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PRICE 2d

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Wednesday. — The Chief
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With Old Phoenix Foundry

While replacing a length of tram line opposite Tunbridge's yesterday tramways workers completely uncovered two short lengths of line running parallel with Armstrong street. These rails are in such a position to remind Ballarat of a one-time thriving industry.

They recall the activities of the Phoenix Foundry in Armstrong street.

On March 3, exactly 77 years ago to-morrow, the foundry sent out its first locomotive to the West railway station. This, and all the engines that followed, was driven along the private railway line which was laid in the direction of the railway station.

Within 10 years Phoenix had built 100 locomotives, and on the day that the first engine was sent to the station, a public holiday was declared in Ballarat.

Early in the 1900's, however, a serious setback was experienced. This was not because of financial troubles, but because of a political bias.

Political End

When Ballarat sent a Labor member, Mr Scott Bennett, to the State Parliament, the anti-Labor Premier of Victoria, Thomas Bent, decided that if Bennett took his place in Parliament, Phoenix would no longer receive contracts from the Railways Department; and from that time the foundry lost its tenders to the Newport workshops.

The foundry, nevertheless, had built 345 locomotives before 1906.

Many of its engines are still used. Because it was no longer of use, the foundry's railway line was torn up.

In response to a request by the Historical Society some years ago, the Electricity authorities permitted a portion of the old line to be retained as a memento of one of Ballarat's greatest heavy industries.

● In the adjoining picture the two arrows mark the position of the line in question.

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