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GRG 42/7/17/23

GRG 42/98 SAR Circulars from the General Traffic Manager's Office 1879-1909

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is not an in depth study. The aim is to create an impression of the Hills Line in the days of steam. In this account two travellers are followed on their journey from Adelaide to Belair National Park. The first passenger is travelling in 1912. The second traveller, in 1929, is faced with different circumstances as he makes his journey.

There is a small section on the main types of steam locomotives used on the line. Memories of some people and snippets of interest are included.

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END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> SAPP No 181 1878

<sup>2</sup> GRG42/98 6October 1899

<sup>3</sup> SAR Weekly Notices 5 May 1913

<sup>4</sup> GRG 42/98/4 Railway Circulars  
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<sup>5</sup> GRG 42/98 1879-1909

<sup>6</sup> Auckens ,A. p.42

<sup>7</sup> Service p.19

<sup>8</sup> Service p.70

<sup>9</sup> SAPP 1929 Vol.2 p.16

<sup>10</sup> GRG 42/79/215/26

<sup>11</sup> GRG 42/79/215/27

<sup>12</sup> GRG 42/7/129/27

<sup>13</sup> GRG 42/7/17/23

<sup>14</sup> Australian Railway Disasters K  
Pearce p.95( Mitcham Local  
History Collection)

<sup>15</sup> GRG 42/98/4/93

<sup>16</sup> GRG 42/98/4/02

## Station Masters on the Hills Line

### Station Masters Mitcham

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr W Glenn 1883-1889       | Mr J T Walker 1927-1933   |
| Mr A Alsworth 1889-1910    | Mr F G Pike 1933-1938     |
| Mr Walters 1911-1912       | Mr A B Williams 1948-1946 |
| Mr Gibson 1913             | Mr L R Davis 1946-1956    |
| Mr S H Williams 1913-1920  | Mr R E Ellis 1956-1977    |
| Mr F Gillibrand 1920       | Mr A C Brown 1977-1978    |
| Mr H J Humphries 1920-1927 | Mr B R Jaensch 1978-1989  |

### Station Masters Blackwood

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mr R M McLeish 1883-1909 | Mr L Peake 1943-1951     |
| Mr A Alsworth 1910-1925  | Mr V B Sampson 1951-1980 |
| Mr W Killmier 1926-1927  | Mr R Fleming 1980-1989   |
| Mr H H Cullen 1928-1943  |                          |

### Station Masters Belair

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Mr W Killmier 1908        | Mr M Harnett 1949-1982 |
| Mr C Harding 1908-1927    | Mr H Sieburn 1982-1984 |
| Mr R Dalgleish 1927-1934  | Mr F Tobias 1984-1987  |
| Mr C R Thompson 1934-1944 | Mr J Radzevicius 1987  |
| Mr E Walsh 1944-1949      | Mr B Temme 1988-1989   |

## Early Days

Adelaide was to be linked to Melbourne by rail. After years of discussion and ten different surveys the Honorable J G Ramsay, Commissioner of Public Works, had finally introduced a bill into Parliament. It was 1878. The proposed route would:

"leave Adelaide by the West Park lands, Goodwood, Goodwood Park, Unley Park, Old Mitcham, Clapham, Mitcham Lawn near Springbank, to the hills---thence by Belair and along the north side of Government Farm---as far as Nairne via Crafers, Aldgate Pump, Bridgewater, and Balhannah."

The Commissioner was convinced that this, the greatest engineering feat yet attempted in the colony, could be achieved. In time Adelaide could even be linked to Sydney!

The first stage would be from Adelaide to Nairne. There would be eight tunnels, numerous cuttings, and two viaducts crossing gullies at Eden Hills. The cost of the line was estimated at £20,000 a mile. The viaducts, costing £13,340, were imported from America. The first one was 360 feet long and 100 feet high, the second one 260 feet long and 278 feet high. Stone for ballast was to be taken from the Sleeps Hill Quarries. Bricks to line the tunnels would be produced at brickworks established along the line. Cuttings and tunnels would be blasted by dynamite and picked out manually, the rubble being cleared by spade, barrow, and horse and cart. Railway camps were established along the route, and work began in May 1879.

The third tunnel, near Eden Hills, was the first to be completed. To celebrate the achievement a banquet attended by the Governor, Sir William Jervois and some Members of Parliament, was held inside the tunnel.

By 1883 the line was completed as far as Nairne with four identical Class One stone stations at Mitcham, Blackwood, Mt Lofty, and Aldgate. The line to Bordertown opened in 1886 and from January 1887 it was possible to go by inter-colonial train from Adelaide to Melbourne.

Adelaide's first railway station was built in 1856 when the line to Port Adelaide was opened. As railway lines proliferated railway offices were spread to other buildings in the city and before the turn of the century new station premises were urgently needed. Alternative sites were considered but eventually a new station, completed in 1903, was constructed in the same position as the old one.



(1. Adelaide Station completed in 1903 and as existing in 1925, showing North Eastern Entrance and North Terrace Frontage. *Adelaide Railway Station SAR publication 1928 p.14*)

At this time passenger and goods trains shunted, steamed and clattered through the Adelaide Station yard.

By 1908 the Premier, Thomas Price, foresaw a need to remove the goods trains, the locomotives, the stock yards, and the sheds for the storage and maintenance of rolling stock, from the Adelaide station yard. One hundred and eighty acres of land were acquired for a goods yard to be established at Mile End. These yards became available in 1910.



Locomotive Class 500B No.506 Short freight train passing through Eden Hills bound for Tailm Bend 1953. *Photo Douglas Colquhoun. Kindly supplied by the National Railway Museum.*



Locomotive 520 Class No. 524 named "Sir Mellis Napier"s. Victor Harbor train passing through Eden Hills bound for Adelaide 1953. *Photo Lionel Bates. Kindly supplied by the National Railway Museum.*



Locomotive RX Class No.218 climbing Sleeps Hill, Bridgewater train 1955. *Photo Lionel Bates. Kindly supplied by the National Railway Museum.*



Locomotive 720B Class No.733 leaving Glenalta Easter 1953, Oakbank Special. *Photo Lionel Bates. Kindly supplied by the National Railway Museum.*



(2. Adelaide Station Yard circa 1888 *photo courtesy State Library of South Australia*)

## Our Traveller, 1912

Our traveller of 1912 has just boarded the train leaving the Adelaide Station, bound for Belair.

She may be travelling on the Picnic Excursion train or on the Suburban District Day Trip as advertised in the SAR Time and Fare Time Tables commencing December 1911. She would pay one shilling and sixpence to sit in a first class compartment, or one shilling for a second class seat.

She is drawn under Morphet St Bridge, an iron structure with wrought iron sides, and past the nearby signal cabin. She passes under the overway and through the new goods yard at Mile End one and a half miles from the Adelaide Station, and on to Keswick. Keswick Station, two and a half miles down the line, takes its name from the English town of Keswick. Here a small goods yard "for inwards and outwards traffic of Firewood, Manure, Miscellaneous and Grain A, B, C " would soon be opened, to replace the one at Goodwood.

# Places Worth Visiting.

## SUBURBAN DISTRICT DAY TRIPS.

### 1. SEASIDE RESORTS.

Residents of the Metropolis desiring a pleasant daily excursion have a fine sea-coast, stretching from Noarlunga to St. Kilda Beach, dotted with interesting spots where a good outing may be enjoyed at little cost. Hallett's Cove, Brighton and the Rocks, Glenelg, the fashionable watering place; Henley and Grange, with their fine slopes of beach and multitude of shells; Semaphore, most popular with children; Largs, with its fine jetty; Outer Harbour, the port for ocean steamers; and St. Kilda, noted for crabs, cockles, &c., are all worth visiting.

### 2. NATIONAL PARK, BELAIR.

Within forty minutes' journey of Adelaide, and passing through hill scenery of uncommon beauty, the National Park, Belair, is an excellent resort for picnic parties. Its natural advantages have been added to by judicious improvements under the direction of a board of management, and picnickers have everything at hand for their enjoyment and comfort.

The park is extensive, covering an area of 2,000 acres. Refreshment-rooms, cricket grounds, tennis courts, &c., have been provided, and all the necessary equipment may be hired from the curator at reasonable rates.

### 3. MOUNT LOFTY RANGES.

All along the Hills line such places as Mount Lofty, Aldgate, Bridgewater, Ambleside, Balhannah, Nairne, and Mount Barker are extremely beautiful, and suitable for a day's outing.

Charming coach drives may be undertaken from Blackwood to Cherry Gardens, Coromandel Valley, Clarendon, Dashwood's Gully, Bull's Creek, and Ashbourne; from Mount Lofty to Piccadilly, Summertown, Uraidla, Carey's Gully, and in another direction to Longwood and Scott's Creek; from Aldgate to Mylor, Biggs Flat, and Echunga; from Ambleside to Grunthal and Hahndorf; from Balhannah to Oakbank, Woodside, Charleston, Lobethal, Mount Torrens, and Blumberg—most of the journeys occupying a day only.

## PICNIC EXCURSIONS, NATIONAL PARK, BELAIR.

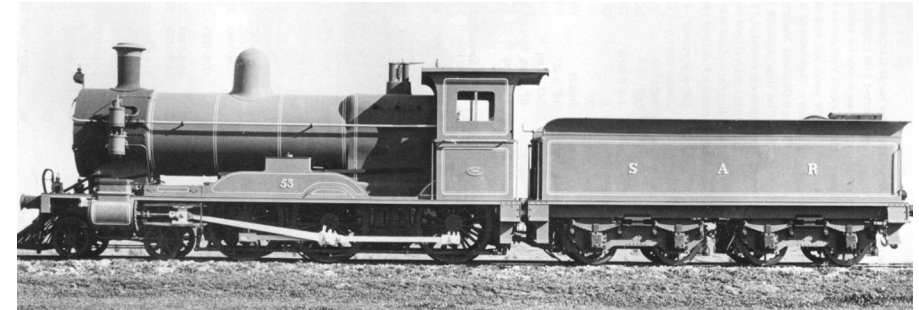
VII. A SPECIAL PICNIC TRAIN for SCHOOLS and LARGE PARTIES LEAVES ADELAIDE for BELAIR at 10-0 a.m. on EACH SATURDAY from first Saturday in OCTOBER until second Saturday in DECEMBER at the following specially LOW RETURN FARES:—

(a) FROM ADELAIDE, GOODWOOD, MITCHAM—First class, 1s.; second class, 8d.; Children under 14 years of age, half rates.

These cheap Picnic Fares to Belair also apply from the same stations by train leaving Adelaide as under:—10-30 a.m. each week day, and Saturday from October 1st until April 30th (Public Holidays excepted).

(3. Suburban District Day Trips *South Australian Time and Fare Tables 1911 p.13*)

# Steam Locomotives on the Hills Line



Locomotive N Class No.53. Rebuilt 1904 at the Islington Workshops. The rebuilt N Class locomotives were used on broad gauge lines throughout S A until withdrawn from service in the mid 1920s. *Photo courtesy National Railway Museum Port Adelaide.*



Locomotive F Class No.183 leaving Blackwood 1952, suburban train to Belair. *Photo Lionel Bates. Kindly supplied by the National Railway Museum.*

This conductor, on her retirement, was farewelled with a party in the last carriage of the train.

The travelling community segregated itself into different carriages. Woe betide the Eden Hills traveller who inadvertently entered the "Blackwood" carriage on the morning train, or the hapless passenger from Belair who entered the "Eden Hills" carriage with his pack of cards on the evening train home from work. (memories of Cynthia Rutchjen nee Gribble)

### Blackwood Crossing 1919-1920

"My grandfather, Tom Kavanagh, spent the last years of his working life with the railways, opening and closing the Blackwood Crossing gates. This was about 1919-1920. He lived in the cottage at the crossing. There was fruit tree and a climbing rose in the garden. The cottage was demolished about the end of 1966, I believe this was helped by a tractor jolting off the truck of a freight train and knocking into it." (account of Brian Hegarty)



As she steams for two minutes over the half mile between Keswick and Goodwood the Crossing Keeper at Leader St signs to stop the traffic, manually closing the crossing gates. Our traveller passes the signal box, which has been standing at Goodwood since 1888. Alfred Day, Railway Commissioner in 1915, records that Goodwood was named after the seat of the Duke of Richmond, in Chichester, England.

Our passenger would progress half a mile to Millswood, named after George Mills, one time owner of the section, and a further half mile over the road crossing to Unley Park. Unley had been laid out by Thomas Whistler in the 1850's, and named in honour of his wife's family.

It is to be hoped that our traveller is in a Non Smoking carriage with other female passengers, and young lads. A circular issued from the General Traffic Manager's Office stated:

"Boys in Smoking Carriages"

"I have received frequent complaints of boys travelling in smoking carriages to the annoyance of adult passengers. This must be stopped and all concerned must note that boys under sixteen years of age must not be allowed to travel in compartments set aside for smoking."<sup>2</sup>

Our traveller's ticket may by now have been "nipped." Railway policy was that "nipping" had to occur between Keswick and Hawthorn stations. The carriages were the so called "dog box" variety without a corridor so the conductor moved along the outside of the train, on a ledge attached to the carriage to collect tickets. This was through the windows and could be while the train moved along.

Hawthorn was the next station, and, if it was spring time, the cream and pink blossom may have been a sight to behold. There was a Crossing Keeper here too, signing to stop the horse drawn traffic. Crossing Keepers were often women, whose husbands also worked on the line. The position at Hawthorn was soon to become vacant, and was advertised at six shillings and four pence a day.<sup>3</sup> A warning bell had been fixed on Hawthorn Crossing (1910) and was activated by the porter at Unley Park.

Mitcham, named after a town in Surrey, was the first Class One stone station on the line, and was complete with a station master's residence and signal cabin on the Adelaide end of the building. The Mitcham Station housed the first Mitcham telegraph office. The wooden platform would have been well trodden by school children attending Mitcham Public School, which opened in 1880. Free train passes had been issued for children living outside "the school radius." This was "for children not exceeding nine years of age two miles, for those exceeding nine and not exceeding thirteen, three miles."<sup>4</sup>

There were strict instructions concerning teams of horses standing in station yards. They needed to be well secured lest a nervous horse, alarmed at the clanking and hissing of the locomotive, lurched, causing havoc. The General Traffic Manager's Circular of 18 May 1897 stated that;

"When vehicles drawn by horses are standing in Station Yards the Station Master must see that they are not left unattended by the driver, or if they are so left that the wheels are invariably chained, spragged, or otherwise fastened."

This station yard was a busy one with a spur line linking Mitcham to Clapham, to separate traffic from the hills and the plains. There was a spur line to Sleeps Hill Quarry from 1909 and loaded quarry trucks rattled through Mitcham on the way to Mile End. There were two road crossings at Mitcham until the Belair Road was rerouted to the east of the line in 1921.

The Station Master as our traveller passes through Mitcham was Mr Walters, to be succeeded by Mr Gibson.



(4. Mitcham Railway Station c.1910 photographer C A Petts, Courtesy Mitcham Local History Collection )

### Limestone Block Works

A resident who grew up in Torrens Park recalls walking daily to the Mitcham Infant School in the 1950s. Just over the school fence, in the exciting world of the railway yard, was the noisy sawing of huge blocks of limestone into building blocks. He relates that "the huge blocks of stone arrived regularly from the South East in open railway trucks, enormous white gleaming cubic blocks. A saw table was adjacent to the shed of the stone supplier, where the blocks were progressively sliced into 'ashlars' used for building. All round the ground was white from the drifting powder." He recalls too the familiar daily whine of the saw, carried in the wind as far as his house at Torrens Park.

This resident remembers that the Mitcham and Goodwood Railway Stations as well as other stations provided facilities for homing pigeons. (Memories of a Blackwood resident)

### Washing Day and Mallee Roots

David Mack recalls his life as a boy living opposite Mitcham Station. The entrance was carefully designed for easy access for horsedrawn vehicles, with a curved roadway so they did not need to turn to exit. He recalls watching the RX engines struggling up the incline out of Mitcham, pulling the Melbourne Express. The fire would be stoked, sparks flying. Smoke and steam billowed into the air. The noise was huge, and, if the two front engines slipped in winter another would arrive to push from behind. This engine too would stoke up, with more sparks, noise, steam, and smoke.

During the Depression he gathered the small lumps left when the railway trucks were emptied of mallee roots in Mr Hollard's wood yard. These he took home in a home made cart, lumping it over three sets of tracks. For sweeping the trucks clear of the sand and dirt which dropped off the wood, he was rewarded with a few bigger bits.

Monday was washing day. The copper was fired up, the troughs filled, and the clothes gathered up in the outside laundry. Train timetables were consulted, in an endeavour to avoid calamity. However, goods trains were not so predictable and on many occasions the wash, carefully scrubbed, boiled, hand wrung and lugged to the line, was engulfed in smoke and cinders. The washing process had to be repeated. The thunderous noise of the 500 Class engines was a warning of approaching disaster.

### The School Train

The sign, "Danger from Passing Trains" read "anger from assing pains," Cynthia Gribble recalls from her days on the school train. She recalls too the well built female conductor who was wise to students. She could not be fobbed off by the girl who, having lost a rail pass, hid in the toilet at the end of the carriage. Nor was she bluffed by those who tried to hand a pass over the top of the luggage racks.

Sometimes these occasions had a sobering effect on the school children. George Cornwall recalls, in his brother's book, that:

"Sometimes we used to go over to the back of the railway station yard when a troop train came in carrying mostly walking wounded. The train would pull in and the troops would disembark to be transferred to the Repatriation Hospital on Daws Rd. by truck. These were sad and sobering occasions for us. One soldier, nothing but skin and bone, with a leg missing, had to be lifted off the train---he could hardly stand even on crutches---"

The boys lit a cigarette for another soldier who was shaking too much to do it himself.

### School Boy Memories

Carl Belle remembers children arriving by train from Bridgewater and Aldgate to attend Belair Primary School. The school was then by Belair Railway Station. During the occasional railway strike these children did not come to school.

From his home on Penno Pde in the 1950s, Carl would often watch the train crew sprinkling sand on the line, to prevent the engines slipping under the bridge near Pinera Station.

Carl remembers, too, travelling by train to Saturday Matinees held in the Blackwood Memorial Hall, and to football matches at the Adelaide Oval. It was a schoolboy prank to open the windows of the carriage to let in smoke and cinders while the train was in the long Sleeps Hill tunnel, especially if another train was passing! The annoyance of other passengers was keenly observed.

During boyhood the sounds of the different types of engine became familiar, the cheeky whistles of the Fs and RXs, and the sombre breathing sounds of the Mountain engines, puffing with their heavy loads. To count the trucks was a pastime; on one occasion fifty four was the tally.

### Cycling to "Goody Bumps"

"As a schoolboy at Mitcham and Unley High Schools from the late 1950s to late 1960s, it was common to cycle quickly and safely alongside the railway, all the way from Mitcham Station to the junction at Goodwood.

A combination of "official" pathways, gravelled and fenced from the tracks, and smoothly worn paths along the fence line, enabled fast passage from the Mitcham area to the much enjoyed piece of wasteland at the end of the Model Engineers grounds at Millswood. Here at "Goody Bumps" an extensive plot of dumped earth and waste filling provided an exciting pattern of dips and jumps where hours could be spent on a weekend afternoon in thrilling manoeuvres---

The next stop was Blythewood, named after Sir Arthur Blyth, a Minister of the Crown who lived in Mitcham Village. Blythewood Rd continued over the line so this was a gated crossing. When Belair Road was rerouted the crossing was removed. This station then became Torrens Park.

The spur line to Clapham was on the sea side of the present line. Passengers alighted onto a raised platform by a small water tank. Clapham Station had opened in 1905, and was repositioned on the main line when the bridge directing Springbank Rd traffic over the line was completed in 1924. Some suburban trains terminated at Clapham. It is possible that our traveller may have been familiar with the London suburb of the same name.

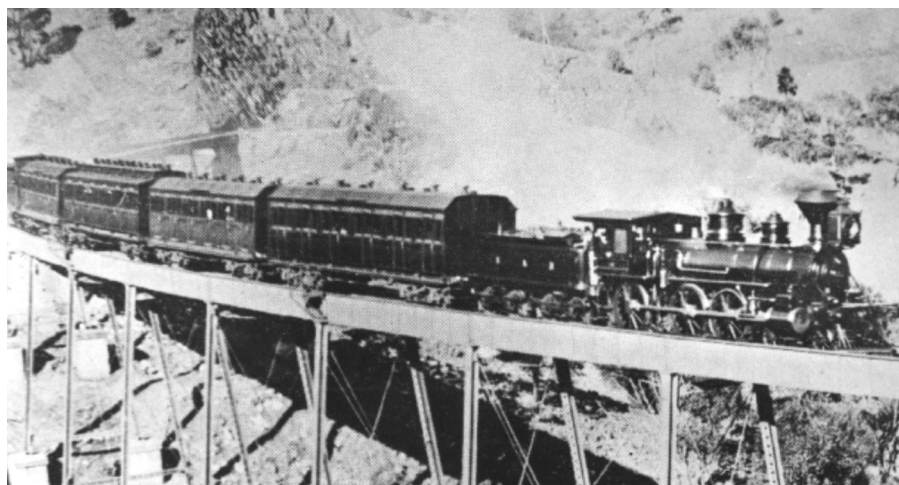
The next Crossing Keeper would appear at Barretts Rd. The Crossing Keeper's house is still standing on the North West corner of the crossing at Lynton Station, which opened in the 1950s. Our traveller's train would not stop here, but would move on towards Sleeps Hill.

Sleeps Hill took its name from Samuel Sleep, who had worked as a shepherd in the area and later owned land adjoining the quarry. The passenger would see men busy near the storage bins whence stones gravitated into railway trucks. The stone was used for ballast on the railway, and was taken the goods yard at Mile End. Other men would be concealed from view, working on the slippery rock faces directing rock into cable cars which were guided down the inclines to the main line. At night hurricane lamps may have been visible, bobbing about among the rocks as men worked in darkness filling the trucks.



(5. Sleeps Hill Quarry c 1910 *photo courtesy National Railway Museum, South Australia*)

After the darkness of two tunnels the train carrying our passenger would emerge onto a tight rope like structure high above the scenic valleys of Eden Hills. From this perch she may be able to see the creek flowing at the bottom of the gully a hundred feet below. She would then pass onto a second viaduct, balanced seventy eight feet above the ground. Engine drivers were said to hesitate nervously in the mouth of the tunnel if there was a storm, before venturing across the spindly structures. However, both viaducts, manufactured by the Edgeware Company of Delaware, USA, had been tested before the line opened with a loaded train weighing at least two hundred tons. There was never an accident in twenty five years of operation, and the viaducts were only replaced in 1919 when the line was doubled and rerouted to cater for increased traffic and heavier trains.



(6. Train crossing viaduct in 1885, N Class locomotive of American design *photo courtesy of Coromandel Valley and District Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

Our train is now pulling into the newly opened station of Eden, named for its garden like beauty. Here subdivision was accelerating with the expectation of transport to the city. Land agents advertised free rail passes to persons who erected a house of a minimum value. Prior to the opening of the station, it is said that passengers passed parcels from the carriage windows as the train slowly made its way up the hill. Family members could then take these home, saving the passengers who had to walk back from Blackwood, winding their way through bush land, and across the mud of the "glue pot", at the top of the current Lee St. At the Adelaide end of the Eden station yard was an uphill siding for runaway trucks to prevent any accident occurring on the viaduct. A turn table was situated where the car park is now. After the station the train ran into the third tunnel, under Shepherd's Hill.

South West of the railway station site is the northern of two disused tunnels. We walked through this tunnel on a number of occasions. Eventually we walked far enough to discover the southern tunnel which we walked through once or twice.

The only occasion we were calculating enough to walk through the "new" much longer tunnel was when we knew there were no trains running. This was during the Newcastle Coal miners' strike of 1949 or 1950.

The main attraction of the railway at Sleeps Hill was to admire the Mountain Locos from our vantage point---" R.A.Ward, resident.

### A 1920s Train Journey to the City

"Orchards of apple and pear, peach and nectarine, spread over the hills like carelessly flung carpets, Upper Sturt, Belair, Blackwood, Eden we flashed through these little villages then we saw Adelaide---To the West stretched the line of beach north and south and beyond that the blue grey waters of the gulf---All along the seafront we could see the seaside suburbs against the blue water. Behind these spread a lovely carpet of vineyards and almond groves. In the far distance we saw etched the tall buildings of the city---The train clattered along through comfortable brick and stone houses with neat gardens shaded by peach, nectarine, and almond trees, grapevines, and grey- green olive hedge.---Now we were down we could look back to the hills ---scarred with quarries, and spotted with olive bushes and scrubby gums." From Quinlan-Watson Reminiscences (Mitcham Local History Collection)

### Train Ride to Belair 1920

A resident describes billows of grey smoke, and small children collecting rugs and cushions from the overhead racks in the train carriage. Hot and smutty, the children descended onto the platform with picnic baskets, and stretched up to take a drink from the canvas water bags hanging from the platform shelter shed. They used the metal mug attached to the bag with a bit of string.(Described by J Moffatt, Neil Stallard Collection)

### War Time Memories

Charles Cornwall remembers as a small boy in 1941, seeing troop trains passing through Mitcham Station. In his book Mitcham School-150 Years of History 1847-1997 he describes the scene (p.74);

"Because of the proximity of the railway line to the boys' playground the boys at Mitcham School were privileged on occasions during the War to wave to servicemen passing through Mitcham Station in troop trains. The writer has a clear recollection of leaning on the fence with other boys and waving vigorously to soldiers as their train steamed past the school grounds----"

### The Cafeteria or Quick Lunch Cafe at the new Adelaide Railway Station

"Among the many items to be obtained in this Refreshment section, in the way of hot soups, are tomato, pea, and beef tea. Entrees, sausages and mashed potatoes, mince and mashed potatoes, savoury cutlets, steak and kidney pudding, lamb's fry and bacon, hot pies, pasties, etc. In sandwiches or rolls are ham or beef, cheese, egg, salmon, sardine, tomato (in season), tongue, chicken, etc. Among the soda fountain drinks are lemon squash, lemonade, sarsaparilla, ginger ale, vanilla, raspberry, strawberry, soda, and lime, and a number of other popular lines. In addition among the sundries, are various kinds of cakes, sponges, buns, cakes, biscuits, tarts, toast, etc."(Service, SAR Publication 1929 p.51)

### Memories of a Signalman

A former Belair Signalman, Frank Moore, recalls the Signal Cabin being worked round the clock, with a night, day, and afternoon shift. He recalls the steam trains and Red Hen Railcars in the early 1960s, and the use of flags and lights if there was a signal failure. The Belair Station was a good place to work. Mr Harnett was the Station Master.

### Patch, a Good Mate

Patch, the faithful companion of Belair Station Master Mick Harnett, is buried behind the Station. For sixteen years Patch welcomed every train from his position on a stool near the window of the Signal Cabin. He barked as the signal lever at his side was lowered, adding to the information provided by the signal. He became well known to railway staff and passengers. After his death in 1979 he was buried behind the station, with this inscription carved by his master:

*"Patch, born 1962, died 21st January 1979,  
My Old Mate."*

Due to vandalism, Patch's head stone has been removed.

### Childhood Memories of Sleeps Hill

The Sleeps Hill area became a favourite area to explore.

"Almost invariably we headed for the same shallow cave which is still intact in the reserve immediately north of Mead Street, Belair. We would cross the railway near the tunnel and scale the waterfall to visit the cave which provided good shelter on hot or wet days.

We returned often over the years particularly when we were given single speed bikes. The bikes would be parked at the side of the road bridge (since dismantled) which gave access to the quarry over the railway. A path led across the railway embankment to the twin timber platforms of the Sleeps Hill Station at the tunnel end of the embankment.

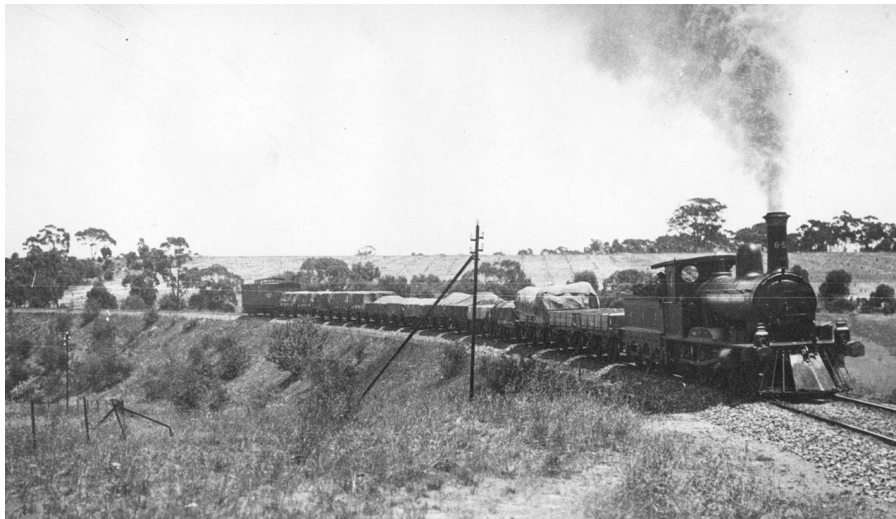


(7. Instructions for Working the Brick Siding SAR Circulars 1879-1909; State Records of South Australia)

On the other side was Brick Siding, used by the Adelaide Steam Brick Company. Bricks had been produced here to line the tunnels and later loaded trucks were taken to the Mile End Freight Yard. The siding finally closed after World War Two.

The engine driver would be wary now. The danger of a fire set off by a spark from the engine was an ever present worry. The instructions in the Railway Circulars of the General Traffic Manager and Locomotive Engineer were ;

"Whenever an Engine-driver becomes aware that Sparks from his Engine have caused a fire to spring up on land adjacent to the Line he is authorised to STOP his TRAIN for a period not exceeding fifteen minutes and to send his stoker to endeavour to extinguish it. For this latter purpose each driver must carry on his Engine during the Summer Months two or three old Grain Bags, which on emergency must be saturated with water from the Tender--".<sup>15</sup>



(8. Train passing area near Blackwood High School *photo courtesy Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

## Snippets and Memories

Instructions circulated by the General Traffic Managers:

### Carriage of Cats by Passenger Train

"In future cats must not be carried in the guard's van of any passenger train, and if the consignor insists on their being forwarded by passenger train either a special vehicle such as a horse box, must be attached for their conveyance, and charges made as for one horse in a horse-box---or single cats, in a basket not exceeding three feet long, one foot three inches in width and depth, can be placed in the dog-box and charged for the same rate as dogs."<sup>14</sup>

### New Ticket Nippers

"On and after June 1st 1902, the new ticket nippers supplied to stations and others concerned, must be brought into use, and the old nippers withdrawn and waybilled to this office "O.S." with a menu giving particulars."<sup>15</sup>



Extracts from *SAR Weekly Notices*:

### Commendation

Porter at Mt Lofty "for his prompt action in jumping onto a moving railcar at Mt Lofty and catching a passenger who was falling, and thus preventing what may have been a serious accident." (August 1930)

Signal man at Mile End "for suggesting a small bore be placed in the Mile End Subway for drainage purposes." (September 1930)

### Vacancy

"Ganger, Blackwood; wages 16s 5d per day 1st year, 16s 8d 2nd year, and 16s 11d there after, the successful applicant must occupy a five roomed railway cottage, rental 17s 3d per week, inclusive of water and electric light, public school and doctor in town." (August 1930)

One of the greatest tragedies in South Australian railway history occurred on the night of 31 January 1928, when six men died, buried in a land slide while demolishing the tunnel to make way for Overway Bridge, on Main Road Belair. This bridge is near the present day Pinera Station, previously known as Overway Bridge Station. Conditions were difficult for rescuers who worked through the wet and stormy night, in the light of hurricane lamps and car headlights. Robert Lafferty of Coromandel Valley was one of the men killed. The accident is reported in The Advertiser 2 February 1929;

"There was a fog which clothed the scene with a mantle of softness---" The injured man "chatted with the ambulance men but seemed unable to say anything about his sensations during his terrible experience. However his injuries were so serious that he died in the hospital at 4.10am."



Foster's Corner, Belair, was a scene of carnage on 10 January 1929. That morning twenty one trucks loaded with livestock became unattached during shunting at the Mt lofty Station Yard. They began to move at an increasing speed down the line. The article continues;

"The wagons then continued downgrade 7.3 km before becoming wrecked in a cutting about 2km from Belair Station---The wagons lurched and swung crazily passing through Upper Sturt and Long Gully stations at speeds estimated at 145 km per hour---The leading truck containing sheep, left the rails in a cutting smashing into an embankment. Subsequent trucks telescoped into one another leaving a trail of truck debris and maimed livestock throughout the cutting." 14

There was no human life lost due to the prompt action of Mr Goodenough, Signalman at Mt Lofty.



"Mitcham Railway Accident, Runaway Brakevan crashes into rail car. Many passengers injured" is the heading of an article in the Courier, 14 July 1949. In this incident a brakevan became detached from a freight train near Eden Hills early on the Wednesday morning. It finally came to a halt when it collided with a railcar at Mitcham Station. The railcar driver, anticipating the collision, hastily put his rail car in reverse. This reduced the impact but even so he was knocked unconscious. Some passengers were taken to hospital and others were treated at the site.

Our traveller would pass under another tunnel before pulling into Blackwood Station. This tunnel, lined with bricks from a small brickworks in Brigalow Ave, passed under Coromandel Parade. It became a bridge when the line was doubled as far as Blackwood in 1928.



(9. Melbourne Express going under Coromandel Pde 1912 photo courtesy Coromandel Valley Branch of the National Trust of South Australia)

A railway camp had been situated at Blackwood in the early 1880's, during the construction of the line. At this time speculators felt confident that with the new railway people would be attracted to the area. The climate, and scenic beauty were widely advertised. The Hills Land and Investment Co. stated in 1883 that the blocks were -

"within half an hour's ride from Adelaide, possessing a most SALUBRIOUS CLIMATE, with DELIGHTFUL SCENERY and EXCELLENT CONVENIENCES of COMMUNICATION---The land is admirably situated to ensure the most perfect drainage, and it is lightly timbered, giving it a thoroughly park like appearance."<sup>6</sup>

This company offered free first class train tickets for three years if a home worth £1000 built within twelve months, and a second class ticket for those who put up a house worth £500 in the same period of time.

Our traveller would pass the Crossing Keeper's house at the entrance to Blackwood Station, named to reflect a predominance of somberly trunked trees in the vicinity. This first class stone station, with a station master's residence attached, was similar in design to Mitcham, and also housed the first telegraph office. A mail service had operated from here up to the early 1900's, with the horses that pulled the mail coach paddocked on the embankment above the station.

Blackwood was considered a country station. Our traveller, after perhaps noticing the station master, Mr Alsworth on the platform, would pass the new goods shed, opened in December 1911. Stock yards were situated at the Belair end of the yard, opposite the water tank, and water column used to water the steam engines. In February 1914 a three ton crane was erected for loading at Blackwood. In 1918 a siding to the Blackwood Cold Stores was constructed. Would our traveller see any sign on the line of the hamper reported lost between Belair and Adelaide or the Gladstone bag with a rug and shovel attached, lost between here and Adelaide?



(10. Blackwood Railway Station c1910 *photographer C A Petts, courtesy Mitcham Local History Collection*)

The engine driver who, in 1923 was "struck on the head and shoulders by the telephone wires which were apparently hanging down" at the Mile End Station, explains in his statement to the Local Foreman, that "the funnel of my engine first caught the wires and evidently broke them---"

The pole with the wires attached had leaned over when the soil it was in became water logged. Telegraph and telephone services between Adelaide and Serviceton, Murray Bridge, Willunga, Belair, and local suburban stations were interrupted. The matter was "promptly attended to."<sup>13</sup>



Headlines in the Register 10 June 1927 read "Overcome by Fumes. Engine Stops in Tunnel. Four Men Collapse." There are varying accounts of this event early in June 1927 when one of the Mountain Type engines introduced by Commissioner Webb stalled in the tunnel between Belair and Long Gully. The engine, slipping because the lines had been made wet and slippery with condensation in the tunnel, could not move forward. The driver, fireman, and crew were almost smothered by the smoke billowing out of the engine, and held in the tunnel. One account records that the crew lay flat on the floor of the cabin while the driver backed the engine out of the tunnel and that nothing more occurred. The newspaper records the heroism of Conductor Clark, who with six men had been on the line behind the train, on a rail motor. Realizing the problem, the men entered the tunnel and dragged the driver, fireman, and crew to safety. They revived in the fresh air and were able to drive the train out of the tunnel when the smoke cleared. Tunnels were modified to help solve these problems.



In March 1927 the guard of a freight train escaped with his life moments before an express train ran into the his van near Mitcham Station. Though the driver of the express slowed to try and prevent the accident, the van was reduced to match sticks, and the engine received a hefty dent. The guard, Mr E J Dalling, promptly acted to give warning of the accident.<sup>14</sup>

It is reported in the Advertiser 11 May 1911 that: "The 5.58 passenger train from Adelaide to Clapham-widely known as the Mitcham Dodger, -collided with four trucks laden with sand, stone, and timbering that were standing on the main hills line. The train was slackening speed preparatory to pulling up at the Mile End Station and consequently the impact was only moderately hard---" There was no loss of life or serious injury in this minor event.



The *Adelaide Chronicle*, 24 May 1919 p.16 reports the death of the railway porter Thomas Crouch at Belair Railway Station:

"Mr Crouch died at the Adelaide Hospital on Saturday as a result of a railway accident at Belair earlier in the day---Dr Barlow, who admitted the patient to hospital, said the patient was suffering severely from shock, a compound fracture of the left arm, contused wounds of the abdomen, and small wounds on other parts of the body. The deceased told him he had fallen from the platform at the Belair Railway Station---Crouch had been attempting to obtain the staff from the fireman of a passing train. On the way to the hospital the injured man is reported to have said, "The bally staff was the cause of this. It was not held out far enough, and in trying to grab it, I overbalanced and fell. The fireman and driver did not know anything about it. Every bally truck must have passed over me." The coroner found that the deceased had met his death through injuries received by being run over by a train at Belair Station, no blame being attachable to any person. He added a rider that the speed of trains passing through stations on the staff system should be reduced to one of absolute safety."



It was a misty stormy night in winter, July 17 1916. This incident is recorded in the SAR Officers' Magazine, August 1916 p.15:

"About 9 pm the call came, advising that all communication on both sides of Belair was interrupted and a hurried investigation led to the conclusion that all wires, block telegraph and phone rail and public, were down."

Mr Harding, Station Master at Belair, organised his staff to act as "pilots" guiding trains to and from Blackwood, walking along the line with lanterns in the mist and rain. Accidents during the night were avoided.

At Belair Road Crossing, now Glenalta, a telephone had recently been installed in the crossing keeper's house, connected to Blackwood, and Belair stations. The keepers no longer had to rely so heavily on timetables to predict when the next train would come. The Belair Hotel was predominant on the landscape, the licensee as our traveller passes being Clarence Penny.

Next came the tunnel under the hill near the present Pinera Station. This tunnel was later converted to a bridge when the line was doubled. The tragic accident which occurred here is recorded later in this text.

When Belair Station was first opened the area was known as Government Farm. The name "Belair" reflects the name of the birth place in France of Helena Ludwig, who started the first school in Belair. When the National Park was opened in 1893 this station catered for picnic traffic, and over the years record numbers of visitors to the park are recorded in railway records. For example, it is recorded in the SAR Officers' Magazine of November 1917 that on Eight Hours Day over 1300 people stepped off the train at Belair to attend an Eight Hours Day picnic, and over 1000 went onto Long Gully Station, built in 1912. An extra train had to be put on in the evening to cater for the returning visitors. The SAR Officers' Magazine of January 1918 informs us that a picnic held in the National Park for returned servicemen attracted 700 AIF men who came by train, to be joined by school children and local residents.

Our visitor to the Park could travel to her picnic spot in one of the Passenger Trolleys which left the Belair Station regularly.



(11. Passenger Trolley Belair National Park, photo from "*The National Park of South Australia*" first issued by the Commissioners of the Park 1909, courtesy Mitcham Local History Collection)

Before this, however, she could partake of a cup of tea at the wooden and iron Station Refreshment Rooms. These are recorded as leased and run by Minnie Maud Holderness from 1904-17, and valued at £30. In the December 1911 edition of the SAR Fares and Time Tables Belair is listed as being a Refreshment Room Station with "Sundries at Counter." Here such things as "sandwiches, ham or beef, ---tea or coffee large cup,---bun or seed cake, ---and soup" would be available. Let us leave our passenger sipping tea, or resting in the wooden shelter shed built 1894, and taking in her surroundings.

# Belair. Site for Refreshment Stall

| Lessee     | Term   | Period   |          | Annual Rental | Authority     | Remarks  |
|------------|--------|----------|----------|---------------|---------------|--|
|            |        | From     | To       |               |               |  |
| Holderness | 1 year | 22/4/05  | 21/4/06  | £5.           | STW 5910      | Stall may be conducted from stall and from a basket. |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/06  | 21/4/07  | £5            | "             | Renewal  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/07  | 21/4/08  | £5            | Rt. 1407/06   | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/08  | 21/4/09  | £5            | STW 1062/07   | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/09  | 21/4/10  | £5            | STW 6033/08   | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/10  | 21/4/11  | £5            | STW 6033/09   | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/11  | 21/4/12  | £5            | STW 11504/10  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/12  | 21/4/13  | £5            | STW 11504/11  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/13  | 21/4/14  | £5            | STW 11504/12  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/14  | 21/4/15  | £5            | STW 11504/13  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/15  | 21/4/16  | £5            | STW 11504/14  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/16  | 21/4/17  | £5            | STW 11504/15  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/17  | 21/4/18  | £5            | STW 11504/16  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/18  | 21/4/19  | £5            | STW 11504/17  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/19  | 21/4/20  | £5            | STW 11504/18  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/20  | 21/4/21  | £5            | STW 11504/19  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/21  | 21/4/22  | £5            | STW 11504/20  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/22  | 21/4/23  | £5            | STW 11504/21  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/23  | 21/4/24  | £5            | STW 11504/22  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/24  | 21/4/25  | £5            | STW 11504/23  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/25  | 21/4/26  | £5            | STW 11504/24  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/26  | 21/4/27  | £5            | STW 11504/25  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/27  | 21/4/28  | £5            | STW 11504/26  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/28  | 21/4/29  | £5            | STW 11504/27  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/29  | 21/4/30  | £5            | STW 11504/28  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/30  | 21/4/31  | £5            | STW 11504/29  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/31  | 21/4/32  | £5            | STW 11504/30  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/32  | 21/4/33  | £5            | STW 11504/31  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/33  | 21/4/34  | £5            | STW 11504/32  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/34  | 21/4/35  | £5            | STW 11504/33  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/35  | 21/4/36  | £5            | STW 11504/34  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/36  | 21/4/37  | £5            | STW 11504/35  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/37  | 21/4/38  | £5            | STW 11504/36  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/38  | 21/4/39  | £5            | STW 11504/37  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/39  | 21/4/40  | £5            | STW 11504/38  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/40  | 21/4/41  | £5            | STW 11504/39  | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/44  | 21/4/45  | £5            | STW 11504/43  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/45  | 21/4/46  | £5            | STW 11504/44  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/46  | 21/4/47  | £5            | STW 11504/45  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/47  | 21/4/48  | £5            | STW 11504/46  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/48  | 21/4/49  | £5            | STW 11504/47  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/49  | 21/4/50  | £5            | STW 11504/48  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/50  | 21/4/51  | £5            | STW 11504/49  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/51  | 21/4/52  | £5            | STW 11504/50  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/52  | 21/4/53  | £5            | STW 11504/51  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/53  | 21/4/54  | £5            | STW 11504/52  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/54  | 21/4/55  | £5            | STW 11504/53  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/55  | 21/4/56  | £5            | STW 11504/54  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/56  | 21/4/57  | £5            | STW 11504/55  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/57  | 21/4/58  | £5            | STW 11504/56  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/58  | 21/4/59  | £5            | STW 11504/57  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/59  | 21/4/60  | £5            | STW 11504/58  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/60  | 21/4/61  | £5            | STW 11504/59  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/61  | 21/4/62  | £5            | STW 11504/60  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/62  | 21/4/63  | £5            | STW 11504/61  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/63  | 21/4/64  | £5            | STW 11504/62  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/64  | 21/4/65  | £5            | STW 11504/63  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/65  | 21/4/66  | £5            | STW 11504/64  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/66  | 21/4/67  | £5            | STW 11504/65  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/67  | 21/4/68  | £5            | STW 11504/66  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/68  | 21/4/69  | £5            | STW 11504/67  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/69  | 21/4/70  | £5            | STW 11504/68  | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/71  | 21/4/72  | £5            | STW 11504/70  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/72  | 21/4/73  | £5            | STW 11504/71  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/73  | 21/4/74  | £5            | STW 11504/72  | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/75  | 21/4/76  | £5            | STW 11504/74  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/76  | 21/4/77  | £5            | STW 11504/75  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/77  | 21/4/78  | £5            | STW 11504/76  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/78  | 21/4/79  | £5            | STW 11504/77  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/79  | 21/4/80  | £5            | STW 11504/78  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/80  | 21/4/81  | £5            | STW 11504/79  | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/81  | 21/4/82  | £5            | STW 11504/80  | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/140 | 21/4/141 | £5            | STW 11504/139 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/141 | 21/4/142 | £5            | STW 11504/140 | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/146 | 21/4/147 | £5            | STW 11504/145 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/147 | 21/4/148 | £5            | STW 11504/146 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/148 | 21/4/149 | £5            | STW 11504/147 | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/152 | 21/4/153 | £5            | STW 11504/151 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/153 | 21/4/154 | £5            | STW 11504/152 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/154 | 21/4/155 | £5            | STW 11504/153 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/155 | 21/4/156 | £5            | STW 11504/154 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/156 | 21/4/157 | £5            | STW 11504/155 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/157 | 21/4/158 | £5            | STW 11504/156 | "  |
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| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/160 | 21/4/161 | £5            | STW 11504/159 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/161 | 21/4/162 | £5            | STW 11504/160 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/162 | 21/4/163 | £5            | STW 11504/161 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/163 | 21/4/164 | £5            | STW 11504/162 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/164 | 21/4/165 | £5            | STW 11504/163 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/165 | 21/4/166 | £5            | STW 11504/164 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/166 | 21/4/167 | £5            | STW 11504/165 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/167 | 21/4/168 | £5            | STW 11504/166 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/168 | 21/4/169 | £5            | STW 11504/167 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/169 | 21/4/170 | £5            | STW 11504/168 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/170 | 21/4/171 | £5            | STW 11504/169 | "  |
| "          | 1 "    | 22/4/    |          |               |               |  |

As the train drew into Belair Station our traveller would see canvas water bags hanging from hooks along the front of the long wooden shelter shed. The road crossing leading across the line and directly to the National Park Entrance behind the station, had been removed in 1914 after a fatal accident. Mr Edmunds had been struck by a train crossing the line. The accident is recalled by residents as it was market day. A bridge over the line now joins Upper Sturt Sturt Rd a short distance west along the line.

Trains to Belair still brought many picnickers. The National Park Station did not open until 1936. Picnickers were able to purchase provisions from Dorothy (Dolly) Holderness who now ran the Refreshment Stall in the wood and iron structure near the entrance to the Park. Here sandwiches, cakes, and lollies could be purchased. Dorothy's grandson George would carry billies of hot water to nearby picnic spots. Residents of Belair recall ten coppers of hot water boiling at a time. Residents remember too that "the front opened up to become a sweets counter---the side door led into a small room with trestles where afternoon tea was served---." There was a problem of possums so that "everything as well as biscuits was kept in the tins." (transcript of a tape recording made by elderly residents on a car trip in 1981, Mitcham Local History Collection) The Station Master at Belair in 1929 was Mr R Dalgleish.

Let us leave this traveller having a cup of tea in these refreshment rooms.



(27. Refreshment Room Belair Station c 1930 *photo donated by Mrs W N Halstead, Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

At one end of the station yard, where the car park now is, was a turn table. This was buried in the 1970s and later removed.



(13. Belair Turntable 1920s *photo McDougall Collection, Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

The signal box, now on the Commonwealth Heritage Register, was manned twenty four hours a day. Railway workers' houses were situated along Sheoak Rd, then known as Main Rd, Belair. Several of these still stand, including Nos 50-54 Sheoak Rd, and the signalman's house near the road entrance to National Park. The Station Master's House built in 1887 had a bathroom added during the residency of the Harding family 1908-1927, which was perhaps a first for a railway cottage of the era. Electricity was connected to these cottages in 1925.



(14. Picnic Train Belair 1908 *photo courtesy Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

## Developments

The 1920's were a time of change for the SAR. Lines were doubled, and the big steam engines which were to dominate the scene for over forty years, were introduced. Henry Barwell was Premier and his decision to invite Mr William A Webb to come from USA as Railways Commissioner (1922-30) ushered in many of these changes. It was considered more economical to use larger locomotives and heavier rolling stock to move goods and passengers round South Australia and interstate. Engines, rolling stock, stations, signals, bridges and tunnels were all upgraded. This meant sweeping changes to the Hills Line. During the Depression years the SAR provided a lot of employment.

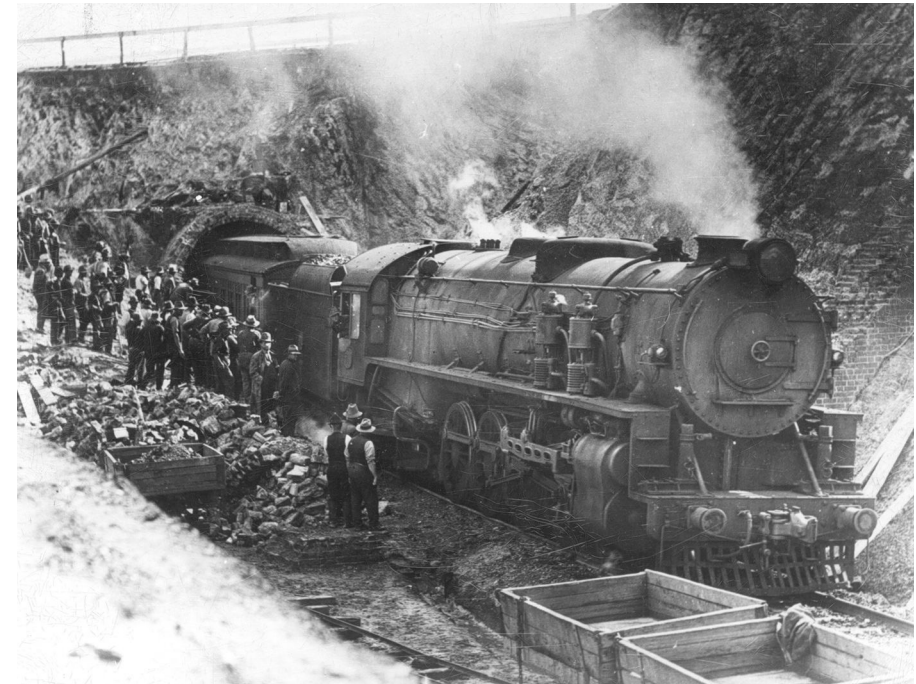
There was to be a brand new station for Adelaide. Temporary buildings were constructed along the banks of the Torrens to enable business to continue as usual while the new station was built on the North Terrace site. The temporary buildings remained in situ until the Festival Theatre was built in 1970.

The foundation stone of the new building was laid 24 August 1926.

By this time Wig Wags had been installed at Blackwood Crossing. The Station Master, Mr H Cullen, might be on the platform as the engine of the train pulled up under the water column to fill with water. Our traveller would have time to notice the advertisement for Amgoorie Tea on the side of the tank, and the two railway cottages on the nearby embankment. In close proximity was the Blackwood Cold Stores, where fruit from nearby orchards was kept ready for transportation. A siding here from the line had been constructed in 1918. The stock yards at the Belair end of the station were not removed until the 1970s.

The crossing near the Belair Hotel was known as the Belair Rd Crossing. This later became Glenalta station. Our traveller is passing when the licence was held by Herbert Gillmore.

Overway Bridge was completed in 1928 near the station now known as Pinera. The spans here were also recycled from the bridge near Bridgewater. The tragic accident which occurred during a land slide when the tunnel was being demolished was widely reported in the press and it is likely that it was freshly in the mind of our traveller. This disaster is described later in this text.



(26. Work at the site of Overway Bridge 1928 *photo courtesy of Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

Close to the Blackwood end of the tunnel was the Brickworks Siding, where up to nine trucks could be loaded at any one time. The area later became part of the Eden Hills Rubbish Dump, and the Lions' Club Bargain Centre.

On the Hills Line the risk of bush fire was ever present. Instructions concerning the maintenance of ash pans and spark arrestors are outlined in the SAR Weekly Notices of 21 October 1929;

"Spark Arrestors and Ashpans, Examination of: Spark arrestors and ashpans of all engines must be specially examined before entering traffic; on completion of a day's work, and a further examination made by the mechanical staff (if there be one) at the time of stabling---This special examination must be made not only in the dry season but throughout the whole year---."

With the upgrading of the line instigated by Commissioner Webb, some of the level crossings became stopping places. One such was Brighton Pde, later named Coromandel.

The tunnel under Coromandel Pde had been replaced with a road bridge recently, and our traveller of 1929 could see the bricks which lined the tunnel on the face of the cutting. A railway cottage formerly on top of the tunnel was demolished when the bridge was built. The spans for this bridge were recycled, being from a bridge which had been removed from further up the line, at Cox's Creek near Bridgewater.



(25. Bridge replacing tunnel, Coromandel Pde, 1928 photo N Stallard Collection)



(15. Adelaide Railway Station Southern and Eastern Elevations SAR publication September 1928 p.2)

## Our Traveller, 1929

Let us look at this new station through the eyes of our second traveller. He is embarking on a journey to the National Park in 1929. He has consulted the timetable and finds he has almost an hour to wait.

He could wander around the vast new station complex or wait in the new waiting hall, built in the form of a Greek cross, with a domed roof sixty eight feet high. He could have his hair cut, in the Gents' Hair Dressing Saloon, attended by staff "skilled in every phase of the tonsorial art".<sup>7</sup>

He could take a shower, in the Gents' Toilet Rooms situated in the South West corner of the Main Waiting Hall.

He is more likely to take refreshment in the Cafeteria. Included in refreshment preparation was the Modern Baker's Shop.



(16. Baker's Shop Showing Pies Ready for the Oven, "Service," SAR Publication 1929 p.65)

**I**NCLUDED in the Refreshment activities is an up-to-date Baker's Shop. Here are made all the Vienna rolls, and all smallgoods used in the Dining Car on the Melbourne Express and the Refreshment Rooms, both in Adelaide and at the 20 country rooms controlled by the Commissioner. The walls are tiled, and a special feature of the equipment is a 30-quart Electric Mixer, which will handle up to 9 quarts, or 45 lb., of dough for bread or rolls (average mixing time less than 10 minutes), 23 lb. mashed potatoes, 2 quarts egg whites, 6 quarts whipped cream, 1 quart meringue, 5 gallons mayonnaise, 15 lb. sponge butter, 30 lb. cake; in fact, can be used for mixing anything required in the Kitchen.

He could even have a meal in the Main Dining Hall. It was possible to arrange a wedding reception, dance, or party, in consultation with the Manager of the Main Dining Hall. Behind the scenes were the Water Softener, the Potato Peeler, and the Electric Dish Washing Machine.

Our traveller may gaze into the Ladies' Hair and Beauty Culture Salon. Here the customer could have "Full Head, Three Quarter Head, Half Head, or Side Curls." She could even have "Eye-brow Arching, and Violet Ray Treatment, the beneficial effects of which are not widely known."<sup>8</sup>

## TOO HOT TO COOL DOWN

### "DRIVING THE BIG ENGINES WAS HOT WORK IN THE TUNNELS"

During the era when large powered steam locomotives worked heavy freight trains over grades of 1 in 45 on the Taillem Bend line, a problem existed for engine crews passing through tunnels between Eden Hills and Ambleside.

The intense heat of super-heated exhaust from the cylinders, and gases from the coal fed fire being blasted through the locomotives funnel, made work unbearably hot for the driver and fireman. When hauling full loads at speeds of between 5-10 m.p.h. with a following wind, the hot air which collected in a tunnel was known to burn any skin that the engine crew left uncovered. The clearance of 11 inches between funnel to top of the tunnel left little room for the gases to escape. Another hazard was that steam often settled on the rails and caused the driving wheels to spin. This slowed the engine and sometimes brought it to a halt.

In an attempt to provide relief for engine crews, four of the five small tunnels were provided with ventilation shafts which were drilled above the top of the tunnel to provide an outlet for steam and smoke. The Down Eden Hills tunnel did not have this innovation and in later years passing through this 7 chain 77 links tunnel was a dreaded experience for loco crews.

In the 1930's gauze masks similar to those used by troops in France for gas during the First World War were issued to crews. In later years all drivers and firemen working on the Taillem Bend line were also supplied with leather gauntlets and a cloth "smoke-helmet" which fully covered the head, face and neck. A connection from the main air reservoir to the helmet allowed each man to breathe in cool air.

The introduction of closed cabins on later locomotives brought further relief.



*A mountain type engine blasts out of the once dreaded Eden Hills tunnel*

(24. article "Too Hot to Cool Down" from "Among Ourselves," In House Magazine STA Vol.2 No.197 p.18)

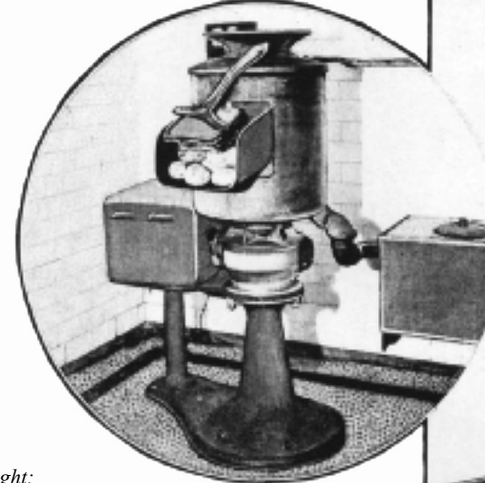


(23. Eden Hills Signal Cabin and Ticket Office, 1953 photo Douglas Colquhoun, courtesy of Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia)

So, after passing the turn table, and the small rail side sign advertising Griffiths Bros Tea, our passenger would continue on under the tunnel beneath Shepherds Hill Rd. This narrow tunnel caused problems with the new big engines, being dreaded by drivers because of the smoke, and lack of clearance above. With the doubling of the line some of the tunnels were converted to bridges, and ventilation in the tunnels was improved. There was an incident in a hills tunnel on this line sensationalized by the press, and described later in this text.

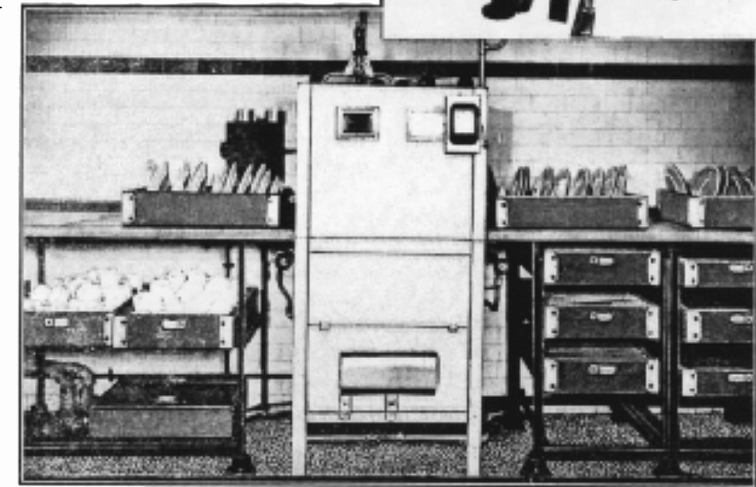
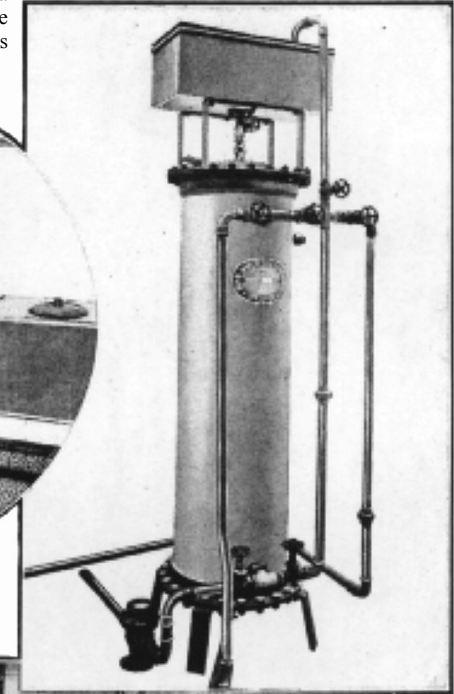
Below:

Electric Potato Peeler. The potatoes are placed in a revolving cylinder through which passes a constant stream of fresh water. This handy little machine cleans and scrapes 28 pounds of potatoes per minute, and is very satisfactory



Right:

Boab Water Softener, made and supplied by Whitehill Ltd., used in connection with the Refreshment Services on the Adelaide Railway Station.



This Electric Dish-Washing Machine is capable of washing, sterilizing, and drying 3,000 pieces of crockery and cutlery per hour.

(17. "Service", SAR Publication 1929 p.59)



TWO SMALL SECTIONS OF OPERATING ROOMS - LADIES' HAIR AND BEAUTY CULTURE SALONS

(18. Ladies' Hair and Beauty Culture Salons "Service" SAR Publication 1929 p.73)



(22. Work on the cutting for the double line replacing the viaducts 1918 *photo courtesy of Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

The train would then reach Eden station, overlooked by three railway houses high up on the embankment. Eden was not known as Eden Hills until 1948. Tickets and passes could be bought from the galvanized iron ticket office attached to the signal box. Galvanized iron shelters were on each platform offering shelter from the hills fog and rain. These would be sheltering, too, boots and galoshes of passengers who changed into their town shoes after a muddy walk along unsealed roads to the train. Sometimes lanterns would be left here, conveniently hanging from sticks dug into the ground. Since 1914 there had been a bridge over the line at Willunga St, and it was a common sight to see a mob of sheep crossing this bridge.

After the Barrett Rd level crossing, on the corner of the current Hogarth Rd and Sleeps Hill Drive, a bridge straddled the line, leading horse drawn and motor traffic to the Sleeps Hill Quarries.



(21. Bridge at Sleep's Hill 1953 *photo Douglas Colquhoun, courtesy Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch of the National Trust of South Australia*)

There had been a signal cabin at Sleeps Hill since 1914. This was not used after 1926. Passengers could stop the train here by means of a circular disc which, when rotated at right angles to the line, indicated to the driver to stop the train. Rail trucks would be lined up under the storage bins, loading stone to be trucked to the Mile End Freight Yard. A new crushing plant was built in 1927, complete with an eighty five horse power electric motor with a starter, foundation, belting, and shed.<sup>12</sup> The crushed stone was used for bitumen, concrete, and building. There were several cottages, and a Blacksmith's workshop at Sleeps Hill.

Our traveller would next enter the Sleeps Hill Tunnel, opened in 1919 when the line was doubled. The old viaducts were demolished, some of the concrete ballasts being used for blasting practice by the Army. The two old tunnels, both heritage listed, have been used to grow mushrooms, store precious art works and documents, and may be used in the future for wine storage. They can be found at the end of Railway Tce, Panorama. In August 1919 the last train passed over the viaducts.

When our traveller finally boards his train it could be pulled by the suburban F class engine, probably built at the Islington Workshops, or he might get into a green and yellow motor rail car, introduced onto suburban rail by Commissioner Webb, and known, in honour of the Premier, as the "Barwell Bull."

As he passed through the station yard he would have the advantage of automatic signalling. As he approached the Mile End Freight Yard he could see the Round House for engines, established by Commissioner Webb. It was flood lit at night

In February 1929 there was a vacancy for an Assistant Yard Master at Mile End. In the SAR Weekly Notices it was recorded;

"Assistant Yard Master Mile End; salary £288 to £304 per annum in accordance with Salaried Officers' Federal Award."



(19. WA Webb's Mile End Round House *Photo courtesy R Jennings*)

At Keswick, not only was the station lit by electric lighting, but also there was an electrically illuminated advertisement for "Witch's Soap", which flickered on and off to attract attention. In 1925 with the construction of a new signal cabin, the foot bridge had been extended. Out of Keswick the line ran parallel to the Show Grounds siding.

The train was now bound for the Leader St Crossing. Here and at Victoria St the manually controlled gongs had been replaced by Wig Wags and motor traffic was now quite common. At Goodwood passengers could be waiting to join the train in the galvanised iron waiting shelters, armed with tickets from the corrugated iron ticket office. These passengers may be from as far away as Willunga, as trains from here met at the Goodwood junction. During 1929 trains passed slowly through Goodwood as the tramways bridge was under construction. The dangerous crossing of the Glenelg train service with the Hills line was then removed.

Next, passengers on our trains might alight or disembark at Millswood.

Suburban stations such as Unley Park were now well lit with electric lighting for the convenience of evening travellers. Unley Park was used as a model station to demonstrate to Parliament the benefits of modern platform lighting.<sup>9</sup>

The crossing gates at Unley Park were lit by red lensed long burning oil lamps. These were not always sufficient as was the case in February 1926 when a driver was sent this letter from the Signal and Telegraph Engineer:

"It has been reported to me that the car ---driven by you came in contact with the Railway Crossing gates at Unley Park on the 28th of February and damaged same. I have to advise you that debit will be raised against you for this damage and you will receive an account in due course." 10

A similar accident also occurred in July 1927. The driver denied responsibility for the damage, valued at 13/9d. In his letter to the Signal and Telegraph Engineer he writes:

"Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th inst. And note your remarks. As the incident in question was the result of carelessness on the part of the Gate Keeper, I decline to accept any liability in connection with the matter."

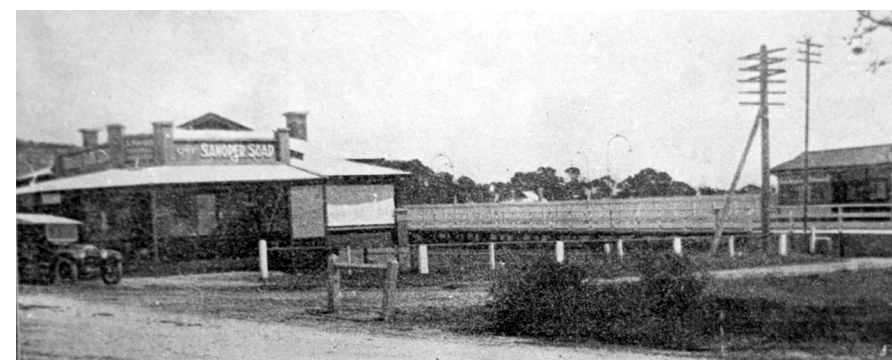
Yours faithfully---"<sup>11</sup>

Those boarding the train at Unley Park could purchase a ticket on the train but those needing a weekly ticket needed to walk one third of a mile to Hawthorn where there was a ground level ticket office. It was important to check that no error occurred with the issue of the ticket. In the SAR Weekly Notices of October 1928 a case of "Sex Distinction" is reported;

"An incidence has occurred of an applicant being issued a ticket bearing an incorrect sex distinction. Effort must be made to avoid errors of this kind, and each purchaser should be queried whether the ticket is for use by a male or female, and ticket issued accordingly."

At Mitcham the Station Master on duty in 1929 was Mr J Walker. Here our traveller may have been astonished to witness an impressive new Mountain Type 500 class steam engine hauling a massive load through the hills. These engines were introduced by Webb to pull heavier loads than previously thought possible. There was a new signal cabin at the Blackwood end of the platform at Mitcham and since the rerouting of Belair Rd east of the line in 1921 there was one less rail crossing. Carriages loaded with mallee roots stood in the Mitcham yard. The Station Gardens, clearly visible from the platforms and the train, were well tended. The annual Railways Garden Competition was judged between April and December for stations on the Hills Line. There was a severe drought in 1929 and no prize was awarded.

The next station, previously Blythewood, had changed. At the newly named Torrens Park, the concrete platform blocked the former rail crossing, and passengers passed underneath in a subway.



(20. Torrens Park Railway Station 1920s *photo courtesy Mitcham Local History Collection*)

The Clapham station was now situated on the main line. In 1924 the Springbank Rd traffic, increasing with the impact of the motor car, was redirected over the line on a new bridge. The last section of the old spur line was used for shunting until the 1980s.

It is to be hoped that our traveller has not lost his ticket at this stage of his journey. On 14/12/28 in the Railway Prosecutions section of the SAR Weekly Notices it is reported that "for travelling without a ticket between Clapham and Adelaide a passenger was fined 5/-, £1 cost, and 7d fare, total, \$1.5.7d."