

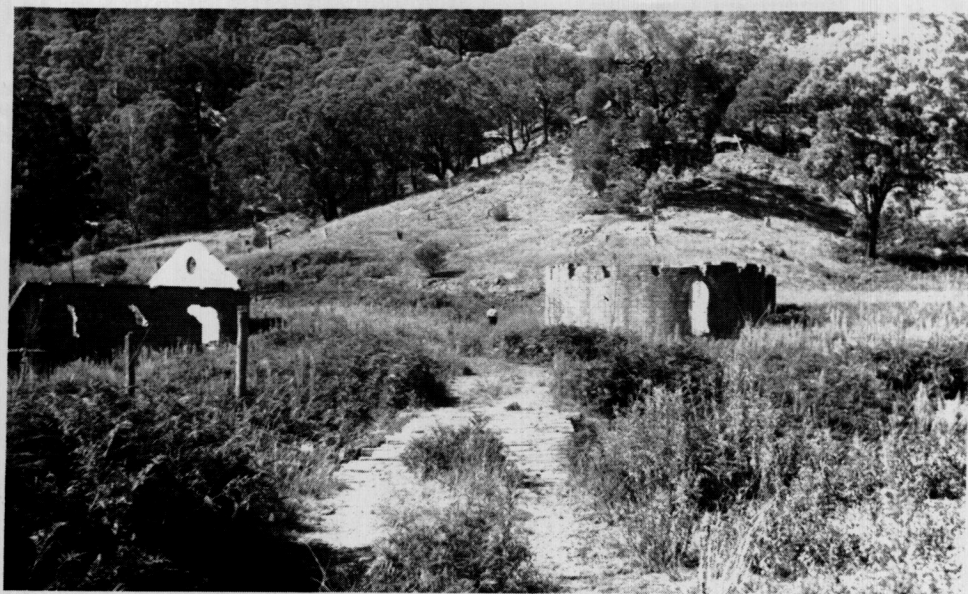
an Eight Hour Day Celebration was held. More than four hundred local people attended and in addition, a number of visitors came from Lithgow by the Departmental shunting trip to Torbane Station. Here they boarded the company's train, presumably composed of shale-wagons, for conveyance to the scene of excitement. At this time also Departmental Regulations required that goods trains leaving Wallerawang for Torbane should have a carriage attached. Trains left Wallerawang at 4.20 a.m. and 8.30 a.m. (Saturdays excepted). On Saturdays the departure time was 10 a.m. These trains left Torbane (after the turning of the locomotive and the completion of shunting duties) at 10.23 a.m. and 1.16 p.m. (Saturdays excepted) and on Saturdays at 2.36 p.m.

There is mention that at February 1916 the shale mines at Torbane were once again in operation, the shale being railed to Newnes and also to the Railway Department's gasworks adjacent to the Macdonaldtown carriage sheds. It was necessary at this time to insert new sleepers at various places in the private railway at Torbane. It was noted in 1917 that the loop run-round siding, together with the then defunct Australian Kerosene Oil and Shale Company's dead-end loading siding and the adjacent engine turntable, had been removed from the station precincts at Torbane. Shale mining ceased by June 1918, a circumstance which virtually brought an end to the settlement at New Hartley township, and by April 1920 the various company houses were being dismantled and

their components sent to Newnes for re-erection. Further dismantling of the plant occurred in 1925-6 when large quantities of recovered fire-bricks and other material were loaded into the company's "DREADNOUGHT" bogie high-sided wagons and sent to the oil refinery near Duck Creek at Clyde. At this period the coal adits at Torbane temporarily ceased to function. By 1930 dismantling activities at the retorts had been completed, and at 1973 only odd foundations, rotting timberwork, fallen brick-work, and huge slag heaps covered with rank weeds and wildings are all that remain on the site of this once so busy oil industry.

About 1929 the "F" class locomotive, No.360X puffed her way out of the small running shed at Torbane Retort siding and made her last journey to Torbane Station. Here she was placed in the "UP" siding where her fire was drawn and her boiler emptied of water. She remained seemingly derelict at Torbane until June 1930 when a Departmental locomotive towed her to a back siding at Newnes Junction, where the old engine rested amongst a number of the company's "DREADNOUGHT" bogie wagons, evidently awaiting a buyer. Here the engine quietly rusted until 1940 when, according to a report from a most irate friend, it was "cut up in a disgusting manner" for its scrap content.

The rails from the Torbane private railway were taken up after the departure of the above locomotive and only the entrance point, and its ancient stub-rail catch point, to the company's line re-



*Ruins at Torbane works area, April 1954.*

*E.M. Stephens.*