

ating haulage cable of the double-tracked Megalong Valley tramway, after passing eastwards through the "Daylight" tunnel, crossed over the long skeleton bridge to enter the coal tunnel below Malaita Point. It is understood that a vertical boilered steam winding unit was installed outside the eastern portal of the coal tunnel which drove the circulating rope leading to the Glen Shale Mine as a separate installation. The rails of the latter tramway, when clear of the circulating rope, curved sharply to make a junction with the base tracks of the bank-head haulage way. It is surmised that the skips running over this "dead" section were trundled by manual labour, a job carried out by clippers. The authors are fully aware that suppositions of this nature can have no claim to accuracy but the track arrangement, with so meagre evidence available, cannot now be ascertained with any degree of certainty.

THE RUINED CASTLE HORSE OPERATED SURFACE TRAMWAY.

Leaving its junction with the double-tracked skipway leading to the Glen Shale Mines the single-tracked horse-operated tramway serving the shale adits at Ruined Castle led southwards over a reasonably level course based on the 2350 feet contour. The track wound its serpentine way around projecting spurs and their intervening gullies, following in general the direction imposed by the towering cliffs forming the eastern ramparts of the Narrow Neck Peninsula. The track, laid with cheap "Bridge" rails spiked to wooden sleepers, was encompassed in rain-forest greenery, with gum forests skirting the line and climbing high up the talus slopes to the foot of the cliffs. The numerous creeks along the route were crossed by loosely packed stone embankments so arranged to let the water trickle through. In spite of the lapse of time these banks still remain in perfect condition and form a silent tribute to the skill of their builders. Some of the banks were ten feet in depth and numerous sidlings averaging five to six feet in height in their excavations were a feature, although there was one double-walled cutting of similar depth.

The fauna inhabiting the forest country verging on the tramway is most interesting and numerous small sized rock wallabies were to be seen. The place was noted for large goannas, black red-bellied

snakes, and the blood-sucking propensities of its vast leech population. Flocks of currawongs and gang-gang cockatoos searched for food in the trees, whilst the dense undergrowth and fern-beds were well-examined by insect-seeking lyre-birds. A lovely land for the probing eye of a devoted naturalist.

At a distance of about half a mile from the junction a miner's path, known as THE GOLDEN STAIRS, left the tramway in a westerly direction to climb the steep talus slope and gain access to a fissure in the cliff face where a somewhat precarious ascent, over rocks and clefts, some of the latter being bridged with sapling trunks, was made to the top level of Narrow Neck. Here a path of sorts led onwards to Katoomba, or an equally sharp descent to the delights of the Nelly's Glen Hotel, marked by its huge pine tree (*Pinus Radiata*) and located near the junction of Diamond Falls Creek and Megalong Creek in the upper section of Megalong Valley. Hereabouts was quite a large mining settlement served by a general store, bakery, butchery, and a public hall, the latter place having its dancing attractions on Saturday nights.

From The Golden Stairs path the tramway followed a wide curve to the south-east to maintain its level course along the talus slopes ranged below the cliffs forming the northern face of Mount Megalong and its eastern ridge extension known as THE BLUFF. Several adits were driven into the shale outcrops along this section before the base of The Bluff was reached at the track contour level. One adit in particular was noted for its tiny stream of icy cold crystal clear drinking water which came from the inner depths of Mount Megalong, filtered through hundreds of feet of semi-porous sandstone.

At the eastern end of The Bluff there is a vast conglomeration of rocks where part of the sandstone cliff face has collapsed into a heap of fragments. Beyond this obstruction the tramway traverses, in a southerly direction, a low tree-covered ridge which forms the watershed between Jamieson Valley and Cedar Creek Valley, the main streams of which flow into the River Cox. The principal feature of this wind-swept ridge is a rocky elevated sandstone mass, known by its distorted shape as THE RUINED CASTLE. Prior to reaching this eminence a facing point to outwards traffic inserted in the tramway sent its curved branch westward and then north-westward

Opposite:

A horse tram on the line to Ruined Castle.

Mitchell Library.