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Focus on - Victoria's Narrow Gauge Beech Forest Line - Part Two

By Thompson, John E.

Puffing Billy Preservation Society, Belgrave, Victoria, Australia, 2006. Soft Cover. Condition: New. No Jacket. First Edition. 42 pages sepia toned photos - The former Victorian Railways, the state railway authority in Victoria, Australia built a number of experimental 2 ft 6 in (762 mm) narrow gauge railway lines around the beginning of the 20th century. A depression in the early 1890s brought a halt to the rapid expansion of railways in Victoria. Politicians promoted narrow gauge lines as a way to link remote communities, particularly in hilly country, without the expense of the 5 ft 3 in (1,600 mm) broad gauge railways. Railways officials opposed them, citing the inconvenience and expense of a break-of-gauge. A parliamentary committee eventually identified 14 possible locations for narrow gauge railways, and recommended that four experimental lines be built. They were: Lilydale - Warburton : Wangaratta - Whitfield : Upper Ferntree Gully - Gembrook : Colac - Beech Forest. The third line to open was in the Otway Ranges in southwest Victoria. The line from Colac to Beech Forest opened in March 1902, and it was extended to Crowes in June 1911. Nearly 44 miles (70.8 km) long, this was the longest of the narrow...



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