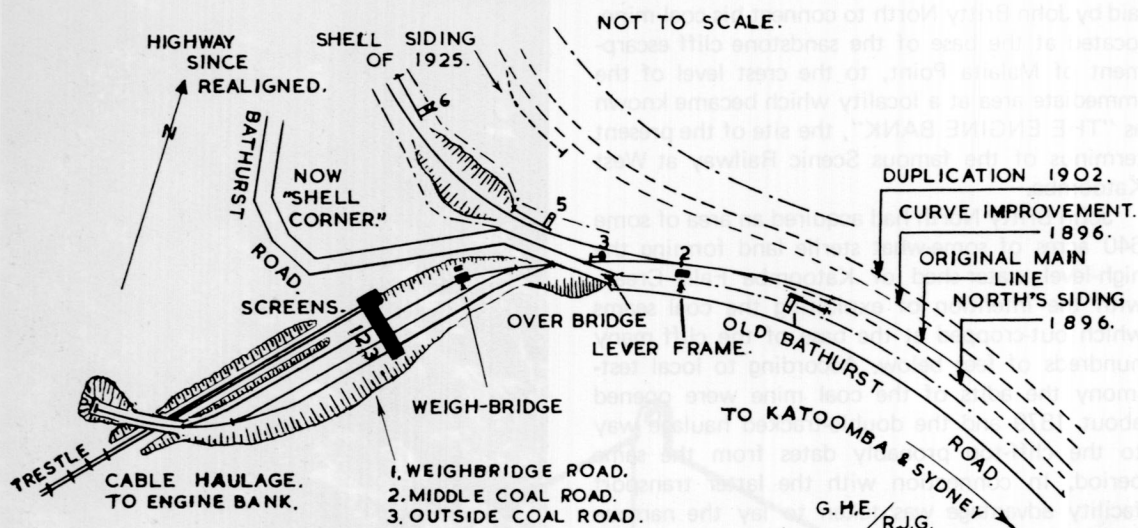


ness of sassafras, myrtle and other indigenous trees, their trunks covered with moss, together with a tangled undergrowth of all manner of ferns, both large and small. It has been stated that the underground workings of these coal adits eventually extended northwards beyond the Great Western Railway alignment.

At the bankhead of the cable-haulage skip-way there was a powerful steam-driven winding engine

and a boiler installation. At this developmental stage of the coal mine it is thought that the transport of coal from THE ENGINE BANK to North's Siding, located on the Great Western Railway about three-quarters of a mile north-west of Katoomba Railway Station, may have been carried out with horse-drawn vehicles traversing the then inadequate bush roads of the district,

### NORTH'S SIDING. 1887.



### NORTH'S SIDING, WEST KATOOMBA.

The late Cyril Corbett Singleton discovered an obscure reference in the Railway Department's Archives which stated that a siding was laid for Mr North on January 7th, 1882. It is possible at this period North's Siding consisted of a short single-track spur with its entrance point facing towards Down trains, and passing beneath a skew bridge carrying the Old Bathurst Road. Nearby was John Britty North's two-storied house named 'ESSENDENE', which was surmounted by a "Captain's Walk" look-out tower affording a wide view of the Jamieson Valley and its mountainous surround.

However, at 1887, there is a plan which shows North's Siding and the adjacent portion of the single-tracked Great Western Railway in great detail. The siding entrance point (and its protective catch-point) facing to Down trains, are controlled from a line-side lever frame, together with Down Home, Up Distant, and Up Home semaphore signals erected to protect shunting movements at the sidings from main line traffic in either direc-

tion. Clear of the catch-point the siding curved southward to enter a cutting and pass beneath the above-mentioned skew bridge which lay across the excavation. Below the bridge, arranged in tandem fashion, the facing entrance points of three loop sidings were met, that on the western side having a twenty-ton truck weighbridge installed near its northern end. All three "Full" sidings, side by side passed beneath the shoots of the loading staith and beyond their "Empty" wagon standage space converged in a westerly direction to form a single tracked shunting neck, which after passing over a bridge spanning the cable-haulage skip-way ascending from The Engine Bank, terminated within the three walls of a dead-end cutting. No locomotive run-round facilities were provided and it is obvious that the sidings were serviced by a propelled shunting trip from Katoomba made under the protection of the Train Staff for the section Katoomba to Blackheath. It is possible that the marshalling of Departmental wagons to and from the loading staith at North's Siding was a duty