

and forded the Wolgan River to join the Wolgan Gap Road at a point a few miles to the south of the then embryonic mining township of NEWNES, so named after the Chairman of the London Board of Directors.

Hereabouts the line curved northwards to reach MOUNT WOLGAN at the foot of the steep 1 in 25 down-graded section. Mount Wolgan, more usually known as the MARSHALLING YARD, originally comprised a pair of loop sidings, arranged one on either side of the main line, one track being for inwards and the other for outwards traffic. This arrangement, under altered train movements, was later removed and replaced by a single dead-end siding, trailing to Down trains, and of sufficient length to afford standage to a normal load.

A few chains further along on a grade of about 1 in 78 was CONSTANCE, the original locomotive depot sited within the limits set by a reversing triangle. Checking the formation at this once so important place, in later years it would appear that there was a loop against the eastern side of the main line, entered from points arranged near the entrance points to the curved legs of the triangle. A Down Home signal protected traffic movements at the approach to the loop and the adjacent locomotive depot at the southern end of the yard, and an Up Home signal did similar duty at the northern approach. All three locomotive sidings were entered by points arranged in tandem in the southern leg of the triangle, the westernmost terminating as a dead-end track, whilst the other two were united by a crossover before they entered the precincts of the galvanised-iron locomotive shed. Other facilities provided at Constance included servicing pits, coal-stage, and water-tanks. Water was obtained from a small dam in the gorge immediately east of the depot and conveyed to the tanks by a gravity pipe line. It will be noted that most of the sidings and like facilities along the length of the Wolgan Railway were located where the topography permitted and not necessarily where most convenient, for in the case of Constance,

the gorge of that name afforded the only adequate space available for the triangle without costly excavation.

Continuing on over an easy grade alongside the Wolgan River, NEWNES Station was reached at 30m. 70c., and here a goods siding on the Down side and a crossing loop (or engine run-round) on the Up side, 660 feet in the clear, was provided. A large goods shed adjoined the goods siding and a timber faced platform 110 feet in length, was located against the main line towards the Down end of the loop. A small station building and a separate post-office were placed on the platform and pedestrian access to the township across the adjacent river was gained by a footbridge. About 1918 the timber facing of the platform was replaced with cut stone recovered from the then abandoned coke-works at Newnes. Home semaphore signals, erected in both directions, protected the entrance to the station yard.

Newnes township was located on the Wolgan River, and like most mining villages had little claim to civic splendour although set amidst such magnificent mountain scenery. The dozen or so shops, general stores, hotels, etc., were ranged along the main Wolgan Road leading to Lidsdale, each with a wide verandah spreading over the adjacent unpaved footpath. Some of the emporiums were built of brick but most were of weather-board, several of the latter type having high false fronts to lend an atmosphere of dignity to the facade. The houses, huts, and shanties occupied by the company's employees were scattered for the most part around the slopes of the adjoining hillsides. These dwellings were cross-connected by a maze of straggling footpaths which followed the line of least resistance when boulders or large tree trunks blocked their wandering way. The by-road leading to the railway station and its goods yard crossed the river by means of a water-splash. Immediately north of Newnes the valley converges to form a narrow outlet between its precipitous slopes, a feature which permitted the Corporation

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An early goods train under "The Bluffs" near the 25 milepost. Here a signboard warned drivers against standing in the vicinity "owing to the danger of falling rocks".

D. O'Brien Colln.

Opposite:

Under "The Bluffs", 1908.

G.H. Eardley colln.

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The Wolgan Valley Railway emerging from the Penrose Gorge.

E.M. Stephens.