

Activity sheet 4A

Transport in the 19th century: Library or online research

The online *Dictionary of Sydney* contains a good selection of images.

http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/transport?zoom_highlight=transport

Students can take note of the modes of transport available in Sydney:

1. Which forms of transport are no longer used in New South Wales today? Why have these become obsolete?
2. Briefly explain how transport in New South Wales changed during the 19th century.
3. Suggest some reasons for these changes.
4. What developments in the second half of the 19th century could help to explain these changes? Use sources and your own knowledge to answer this question.



Northwest

Activity sheet 4B

Study: A tramway incident, 'Steam Fiend' and fatal collision at Emu Plains

These illustrations and articles come from the *Illustrated Sydney News* and *Sydney Punch* in the 1870s and 1880s. Find the original two *Illustrated Sydney News* stories on the Trove (digitised newspapers) website.

1. According to the newspaper article entitled 'Fatal collision at Emu Plains on the Great Western Railway' (Source 1) what research did the illustrator of that event do to create his sketch of the Emu Plains collision?
2. According to the newspaper article entitled 'Our Government Tramways' (Source 3) what research did the illustrator of that event do to create his sketch of a tramway incident in the streets of Sydney in 1887?
3. How are these stories both similar and different from those featured in today's newspapers?
4. Why illustrations? How are they different from photographs?
5. What do the newspaper articles and their accompanying illustrations (Sources 1, 2 and 3) suggest about attitudes to these new forms of transport?
6. What aspects of change and continuity are highlighted in these sources?

Source 1



Figure 19: Illustration: Fatal Collision at Emu Plains on the Great Western Railway.



Northwest

Activity sheet 4B

continued

Source 1 (continued)

The full text of the article is available at <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/page/5452976>

Fatal collision at Emu Plains on the Great Western Railway

“On our first page we give an accurate sketch of the late dreadful accident at Emu Plains, the harrowing details of which have been so fully given by the daily newspapers. It appears that on Wednesday night, 30 January [1878], a special goods train of nine loaded trucks of kerosene shale left Bowenfels in charge of George Purdue (the guard), John Egan (driver), and John Larkins (stoker). Passing the regular stations at its due time, it arrived at Blue Mountain station, where the signal “all right” was shown; but the station-master called to the guard as the train was passing that he was late, to which Purdue returned the remark that he had “plenty of time for the Plains,” where he would cross the goods train with Sydney merchandise. At this point of the narrative some confusion prevails as to the exact place of crossing mentioned by the guard. The goods train referred to was duly started, and the two doomed trains hastened to destruction, both being involved in utter ruin. The combustible matters with which the trains were freighted took fire, and in addition to the horrors of the collision, came the calamity of a conflagration. Three men, Wiggins, Egan, and Brady, were killed, the others escaping with but little injury – a verdict of manslaughter being returned against Purdue, the guard. We are indebted to Mr. Alliband, the station-master at Emu Plains, for his courteous attention to our artist on his visit to the scene.”

Source: *Illustrated Sydney News*, Saturday, 23 February 1878.



Figure 20: How the article appeared in the *Illustrated Sydney News*, Saturday 23 February 1878.

Source: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/page/5452976>



Figure 21: How the illustration appeared on the cover of the *Illustrated Sydney News*, Saturday 23 February 1878.



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Activity sheet 4B

continued

Source 2

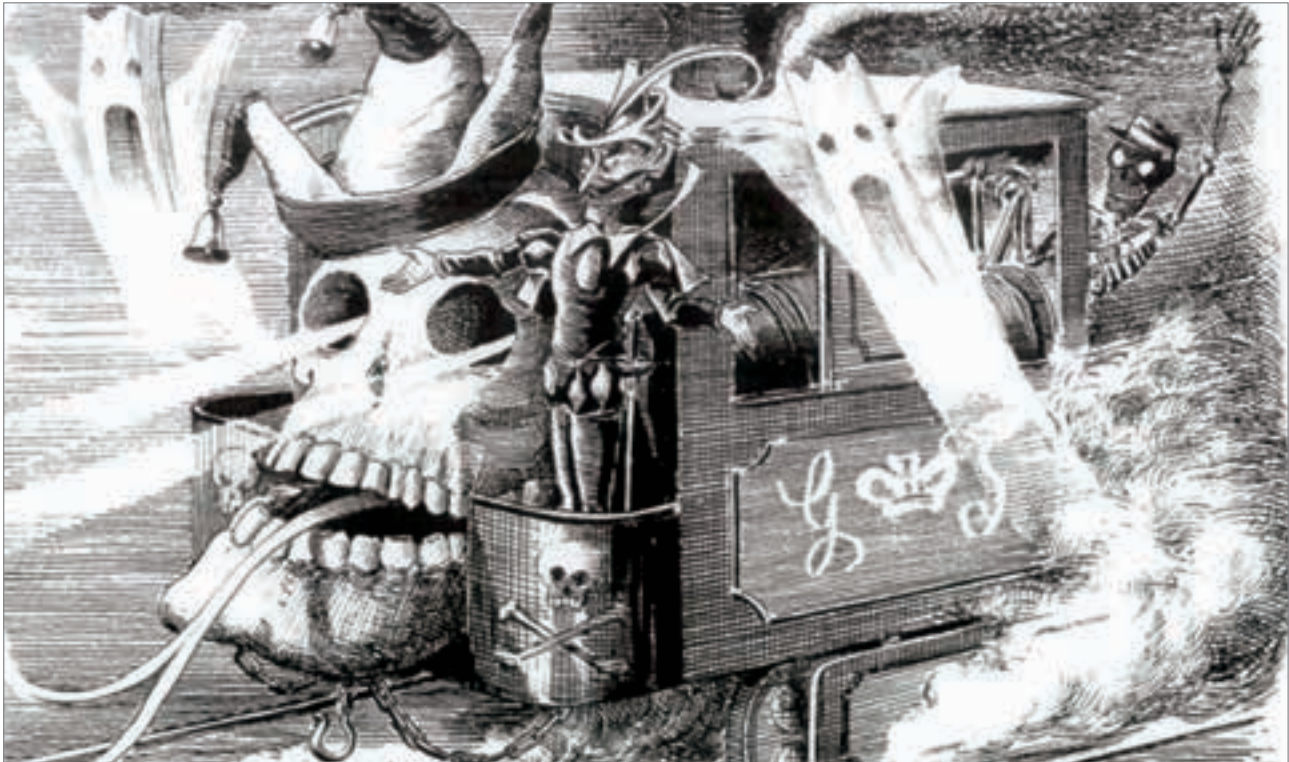


Figure 22: Cartoon - 'The Steam Fiend', Montagu Scott, *Sydney Punch*, 1881.

Source: Harold Finch-Hatton, *Advance Australia*, 1885.

Sydney's steam powered trams

Steam powered trams were introduced to Sydney in 1879 to coincide with the International Exhibition. Four Baldwin trams were imported from the United States and ran on tracks laid from Hunter Street along Elizabeth Street to the Devonshire Street Station. The system was cheap, efficient and relatively simple to install because the steam trams each carried their own source of power. During the next few years the service was extended to Woollahra, Waverley, Glebe, Forest Lodge, Camperdown, Leichhardt and Annandale.

Apart from noise and dirt, a major disadvantage of the small heavy machines was their inability to stop quickly. This meant they often ran down pedestrians with tragic results. One commentator said that they 'rush down the most crowded thoroughfares, terrifying horses and killing on an average, about two foot-passengers a week.' The same sentiment is expressed in this contemporary cartoon and within a decade the steam trams were referred to by the people of Sydney as the 'murderers'.



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continued

Source 3



Figure 23: Illustration – A tramway incident, Otto Fischer, *Illustrated Sydney News*, 15 March 1887.

Source: Trove, National Library of Australia.

The full text of the article can be found at

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/5788558?zoomLevel=1>

The author of the editorial accompanying this illustration in the *Illustrated Sydney News* wrote:

Our Government Tramways

“In the ordinary street traffic of all large cities the traveller is constantly surrounded by unsuspected dangers. In Sydney, for example, scarcely a week passes that does not furnish some evidence of the perils that beset pedestrians and all kinds of travellers by every means of locomotion...

Take, for example, the tramway system of Sydney. The danger, discomfort, and utter inconvenience of the system, is a serious reflection on the common sense of the community, and we doubt if public opinion, in any other part of Her Majesty’s dominions, would tolerate the continuance of such a nuisance as these cars are, both to the travelling and resident public, in the districts through which they pass.

The artist has here realised one of the many scenes that have occurred in the past, and which at any time in the future may form the subject of a sensational report in one of the daily newspapers, A lady with her infant child has just alighted from the tram car, the guard is in the act of blowing his whistle as an indication to the engine driver to steam ahead, with his living freight, when a cab dashes along and intercepts the progress to the footpath so that she is in imminent danger of being trampled under foot by the excited horse, maddened by the noise and confusion surrounding him. The illustration gives a very spirited and life-like portrayal of the situation, the terror of the unfortunate woman, the indignation of the crowd on the tram car, the characteristically cool indifference of the guard, and the efforts of the cabman to rein up his horse and thus avoid the impending catastrophe”.

Source: *Illustrated Sydney News*, 15 March 1887.



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