

FORSTER RAILWAY.
BREAKWATER 1898-1903

From the earliest days it was essential, when all goods in and out our port depended on shipping, that the bar at all times be navigable. The experts decided a breakwater along the Forster shore extending out to sea was the answer. The plans were made and tenders called. Hungerford and Son's tender for the construction of the southern breakwater at Forster was accepted in August 1898 and by later that year, the tramway was constructed.



Men at Work

A decision was made to quarry the rock needed from the northern face of Bennett's Head. The line was one and a half miles in length running along the coast from Bennett's Head behind Pilot Hill to the breakwater. A branch line cut off the main line at Beach Street intersection and ran down to a wharf situated about where the Red Spot Boatshed stands today.

Here supplies and especially coal for the engines was shipped in. The line crossed by the Tanks, so named because it was the site of the Railway's blacksmith shop and the water tanks, water being pumped from the well at the western base of the head. A weigh-bridge was in the middle of what is now the camping reserve to tally the weight of



the rocks used. The two Steam locomotives, used to carry the rocks in lumps of up to 9 or 10 tons, were originally brought from Bungwahl (Neranie) where they had been a part of an early timber harvesting rail system belonging to the Hudson Brothers.

Original Steam Locomotives used

The wall took three years to build and in 1900 the line was dismantled and shipped to Tasmania for similar work.

The Forster break wall was only partially successful in keeping the bar navigable so, in 1926, John Wright was granted a tender to construct a retaining wall on the Tuncurry shore.

Sketch of the original Tramway

