



**ON THIS PAGE TWO OF FRED SHEA'S  
LOCOMOTIVES.**

**LEFT.** 718 at Murray Bridge. The 710 class Mikado locomotives were essentially a copy the 700 class that had entered service in 1926. But whereas the 700 class locos had been built overseas, by 1928 Shea had upgraded the SAR Islington workshops and these 710 class locomotives were 'home built'. 22 April 1966. **JLW.**

Mr Anthony's support for the line through Horrocks Pass leaves us agog but on the positive side he advocated for the standard gauge to enter the Adelaide Railway Station by an eastern approach along the valley of the Torrens.

The 1920s was about faster and more powerful locomotives. It was South Australia that showed the way. Some say that the improvements on the South Australian broad-gauge network were rather flattering when considering the size of the network which was only about 2,500 miles. Add in that more than half of that mileage was narrow-gauge systems that saw very few visible improvements.

Webb arrived in South Australia in November 1922 but even before he had arrived in Adelaide, he called in to make the acquaintance of his Victorian counterpart Harold Clapp. Webb was an American from Texas, and Clapp, though born in Australia had been of American parentage. They would become a formidable twosome in bringing their respective systems up to date but, there was also an element of competition, each trying to outdo the other. Webb had worked out what type of locomotives he needed. They were bigger than anything that had previously been seen in Australia. But he needed a mechanical engineer who could design these locomotives, supervise their construction and nurse them through the running in troubles. co

Harold Clapp was certain he had the man that Webb needed and he recognised that in making the recommendation he stood to lose one of his best - Fred Shea.

There were three major projects underway in South Australia and they all had some connection to the gauge problem. Firstly, there was the broadening of the narrow-gauge Western System from Hamley Bridge to Moonta and Gladstone. The second was the extension of the broad-gauge line in the direction of Port Augusta, and finally the rehabilitation programme that was all about the big engines, the track and bridges that would carry them, the Islington Workshops, and the grand Adelaide Railway Station. These three projects had been integrated into one great spending spree by Webb.

Fred Shea's big engines came in 1926. The largest was the Mountain type which could get the Melbourne Express over Mount Lofty, whereas it previously took three engines, two pulling and one pushing. South Australians could wallow in the glory that they had the biggest engines in the country.

The 1920s were not a total loss. Prime Minister, Stanley Bruce deemed it worth a try to pick up the pieces left by the 1921 Royal Commission and commenced discussions with some of the Premiers soon after achieving office in 1923. There were two projects in his sights. Regarding the direct railway to Port Augusta he found Premier Barwell completely obstinate. He had a warmer reception from New South Wales and Queensland. The standard gauge railway from Kyogle (NSW) to South Brisbane was opened on 27 September 1930.

