

In a further report, dated October, 1873, Higinbotham claimed the following advantages would be derived from the "Outer Circle" railway. It would :

- connect the Gippsland line with the existing Government system ;*
- provide railway service to a large and important suburban area ;*
- provide an easy and cheap means of extending railways to Heidelberg and other places north and north-east of the Outer Circle line ;*
- serve as an approach for all Government railways to a central passenger station, if this were subsequently found desirable.*

The first of the extended series of negotiations for the purchase of the Hobson's Bay United Railway collapsed in November, 1873 ; construction of the Gippsland railway was postponed and Higinbotham's plans for an Outer Circle line were abandoned. Eventually, purchase was ratified by Act of Parliament on November 14, 1878. The Gippsland line, by then nearing completion, was connected with Melbourne by way of Oakleigh to the Hobson's Bay system at South Yarra on April 2, 1879. Higinbotham had been removed from office on "Black Wednesday"*—January 8, 1878—and, of course, was not in the Railway Department when these events occurred.

*p. 120

General extension of the State railways was approved by Act of Parliament No. 682, assented to on December 28, 1880. Among the 23 new lines authorized were North Melbourne to Coburg (5 miles), and Clifton Hill to Alphington (2½ miles). These might well be regarded as portions of Higinbotham's proposed Outer Circle railway although not included in the term Outer Circle line used in later years to describe the connexion between the Heidelberg and Gippsland lines.

The former was opened for traffic on September 9, 1884 ; the latter, though completed in 1885, was not worked until May 8, 1888, when through running from Melbourne to Heidelberg began, *via* the newly completed Royal Park and Clifton Hill section.

According to unofficial information, the residents adjacent to the Clifton Hill-Alphington line arranged a local train service during the period in which the railway lay idle. A report claims that passenger traffic was worked with a gas engine, supplied by Messrs. John Danks & Son, fitted to a carriage. Operating between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., the service was controlled by the train driver, who also acted as guard and ticket seller.

Then came the "Octopus Act"—No. 821, December 12, 1884. Included in the 66 new lines authorized by this Act were:

Burnley to Waverley Road (5½ miles), Royal Park to Clifton Hill (2½ miles), and the Outer Circle railway from Oakleigh to near Alphington (9½ miles).

The latter two lines, together with the two sections approved in 1880, traversed approximately the route of Higinbotham's "Outer Circle" plan. The Burnley to Waverley Road section later became known as the Glen Iris line.

Duncan Gillies, who, as Minister of Railways, introduced the Bill, declared that the Outer Circle railway would enable a considerable amount of goods traffic from the Gippsland line to be diverted from the suburban system between Oakleigh, South Yarra and Melbourne. Also, firewood traffic from the

Lilydale line could be worked through the Outer Circle for delivery to northern suburbs. When completed, however, the new railway was never used to any extent for these purposes. Other than for very limited local goods business, it was used for passenger traffic only.

More than three years after the passing of the "Octopus Act", Messrs. Graham and Wadick were, on April 13, 1888, awarded a contract to build the Outer Circle railway for £125,016. The route commenced at the Gippsland line near Oakleigh and terminated at Fairfield Park on the Heidelberg line—a distance of $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The work did not include station buildings, or the supply of rails. Three weeks earlier, Messrs. David Munro and Co. contracted to build the Burnley to Waverley Road line (there joining the Outer Circle), $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, for £58,169.

On March 24, 1890, the Burnley to Waverley Road line, and that portion of the Outer Circle railway from Waverley Road to Oakleigh—1 mile 5 chains—were opened for traffic. So far as can be ascertained, passengers from and to Melbourne changed trains at Burnley, from where a local service ran to Oakleigh. The time-table provided 14 trains each way daily, and six on Sundays. Stations from Burnley were: Richmond Park, Heyington, North Malvern, Tooronga, Gardiner, Glen Iris, Darling, Waverley, and Oakleigh.

Passenger service between Camberwell, Waverley Road and Oakleigh commenced on May 30, 1890. Travellers from and to Melbourne changed trains at Camberwell. Thirteen trips each way daily and six on Sundays were provided. Running time between Camberwell and Oakleigh occupied 19 minutes.

Through fares, Melbourne to Oakleigh, were:

1st-class: 1/- single, 1/6d. return
2nd-class: 9d. single, 1/1½d. return

Stations between Camberwell and Waverley Road were Riversdale, Hartwell, and Norwood (renamed Ashburton on December 12, 1890).

The final section of the Outer Circle railway—from Riversdale to Fairfield Park—was opened on March 24, 1891. This included a loop line about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile long, from near Shenley connecting with the Lilydale line near Canterbury. The loop was to provide an outlet for the expected firewood traffic, from Lilydale, that did not materialize. There is reason to believe that only very few trains, including one or two picnic excursions, travelled on the loop during the years it was in existence.

To avoid traversing the line from Camberwell to Riversdale to join the Fairfield Park section, it was proposed to construct a loop from near Camberwell to Shenley, but this did not eventuate.

Completion of the Outer Circle railway did not bring a through service between Oakleigh and Fairfield Park. Local services operated from Camberwell to Waverley Road and Oakleigh, and from Riversdale to Fairfield Park, connecting there with the Heidelberg line, which ran from Spencer Street *via* North Melbourne, Royal Park, and Clifton Hill. Passengers from and to Melbourne

(Princes Bridge) to Fairfield Park by way of the Outer Circle railway changed trains at Camberwell and Riversdale. A service to Oakleigh on the Glen Iris line from Burnley was maintained.

Eight trains daily each way served the Riversdale-Fairfield Park section; there were no trains on Sundays. Through fares from Melbourne were the same as those on the Oakleigh division. Intermediate stations between Riversdale and Fairfield Park were—Shenley, Deepdene, East Kew, Willsmere, and Fulham Grange. In addition to connecting with the Heidelberg service, the Fairfield Park line gave access to the Collingwood line, through Clifton Hill.

Traffic on the Outer Circle railway was very light, mainly because of the sparse population of the area served by the line. The longer distances to Melbourne and the "dead-end" working of the line sections were also contributing factors for the meagre patronage.

Operating economy was effected by substituting two Rowan steam cars for locomotives to work the local services, commencing on October 12, 1892. But the severe financial depression then prevailing reduced revenue to such an extent that the Deepdene to Fairfield Park section was closed on April 12, 1893—never to re-open for passenger traffic. The Riversdale to Deepdene portion was closed on December 14, 1893.

The service between Camberwell and Oakleigh continued, with a reduction to six trains each way daily, the majority terminating at Waverley Road, where connexion was made with the Melbourne to Burnley and Oakleigh trains.

No improvement in traffic returns resulted. On December 9, 1895, the Oakleigh to Ashburton section was closed, together with the portion of the Burnley line from Darling to Waverley Road. These sections, also, were never re-opened for traffic, and were subsequently dismantled. The remaining $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Ashburton to Camberwell was worked with seven trips daily, until the service was discontinued on April 30, 1895. The whole Outer Circle Railway from Oakleigh to Fairfield Park was then idle.

Following and during the closure of the line, a privately-owned horse cab service began working between Camberwell and Burwood. It was subsidized by the Railway Department at a yearly rate of £200. Starting from Camberwell station, the route traversed Burke, Camberwell, and Norwood Roads to the terminus at Burwood Post Office. Eight trips each way daily between 8.25 a.m. and 11.50 p.m. and three on Sundays, connected with trains at Camberwell. The cab journey between the terminals occupied 30 minutes, and the fare for rail passengers was 3d. Holders of railway periodical tickets from Riversdale, Hartwell and Ashburton travelled free.

The Camberwell to Ashburton line was re-opened on July 4, 1898, with seven return trips daily and the cab service was discontinued as a railway auxiliary.

Operations were resumed on the Riversdale-Deepdene section on May 14, 1900. A new station (East Camberwell) on the Box Hill line was opened on the same day. Here, a lower level platform had been constructed for working the Outer Circle railway. An additional station (Stanley) at Mont Albert Road, between Shenley and Deepdene, had also been erected.

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No. 1 Rowan Car

*Pic. p. 223

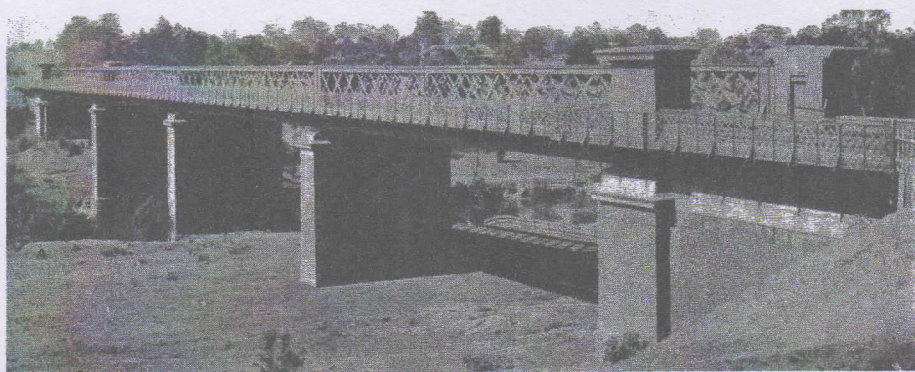
Through local working from Deepdene to Ashburton began with this restoration of service. East Camberwell station removed the necessity for the Outer Circle line trains running into Camberwell. Passengers from and to Melbourne changed trains at East Camberwell. Time-tables provided for 10 trains daily.

Despite strict economy and the adoption of the cheapest possible form of operation, the revenue from the Outer Circle railway was insufficient to cover working costs from the outset and losses on the line continued to increase. "Motor" type locomotives (Z class, 2-4-OT)* hauling two carriages, replaced the Rowan cars about 1900. From 1910, F class, 2-4-OT motor engines worked on the line, with usually one "American" pattern carriage. The "motor locomotives" were operated by an engine driver, without a fireman. Staff had been withdrawn from the stations in 1900, and the train guard issued and collected tickets at stations. The train was locally known as "The Deepdene Dasher."

With a gradual increase of population in the area, action was taken to have the Deepdene to Fairfield Park section re-opened. On May 5, 1909, a deputation representing the municipalities of Kew, Camberwell, Collingwood, Northcote, and Heidelberg waited on the Minister of Railways (Alfred Arthur Billson) to request that this line be restored to use. The deputation offered to provide a guarantee against operating losses.

In a report dated December 7, 1909, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways, to whom the matter had been referred, recommended that land-owners near East Kew, who would benefit by the re-opening of the line, should pay £216 to cover the estimated loss on the first year's working and that the Kew Municipal Council should provide a guarantee of £216 yearly for 19 years (or such lesser sum as may be necessary) to meet the losses from the second year. Should the line pay expenses before the expiration of the 20-year period, the council's guarantee would be cancelled.

Outer Circle Railway Bridge over River Yarra, Fairfield



The recommendations were either not acceptable to Kew Council and the property owners, or were not approved by the Government. In any case, the Railways Commissioners were opposed to the re-opening of the line.

When the electric tramways system was extended across the Outer Circle railway to Burwood and other portions of Camberwell Municipality in 1912, such a large decrease in rail passengers resulted that one carriage instead of two was sufficient to accommodate traffic on the line. Between 1912 and 1918, the annual loss due to electric tramways competition was estimated to average over 250,000 passengers.

In 1918, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways investigated the prospects of the line. The committee recommended on December 20, 1918, that the Deepdene to Ashburton line be closed for passenger traffic as from August 1, 1919, and that the portion from Burwood be then dismantled. The committee also recommended the immediate dismantling of the railway from Willsmere to Deepdene and from Ashburton to Waverley Junction.

The Railways Commissioners had, in 1918, recommended the closing and dismantling of the entire Outer Circle line. However, the Standing Committee's recommendations were not carried out, and service continued.

After the termination of the 1914-18 War, the population in the areas adjacent to the line rapidly increased. As part of the extension of the electrification of Melbourne suburban railways,* the Camberwell to Ashburton line was equipped for electric traction which was introduced on November 1, 1924.

Steam trains continued on the East Camberwell to Deepdene section until August 16, 1926, when rail motors were substituted.

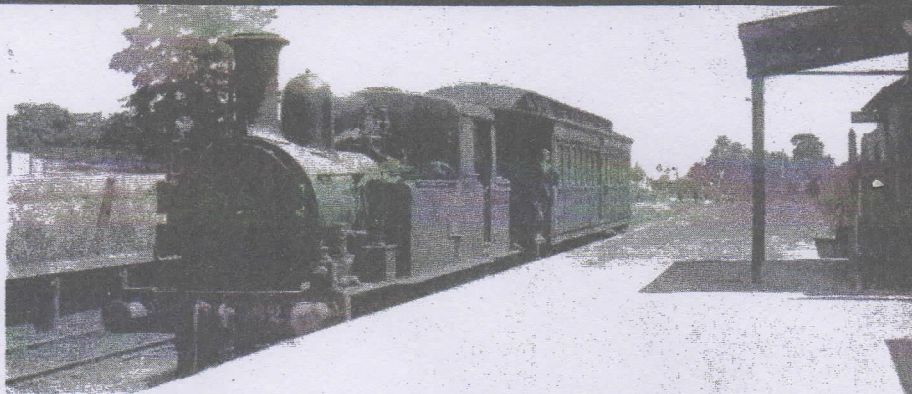
It was a regular sight to observe two rail motors, coupled back to back, working passenger traffic on the line. The rail motors were withdrawn on October 9, 1927, and a road motor omnibus service, still operating, began on October 10, 1927. This substitution brought about the permanent closure of the East Camberwell-Deepdene line.

From February 11, 1925, to September 6, 1943, a steam goods service worked, when required, between Riversdale and East Kew. A short section of track, about one-third of a mile long, from Fairfield to the Australian Paper Mills, is still in use for goods traffic to and from the latter.

Increasing population and widening of settlement beyond Darling (since 1895, the terminus of the Burnley to Waverley Road line) brought about an extension of the railway through East Malvern to Glen Waverley, a distance of six miles. Train operation on the first portion to East Malvern was commenced on February 3, 1929. The remaining five miles to Glen Waverley were opened on May 5, 1930, with through electric service to Melbourne.

To meet the requirements of a new residential area, the line beyond Ashburton was rehabilitated for a distance of about three-quarters of a mile in 1947. A new station, named Alamein, was opened on June 28, 1948, and is the present terminus of the railway from Camberwell.

*Ch. 17, p. 109



"Deepdene Dasher" at Deepdene

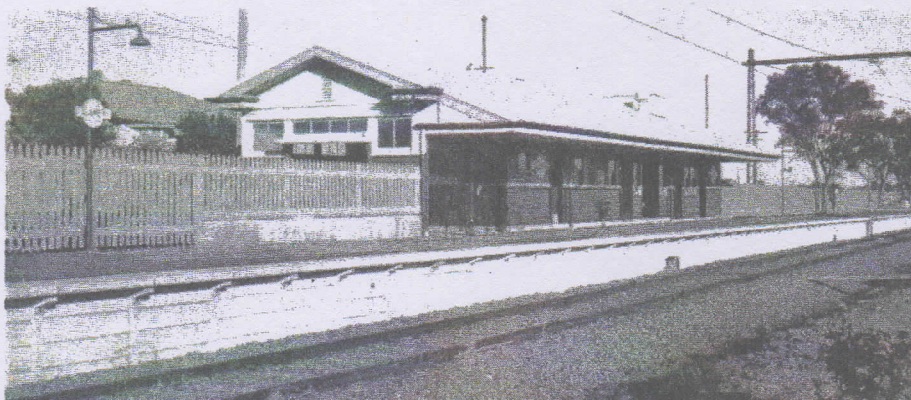
So, with the passing of the years, the Outer Circle railway has practically vanished. Of the line's total original length of about $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles (including the Canterbury loop and the Riversdale junction) only $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles now remain. These comprise a portion 30 chains long from Fairfield to the Australian Paper Mills, and the section from Riversdale to Alamein.

The other parts were dismantled at various times. The following list shows the sections of track taken up and the approximate dates on which they were removed :

Canterbury loop line	—	1903-04
Neerim Road crossing	—	1911
Between Fulham Grange and East Kew ; and between Ashburton and Waverley Road (portions)	—	1916
From north side of Yarra to Princess Street, Kew	—	1930
Darling to Waverley Road (61 chains)	—	1936-37
From Princess Street to East Kew and Waverley Road to Oakleigh Junction	—	8/6/1940
From East Kew to Riversdale Junction	—	25/5/1946

In 1929 the Yarra bridge, between Fulham Grange and Willsmere, was leased to the Board of Land and Works, together with a portion of the railway reserve sufficient to form a public roadway from the north side of the river to Princess Street, Kew. The bridge and new roadway form part of the Chandler Highway.

Alamein station



From time to time, several portions of the railway lands which became idle after the closing or dismantling of the lines were disposed of by lease or sale to the Kew and Camberwell municipalities, and to the State Electricity Commission of Victoria.

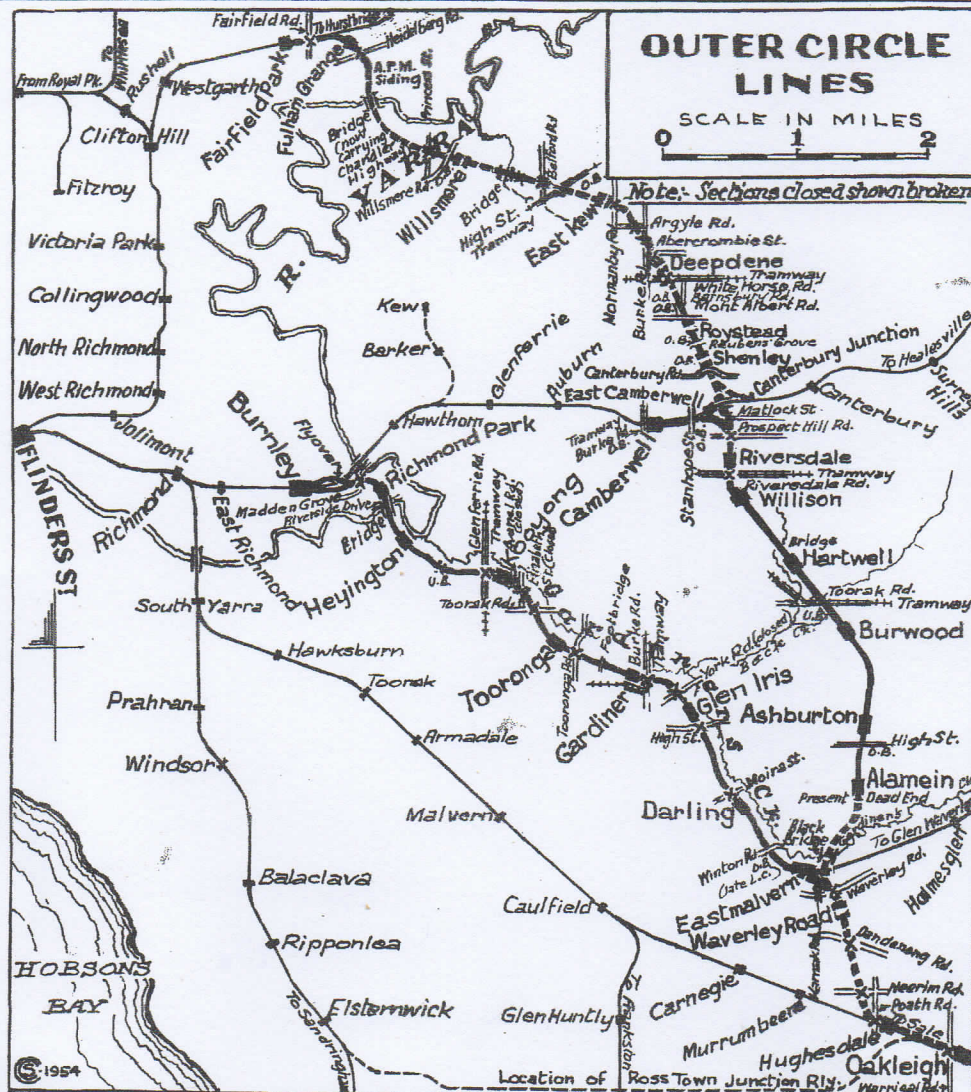
LIST OF STATIONS - OUTER CIRCLE RAILWAY

Name	Date opened
Fairfield Park	8/5/1888
Fulham Grange	24/3/1891
Willsmere	"
East Kew	"
Deepdene	"
Shenley	"
Stanley	14/5/1900
renamed Balwyn -/12/1902	
renamed Roystead -/-/1922	
East Camberwell	14/5/1900
Riversdale	30/5/1890
Golf Links	1909-10
renamed Willison 23/7/1936	
Hartwell Hill	1905-06
renamed Hartwell 1/8/1909	
Hartwell	30/5/1890
renamed Burwood 1/8/1909	
Norwood	30/5/1890
renamed Ashburton 12/12/1890	
Alamein	28/6/1948
Waverley	24/3/1890
renamed Waverley Road 23/6/1890	
Oakleigh	2/4/1879

BURNLEY TO WAVERLEY ROAD

(Stations opened 24/3/1890)

Burnley	
Richmond Park	Closed -/5/1890
Heyington	
North Malvern	
renamed Kooyong	
Tooronga	
Gardiner	
Glen Iris	
Darling	
Waverley Road	Closed 9/12/1895



provide any connections for passengers between the three shuttle services!

It is not surprising, therefore, that there was a poor response in patronage. On the Fairfield Park-Riversdale line, the total revenue from its five stations for the year ending 30th June 1892 was £234.18.4! In the last 10 months of its operation, it only made £183.14.9. In the depression years, following their opening, the closing of the three sections occurred between 1893 and 1897, except for a shuttle service remaining to work between Burnley and Darling on the Glen Iris line.

In 1896, traffic was resumed on the Camberwell to Ashburton section with a further resumption of working between Riversdale and Deepdene in 1900. The provision of a low-level platform at a new station, known as East Camberwell, on the main Healesville line, became the exchange point for city passengers for a new shuttle service between Ashburton and Deepdene, the Camberwell-Riversdale triangle loop being only used for exchange of cars or engines. The lines passed through many vicissitudes and there were numerous alterations in train working and at stations, the latter being dealt with separately.

At the present time, only two sections are in use; Burnley to East-Malvern with extension to Glen Waverley, and Camberwell to Alamein, both being electrically worked. A wired siding, 30 chains in length, uses the aban-