**HOMEBUSH TO HORNSBY RAILWAY LINE 1886**

**Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), Wednesday 15 September 1886, page 9**

NEWS OF THE DAY.

THE first section of the Homebush to Waratah railway which reaches Hornsby, will be opened for traffic on Friday. The junction of the new line with the old suburban line is at Strathfield, a distance of eight miles from Sydney. From the junction to Hornsby the present terminus is 13 miles, and the intermediate stations are Ryde, Eastwood, Field of Mars, **Beecroft**, and Thornleigh. The fares from Sydney to Hornsby will be, single, 1st class, 3s. 3d.; 2nd class, 2s. 2d.; excursion — 1st class, 4s. 4d.; 2nd class, 2s. 11d. Trains will leave Sydney daily (Sundays excepted) for Hornsby at 8.30 a.m., 12.30 p.m., and 4.27 p.m., and for Ryde only at 5.24 p.m. and 8.5 p.m. Up trains will leave Hornsby daily (Sunday excepted) at 7.40 a.m., 11.40 a.m., and 4 p.m., and Ryde at 6.15 p.m. and 9.15 p.m. On Wednesdays and Saturdays additional trains will run from Sydney to Ryde at 11.30 p.m., and from Ryde to Sydney at 12.25 a.m., and on Saturdays only will leave Sydney for Hornsby at 1.40 p.m., and Hornsby for Sydney at 5.5 p.m. On Sundays trains will leave Sydney for Hornsby at 9.30 a.m. and 2 p.m., and Hornsby for Sydney at 11.30 a.m. and 4.55 p.m. The ordinary trains will stop at all stations between Strathfield and Hornsby, and the time of journey will be about 1 hour 22 minutes. No arrangements have been made for the opening to be marked by any public ceremony.

**Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), Friday 17 September 1886, page 4**

HOMEBUSH TO WARATAH RAILWAY.

OPENING OF THE RAILWAY TO HORNSBY.

The first section of this line, which is partly a suburban one, being a portion of contract No. 1 connecting the Great Northern with the Great Southern and Western Railway systems of the colony, will be opened for traffic to-day as far as Hornsby. Messrs. Amos and Co. are the contractors for the general works upon this section, which branches off to the right from the old suburban line a little way beyond Strathfield (Redmyre) platform, at a point 7 miles 24 chains distant from Sydney, its temporary terminus being, at Hornsby, 21 miles, giving a total distance of 13 miles 56 chains. The height of rails at Strathfield Junction is 42 feet above high water spring tides at Sydney, and at Hornsby it is 592 feet, giving a rise towards the latter place of 550 feet. The earthworks upon this extension are very heavy, 622,000 cubic yards of excavation having been taken to embankments, or at the rate of about 45,500 cubic yards per mile. There are 18 curves, varying from 15 to 280 chains radius, viz., 2 of 15, 1 of 16, 2 of 20, 2 of 24, 2 of 30, 2 of 32, 4 of 40, 1 of 50, 1 of 80, and 1 of 280 chains radii; the aggregate length of these curves being 7 miles 23 chains, the remaining distance of 6 miles 33 chains being straight. The gradients number 60, and vary from 1 in 40 to 1 in 825 for a total distance of 12 miles 40 chains, the length of level being 1 mile 16 chains. The cuttings are 37 in number, made chiefly through loam, clay, shale, and sandstone rock, the two latter greatly predominating, and the depths of the cuttings and heights of the embankments vary from 1 to 42 foot for the former and 1 to 49 feet for the latter. There are 11 overbridges, all built of timber on brick piers. Twenty-six level crossings have also been provided, six being for main roads, and the remainder for private occupation. A little over one-third of the area of the land resumed for this portion of the railway belongs to the Crown.

At Charity Creek, 11 miles 25 chains from Sydney, there is a 15-feet brick culvert. A 20-feet arch has been built of brick over a creek at 13 miles 18 chains, and one 30 feet at another creek 14 miles 78 chains. In addition to these there are a large number of brick and concrete culverts, waterways, and numerous box drains. An additional platform and double line of rails have been laid to meet the junction requirements at Strathfield.

At 7 miles 58 chains, where the Parramatta-road crosses the line on the level, a gatehouse will shortly be erected. There is an overbridge at 8 miles 25 chains, and another, on the skew, at 9 miles 62 chains, 14 feet wide, built for double line; and a timber subway, 10 feet wide, at 9 miles 73 chains. The first stopping place reached after leaving the junction is at 10 miles 11 chains, where there is a platform, 264 feet by 12 feet, and timber waiting-shed. A 12-feet timber opening has been provided at 10 miles 48 chains to serve as a passage for cattle.

The handsome viaduct spanning the Parramatta River at Ryde has been constructed for a double line of rails, and consists of two continuous wrought-iron main lattice girders, each 956 feet 4 inches in length, placed over six openings or spans each 150 feet wide in the clear. The girders are 17 feet 4 inches in depth, placed 25 feet 6 inches apart, and are carried by massive stone abutments at the shore ends and by five piers of cast-iron cylinders in the stream. The cylinders are sunk in pairs 28 feet apart, centre to centre, securely tied and braced together down to high-water level, and finished off on top with octagonal cups and bed-plates. The longitudinal distance from centre to centre of cylinder piers is 159 feet, leaving a clear waterway in each opening of 150 feet in breadth and 38 feet in height. The cylinders are all sunk down into the solid sandstone rock, the centre piers to a depth of 64 feet below the river bed, through mud and sand, the total depth of these piers being 126 feet. The cylinders are of 9 feet external diameter from the top to 4 feet below high-water level. Below that, exclusive of tapered rings, they are 11 feet in diameter. Their total length is 852 feet, and they are all filled up solid with sandstone concrete, having an ashlar block 6 feet x 6 feet x 2 feet bedded in the concrete at the top for the girder and expansion roller-plates and slides to rest upon. On each pair of cylinders two wrought iron octagonal pilasters with suitable cornices and mouldings are fixed, the height of these being 20 feet. The main girders are connected, with overhead braces, one being placed at each end of the lattices, one over each pier, and three over each 150 feet span, making in all 25 on the structure. The clear headway from rail level to soffit of arched bracing being 16 feet 9 inches. The cross girders or transoms carrying the roadway are 3 feet in depth. They are spaced 6 feet 4 inches apart, and rest upon the bottom booms of the main girders. The roadway is carried on the transoms by four longitudinal rail strings, 15 x 8 inches, and two side strings, 9 x 8 inches, the rail strings being supported for their whole length by suitable iron girders, to which they are bolted for the purpose of stiffening the roadway. The planking is 9 x 2 inches, with 9 x 4 inch bearers spaced every 3 feet, to which the rails are screwed and spiked. The massive masonry abutments of the viaduct are founded well into the solid rock. The width of the face of the abutments is 37 feet, and the depth to the back wall is 57 feet. They are built of freestone ashlar in cement, with a series of longitudinal and cross tie walls, the voids being filled up with shivers and gravel. The spandrils are arched over throughout, and the haunches and crown tilled in and over with concrete brought up flush and 2 foot 6 inches below formation level. The quoins, plinths, parapets, string courses and copings are all of fine dressed freestone, and the whole presents an elegant and chaste appearance The rails on this bridge are 41 feet above high water level. The total length of the bridge, including abutments, is 1059 feet. The superstructure, weighing 1286 tons, was built by A. Handyside and Co., of Derby, and the cylinders, weighing 985 tons, were sup-plied by the Stockton Forge Company, England. The total value of ironwork being £29,509. A roadway, 40 feet wide with retaining wall, has been made at the foot of the abutment under the Sydney end of this bridge.

The next platform is at 10 miles 73 chains close by the northern end of the bridge spanning the Parramatta River, where there is a platform 264 x 12, and timber waiting-shed.

Ryde station is situated at 11 miles 65 chains. Here there is a level crossing where the main road from Gladesville to Parramatta crosses the line; the gatehouse being built of brick, with iron roof, and containing five rooms and verandah. The neat little brick passenger station, having an iron roof and verandah to platform front and porch to road front, contains a general waiting-room, 20 feet x 17 feet; ticket office and ladies' waiting-room, each 15 feet x 14 feet; lamp-room, sheds, &c. The platform is 330 feet in length by 12 feet in width, and is ramped. A double siding and goods shed, 60 feet x 16 feet, built of timber and galvanised iron, on brick piers, with outside uncovered platform 84 feet x 12 feet, an office 12 feet x 10 feet, and two outside covered platforms, each 6 feet wide, extending the whole length of the building, back and front, have also been provided. Opposite the goods warehouse on the down side is situated a very comfortable residence for the master in charge of the station, containing six rooms, with hall, lobby, pantry, and other conveniences. This house is built of brick, and the roof and verandah are covered with corrugated iron. There are two other overbridges at 12 miles 36 chains, and 13 miles respectively.

At Eastwood. 13 miles 14 chains distant from Sydney, there is a level crossing lending to road approach to the station, near which is the house provided for the stationmaster, of the same size and description as that erected at Ryde. The neat-looking weatherboard passenger station, built on piles, has an iron roof, and contains a general waiting room 20 feet x 17 feet, ticket office and ladies' waiting room, each 15 feet x 14 feet; also yards, sheds, &c. This building has a verandah to platform, and a porch as well as verandah to road approach. At this place the platform is 330 feet x 12 feet, and ramped as usual. A siding 10 chains long has been put in for passing trains. An occupation overbridge has been erected at 13½ miles.

Further on, at a place called Field of Mars, 14 miles 65 chains, there is a platform 264-foot long x 12 feet broad, together with a small weatherboard waiting-shed.

Similar accommodation has been provided at the next stopping place, named **Beecroft**, 16 miles 38 chains.

Pennant Hills platform is reached at 17 miles 51 chains from Sydney, where there is an overbridge 26 feet wide, built on brick piers, with stone capping. Another overbridge has been erected at 18 miles 8 chains.

Tenders have been invited for the last two stations upon this length, viz., Thornleigh 18 miles 13 chains; and Hornsby, 20 miles 73 chains. At the former place there will be a weatherboard passenger station building, built on piles, with iron roof and verandah to platform front. This building will contain a general waiting-room, 14 x 13; ticket office and ladies' waiting room, each 10 x 13, with yards, in which will be erected sheds, &c. The ramped platform will be made 264 feet in length by 12 feet in width. There will also be built on the up side, and nearly opposite to the passenger station, a five-roomed brick cottage, for the use of the station-master. Between Thornleigh and Hornsby stations are four more overbridges, two being built on the skew.

At Hornsby, which will remain the terminus for some time to come, a level crossing and gate-house will be provided. The passenger-station building will be of brick with iron roof, having porch and verandahs to approach from the road, and verandah to platform front; and contain a general waiting room, 22 x 17; parcels office and ladies' waiting room, each 16 x 14; and ticket and station-master's office, each 14 x 14; also, lamp and porters' rooms, yards, &c. The station-master's house is to be placed on the down side of the line, near the Sydney end of the passenger station. There will be a siding here with platform 330 feet x 15 feet, also a goods shed 60 feet x 16 feet built of timber and corrugated iron on brick foundations, with two outside uncovered platforms, each 84 feet x 12 feet; an office and also two outside covered platforms, both 6 feet wide, and running the whole length of the building back and front. A double siding for loading or unloading purposes has been put in. Underground rain water tanks have been provided at the stations, and galvanised iron tanks at the platforms. Mr. William Robinson is the contractor for the station buildings at Ryde and Eastwood.