Coal Train Operations in the Ipswich District in the 1950's and 1960's

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This paper provides an insight to the operation of coal trains in and around Ipswich in the late 1950's and early to mid 1960's. It is hoped that by reading it, modellers will understand the wide range and variety of coal train operations, that there is a scope for their inclusion on a model railway, and that they will interpret the information herein so that operating their model railways can become more interesting.

It will be seen that coal trains are not just a standard train of locomotive, a number of hoppers and a van. Indeed, the variations in the coal trains described and their operations leads towards a challenging modelling event.

The information provided here consists of "snapshots in time". It is impracticable to say that all aspects of coal train operations held firm over many years. Like everything else in this life of ours, constant evolution and change are part of railway operations. So descriptions and vignettes in this paper relate to specific times and a specific events – they may have taken place before or after, but not necessarily so.

But take place they did, and we use our modellers' licence to compress or expand time as we need to, to justify or explain something we are trying to create.

Coal Trains

Coal trains have been a feature of the Ipswich district for almost as long as railways have operated there. Over time, little change took place in the composition of trains until four wheel hoppers were replaced by high capacity bogie hoppers in the 1970's.

Coal trains were, in the main, trains of a varying number of hoppers, depending on the destination of the coal. Each train also comprised a range of hoppers, being a mix of wood and steel wagons. On some trains coal hoppers were incorporated with other goods wagons to become goods trains.

On the other hand, many goods trains operating in the Rosewood-Ipswich-Brisbane area included coal hoppers, loaded or empty, in their consists.

Ipswich mines were considered to be large underground mines in their own right, but were quite small in comparison with those in, for example the Maitland field (NSW) and the newer Central Queensland mines. Nevertheless, coal trains - empty or loaded – plied their way back and forth between collieries or loading ramps in the Rosewood-Ipswich-Bundamba area and destinations generally in and around Brisbane.

Coal trains were scheduled to a daily timetable published in the appropriate working timetables. However, apart from a small number of trains that had to run sharp to time because they filled roles in addition to moving coal hoppers, the interpretation of timetables was quite liberal. It was common to see a coal train that had lost its path in the timetable, put away in a refuge loop on the Corinda to Ipswich section of the Main Line while one or two suburban passenger trains overtook it – especially in peak hours.

For this reason, and to ensure that on-time running was achieved as much as possible, and even though coal trains were scheduled, the general instruction was that coal trains were to run as arranged by train Control. They were not to perform any work other than that specified in the Working Time Tables, unless authorised by Control. In other words, if all was well, the schedule was adhered to, but if the train had problems, its path would be determined by Control and relayed to signalmen and train crew.

In the case of coal trains running in the West Moreton field, timetables for west of Ipswich – to Rosewood and Grandchester - were published in the *Main, Southern, South-Western and Western Lines and Branches Working Time Tables*. Timetables for trains running east of Ipswich were published in the *Suburban Lines Working Time Tables*.

The *Main, Southern, South-Western and Western Lines and Branches Working Time Tables* also listed coal trains in other parts of southern Queensland – Tannymorel to Warwick and Acland to Toowoomba.

Many of the train movements referred to in this paper were programmed for a Tuesday in mid-1959. It should be noted that the term "coal trains" refers to trains identified as having a majority of coal hoppers in their consist.

Other goods trains – shunt trains - operated to move small numbers of hoppers and other varieties of wagons from a drop off point – eg Corinda, Roma Street, Mayne, Wooloongabba – to customers whose requirements did not warrant a full trainload, or who were located in a position that made shunting a coal train difficult.

Destinations

In the days of steam, a large quantity of the coal hauled by the Queensland Railways was destined for its own use. Hoppers were detached at Ipswich for use there, and scheduled coal trains ran regularly to Mayne and Wooloongabba locomotive depots. At all three locations, coal hoppers were pushed onto coal stages and discharged through the floor of the hopper into storage bins underneath.

Some coal was required at places where locomotives were staged overnight a reasonable distance from their home depot, such as at Yarraman. Because of the small amount of coal that was used at these places, it was transported on regular goods trains in open wagons such as F, FJ and FJS, and hand shovelled into locomotive tenders from a low trestle or ramp beside the engine road.

Some consignees required only small quantities of coal delivered regularly, either daily, or maybe two or three times per week. Princess Alexandra Hospital had a siding near Dutton Park Station where a few hoppers were left on a regular basis, then moved to a location near where it was required by by a small tractor.

Coal for the paper mill at Petrie came to Mayne on 559 goods from Wulkuraka. It was attached to 149 Fruit and Goods which departed Mayne at 5.55am. 149 shunted Zillmere (livestock and general goods), Strathpine (detach molasses cylinders) and Petrie (general

Yarraman was host on a daily basis to Ipswich engines that stabled there until their return working to their home depot. Because of the distance from Ipswich to Yarraman, it was necessary to replenish coal supplies at the branch terminus. The FJS to the right of C17 705 is on a low ramp which gives additional height so that coal is more easily hand shovelled into the tender.

(D. Mewes)

goods and coal). The loaded hoppers were shunted along the short siding to the paper mill, and empties brought out to be returned to Mayne for forwarding to Ipswich by 432 Goods (8.22pm).

At this time, Brisbane's power supplies came from powerhouses at Tennyson, New Farm (Newstead) and the two large units at Gibson Island (Bulimba A and Bulimba B) on the Brisbane River near Murarrie.

Considerable quantities of coal were needed by these powerhouses, and a number of trains ran daily – Monday to Friday – to supply the fuel.

Other major destinations included Roma Street and South Brisbane where the coal was required by commercial interests. They stockpiled the coal there and transported it by road across the city to a range of customers.

Wooloongabba Wharf was the major export point for Ipswich coal for many years. Coal

Two views of the coal unloading facility at South Brisbane. Although an 1800 class rail motor is occupying the trestle, it was still being used at the time of the photograph to unload coal hoppers through their bottom discharge doors.

was loaded onto ships for their own bunkers and for transport to destinations along the Queensland coast. It operated from 1884 until the mid 1950's when coastal shipping declined and bunkering was no longer required with oil replacing coal as a fuel.
In 1950, a daily coal train B19 ran from Bundamba to the wharf, arriving there at 12.37am,

Looking south from the coal stage at Ipswich in 1961. Five or six wagons at a time were pushed up the 1 in 20 grade by one of the rostered locomotives, usually a PB15 but often a C16 or a C17. At Mayne depot in Brisbane, tank locomotives were frequently used. Some depots - North Bundaberg, Mackay, Gladstone with restricted space used a winch to pull the hoppers up a 1 in 5 grade.
Once on the level section on top of the stage, coal was gravity fed into bins below through their bottom discharge doors.
A close examination of this photograph will reveal a large number of coal hoppers in the yard.
This is the North Yard, where most trains, coal as well as general goods trains, were broken down on arrival and made up for departure.
In the case of coal trains, hoppers were rearranged so that wherever possible coal for a single consignee went forward as one train.

the locomotive returning light engine to Wooloongabba. By 1959, scheduled trains had ceased, the rails being removed from the wharf in 1960.

Consists

Most scheduled coal trains, particularly those going to the powerhouses, were "block" trains consisting of a variety of coal hoppers and van. Some scheduled coal trains attached other varieties of wagons if required to clear loading, or to detach or attach wagons at sidings that were accessible only to one direction of travel.

Generally, though, block trains were not made up to more than a through load for the locomotive and the sections over which the train was to run, so that they could be hauled by a single locomotive throughout. An exception was the Murarrie service, which was banked from Dutton Park to Murarrie, and the occasional train bringing loading off the Bundamba-Redbank Loop from 3 Miles 8 Chains to Bundamba.

Booval Butter Factory, Ebbw Vale Clay Products and Riverview could only be shunted by down trains. Wagons for these locations were taken forward by Up trains to Bundamba or Ipswich and returned on Down trains. A5, coal to Murarrie included wagons for

Booval, and was allowed seventeen minutes there to shunt.

General goods trains also conveyed loaded or empty hoppers as part of their consist. 183, daily goods from Wulkuraka to Roma Street, departing Wulkuraka at 2.50pm, could be made up to a full load by attaching coal for Mayne. When attached, coal hoppers were to be marshalled on the van.

C17 838 heads a down loaded coal train out of Bundamba, heading towards Brisbane. Note the general goods wagons ahead of the coal hoppers.

344 ex Roma Street (11.35pm) on Wednesdays conveyed empty wooden wagons for the wagon repair shops at Wacol, in addition to empty hoppers for Ipswich.

Monday to Friday goods and empty hoppers B18 ex Wooloongabba was scheduled to lift loading (clay products) for the South Coast Line from Brittain's Siding east of Darra. This loading was to be taken to Bundamba by that train and returned to Wooloongabba by B11 – 40 kilometres of additional distance for these wagons.

The engine on B18 was a Wooloongabba based C17. On arrival at Bundamba, it exchanged roles with the C17 that had worked shunt train 219 since 7.30am that morning. It was turned then ran tender first with empty hoppers to 3 miles 8 chains on the Bundamba Loop, as shunt train 219, while the engine off shunt train 219 became the train engine for B11 to Wooloongabba.

B11 was formed with the loading from Brittain's and full hoppers brought off the branch by its now train engine. Most of the coal was destined for Tennyson Powerhouse, while the remaining hoppers and goods wagons went to Wooloongabba. From Dutton Park to Wooloongabba, the PB15 banking engine from the day's Murarrie coals, ran attached.

C6 was a goods from Roma Street (5.14am) to Redbank. It conveyed empty hoppers for Redbank, but also shunted general goods at Darra, Wacol and Goodna. It was at Darra for two hours, Wacol for an hour and twenty-five minutes, and Goodna for ten minutes.

A spare set of trainmen was sent to Redbank by suburban passenger to relieve the crew of C6, who returned spare to Mayne on 65. The replacement crew turned the locomotive, and prepared C5, 12.30pm coal to Newstead. After detaching at Newstead, they ran light engine to Mayne depot, arriving there at 3.23pm.

432 goods to Ipswich departed Mayne at 8.22pm, conveying south side loading (detached at Corinda), Goodna perishable wagon and empty hoppers for Redbank and

Ipswich.

Locomotives Used

In general, coal trains in the West Moreton field were hauled by almost any class of steam locomotive available at the time, subject to some specific rostering and track capability.

The Tivoli Branch, the portion of the Redbank-Bundamba Loop line between Redbank and 3 miles 8 chains and the New Chum Branch (Dinmore) were available only to PB15 or lighter locomotives. In the latter part of the 1960's, C17 locomotives were allowed to traverse the section from Redbank to Rhondda and the New Chum Branch.

Trains west of Ipswich were hauled by locomotives up to C17 standard, because part of the locomotive roster included the Marburg Branch, and shunting the Westvale Colliery Siding (Lanefield) and the Caledonian Colliery Siding (Thagoona) all available only for C17 or lighter locomotives.

C17 or heavier locomotives were used on the Murarrie coal trains. More often than not, a Murarrie train would be hauled by a B18¼ or BB18¼ locomotive. C19's 196 and 700 were at Ipswich in the late fifties and early sixties and were often seen on these trains.

Late night empty hopper train B20 ex Wooloongabba to Bundamba on Thursdays was to

C19 No. 700 storms past Dutton Park signal cabin heading for Ipswich on a return trip from Murarrie, ca1963.
The track to the right of the train is the dead end siding where the banking engine waited for the train it was to assist to Murarrie.
The tracks on the left led to Wooloongabba steam depot, and sidings serving industries, including one (far left) where loaded hoppers were placed for Princess Alexandra Hospital.

be hauled by a Wooloongabba based D17 or C16 engine. This locomotive returned on B21, leaving Bundamba on Friday at 1.50am with coal for Tennyson Powerhouse. After detaching the loaded hoppers, it ran to Yeerongpilly to turn (if a C16) then proceeded to Corinda where it lifted loading for its home depot, Wooloongabba.

By the time diesels made severe inroads into motive power, fewer trains ran because at the same time, demand for Ipswich coal lessened, Central Queensland fields were coming on stream, and many Ipswich mines were either running out of economically mined coal, or were facing economic problems in remaining operational and competitive.

Several Ipswich locomotives were fitted with tender headlights and a second sand dome to facilitate tender first running. Light engine movements and some empty and loaded hopper movements required tender first operation, both on the main line and on branches. PB15's No.455 and 587, and C17's 840 and 785 were so fitted. The PB15's had small lights, 785 had a Stones headlight while 840 had the large headlight from 709.

PB15 No. 587 with rear headlight and twin sand domes fitted for tender first running works a string of loaded hoppers on the New Chum Branch. Note the absence of a van.

Coal Hoppers

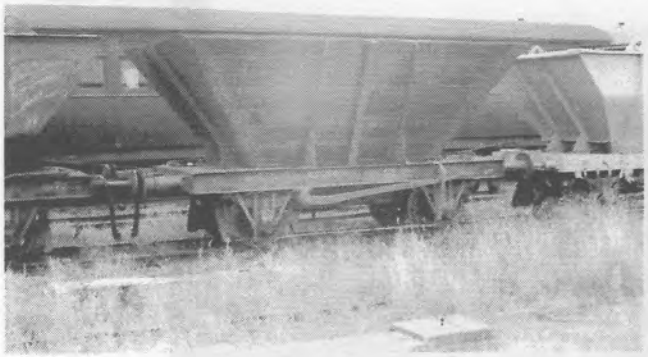
Apart from some use of bogie hoppers in earlier times, four wheel hoppers were the mainstay of Ipswich coal train operations.

The hoppers were given a "V" classification, developments on the original design, the "V"

The standard Queensland coal hopper - the V class. There were several variants of this classification. The major differences were in the dimensions of the hopper body, some being longer and/or higher than others.

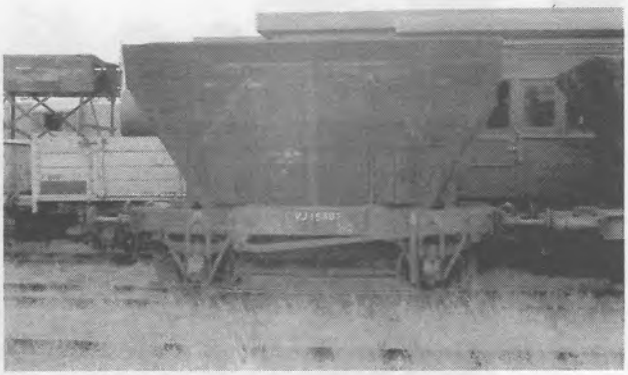
(late S. Suggit)

A VJ class hopper with timber underframe and body. This was the most common form of VJ. Forty of these hoppers were altered, fitted with lifting hooks and reclassified VJM.



This VJ hopper differs from the one above right, having a steel underframe.

(Arthur Robinson)



Looking more like a VR than a VJ, this hopper is essentially a V with two additional boards fitted to the top.

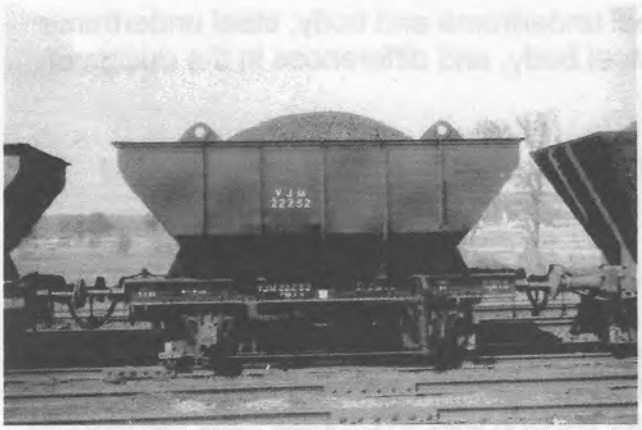
(Arthur Robinson)

A number of V wagons were altered, being fitted with additional boards to increase capacity and reclassified VR. The boards on VR5474 are vertical all around.

(late S. Suggit)

VR15687 is different fro the VR on the left - the additional boards on the side of the hopper are canted and a econd set of lifting lugs added. The lifting lugs allowed overhead cranes to lift the body off the underframe for discharge of coal into large stockpiles, such as into the hold of a ship.

(late S. Suggit)



VJM22252 at Bundamba. These all steel hoppers were fitted with lifting hooks. They could be unloaded through the bottom discharge door or by crane, lifting the body from the underframe.

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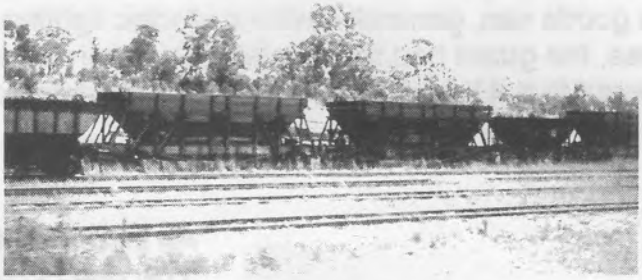
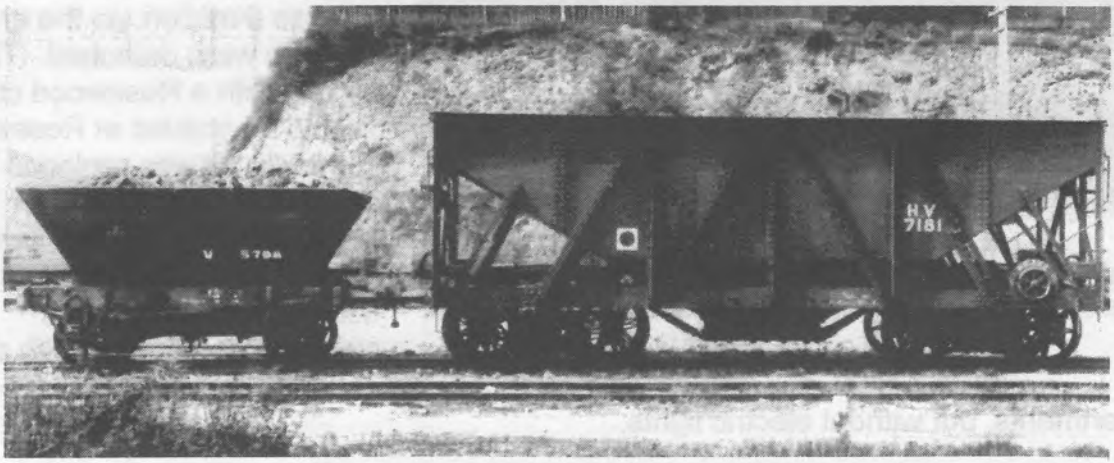


VH timber bogie hoppers stored at Wulkuraka in 1960. These hoppers saw little, if any, service in the Ipswich district. They worked coal trains in North Queensland and from the collieries in the Acland district on the Darling Downs.



An early QR photograph of a 6 tonne V class hopper attached to a 25tonne VH steel bogie hopper. Twenty steel hoppers were constructed in the United States, but their non-standard coal discharge system made them difficult to use. Some of these hoppers were known to have operated in the Ipswich district.

(Queensland Railways)

VJM hoppers varied. Variants included all steel underframe and body, steel underframe with wooden body, wooden underframe and steel body, and differences in the design of the steel bodies.

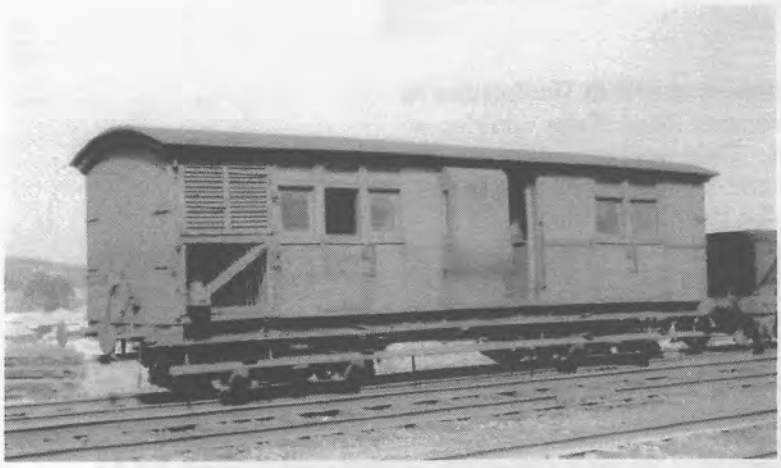
Additional boards were added to the standard hopper body to provide for increased capacity. This was the case with the VR and the wooden bodied VJM.

The bogie hoppers were classified VH, some being constructed from timber and others in steel. The timber and steel VH wagons were of different sizes and capacities. Although the steel hopper was shorter (albeit slightly higher) it had a substantially increased capacity. The wooden hoppers were built in Townsville in two batches in 1915 (2'9½" wheels) and in 1922-23 (2'2" wheels). The later version was 5½" longer over headstocks.

The VH hoppers saw service in North Queensland, and on Acland to Toowoomba coal trains on the Darling Downs. However, a photograph taken at Rhondda Colliery in the Bundamba field prior to 1909 shows a steel VH hopper in a string of wooden four wheelers awaiting loading.

Vans

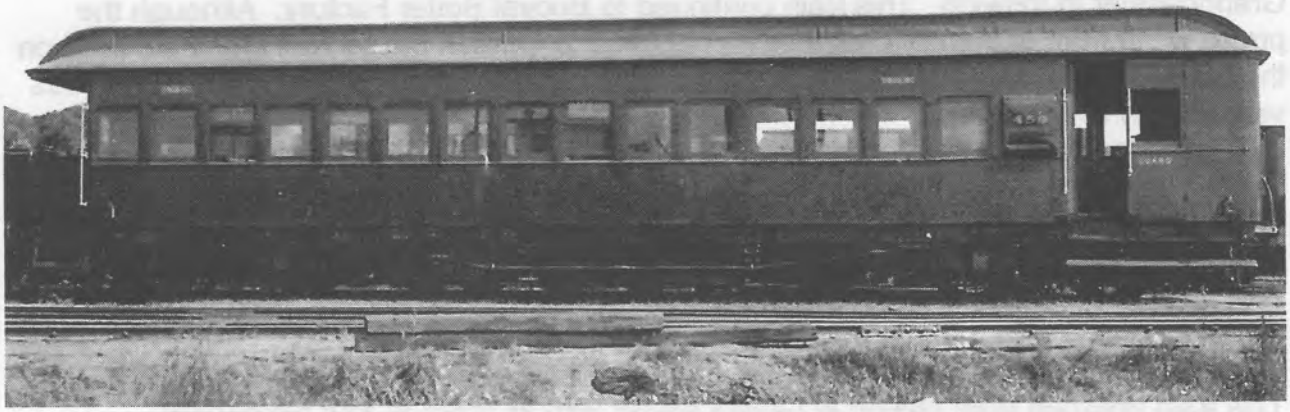
Vans attached to coal trains varied, and a typical coal train of the late fifties-early to mid sixties was likely to have a goods van, generally without electric lighting. This meant that during the hours of darkness, the guard had to complete his paperwork on the train using a kerosene light. It also meant that if the van had passenger accommodation, any passengers would also be travelling in the dark.



A typical goods van, without electric lighting. These vans were quite common on coal trains.

An instance of this was train 179, one of two daily goods trains from Marburg to Ipswich. It conveyed coal from collieries on the branch, as well as any goods from Marburg. At Rosewood, the train had to reverse direction, so the engine and van were detached. The engine with a Rosewood crew was to be stabled at Rosewood overnight. It was replaced by an Ipswich engine with an Ipswich crew. The van was also changed, the new van usually being one of the standard goods vans with one or two passenger compartments, but without electric lights.

The train, still 179Down, left Rosewood for Ipswich at 9.30pm, shunted Wulkuraka from 10.00pm to 10.30pm, arriving in Ipswich Yard at 10.40pm.



A van of the type used when a reasonable amount of passenger accommodation was required - for example on 534 Ipswich-Rosewood empty hoppers, and on 523, daily Grandchester to Ipswich coal.

(late S. Suggit)

class being given one or two following letters – eg VJ, VR, VJM. A steel hopper built for Mount Isa concentrate traffic, GVJM, was little, if ever, used in the Ipswich area.

Despite the small number of classes of coal hopper, variants within each class were many. For example, in the V classification, there were at least three different sizes of hopper body, and therefore three different capacities. The loaded hoppers detached at Wulkuraka would go forward to Mayne on 559, departing Wulkuraka at 12.50am the next morning, Tuesday to Saturday. The locomotive for 559 ran Ipswich to Wulkuraka tender first, after working suburban passenger 262 from Shorncliffe and being turned at Ipswich. On occasions, the locomotive was a DD17, which did not require turning.

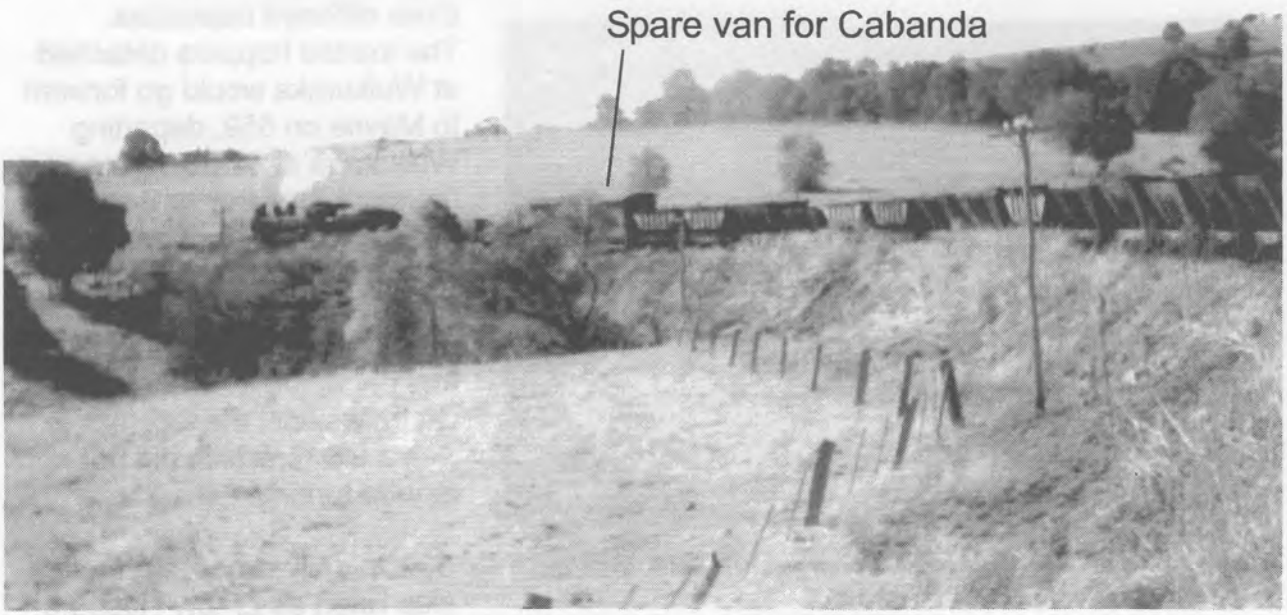
A small van with passenger accommodation on 179A, ready to depart Marburg for Rosewood.

534Up daily except Saturday, was listed as Empty Hoppers, departing Ipswich at 11.55am and arriving at Rosewood at 12.30pm. On Tuesdays and Fridays, it had passenger accommodation attached to convey school children from Ipswich, stopping as required between Ipswich and Rosewood to set them down. The children were Grade7 and 8 from small schools – Karrabin, Walloon, and Mt Marrow - as well as the larger Rosewood State School, who had travelled to Ipswich in the morning, and were returning to their home schools after having attended Manual Training and Domestic Science classes at the Ipswich State High School.

Their forward journey would have been on M1, Passenger and Milk train from Grandchester to Ipswich. This train continued to Booval Butter Factory. Although the prefix "M" in front of the train number was applied to Ipswich based Rail Motor services on the Main Line, M1 was in fact a steam locomotive, three passenger carriages an a goods van, usually a "CB" class.
26A was a passenger train from Roma Street to Grandchester, Mondays to Fridays. Passengers from west of Ipswich for train 26Up took this train to Laidley and transferred to 26, which had run express from Ipswich, at that station. From Brisbane to Ipswich, the locomotive was usually a B18¼ or BB18¼. At Ipswich, the locomotive was changed, and 26A completed its journey with a PB15 locomotive, as the turntable at Gatton could not accommodate a larger engine.

This train returned from Gatton to Grandchester with its three or four passenger carriages, as train 517, Empty Coaches. From Grandchester, it became a Coal train, shunting Caledonian Colliery Siding east of Thagoona. Sufficient loading was to be attached at Rosewood to make the train up to through engine load leaving Caledonian Colliery Siding.

The passenger carriages were detached at Wulkuraka, where they remained until 2.50pm, when they were attached to 183, Wulkuraka to Roma Street Goods, including



172 afternoon Rosewood-Marburg goods with a bogie water wagon, a wagon of general goods for Marburg, empty hoppers for Cabanda, and a spare van, also for Cabanda. Two daily return trips were made to Marvburg, each train leaving a van at Cabanda and picking it up on the return.

coal.

Another Coal train with a passenger van was 523, daily from Grandchester to Ipswich. It picked up school children at Rosewood and stopped at Thagoona to set them down. It

then stopped at the points to the Caledonian Colliery Siding to pick up miners, stopping as required betwee there and Ipswich to set them down. This train shunted Lanefield and Westvale, and lifted loaded hoppers from Rosewood. Because of the passenger component of its trip, it was required to run sharp to time.

An interesting working with vans took place daily on the Marburg branch. 172 was a daily goods to Marburg, with passenger accommodation. It connected at Rosewood with 528, Gatton rail motor. 172 departed Rosewood with two vans – one at the rear of the train (the van for passengers) and a goods van marshalled in the train immediately ahead of the empty hoppers it conveyed to place at sidings between Rosewood and Cabanda, and for beyond Cabanda if room was available on the train.

The van marshalled in front of the empty hoppers was placed at Cabanda, to be picked up on the return trip from Marburg to Rosewood. The van would be placed in front of the loaded hoppers so that the train was marshalled correctly for its journey to Ipswich.

The van had come from Ipswich on the empty hoppers which were going on to the branch. As storage at Rosewood was limited, and other coal trains required space there, the van was sent to Cabanda to get it out of the way. The same procedure was followed on the morning return trip to Marburg.

Shunting of Coal Trains Enroute

Specific instructions regarding shunting, or non-shunting, of coal trains were common. 188 Up empty hoppers Monday to Thursday, 8.25pm ex Newstead for Wulkuraka, was not to shunt between those two stations. Besides empty hoppers, it conveyed wagons for 4R Up, the next morning's goods (including empty hoppers) from Wulkuraka to North Rosewood.

Light engine movements were integral to coal train operations. Empty hopper train D8 Up on Mondays only, arrived at Redbank at 4.06pm. The diesel locomotive departed Redbank at 4.35pm and ran light engine to Ipswich, arriving there at 5.00pm.

Where a coal train was used to convey wagons to sidings to be shunted, the goods wagons were always placed ahead of the coal hoppers.

Wacol

All loaded trains were weighed at the weighbridges at Wacol. Here there were two weighbridge roads, each with two weighbridges so that two hoppers on each road could be weighed at the same time. Coal trains were timed so that they arrived at Wacol well ahead of other Down trains, because as weighing took place with the train moving slowly over the weighbridges, the rear of the train was foul of the down main.

By the time the train was clear of the main, the weighing was about seventy-five percent complete. After weighing, the train pulled forward to the starting signal to await the road. A water standpipe was located adjacent to the tracks at this point so locomotives could take water if required.

Time taken to weigh trains and have them on their way, varied from fifteen minutes (B25

Monday only coal to Wooloongabba) to an hour (A9, Tuesday to Friday Coal to Murarrie). The variance in times was more related to regaining a path in peak hour or other traffic, than to the length of the train, although this was a factor. The weighing process itself did not take long.

While a train was waiting for the road, a second loaded coal train could be weighed, and it was possible to see two trains in these sidings. On Mondays, C5 and D5, coal to Newstead and Murarrie respectively, were there together. C5 arrived at 12.45pm, and D5 at 12.58pm. D5 (with a diesel at the head) was first away at 1.28pm with C5 following at 1.48pm, with 87 suburban passenger between them.

Wooloongabba coal, B11 has just left the eastern end of the weighbridge road (6.45pm) when C11, Murarrie coal arrives at the western end (6.47pm). A late running B11 would have both trains there at the same time.

Shifts

Murarrie trains were hauled by Ipswich locomotives. A typical shift excluding preparation time, waiting in the yard and sign-off time, for an Ipswich crew working A7 Down/A4 Up, would have been from 6.53am when A7 left Ipswich yard until its arrival at Ipswich Yard on its return from Murarrie as A4 at 2.25pm.

Other trains were timetabled to work across shifts, with trainmen travelling spare on suburban passenger services to relieve crew who then returned to their depot, also on suburban services.

The Murarrie Trains

The Murarrie trains were hauled by Ipswich based locomotives with Ipswich crews. They ran return trips Monday to Friday, with an "as required" Saturday train. The Monday times were somewhat different from the Tuesday to Friday times and in 1959 all trains were steam hauled with two exceptions.

Monday services, D9 ex Ipswich Yard 5.00am and returning as D12 empty hoppers to Bundamba, and D5 ex Bundamba returning as empty hoppers D8 to Redbank, were diesel hauled with the same diesel performing both round trips. The diesel had stabled overnight at Ipswich after operating Sunday services, and after returning empty hoppers to Redbank on D8, ran light engine to Ipswich, turned then worked late afternoon suburban service 127 to Central allowing it to return to its home depot, Mayne.

The steam hauled Murarrie trains were built up to a bank load, with a PB15 bank engine from Dutton Park to Murarrie, where the grade between Norman Park and Morningside provided a major challenge. Five trains ran daily, with trains D9 and D5 on Monday not requiring banking as they were diesel hauled.

Coal for Murarrie was not to be attached to trains other than those specifically made up for that destination. In other words, Murarrie coal was not to be used to build up loads on other trains and then detached at a convenient location and forwarded to Murarrie separately.

Bundamba, 1963. B18¼ 827 on Ipswich bound suburban 38Up passes Murarrie coal A5 hauled by B18¼ 915 (far left). The C17 seen on the down main behind the suburban train has placed the loaded hoppers in the centre ready for a later Murarrie coal. After the C17 has cleared the main line, A5 will depart.
The loaded hoppers are on the down coal sidings. The up coal sidings are at the other end (the Brisbane end) of Bundamba station, just beyond the C17.
The line to the right of 38Up is the commencement of the Bundamba Loop, the junction crossover being just on the Ipswich side of the Bundamba Up platform.

Steam services Tuesday to Friday to Murarrie with coal for the Bulimba Powerhouses departed Bundamba at 6.10am (light engine Ipswich to Bundamba),
and Ipswich Yard at 6.53am, 9.30am, 12.15pm and 3.15pm. They were to be worked with a C17 or heavier engine, clear coal from Ipswich, Bundamba and Redbank, and be banked from Dutton Park to Murarrie.

The PB 15 bank locomotive on Murarrie trains was supplied by Wooloongabba depot. It started its banking duties by returning light engine from South Brisbane after working an inbound suburban service.

Light engine movement 248 Tuesday to Friday ran tender first from South Brisbane (8.02am) to Dutton Park (8.10am) where it waited in the short dead end siding on the inbound side of the line for A9 from Ipswich. It banked A9 to Murarrie and turned on the turntable there after the train engine had turned.

The train engine took empty hoppers back to Ipswich, (A12), with the banking engine running light, following about half an hour behind. The PB15 crossed to the Up line at Park Road then ran tender first to Dutton Park to wait in the siding for A7 which arrived at 10.32am.
It then banked A7 coal to Murarrie, was turned on the turntable there and ran light engine to Park Road. Here it crossed to the up line and again tender first, ran back to Dutton Park to await A7, which arrived at there at 10.32am.

The process was repeated, the next banking duties for the PB15 being A5 at Dutton Park at 1.14pm, A3 at 3.40pm, and A15 at 6.21pm. It returned from Murarrie at 7.00pm, running to Dutton Park. Here it attached to the C17 locomotive on B11, coal and goods from Bundamba to Tennyson and Wooloongabba, for the trip to home base.

The procedure at Murarrie was for the train engine to detach the full hoppers, run around the train and shunt the van to a siding whilst awaiting empties to come from the powerhouse. When these arrived, the electric locomotive hauling them the three kilometres from the powerhouses would detach, move to the fulls and take them away. Trains on the powerhouse line were worked without vans.

B18¼ 915 leads a Murarrie coal train across the Yeerongpilly level crossing, May 1963. The wide assortment of coal hoppers was a feature of Ipswich based coal trains.

Murarrie coal traffic ceased at the end of 1966, when barges were used to bring the coal to the Bulimba A and Bulimba B

B18¼ 915 exits the turntable at Murarrie after being turned ready for its return to Ipswich as A8 empty hoppers, departing at 2.35pm. 915 will make up its train by collecting empty hoppers from an adjacent siding and attaching them to the van seen in the centre of the photo.
When banking engines were used, the banker, a PB15, would turn on the turntable after the

This is One of two electric locomotives on the Southern Electric Authority's four kilometre line between Murarrie and the Bulimba A and Bulimba B power houses.

The locomotive has brought empty hoppers to Murarrie, and will return with the full hoppers seen to the right.

powerhouses.

The Bundamba-Redbank Loop Line and Branches

The Bundamba-Redbank Loop Line was a hive of activity, with a number of trains operating daily. While the running of trains on the loop was to be confined to daylight as far as possible, night

C17 721 fitted out for tender first running, lifts a load of empty hoppers at 3 Miles 8 Chains.

(Arthur Robinson)

running was timetabled. Train 219 commenced at 7.30am from Bundamba, and finished for the day at Bundamba, albeit with a different engine, at 8.25pm. During winter the Redbank Shunting Train, train 246 and Late No. 2 Shunting Train based on Bundamba would also have completed their duties in the dark.

For most of its life during the steam era, the section from Bundamba to 3 Miles 8 Chains was available to all classes of locomotive, including diesels, although load tables were not published for Beyer Garratt engines. From 3 Miles 8 Chains via 4 Miles 54 Chains to Redbank,, the section was available only to PB15 or lighter engines. The Park Head and Blackheath branches and all sidings were also only available to PB15 or lighter engines.

Another load of coal makes its way up the heavy grade into Bundamba. C17 721 prior to its being fitted for tender first running puts on a good show.

Loads of trains running the sections 3 Miles 8 Chains to Bundamba and 4 Miles 54 Chains to Redbank had to be reduced by twenty percent if the engine was running tender first.

Trainmen were instructed that when trains ran in the dark, they were to take special care, and that they were to reduce speed when crossing open level crossings. There were numerous open level crossings, the only crossing protected by gates being across Blackstone Road at Blackstone. These gates were controlled by a gatekeeper, who lived in a cottage adjacent to the crossing.

A timetable for the loop line was published, and was to be adhered to as far as possible. However the working of shunting and other trains on the loop line was subject to alteration according to the activity in the coal trade and the supply of empties. When alterations were necessary, the Stationmaster at Bundamba had the authority to make them, then advise the General Manager in Brisbane.
The Stationmaster at Bundamba effectively controlled the shunting trains on the Bundamba-Redbank Loop and Branches. Stationmasters at Redbank and Dinmore and the Officer-in-Charge at 3 Miles 8 Chains were to assist by seeing that engines and trains were not unnecessarily delayed, and that any relevant information was promptly given.

The area between 3 Miles 8 Chains and Park Head was treated as a Station Yard. The Officer-in-Charge at 3 Miles 8 Chains was responsible for the placing of empties and the clearing of loading from pits. Additional responsibilities included keeping records of consignments and other station duties.

at 6.35pm. This train – which was not given a train number – was worked by the PB15 engine and crew from train 258, Redbank to Ipswich passenger.

An "As Required" train was timetabled Tuesday to Friday leaving Ipswich at 5.30am and returning at 8.05am. This train was worked by one of the Ipswich PB15 shunt engines.

An instruction was given that during winter months, when it was dark, the evening train in each direction was to stop before crossing Hill Street, to avoid the possibility of accident with motor vehicles. The open level crossing at this place, with its limited visibility, was quite dangerous.

Trains on the Tivoli Branch generally worked without a brake van, the guard riding on the engine. This branch closed on 1 July 1965 with minimal coal loadings being offered.

The New Chum Branch

This line left the main line at Dinmore, and like the Tivoli Branch, was only a part of its former self. It was available for engines up to and including PB15, although in the mid to late sixties, C17 locomotives were able to shunt the branch.

Two shunting trains worked the branch daily. C26, arrived at Dinmore from Redbank at 8.46am. It shunted the mines at New Chum, as well as the pottery with its own siding along the branch. Returning to Dinmore, it departed there at 12.25pm as train C29, with loaded hoppers and any wagons from the pottery, arriving at Redbank at 12.33pm.

PB15 No 455 brings a load of coal into Dinmore, crossing the Brisbane-Ipswich highway just prior to entering Dinmore yard. The flagman to the left of the engine stopped road traffic while the train moved slowly across.

(Arthur Robinson)

The engine used for this service was a PB15 which had run light engine Ipswich to Bundamba (out of Ipswich at 6.08am), travelled around the Bundamba-Redbank Loop as No. 1 Shunting Train (ex Bundamba at 6.17am) prior to going to Dinmore. On arrival at Redbank, the engine resumed duties on the Loop, running in the reverse direction, arriving at Bundamba at 6.00pm. It concluded its day by working light engine to Ipswich arriving there at 6.33pm.

Number A13 goods was the second daily shunt train on the branch. This train, with a

PB15 which had come light engine from Ipswich, had traversed the Bundamba-Redbank Loop from the Redbank end, departing Redbank at 9.50am with empty hoppers for Bonnie Dundee Colliery. Here they were detached and loaded hoppers attached. A13 train proceeded to Bundamba, where it spent two hours shunting.

Leaving Bundamba at 2.11pm it arrived at Dinmore at 2.18pm, left its train in the refuge and it shunted the New Whitwood Colliery at New Chum. Adding this loading to the existing loading, A13 left for Redbank where it arrived at 3.35pm.

The engine shunted Redbank, and returned light engine to Ipswich, departing Redbank at 8.33pm or earlier if shunting was completed.

The New Whitwood Colliery was one of the few mines in the Ipswich area to have replaced old timber coal loading bins with metal bins.

Running tender first, B18¼ No 889 moves a load of coal on the main line through Dinmore. The empty hoppers to the left are waiting to be taken by one of the shunt trains to New Whitwood Colliery for loading.

The Marburg Branch

Trains on the Marburg Branch were timetabled as goods trains rather than coal trains, even though coal was about all that they carried. One train each day, 172/179A/172A/179 ran as a "goods with passenger accommodation attached". It would stop as required for passengers, but it was subject to cancellation or alteration at short notice.

Trains of empty hoppers from Ipswich or Wulkuraka had to reverse direction at Rosewood, as the junction points, to the east of Rosewood station, faced down trains. The same applied to trains of loaded hoppers off the branch. They too had to reverse direction before proceeding to Ipswich.

For this reason the two trains that made the daily return journey from Rosewood to Marburg took a spare van in both directions. In the up direction, it was the van that had trailed the empty hoppers, and when the train reversed direction, it was ahead of the hoppers onto the branch.

The spare van was left at Cabanda on the outwards journey and picked up on the return, when it was again placed ahead of the now loaded hoppers. When the train reversed at Rosewood, the van was correctly placed for the trip home to Ipswich.

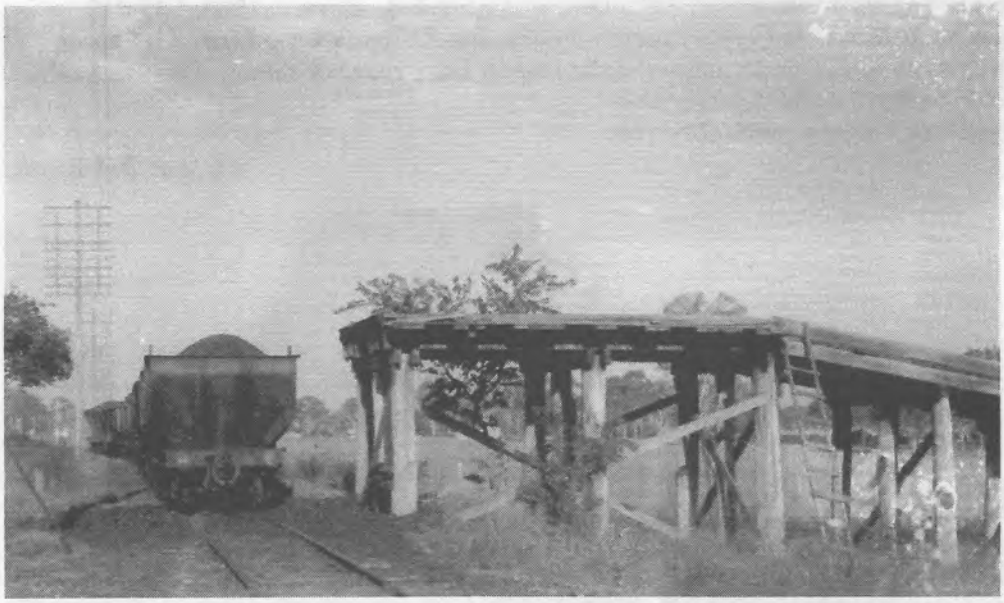
The daily goods with passenger accommodation, 172 from Rosewood, placed empties at loading points along the branch, the final drop before Marburg being Birru. On the return, as train 179A, it lifted a full load from Birru to Kunkala. Here the locomotive detached and ran tender first back to Tallegalla as train 172A.

It lifted loading from Tallegalla, and now as 179 ran on to Kunkala where the loads were amalgamated. 179 then ran to Rosewood, clearing loading from the branch as it went along.

Loading and Unloading

A large number of mines were served by rail. Some mines had their own branch lines from the main line to the pit head. On the Marburg Branch, two shorter branches ran to loading facilities at collieries, but loading generally was carried out from bins or ramps on sidings beside the through line.

Mines not connected to rail and some smaller mines used road transport to a convenient rail loading facility. Woodend mines transported coal by road to Ipswich where the coal was transferred to rail. Other similar loading facilities were located at Walloon,

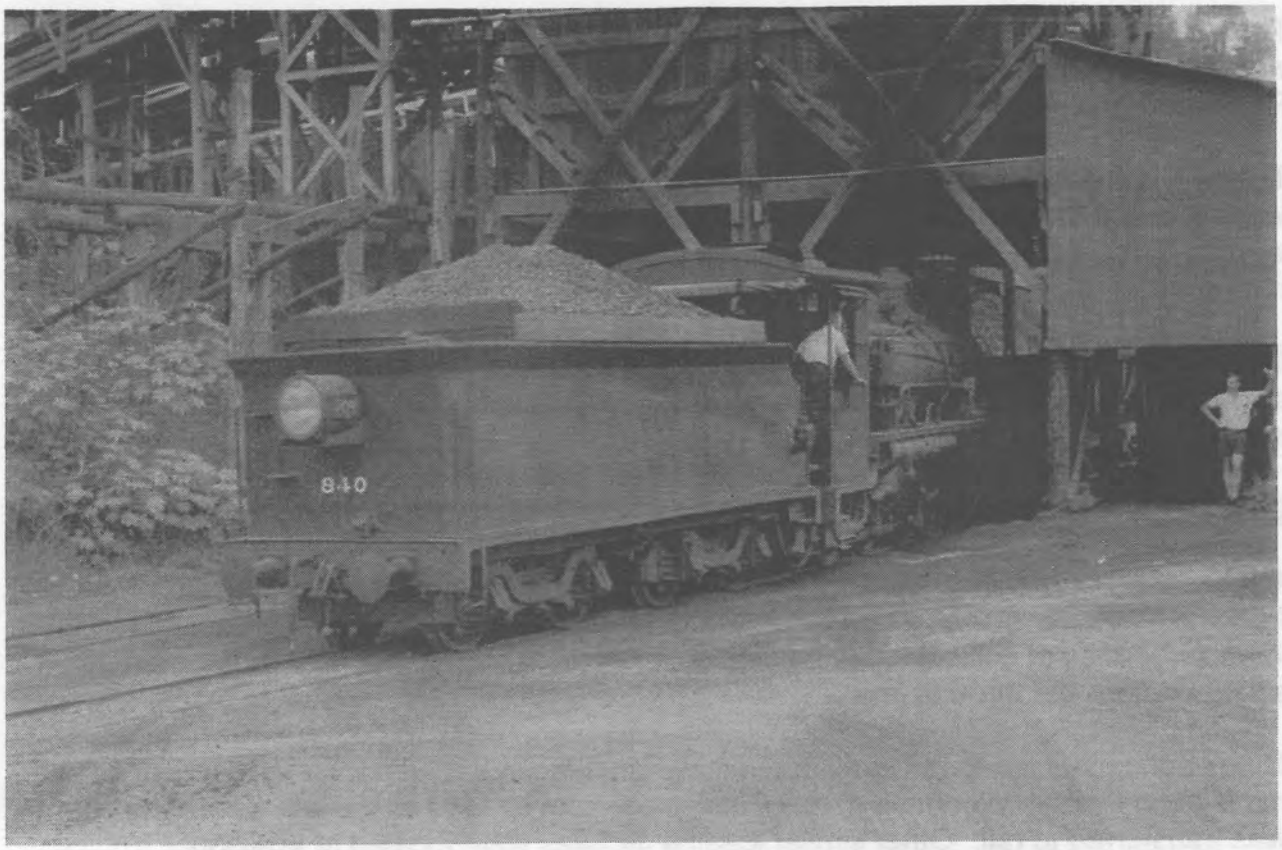


One of three coal loading rams at Walloon - two on the up side of the main laine and one on tha down side.
Motor trucke reversed up the ramp and tipped coal into the hoppers placed adjacent to the ramp.
Empty hoppers were positioned and full hoppers moved on by hand using a pinch bar under the wheels of the wagons.

Bundamba and Riverview

The mines served directly by rail used overhead loading bins, with the coal fed into the bins by conveyor belt from the washing plant. Most West Moreton mines had old infrastructure, and the loading bins were of varying designs in timber. Other mines, particularly when new pits were opened, constructed loading bins using steel.

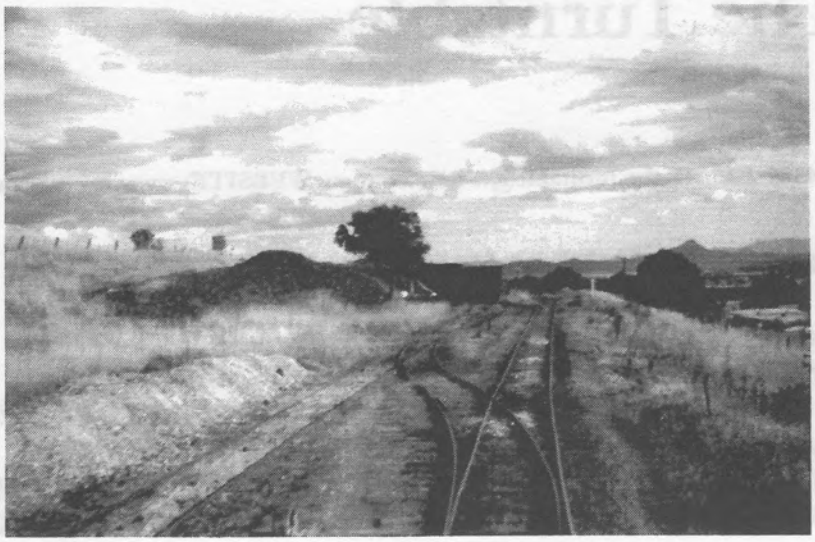
Where direct rail connection was not available, road trucks transported coal to coal loading ramps. Trucks reversed up the ramp to the level deck, then tipped the coal into



Overhead bunkers were used at most pits where rail access was provided. Here, ca1968, C17 840 positions hoppers for loading at Rhondda Colliery on the Bundamba-Redbank Loop Line. C17 class engines were used on the Redbank-Rhondda section of the loop in later years of steam. Previously this section had been restricted to PB15 or lighter engines.
Note the large tender headlamp – from engine No. 709.

(Arthur Robinson)

Two views of the loading facility at New Whitwood Colliery at New Chum. The photograph on the left, from 1961, shows the old timber facility with the treplacement steel structure in front of it. The photograph on the right, from 1963, shows a closer view of the loading chutes. Both photographs were taken on tours of goods lines around Brisbane-Ipswich using 2000 class railcars.



Cabanda on the Marburg branch. The coal is transported by truck from a nearby mine and loaded into hoppers from the ramp near the tree in the centre of the photograph.
The track layout here was quite simple, but it served the purpose for which it was intended - the effective loading of coal on a daily basis.

Perry's Knob, also on the Marburg Branch. The overhead loading facility here spanned the "main" line as well as the siding used for loading hoppers.

Conclusion

It is hoped that this paper provides incentive to incorporate coal trains onto model railway layouts. As pointed out, there is a large scope for modelling these trains - the hoppers, locomotives, vans, loading and unloading facilities, track arrangements, and the variety of train consists and their operations.