INFUSED WITH POLITICS – DEPRIVED OF MONEY

THE STORY OF A TYPICAL NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAY STATION – PICTON

In a beautiful rural setting with the distant haze of a hot Summer, railmotor CPH 34 sits in the Down Dock platform at Picton station on 26th December 1974. Rail services on the Loop Line continued until 19th October 1975.[1] The 1863 main building is to the right and the 1916 signal box is left of centre. Alongside the signal box in the lamp room. A feature of the southbound platform is the red-coloured letter postal box.

Stuart Sharp

8th December 2022

[1] *The Railway News*, November/December 1975.

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THE ROLE OF POLITICS IN THE SELECTION OF THE ROUTE

"THE RAILWAYS HAVE BEEN CONTROLLED BY POLITICAL SWINDLERS ….THEY WERE WORSE THAN THAT"[2]

Governor Macquarie named the tiny village, Stonequarry, after nearby Stonequarry Creek, but the Government changed the name to Picton in 1841. Macquarie's Aide-de-Camp was Henry Antill, who was very matey with Macquarie. When the Government opened up the Picton area, Macquarie gave Antill a grant of 2,000 acres in 1822 and a subsequent Government granted further 900 acres in 1833. Antill strengthened his local political influence through his Government appointments as a magistrate and the local Superintendent of Police.

It was Antill's influence on the Government to build the main southern road to Goulburn over the Razorback Range and through Picton, which facilitated access to his landholding.[3]

Antill developed the idea of a private town as a commercial enterprise to benefit himself. Historians, including Cyril Singleton and William Bayley, explain that there were three centres of urban growth under the umbrella name, Picton, these being:

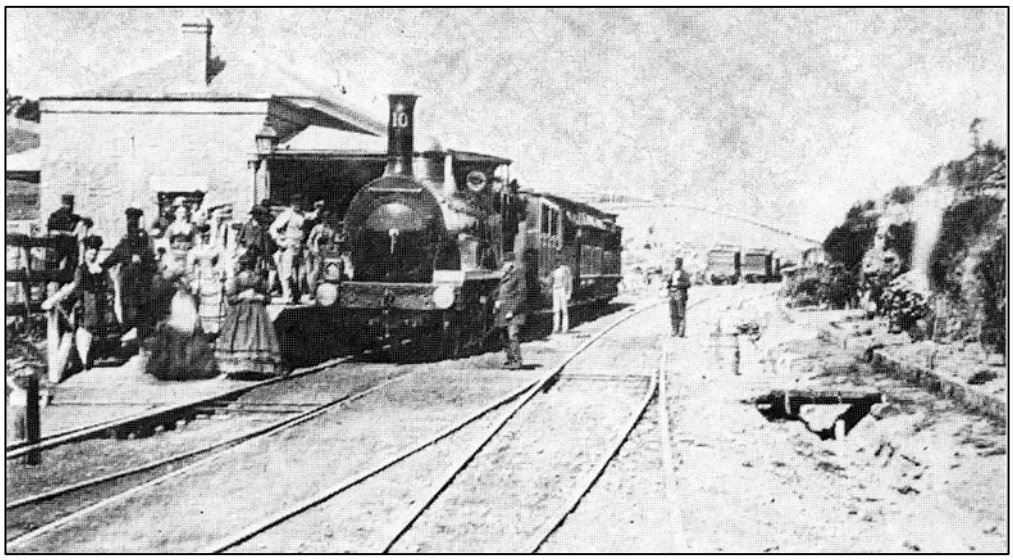
- the government town along the former Hume Highway adjacent to Stonequarry Creek .[4]
- Antill's private town, later called Upper Picton, to the west and south of the station, &
- the area that developed around the railway station.[5]

However, things did not work out entirely the way Antill envisaged. All the public buildings were erected in the Government town, with the exception of one school, which was built in the private town.

[2] A quote by John Sutherland, Minister for Public Works at a deputation from Picton on 22nd June 1888.
[3] L. Vincent, *A Brief History of Picton*, privately published, 1996, p. 7.
[4] C. C. Singleton, "Centenary of the Opening of the Southern Line to Picton", ARHS *Bulletin*, July 1963, p. 104.
[5] Ibid.

Early surveys for the proposed railway line to Goulburn bypassed Picton. Just as Antill had a plan to bring the road through Picton, so too did he have a plan to divert the railway into the town.[6] Because he was most aware of the difficult topography around the village, Antill believed that the conventional railway would go no further south than Picton "because the surrounding hills were all too steep for a railway to climb out".[7] The extent of Antill's influence was reflected by the deviation of the main southern railway line into Picton despite Antill's death in 1852. Moreover, the site selected for the station was one that aided Antill's private village rather than the government area.

The Railway Department in 1862 acquired the land on which the station stands from Henry Antill's son, John.



This is a well-known photograph of Picton station in 1874. The photographer is standing near the level crossing between the station and the sandstone viaduct. An indication of John Whitton's high construction standards at the time was reflected in the sandstone edging along the drain on the right-hand side. Such edging went no further than Picton and its cessation was a measure to save money. There is a doorway at the end of the building that leads to the male toilet. It was the responsibility of men to ensure that the door remained closed. However, some men attending the facility disregarded polite etiquette and left the door open. Ultimately, the Railway Department provided a privacy screen across the entrance, thus obviating the need to rely on the goodwill of all men. ***SOURCE:*** *L. Paddison, The Railways of New South Wales 1855-1955, Sydney, 1955, p. 47 and C. C. Singleton, "Centenary of the Opening of the Southern Line to Picton", ARHS Bulletin, July 1963, p. 106.*

[6] Kate Holmes, Picton local historian, has undertaken extensive research on this subject which confirms Antill's influence. Discussion between Holmes and author on 30th March 2010.

[7] W. A. Bailey, *Picton-Mittagong Loop-Line Railway*, Bulli, Austrail Publications, 1974, p. 10. There is known documentation to support Bayley's claim. See *Australian Railway History*, September 2017, p. 30 and October 2017, p. 31.

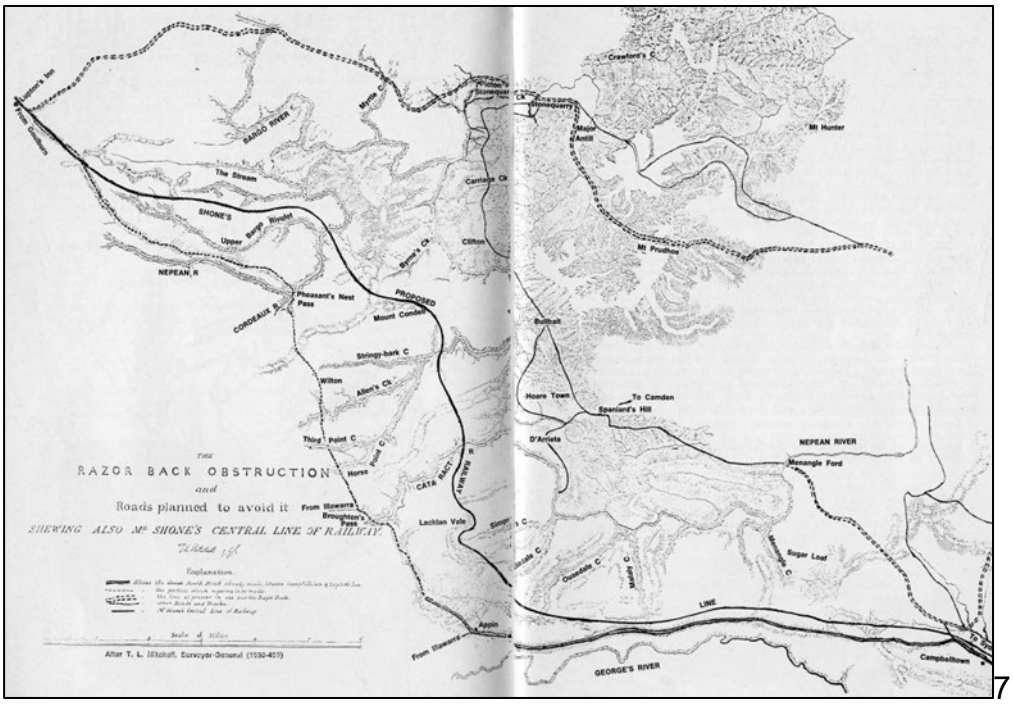
There is one very interesting question that needs to be asked. Why was the Engineer-in-Chief, John Whitton, unable to stop the deviation into Picton?[8] Because of the extremely limited amount of capital money available, Whitton's railway construction policy required routes to be surveyed with the shortest mileage possible. The plan below shows that the Picton deviation did not accord with Whitton's policy. As far as is known, there is no existing documentation that indicates any action by Whitton to contest the decision to take the railway line to Picton. It appears that Whitton was aware of the strength of the political power brokers and, hence, excepted the Government's decision to take the southern line via Picton.

Heritage engineer, Bill Phippen, *OAM, BSc, B.E., F. Inst. Eng.,* offers the following comment on why John Whitton may have intentionally chosen the route through Picton. He argues:

> "I do wonder about the early plan to bypass Picton, Antill's efforts notwithstanding. It seems to me that the direct route was impossible to build in 1860. There are too many enormous bridges over the Nepean River and its tributaries. Basically, it would have followed the present Freeway and look at the mighty bridges on that! It seems to me that the route which used the Stonequarry Creek and Matthews Creek valleys to gain the ridge through Thirlmere, Buxton, Hilltop and Colo Vale was the only viable one with the technology and wealth of the times. Basically, it stays west of all the Nepean River tributaries, except Stonequarry Creek, but east of the unspeakable Nattai River valley.
>
> Menangle River bridge is in relatively benign topography. The bridge over the Cataract River would have been over a very deep gorge as would the bridge over the Nepean River, much higher upstream than Menangle, perhaps at Pheasants Nest – and look at that bridge!!. Just above Menangle the Nepean River enters a very deep and rugged gorge – see the bridge on the road from Pheasants Nest interchange towards Picton near the Maldon cement works.
>
> The Nepean River has to be crossed somewhere, but otherwise the only bridge before Mittagong is Stonequarry Creek. The Nattai River is crossed on a trivial bridge within Mittagong town and the Wingecarribee River with a simple bridge at Burradoo. Then, the route follows the watershed between the Wollondilly River and the Shoalhaven River with no bridges except Barbers Creek and Boxers Creek near Goulburn. I have never understood why Whitton crossed the Wollondilly River

[8] Thank you to Craig Mackey, Archives Supervisor, ARHS Railway Archives, for identifying this question.

twice – over and back – to get into Goulburn. The Mulwaree Ponds was unavoidable".[9]


[7]

Although the map is difficult to read, it shows Picton at the top and the survey of the proposed railway towards the bottom where the line proposed to completely bypass Picton. ***SOURCE:*** *W. A. Bailey, Picton-Mittagong Loop-Line Railway, Bulli, Austrail Publications, 1974, pp. 8 & 9.*

Bayley wrote:

> "It was a foregone conclusion that political considerations would provide the answer (as to the route of the railway). The result was that it must pass through Picton".[10]

The cost to taxpayers for the political favour to deviate the line through Picton was huge. For the railway to climb out of Picton station, it was necessary to construct a sandstone viaduct 276 feet long and 76 feet high as well as a tunnel 592 feet long.[11] Of course, as Bill Phippen argues, the cost of other routes that bypassed Picton may have been even greater. The unfulfilled desire of later New South Wales rail administrations to by-pass Picton with a direct route from Maldon to Bargo may be a testament to the high capital and operational costs of taking the line through Picton, but the fact a by-pass has not been built may support the notion that the Picton route was the cheapest option in the 1860s.

[9] Email from Bill Phippen on 28th November 2022.
[10] W. A. Bayley, *Picton-Mittagong Main Line Railway*, Bulli. Austrail Publications, 1975, p. 17.
[11] Department of Railways, *Main Southern Line Maps*, Revised Edition, 1967, p. S15.

The press reported on a ministerial inspection of stations between Picton and Marulan in March 1884 and referred to the problems related to the site of the station and yard.

> "Picton, it appears, is an important changing station, trains coming here being broken up — that is, an engine can haul about double the load from Sydney to Picton than it can from Picton outwards up the Big Hill. In consequence, a great deal of shunting is necessary and additional siding and yard room is required. To supply these wants, however, is a difficult matter as Picton lies in a cutting and on the edge of a gradient of one to 40".[12]

Over 30 years later, the press continued to express anger about the adverse impact of politics on the town. The *Campbelltown Herald* continued the identification of three distinct areas which made up the municipality, one of which was the locality around the railway station. The newspaper stated in 1898:

> "The station, or railway portion, has grown rapidly with railway requirements. About four years ago, the town was incorporated, and then its troubles began. ….The station end (was) forgotten. History is but repeating itself. When it was first proposed to build a railway station here, a site in Redbank, the real Picton (near the tunnel), was chosen, but wire-pulling and log-rolling placed it where it now stands. Hence, two bridges have had to be built which ought not to have been required, at the cost of much wasted money. Hence, too, a township consisting of three scattered divisions, each a mile from the rest, instead of one compact community".[13]

The photograph was taken between 1899 and 1916. On the left is the 1877 Station Master's residence and, between that house and the 1863 platform building, is the guards' barracks/Railway Institute. The existing 1916 signal box is yet to be erected. The roof of the former

[12] *Bowral Free Press*, 29th March 1884, p. 2.
[13] *Campbelltown Herald*, 23rd November 1898, p. 2.

signal box can be barely distinguished over the roof of the Institute building. On the right-hand side of the 1863 building is a small structure with a gabled roof and chimney. It is possible that this was a private refreshment room operated under a licence agreement with the Railway Department. There is evidence of such a facility between 1902 and 1928 with Mrs. Jeffress being the Proprietress in 1902.[14] Facing the forecourt opposite the station building is the fur and feather factory. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 510621 ARHS Railway Archives.*

[14] *Picton Post and Advocate*, 3rd September 1902.

THE 1863 PLATFORM BUILDING

INPUTS INTO WHITTON'S DECISION TO PROVIDE A FIRST CLASS PLATFORM BUILDING

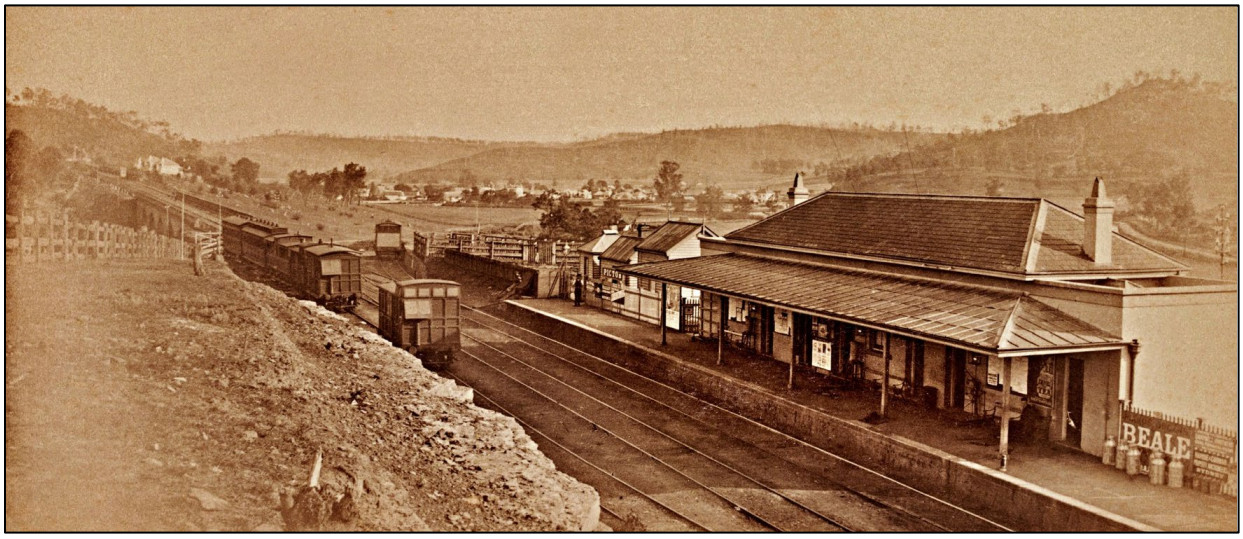
Was the Antill family sufficiently powerful to ensure that Picton, and particularly his private village, received the most expensive form of station building? It is hard to believe that Whitton would have approved of the current platform building at Picton because of the existing, large population. Whitton would have been aware of the influence of the Antill family in colonial government and, apparently, did not want to have upset a key, local powerful family. In other locations, the evidence shows Whitton to be most astute to recognise the importance of local political influences. Perhaps Whitton did not need any convincing to provide his top-level building design, considering that similar sized buildings were erected at the very small villages at Mittagong and Moss Vale?

The date is 21st January 1901 and the above photograph shows in the lower centre the road that the Commissioners proposed to extend about 1897 in order to provide public access across the railway corridor using the spaces between the arches of the viaduct. It was intended to replace the level crossing not far from the Moss Vale end of the platform. Whether the road was or was not extended is unknown but the idea became redundant with the approval of the road overbridge in August 1897, which is visible in the photograph, at the Maldon end of the station. ***SOURCE:*** *photograph No. 510620 ARHS Railway Archives.*

If the Antill family could deviate an entire railway line, it could easily demand the top tier of platform building and that is what the family achieved. It also is interesting to note that

the design of the Antill family home, *Jarvisfield*, at Picton had a strong resemblance to Picton platform building, especially in the design of the roof and overall symmetry. Both were designed and built in the 1863-64 period and there was a link between the buildings so far as the architects were concerned. William Weaver, of Weaver and Kemp, designed *Jarvisfield*. At the time, Weaver was employed by the NSW Railways to supervise construction of the Windsor to Richmond extension. Weaver had also trained under the great British railway engineer, I.K. Brunel. It could well be that the design of the structure selected for the platform at Picton was used to mirror the design of *Jarvisfield*. The matching of railway stations with important local houses did occur later at Goulburn and Bathurst. It is possible and probable that the precedent was established at Picton.

Picton platform building was built in response to lobbying from the Antill family in fulfillment of a dream of a larger Picton someday. The station was approved possibly to address future expansion of the town. John Whitton got his assessment correct in regard to what he would build at Picton. Somewhere on the journey of time, New South Wales Governments have forgotten the concept of providing space for future growth and now supply projects and infrastructure that lag behind demand.



The above photograph was taken on 10th November 1886. The history of Picton station contains many unanswered mysteries. There appears to be three separate buildings on the Mittagong side of the 1863 main station building. It is possible that one of those structures was a private tea room that was known to have existed on the platform. In 1881, a canopy was placed over a "copper" that was used to heat the foot warmers. Was the footwarmer structure amongst the three buildings? There was a guards' room somewhere at the station to which Venetian blinds were fixed in 1881.[15] Where was it? In 1890, gasoline exploded in a store adjacent to the station building and completely destroyed the store.[16] That store may also be one of the three buildings.

[15] Commissioner for Railways, *Annual Report 1881*, Appendix 1, p. 8.
[16] *Bowral Free Press and Berrima District Intelligencer*, 23rd April 1890, p. 2.

The photograph shows the Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles on the platform awning. This was the same product used on the roof of the verandah facing the station forecourt. The post verandah was removed in 1965 and replaced by a new, cantilevered platform awning. ***SOURCE:*** *Facebook*

WHITTON OBLIGED TO MAKE SAVINGS WITH THE DESIGN PROPOSED FOR PICTON

Although Whitton was under pressure to provide the then top level of platform building, he did approve nine measures to reduce the overall cost compared with earlier, similar designed buildings at Parramatta, Penrith and Singleton. These nine areas of financial savings were:

1. building length reduced by one third,
2. building width slightly reduced,
3. individual rooms with smaller dimensions,
4. elimination of separate spaces for a general/gentleman's waiting room and the amalgamation of separate spaces for Porters and a lamp/oil store,
5. use of the entry lobby as the sole general waiting area,
6. reduction in the number of chimneys, providing heating only for the ladies' waiting room and the Porters' room,
7. platform construction with the use of brick piers and a timber deck,
8. restriction of the amount of sandstone for external dressings, &
9. redesign of the booking office from five to three-sided.

In this undated photograph taken about 1912, a corrugated iron screen, supported by a timber frame, has been erected across the entrance to the male toilet. The screen was removed when the platform was raised in 1965. The extension of the Down Storage Siding behind the down

platform dates from 1912, according to the official documentation, but the extension had not occurred by the time of this photograph. It is another mystery. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 510622, ARHS Railway Archives.*

The Picton building was constructed at a lower cost compared to the previous members of the design family and Whitton may have signed the plan to set revised, standard arrangements for future examples of the Georgian design to be built between 1863 and 1871. Whitton was endeavouring to meet the Government's requirement to lower costs, and he did this at Picton while at the same time achieving almost the same class of presentation for the community which the station served. While the Picton building continued to be a representative of Whitton's First Class design, it was a more restrained effort to reflect the restricted funding reality.

It is with ease that one can describe the Picton station building when completed in 1863 as an attractive and elegant building but there is not a single surviving press reference that indicates that the local inhabitants were pleased.

Appendix 1 lists all other Georgian buildings erected at the time of line opening as well as indicating the story of the rebirth of the design from 1876. Appendix 1 additionally compares some elements of the Picton building with earlier, similar designed structures at Parramatta, Penrith and Singleton.

This photograph shows the location of the goods shed erected in 1863, the locomotive shed from the 1870s and the barracks on the right side which was built in 1890. Near the entrance to the goods yard is the Great Southern Hotel, which opened in 1892. The post card is dated 14th March 1907. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 510619 ARHS Railway Archives.*

POSTPONING CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN ORDER TO SAVE MONEY

The New South Wales Government allocated John Whitton insufficient capital funds to build the railway system at the standard Whitton considered necessary to minimise ongoing maintenance. One of the desperate initiatives he implemented was the postponement of contracts for station buildings and good sheds to a date where they would be incomplete when the contractor building the permanent way handed the line over to the Government. On that official opening date, any incomplete works had to be funded by the Commissioner for Railways rather than being taken from Whitton's budget.

Tenders for the construction of the Picton station were called on 17th February and closed on 3rd March 1863.[17] The contract for the station building allowed three months for construction, according to an April 1863 press report.[18] The contractors for the station and platform were Matthew Jamieson and Andrew Eaton, both being experienced in station construction. Jamieson also built the large structures at Penrith and Singleton and smaller ones at Morpeth Junction and Ashfield. While their contractual success was made public in late March, they did not sign the contract until 25th May 1863.[19] Construction commenced at that time.[20] The contract amount was £2,193 and the contractors had paid a bond prior to commencement.[21]

Ten days before the opening, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on progress, saying:

> "The goods station at Picton has been contracted for but is only just being commenced; the passenger station is considerably advanced, but will take three or four weeks to complete".[22]

On 21st July, three weeks after the opening, the *Empire* newspaper stated:

> "The Picton station is not yet completed, but the works are in a forward state".[23]

The last word on construction appeared in September with the *Sydney Morning Herald* writing:

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[17] *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 17th February 1863, No.26, p. 406.
[18] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st March 1863, p. 8.
[19] *Goulburn Herald*, 25th March 1863, p. 3. John Forsyth incorrectly states that the contract date is 25th June 1863.
[20] *Goulburn Herald*, 23rd May 1863, p. 2.
[21] S. Richardson, *Picton – Past and Present*, Back to Picton Week Committee, no date, p. 23.
[22] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20th June 1863, p. 6.
[23] *Empire*, 21st July 1863, p. 5.

> "The lines to Picton and Singleton were opened before they were quite completed, but the few remaining works are now almost finished up".[24]

Thus, as was the case at Menangle, the platform building at Picton was also incomplete at the time of the opening on 1st July 1863.[25] Work was apparently completed roughly four weeks after the opening.[26]

The station construction was not the only tardy element of the work. The Government did not issue the contract to John Gwynneth for the construction of a road between the Great Southern Road and Picton station until late April 1863.[27] Even later was the contract for the goods shed, which was issued only on 15th June 1863, two weeks before the station opening.[28] Gwynneth was also the contractor for the goods shed.[29]

POLITICIANS CUT BACK CONSTRUCTION FUNDS

As Cyril Singleton wrote, John Whitton had been forced to abandon his high standards of construction.[30]

Considering the very significant physical terrain that John Whitton encountered in pushing the railway southward, the New South Wales Parliament, when voting for the simultaneous construction of the three trunk routes, resolved that the new lines should be 'laid out upon a more economical scale than those now in working or on the point of completion". The press reported that gradients on the "old" lines were no steeper than one in 66 but, "owing to the precipitousness of the mountains to be crossed, gradients of one in 33 are now occasionally and curves of eight chains radius; ballasting of the new lines will be of a less expensive character than the old. Mr Whitton's estimate of the cost of the new extensions was £8,500 per mile for the southern and northern lines and £10,000 for the Western line".[31]

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[24] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st September 1863, p. 3.
[25] *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, 27th June 1863, p. 3 and *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st July 1863, p. 8.

[26] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9th November 1863, p. 5.
[27] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25th March 1863, p. 8.
[28] *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, 27th June 1863, p. 3.
[29] *Sydney Mail*, 4th July 1863, p. 4.
[30] C. C. Singleton, "Centenary of the Opening of the Southern Line to Mittagong", ARHS *Bulletin*, March 1967, p. 50.

[31] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st March 1863, p. 8.

Railway historian, Dick Fookes, wrote:

> "A contract was let in 1862 for the earthworks for the first five miles 35 chains which included the double-line stone viaduct over Stonequarry Creek and the old Picton single-line tunnel. As the first contractor did not carry out his contract satisfactorily, Messrs. Murnin & Brown took over in December 1863 and completed the earthworks. In February 1863, the tender of Messrs. Larkin & Wakeford was accepted for the second section of 6miles 76 chains".[32]

THE IMPACT OF THE RAILWAY ON THE TOWN

Local historian, Liz Vincent indicates that it was Picton's transport role that developed the town into a major stopover for travellers on the main road. When the railway arrived in 1863, it "continue to nurture the town" and a "general building explosion" occurred with the railway's arrival. Vincent adds:

> "Even after the navvies moved on, Picton remained a major change over station for railway staff. Great many of the residents were railway employees and quite a large settlement developed around the railway station area".[33]

THE PLACE OF PICTON IN THE CONTEXT OF ALL PLATFORM BUILDINGS ON THE CAMPBELLTOWN-GOULBURN RAILWAY EXTENSION

A three-tiered hierarchy of platform structures was used by Whitton at the time of the opening of the line to Goulburn. Prior to the construction of Goulburn station, the top design was the Georgian influenced structure that was applied at Campbelltown, Picton, Mittagong and Moss Vale. The second tier was formed by a simple residence that had a ticket office and other facilities added to it. These were built at Menangle (extant), Bowral, Jordan's Crossing (Bundanoon) and Marulan (extant). The bottom tier was formed with simple timber-framed waiting sheds and these existed at Rush's Platform (Braemar) and Mannafields (Towrang).

All railway stations served some person or persons. Small waiting sheds were provided for locations of only one or two local people. The combination office/residence building at Menangle was built where the New South Wales Railways thought there was little commercial activity. That design was also used where there were no strong, local political

[32] R.S. Fookes, "Gold is Where You Find it", ARHS *Bulletin*, March 1956, p. 32.
[33] Ibid., p. 21.

influences demanding a top-level structure. Picton was in the top layer of platform designs. Not only was the Georgian influenced design used where there were a 100 or more people, the design was also applied by Whitton to appease local political influences, – in this case Henry Antill and his family.

Whitton used the same design as at Picton for the platform building at Mittagong in 1866. It measured 85 feet six inches long by 17 feet wide externally and its floor plan reflected much the same as Picton but without the telegraph office.[i] In 1867, Whitton again used the same design as at Picton for Moss Vale with a structure 82 feet six inches long by 17 feet wide. Again, there was no telegraph office but both Mittagong and Moss Vale structures provided heating to all rooms where people waited or worked. Whitton was overseas when the plan for Goulburn building was approved.

In Whitton's absence, William Mason approved the Colony's first Italianate detailed platform building for Goulburn. Because of its larger size and very high level of ornamentation, the structure at Goulburn became the new first class design for platform buildings. It had replaced the Georgian style as the style for the most important locations.

The building at Goulburn was 108 feet nine inches long and 28 feet wide where the bay windows are located. It was bigger and classier than all previous examples of the style, being the first building approved to include refreshment facilities. It was the first building since Picton to have a telegraph office which was no larger than that at Picton but was inconveniently located at the extreme end of the building. While the level of ornamentation of the Goulburn structure was higher than that at Picton, they shared some fundamental design criteria, including an overall symmetry, low-pitched roof, central pedestrian access and attached pavilions at each end.

WHAT TYPE OF BUILDING DID PICTON RECEIVE IN 1863?

The building at Picton shared architectural features with its design family predecessors at Parramatta, Penrith and Singleton. All had the following common features:

- Georgian design influence,
- brick construction with sandstone dressings,
- overall symmetry expressed by the centre pedestrian access, fenestration and chimney placement,
- posted verandahs on both sides of the structure,
- internal width of 14-18 feet,
- uncluttered, hipped roofs covered with Duchess Welsh slate,
- Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles for both verandahs,
- attached, parapeted pavilions at each building end,

- absence of a dedicated space for the Station Master, &
- booking office contained within the entry lobby.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PICTON BUILDING

For Picton, John Whitton approved on 17th February 1863 a Georgian-influenced building with the same overall design influences as the buildings at Singleton and Penrith, with some significant changes. It was a plain but elegantly-executed building and this status was not only achieved by the overall design but also by the materials.

The roof was sheeted with Welsh Bangor slates, otherwise known as Purple Bangor slates due to the purple tinge of the material which was quarried in the Bangor area of Wales. This was the standard roofing material for NSW Government buildings in the mid-19th century. The 1863 plan for the structures shows "Duchess" slates, which was an indicator of the size of the individual slates. The slates measured 24 by 12 inches. Another elegant feature on the road elevation was the placement of Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles over the verandah on the forecourt side and on the platform awning. These were imported from North London and are still in place on the structure on the road side. Both male and female toilet wastes were drained initially into a cement lined "cess". This was the standard arrangement before the use of night soil pans in the toilets. Cement was also used in the brickwork and for the setting of the stonework in the front of the structure.

The room functions from the Stonequarry Creek viaduct end were:

- separate male/female toilets (under the end pavilion),
- ladies' waiting room with entry to the female toilet,
- telegraph office,
- centre pedestrian entrance and waiting room with a booking office located in one corner,
- parcels office,
- Porters and lamp room.

Local resident and passionate author of local railway history, James Whitfield, took this photograph in 1975 of Picton station. The parked cars in the station forecourt give an idea of the scale of the station building with its 15 feet ceiling height. The station is painted white, a colour which was adopted conjunction with the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to New South Wales in 1954. It replaced the traditional three variations of stone colour. An iconic feature of stations up to the mid-1980s is evident in the photograph – flowers and shrubs in tubs. Picton is one of the few examples of the Georgian-influenced design that have not been mutilated significantly with post-construction changes. It retains its original slate on the roof and iron sheets on the roadside awning. The elegant, overall symmetry of the structure was an architectural delight to the keen admirer of buildings. Unfortunately, the Railway Department added a timber out of shed to the left side of the original building, thus spoiling the overall balance of the structure.

THE FEATURES OF PICTON STATION BUILDING

By the time Picton station was opened, Whitton had resolved to use the Georgian influence as his structure for the most important locations.

John Whitton's name is on the plan for Picton station. He approved a building 82 feet long by 17 feet wide externally. It followed the standard design of platform structure that Whitton had been evolving since 1858. There was a single closet in both the male and female toilets. Men also had a slate-lined urinal with partitions for four users. Each man was allocated a very generous space of two feet nine inches, a size that was reduced over time on later buildings to less than two feet wide.

What function was absent from the building is interesting. Heating was provided for the Porters and the ladies but no heating was provided for those in the main waiting room and staff in the parcels, telegraph and ticket offices. The roof was clear of any feature, with single chimneys being provided where the hipped roof met the pavilions. Every aspect of the structure appeared symmetrical. The floor plan was symmetrical and pedestrian access from the street was through a pair of centrally located doors. There was no internal access between two rooms in the building, apart from the female waiting

room and female toilet. Every room, apart from the centre pedestrian access to the main waiting room was accessed by single doors from the rail elevation. As travellers walked towards the building, they would have noticed the sandstone flagging underneath the canopy. The platform on the rail side was formed with ironbark planking six by three inches. Unfortunately, the original posted canopy on the rail elevation was replaced in 1965 by the present, unsympathetic cantilevered awning.

The overall level of presentation was capped off by a selection of plants from the Sydney Botanic Gardens.

THE PROBLEM WITH THE GENERAL WAITING ROOM

It is with ease that one can comment that Picton station when opened in 1863 was an extremely attractive and elegant building in its overall uncluttered simplicity. However, there was one major deficiency and that was the inadequate space for passengers in the general waiting room. Whitton had provided one classy feature and that was the insertion of a stand-alone ticket office within the space of the general waiting room. He had provided an elegant, pentagon-shaped ticket office within the waiting room only three times previously – at Parramatta in 1859, Singleton in 1862 and Penrith in 1862. For Picton, he downscaled the feature by making it smaller and by placing the ticket office on one corner of the waiting room, thereby making it only three-sided.

While the travellers at Picton might have been impressed with their ticket office, they faced a substantial adverse impact as a consequence. Within the waiting room space of 300 square feet, there was the ticket office which occupied about 100 square feet plus two sets of paired doors, one single door, one window and one ticket window. The result of these fixtures was minimal seating and the absence of space for a fireplace.

The inadequate facilities for waiting passengers at Picton became a big issue in the 1880s. In 1882, a ticket office was removed from Bundanoon and redirected to Picton station. Its location at Picton is unknown. In 1884, another waiting room had been converted from an “old office and a hall”.[34] However, those actions in 1882 and 1884 proved to be inadequate and, on 3rd July 1885, a deputation from the Picton Progress Committee, led by member of Parliament, Thomas Garrett, waited upon Francis Wright, the then Minister for Public Works, mainly in reference to the Picton locomotive depot. The deputation was protesting against the rumoured removal of the railway “workshops” from Picton to Menangle. Francis Wright replied that he was not aware that it was contemplated to remove the workshops. Then, the Minister mentioned the problem of “accommodation”, mentioning that the question of providing increased accommodation at Picton station had been raised with him but, up to the present, no steps had been taken

[34] J. F. Forsyth, SRA, *Historical Notes on Main Southern Railway*, Vol. 2, p. 37.

to improve the situation.[35] Garrett acknowledged that the accommodation was "urgently required".[36] As far as is known, nothing additional occurred as another deputation of local citizens met the Minister for Public Works, John Sutherland, on 29th October 1887. They met the Minister in the waiting room in order to demonstrate that "further accommodation (was) necessary in the waiting room of the station".[37] It is unknown if any improvement was made.

THE PLATFORM

Construction differed from earlier platforms. Timber piles were not used and were replaced with brick piers. A short timber frame was placed on top of the piers. It is unknown whether the front of the platform was open or closed but there is a little evidence that it was enclosed with masonry and sloped to the toe of the wall.

The platform was 300 feet long, including the ramped ends, and 12 feet wide in front of the building. Beyond the building, the platform narrowed to seven feet six inches wide. Those dimensions were the norm. The platform level was set two feet nine inches above the head of the rails, as was the standard at the time. The usual box type fencing with diagonal bracing was to be placed at the rear of the platform but photographic evidence suggests that it was not built as designed or replaced at an early date with pickets.

The platform was placed on a 60 chain radius curve and was the third instance of a platform being erected on a curve, after Lidcombe and Parramatta in 1859. Three backless benches were fixed to external wall on the platform side, each one foot nine inches wide.

The awning over the platform extended the full length but the verandah on the road elevation did not extend to the end pavilions.

[35] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4th July 1885, p. 8. There is always the possibility that "accommodation" relates not to a building but additional sidings.

[36] *Evening News*, 3rd July 1885, p. 4.

[37] *Daily Telegraph*, 31st October 1887, p. 6.

This photograph was taken some time after 1978. The building is in poor condition but typical of station structures throughout the New South Wales railway system in the 1970s. The roof required urgent repairs. Flues have penetrated the roof for the gas heating of the Station Master's office and the ladies' waiting room. The 1970 addition of windows in the ladies' waiting room, which is located under the awning closest to the camera, can be seen with a little difficulty. The chimney at the Stonequarry Creek Viaduct end of structure has been removed, though the chimney at the opposite end survives. An additional window has been inserted adjacent to the entrance to the male toilet. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 017684B ARHS Railway Archives.*

The NSW Government had achieved a spectacular extension of the telegraph service throughout New South Wales. In 1858, not only had Picton been connected to the telegraph system but it had extended as far south as Albury. By 1861, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria were connected to the system. With this in mind, it was a little bizarre for the building at Picton to feature a separate telegraph office to serve the public. It can only be assumed that the post office that existed in Picton was not connected to the telegraph line. There was a small window at the station through which members of the public at Picton could send and receive their telegrams. Very few subsequent platform buildings after 1863 had a telegraph office and its inclusion in the Picton structure must be seen as an undertaking specifically in response to local circumstances.

In 1911, public telegraph instruments were available at major stations on the Main South line and some branch lines. These were:

- Sydney
- Picton
- Goulburn
- Cootamundra

- Bethungra
- Junee
- Bomen
- Albury
- Michelago
- Mt Horeb
- Morundah[38]

[38] Email from Graham Harper on 13th November 2022. Thanks to Graham for examining the 1911 Local Appendix.

STRUCUTRES ON THE DUPLICATED DOWN MAIN PLATFORM

1. CONSTRUCTION OF THE SECOND PLATFORM

Track duplication reached Picton in 1892. However, the second platform does not date from that time as the two tracks stopped short of the then single platform. Construction of the new Down platform was underway in January 1898. That event stimulated the first recorded reaction in the press to the town's 1863 structure. The *Picton Penny Post* commented:

> "The current station building (i.e., the 1863 building) was one of the most miserable apologies for a station anywhere on the southern line. With the new structure (i.e., on the Down platform), things were going from bad to worse".[39]

Work was also underway on the extension of the Up Main platform, which was completed at the end of February 1898. The new Down Main platform was completed in December 1898 but there are mixed messages whether it was commissioned in 1898 or 1899.

During the time of John Whitton up to 1889, the walls of platforms were sloped to the toe regardless of whether the platform wall was made of bricks or timber. When the wall was built for the new Down Main line at Picton in 1898, Whitton's policy had been abandoned after his departure and the brick wall was vertical rather than inclined.

When constructed, picket fencing was erected at the rear of the Down Main platform to match the fence on the Up Main platform.

[39] *Picton Penny Post,* 19th January 1898, p. 2.

The date is 15th December 1946 and members of the ARHS are on a rail motor tour, the CPH being stabled in the Down Dock. There are two items of interest. The first is the station nameboard on the Down platform with white letters on a black background. From approximately 1915, the Railway Department reversed the two colours and used black letters on a white background but there is evidence that white letters continued to be applied to stations in country areas. The pattern relating to the use of black and white paint for nameboards is unclear. The second item of interest in the photograph is the elevated, 3,760 gallon pillar locomotive water tank at the Stonequarry Creek viaduct end of the Down platform. The tank was subsequently replaced by a nine inch diameter waterpipe and a water column. The black smudge on the right side is on the photograph. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 215269 Singleton collection ARHS Railway Archives.*

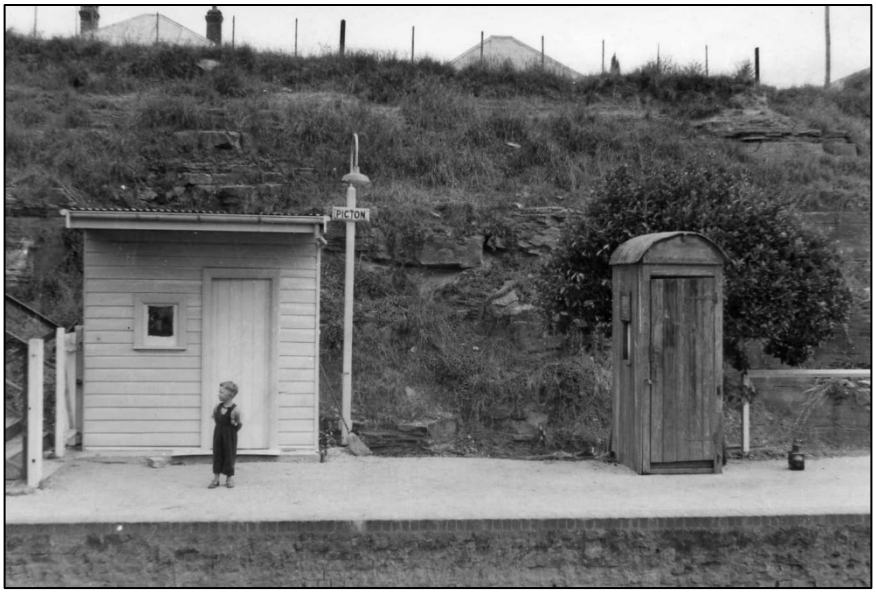
2. TICKET OFFICES

The photographer is looking into the ticket office with the door open. The original ticket office on the Down Main platform was positioned flush with the picket fencing at the rear of the platform and located at the base of the stepway. ***SOURCE:*** *The Staff, 26th June 1928, p. 354.*

In *The Staff* magazine, the Department stated in the caption for the above photograph that the ticket office was "claimed to be the smallest in the State".[40] What the caption did not say was that similar examples of the tiny building had been used from the 1860s as portable ticket offices and were described by the press as a "sentry boxes". The first ticket office at Picton was replaced in the mid-1950s.

The photograph below shows the first and second ticket offices on the southbound platform.

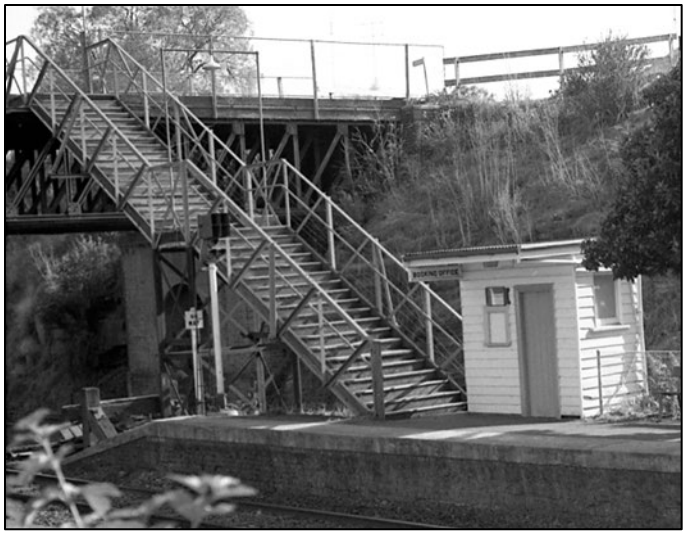
[40] *The Staff*, 26th June 1928, p. 354.



Harry Wright, who was an engineman stationed at Picton in the 1950s, took this photograph on 22nd March 1957. The original ticket office has been relocated along the platform to allow the construction of the new facility. ***SOURCE:*** *J. Whitfield, Picton to Mittagong Main Line Railway Centenary 1919-2019, privately published, 2019, p. 23.*

In the 1950s, the Department of Railways replaced several old, timber and corrugated iron buildings at some country stations. The main focus was on the replacement of off-platform male toilets with modern facilities in new structures on platforms. Usually, such work was undertaken when both the male and female toilets were serviced with water closets that flushed into septic tanks. A small number of other types of timber structures were also replaced, including the ticket office at Picton.

No plan for the new ticket office survives, as far as is known. There are two clues that help to identify the construction date of a building with a single pitched roof. Those built after 1945 possessed a low roof pitch. The second clue of a post-1945 timber structure is the use of lapped weatherboards on the external walls. For Picton, those identifiers confirm a post-1945 building.



The set of gates or bye posts across the base of the stepway shown in the 1957 photograph have been removed. The photograph was taken on 29th December 1979.

Heritage engineer, Bill Phippen, OAM, writes that the plan for the stepway was prepared on 18th April 1898. The top landing, which was adjacent to the roadway, was located at a height of 25 feet five and 9/16ths of an inch above the railhead. The single intermediate trestle was located 14 feet above the railhead. The stepway was seven feet wide.[41] *The photograph was taken on 29th December 1979.*

[41] Email from Bill Phippen on 25th November 2022.

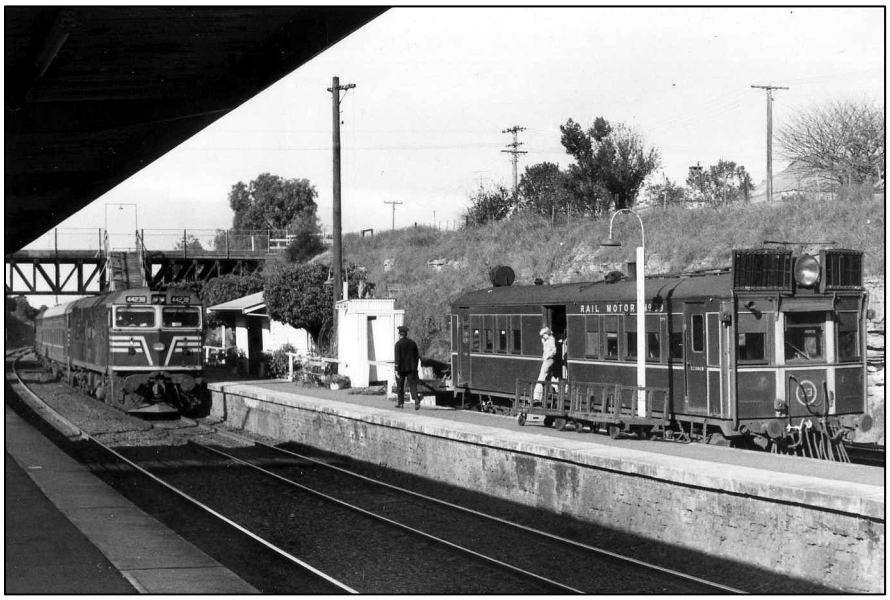
3. THE WAITING SHED AND MALE TOILET

There is a plan that shows the waiting shed in position on the platform in 1910. There are two indicators that give a clue as to the construction of the building. Firstly, the pitch of the roof is in the medium range and, secondly, the awning extends only three feet from the building wall without any supporting braces or brackets. Both of these factors suggest a construction time very early in the 20th century and its design is consistent with the date of the opening of the down Main platform in 1899. The waiting shed was probably built in 1898, especially since the local press was unhappy with the structure being erected on the Down Main platform in 1898. Also on the platform was a very small, single occupant male toilet constructed of a timber frame and clad externally with corrugated iron sheets. There is a fair chance it also from track duplication through the platform, i.e., 1899. Human waste was collected by using pans which would have been changed either by a contractor or by local per way staff, who had their humpies close by just off the end of the Down Main platform. There was no female toilet on the southbound platform. The photograph was taken on 29th December 1979.

4. THE POSTAL LETTER RECEIVING BOX

In past times, stations were places where facilities other than train management were often provided. At Picton, a letter postal receiving box was located on the southbound platform. Note the difference in height between the platforms serving the Down Main and the Down Dock, which was the result of the renewal of both the Up Main and Down Main platform walls in 1965. James Whitfield snapped this photograph in 1975 on his way to post a letter.

5. THE PORTABLE STEP TO ASSIST WITH ACCESS INTO/OUT OF RAIL MOTORS



James Whitfield was on hand to photograph locomotive 44238 on No. 35 passenger and CPH 33 on 25th May 1975. The employee is fully decked out in his uniform, including his cap. The passenger detraining from the rail motor has placed his/her left foot on a portable, timber step to assist overcoming the vertical distance between the platform level and the floor level of the rail motor.

At many stations on duplicated lines, parcels and luggage were transferred between platforms using ramps at the ends of the platforms. This was not the case at Picton where staff conveyed parcels and luggage between the platforms using the timber boarding placed between the rails. It appears that parcels traffic was brisk with the allocation of two four-wheeled trolleys to the southbound platform. A thoughtful touch for passengers was the use of a step to help embarking/disembarking passengers. The photograph was taken on 12th December 1970.

6. THE JUNCTION ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE DOUBLE AND SINGLE LINE

Graham Harper specialises in the history of track layouts, signalling and safeworking. He writes:

> "Cyril Singleton says that the junction of the single and double lines was "immediately at the Albury end of the platform" but this was not the case until probably 1899. The Local Appendix, Main Suburban and South of 1894 or 1897 [we have been unable to date it precisely] clearly states that the junction was at the facing points opposite the Sydney end of the platform. This appears to indicate that the Up Line was formed by the old loop line which ran from the Sydney end of the platform towards Sydney. The reference is clearly to "the" platform. The

detailed instructions make it clear that the yard and signals were not interlocked in any way.

Singleton wrote that the second platform dated from 1898. However, his diagram dated 1898 is most probably a copy of Circular A114 of 1899. The Circular attached to that diagram states that the junction points were "on the viaduct at the southern end of the station", and it is a safe assumption that the Circular was issued with interlocking and the provision of the second platform".[42]

It was highly unusual to locate a junction between single and double lines on a bridge. Graham Harper takes up the story:

"John Whitton designed and bult the Stonequarry Creek Viaduct at Picton with a double track, ballasted deck from the 1st July 1863.

The points leading to the Down Dock platform were too close to the edge of the viaduct to allow any connection between the Down Main line and the single track main line without portion of that connection being on the viaduct. The 1899 and 1912 track diagrams both show this extension as a refuge siding, and the junction crossover points were located as follows::

- Down Main end – just before the bridge
- Up Main end – on the bridge 156 feet from the Sydney end of the platform

The junction crossover was 185 feet in length and, in 1912, the refuge siding was 315 feet from catchpoints to buffer stops. The refuge siding catchpoints would have been opposite the Up Main junction points. The arrangement seems reasonable in that the area was pretty cramped and junction points on the Viaduct would allow the station to be largely unaffected. Also, the refuge siding at that location would allow an assistant engine to attach to a Down train with the minimum of delay and shunting.

The junction points could have been placed south of the viaduct, but that might have made the rodding run too long for the safe operation of the points.

The arrangement at Picton was not as odd as the situation at Murrumburrah in 1887 whereby the goods siding points were located at the Harden side of the viaduct over Currawong Creek and the main line and goods siding were gauntleted across the bridge to the siding clearance point on the Murrumburrah station side

[42] Email from Graham Harper on 11th November 2022.

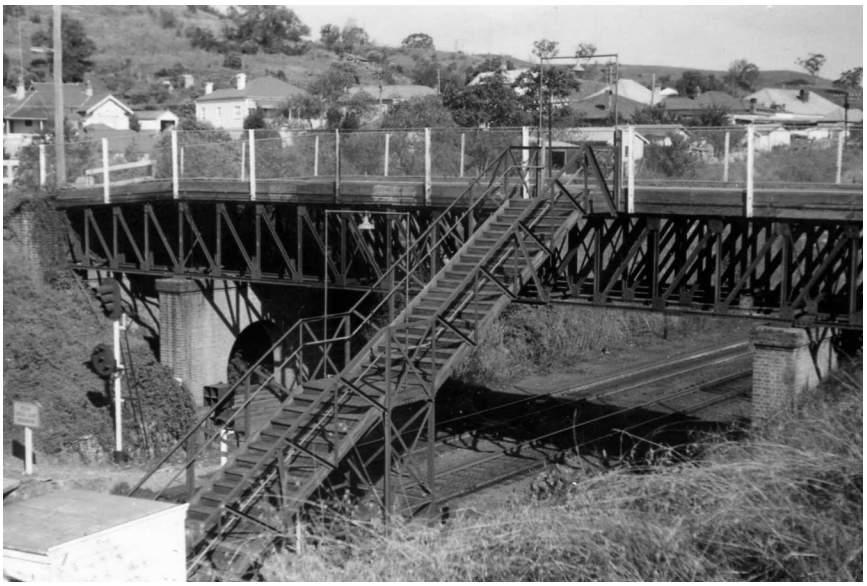
where there were catchpoints in the siding to protect the main line, controlled by another lever in the shunting frame. Now, that was peculiar!”.[43]

[43] Emails from Graham Harper on 14th and 15th November 2022.

IMPROVEMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT DECADES

THE ELIMINATION OF THE LEVEL CROSSING BETWEEN THE STATION AND THE STONEQUARY CREEK VIADUCT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE REPLACEMENT PRINCE STREET ROAD OVERBRIDGE 1895-1899

In 1895, Chief Commissioner Eddy, accompanied by the District Engineer and other Departmental officers, made an inspection of Picton Station and the nearby level crossing. They expressed "their intention of doing away with the level crossing at the Picton Viaduct, considering it dangerous to traffic, and making a crossing under the arches (of the Stonequarry Creek viaduct)".[44] That was Plan "A" and did not proceed, so far as is known.



James Whitfield photographed the Prince Street bridge in 1975. The distance between the two brick piers was 63 feet. The bottom of the road deck of the bridge was 17 feet above the head of the rail. The ticket office on the platform serving the Down Main line is in the lower left corner.

A public meeting, convened by the Picton Mayor at the request of the Railway Commissioners, was held on 19th January 1897 to consider the best site for an overhead bridge across the railway line. Two sites were considered and the meeting chose the one

[44] *Evening News*, 5th October 1895, p. 5.

nearest the passenger station on Prince Street.[45] This site became the successful Plan "B".

Heritage engineer, Bill Phippen, has written a very comprehensive study of the Prince Street road overbridge and compares its construction with other contemporaneous bridges. The bridge design was consistent with practice elsewhere at the time. His analysis forms Appendix 2. He states that the bridge was specifically designed for the site, as indicated by the ramped span on the northern side. He also cites as interesting the method of attachment of joints which involved the use of both double-headed and "T" section old rails.

The photographer is looking in the southbound direction towards the station. The photograph shows the Down Storage Road/Loco Road on the left. Plans for the Prince Street road overbridge were prepared in August 1897 for a deck truss bridge which was open by June 1899 in conjunction with the construction of the new platform serving the Down Main line. At the time of construction, there were two tracks passing under the bridge. There was a distance of approximately of 14 feet between the pier on the left and the abutment to allow a third track to pass in 1912 for the extension of the Loco Siding to allow easy access for bank engines from the engine depot to the front of trains. Also in 1899, the Public Works Department built a timber and iron bridge further along Prince Street over Stonequarry Creek, which was formally opened on 7th October 1897. No doubt the Victoria Bridge, as it was named, stimulated the construction of the bridge over the railway corridor, thereby providing vehicular access between the station and the main southern road. The photograph shows No. 34 passenger, the Cootamundra Day Train, on 22nd August 1953. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No.014072 E. G. Skiller collection ARHS Railway Archives.*

[45] Ibid., 20th January 1897, p. 5.

The 1897 approved Prince Street bridge was replaced in 1990 but the original brick piers and abutments were retained with a new concrete section placed on top of them. ***SOURCE:*** *James Whitfield*

When the Prince Street road overbridge opened in 1898 or so, there was no separate provision for pedestrian access. Ten years later, the need developed for such a facility. The Railway Department prepared an initial plan in 1910 for a stand-alone footbridge near the road bridge which was to be 37 feet one and a half inches long and four feet eight inches wide. It was to provide access only across the running lines. A second plan was issued in 1912 for a longer pedestrian bridge, measuring 59 feet by four feet wide, across not only the running lines but also extending to Menangle Street. Then, the final plan was issued in 1913 for a five feet wide deck to be added to the existing road bridge. It was the third option that was built no doubt because it provided the lowest expenditure.

INTERLOCKING OF POINTS AND SIGNALS

Graham Harper considers the assertion by John Forsyth, former Archives Officer, that 13th September 1898 was the date that the station was interlocked and signal box erected on Up Main platform. He writes:

> "Forsyth's date corresponds with that given in the NSW Railways' Interlocking Register. However, there is nothing in the *Weekly Notices* in 1898 about Picton being interlocked. Neither does Traffic Branch Circular No. A114 nor its attached diagram introducing alterations on 14th June 1899 have anything about cancellation of previous instructions. Singleton gives the interlocking date as 13th September 1898.

The 1899 Circular was subtitled ‘alterations to the interlocking arrangements’, all but stating that there was some interlocking prior to 14th June 1899, the date of commencement of the alterations given in Circular No. A114. No details are given of the alterations.

The NSW Railways’ Interlocking Register notes that the Picton machine had ‘alterations’ on carried out on 14th June 1899. I am unable to identify any differences between Singleton’s 1898 diagram and the NSW Railway’s 1899 diagram. The 1899 Circular simply states that ‘the interlocking arrangements as per diagram will be brought into use’. Cyril Singleton ducks the question, saying “…After the signal box containing an interlocking machine was provided on the Up platform on 13th September 1898 at the Sydney end of the station building, the arrangements were as shown in (his 1898 diagram)’.

Therefore, it would appear that:

- Picton was interlocked on 13th September 1898,
- Cyril Singleton’s 1898 diagram is a copy of the Railways’ 1899 track diagram, &
- The actual interlocking arrangements for 13th September 1898 cannot be determined nor can the 1899 changes”.[46]

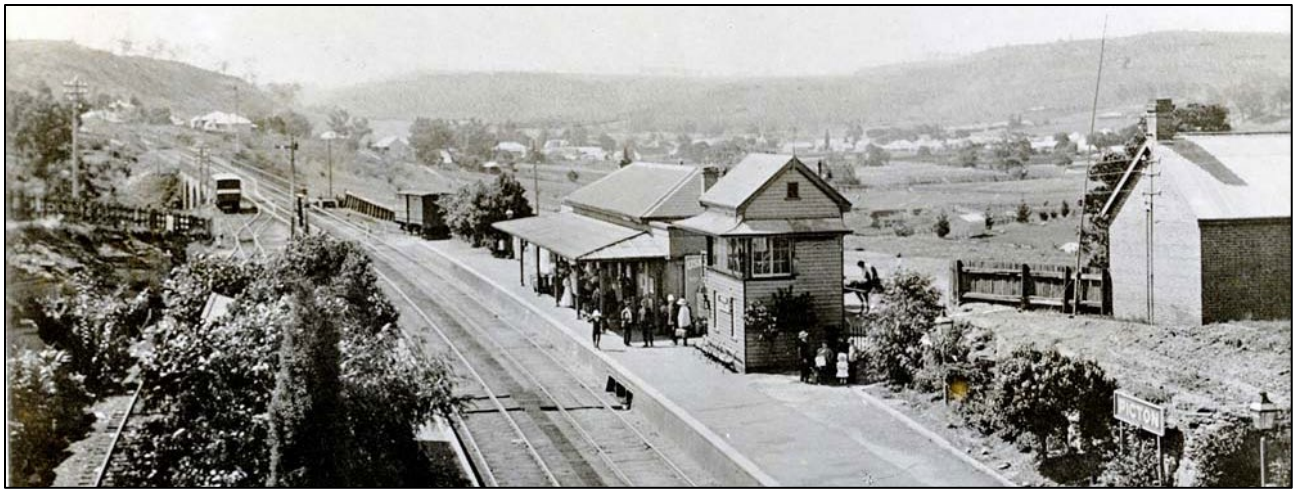
NEW PICTON SIGNAL BOXES 1912 AND 1916

The first elevated signal box on the platform was provided in 1899 though it was poorly located with limited visibility of the tracks in both directions. Dr Bob Taaffe, the historian of signal boxes, states:

> “The signalman’s vision was partly obscured by the station awning in one direction on the road bridge and the other”.[47]

[46] Email from Graham Harper on 17th November 2022.

[47] R. T. Taaffe, *Signal Boxes of New South Wales Railways and Tramways*, Vol. 3, Hobart, Taaffe Press, 2020, p. 54. Bob also indicates that it is possible that a signal box existed before 1898 though there is no certainty of that occurring.



This photograph shows what is believed to be the first elevated signal box which was erected in 1899 in conjunction with the interlocking of the signals and points and construction of the new platform serving the Down Main. The photograph shows that the Up Main platform has been rebuilt and widened with the replacement of the original timber deck with Locksley crushed granite. The brick guards' barracks are located on the right-hand side of the photograph. The photograph was taken between 1899 and 1916. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 507976, Vic Solomon collection ARHS Railway Archives.*

Major changes to Picton yard occurred in 1912. Cyril Singleton wrote:

> "In 1912, another of the ill-conceived alterations was perpetrated in the shape of a major rearrangement of the yard, obviously by direction of someone who could hardly have known how trains were operated. A maximum expenditure, which included an additional signal box, rebuilding of the engine shed and locomotive yard, gave little in return beyond additional storage but did not facilitate refuging in either direction. The new North Box, which, incidentally, was geographically south of South Box, as the box on the platform had been renamed, was fully manned by signalmen who had little to do and, when the opening of the Picton Mittagong deviation led to further alterations on the 20th October 1919, North Box was dispensed with".[48]

[48] C. C. Singleton, "Centenary of the Opening of the Southern Line to Picton", ARHS *Bulletin*, July 1963, p. 113

The photographer is looking from the Prince Street road overbridge in the northbound direction. Locomotive 4202 is shunting milk pots on 27th December 1975. It has just set down two milk containers in the goods siding adjacent to the small, corrugated iron shed which is seen in the distance towards the left of the photograph. Three crossovers facilitated easy access from the Down Main into the good siding.

Bob Taaffe indicates that the Picton North signal box in 1912 was relocated from Flemington. He agrees with Singleton that resignalling of the yard was "like a number of others in the same year, (i.e., 1912) ill thought out and basically useless".[49] He adds:

> "Another disaster that comes to mind in 1912 was Boronia Up Refuge Loop. A lot of layout disasters had happened in the period from about 1906/7 until 1912 and I am not sure who was responsible. One of the earliest was the new layout at Rockdale in 1907 which only lasted a few weeks at the most before being changed. No names were ever mentioned as to who was responsible but probably someone like the Chief Traffic Manager or one of his senior staff who reported directly to him".[50]

The present Picton signal box was opened in 1916 and was renamed Picton from its previous name of Picton South in 1919. Picton North signal box was abolished in 1919 after a life of only seven years.

[49] R. T. Taaffe, *Signal Boxes of New South Wales Railways and Tramways*, Vol. 3, Hobart, Taaffe Press, 2020, p. 56.
[50] Email from Bob Taaffe on 9th November 2022.

The 1916 elevated signal box had an extremely unobstructed view of the signal bridge protecting the track crossover that served the Loop Line. CPH 35 has a caution indication as it heads towards Picton station on 11th June 1971. The caution signal was an indication to the railmotor driver that the track was set for the railmotor to terminate in the Down Dock.

Bob Taaffe describes the present Picton signal box, saying:

> "It is typical of elevated mechanical signal boxes constructed in NSW between around 1912 and about 1928. The hip or bungalow roof was the flavour of the time and it also provided some shading of the windows. It was possibly simpler to construct than the former gable roof and awning. One complication with this style of roof was that there were no ceiling joists and so the walls were held together with tie rods and tie rings.
>
> Another flavour of the period was the use of asbestos fibre cement slates for the roof cover. These started to be used from about 1914 and continued into the 1930s. They were relatively lightweight, fire and vermin resistant and could be made locally. No mention of course was that they were made from the dreaded asbestos. The slates were normally laid diamond fashion to help shedding of rainwater. The water tended to reach the edge of the slates and ran to the bottom point before being deposited onto the slates below and so on. The aim was to avoid too much water sitting on an edge and the wind blowing the water under the tile. In about the 1970s or 1980s, the roof was recovered with corrugated steel sheets. Other than the roof and minor changes to the width of the side window

sashes this design of signal box (Type I) was largely identical to the earlier gable roof styles".[51]

The above photograph, dating from November 1960, shows the signal box with its original asbestos fibre cement roof slates. The photograph exhibits one aspect of railway infrastructure that was visually alienating. That unpleasantness related to the decision by the Railway Department to install aerial conduits to hold electrical cables between the signal box and the Prince Street end of the 1863 building. The conduits ruined the visual enjoyment of the station environs and were adopted probably because of the need to draw road vehicles up to the rear of the platform without any obstruction from ground based conduits. Bob Taaffe comments that the use of aerial cabling was related to the insulation behaviour of buried cables. More, he adds: "In early installations, it was often only the top cover that was made of asbestos fire cement, the rest being timber. Later, the trough and the top cover were all asbestos cement. The problem about insulation behaviour existed until about the 1950s or 1960s. Rhodes and Harris Park were two other locations that spring to mind with that sort of cable bridge" .[52] ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 001430, ARHS Railway Archives*

THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM

In response to a request by Wollondilly Shire Council, the Chief Commissioner declined to connect the station to the telephone system, which had been commenced locally at Picton in 1913, because the Railways had a policy of only doing so when there were 20

[51] Email from Bob Taaffe on 9th November 2022.
[52] Email from Bob Taaffe on 11th November 2022.

subscribers to the local telephone exchange and that was not the case with the Picton exchange.[53]

Although the Commissioner declined the connection to the local town exchange, His Department was already making considerable use of its own telephone system. Railway telegraph offices were open at many other locations, but mostly not for public business. Railway historian, Graham Harper, provides the following information about the Departmental telephone system. He writes:

"In addition to the railway telegraph, Picton station was served by a number of local railway telephone circuits. The staff accessed the desired location by ringing a code of dots and dashes. Below is a list of some of the circuits.

- No.19 – Campbelltown, Menangle, Douglas Park, Maldon, Picton [loco shed, loco office, goods shed, signal box and telegraph office]
- No.20 – Clyde Yards and loco, Picton and Picton Loco
- No.21 – Picton telegraph office and all stations Thirlmere to Moss Vale.
- No.24 – Picton, Picton Loco, Goulburn Loco, Goulburn Telegraph Office

Some locations were provided with a connection to the local public telephone exchange. The nearest such connections to Picton in 1911 were at the Liverpool Goods Office, Camden station and Bowral station.

The connection to the local Picton telephone exchange would not have greatly assisted with railway operations. However, I would be pretty certain that telephones from one or more of the local circuits would have been installed in the new North and South Boxes at opening in 1912 and would have been retained in the new Picton Box of 1916.[54]

STATION CONNECTED TO ELECTRICITY NETWORK 1923

The press announced in February 1923 that the station would be lit by electricity from the newly opened municipal supply.[55]

THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR TWO 1941-1945

By 1941, many station nameboards, including those at Picton, had been removed and those remaining had been repainted to make them less obvious. Also, advertisements were displayed in station offices and elsewhere stating "Don't Talk, the Enemy Listens".[56]

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[53] *Picton Post*, 17th September 1913, p. 6.
[54] Email from Graham Harper on 13th November 2022 and his analysis of the 1911 Local Appendix.

[55] *South Coast Times and Wollongong Argus*, 2nd February 1923, p. 24.
[56] *Weekly Notice No. 18*, 3rd – 9 May 1941, p. 3.

On 20th March 1942 station nameboards for all stations between the coast and 100 miles inland were removed from stations, yards and depots.

A Traffic Branch Circular was issued on 19th January 1943 stating that, when the station nameboards are required to be repainted, the original colours are to be reverted to for railway stations outside the Sydney electrified area. Outside the electrified area, this meant that the nameboards were to be painted black with white lettering. So far as the electrified area was concerned, the existing practice of painting the background with No. 35 colour (a colour known as Gamboge) and black lettering was to continue. The press reported that "the decision to restore the signs further underlines the 'no invasion' statement made by the Prime Minister, Mr. Curtin after his meeting with General Macarthur".[57]

All station buildings were covered with locomotive soot and ash. The photographer was member, Noel Reed, and he took the photograph on an ARHS annual outing on 15th October 1955. On the left side is the location board which indicated the position at which engine drivers stopped to enable the water column spout to reach the water intake on tenders of locomotives. The locomotive is 1243. ***SOURCE:*** *photograph No. 748384, ARHS Archives.*

Wollondilly Shire Council in early 1943 wanted the Picton station nameboards restored on railway platforms. In reply, the Commissioner said he appreciated the inconvenience to the travelling public caused by the absence of the signs and, hence, had made representations were made to the military authorities for permission to restore the signs.

[57] *Gloucester Advocate*, 25th June 1943, p. 1.

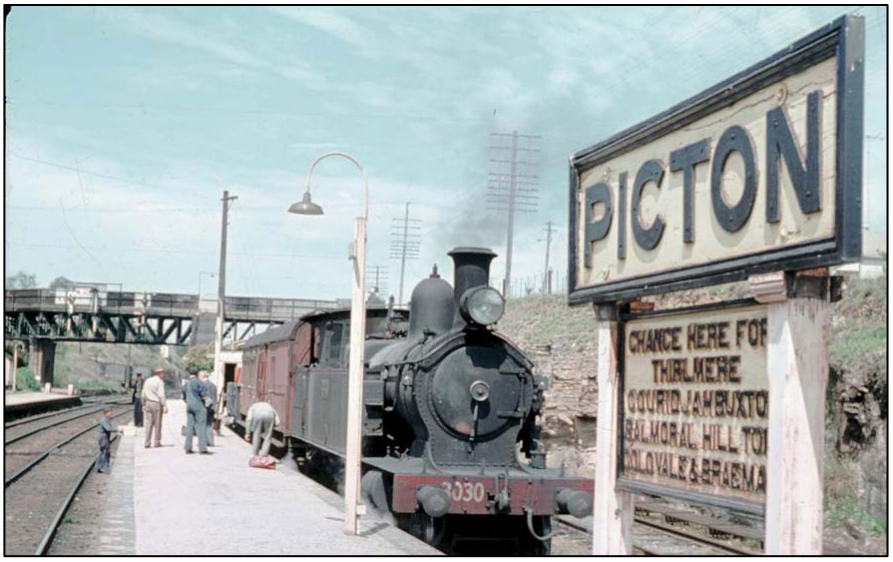
The pressure worked. The military authorities issued a new directive that a modification of the direction of signs order had now been issued by, and the following is an extract from same as affecting the (Wollondilly) Shire: —— “small, enamelled name plates on electric light posts, or name plates on kerosene plat form lamps, can be exhibited”. In the near southern region, it related to the sections from Casula to Yass Junction (inclusive) and the Crookwell, Taralga, Bombala, Canberra, Captain's Flat branch lines. Station names could be painted on platform seats. In addition, standard nameboards could be exhibited at Mittagong, Moss Vale, Goulburn, and Yass Junction but not Picton.[58] The number of press articles in June announcing the re-introduction of station nameboards suggests that the policy change to restore station nameboards generally was not implemented until the middle of 1943. It is unknown when the nameboards at Picton were restored.

Picton town introduced a sewerage scheme in 1942 but it is unknown if and when the station was sewered.

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE 1950s – THE ROLE OF PAINT

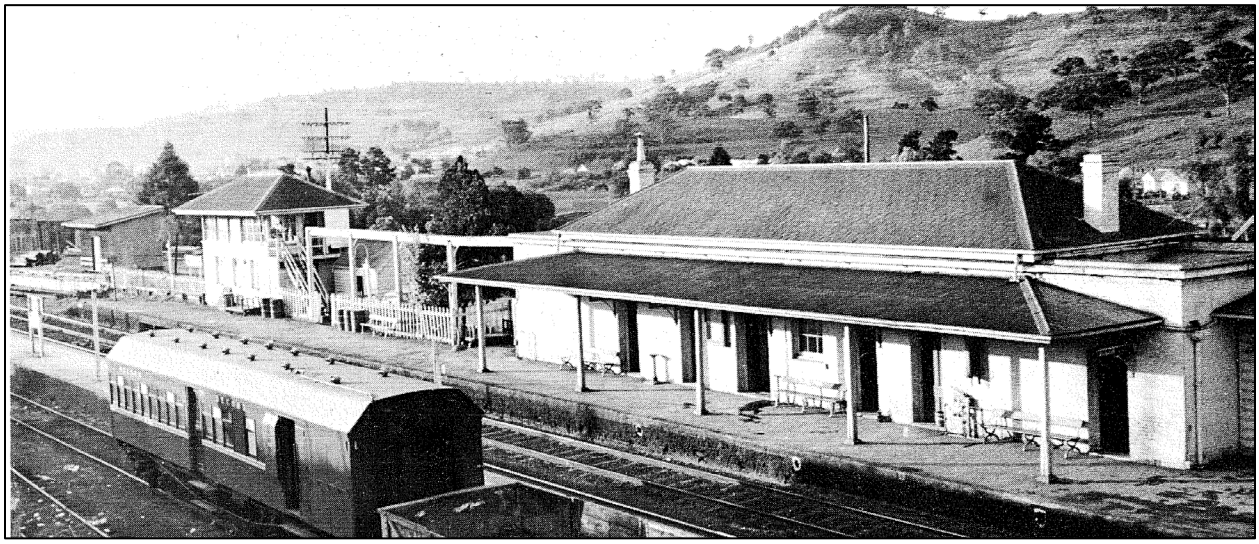
There was extraordinarily little money made available in the 1950s (and in most every other decade after 1855) for station improvements. The visit by Queen Elizabeth in 1954 prompted the acceleration of a system-wide programme to modernise the appearance of buildings by the replacement of the traditional stone colours. A similar programme was also under way to replace the traditional black and white colours of station nameboards. The range of colours included green and maroon for the frames, yellow and cream for backgrounds and maroon, black, blue and brown for the letters.

[58] *Picton Post*, 18th March 1943, p. 1



The Picton nameboard has been repainted with a yellow background and what appears to be dark blue or grey for the larger sign and black letters for the smaller sign underneath. Similar paint schemes were applied to nameboards in the region at Glenfield, Leumeah, Campbelltown, Moss Vale and Goulburn. The photograph was taken on 27th September 1962. ***SOURCE****: Photograph No. 053288 E. G. Skiller collection ARHS Railway Archives.*

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE 1960s



Alex Grunbach was on site in 1963. Note the aerial cabling between the signal box and the main building. The chimney at the signal box end of the 1863 structure is in place as is the picket fencing along the rear of the platform. The vertical posts supporting the platform awning were replaced in 1965 by a cantilever from steel stanchions placed against the wall of the building. It

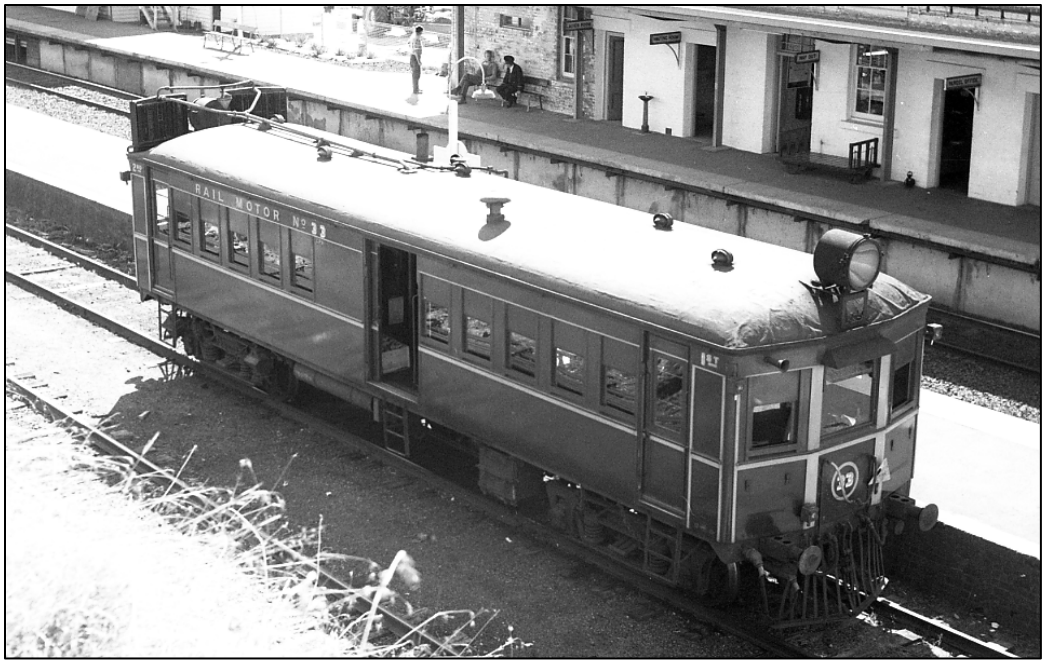
appears that the shed with the skillion roof towards the left side was relocated to the position of the first goods shed. ***SOURCE:*** *C. C. Singleton, "Centenary of the Opening of the Southern Line to Picton", ARHS Bulletin, July 1963, p. 114.*

The northbound platform wall is in the process of being rebuilt in 1964 and the picket fencing has yet to be re-instated. The Railway Institute is on the right side. John Ward captured No. 14 Goulburn passenger on 12th December 1964. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 548937 ARHS Railway Archives.*

This March 1966 photograph shows that the northbound platform wall has been renewed and the fencing at the rear of the platform has been re-erected. The aerial conduiting is still in place. ***SOURCE:*** *Photograph No. 103085 ARHS Railway Archives.*

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE 1970s

It was in early 1970 that the pan system in the male and female toilets was replaced by water closets which discharged into a newly installed septic tank. At the same time both the platform building and the signal box were painted and the replacement of the picket fencing with galvanised, rolltop steel fencing. The work was completed on 10th April 1970.



This photograph, taken on the day when the then Public Transport Commission recorded as the official completion of upgrading works – 10th April 1970, shows that work has not been completed by the alleged official completion date. The improvements included an increase in the number of windows in the male and female toilets on the northbound platform. However, the alterations are yet to receive a lick of paint.

By the 10th April 1970 when this photograph was taken, the picket fencing on the northbound platform has been replaced with roll-top, galvanised mesh fencing. At least

the fencing had been completed by the official completion date of the upgrading. The Railway Institute building has been demolished though its former location is marked by the embankment on the right-hand side of the photograph.

This composition of Picton station was taken by James Whitfield in 1975. Note the timber boardwalk across both main lines to facilitate the transfer of parcels and luggage from the out of office on the northbound platform to the trolley on the southbound platform. The original brick platform wall has been replaced by a steel frame using old rails. The photograph shows another change to the 1863 design with the replacement of the posts supporting the platform awning. This was done as a part of a programme that was commenced in the 1887 and was given substantial support by the new Chief Commissioner, E.M.G. Eddy, when he arrived in 1888. The timber out of shed had been erected adjacent to the end of the main building and is easily identified by the four-wheel trolley outside the door.

Local resident and passionate advocate of railways, James Whitfield, took this photograph in 1975 of Picton station. The parked cars in the station forecourt given an idea of the scale of the station building with its 15 feet ceiling height. The station is painted white, a colour which was adopted conjunction with the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to New South Wales in 1954. It replaced the traditional three variations of stone colour. An iconic feature of stations up to the mid-1980s is evident in the photograph – flowers and shrubs in tubs. Picton is one of the few examples of the Georgian-influenced design that have not been mutilated with ruinous post-construction changes. It retains its original slate on the roof and iron sheets on the awning. The elegant, overall symmetry of the structure is an architectural delight. The timber out of shed adjacent to the 1863 building on the left side of the photograph is on its last legs and was replaced in 1978 with the construction of a brick out of shed near the signal box.

HOW BUSY WAS THE STATION IN 1984/85?

The then Chief Commissioner, David Hill, made a tour of part of the Main South in June 1985. This was one of many inspection tours that David undertook and staff compiled very thorough documentation for each inspection trip.

In 1979, the tonnage received at Picton was 421 and in 1984 it was 327 while the tonnage out was 122 in 1979 and 699 and 1984. The number of goods vehicles despatched from Picton in 1979 was 16 and in 1984 it was six. Passenger revenue was $36,746 in 1979 and 103,258 1985.

In 1979/80 there were 9,996 parcels received and 2,550 parcels despatched. In 1983/84, 5,941 parcels were received and 1,511 despatched. In other words, Picton station was handling an average of about 20 parcels a day in 1983/84. The State Rail Authority ended all parcels business in 1989.

In 1985, there were six salaried staff and five wages staff working at the station. These figures included Signalmen in the signal box.

There had been past problems about damp walls in the 1863 building because of the absence of a cavity between the two skins of brickwork. The damp problem was addressed as required in relation to the internal walls. A different approach was taken for the external walls and this involved the painting of the original face brickwork. In addition to painting, a damp course was inserted into the external brick walls in 1984. The station building had last been painted in 1981 and was due for painting again in the 1985/86 financial year. As at the middle of 1985, the building was not air-conditioned.

As of June 1985, there were 30 commuter car spaces available in the station forecourt.[59]

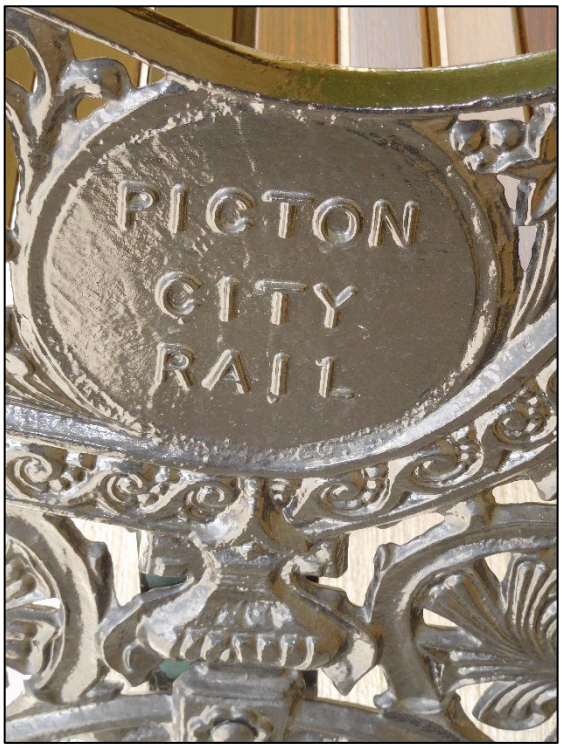
STATION UPGRADING 1993

After its establishment in 1989, CityRail undertook an upgrading programme of every railway station in its network. CityRail raised both platforms in 1993 and also brightened the station by the addition of the new corporate signage, bins and platform seats. CityRail appointed a number of Line and Business Managers who had substantial delegations to upgrade stations. This work represented the first time in the history of Picton station in which very substantial funding was made available to make the station area attractive to customers.

[59] State Rail Authority, *Management Inspection of Country Areas – Picton to Moss Vale, 17th & 18th June 1985*, unpublished internal document, pp. 68 – 70.

This wonderful photograph by James Whitfield shows the CityRail work in progress on 28th April 1993. The red-and-white seats have been placed on the platform as a have the red rubbish bins and the light poles have been repainted red and new signage attached to them. The approved plan for the raising of the platforms included the rebuilding of the timber waiting shed on the southbound platform. Despite the intention, the old waiting shed was demolished. The photograph above shows the replacement shed under construction.

In addition, the staff benefited from the provision of modern facilities for their welfare. Thinking that it would be nice if "heritage" seating were provided, CityRail commissioned platform seats with the writing "Picton CityRail" on the end supports of the seats. The seats were painted in what was widely known as "heritage green". The provision of such seating was a compassionate, though ill informed, initiative as their design was inconsistent with the heritage values of Picton station. Four of these seats survive in 2022 along the building wall facing the station forecourt.



The above photograph on the left shows one of the so-called green coloured heritage seats with "Picton CityRail" cast into the end supports. It was located in the former general waiting room but has since been replaced by more appropriate replica seating. These seats were also provided at

several CityRail stations. The photograph shows the extent of the improvements undertaken by CityRail with the use of coloured tiles covering the concrete floor. The photograph was taken on 3rd October 1997. In conjunction with the installation of lifts at Picton, Sydney Trains removed the green paint and retained four of the seats at the front of the building facing the forecourt.

In the general waiting room of the station there is a plaque on the wall adjacent to the platform that states that Liz Kernohan, the then local Member of Parliament, opened the "refurbishment" on 10th September 1993. The former booking office in one corner of the waiting room has been removed and the doorway to that facility has been converted into a window.

CityRail also provided green painted, steel fencing with acorn style heads at the rear of the platforms but these have been replaced with black painted steel fencing at the Maldon end of the northbound platform when the lifts were provided about 2011.

All the remaining buildings on the southbound platform were demolished and a simple shelter was erected. It has since been replaced.

Extensive CCTV surveillance cameras were installed at the station in 2001. This was a part of a system-wide programme of upgrading passenger security at all stations.

EASY ACCESS LIFTS 2011

CityRail provided lifts to both platforms with construction commencing in 2010. The lifts were opened in 2011. In addition, CityRail remodelled the toilets and installed a separate toilet for disabled people. While the work commenced under the umbrella of CityRail, it was completed by a new replacement organisation called Sydney Trains.

Sydney Trains must not have liked the paint scheme proposed by the former CityRail and repainted the structure. The image was taken on 22nd June 2022.

The buildings were repainted and the station forecourt remodelled as part of the work associated with the provision of the lifts. Image taken by James Whitfield in 2011.

James Whitfield took this image on 23rd December 2011 showing the then recently installed lifts. The construction was undertaken by GartnerRose, a construction group which has had extensive experience in the upgrading of Sydney stations. Black and dark grey are colours widely applied to new structures inside and outside the railway boundary fences and, in the case of Picton station, they show a distinct difference between the existing buildings and the new work. The contrast in paint colour helps to identify the heritage structures.

Other work was carried out when the lifts were installed. The former “heritage” seats on the platform were removed but the bases of some of the seating is noticeable where they have been cut off at platform level. CityRail’s 1993 floor tiles in the general waiting room have been removed and the floor has been re-laid in timber, which is more in accordance

with the heritage values of the structure. A facsimile bubbler and facsimile room signage were also provided at the time.

SCULPTURE DEDICATED TO RAILWAYMEN WHO SERVED IN WORLD WAR ONE 2018

On 11th December 2018, the Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council unveiled a sculpture on the northbound platform which featured "railway tracks and sleepers in a spiral decreasing in width as it winds upwards".[60]

An image of the sculpture taken on 22nd June 2022 adjacent to the northbound platform.

[60] *Railway Digest*, February 2019, p. 54.

The sculpture contains an incorrect message saying that the Railway Department looked after soldiers returning from World War One. That was not the case. The Department was afraid that the soldiers knew how to shoot guns possessed the potential to join other returned employees in a political revolution as had occurred in Russia in 1917. The 1917 Great Railway Strike also left tremendous scars on both management and workers. The Railway Department created a significant number of additional branches of the Railway Institute but the aim was not to care for the staff but to dissipate any significant industrial aggression and deflect adverse ill feelings away from industrial disruption into social and recreational pursuits. It worked!

PROBLEMS WITH FLOODING 2022

Picton was not spared from the impact of the incessant rain in 2022.

James Whitfield on 3rd July 2022 wrote: "I took image at 7.30 am this Sunday morning!!!The flooded area to the left was the road for the Down Storage Siding and the Down Dock for the rail motors. When the tracks were lifted, the drain was filled in!". Smart planning indeed!

SMALL STRUCTURES ADJACENT TO THE UP MAIN LINE

1. THE OUT OF SHEDS

Mick Morahan was on the road overbridge on the 14th May 1977. The timber out of shed is adjacent to the end of the building and identified by the trolley and set of scales. The aerial cabling from the signal box along the northbound platform has disappeared. The platform buildings were painted white, which was the colour the Department of Railways chose for more important buildings to improve their appearance in conjunction with the visit by Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. However, the evidence indicates that Picton station did not receive its white paint until after the Queen's visit. ***SOURCE:*** *M. Morahan, Early Diesel and Electric Locomotives of the NSWGR, Burwood, NSW RTM, 1997, p. 98.*

This image, taken by James Whitfield on 23rd August 2019 shows the new brick out of shed, which was approved in 1978, on the right side. It was amongst the last out of sheds built on the New South Wales railway system. Its brick construction was also exceedingly rare. The bus is waiting for the arrival of a service from Campbelltown to take people to loop line stations.

The out of shed was completed on 22nd August 1979. This image was taken on 22nd June 2022.

It is very hard to believe that the Public Transport Commission would approve a brick out of shed, considering the pressures on finance at the time. The design of the structure also suggests that the structure was intended for another use. The definition of an out of is a second-class parcel. An out of is not a heavy item that requires a loading dock. Hence, it is possible that local officials concocted a devious plan to hoodwink officials in Head Office to provide a new structure for the local per way gang, keeping in mind that its original timber structure on the Up Dock had been relocated approximately three years previously to the goods siding. The 1978 approved out of shed would have been very handy to the office of the Per Way Sub-Inspector considering that his office was not far away on the other side of the station forecourt. The true story is now lost to time.

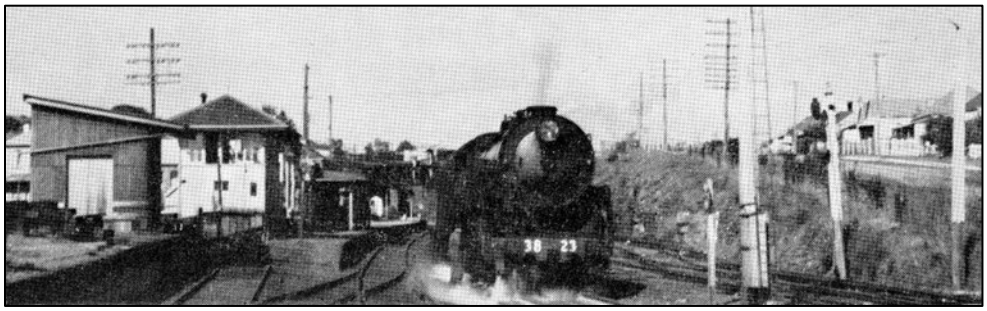
2. THE COAL STORAGE BUND

All attended stations and signal boxes used coal at least up to the 1920s, and beyond in rural areas, as a heating source for fireplaces. The Railway Department possessed its own concrete works from which it produced a box made of precast concrete panels in which coal was stored for station fireplaces. The concrete container is seen on the right-hand side of the 1962 photograph. It was the job of the Junior Porter to transfer coal from the store to the fireplaces. At Picton, the coal container was located adjacent to the Up Dock. Coal would have been shovelled directly from a railway truck into the concrete container. ***SOURCE:*** *L. Crow, D. McLean & R. Selems, Steam in the Sixties, Burwood, NSW RTM, 1984, p. 9.*

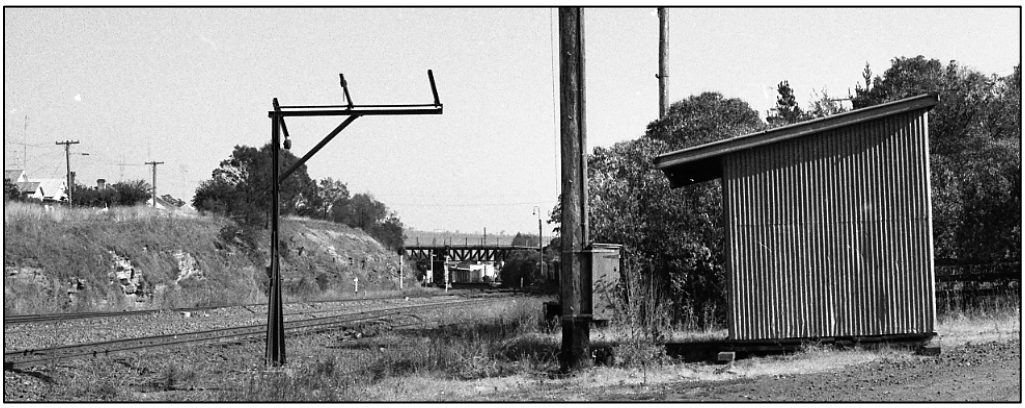
3. THE LOADING BANK, UP DOCK AND FETTLERS' RAIL STAND AND SHEDS

Gary Hughes was on a SPER tour on 25th August 1963. Locomotive 3801 has stopped to take on water. Gary took this composition of a classic railway setting. He has included, on the left, a part of the rail stand on which short lengths of rail were placed. Also on the left is the site of the Up Dock, which the Railway Department later renamed as the loading bank. On the right side are the fettlers' tool and trolley sheds. Standing sentry in the middle is the imposing, bracketed Down Second Home semaphore signal. Towards the middle background is the barely visible original platform awning, which was supported by vertical timber columns and, beyond the station, is the Prince Street road overbridge. Other than the signal box and 1863 platform building, all the infrastructure has been demolished.

4. THE SMALL GOODS SHED

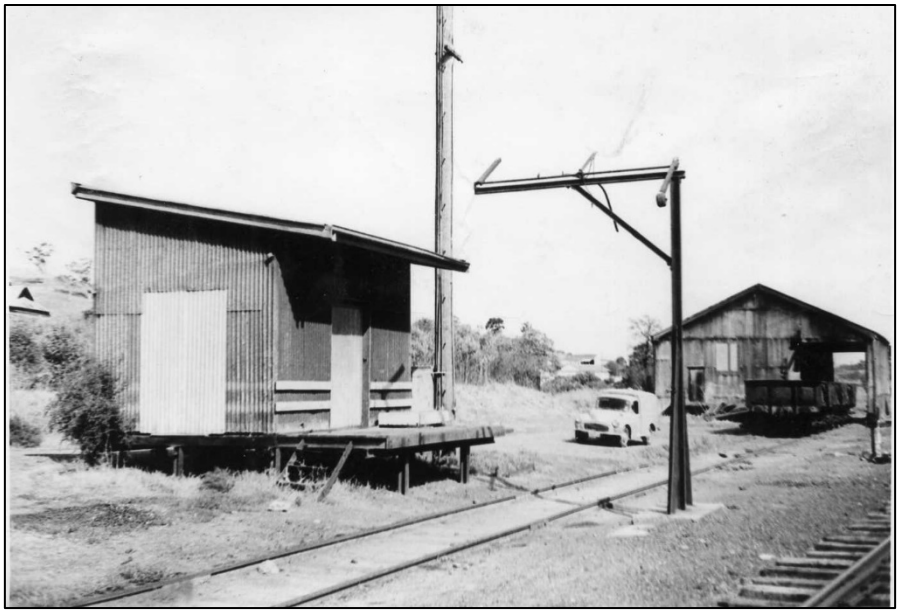


For many years, located adjacent to the Up Dock there was a small, timber-framed shed with corrugated iron sheets for the walls and a single pitched roof, it is seen on the left side of this photograph taken on 16th May 1963. It has a double door unusually located at one side. In the 1970s, the shed disappeared. ***SOURCE:*** *W. A. Bayley, Picton-Mittagong Main Line Railway, Bulli. Austrail Publications, 1975, inside front cover.*



On 26th December 1979, there was a small, timber-framed shed clad with corrugated iron sheets with a skillion roof located in approximately the position of the 1863 goods shed, which had been demolished on 13th April 1976. Is this the same shed as that located adjacent to the Up Dock? A loading gauge to measure the height of merchandise stacked in open wagons still served the good siding.

The 1975 photograph below from James Whitfield confirms that the shed formerly located at the Up Dock has been repositioned to the goods siding. Why? The location of the shed at the Up Dock was juxtaposed to a rail stand on which spare sections of railway line were stored. Hence, there is a strong possibility that the shed was used not for the storage of items owned by freight customers but for materials used by the Picton per way gang. The shed was relocated for a reason unknown.



STRUCTURES AROUND THE STATION FORECOURT

1. THE STATION MASTER'S RESIDENCE

The Station Master's residence has an elevated position overlooking the station forecourt. The image was taken on 22nd June 2022.

At the time the line opened to Picton in 1863, the policy of the Railway Department in relation to residential accommodation was based on the provision of combination residences/offices at small villages and no accommodation provided at larger centres where, supposedly, housing was available on the commercial market. Hence, there was no residence for the Station Master in 1863 at Picton because the Department assumed he would be able to find suitable housing within the village, despite it being some distance from the station. That policy changed in 1870 when freestanding, two-storey houses started to be erected. The list below shows the pattern of staff housing from 1870.

LIST OF PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR STATION MASTERS 1870-1877

YEAR	LOCATION/S
• 1870	Goulburn – two-storey
• 1872	Newtown, Granville & Honeysuckle Point – all two-storey
• 1874	Mittagong – two-storey
• 1874	Murrurundi – two-storey but not built
• 1875	Gunning and Yass – two-storey – Yass not built

- 1876 Bathurst – two-storey
- 1876 Binalong, Harden, Millthorpe, Spring Hill & Willow Tree – all one storey
- 1877 Picton – two-storey
- 1877 Cootamundra, Junee & Bomen – all one storey

This image is taken from the walkway adjacent to the Up Main line. The flat area in front of the house is the location where members of the Railway and Tramway Institute built a tennis court in front of the Institute building which was out of the frame to the left. The image was taken on 22nd June 2022.

The Station Master's house accords with the Georgian design which resulted in the delivery of a very plain looking house void of external ornamentation. This is especially obvious when it is contrasted against the far more embellished Italianate design at Goulburn and the Gothic style at Bathurst.

John Forsyth, former State Rail Authority Archives Officer, states that the contract for the Station Master's residence was issued on 25th June 1878. That assertion is incorrect. According to the Commissioner's *Annual Report*, the house was built in 1877.[61]

Ann Cahill-Newell lived in the house in 1955 and 1956. She describes the internal features:

> "When we moved to Picton, we lived in the Station Master's residence for about nine or ten months. It was very primitive with no running hot water, a chip heater in the bathroom and very few power points throughout the house. Also, there was

[61] Commissioner for Railways, *Annual Report 1877,* Appendix 1, p. 16.

no damp course in the walls. Therefore, there was always a very musty odour in the downstairs rooms. It could have been made into a lovely family home as the rooms were very large. The house had four large bedrooms upstairs while downstairs there was a lounge room, a dining room, family room, an eat-in kitchen, bathroom and laundry. There was a massive yard surrounding the residence".[62]

The minimisation of electric lights in the Station Master's residence was typical practice of the Railway Department. Because the vast majority of official residences were designed and built prior to the introduction of electricity, substantial work was necessary to provide power points and lights. The Department had a policy of providing only one ceiling light and one power outlet in each room.

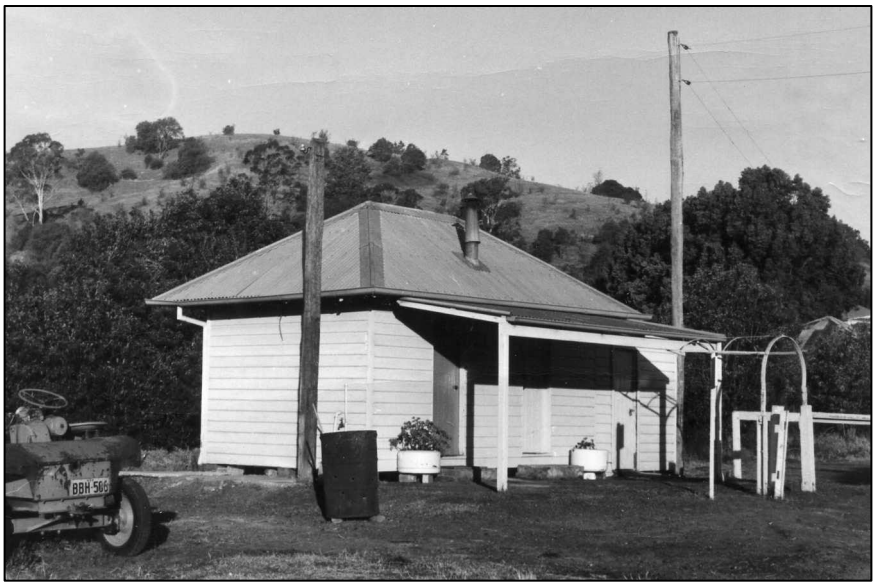
The residence was sold to Mrs. T. Savney in 1958.

2. THE PER WAY SUB-INSPECTOR'S OFFICE

The above 1975 photograph by James Whitfield of the station shows the Per Way Sub- inspector's office on the right-hand side. The date of its construction is unknown but, by its appearance, it was designed and built under the supervision of the Buildings and Bridges Sub-inspector and his team of men. There is a caravan located behind the structure. The use of caravans became popular in the 1970s as a means of accommodation by relief staff. The facilities were originally privately owned and the use of caravans avoided staff having to find rental accommodation for relatively short periods of time. At some locations in 1980s, the State Rail Authority purchased caravans for use by staff at remote locations or where rental accommodation was difficult to obtain.

[62] Email from Cahill-Newell via James Whitfield on 5th December 2022.

James Whitfield took the photograph above and below of the Per Way office. These were taken in the mid-1970s when the title of the Sub-inspector was replaced by Track Supervisor. The sign out the front of the building reads: "Track Supervisor, District Engineer, Metropolitan".



Over the decades, some of the staff at Picton were keen gardeners and worked hard to beautify the forecourt, platforms and buildings. The existence of a frame over the entrance for a vine suggests that it was one of the Per Way staff who was the horticultural enthusiast. Similar plot plants existed on both platforms until the 1990s.

3. THE GUARDS' BARRACKS/ RAILWAY INSTITUTE

A plan for "engine drivers' barracks" had been approved by William Foxlee on 30th June 1890 on behalf of James Angus, the Engineer for Existing Lines, and initialled by Chief Commissioner Eddy on 31st December 1890. Tenders closed on 14th July 1890 for the structure.

The press reported in early 1891 an increase in the number of sidings. In addition, there was a reference to rest house accommodation, saying:

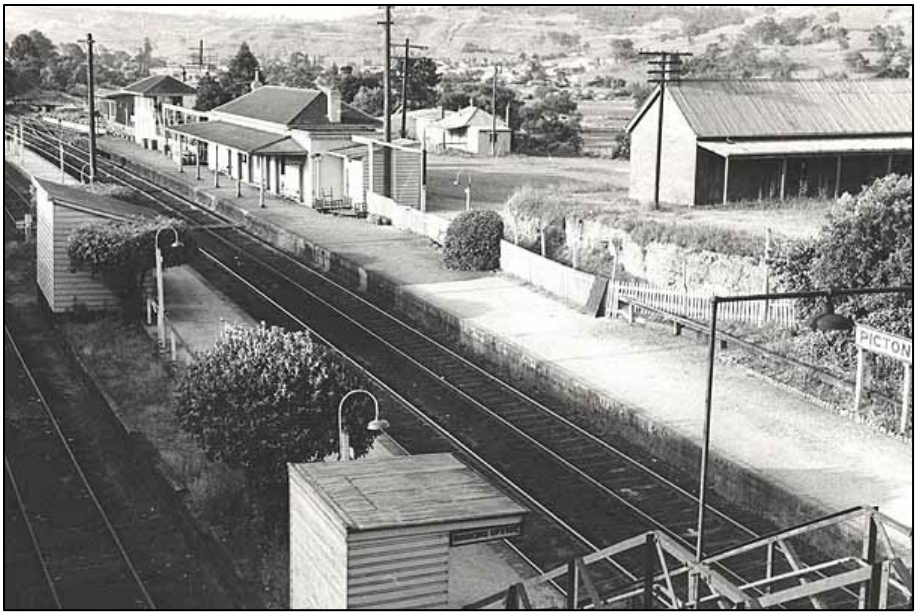
> "It is at this station that new barracks for the southern line have been erected for guards and drivers who may be from home on duty. A capital situation has been selected for the quarters and they have been comfortably fitted up and well ventilated".[63]

The approved plan for the engine drivers' barracks did not include any reference to guards. However, the press referred to accommodation for guards. Was the rest house built on the top of an embankment adjacent to the locomotive depot to be used by enginemen and guards? There is no evidence to say one way or the other.

Between the Up Main platform and the Station Master's residence, the Railway Department built a barracks for guards. The plan for the structure does not exist and there is no evidence to indicate a date of construction. The locomotive shed at Picton had been approved and built in 1875. The contractor was Fred Horn of Goulburn, who constructed a number of railway structures in the second half of the 1860s and 1870s.[64] In 1882, a "new house" was erected for enginemen.[65] In the same year, an office was removed from Bundanoon to be used by guards but the purpose is unknown.[66] After the construction of the barracks for enginemen in 1890 at the locomotive depot, the original barracks may have been used by train guards.[67] Photograph No. 198211 at the ARHS Railway Archives shows a house on the embankment not far from the 1875 locomotive shed as well as a smaller structure which could have been an office for guards.

[63] *Daily Telegraph*, 3rd February 1891. p. 5.
[64] *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 6th March 1875, p. 9.
[65] Commissioner for Railways, *Annual Report 1882*, Appendix 1, p. 3.

[66] Ibid.
[67] The contract was dated 18th September 1890 and issued to R. Flood. See J. F. Forsyth, SRA, *Historical Notes on Main Southern Railway*, Vol. 2, p. 36.



On the right of this pre-1965 photograph is the former Guards' barracks/Railway Institute building in derelict condition. ***SOURCE:*** *ARHS Railway Archives*

The Station Master's residence, which was erected in 1877, was not positioned immediately close to the station but near to the entrance gates to the station forecourt.[68] The basic rectangular footprint and simple, unadorned gabled roof and the omission of awnings of any type suggest that the Guards' barracks/Institute building is old but how old is unknown. The design of the Guards' barracks adjacent to the station suggests a time which predates the standardisation of rest house designs in the 1890s and reflects construction in the 1880s. The structure was austere in appearance and reflected the utility of its function. The only clue that dates the building is a photograph which shows it in existence in 1898.

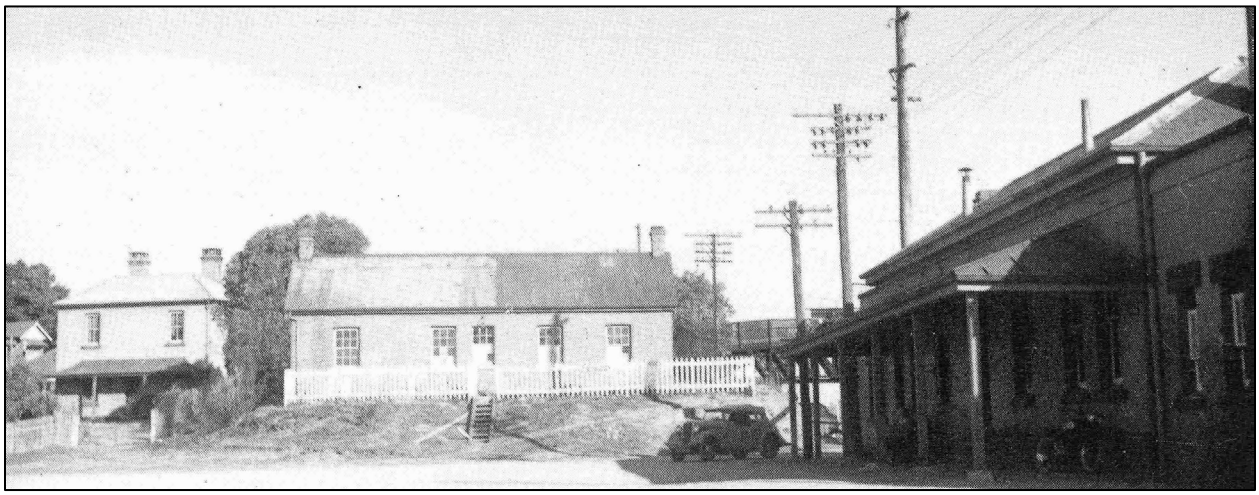
It is possible that the guards barracks dates from the same year – 1892 – that the engine drivers' rest house was built. Carriages and brake vans at the time were stabled not in the goods yard or anywhere adjacent to the locomotive depot but opposite the station. It thus makes sense that the guards' barracks were located near the place where they commenced and finished their work shifts. The location of the stabled coaching stock and guards' vans also suggests that the 1890 drivers barracks was not used by the guards.

Externally, the brick barracks on the side of the station forecourt was 47 feet 4 inches long by 16 feet 6 inches wide. It had a gabled roof, covered with corrugated iron sheets, with single chimneys at the extreme ends of the building. Internally, there was a kitchen

[68] Commissioner for Railways, *Annual Report 1877*, Appendix 1, p. 16.

and an open space measuring approximately 31 feet long. Ceiling height was 9 feet 2 ½ inches. In later years, a full-length awning was erected on the southern side of the structure.

The Picton Branch of the Railway Institute was in existence by 1910 at which time meetings were conducted in the station's general waiting room.[69] The use of that facility was customary practice in towns not served by the Institute's own building. Until 1924, the building had been used as a guards' barracks. At that time, the Commissioner handed over the structure to the Picton Branch of the Railway Institute. The combination of the opening of the deviation of the Main South through Bargo and the implementation of through running from the early 1920s resulted in lower demand for barracks work by foreign crews. The Institute took occupancy in August 1924.[70] The Commissioner allocated money for furniture and fittings, the extension of the electric lighting system and the sum of £15 for the construction of a tennis court. The local members also constructed a small, timber-framed toilet clad with corrugated iron adjacent to the court. An unofficial opening occurred on 23rd August 1924 when a "500 tournament" was held.[71]



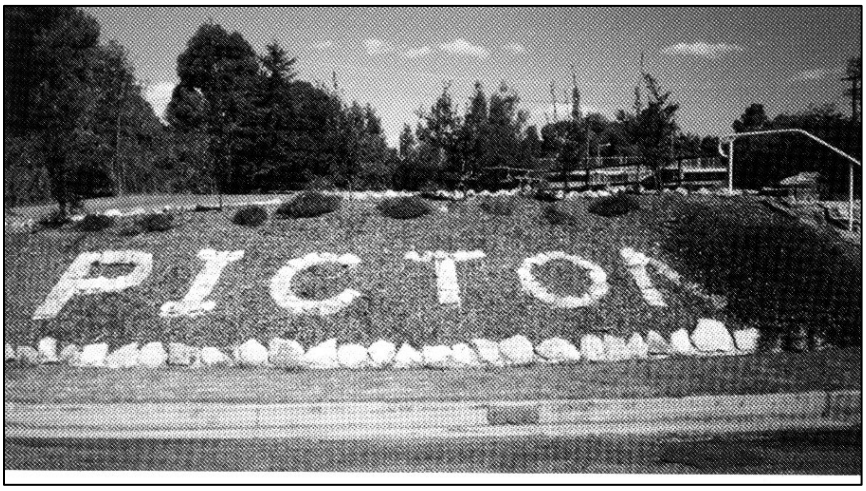
The best published photograph of the Railway Institute building, unfortunately with poor reproduction, was taken by former locomotive driver, Ken Groves, in 1954. The 1877 residence for the Station Master is on the left and the 1863 platform building is on the right. It is where the steps are located that the station name was later expressed by white-painted stones. ***SOURCE:*** *K. Groves, "Picton Locomotive Depot 1890 – 1899", ARHS Bulletin, September 1983, p. 201.*

[69] *Railway and Tramway Co-operator*, 4th August 1910, p. 3.
[70] *Picton Post, 27th August* 1924, p. 2.
[71] Ibid.

The official opening of the Picton Railway Institute took place on 1st October 1924.[72] At the time of the opening, the members of the local Branch were constructing the tennis court on the southern side of the building.

The barracks/Institute building was demolished in 1966 by a contractor named K. F. Twarla.[73]

4. THE STATION NAME IN STONES



James Whitfield placed the above photograph on his Facebook Page to see if anyone would respond with any information. Railway historian, Jim Longworth, used a similar photograph in an article on station names. ***SOURCE****: Australian Railway History, October 2010, p. 344.*

Long-time railway historian, James Whitfield, says that, at one stage, the land between the Station Master's residence and the Station Master's residence and the station entrance was cleared and made into a 'park'. The name in stones was located in that area.

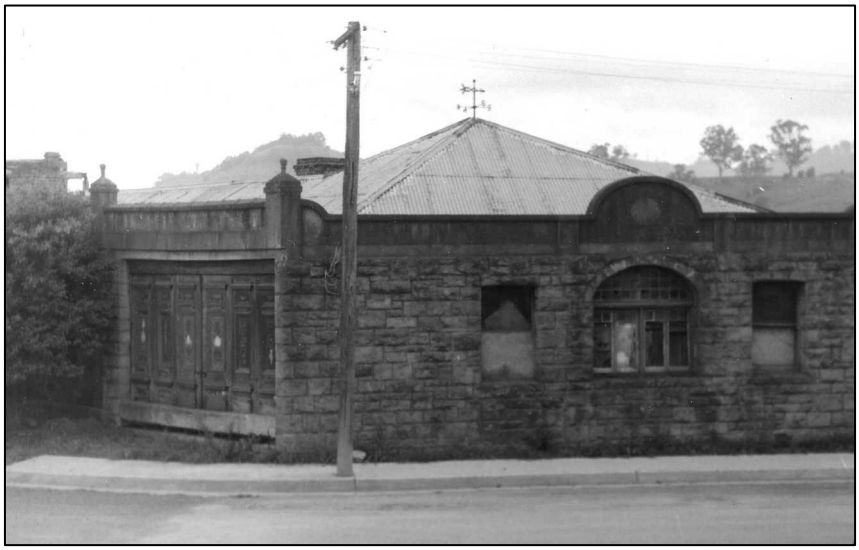
[72] *Picton Post, 8th October* 1924, p. 2.

[73] Photograph No. 198302 ARHS Archives, which was taken on 9th March 1968, discloses a vacant space where the barracks/Institute and tennis court once stood.

James Whitfield took this photograph in June 1994 which shows the completed platform renewal and building work, including the new shelter on the southbound platform. It would be hard to find a word to describe the colour used to paint the 1863 building and signal box. Towards the right-hand side of the photograph is the raised area on which the former Guards' Barracks/Railway Institute was located. If the reader strains her/his eyes, the tops of the stones can barely be made out through the railings of the metal fencing. James speculates whether the picnic area and station name in stones may have been constructed in conjunction with the CityRail station upgrading in 1993.

James Whitfield took the above image on 29th May 2021 which shows the location of the stone sign as the grassed area behind the retaining wall at the rear of the bus shelter.

5. FEATHER AND FUR FACTORY AT PICTON RAILWAY SQUARE[74] - NOW VABY'S RESTAURANT



James Whitfield took this photograph in the mid-1970s of the then derelict feather and fur/cheese factory.

It is unusual to find an industrial or commercial undertaking located on the perimeter of the station forecourt but that was the case at Picton. James Whitfield tells the story:

> "In 1920, William Kutnewsky purchased land on the corner of Menangle Street leading to Picton railway station from Edward Fieldhouse. There was already a building located on the site, which was apparently demolished. Kutnewsky built a single-story sandstone structure as a feather & fur factory. Kutnewsky manufactured fur coats, rugs and mats, and a large variety of feathers, plumes and general sundries. His showroom was in Paris House in Phillip Street, Sydney, but he also had other outlets. He lived in Sydney, not Picton.
>
> Kutnewsky died in 1926 but the fate of the factory is unclear. It is known that, during the 1930s Depression, unemployed 'bagmen' used the building as a resting place between trains. In 1932, Tonnesen & Sons turned the building into a cheese factory until it was closed in 1940. In about 1959, the disused factory was damaged by fire and lay idle for years in a derelict state. In the 1990s, following the issue by Wollondilly Shire Council of a demolition order, Picton resident, John Corbett,

[74] This was the advertised address of the business.

purchased the derelict site and poured boundless energy and money into restoring the crumbling building. The structure now is mostly referred to as 'The Old Cheese Factory' and operates as Vaby's Restaurant opening in about 2002".[75]

Vabys Restaurant is next to the station car park and it is an architectural study in itself. It was a former feather, fur and cheese factory. There are heritage listed iron gates at the entry to the property.[76]

[75] Emails from James Whitfield on 26th January and 22nd November 2022.
[76] Email from James Whitfield on 26th January 2022.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Today, Picton is the only surviving station building of the Georgian style on the Main South railway line that is largely in an as-built form. While it is historically significant, no one in the town of Picton has described the structure as attractive. Even the Picton and District Historical and Family History Society says that "the railway station cannot said to be ornate".[77]

It is that very lack of ornamentation that contributes to the building's cultural significance. John Whitton's selection of Georgian architecture for his larger stations could withstand any political criticism that he was spending excessive amounts of money on decorative buildings. From his first day in office, Whitton received on-going criticism for the large amount of money he was spending on railway construction. It is well-known that he responded to those assertions by lowering track construction costs but it is not widely appreciated that he was almost continually looking at ways of reducing the expenditure on buildings and structures. He implemented such action at Picton by reducing the size of the building by one third, compared to those structures erected previously at Parramatta, Penrith and Singleton. Next, he further eased his budget by purposefully failing to complete construction of the building at the time of line opening, thus passing the unfinished work to the budget of the Railway Commissioner.

The history of the station from 1863 to the present is very much consistent with what was happening elsewhere on the New South Wales railway system. When someone with political clout had a financial interest in the area, as was the case with Henry Antill, the Railway Department acceded to the directions of the government of the day. After Antill, there was no one person or interest group who possessed any significant political power and, therefore, the subsequent history of Picton station is void of interference from political partisan sources. When money was tight, which was the state of affairs in the 1860s, the Picton platform building reflected the need to minimise expenditure. The fact that the 1863 building was never replaced is a testimony to the absence of sufficient funds made available by governments to modernise station buildings. Again, the experience at Picton reflected the situation systemwide. The building's survival is not attributed to its historical significance but to the near-total absence of money to replace it.

In the 20th century, especially from the 1930s to the 1970s, little money was spent by various governments on stations but Picton's treatment was consistent with the history of virtually every other station in New South Wales. The situation improved a little for Picton in the 1980s under David Hill but it was the period from 1990 to the present when Picton station has been upgraded substantially in the first ever attempt to make the Picton station

[77] J. Ross, "Railway Precinct Ramble", *Coach House Chronicles No. 1,* Picton and District Historical and Family History Society, 1991, p. 4.

area attractive to customers. That task has previously been entrusted to shrubs and pot plants and willing staff to tender them. What happened to Picton station in the period between 1990 and the present has been very much the same as occurred at every other operating station on the State rail system. Thus, a visit to Picton station is an accurate journey into the history of the New South Wales railways generally. The physical and built environment at Picton mirrors the story.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The assistance of Ann Cahill-Newell, Graham Harper, Kate Homes, Craig Mackey, Bill Phippen, OAM, BSc, B.E., F. Inst. Eng., Laurel Quarmby-Simmons and Shirley Quarmby-Syphers, David Sheedy, Dr Bob Taaffe and James Whitfeld is greatly acknowledged. James wrote the section on Vaby's restaurant and also very kindly and promptly replied to numerous questions. Bill provided the extensive text on the Prince Street bridge. Graham and Bob contributed their vast knowledge in relation to signalling, safeworking, track alterations and signal box designs.

PICTURES

Photographs and images were taken by the author unless otherwise stated. James Whitfield has been extremely generous with his time providing many photographs and images. Gary Hughes made a great contribution. The ARHS Railway Archives assisted greatly and the Archives Supervisor, Craig Mackey, is thanked for his support.

Stuart Sharp

10th April 2013. Revised and expanded 18th May 2023.

APPENDIX 1

THE FAMILY OF BUILDINGS TO WHICH THE 1863 BUILDING BELONGS

The platform structure was classy in appearance materials and services when built. The evidence relating to Picton station supports the hypothesis that the NSW Railways largely provided platform buildings commensurate with the size and/or nature of towns they served.

Most of the 24 locations where the Georgian design has been used developed into suburbs and towns of some size. On that record alone, it seems that Whitton was an excellent student of local demography and politics. Each of these 24 places could be proud of its local station between 1858 and 1874 as a means of reflecting town pride.

Of the approximately 2,000 platform buildings erected since 1855 at 800 or so stations, only a relative handful have ever been extended or replaced with larger buildings. The total is well below 5% of all structures built. Picton station is like the vast majority of other platform buildings. It has never been enlarged or never been replaced. Why? The shortage of money.

John Whitton had implemented the prototype of his First Class, Georgian-influenced design at Campbelltown in 1858 and the second at Parramatta in 1859. The mass production variation appeared in 1862 with Penrith and Singleton. The majority of the examples were 15 feet wide internal with a few being slightly narrower at 13 feet 6 inches. The length of the family members was the dominant area of change and, as a consequence of those changes, floor plans changed.

Whitton continued using the same design as at Picton up to 1874 for new lines. Scone was 74 by 17 feet built in 1870 and Murrurundi on the Main North line was the same measurements erected in 1871. Both were very much copies of the Picton building but without the telegraph office. On the Main West, Mount Victoria in 1867 and Bowenfels were about the same measurements but were the only examples not built in face brickwork. Both were built from local sandstone blocks.

A SUMMARY OF SIMILAR, GEORGIAN DESIGNED STRUCTURES AT THE TIME OF LINE OPENING

The building at Picton was not only approved by John Whitton as Engineer but, from comments made by him at the opening of Singleton station the previous year, the design

was one that pleased him. It can be assumed that Whitton himself directed and supervised the design process.

Thus, by the end of the first period of main line railway construction to Goulburn, Bathurst and Murrurundi, Whitton had used the design family of which Picton was an example at the following locations upon the opening of the three trunk lines:

LINE	YEAR	LENGTH
SOUTH		
• Newtown	1876	91 (on existing line)
• Campbelltown	1858	70
• Picton	1863	85
• Mittagong	1866	85
• Moss Vale	1867	85
WEST		
• Parramatta	1859	125
• Penrith	1862	125
• Mount Victoria	1867	85
• Bowenfels	1869	85
• Kelso	1874	75
NORTH		
• Singleton	1862	125
• Morpeth Junction	1863	70 (on an existing line)
• Muswellbrook	1868	70
• Scone	1870	75
• Murrurundi	1871	75

THE REBIRTH OF THE GEORGIAN DESIGN

Whitton had Government approval and funding to take the three main trunk lines to Goulburn, Bathurst and Murrurundi and these lines represented the first period of trunk line development. When the lines reached their destinations, there was a lively debate in government and elsewhere about the best way, meaning cheaper, of extending the trunk lines further. What emerged as Government policy was the need for Whitton to build

even cheaper platform buildings in the 1870s. Throughout the 1870s, Whitton moved away from his beloved Georgian influenced design and used temporary structures and combination offices and residences. He also commenced trials with a new design in 1869 using for the first time a gabled roof as the dominant form of roofscape.

From the mid to late 1870s, there emerged a new design for more structures with much higher levels of ornamentation and much larger size. Buildings at Newcastle, Sydney (the second station), Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Albury and other locations became Whitton's new first class design. He used his gabled roof design as a third class of platform structure. How did he plug the status gap between first and third class? He re-introduced the design he had applied at Picton. The work of replacing buildings was taken from Whitton in 1876 but there was no change in the design for the second class of platform building.

A total of 26 examples were also approved by William Mason and George Cowdery as the Engineers for Existing Lines and built as the second class of platform structures between 1871 and 1889.

PICTON COMPARED WITH EARLIER STRUCTURES

The Table below demonstrates the differences between the structure at Campbelltown and the earlier examples of Georgian architecture at Parramatta, Penrith and Singleton.

TABLE: COMPARISON OF BUILDINGS AT PARRAMATTA, PICTON, PENRITH AND SINGLETON APPROVED 1859-1863

BUILDING ELEMENT	**PARRAMATTA ESTIMATED APPROVAL March 1859**	**PENRITH APPROVED April 1862**	**SINGLETON ESTIMATED APPROVAL October 1862**	**PICTON APPROVED February 1863**
Dimensions (feet)	123 by 18	123 by 18	125 by 20	82 x 16
Wall material	Brick covered with render & marked to appear like stone blocks	Unpainted brick with stone lintels, window sills, plinth & cornice, but painted within	Unpainted brick with stone lintels, window sills, plinth & cornice	Face brick but subsequently painted - stone lintels, window sills and cornice

BUILDING ELEMENT	PARRAMATTA ESTIMATED APPROVAL March 1859	PENRITH APPROVED April 1862	SINGLETON ESTIMATED APPROVAL October 1862	PICTON APPROVED February 1863
		the first decade of opening.[78]		
Expression of width	Variable with the portico entrance and the end pavilions, which were narrower by two courses of brickwork (one course each side)	Constant except the end pavilions, which were narrower by two courses of brickwork (one course each side)	Constant	Constant except the end pavilions, which were narrower by two courses of brickwork (one course each side)
Total no. of rooms	7 plus 2 under pavilions	7 plus 2 under pavilions	7 plus 2 under pavilions	4 plus 2 under the pavilions
No of windows facing the street	7 large (square heads) & 4 small (semi-circular heads in pavilions	7 large (square heads) & 4 small (semi-circular heads in pavilions	7 large (square heads) & 4 small (semi-circular heads in pavilions	6 large and 4 small (all with horizontal heads)
No. of windows facing the platform	1	1	1	1
No. of doors facing the platform	8	8	8	6
Material for awning posts	Timber	Timber	Timber on road elevation; circular cast iron with square bases and ornate brackets on platform elevation	Timber
No. of posts supporting the platform awning	10	10	10	9

[78] D. Ellsmore, *Report on Conservation Finishes and Painting – Penrith Railway Station*, unpublished report, 1999, p. 2.

BUILDING ELEMENT	PARRAMATTA ESTIMATED APPROVAL March 1859	PENRITH APPROVED April 1862	SINGLETON ESTIMATED APPROVAL October 1862	PICTON APPROVED February 1863
Extent of platform awning	Does not extend to pavilions	Does not extend to pavilions	Does not extend to pavilions	Extends to cover pavilions
Method of pedestrian access	Through portico	Through centre of building	Through centre of building	Through centre of building
No. of chimneys	4	4	4	2
Roof material	Duchess slate	Duchess slate	Duchess slate	Duchess slate
awning material	Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles	Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles	Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles	Morewood and Rogers patented iron roof tiles
No. of closets	1 for each sex	1 for each sex	1 for each sex	1 for each sex
Type of closets & entry	Water – separate entry to male closet & urinal	Water – separate entry to male closet & urinal	Water – separate entry to male closet & urinal	Water – same – entry to male closet & urinal
No. of platform seats	4 attached to external wall	4 attached to external wall	4 attached to external wall	3 attached to external wall
Type of platform	Vertical brick wall with timber deck	Timber frame with timber deck	Timber frame with timber deck	Usual timber piles replaced by brick piers on top of which was a timber deck – possible masonry platform wall, sloping to the toe
Type of fencing	Box with diagonal bracing & possibly pickets	Box with diagonal bracing	Box with diagonal bracing	Box with diagonal bracing

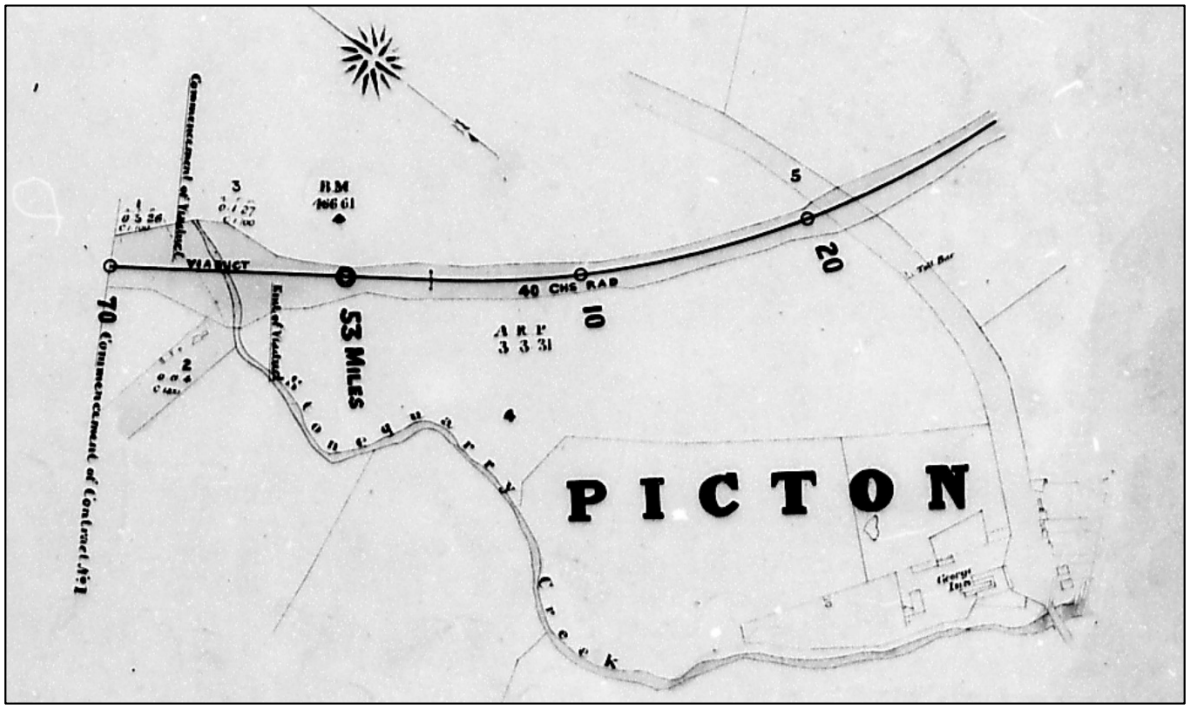
The above Table shows the smaller size of the Picton structure compared to the previous examples.

APPENDIX 2

THE PRINCE STREET ROAD OVERBRIDGE 1897-1899

Picton has always been a staging place in transport routes south from Sydney. It marks the beginning of the ascent of the 'Bargo Ramp' from the relatively low elevation of the Cumberland Plain to the Southern Highlands at the Gibraltar Gap. All transport modes, colonial and modern, use the Bargo Ramp and the Gibraltar Gap.

To the north of Picton, the approach has either followed the Nepean River or crossed the high Razorback Range. The river between Menangle and Picton traverses an ever deepening and rugged gorge and the road and railway route beside it crosses a succession of ridges extending from the main range. The route over the range is steep, but it is direct. Numerous deviations of the Razorback Road have been made over time. The 'highway' route from Campbelltown through (or past) Picton has fluctuated between the river route and the Razorback Range route.



The above plan identifies the original alignment through Picton with the dark, horizontal line. The main road is shown towards the right side of the plan as a curve. It goes through the town and crosses the railway at a point 20 chain marker. The NSW Government built a combined road toll house/railway Gatekeeper's cottage at the level crossing. The

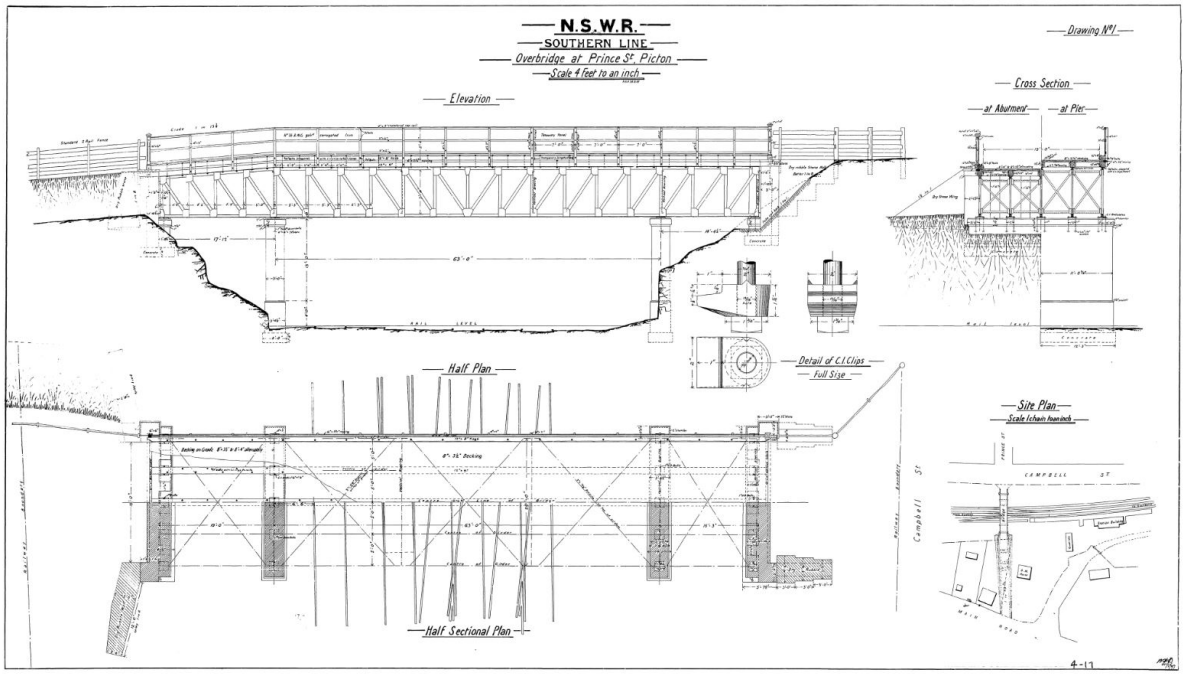
sandstone house survives in 2022. Picton station is off the plan to the left as this plan is the first part page of the plans for the extension to Mittagong.

At the time of the opening of the railway the road route through Picton was within the town, corresponding to the present Old Hume Highway. The crossing of Stonequarry Creek was a low level one, then as now subject to occasional floods. The road intersected the 1867 railway at a level crossing just south of the present 'hole-in-the-wall' brick arch underbridge on the 1919 railway deviation.

This level crossing was controlled by a Gatekeeper and the house provided for that officer still survives adjacent to the road. The old railway route can still be traced from the station, past the house and into the Picton Tunnel.

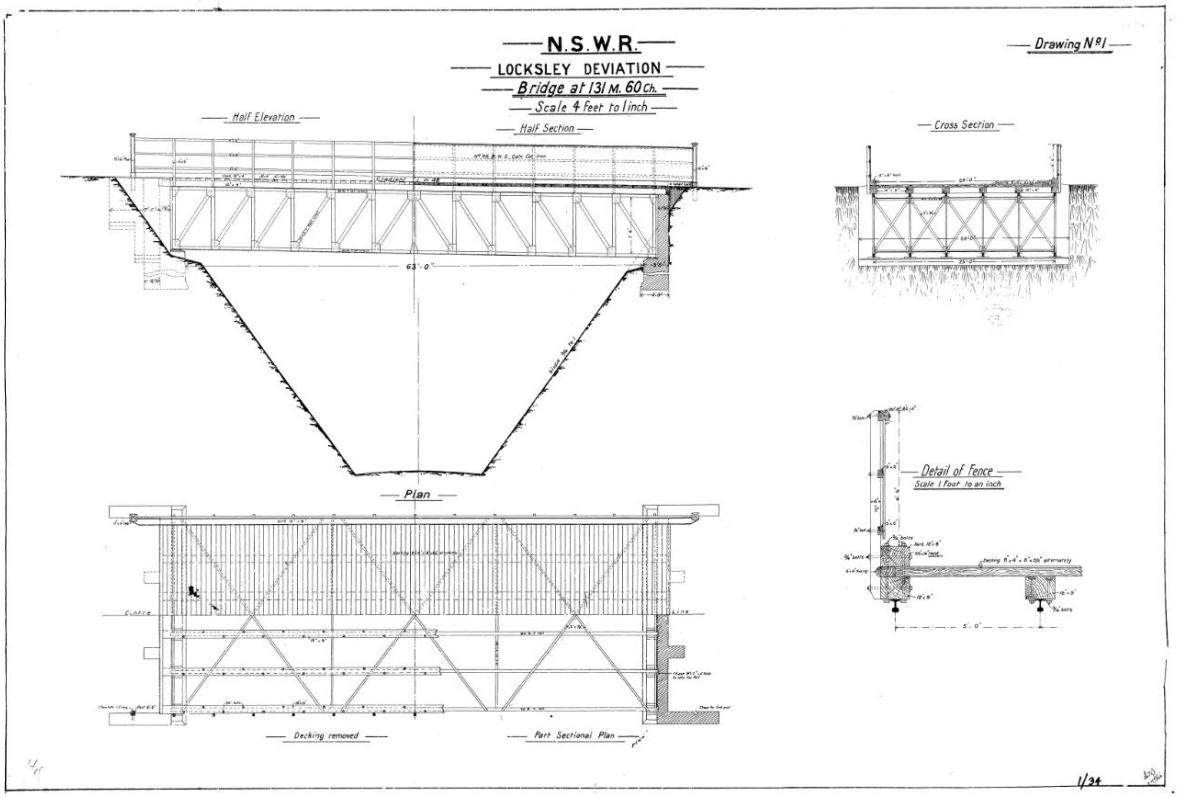
In the late 1890s the decision was made to re-route the main road, perhaps entering Picton along the valley of Stonequarry Creek. To avoid the wasted distance travelling upstream along the creek to the existing crossing and then downstream to a place on the opposite bank only a short distance from the initial entry point into the town a shortcut past the railway station was devised. This shortcut required a high bridge across Stonequarry Creek as the stream had entered something of a gorge by this stage and a crossing of the railway which was positioned well above the level of the creek.

The 1897 Stonequarry Creek road bridge, known as the Victoria Bridge, survives in service as one of a very select group of timber truss road bridges which will be maintained indefinitely as a heritage item. The route remains a useful shortcut to light traffic, though it is weight and height restricted and of single lane. There has long been a proposal to build a new local route, bypassing Picton town centre a little further downstream via a much larger bridge between sites south of Maldon and north of Tahmoor. The modern Hume Highway route bypasses Picton completely on a direct line following the Nepean River using a succession of absolutely enormous bridges over the deep gorge.



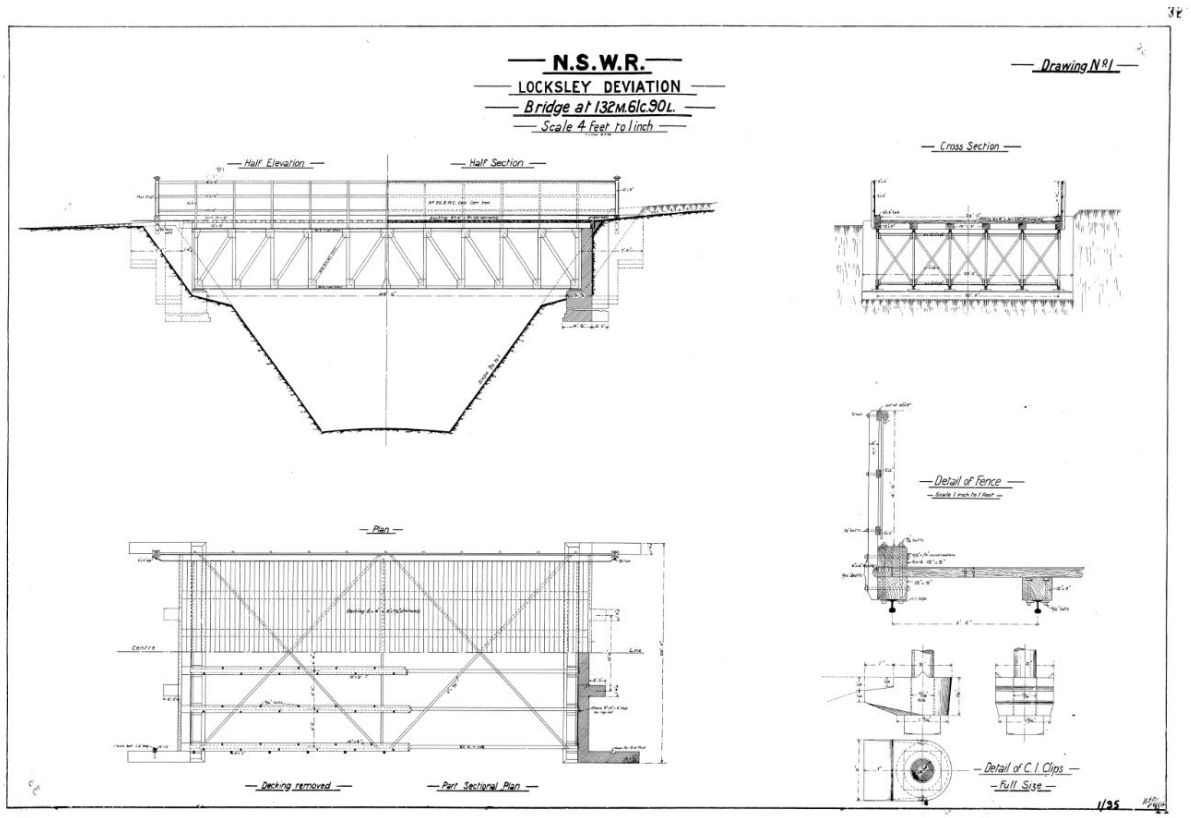
The above plan is of the Prince Street road overbridge at Picton station. The plan is dated 28th August 1897. Note the ramped end span on the left side of the plan.

The bridge over the railway was apparently built by the Railways, though the need for it was only created by a road construction project which opened as the Victoria Bridge. It was a Pratt Truss design fabricated from old double-head and T-section wrought iron rail.



The above plan shows the bridge at 131m 60ch west at Locksley. The resemblance to Picton is striking though the one at Locksley is a Howe truss. The bridge is built with a gradient in its length. Although drawn as single line when duplication came 20 years later this was achieved on the same alignment by widening the track bed with low retaining walls. The bridge was easily long enough to accommodate two tracks. The plan has no date in the title block but the signature at lower right would seem to be dated 1896.

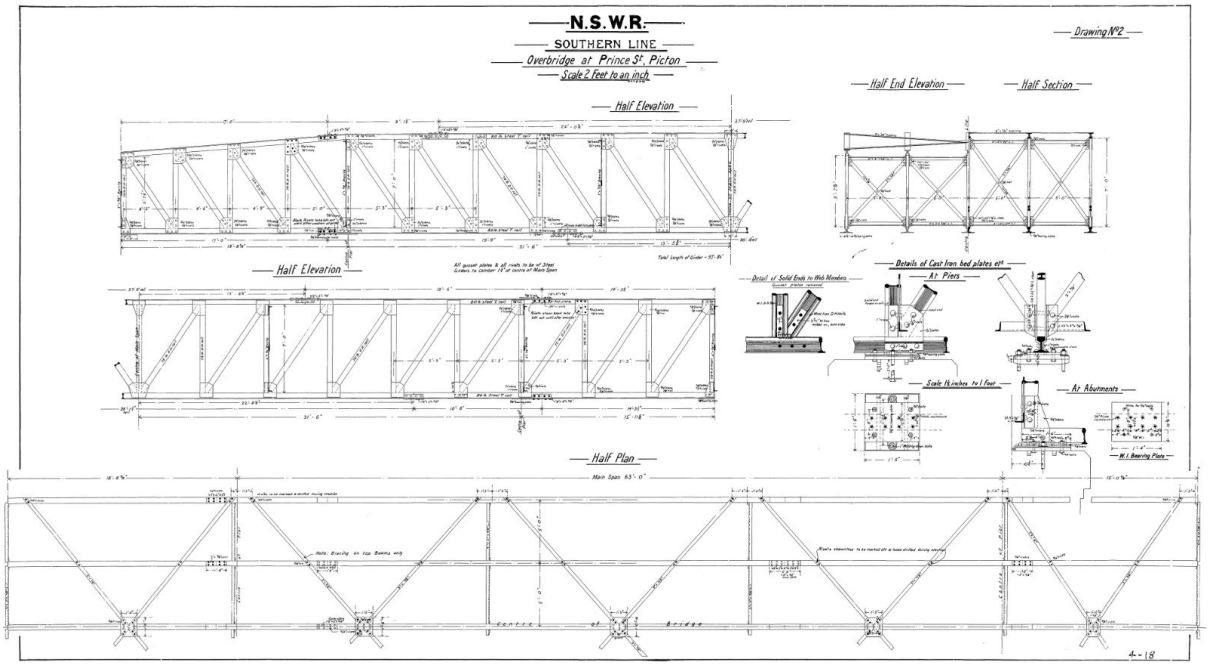
Two very similar, but not identical, overbridges were built at almost exactly the same time at Locksley on the Main West. The Picton bridge was a Pratt truss, (the diagonal members were in tension) while the Locksley bridges while otherwise nearly identical in detail were Howe trusses, (the diagonals are in compression). Both western bridges survive in service. Careful perusal of the plans would suggest that that Locksley bridges were a year earlier in their design. Certainly, the joint details at Picton are more considered in their design and perhaps the switch from Howe to Pratt was also an ‘improvement’ in the design.



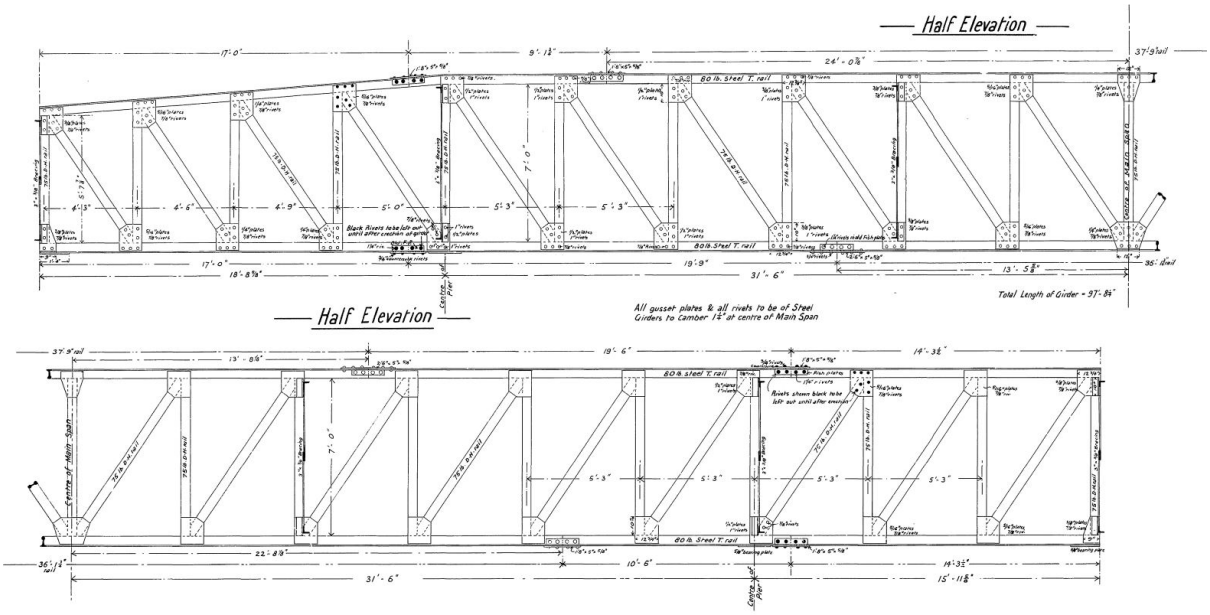
The above plan of the bridge at 132m 61ch 90L west at Locksley. This bridge is shorter and lower than its neighbour. The signature is dated 1896.

The Locksley bridges are of single span, but the Picton Bridge was more sophisticated in that it was of three continuous spans, supported on the abutments and two brick piers. Although the truss spans have been replaced relatively recently with shallower steel 'I' beams, the abutments and piers of the older bridge remain in use.

The Picton bridge consisted of five parallel trusses with a timber deck. Each truss seems to have been lifted into place in three sections – the main span and the two side spans. The plan includes the note 'Black Rivets to be left out until after erection of girder.' That information contrasts with the Locksley trusses which were lifted into place whole.



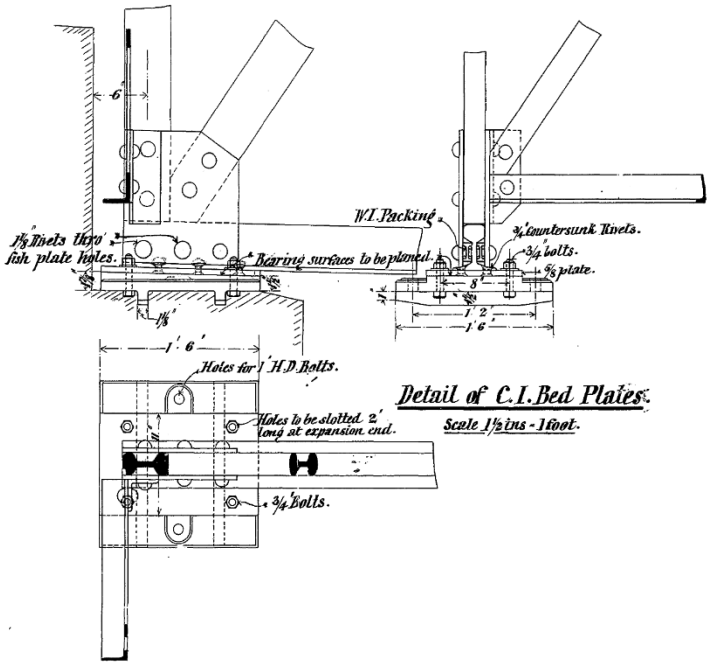
The complete plan of the Picton bridge, from which details have been extracted in adjacent illustrations.



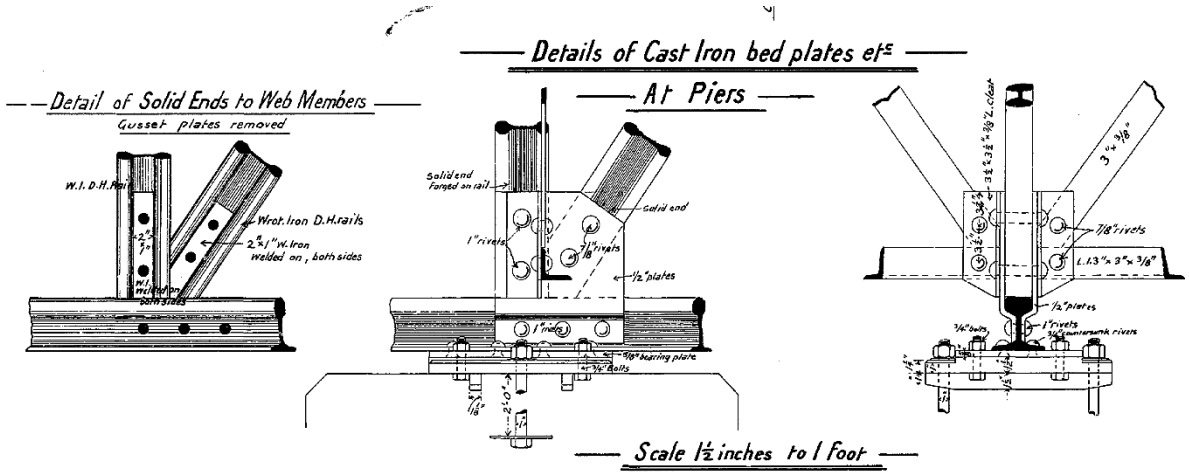
The above plan is the truss elevation enlarged. Note the rivets shaded in black as to be fitted in the field. This gives a clue as to the erection procedure.

The Picton bridge was tailored to its site, with an embankment as the northern approach, by having a sloped top chord to the ‘UP’ end span, thus reducing the height of the embankment.

At about the time of its construction, the stepway was built off the Prince Street road bridge to serve the new Down Main platform, which was under construction in 1898.



The above plan is of the joint detail at Locksley. No detail is given for the double-headed members and the T section rail is shown to have nothing more specific than 'W.I. Packing'.



The above plan shows the joint detail at Picton. Specifically sized wrought iron blocks are shown welded to the webs of the double-headed rails and the gusset plate is formed around the head of the T rail to form a snug joint

A limitation of fabricating a truss from old rail is that the shape of the rail, either double-headed or T-section does not lend itself to making strong joints. The Locksley plans show

fishplates inserted into the hollow between the heads to avoid the rivet being left to bend in the open space, but at Picton an insert is shown as being welded, (by a blacksmith, not an electric arc), between the heads to form a solid section. The gusset plates are shown as being formed by bending into the web of the T-section rails which formed the upper and lower ‘booms’ as was the term used in 1897 for the horizontal members.

The bridge was provided with sway bracing between the several trusses at the abutments, over the piers and at the one third points of the main span. Wind bracing was provided to the top booms only.

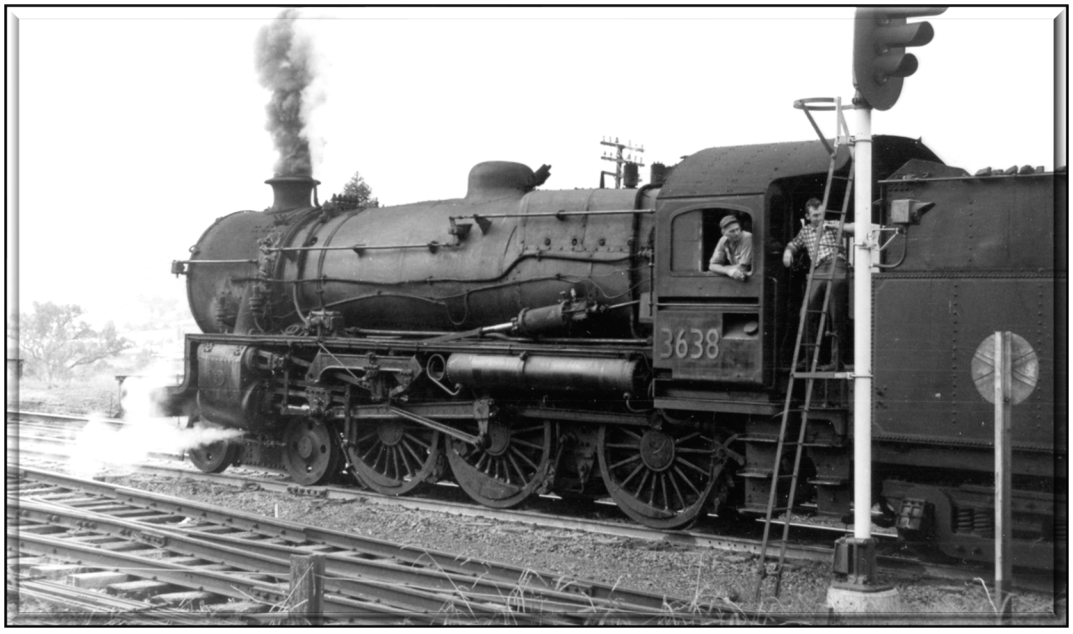
Although the old rails used in the bridge are specified as wrought iron, as they necessarily would have been to be condemned in 1897, and rivets and gusset plates are specified as steel, no note can be found on the plans for the material to be used for the bracings. Presumably by 1897 steel was normal.

Strong timber baulks to carry the wooden deck were clipped to the upward-facing flat flange of the rail forming the top ‘boom’ of the trusses. This would seem to be the reason for the mix of double-headed and T-section rail in the design.

Bill Phippen, OAM, B.E., F. Inst. Eng.,

Deputy Chairman, Engineering Heritage Committee, Sydney Division, Engineers Australia

25th November 2022



On 12th March 1969 locomotives 3638 and 3652 on a goods train had stopped to take water at the water column located at the extreme end of the platform serving the Down Main line. The train is once again under way. As we bid them farewell on their continued journey to Goulburn, our time at Picton is also over.
