour No. 2, Bendigo North No. 1, Dimboola, Bendigo Loco. and Bendigo No. 1 (Transportation).

In the Senior Individual event, Messrs. P. Delmerico, R. Klemke, and F. L. O'Brien qualified for the final, while in the Novice Individual, Messrs. E. Wensor, J. Gleeson, S. Dawe, J. Richards, J. Smith, H. A. Barker and G. H. Skene, will compete in the Finals.

District Shields were won by Ballarat North No. 1, Ararat No. 2, Benalla No. 1, Bendigo North No. 1, Traralgon, Jolimont Guards, and North Loco. No. 2. Congratulations to all of them!



Mr. G. Morris

CENTENARY OF GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

"FANCY trying to stop a train with air. The man's mad." Thus spoke one of the famous family of Vanderbilts when the great George Westinghouse introduced his air brake to the world. The comment sounds humorous in these days, when Westinghouse's automatic air brake for railway trains ranks among the highest benefits to mankind that have been produced.

This year is the centenary of Westinghouse's birth, and it is appropriate to make some reference to this remarkable man.



George Westinghouse

In tenacity of purpose, in industry, and in ability to concentrate on a definite achievement regardless of all frustrations and disappointments, he was a memorable character. Nothing could stop him. Nothing did.

What started him thinking of some means of quickly and effectively stopping railway trains was the numerous collisions, with the consequent deaths and injuries, that occurred in the 1860's of America's railroad history.

Many devices had been proposed—some were even given trial—before Westinghouse launched his own famous idea. His compressed air brake was actually born of one of those sudden inspirations. He had been thinking of steam and even electric brakes, when he read in a magazine that the engineers who were constructing the Mont Cenis tunnel had produced a 3,000-foot pipe line through which compressed air had been pumped to power the rock drills required for their operations.

Westinghouse reflected that if compressed air could operate rock drills through 3,000-feet of pipe line—a much greater distance than the longest train of the time—it was the simple dependable power he had been seeking to operate a brake on every wheel of a train. He set to work and in two years a patent (No. 5504) was issued to him. It was April 13, 1869. He had been financed by the executive of a Pittsburgh foundry, and he was now preparing for a practical test.

He was only 23, but he was sufficiently ardent and persuasive to induce the superintendent of the Panhandle Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad to try out his device.

What happened is now history. The strange new air brake was attached to the Steubenville train of locomotive, tender and three passenger cars. Somewhat sceptical railroad men were aboard to watch the result. The result was unexpected even to Westinghouse. As the train emerged from a tunnel at 30 miles an hour, the engine driver saw a huckster's cart crossing the line only two short blocks away. The driver of the cart tried to hurry the horses across with the whip. They reared and stalled the cart. What was the engine driver to do? "Without much faith," it is reported, he reached for the new strange brake handle and pulled. It worked, and the train was brought to a standstill within four feet of the cart.

That was sufficient to establish Westinghouse. Though some other inventors had thought of using compressed air for braking force, only Westinghouse had made his brake unique by connecting his cars with a continuous air pipe running from car to car throughout the train. He later introduced an automatic device called a "triple valve," which was fitted in conjunction with a compressed air reservoir on each vehicle. Whilst the train was running unbraked, the air pipe line and reservoirs were charged with compressed air. When the driver wanted to stop the train,

instead of admitting air into the pipe line, as before, he let the air out. The difference in pressure between reservoir and pipe then operated the triple valve, which automatically turned the air from the car reservoir to the brake cylinder, and thereby forced the brake blocks to the wheels.

The ingenious part of this arrangement was that when a train accidentally divided from any cause, the automatic feature caused both parted sections to stop promptly. This safety feature is acclaimed as one of the great inventions of all time.

Having justified his invention, Westinghouse speedily found himself an identity. The progressive Pennsylvania Railroad was the first to try the new equipment, and within five years over 2,000 locomotives and 7,000 cars in America had been fitted. Not only that. His fame spread to Europe, and as early as 1872 a Belgian Railway Co. adopted his air brake. Mexico followed next year, and factories for the express purpose of manufacturing the air brake equipment sprang up in England, France, Germany, Russia, and other European countries.

The Westinghouse Automatic Air Brake has progressively developed up to the present time, but this was not the only highlight in the career of its inventor. We read of his justifying the use of alternating current in electricity against the opinion of even Thomas A. Edison, and he proved his ability by securing the contract to provide the electric light for the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. Later he was to harness the Niagara Falls to produce electric power, and he was one of the first to discover the value of natural gas.

A big, hearty man with a backslap or a wisecrack for everybody he met, he was a fine advertisement for the fact that genius can arrive without the benefit of much formal education. Actually he was not conspicuous in school. His college, indeed his university, in his youth was the machine shop of Westinghouse Senior at Schenectady, U.S.A. He died in 1914, after months of illness—the upshot of a severe cold caught when fishing.

APPOINTMENT CONFIRMED FOR MR. L. C. BROMILOW

THE appointment of Mr. L. C. Bromilow as Manager of Publicity and Tourist Services and Chairman of the Betterment and Suggestions Board is the climax to a long and industrious career in the Department. During the recent war he controlled all the activities associated with the Betterment, Suggestions and Publicity Sections of the Department.



Mr. L. C. Bromilow

He started as a goods clerk at Kyneton, and was subsequently transferred to Head Office, Spencer Street, where he soon began to make his mark. Some time was spent in the Train Running Office and also in special work with Mr. Miscamble in the reorganization of goods transportation. He later showed his capacity in the Outdoor Superintendent's Office. He has been associated with the Betterment and Suggestions Board, first as a member, for over 19 years.

NEWS FROM THE V.R. INSTITUTE

"A great success!" was the unanimous verdict of the 800 happy railwaymen and their friends who attended the Railway Ball at the St. Kilda Town Hall last month. This was the first appearance of this Ball since 1939 and everybody present enjoyed the reunion, and the entertainment that had been carefully planned by a capable committee of which the Chairman was Mr. C. G. Walker, Supervisor of Road Transport. Everything went off without a hitch. Excellent music was provided by Hood's Orchestra under the baton of Mr. Harry Thomas, Officer-in-Charge of the Typewriter Maintenance Depot, and the catering was in the experienced hands of the popular Turner's Catering Service.

Among the throng who appeared were Mr. N. C. Harris (Chairman of Commissioners) and Mrs. Harris, Mr. L. J. Williamson (Comptroller of Accounts), Mr. W. Price (Asst. General Supt. of Transportation), Mr. L. C. Stewart (Asst. Comptroller of Stores), Mr. H. L. Kennedy (Asst. Supt. of Refreshment Services), Mr. L. C. Bromilow (Manager, Publicity and Tourist Services) Mr. J. L. Timewell (Commissioners' Special Officer), Mr. T. R. Collier (Supt. Train Services), Mr. Ken. Wood (Asst. Manager, Spotswood Workshops), Mr. W. E. Elliott (Secretary of the V.R.I.), and other well-known railwaymen. One very welcome figure was Mr. Brennan, ex Comptroller of Accounts, who stepped out jauntily from his retirement to join with old friends in a very joyous evening.

* * * *

After a series of close games Spotswood Workshops have won the Commissioners' Cup in the 1946 V.R.I. Football Competition.

In the final, Spotswood held Melbourne Yard by the barest of margins—an after-the-bell mark taken by Melbourne Yard failing to register the score that would have given a Yard victory. Then came the grand final between Spotswood and North Melbourne Shops. A thrilling battle had a breathless finish when the last kick of the day—a free taken after the bell—registered one point to make a drawn game. The play-off on September 18 was equally exciting and Spotswood Workshops ran out from a hard match the premiers for 1946—by a bare 3 points win!

* * * *

For a number of years, the Ladies Sporting section of the V.R.I. has provided a good programme of field sports for girls in the Service, but until recently no attempt has been made to establish sporting clubs. At a meeting of the Institute, however, on August 26 last, 33 girls from six Branches in the Department decided to start tennis and soft-ball clubs. A table tennis club will probably be decided upon later.

* * * *

The V.R.I. Golf Association is also making happy progress. Following on the first successful "Get Together" at Aspendale on June 25, another delightful match was staged at Woodend recently. Approximately 50 players turned out. The trophies which were presented by Mr. F. Findley of Ballarat were won by Messrs. Eric Wishart and Bill Salary.

* * * *

The V.R. Institute is making a big effort to revive the pre-war competitions by country teams, in cricket and tennis, in Melbourne in February and March next year. The Council of the Institute realizes that a major problem to be overcome is the transport position brought about by the coal restrictions, but it intends to seek the views of the men concerned and, should these be favourable, the Commissioners would be asked to approve of the restoration of these highly popular events as soon as transport conditions permit. Similar competition fixtures will also be considered

for other branches of sport such as bowls, billiards, carpet bowls, golf, etc.

* * * *

A Geelong correspondent reports that the Geelong V.R.I. Quoits Club competing in the Quoits Association had a successful season and finished in fifth place. The Billiards Club provided two teams in "B" grade and one in "C" grade of the Geelong and District Competition. The "B" teams did not reach the final four; "C" team, however, has won its semi-final and has a good prospect of winning the premiership. A recent Club Handicap was won by Mr. J. Fuller, with Mr. W. Carroll as runner-up. Highest break was made by Mr. K. Howard (51).

Changes in Control of Estate Office

FOLLOWING the recent retirements after long and valuable careers of Mr. S. P. E. Capps (Estate Officer) and Mr. A. H. Rogerson (Assistant Estate Officer), Messrs. F. R. Pritchard and W. H. Sherriff have been appointed to fill these important positions.



Mr. F. R. Pritchard

The new Estate Officer, Mr. Pritchard, is a qualified Land Surveyor who originally came from the Construction Branch of the Department, which he entered in 1912. He was then employed as a draughtsman and held this job until 1916 when he enlisted in the 7th Batters Field Artillery for service in the First Great War. He saw heavy fighting in France and Belgium and on returning to the railways he joined the Estate Office where he has been ever since.

Mr. Pritchard is the descendant of a long line of civil engineers. His great grandfather, Daniel Pritchard, who receives a complimentary reference in the Memoirs of Thomas Telford (1757-1834), a famous canal bridge and harbour engineer in Britain, was responsible for the construction of one of the first railways in England—from Wigan to Parkside—and was also associated with the construction of the London-Birmingham railway. Grandfather Daniel Baddeley Pritchard was also engaged in various railway projects and soon after coming to Melbourne in 1852 he was "appointed to superintend the construction of the first railway in Victoria from Melbourne to Hobson's Bay." Subsequently, he surveyed and "estimated for projected extensive lines of railway from Ballarat to the Western districts of Victoria."

His son, Frank Pynor Pritchard (the father of the present Estate Officer) was another civil engineer who was also engaged on various railway construction works here, including the extension of the railway lines from Lilydale to Healesville and from Heyfield to Bairnsdale.

The Assistant Estate Officer, Mr. W. H. Sherriff, is another veteran of the First Great War. He enlisted in the 2nd Engineers in 1915 and in the battle at Pozieres was badly wounded in the knee. Before entering the Estate Office he was engaged in the Construction Branch on survey and construction work in the field. He is also a qualified Land Surveyor.

His father was a sea captain who at the end of a long career in wind-jammers and steam vessels became Commodore of Huddart Parker Ltd.

RAILWAY FAMILIES

The Watkins—Father and Son

THE Watkins of Geelong are a more than interesting railway family—the son was atom-bombed! A prisoner of war of the Japanese he was working in the dockyards on a small island about four miles from Nagasaki when the second atom bomb of the war was dropped. At the time all Australians had been withdrawn from the area to work in the coal-mines, with the exception of Bob



Mr. Bob Watkins and his father

Watkins and two companions. Bob is the son of the popular and well-known Passenger Guard R. Watkins who has been stationed at Geelong for the last nine years. Here is the story in his own words:

"It was a warm, brilliant morning. We were working at riveting in the dockyard with our shirts off. Suddenly, without warning, there was a brilliant blue flash. It was just nine minutes past eleven by the dockyard clock. There was dead silence, then I had a distant sensation of warmth.

Then came the sound of a tremendous explosion. It was so loud, though it came from so far away, that I thought the dock next to ours had blown up. With the noise came the blast: like a terrific rush of wind over the island.

"There were no casualties. The island was saucer-shaped, with low hills all around the edge, and so it was the top works of the dockyard that suffered. Roofs and top gear were torn to bits and broken glass

was scattered all over the place.

"About ten seconds after the explosion the alarm was sounded and we were ordered to the shelters. To get to the shelters we had to leave the dockyard and run about 600 yards along the road. As I ran I looked over at Nagasaki. By then a huge column of black smoke was rolling up from the town. Flames were rolling and billowing in and out of the smoke which mushroomed out in the sky. The top was pure white in the sunlight—really it was a lovely sight."

Before the war Bob was a permanent soldier in the Royal Australian Artillery at Queenscliff. Enlisting with the A.I.F. in 1941 he was captured with 2/19 Bn. at Singapore, imprisoned at Changi, and then given his first taste of railway work—on the infamous Burma-Siam railway. For fifteen months he slaved on the project before being transferred to ship-building duties in Japan, in July 1944.

The surrender of Japan brought his liberation and he was discharged early this year. Following in father's footsteps he became a railwayman and is now an acting shunter at Geelong.

After emerging successfully from all his adventures and narrow escapes he fell off his motor bike some weeks ago and broke his arm!

Bob's father is today No. 3 guard on the Passenger list. Joining the Department in 1900 he was appointed Goods Guard in 1911 and Passenger Guard in 1929. When stationed at Natimuk in 1908 he shared a room at the boarding house with Junior Clerk R. G. Wishart—now a Commissioner.

Before he went to Geelong Mr. Watkins was at Bendigo for 21 years. During the war he was a prominent member of the Geelong branch of the "Dad's Association." These days his spare time is devoted to fishing and gardening.

V.R. OFFICER HONOURED

IT does not often fall to the lot of a railwayman to be honoured by the Citizens of Melbourne in the Melbourne Town Hall for his work as a public servant.



Mr. D. Cameron

That distinction was, however, conferred on Mr. D. Cameron, Chairman of the Railways Staff Board, on September 11.

Between 250 and 300 citizens, including representatives of manufacturing and commercial establishments, primary producers, industrial organizations, private citizens, and former officers of the Manpower Directorate, gathered together to pay tribute to Mr. Cameron for the manner

in which he carried out his very onerous and difficult duties as Deputy-Director of Manpower in Victoria during the war.

The Honorable P. L. Coleman, M.L.C., representing the Premier and State Government; the Lord Mayor (Councillor F. R. Connelly), Sir Louis Bussau (Chairman of the Australian Wheat Board), Captain Frank Ayre (Chamber of Manufacturers), Mr. J. V. Stout (Melbourne Trades Hall Council), and Mr. W. Funnell (former Director-General of Manpower), were the speakers.

Mr. Percy J. Portus, Chairman of the function, presented Mr. Cameron with a cheque and a handsomely bound and illustrated souvenir of his association with the Manpower side of the war effort.

Mr. Portus said that public servants were often called upon to perform hard and unpleasants tasks, and their

services were not always fully appreciated by citizens. Mr. Cameron had handled a unique and tremendously difficult job with ability, tact and human understanding, and citizens wished to make some public recognition of his work.

In acknowledging the tributes paid to him, Mr. Cameron said that much of the success of his organization was due to the splendid manner in which everybody had co-operated with him.

Football Champions

HERE are the champions in the V.R.I. Football League Competition for 1946—Tom Yates, best and fairest player, and Bert Kenny, highest goalkicker.



Mr. T. Yates Mr. B. Kenny

Yates plays with Flinders Street and gave an inspiring exhibition throughout the season of clean, clever football. He is a member of Yarraville in the Victorian Football Association.

Kenny, by registering 87 goals with deadly accuracy, scored the highest total in the history of V.R.I. football. He plays with Spotswood Workshops, this year's premiers.

TALKING OF RAILWAY MEN AND WOMEN

There was a great turnout in the Dining Car Depot last month when Miss G. Chamley, one of the Supervisors of the Buffet Car Services since 1939, who has resigned from the Service on account of her marriage, received a send-off that will be a fine memory with her for many, many years. Mr. A. W. Keown, Superintendent of Refreshment Services, who presided from a moving buffet car that was being prepared for service, assured the many colleagues of the lady, of the high esteem in which she was held and of the general regret at losing her services. The affection which she had won during her career was revealed by the fact that not only her colleagues in the Depot but many other railway men and women and several members of the travelling public had contributed to the magnificent silver tray and cocktail set which, it is considered, only modestly expressed the unanimity of opinion regarding her.

* * * *

The many friends of Mr. John Minehan, Officer-in-charge of Room 55, will regret to learn that ill-health has compelled him to retire. For many years he was a well-known Transportation personality. Joining the Department as a junior clerk in 1897, he spent his long career in Head Office, where he was associated with the Staff Office and with the Superintendent of Train Services until 1915. He then took up duty in Room 55, rising to officer-in-charge. His quiet personality and sympathetic understanding of railwaymen's problems earned him a wide circle of railway friends throughout the State.

* * * *

One of the Department's most picturesque identities has left the Service. He is Mr. Joe Chard, 70 year-old cook attached to the Dining Car Depot, North Melbourne.

Born in Victoria back in 1876 he went to sea as a lad, spent five years trading in the South Sea Islands, then took himself to America. For a time he worked on the San Francisco waterfront before joining the Oceanic Steamship and Railway Company with the post of steward. After several trips between America and Australia, and surviving two shipwrecks, he forsook the sea and became a railroad steward.

The great San Francisco earthquake, from which he emerged unscathed, convinced Mr. Chard that the time had come for him to leave America. So he came back to Australia, joining the Victorian Railways as a cook in 1909. Over the following years he provided meals on every dining-car running in the State, including the diner on "Spirit of Progress."

Due to retire five years ago, Mr. Chard was retained because of the pressure of work brought about by the war. Despite his age he has always been able to hold his own with younger and more active cooks.

Now he plans to visit Western Australia—and after the holiday he may take another job! Goodbye and good-luck, Mr. Chard, you're a grand oldtimer.

* * * *

With deep regret the death is recorded of Mr. Kevin Coyle, Accounting Officer, Bendigo, who died from a heart-attack on August 27, whilst on sick leave. Mr. Coyle, who was 63 years of age, joined the Department in 1901. A capable and popular railwayman, he rose to the position of Accounting Officer, Refreshment Services Accounting Office, and was transferred to Bendigo 13 years ago.

* * * *

The tragic death of Mr. M. S. Wass, plumber with the District Engineer, Ballarat, came as a shock to his many friends. He was killed in an accident

on the job. Mr. Wass, who was in his 61st year, joined the Department in 1914 and was stationed at Warrnambool. He was transferred to Ballarat in 1920 and remained there up to the time of his death. Keenly interested in bowls, he was senior vice-president of the Ballarat Bowling Club.

* * * *

Only six months to go before retirement Mr. T. L. Diss, repairer at Elphinstone, had the right to expect that he would reach the leisure that he had so well earned. But it was not to be. Last month he was killed in a railway accident when on duty in the area with which he had been associated for most of his railway career. Mr. Diss, whose death is deeply regretted, has a son, Mr. R. C. B. Diss, a skilled labourer in the Signals Division, and a nephew, Mr. A. W. Diss, a repairer at Harcourt.

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A Traralgon correspondent informs us that Guard C. D. S. Courtney, who was recently transferred to Orbost, was Safe Working Instructor during his stay at Traralgon, and had the pleasure of seeing two members of his class win the N. C. Harris Prize for Safeworking in successive years, viz., Mr M. W. Isaac (A.S.M.) 1942/43 and Mr. K.C.G. Howes (Shunter) 1943/44.

* * * *

From a Geelong correspondent: "I greatly regret to report the sudden death of Mr. W. H. Lewis, a veteran under-gear repairer who had spent most of his railway life in Geelong. He was just on the verge of 51 when he died—an excellent fellow whom everybody knew as 'Yogger.' He was ex-President of the Geelong V.R.I. and R.S.S. & A.I.L.A. Sub-section."

* * * *

Ill-health has been responsible for the retirement of Mr. Les. Hillhouse and Mr. Reg. Ellis. Mr. Hillhouse, who was born in 1891 and commenced as an engine cleaner at North Melbourne Loco., had been stationed at Geelong Loco. since 1921, and Mr. Ellis (aged 59), had gone to Geelong in 1918. Both had been excellent drivers and had active associations with the V.R.I. and A.F.U.L.E. Mr. Hillhouse had been president of the Geelong Trades Hall.

* * * *

WHEN the "Food for Britain" Appeal opened last February, the members of the Traffic Branch decided not only to support wholeheartedly the Railway effort, but to go even further. They arranged a regular pay-day subscription among themselves, obtained a list of deserving English families—mostly with a large number of children—and since then have sent parcels overseas regularly.

Letters of appreciation from the recipients have been most grateful. Typical is that received from the wife of an English dock-yard worker. She writes:

"I think I ought to tell you that your parcel could not have arrived at a more fortunate time for me, as my husband is having to keep to his bed for quite a long time with heart trouble, and consequently I cannot now spare the time to stand in queues. I think you could not have chosen more useful contents, and I really couldn't put one article in front of another as regards its welcomeness. My husband and family all join me in saying "Thank you, Australia."

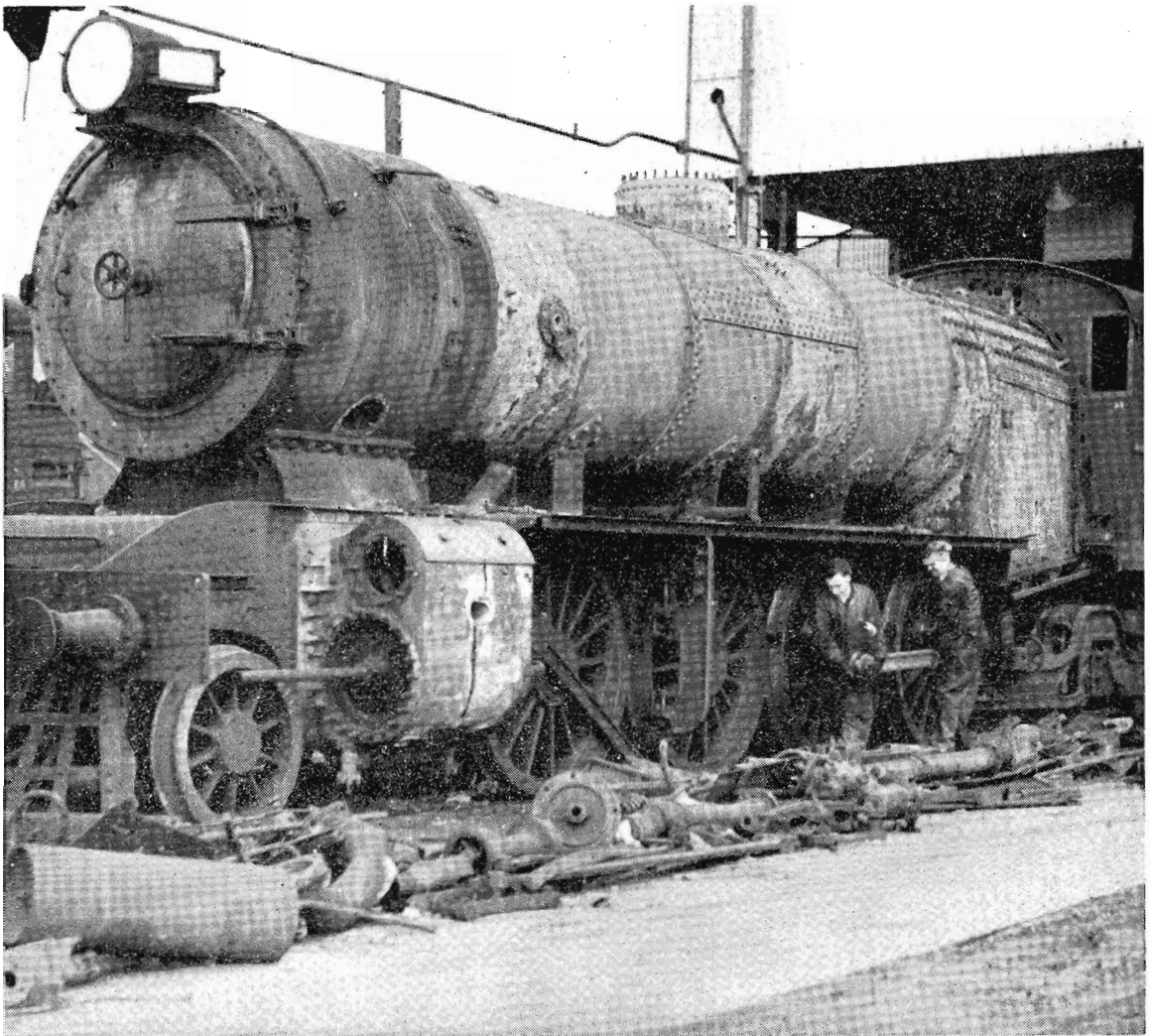
All who would like to help this work can obtain details from any of the ladies in the Traffic Branch.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

NOVEMBER 1946

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STRIPPING A LOCOMOTIVE AT NEWPORT WORKSHOPS



The above photograph shows an "X" class locomotive being stripped at the Newport Workshops in the course of a thorough overhaul. During this operation, which is carried out in front of the Locomotive Erecting Shop, all readily removable parts not requiring the assistance of overhead cranes are dismantled. They are then forwarded to the Boiling Down section for cleaning prior to being sent to various sections of the Workshops for inspection and any necessary repairs.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL REPORT, 1945-1946

THE financial result of the year's operations was a deficit of £62,400, compared with a surplus of £207,013 in the previous year. Main variations in revenue and expenditure were as under:—

	£	£
Decreased Revenue	584,171	
Increased Loan Conversion Ex- penses	10,142	
	—————	594,313
<i>Less decreases in—</i>		
Working Expenses	298,529	
Interest Charges	10,706	
Exchange	15,151	
Sinking Fund Charges	514	
	—————	324,900
Retgression		269,413

There were decreases in the receipts from goods and livestock (£804,525) and Treasury recoups—mainly for Service home leave concessions (£134,848), but they were partly offset by increases in passenger earnings (£332,404) and parcels revenue (£42,689). The reduced revenue from goods services was mainly the result of the falling off in the volume of war traffic and of the continued coal shortage, which seriously handicapped operations throughout the year.

The higher level of revenue from passenger and parcels traffic was due to the fact that, with the exception of a period of six weeks in December-January, ordinary civil passenger train services were less restricted than in the previous year.

Working expenses were £12,615,559 or £298,529 less than in 1944/45. The principal items in this reduction are as follows:—

Decreases—

Contribution to the Railway Renewals and Replacements Fund	£ 200,000
Contribution to the Reserve for annual leave, etc., and deferred ordinary way and works maintenance	180,000
Superannuation contributions in respect of employees serving with the Armed Forces	8,000
Reduced goods train mileage	150,000
	—————
	£538,000

Increases—

Salaries and wages awards	132,000
Long Service Leave	11,000
Commonwealth Payroll Tax	4,500
Flood damage repairs	13,000
Additional cost of coal, oil and firewood	80,000
	—————
	240,500

Net decrease on these items £297,500

The disparity between falls in Revenue and Working Expenses arises partly from increased wages and prices of materials, and also substantially from the disappearance of war traffic, of which a great deal was handled in full trucks and well filled special trains.

The contribution to the Renewals and Replacements Fund (£500,000) was approximately £130,000 less than the amount which should be provided in a normal year to take care of the wear and tear which occurs in giving railway service. Traffic during the year in

question, however, was considerably greater than in a normal year with the result that there was a correspondingly greater increase in wear and tear, although the inadequacy of the contribution was offset to the extent of £111,891 by interest earned during the year from the investment of a substantial portion of the moneys in the fund.

The necessity for making proper provision for depreciation, irrespective of the result of the year's operations, cannot be stressed too strongly, if a recurrence of serious overcapitalization is to be avoided.

The restricted coal supplies during the year not only caused serious losses of passenger and goods revenue, but also involved heavy additional costs for overlanding from New South Wales more than half of the total coal requirements. This increased the working costs by £184,000, apart from increases in the price of State Mine coal. In the buoyant revenue years during the war, these heavy transport costs for coal were borne without difficulty, but with the retrogression that is taking place in railway traffic, and consequently finance, these costs are a very real and unfair burden. It has been repeatedly urged that a more equitable distribution of the heavy additional costs of overlanding coal should be made. If it is impracticable to increase the quantity of sea-borne coal allotted for use by the Department, it is only equitable that the burdensome extra overlanding costs should be shared by all coal users, and the Commissioners urged that further representation should be made to the Commonwealth Government in that respect.

The coal shortage was also responsible for the use of large quantities of firewood as locomotive fuel during the cooler months of the year. This is a costly and inefficient expedient that no other State has been compelled to adopt to any noticeable extent, and it represents another direction in which sacrifices by the Department enabled other users to obtain more coal.

Another development brought about by the coal shortage was the decision towards the end of the year to equip about 80 engines to burn oil. The programme provided for conversions at the rate of 5 locomotives a week, and 12 were in running before the end of June. It is estimated that on the basis of present costs the use of oil fuel will represent an additional outlay during 1946-47 of approximately £70,000.

With the lifting of rubber controls and the relaxation of petrol restrictions, substantial losses of passenger revenue through the greater use of private motor cars are inevitable. In pre-war years this loss was conservatively estimated at upwards of one million pounds per annum. The revival of active competition by commercial road and air transport also constitutes a serious threat to railway revenue.

The extent to which the present traffic can be held will depend in some measure upon the Commissioners' ability to implement their plans for providing more attractive service in the way of faster speeds and greater comfort. It will also depend enormously on team work. Coal and manpower difficulties are unfortunately hampering their efforts, but even if the most optimistic expectations are realized there must be, sooner or later, a serious slump in railway business.

Coupled with the inevitable fall in business, a continued upward trend in expenditure, through causes entirely outside the Commissioners' control, must eventually lead to other State funds being required to meet huge railway deficits annually, or to the charges payable by the railway user being substantially increased.

YEAR'S OPERATIONS RESULT IN DEFICIT OF £62,400

If the far-reaching adverse effect of either of these alternatives is to be avoided, wise control of competitive transport will be essential.

The Commissioners have referred in previous reports to the irritation, annoyance and loss of goodwill caused by the pre-war legacy of anomalies in the rating structure due to freight contracts. The contract rates vary widely according to the intensity of road competition, and the serious anomalies as between the contract rates themselves, and more especially as between them and the ordinary mileage rates where they are still applicable, are the cause of much dissatisfaction. To avoid this, and to remove such a costly and undesirable means of protecting the State's greatest source of revenue, the Commissioners strongly urged that they be given an assurance of effective protection from competition, so that they may introduce at the earliest possible moment a rational rating structure based upon fair charges that will show a reasonable return.

Competition.

The withdrawal during the year of National Security Regulations that restricted the operations of commercial road motor transport resulted immediately, as was foreseen, in a revival of active road competition. The coal shortage which led to curtailments in rail service provided the excuse, if not the reason, for the transfer of much traffic to the road. In some instances the use of the alternative service was justifiable, but there were many other cases where road transport obtained much traffic that could have been carried efficiently, and satisfactorily, by the railways.

Numbers of road vehicles that were previously limited to local carrying were employed in long distance haulage of live stock, fruit, vegetables and other perishable goods which, although contributing a valuable source of rail revenue may, under the existing law, be carried by road anywhere in the State. Evidence also exists that goods, other than those permitted, were commonly carried by road. It is obvious that these conditions are inevitable under the present system which allows any person to acquire and operate a vehicle for specified purposes irrespective of the need for such service, or of its ability to succeed financially if confined to the limited rights conceded under the law. The Commissioners repeated their previous opinion that an amendment of the law should be made so that all commercial vehicles operating beyond a reasonable prescribed radius are brought within the discretionary powers of the licensing authority.

The greater number of applications now before the Transport Regulation Board for licences to operate long-distance road services is a serious threat to future railway business. Of particular significance is the increasing demand by manufacturers, traders, builders and industrial concerns generally for the right to operate large capacity vehicles for long distances "in the course of trade." This demand, unless checked by wise control, can be expected to intensify the competition by general hauliers, since the latter will in the long run only hold their business by offering rates lower than the costs of the ancillary user.

During the year, main developments in air transport were in the introduction of large aircraft, and increased frequency of service on interstate routes. The specialized usefulness of this form of transport is fully recognized; but its development should not be fostered by open or hidden subsidies, and should be so controlled that it will not weaken railway service so long as the latter must be maintained for the vital transport needs of the community.

Restrictions due to Coal Shortage.

The extent to which passenger services had to be reduced by coal shortages during 1945/46 is revealed in the following table giving percentage reductions on the normal week-day (including Saturday) schedules at the end of 1941:—

	Percentage Reduction.
From July 1	35 per cent.
.. Dec. 3	56 "
.. Dec. 21	74 "
.. Jan. 7	52 "
.. Jan. 28	33 "
.. Mar. 11	18 "
.. Apr. 15	—
.. June 18	30 "

Railway Staff and the War.

In all, 3,298 officers and employees were released for service in the war. It is recorded with deep regret that 184 are known to have made the supreme sacrifice. The number who had resumed duty at June 30 is 2,127-1441 of them during the year. A Rehabilitation Section was established to specialize in the reception and guidance of ex-servicemen. Every man returning to the Department is interviewed, individually, his war experiences are discussed, his wishes considered, and his rights and privileges explained. After he takes over his job contact is maintained, so that if he has any difficulty, efforts may be made to straighten it out. Rehabilitation Committees were established at all the larger workshops and centres.

Rolling Stock Construction.

During the early portion of the year when the workshops were still busy on war production, it was again necessary to set aside the Department's rolling stock programme. Upon the ending of hostilities against Japan, steps were taken to wind up various defence contracts and resume railway construction work, which is still considerably in arrears. One of the many war projects undertaken for the Commonwealth was the construction of 13 Australian Garratt locomotives and 300 open goods trucks for use on 3ft. 6in. gauge lines in other States.

New rolling stock completed consisted of 5 "K" class locomotives, 41 "Z" vans and 402 "GY" open trucks equipped for the carriage of wheat in bulk. Good progress was also made with two 7-car trains for the suburban electric service.

Way and Works Activities.

The shortage of manpower and difficulty in obtaining materials made it impracticable to overtake deferred maintenance, particularly of the track, to any appreciable extent.

Satisfactory progress was maintained with the reconstruction of the Cremorne bridges over the River Yarra. The substructure was practically completed and the superstructure sufficiently advanced to enable the section carrying the "up" Sandringham line being brought into use on June 2, and the "down" line after the close of the year. It is hoped that the balance of the work, including the removal of the old bridges and the realignment and reconstruction of Alexandra Avenue, will be completed during the present financial year.

Surveys have been made and plans prepared for the duplication of a portion of the line between Alphington and Heidelberg, also for new gravitation and marshalling yards on the "down" side of Seymour.

Plans have been prepared for extensive alterations at Yallourn and for new trackwork at South Maryvale to meet contemplated expansion of the State Electricity Commission's activities.

(continued on page 4)

HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL REPORT—Continued.

Suburban Electrification Equipment.

Contracts have been accepted for two new boilers and one new turbo-alternator for the second stage of the modernization of Newport "A" Power Station. This new plant will be of similar capacity to that recently installed, and although only one old turbo-alternator and 6 old boilers will be dismantled concurrently with its erection, the new capacity will be equal to that of 3 of the old turbo-alternators and 12 old boilers.

The new installation will result in substantial savings in coal consumption and costs.

Owing to the acute shortage of coal, experiments have been made at the Power Station with the burning of fuel oil and arrangements are in progress to equip the remaining 17 boilers in the old station for auxiliary oil burning.

Stores and Materials.

The value of stocks at June 30 (excluding Railway Construction Branch and Refreshment Services stocks) was £1,926,677—or £65,064 more than at the end of 1944/45. The main cause of the increase was the purchase of materials for construction and maintenance programmes.

Issues amounted to £3,924,304 as compared with £4,044,258 in the preceding year, representing a turnover of 2.03 contrasted with 2.15 in 1944/45.

The value of materials reclaimed for further use or for sale at the Reclamation Depot was £109,787.

Coal Supplies.

Maitland coal, without which the schedules of express passenger and selected goods trains cannot be maintained, was only allotted to the Department in retail quantities. Over two-thirds of the New South Wales coal received was of inferior quality. The lack of Maitland fuel due either to shipping shortage or insufficient production again made it necessary to rail overland large quantities of coal from the Western fields of New South Wales. Of the total of 387,000 tons of coal from New South Wales 265,000 tons were carried by rail. After allowing for a comparatively small Commonwealth subsidy the overlanded coal cost approximately £184,000 more in the year than if the equivalent tonnage of Maitland coal had been obtainable by sea. As a result of this increased cost, the Department was involved in an addition (provisionally fixed at 5/- per ton) to the rate paid for coal from the State Coal Mine amounting to approximately £28,000 for the year.

The total quantity of coal allocated to the Department during the year amounted to 500,775 tons. Of this, 112,839 tons (practically all from the State Coal Mine) were provided in Victoria. Of the remaining 387,936 tons, 121,702 tons came by sea, 265,209 tons by rail, and the other 1,025 tons "from sundry sources."

The consumption was 524,866 tons at a cost of £977,621. This consisted of 384,954 tons of large coal at an average rate of 38s. 3.6d. per ton and 139,912 tons of small coal at an average rate of 34s. 4.4d. per ton.

Refreshment Services.

Revenue from refreshment rooms and dining and buffet car services was £746,956, about £1,300 less than the revenue for 1944/45. The total revenue of the Branch, including bookstalls and advertising, however, was a record, viz., £925,399.

On "Spirit of Progress" dining car a new record was achieved by the serving of 159,235 meals, in addition to 35,952 light refreshments.

Tourist Services.

Receipts from all classes of activity at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau amounted to £774,374 and surpassed the previous record by £141,000. Interstate rail traffic, which was exceedingly heavy for most of the year, accounted for the bulk of the increase.

The Staff.

The total staff employed at the close of the year was 27,385. The comparable total a year earlier was 26,124. The manpower position improved during the year although a marked shortage still exists in Transportation operating grades—and has necessitated continuance of overtime working and some deferral of annual leave. Special efforts to recruit additional staff are being continued, and full-time instructional classes in safe-working systems have been established in an endeavour to meet the shortage.

Salaries and Wages.

The amounts disbursed in salaries and wages during the past seven years, excluding payments to butting gang workers were:—

	£
1945-46	8,912,719
1944-45	8,828,090
1943-44	8,970,445
1942-43	8,670,724
1941-42	7,786,251
1940-41	6,661,937
1939-40	6,177,177

A summary of the financial results by contrast with those in the preceding year is given hereunder:—

	1945/46	1944/45	Increase - or Decrease — in 1945
Revenue	£ 14,768,322	£ 15,352,493	—584,171
Working Expenses	12,615,559	12,914,088	—298,529
Net revenue	2,152,763	2,438,405	—285,642
Interest charges and expenses	1,902,029	1,902,592	—563
Exchange on Interest payments and redemption	184,875	200,027	—15,152
Contribution to National Debt Sinking Fund	128,259	128,773	—514
Total Interest, Exchange, etc.	2,215,163	2,231,392	—16,229
Deficit	£ 62,400	—	—
Surplus	—	£207,013	—269,413

RECORD ATTENDANCES AT THE SHOW.

PUBLIC interest in the reappearance of the Royal Agricultural Show, the first since 1939, is revealed in the phenomenal number of people (actually 320,772—approximately 50 per cent. of the total attendance) who travelled by train. This was easily an all-time record, the corresponding figures for 1938 and 1939 being 187,792 and 167,155 respectively.

A curious feature was the fact that the peak of the rail traffic did not occur on the Show Holiday, Thursday, September 26, but on the previous Saturday, when 80,158 went by train to get an early peep at the Show. On the Show Holiday, 66,619 travelled to the Showgrounds by train. This number exceeded the previous record for that day by 22,602 passengers.

Another interesting aspect, which was very gratifying to the Department, is that whereas 70,249 Show passengers in 1938, and 66,746 in 1939, booked their tickets to the Showgrounds at suburban stations, fewer than 145,318 did so this year, thus considerably relieving the pressure on the booking offices at Flinders Street and Spencer Street stations.

The Growth of Safeworking

Part 2

IT is not practicable, with the consistent growth of early English railways and the number of Companies which came into operation, to isolate the various safeworking systems. Individual lines produced individual problems, which were met with local solutions. But overall a pattern of safeworking emerged, and principles common to all Companies were evolved.

In the earliest days, the driver of a locomotive had full responsibility for the safety of his train and passengers. He used his eyes and ears, slowed down at appropriate places, and was rather in the position of a present-day bus driver. With heavier traffic and increased speeds, however, it was found that he needed some external assistance, and the practice came into operation of stationing "policemen" at various danger spots—crossings, junctions, station approaches and places of that nature.

The policeman's duty was to halt trains, if necessary, until the line ahead was clear. He was the forerunner of the signalman, and even today "the Bobbly" is a slang term applied to English signalmen.

At first the policeman had rather an easy job, but as the number of trains increased, he became quite a busy man and, especially at crossings, frequently found himself needed in two places at the same time. To overcome the difficulty he would leave a "danger" signal on one line, halting all trains, while he attended to another line.

So arose the first fixed signals, merely a substitute for a policeman temporarily engaged in some other place.

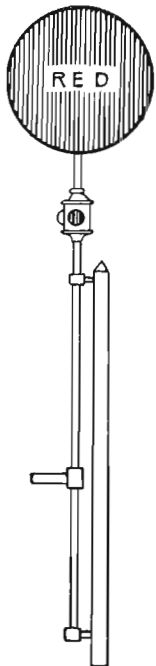
The efficacy of the fixed signal soon became apparent and the custom grew of erecting permanent fixed signals at station approaches, crossings, and danger spots. An accident in 1832 forcibly directed attention to the need for such devices.

A train was standing at Rainhill station, on the Manchester and Liverpool line, when a second train, which had left three-quarters of an hour later, appeared around the bend close by. It was travelling at a speed which made collision inevitable. The stationary train was put into motion, but the crash could not be avoided, and there was a bad smash.

The accident had the immediate result of making the Company install fixed signals at station approaches, to be kept in the danger position until the station was clear.

At some places, because of tunnels, embankments or local conditions, the station signal was not visible in time for faster trains to stop, and additional signals were provided in the rear, known as "distance" signals, and operated in conjunction with the station signal. They were the forerunners of the distant signals of to-day.

By this time, therefore, a definite safeworking pattern had emerged. No longer was the driver solely responsible for the safety of his train—policemen, and then fixed signals, had been instituted to guide him. Railways were still less than 15 years old.



An early type of Fixed Signal.

MR. T. R. COLLIER, STAFF SUPT. IN TRANSPORTATION BRANCH.

LAST month Mr. T. R. Collier, Acting Superintendent of Train Services, was appointed to the new position of Staff Superintendent in the Transportation Branch.



Mr. T. R. Collier

Mr. Collier joined the Transportation Branch in 1910 and his wide experience in the grades of Operating Porter, A.S.M., S.M., Train Dispatcher, Traffic Inspector, Assistant District Superintendent, District Superintendent and Metropolitan Superintendent, provides a solid background for his new responsibilities.

During the recent war—actually in July 1943—the Commonwealth Government sought his release to take the high position of Deputy Director of Railway and Road Transportation in the Department of the Army, with the rank of Colonel. Subsequently he was promoted to Director—a tribute to his ability, character and personality, which have been outstanding characteristics in all his other assignments.

In the First Great War he served in the A.I.F., both in Egypt and in France from 1915 to 1919, and it is sufficient testimony of his achievement at the front that he emerged with a commission supplemented by the coveted Military Cross and Bar. Moreover, he was twice mentioned in despatches.

The First Race Specials

THE annual series of great sporting events—the spring racing carnival—is now a very important topic for that large proportion of the populace who indulge in a modest speculation on the chance of a favoured horse being first past the post.

For 87 years, patrons of the turf in Victoria have been carried to and from the race-courses by special trains, which transport huge crowds with ease, speed and reliability, especially on Melbourne Cup Day, which this year was Tuesday, November 5.

The first "race specials" in this State ran on Saturday, October 1, 1859 when "trains every few minutes" ran from Batman's Hill (Spencer Street) Station to a platform at Salt Water River Bridge for the Victoria Turf Club's meeting at Flemington. Return tickets only, at 2/- without distinction of class, were issued. About 12,000 passengers travelled to the races by these trains.

Salt Water River platform remained in use for race meetings until 1861, when the Melbourne and Essendon Railway Company extended its line from Newmarket into Flemington Racecourse. This Company provided the first specials direct to the course for the Victoria Jockey Club's meeting on February 1, 1861. Later in the year, the line was extended to the grandstand and hill, and special trains operated to that point for the Victoria Turf Club's first Melbourne Cup Meeting on Thursday, November 7, 1861. The Sydney horse Archer won the race, and repeated the success in the following year.

Behind The Railway Scene—LIFE AT THE DINING CAR DEPOT

To meet the demands of travellers, a skilled staff at the Dining Car Depot, North Melbourne, is kept busy every day in the year. Those snowy white tablecloths on "Spirit of Progress," and the highly polished cutlery, gleaming glassware, bright crockery and tempting menus for dinner and buffet patrons are part of the service supplied by the Depot. So, too, are the freshly laundered sheets and pillow slips in sleeping cars, and the clean towels in the wash rooms.

Behind the scenes, the men and women stationed at the Dining Car Depot carry out their various duties quietly and unobtrusively, but their efforts contribute in no small measure to the Railway reputation for comfort on long-distance travel.

Hub of the Depot is the kitchen. A huge square oven in the middle of the spotlessly clean room is used for boiling, baking and roasting. The air is redolent with the appetizing odour of cooking food. There are huge brown turkeys here, crisp and oozing juice, roasts of beef, legs of lamb, pots of soup and trays of steak and kidney pie. Stock pots bubble merrily, sending up clouds of steam. Trimming meats and vegetables, are the chef and his staff of cooks. Most of the dinners served on the journey are pre-cooked in this kitchen and kept hot in a steam-heated Bain Marie before being transferred to another Bain Marie aboard the train. Breakfast dishes are cooked to order on the trains.



Preparing the famous railway pies

The steak and kidney pies are made in the Depot Kitchen, but the famous "Railway pies" come from the Bakery, where a foreman baker (who holds the D.C.M., M.M. and Bar from the First World War) and a team of pastrycooks work busily, looking most professional in their white hats and white suits. Pies baked here are distributed to Refreshment Rooms all over the State. The Bakery works three shifts in the 24 hours, and has turned out as many as 830 dozen pies, 210 lb. of fruit cake and 350 dozen small cakes in a single day. The huge "Scotch" oven cooks 50 dozen pies in a batch.

Beyond the Bakery is the Butchery where, on hooks around the cutting room, hang rows of prime carcasses. In the adjoining room the sausage-making plant churns out about 1½ miles of sausages a day for use in the various Refreshment Rooms. Over in the corner beef floats in brine tubs, being transformed to corned beef. The freezing chambers behind the shop hold bulk meat supplies and dishes of "smalls"—tripe, ox-cheek, kidneys, fries and brains.

The Butchery is busy with the clatter of choppers and the whirr of the sausage machine, but in the Store everything is quiet and orderly. Here, laid out systematically on shelves are supplies of every description from tinned fruit to cereals, enough to ration a

small army. A few packets of cigarettes for travellers are cared for like the Crown Jewels. In the bulk section of the Store are sugar, eggs, fruit and piles of crockery.

Responsibilities of the Dining Car Depot extend beyond preparation and issue of provisions. The snowy tablecloths, towels, sheets, pillowslips and spotless staff uniforms are turned out by the laundry. About 120 thousand articles a month pass through the capable hands of the laundry staff. Keeping the linen repaired is a big job in itself and seamstresses are always busy at their machines ensuring that nine stitches later are avoided by one neat stitch in time.

In another corner of the Depot glasses and dishes are cleaned thoroughly, and in the Fumigator Room blankets and mattresses are treated with formalin gas after every trip.

The courteous and efficient "Spirit of Progress" dining car staffs and the trim buffet car attendants are all attached to the Dining Car Depot. Some of the men received their early training at sea and the experience proves invaluable in the necessarily cramped conditions of a railway car.

On the Buffet Cars all duties are performed by a female staff, most of whom have been on the job for several years, and a few since the inception of the service. It is not easy work, but the efficiency and courtesy of the girls are famous.

Life at the Dining Car Depot never relaxes its tempo, and the air is eternally filled with the whine of machines, the rich odour of food and the clatter of knives and choppers as the men and women of the Refreshment Services work busily and skilfully.

Another V.R. Lad Mentioned in Dispatches

IT gives us great pleasure to record that Corporal L. J. Dunkley, late of the R.A.A.F., and now Running Shed Fitter at Benalla, was "Mentioned in Dispatches" for "fine work at Balikpapan in the recent war."

The official citation is as follows:—

"Corporal Dunkley, Plant Operator, displayed outstanding devotion to duty and rendered exceptional service on the night of July 5, 1945, on the occasion of the Squadron's landing at Balikpapan."

"His handling of heavy construction equipment during the loading of LST 474 and re-loading into LCT's at night called for most skilful work, and as senior operator on that shift he did all the difficult work personally and continued for thirty-six hours without rest. Throughout these operations Cpl. Dunkley's fine leadership and devotion to duty inspired his men and largely contributed to the successful completion of the work."

Mr. Dunkley, who is 24 years of age, enlisted in the R.A.A.F. as an A.C. 1 (Fitter) in 1942. After training he was drafted to a Special Service Squadron as a Plant Operator, engaged on airstrip and earthwork construction in the islands, in which heavy Diesel tractors and earth-moving machinery were employed.

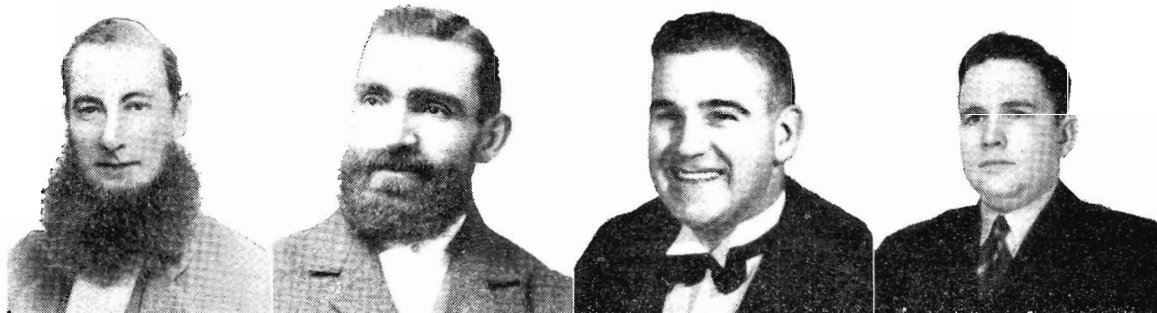
He joined the Department as a lad labourer at Newport Workshops in January 1938, and became an Apprentice Fitter and Turner in October of the same year.

Following his discharge he returned to the Railways in February this year, and after a short period at North Melbourne Loco. Depot, was transferred to Benalla.



Cpl. L. J. Dunkley.

RAILWAY FAMILIES—FOUR GENERATIONS OF FORDS



On the extreme left is great grandfather, Mr. R. G. Ford; next to him his son, also Mr. R. G. Ford, then the late Mr. D. Ford, father of Mr. K. Ford (right) now in the Secretary's Branch.

AN inherited passion for service in the Railways is the conspicuous characteristic of the Ford family, four generations of which are recorded on the staff books of the Department. The first of the family to join the railways was the gentleman with the large beard, on the extreme left of the group shown above.

He was Robert Grey Ford, who was appointed in 1860 to superintend the erection of the ironwork of the Moorabool Viaduct, rose to the post of Engineer for Construction in 1882 and served under a namesake, Commissioner Richard Ford, before his retirement some years later.

Robert Grey, it may be said here, is a family name given to the first sons of first sons, and so it followed that the next member of the family to commence a railway career was the aforesaid Ford's eldest son,

another Robert Grey Ford, who entered the Transportation Branch in 1881, and before his retirement in 1920 had been a busy S.M. at Ringwood, Beechworth, Colac, Traralgon and Benalla. He died in 1942 at the age of 82.

His railway son was not the eldest, and was christened Donald, a fine personality who before taking up a job as a clerk in the Way and Works Branch had served two years in the First Great War. In the Railways, he also worked in the Accountancy Branch and for a short period was in the Estate Office. He died in 1941, at the early age of 45.

His son, Keith Ford, is now a clerk in the Secretary's Branch at the Spencer Street Head Office. He entered in 1941 and in the recent war, served for 3 years in the R.A.A.F. partly as a flying instructor.

NEWS FROM THE V.R. INSTITUTE

DURING the war years the biennial elections to the Council of the V.R. Institute were suspended. Consequently there was considerable interest in the election for the Council, which was held last month. After a keen contest all the retiring councillors were re-elected. In addition, three new members were chosen, Messrs. F. R. Hollister, H. Hopkins and A. Smith. Also three new councillors were appointed by the Commissioners—Mr. T. R. Collier, Vice-President (vice Mr. E. Richard retired), Mr. A. Telford (vice Mr. G. Dowsett retired), and Mr. L. J. Phelan in place of Mr. F. P. Mitchell, who had also retired.

All the new members are active railwaymen. Mr. T. R. Collier, the new Staff Superintendent of the Transportation Branch, whose record is reported elsewhere in this issue, is well known and needs no introduction. Mr. Telford, Clerk in the Way and Works Branch, served long and ably as a member of the committee controlling the V.R. Patriotic Fund, and was also conspicuous with his assistance in the arrangements for the various functions and entertainments associated with this great activity. Mr. Phelan has also been a notable figure on the Council and committees of the Institute for many years.

Mr. F. R. Hollister, one of the newly elected members, is the employees' representative on the Board of Discipline. He is a Clerk in the Traffic Branch. Mr. Hopkins, an electrical mechanic in the Electrical Engineering Branch, is a well-known authority on wrestling, who exhibited his skill in V.R.I. competitions, served subsequently as a referee and is now official referee for the Vic. Amateur Boxing and Wrestling Association. Mr. Arthur Smith, a porter in the Transportation Branch, is another energetic V.R.I.

man who has been connected over some years with the V.R.I. Wireless Club of which he is now assistant secretary.

* * * *

Congratulations to the Quoit Team of the V.R.I. Colac, which went right through the season without being beaten. It won the grand final and the cup by 20 points—a remarkable performance when it is remembered that no fewer than 20 teams competed. One of the V.R.I. players threw 119 out of a possible 120—an achievement indeed!

* * * *

Mr. V. Mullen, president of the V.R.I. Cricket Club at Dimboola, has had the honour of being elected president of the West Wimmera Cricket Association. The V.R.I. Club was only reformed last year, and Mr. Mullen's selection for the presidency of the West Wimmera Association has been received with gratification by all members of the V.R.I.

* * * *

Our Korumburra correspondent tells us that Mr. J. Rowland, Signalman, who did great work as the first secretary of the Korumburra Sub-centre of the V.R.I., has been transferred to Dimboola. Incidentally a debating club has been formed at Korumburra. It is under the care of Mr. L. Hynes, Loco. Storeman in that area.

* * * *

A correspondent from Warragul reports that Mr. P. L. Walter, Vice-President of the Warragul Sub-centre of the Institute and one of Warragul's prominent footballers, successfully captained the Warragul Seconds' team which finally won the Premiership after one of the most successful seasons on record. It was mainly due to Mr. Walter's untiring efforts, both as coach and captain, that this result was obtained.

TALKING OF RAILWAY MEN AND WOMEN

THERE was an unusual event at the Grill Room, Spencer Street Station, last month—unusual for the reason that ex-servicemen of the 1st Great War acted as hosts to ex-servicemen of the 2nd Great Conflict, all being members of the Refreshment Services Branch.

It was officially termed a smoke night, and all the preparations for the entertainment, which began punctually at 8 p.m., were in the hands of a small but enthusiastic working party. Mr. A. W. Keown, Superintendent of Refreshment Services, was master of ceremonies, while the principal guest, who found time to attend and say a few words praising the thought, was Mr. N. C. Harris, Chairman of Commissioners.

Mr. Keown delivered a characteristically bright speech toasting the health of the guests, a toast which was supported by Mr. Don Oliver, foreman baker in the Refreshment Services, who won the D.C.M., M.M. and Bar in the 1914-18 War. The toast was responded to by Mr. W. Courtis of the Accountancy Branch of the Refreshment Services, who wears the D.F.C., whilst Mr. L. David, Chief Rehabilitation Officer, and Mr. S. Thomas, President of the Railways Sub-Branch of the R.S.S.A.I.L.A., also spoke.

The evening swung on with smoke and refreshment, music and stories until 11 p.m., and two ex-P.O.W.'s present, Messrs. M. Greenhatch and A. Myers of the Refreshment Services, warmly agreed with the general verdict that the whole bright show had passed all too quickly. Just on 100 veterans of the two wars celebrated this unique occasion.

* * * *

A large number of former apprentices, who started their railway careers in 1921, turned up at a happy reunion dinner at the Victoria Palace on Saturday, October 12, celebrating their entry into the Department.

This is the second function of its kind—the first having been held in 1941—and the guest of honour was Mr. O. E. Nilsson, who was first Principal of the Technical College at Newport. Mr. Nilsson, who is now Deputy-Director of Industrial Training and Chairman of the Apprenticeship Commission, was presented with a striking illuminated address which had been executed by Mr. Bert Randall, signwriter in the Way and Works Branch.

The presentation was made by Mr. R. McFarlane, a former apprentice, who is now an accountant. Among the visitors who hold professional positions outside the department were Messrs. A. Taebring (Consulting Engineer), G. E. Cole (Manager, Hodson & Gault, Springvale, Electrical Engineers), W. J. Johnston (Engineer, State Electricity Commission), G. Coulthard (Engineer, Richardson's Fans, Footscray), H. McGowan (Engineer, Ludowici & Sons, South Melbourne), P. Woodman, (Draftsman, Public Works Department), and E. Harrison (Planning Engineer, General Motors).

The whole delightful evening was organized by Messrs. J. Hamilton, Assistant Engineer, Plant Engineer's Office, Newport; W. Frost, Fitter, Erecting Shop, Newport, and J. Burke, Carpenter, Machine and Plant Shop, Newport. Mr. H. J. Bromley, Production Manager of Malcolm Moore Ltd., was the very successful chairman.

* * * *

Mr. L. J. Harrigan, who is engaged in compiling an official history of the Victorian Railways, gave an address to the members of the Institute of Public Administration at Melbourne on October 17. His

subject, entitled "A History of Victorian Railways Administration," traced the development through 90 years of the managerial system of the Department since its establishment in 1856. At the conclusion of the address, many questions relating to procedure and events, especially of the early years, were put to the speaker, who was congratulated for his interesting talk.

* * * *

Mr. John Minehan, whose retirement owing to ill-health was mentioned last month, was recently the recipient of a wallet of notes from his former colleagues in the Transportation Branch. Mr. G. Rogers, who is engaged on special Transportation duties, Mr. H. A. Zeis, Chief Train Despatcher, Mr. Mark Baynes and other old friends were noticed at the little gathering where Mr. Ken. Donald, who has succeeded Mr. Minehan in charge of Room 55, made the presentation in a happy little speech. He was fully supported in his appreciation by Mr. Rogers, Mr. Zeis and others. In his reply, Mr. Minehan was obviously touched by the references to his ability as an official and his character as a man.

* * * *

Mr. G. Morris, the V.R. signwriter, who was mentioned last month as the first of four Victorians chosen to represent the State in the Australian Championship of the 2nd Security Loan £1000 Quiz Contest, has again proved his Quiz genius.

Mr. G. N. Sims, bank clerk, Mr. Frank Wilkinson, engineer, and Mr. H. S. Buchanan, public servant, were the other members of the team which won the Australian Championship with a total of 7 points. Queensland, West Australia and Tasmania tied for second place with 6 points each. New South Wales was next with 5 points and South Australia last with 4 points.

Ten days later the team was challenged by representatives from all the other States. Again a clear-cut victory was registered. The Victorians answered correctly every question put to them—a truly amazing performance. A further challenge early in November resulted in another triumph for the Victorian team.

* * * *

Our Traralgon correspondent writes: Traralgon railwaymen and their ladies are preparing for the tennis season. The courts are in excellent condition, mainly due to the efforts of the veteran player, Guard Charlie Potter. These courts are flood-lit for night play and are reputed to be equal to the best lighted courts in the State, but owing to the wartime blackout and the more recent electricity restrictions, local players have had little chance to use them. It is hoped that the near future will permit the free use of lighting and there is no doubt that tennis enthusiasts will make the most of it.

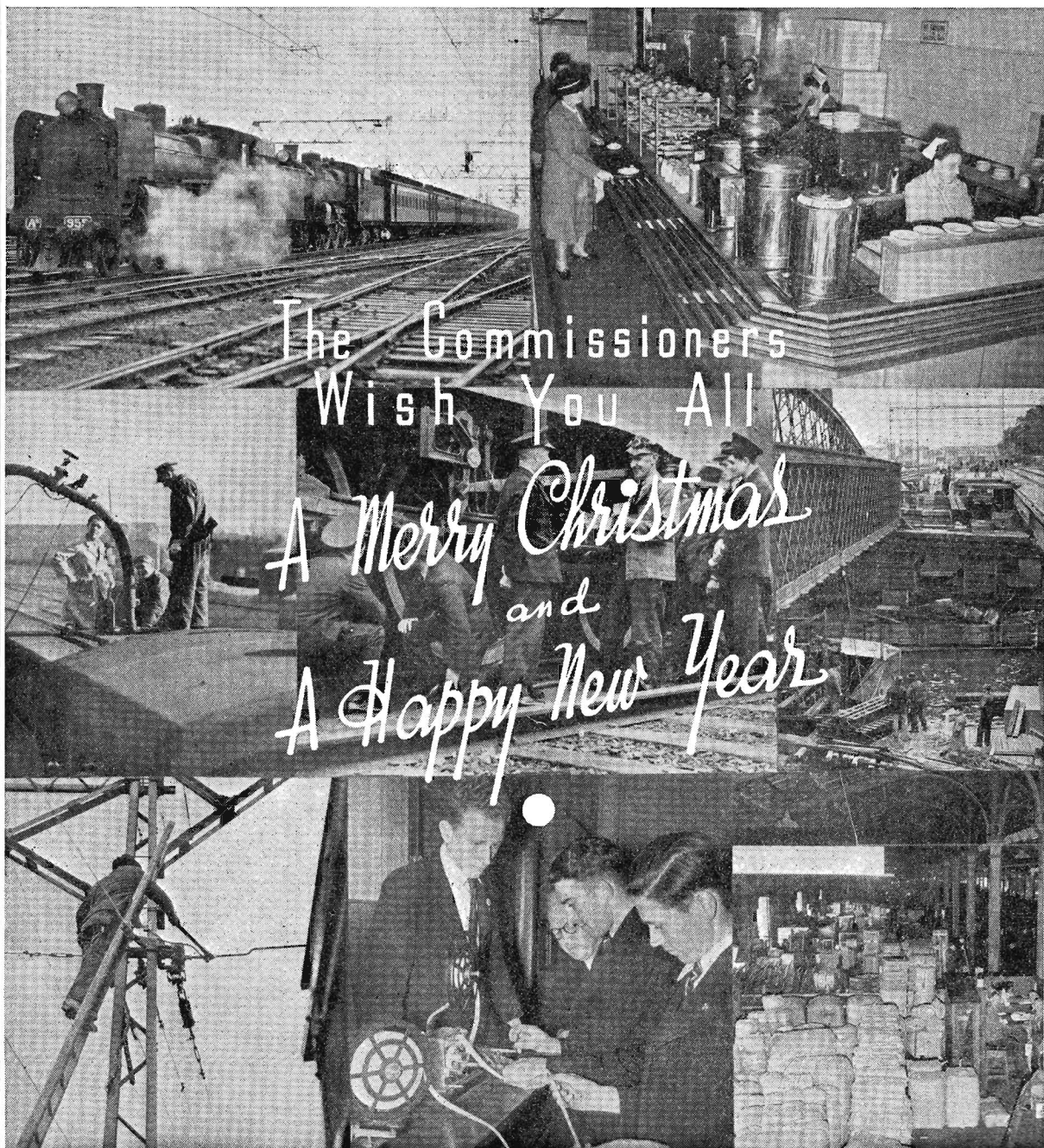
Guard Jack Lockhart, who recently resumed railway work after discharge from the Army, has been off duty for a few weeks suffering from the results of his experiences as P.O.W. in Malaya and Burma for 3½ years.

Guard Pat Fahey, who has suffered ill health for some months, has retired on account of illness, and is now putting in his time at his hobby as a cow cocky. "Paddy" has been stationed at Traralgon for 15 years.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER 1946

Issue No. 195



The Commissioners
Wish You All
A Merry Christmas
and
A Happy New Year

The Growth of Safeworking—Part 3

IN the early years of railway operation the time-table was found to be an effective safety device. It regulated the hours at which trains would leave, and there was little likelihood of overtaking. But as speeds and traffic density increased, "dead reckoning" became ineffective. The provision of fixed and distance signals proved valuable at station approaches and such places, but the need to protect trains between stations, as well as at stations, soon arose. Commonsense, aided by several accidents, made it apparent that steps must be taken to prevent trains overtaking each other while travelling.

To meet this vital need a scheme was devised which figured for many years in British railway safeworking—the time interval system. As a train passed through a station, the policeman displayed a danger signal for a specified number of minutes, holding any following train. At the expiration of the time, "safe" was given and traffic allowed to proceed.

Unfortunately, the system was not very effective and, although better than nothing, permitted too many accidents. Extending the length of intervals was tried, but it slowed down operations considerably—and accidents still occurred with an alarming frequency.

It became obvious that perfect safety could come only from a space interval system, a definite minimum space being maintained at all times between the head of one train and the tail of the train preceding it. The idea was made practicable by the development of electric telegraphy.

About 1850 the space-interval plan, controlled by means of electrical apparatus, first came into serious consideration. It was called the "block system." Improved over the following 20 years, it was established on the main lines of the leading railways by 1870, and under the Railway Regulation Act of 1889, became compulsory on all passenger lines in Great Britain and Ireland.

Under the block system, lines were divided into "blocks" (or sections) of roughly equal length. Only one train could be allowed in the same section on the same line of rails at the same time. Electrical instruments and outdoor signals were used to achieve this object: the instruments being used to telegraph whether or not the section was clear and the signalmen operating their signals in accordance with the information received.

3rd CLASS TRAVEL ON VIC. RAILWAYS

AMONG many matters of interest, forgotten or not generally known, relating to bygone years of the Victorian Railways, the provision of 3rd-class passenger facilities on country lines provides an early example of "Help us to help you."

When the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company opened Victoria's (and Australia's) first country line on June 25, 1857, the "time bill and fares table" announced three classes of passenger rates. A 3rd-class single ticket for the journey cost 6/-, for which very inferior carriages were used. Third-class was abolished when the Government purchased the railway in 1860.

On November 1, 1868, to encourage travel at cheap rates, the Victorian Railways introduced 3rd-class fares on country lines, which then comprised only the routes from Melbourne to Sandhurst and Echuca, and Melbourne to Geelong and Ballarat. (The present line to Ballarat via Bacchus Marsh was opened on December 4, 1889). The Williamstown railway, the only suburban line operated by the Department at the time, was not included in the concession.

Though 3rd-class fares caused a reduction in revenue, the innovation was continued until September 19, 1870. A heavy increase in working expenses, due to the necessity for providing and maintaining an additional type of carriage, was the principal reason for the abandonment of 3rd-class.

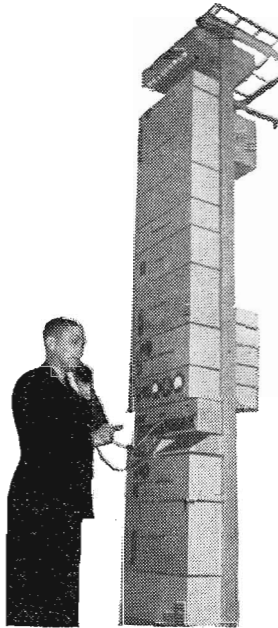
New Telephone Communications between Melbourne and Bendigo

AS the single telephone circuit, which previously provided the only Railway telephone communication between Melbourne and Bendigo, proved inadequate, an additional two-way telephone service has now been installed.

Extra line wires were not required for this new service as its introduction was accomplished by the provision of a single channel high frequency carrier telephone system superimposed on the existing No. 4 Harmonic physical circuit.

The additional circuit has greatly reduced delays in obtaining telephone communication between Melbourne and Bendigo. It has also improved the quality of the voice transmission. The benefit of this is particularly noticeable when communicating with stations beyond Bendigo, i.e., Echuca, Deniliquin, Raywood and Korong Vale.

While the high frequency carrier telephone system has been used by the Postmaster-General's Department for some time, this is the first installation in this Department. It is



expected that its successful introduction will be followed by an increased programme of modernization in our long line equipment.

In the adjoining illustration is shown the Melbourne "A" terminal of the equipment.

The carrier terminals which are installed at each end of the line are equipped with carrier frequency transmitting and receiving apparatus including power supply.

Monitoring and testing facilities are provided which permit of complete supervision and routine maintenance and testing of equipment and line performance.

Mr. George Morris, Signwriter at Newport Workshops, and his three team-mates have proved themselves to be beyond all doubt the champion quiz-team of Australia. In the final contest of the 2nd Security Loan Quiz Championship they successfully defended their National title for the third time. Mr. Morris and his companions each won £375, and the winnings were the more acceptable because they were free of taxation. Congratulations, Mr. Morris, on the well merited success of yourself and your partners.

Behind the Railway Scene—

“SEND FOR THE OVERHEAD!”

ERECTING and maintaining overhead electrical equipment and effecting emergency repairs are responsibilities of the Overhead Depot, Batman Avenue. Three hundred and sixty-five days a year (and one day more in Leap Year) the Depot is on continuous call. When magpies build nests in the brackets, or wires have been struck by lightning, or a stone has scored a direct hit on an insulator or an umbrella has blown over a railway bridge, it's a case of “send for the Overhead.” The men of the Emergency Gangs have forgotten how to be surprised at the things that can, and do, happen.

Handling emergencies, however, is the least part of the job for the 75-odd men in the Emergency Gangs. They are responsible for the normal maintenance of 438 miles of overhead line and spend most of their time repairing, renewing and inspecting equipment. To their credit is the fact that emergencies arising from deterioration are almost unknown. But to take care of the unforeseen, an officer and staff are on duty at the Depot day and night, and can be speeding on their way in a fast road vehicle within a minute or two of receiving a call for assistance. Altogether there are six vans in operation, equipped with all necessary gear for rapid treatment of faults.

Magpie-nesting time is headache-time for the Emergency Gangs. To married magpies, a wire nest seems to be the dream-home, with an overhead bracket an ideal housing site. But accidents do occur even in bird life, especially when contact is made with high voltage transmission lines—and then the men of the Overhead Depot have to restore services. Possums occasionally cause trouble, too, by making unfortunate acquaintance with 1500 volts, direct current.

At times the Emergency Gangs have very strange tasks. A house, for example, being transported from one suburb to another may cross a railway line, and the overhead must be raised to allow passage. Sometimes the

wires are taken down altogether. During the war years the transport of aeroplane sections and massive military materials gave the gangs many jobs of this nature.

Erecting new equipment and altering present equipment are duties of the Construction Gang. The gang works in close co-operation with the various Branches, and one of its recent tasks has been the progressive erection of new overhead equipment for the new Cremorne Bridge. This gang functions as a mobile unit using a specially equipped train as a travelling depot. The train is made up of workshops trucks, material and mess trucks, and a guard's van fitted out as an office for the Supervisor. Special roofs on the trucks provide platforms from which men work on the overhead wires. Like a giant spider the train creeps along, leaving behind it an elongated web of newly spun copper.

The Painting Gang carries out another phase of the

overhead work—scaling and brushing the steelwork of overhead supporting structures and painting it the famous railway-grey. Men of the Painting Gang use specially insulated bracket-covering equipment and work under live-line conditions. They move continuously around the system, completing the circuit about every ten years. Places near the seaside need more intensive treatment and receive attention every four or five years.

Light and power services in the suburban area are installed and maintained by the Light and Power Section. Office and station lighting, operation of subway pumps, power for workshops motors, yard lighting, illumination of hundreds of advertising signs and of train destination indicators are some of the babies fostered by the L. & P. Section. Maintenance and battery charging for the little luggage trollies at Spencer Street and Flinders Street are sideline duties. Seven district mechanics are stationed around the suburbs, each responsible for twenty to twenty-five railway stations. Routine maintenance, installation of electrical fittings and a host of light and power details are included in their duties. For emergency and after-hours light and power calls, patrol mechanics are always on tap. Another part of this section is the Low-Tension Line Gang, in which a dozen men look after the lighting equipment and renew wood poles as required.

There is long experience behind the Overhead organization and the Overhead men play a vital part in keeping the trains running.

CONSCIENCE MONEY!

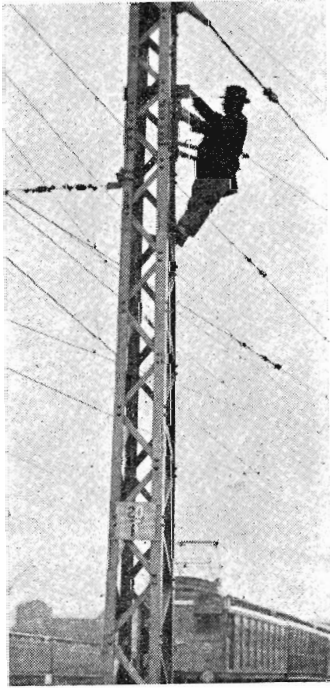
LAST month an anonymous ex-serviceman sent along £11 12s. 8d. conscience money. “Whilst a member of the services I travelled by rail to various places without paying my fare,” he confessed in an accompanying letter, adding (with old-world courtesy) “Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience I have caused the Department.”

His contribution is substantial, but not the year's record. In July three five-pound notes fell into the hands of the officer opening the inwards mail. No explanation of any description came with them and the sender is merely one of the 74 unknown people who have sent conscience money to the Department during the last six years.

The total received since 1941 amounts to more than £150. Largest individual sum was £20. It arrived in 1945—the bumper year for repentance—when fifteen amounts were forwarded aggregating £57. That record will probably be beaten this year for already 14 donors have paid £51 to ease their conscience, that “terrifying little sprite

That bat-like winks by day and walks by night.”

Most conscience money is remitted in cash or stamps without covering letter. Occasionally a slip of paper is enclosed with the cryptic message, “I owe you this,” or “This is conscience money.” Amounts enclosed vary considerably, some totalling many pounds, others being as low as one shilling. All the senders have the same objects, however—to remain anonymous and to ease their troubled minds.



- - - ROUTE OF THE PROPOSED



In the above remarkable aerial photograph, which is published by courtesy of the Department of Lands and Survey, North Melbourne

PLANS for the future development of the suburban railway system have been carried a step further by a revision of the scheme for an underground railway.

Amendments recommended by Mr. A. G. Fletcher, Chief Civil Engineer, and Mr. M. A. Remfry, General Superintendent of Transportation, and approved by the Commissioners, provide for the ultimate construction of three double tracks leading from Richmond station and running underground north-westerly to an underground transfer station at Jolimont, where the lines will merge into two double tracks, one pair terminating under the Flagstaff Gardens and the other connecting with the North Melbourne station.

One double track from Richmond will pass around the eastern side of the Melbourne Cricket Ground, continue on from Jolimont under the Fitzroy Gardens, turn in under Albert Street at the corner of Lansdowne Street, continue on down Lonsdale Street and then sweep round under King Street to its terminating point under the Flagstaff Gardens.

The other two double tracks from Richmond will be taken underground on the south side of the present lines between Richmond and Flinders Street, and turn in under those lines to sweep around the western side of the Melbourne Cricket Ground to Jolimont.

One of these tracks will connect with the double track to Flagstaff Gardens mentioned above.

UNDERGROUND RAILWAY - - -



Proposed new railway from Richmond Station to the Flagstaff Gardens and connecting also with the present service at by a white dotted line.

The other will run under the Fitzroy Gardens, turn in under Grey Street and cross between the State Parliament House and St. Peter's Church into Lonsdale Street to the corner of King Street, where it will circle northwards to North Melbourne station.

The virtue of this modification is that it will relieve the pressure on the Flinders Street station and its approaches besides providing more convenient traffic outlets in the north of the city.

Another feature is that a considerable portion of the proposed underground tracks will run under parklands where the economical "cut and cover" method of

construction can be adopted without lasting injury to gardens. Furthermore, the tracks will run under streets that do not carry heavy tram traffic.

In conjunction with these developments, a new station will be erected at Richmond, a short distance on the Melbourne side of the existing station. It will accommodate four additional surface tracks—two between Jolimont Junction and South Yarra and two between Jolimont Junction and Camberwell. The new station will also have the advantage of alternative entrances at the west end, which will be an added convenience for sporting crowds attending the Melbourne or Richmond Cricket Grounds.

Success Of Australian Railways Ambulance Competition.

FOR the first time since 1941, the Australian Railways Ambulance competitions were held at the end of last month. Five states (Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania) and a Commonwealth Railways team competed. They proved that the lapse of time since the last meeting, and the years of war, had not dampened the enthusiasm of railway ambulance men.

Victoria was represented by Nth. Loco. No. 3 team, who scored the highest marks in the preliminary State examinations.

Events were contested at Mt. Evelyn on land donated by Mr. Chas. Mitchell (brother of the late Dame Nellie Melba) and Mrs. Mitchell. A more picturesque setting amid typical Australian bushland would be hard to find. Areas had been cleared for the various competitions and the result was a credit to Messrs. Bowe and Tate, of the Ambulance Division, and to the Lilydale Track gang who worked hard to produce a splendid layout.

Within a few minutes of the arrival of competitors, judges and spectators, the examinations were under way. There were five events.—Improvised Stretcher; Improvised Materials; Supplied Materials; Oral; and Transport. Perhaps the most interesting item from the spectators' view was the opening event—Improvised Stretcher Making. The task of the teams was to construct a serviceable stretcher, using only materials collected from the bush and their own personal clothing. Each team was allowed a tomahawk, but no other tools. Five minutes were given for general inspection of the area; then all teams were assembled. On the blast of a whistle there was a wild rush to collect

materials which the teams brought back to the enclosure, where the stretchers were constructed within full view of the spectators. Only 15 minutes were allowed for the finished article to be ready. Excitement ran high among the spectators, all of whom marvelled at the skill of the competitors.

After the event, teams were isolated except when competing separately in the remaining events. Clockwork precision characterized the general organization, with no time wasted anywhere.

Lunch was provided, in a marquee, by the Refreshment Services. Among the interstate visitors dining were Colonel Christie, A.A.M.C.; Capt. and Mrs. E. R. B. Pike, of Queensland; and Doctors Black (S.A.) and McCowan (W.A.), and Mr. Burgiss (N.S.W.).

The events were resumed immediately after lunch, and it was late in the afternoon before the weary competitors could relax.

Doric Hall, South Melbourne, was the scene in the evening for a dinner. Mr. Commissioner Canny, who presided, announced and congratulated the winners and presented them with the coveted shield. Each member of the winning team received a gold replica of the shield and second and third teams received silver and bronze replicas respectively. An entertaining programme by stage artists made for a most pleasant evening.

Winner of the competition was Queensland, with Victoria second and Commonwealth Railways third. Congratulations to the champions on a fine performance and to all others on a truly grand showing.

New Medical Officer Appointed

Reference was made in the September issue of the "News Letter" to the appointment of Colonel Max A. Rees to the position of Chief Medical Officer in succession to Dr. A. W. Bowman, who has retired.

Following the retirement also of Dr. F. P. Edwards, Medical Officer in control of the vision and hearing section of the Medical Division, the Commissioners have appointed Dr. Robert Munro, M.B., B.S., in his place.

Dr. Munro graduated with 1st class Honours at the Melbourne University in 1929, and after periods at the Royal Melbourne and other hospitals, including the Eye and Ear Hospital, he commenced practice at Kerang. Recently he disposed of his practice to commence a post-graduate course at the Melbourne University for the Diploma of Ophthalmology.

Retirement of Mr. F. P. Mitchell

Many old friends and colleagues collected recently at the V.R. Institute, Flinders Street, to say goodbye and wish a long happy retirement to Mr. F. P. Mitchell when he finished his valuable railway career last month. In recognition of his merit, a handsome china cabinet was presented to him by Mr. H. S. Sergeant (Comptroller of Stores), who in a neat speech paid a great tribute to the modest Mr. Mitchell's exceptional qualities. The presentation was further distinguished by a number of complimentary speeches from Mr. L. C. Stewart, Asst. Comptroller of Stores, Mr. C. W. Weate, Storehouse Manager, Mr. H. D. Agg, Chief Clerk, Mr. J. J. Gardiner, Rolling Stock Accountant, and Mr. D. L. Lemon, Accounting Officer, Newport. Mr. Mitchell, who had been Bookkeeper at the Spotswood Storehouse since 1932, joined the Department in 1900, spending ten years in the Transportation Branch before being transferred to the Stores Branch.

LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENTS IN U.S.A.

IN a recent report from the Bureau of Transport Economics and Statistics of the Inter-State Commerce Commission, U.S.A., it was stated that approximately 28 per cent. of "highway-railroad-grade crossing accidents in 1945" were caused by motor cars, buses and other petrol-driven vehicles crashing into the sides of trains.

These accidents totalled 971 causing 215 deaths and 1369 injuries, the greater number—702—occurring at night. Though the greatest number of accidents took place between 5 and 6 p.m., the peak of fatality was between 11 p.m. and midnight. The worst day in the week was Saturday and the worst month December, which, of course, is mid-winter in America.

In 54 per cent. of the accidents the motor vehicle bashed into the front of the train which in most instances was in motion. That is presumed to indicate "a possible combination of poor visibility, bad judgement of speed and carelessness."

Of the 971 accidents, over 35 per cent. occurred at crossings protected by lowered gates, watchmen, trainmen, or audible or visible signals. Even in the remainder of the cases caution was urged on approaching vehicles by stop or warning signs. The amount of attention paid to the various ways of urging care on approaching motor drivers is shown by the fact that in nearly 25 per cent. of the cases recorded the road vehicle was travelling over 40 miles per hour.

And here's another young grandfather—Ganger E. ("Snowy") Kerslake, stationed at Heidelberg, who became a grandfather in 1939 at the tender age of 39. The infant who calls him "grandpa" is the son of another railwayman, Mr. Ewart Anderson. Mr. Kerslake, incidentally, served overseas with the First A.I.F. and was for two years a member of the Second A.I.F.

RAILWAY FAMILIES—THE CHALLISES

MEET the Challises of Williamstown. Five generations of this family have lived in this popular suburb, and three generations—William Challis, now retired, his son J. W. Challis, Storeman-in-Charge of North Melbourne Workshops Store, and his grandson, Norman, now employed in Newport Loco. Stores, have excellent railway records.

William Challis entered the railways about 1911, served at Newport as a boiler-makers' help, and retired in 1929. In his youth he played with the Osborne Football Club from which players were recruited for the first Williamstown Football Club. He was also a Lieutenant in the Williamstown Volunteer Fire Brigade. Now 81, Mr. Challis is still a football student, ardently following the activities of the Williamstown team.

His son, J. W. Challis, entered the service as a carriage cleaner in 1905, transferred to the Stores Branch in 1923, and spent some years at Spotswood and Newport Loco. as Storeman in Charge before transfer-



Mr. W. Challis



Mr. J. W. Challis

Norman Challis, son of J. W. Challis, entered the Stores Branch in 1936, and was employed at Spotswood and the V.R. Printing Works, North Melbourne, before securing his present post at the Newport Loco.

The founder of the Australian branch of the family, James Challis, and the father of William Challis, came from England. In the days when Williamstown was a flourishing rival of Melbourne, he directed an extensive butcher's business. Later he became a councillor and mayor of Williamstown.



Mr. N. Challis

Betterment and Suggestions Board 25 Years Old

FOR over 25 years now the Betterment and Suggestions Board has been functioning to the great advantage of the service and its patrons. First created when Sir Harold Clapp was Chairman of Commissioners, the Board has developed its influence under various Chairmen. The first was Mr. Evan Richard, who held office from 1921 to 1923, and the position has since been filled by Mr. Arthur Hyland (1923-26), now in England; Mr. Chas. Holmes (1926-29), Manager of the Australian National Publicity Association; Mr. Burt Kelly (1929-35), Commissioners' Representative, Transport Regulation; and Mr. Victor Letcher (1935-39), now Secretary of the Department of Aircraft Production. Mr. Letcher was followed in 1939 by Mr. L. C. Bromilow who is still in control of this important railway activity.

During its career, the Suggestions Board has received over 47,000 suggestions, and of that number, approximately 7,900, or say, 1 in 6, have been adopted. This is a high percentage of success, proclaiming at once the interest and seriousness of the many railwaymen who have discovered potential benefits from alterations of timetables, new ways of avoiding waste, improvements in engineering—indeed, in a thousand and one operations in the many ramifications of the Department.

Even though 7,900 suggestions have been adopted there must—in such a large organization with ever-changing conditions—still be many more that will improve performance. Broadly, a minimum award of 10/- is paid for all adopted suggestions, and the history of the Board during its 25 years of life is full of instances of men benefiting from successful suggestions.

Surely there is some particular system or practice, originally useful but made obsolete by time, which you feel you could improve—or it may be a new, more businesslike approach to a job which would command approval.

Begin the practice of sending suggestions. Mail them to the Betterment and Suggestions Board, Railway Offices, Spencer Street. Your identity will be kept secret and your idea will receive the closest attention. If adopted, you will have the pleasure of opening a letter containing something of value to you.

Problems Of Black Coal Distribution

THE Railways Commissioners state that, owing to the acute coal position, train services may have to be curtailed without warning. The position is being watched closely.....

Behind this all too familiar announcement in recent years lies a drama of service to the public, the drama of coal distribution. Throughout the 4,748 route miles comprising the railway system, vital supplies of coal, the life-blood of rail transport, must be maintained. There are 84 points in Victoria equipped for coaling locomotives, serviced mainly from consigning points at Melbourne and Geelong for sea arrivals, Wodonga and Tocumwal for overlanded supplies, and Wonthaggi. Coal is received in varying quantities from Newcastle, Lithgow, Southern fields in New South Wales, and the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi. Fuel distribution is a never-ending task, and with supplies so meagre, a grave problem.

At times the railway reserve has fallen to a mere two days' supply including all coal in transit to coaling points. It thus needs little imagination to realize that late arrival of consignments would mean a disruption of traffic. "Hand-to-mouth" existence has long characterized the whole pattern of railway coal supplies and it is a tribute to the efficiency of those in charge that serious delays have been avoided.

An example of the bare margin on which train running has operated comes from the Bendigo line. Coal in transit from Melbourne to Bendigo Loco. Depot was delayed for nine hours when a goods train was derailed. By the time the coal trucks reached their destination the depot was completely out of coal, and locomotives were waiting for fuel.

At North Melbourne Loco. it has frequently happened that the coaling of locomotives has depended on the immediate arrival of consignments railed from New South Wales. Emergencies at other places have been met by diverting trucks of coal to isolated points overnight and at week-ends.

To ensure stocks being maintained at all points, every imaginable expedient has to be employed, including extensive use of paper trains to haul supplies. This drama of distribution is by no means an episode from the past—it is being played all the time.

NEWS FROM THE V.R.I.

THE next Sunday outing of the V.R.I. Golf Association will be held at Park Orchards Links on Sunday, December 8. A Mixed Foursomes competition for trophies will be played during the day, and this will be followed by a Social and Dance in the Club House after dinner. A large attendance of members, their wives and friends is expected.

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The headquarters of the newly-formed Ladies' Tennis Club is at the V.R.I. Tennis Court, Royal Park. New members are invited to join this Club and further particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Miss Joan Richey, Room 184, Accountancy Branch, Spencer Street (Auto. 1525), or V.R.I. Sports Secretary (Auto. 1109).

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VK3RI, well known to radio amateurs prior to the war, is again functioning and offers many advantages to railwaymen interested in radio and desiring to become members. The Club has its own Rooms at the V.R.I. and a library of well-known radio text books and periodicals is available to members. The Club is licensed to operate on the 10, 20 and 40-metre bands and beginners are permitted to operate transmitters under the guidance and in the presence of a licensed operator. In this way members, though not licensed themselves, are able to become proficient as operators or to contact other amateurs throughout the world. All interested in this subject, are invited to contact Mr. H. Clarke, Honorary Secretary, Room 68, Head Office (Auto. 1293).

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The Committee of the Albert Park—V.R.I. Bowling Club reports that although the Club is only a little over 12 months old, it is doing remarkably well. The membership—26 at the inception of the Club in August 1945—already numbers over 80, and the Club has one team in "A" Pennant and hopes next year to have teams in all three grades of V.B.A. Pennant games. The "A" grade team has not yet won a match, but it tied with the powerful Essendon side, and was also only beaten by 3 points (88 to 85) by the strong Northcote team, which has already won five of its seven matches. The selectors are very busy with team building, and as many of the younger players who came into the game for the first time last year are now beginning to show the benefit of coaching and practice, the Club is looking forward with confidence to the future.

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Conspicuous among the sporting activities of the V.R.I., Ararat, is the success of the Institute's Carpet Bowling teams, four of which, including two ladies' teams, are busily engaged in local competitions. Carpet bowls has been a prominent pastime in the Ararat Institute since 1930, and one of the original teams, No. 2, has won the annual premiership of the district in 1933, 1935, 1937, 1939, 1943, 1944 and 1946, whilst the team was runners-up in 1940, 1941 and 1942, and third in 1945. Incidentally, four of the six members of the Ararat district team that won the State Championship in 1941 were V.R.I. players.

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The annual dance and presentation of prizes for the V.R.I. Table Tennis Association was held at the Institute on Friday, November, 22. About 100 players, with their wives and friends, enjoyed a very pleasant evening. Electrical "A" team were presented with the L.J. Williamson Cup for their pennant success.

Talking of Railway Men and Women

A modest railwayman, Kenneth Albert Richards, was present at the special investiture ceremony held by the Governor-General, the Duke of Gloucester, at Government House, Melbourne, during his visit to Victoria last month. Mr. Richards, who is now employed in the Secretary's Branch, was personally decorated by His Royal Highness with the D.F.C. and Bar—honours he won for gallant service during the war. He was conspicuous for his accurate bombing of ships off the Jugo-Slav coast; but the peak of his long achievement was in the low level bombing of the Pescara Dam in Italy. The result of this audacious raid was that the sluice gates to the dam were destroyed and a vast area of the surrounding country was heavily flooded.

If Mr. Leslie E. Pirani, who retired last month, had continued in the Department until February 3, 1947, he would have achieved one of the rare exploits of working in the Victorian Railways for 50 years. For the greater part of his career, he had been immersed in the profound science of revenue statistics in the Accountancy Branch. An excellent, conscientious officer in all that he undertook, he will leave a number of well-wishers behind him. When he entered the Department away back in 1897, he was a small humble fellow in the Telegraph Office. After a few months, he was transferred to the Traffic Audit Office and when the Audit and Accounts were merged together, he entered on the activity which has engaged his attention for so many years. Mr. Pirani, who expects to devote some of his leisure to his work for the Elsternwick A.N.A. and Elsternwick Dispensary with which he has been associated for over 20 years, is the son of Edward Pirani, a former collector in the Accounts, who began his experience with the Hobson's Bay Co. Mr. L. E. Pirani is also a brother of Ernest Pirani, a special loco. driver in the Department.

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Mr. J. A. Wilson, Stationmaster, Middle Brighton, has retired after more than 46 years' service. He joined the Department as a clerk in 1900, became A.S.M. in 1914, and then interrupted his railway career for service abroad with the First A.I.F. 1923 saw him in charge of his first station—Boisdale—followed by appointments to Noojee, Westgarth, Cohuna, Brighton Beach and Middle Brighton. His popularity was amply demonstrated last month when a party of about 50 railwaymen and railway customers met at his home to wish him farewell and presented him with a cheque, and with flowers for Mrs. Wilson.

Of late, unfortunately, Mr. Wilson has not been in the best of health, and his prowess at golf (he has won many tournaments at Mentone Golf Club) and tennis has been forced to lie dormant. But he is on the mend now and his plans for a fishing holiday are causing concern to the River Murray cod. The best wishes of all railwaymen go with him for good health, and good fishing.

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Warm tributes to the good work of Mr. A. A. Burns, conductor of Shorthand Classes at the V.R.I., came this month from Miss C. Bourke and Miss C. Kennedy. Under his tuition both ladies succeeded in passing the 120 words per minute Shorthand Test, which secured for them an increase in salary. Miss Bourke is a permanent typiste in the Commonwealth Public Service (Department of Air).