

SAHRIS OBJECT PDF REPORT

Object Code: 9/2/018/0183

Quantity: 1.00

Cultural Association:

Maker:

Production Place:

Description:

Here in the midst of Cape Town in the modern railway station building stands a monument which calls our attention for a moment from the romantic past, epitomised in the Castle and Parade, to the realities of the age of the machine : an old railway engine. For a long time the building of a railway in the Cape Colony was the subject of hesitation and controversy. At last, in 1857, the "Cape Town Railway and Dock Company" obtained the permission of the Cape Government to build railways from Cape Town to Wellington and Wynberg. In 1859 this locomotive, made by Hawthorne of Leith in Scotland, arrived in South Africa together with its driver, William Dabbs. The locomotive was probably used in the construction of its own track to Eerste River. In 1863 the line to Wellington was completed and the engine put into service on it ; in the following year the line to Wynberg was opened. The standard gauge of 1,434 metres was used, but when the Cape Government took over the Railways in 1873 it decided to adopt a gauge of 1,066 metres for all lines and to alter old lines accordingly. To avoid the immediate loss of all rolling stock, an intermediate rail was placed between the existing ones. When the conversion to the narrower gauge was completed in 1881 the period of service of the old engine and of its driver came to an end.