Catching the Bunny
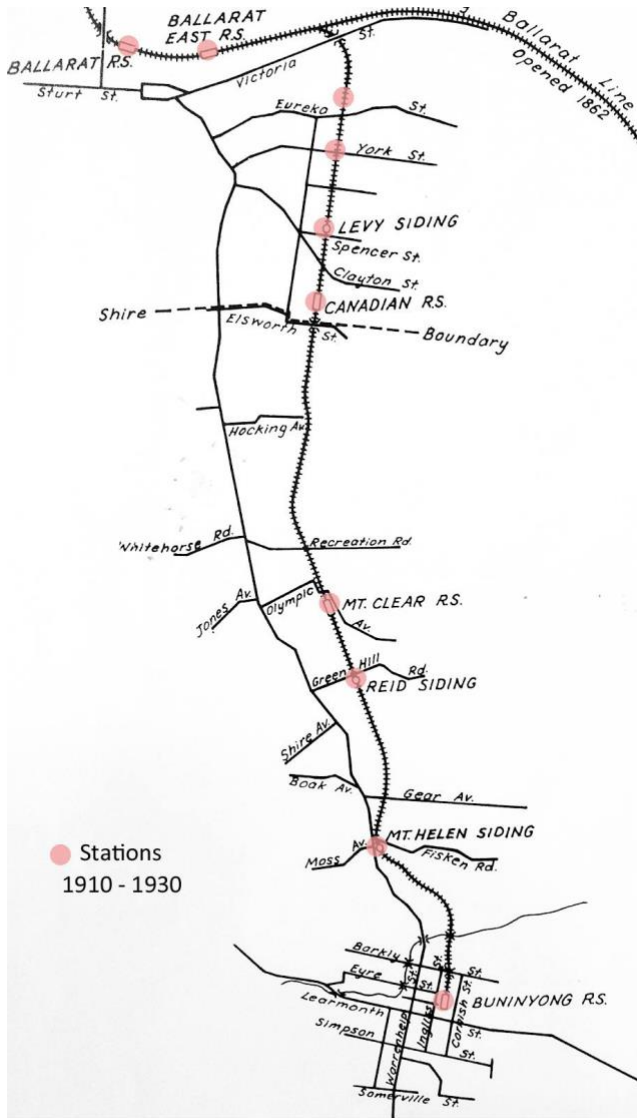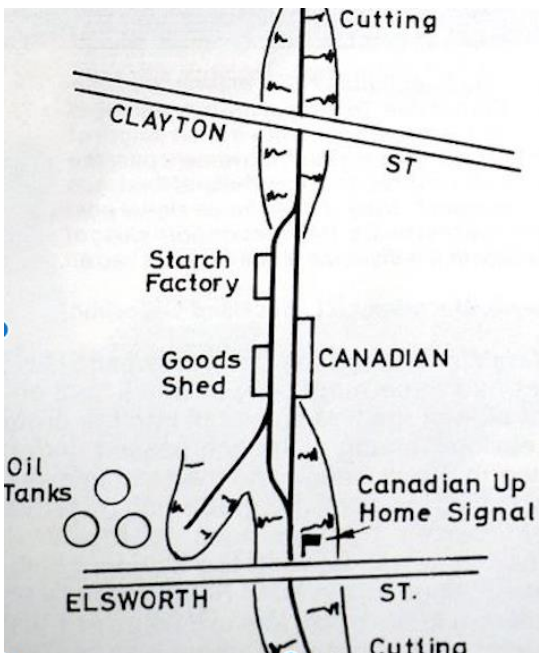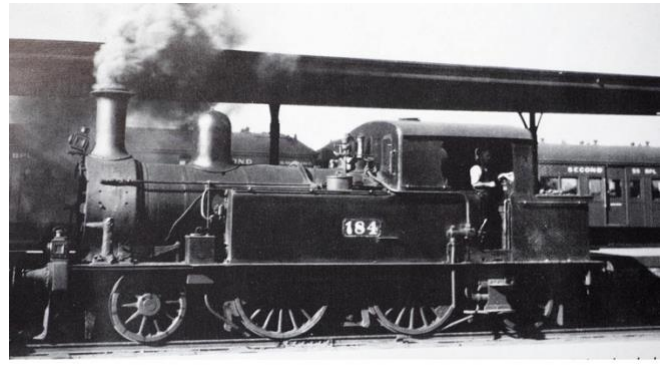

The amount of stations fluctuated from 6 in 1890
to 10 during 1910 to 1930 and 5 in 1947.

● Stations
1910 - 1930

Canadian Station 1947

Buninyong Line train waiting to depart from Ballarat Railway Station, North platform.in the early 1920s

Image 1

The Buninyong Junction just near the King St Footbridge,with Queen St in the distance.
Have a look at the beautiful lights on the bridge

Image 2

The end of the line. In the right foreground is the original Buninyong line, in the background a steam engine shunts.
Those huge tanks are Atlantic Oil Co. This photo was taken from the Eureka St road bridge looking North.

Image 3

The rail line in 1948 looking at the Eureka St Bridge from York St

Image 4

A Ballarat bound ex Buninyong goods in the vicinity of Mt Clear but also looks a bit like terrain between Spencer and Wilson Sts.
This picture was taken on the 12th June 1940 by W.Jack.

Image 5

On the bank at Mt Helen, just leaving Buninyong on one of the steepest grades in the district, a 1 in 40. Taken during the War on 13th November 1940.

Image 6

Buninyong Railway Station in the distance, the road bridge and cutting in the foreground. This image taken by the intrepid photographer who climbed the signal tower to get this shot.

Image 7

Buninyong station

Image 8

The "Bunny" railway began at Ballarat West station, passed through Ballarat East and ran through a cutting under Victoria St, so large a culvert was placed over Specimen Vale Creek, using the material from the cutting to level the track.

From there, the track headed south through Eureka Siding/Station where another cutting was made under Eureka St and a road bridge built over this. The line then dropped down a steep grade towards York St where it crossed a level crossing and continued through a large wide cutting that ran parallel to where Rodier St now runs.

York St Station was opened around 1905 and intending passengers had to wave a red flag by day and there was a red light by night.

Once the track crossed Wilson St, it headed into open farmland and crossed the Pennyweight Gully Creek and just south of that was Levy Station, opened in 1904 and formerly named Spencers Crossing. The line continued on to Spencer St, where the line had to be built up for the crossing. At Clayton St, another cutting and road bridge and once through the cutting, Canadian Railway Station was just a short distance.

Canadian Station was opened on 12th September 1889.

This was a serious station, with a Station Master, a goods shed and passenger platform approx. 30 metres long. Canadian also had a loop siding to service industries in the area, including a sawmill and starch mill. During the second world war an inland Aviation Fuel depot was located on the west side of the station.

After leaving Canadian, the line crossed Elsworth St East and one can imagine the beautiful country this line went through from then.

The next station, Mt Clear, was the longest distance between any station on this route, approx. 2 miles. Mt Clear also had a Station Master, platform about 30 metres long and a waiting shed.

Mt Clear Station located just South of Olympic Avenue. Next stop was Reid, or Reid's Crossing, which was just off Greenhill Road and this opened in 1902 but was never manned, it did have a waiting shed with a name board.

Mount Helen Station was the next stop and situated near the intersection of Moss Avenue and Fiskens Road. There is a reference to Green Hill platform, which was a flag stop, between Mt Helen and Buninyong.

From this point, it was all downhill into Buninyong via the steep gradient that everyone is familiar with.

There were times when this line was flush with passengers and traffic and one account states:

Around 3000 passengers travelled to Buninyong in a day for picnic and race day excursions. There were even trains waiting to cross each other at Canadian. Some of these trains also ran express to Wendouree Station which was just West of Forest St, Wendouree. These trains from Buninyong also were timetabled to meet with Melbourne bound trains at Ballarat Station.

In its heyday, the Buninyong line was a very busy thoroughfare. The passenger statistics bear this out with 62,000 passengers in 1915 and one would imagine that there would have been a lot more in earlier days as numbers by then were already declining. Factors including the decline of gold mining and industry downturn, spelt the demise of the once flourishing passenger service.

The daily went from a steam train to a rail motor and on the 13th July 1931, the Buninyong to Ballarat passenger service ended Goods services also took a hit and were reduced to one train a fortnight or as required. Buninyong was used as an Army Stores depot during World War 2 and Canadian Station housed a inland Aviation Fuel Depot but once the war was over, that was the death knell for the line and it finally closed on 28th February 1947 except for the short section between Ballarat East and Eureka which remained open for the fuel depot until 1989.