

Chapter 8

“Miserable tallow Lamps”

There were many different kinds of Miners lamps, varying from a simple bit of cloth dipped in tallow in a dish, to oil lamps or “stink pots” to fancy American made acetylene generators (see picture)



Lamp by courtesy of John Hill, Oberon. Photo: Philip Hammon

North's Siding

The procedure whereby North had his siding installed at Katoomba is not clear.

Below is a reply from the ARHS re an inquiry from PJH. Also an imaginative interpretation of North's installation by a railway historian J.H. Forsyth.

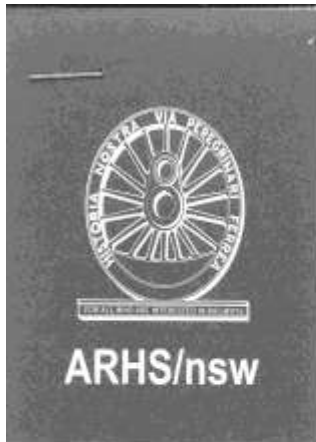
Historical Notes on Main Western Line Vol 1

110.10km. Approximate position of points to **J.B.North's Siding**, opened 7.1.1882, the mine ceased operating in 1897, the connection and yard siding being removed on 3.7.1915. 20 tonne crane listed in 1892 Appendix.

NP: Should be 1918
(4/27/1918)

JW

[Coal and shale were mined in the Jamison Valley. The siding left the Katoomba yard and swung under the old Bathurst Road timber skew overbridge, and probably passed down Valley Road near the twin water reservoirs, hence by easy grades to the summit of the 1 in 1 incline, now known as *'The Scenic Railway,'* from the foot of which horse tramways ran to the coal mines. When the Main line at Katoomba was deviated in 1897 the siding was extended into Katoomba Yard on a high level. The shale mining of the valley gave out in 1895 and the amount of coal mined was insufficient to justify the retention of the tramway that ceased to operate in 1897.]



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Attention: Mr Philip Hammon

Thank you for your enquiry and payment of \$15 regarding North's Siding. Your receipt is attached

Unfortunately there is not a lot in our collection that will assist you in your research. We can confirm the opening and closing dates and also provide some additional information. Please find enclosed the following photocopied information:

- 'Historical Notes on Main Western Line' Vol 1 p94
- NSWGR 'Local Appendix - West' 1906 p18
- NSW 'Weekly Notice 27 / 1918' p18
- 'The Railway Guide of NSW 1886' p45
- 'Shale Railways of NSW' by Eardley & Stephens p58, 59, 61 - 64

There is nothing in our collection that relates to the procedures used to request the building of new railway sidings. I have posed this question to an ex NSW railway engineer and will let you know his answer.

We suggest that you visit the NSW State Records Reading Room. Their address is 143 O'Connell Street, KINGSWOOD, NSW. [See attached information]. We suggest the following:

NRS15912 Reports Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works 1889-1930
R377 Private Siding Index Cards 1885 - 1988

We trust that this information is useful

Yours sincerely,

Ken Williams

And an Appendix to the Working Timetable dated 1 Jan 1906

FOR THE USE OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES ONLY.

**AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY** 1729
NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

LOCAL APPENDIX

TO THE

WORKING TIME-TABLE

AND

Instructions supplementary to those contained
in the Book of Rules and in the
General Appendix.

1st JANUARY, 1906, until Further Notice.

WESTERN DIVISION.

SYDNEY :
WILLIAM APPELEGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

*48454 (Yellow cover.) (a)

1906.

2639 5

North's Siding.

The line from Katoomba to North's Siding is on a rising grade of 1 in 66. Trucks for this Siding are to be propelled from Katoomba, and the Guard or Shunter in charge must ride upon the leading vehicle, provided with a red and green flag by day, and hand signal lamp by night, and must keep a sharp look out ahead for danger or obstruction so as to signal the Driver to stop if required. When returning from the Siding to Katoomba with a load, the Guard or Shunter must ride on the last vehicle, and will be responsible for seeing that sufficient vehicle hand-brakes are applied to properly hold the Train while running from the Siding to the Station.

In order that the work at this Siding may be conducted with safety, it will be necessary for three men to be in attendance during shunting operations when over twenty trucks are being placed in the Siding or lifted from it; but when the number of trucks to be shunted does not exceed twenty, only two men will be necessary. One man will be placed on the overhead bridge before the train enters the Siding, and repeat all signals from the Guard or Shunter to the Driver. After the engine has passed the bridge, he will take up a position on a truck, and continue to transmit all signals from the Shunters, taking care that he is always in view of both Drivers and Shunters.

When not more than six trucks are being put in or taken out, one man will be sufficient.

The Bracket Lock at the Catch Points must be unlocked before trucks are put into the Sidings.

When shunting is completed the Bracket Lock at the Catch Points must be locked and the key returned to the Station-master, Katoomba; care must be taken that all trucks left at the Sidings are inside the Catch Points.

This was at a time when the siding had fallen into disuse, as far as we know at present (2009). The last major use was in 1903 when AKO&M were shipping out seconds of shale for AGL.