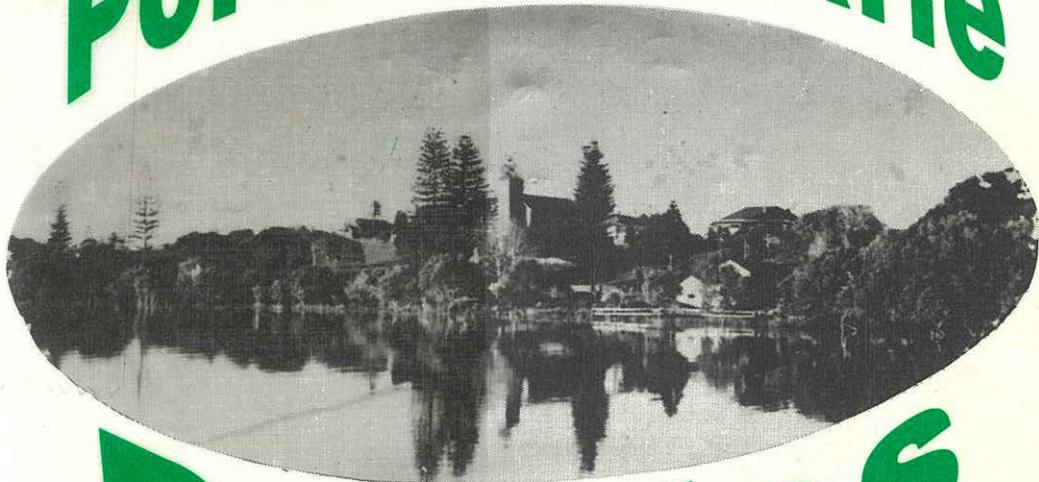


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Port Macquarie Profiles

Ian W. Symonds

Dedication

TO THE PIONEER FAMILIES
OF THE
HASTINGS VALLEY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BULLA BULLA, AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE SHIRE OF BULLA

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1991 BY THE HASTINGS DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
P.O. BOX 82, PORT MACQUARIE, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA 2444.

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The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of all those individuals and organisations who contributed to the production of this work, including the many descendants who were interviewed for their family histories.

Particular mention should also be made of the staff of the records and research section of the Historical Society, for the photographs, genealogical records, research material and support, with a special thanks to the researchers of yesteryear who laid the foundations of our institution.

Preface

Social history quickens the imagination and enables us to appreciate the nature of family and household life in bygone days. It also helps us to gain an idea of the prevailing working conditions and recreational pursuits of the community and to build an understanding of community attitudes generated by the austerities of life in a remote country district.

Established in 1821 as a penal settlement, Port Macquarie was thrown open to free settlement in 1830. The economic slump of 1840 brought real hardship to the district and numerous people were forced to leave and look for work elsewhere. But there were stalwarts who remained and who enabled the town to survive the later depression of the 1890s.

The collection of profiles seeks to portray the personalities and achievements of some of the men and women who brought Port Macquarie into the twentieth century. It is a book for browsing and does not pretend to be an exhaustive study of the life and times. It is hoped, however, that the publication of these profiles will stimulate interest in the history of the district and will encourage both residents and visitors to support the work of the Hastings District Historical Society Inc.

John M. Cowling
President
November, 1991.

Metrication

As these profiles of the men and women are of the period prior to the metric system no attempt has been made to introduce it as an alternative measurement.

Introduction

Port Macquarie was established as a penal colony by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1821 to replace Newcastle as a place of banishment for criminals and refractory convicts and when the system was disbanded in 1847, many of the emancipists chose to remain in the district in which they had been imprisoned, they, and their descendants, playing a major role in the early development of the Hastings Valley. Five of these pioneers have been portrayed within the pages of this social history where, they, and their families, have been integrated with the more fortunate who voluntarily sought to make a future here.

Although free settlement was permitted from 1830, most of the early settlers were forced to leave their holdings during the depression of the 1840's and it was not until the 1860's that life began to flow back into the region with many of the well-known families of today arriving during this period. Despite the harsh conditions and primitive communications, small communities began to spring up at Laurieton, Telegraph Point, Rollands Plains, Ennis, Beechwood, and Wauchope as these hardy men and women fought to lay the foundations of our present day society.

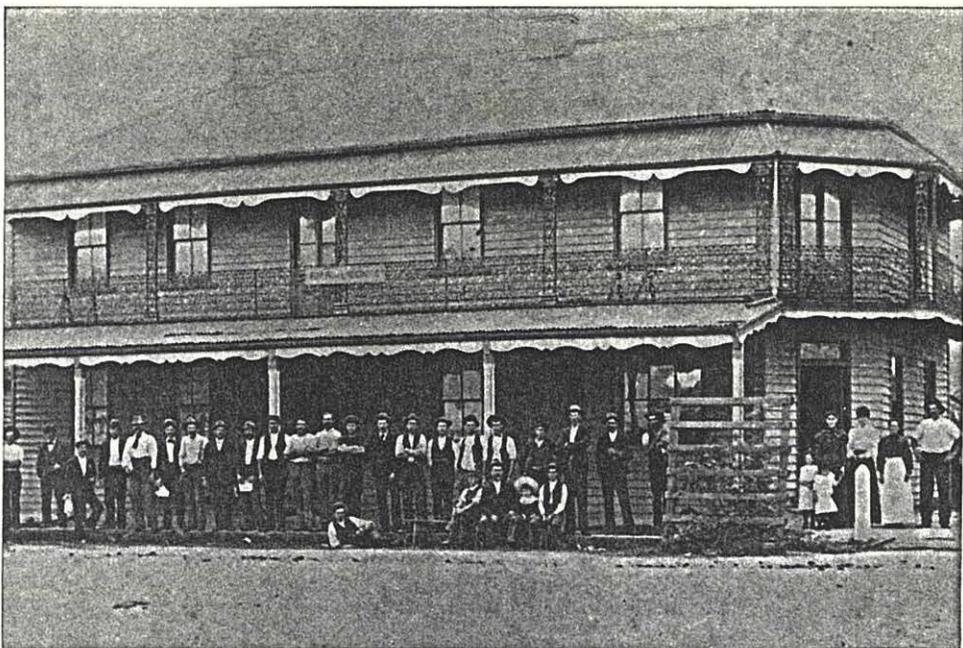
Initially the populace was engaged in subsistence farming, with little trade outside the immediate boundaries, but sugar cane farming and the successful cultivation of the grape were the major industries of the 1870s. It was not until the early 1880s that the exploitation of the regions timber resources provided the impetus for future expansion and the creation of jobs.

At about the same time, an ex-preacher turned newspaper editor had demonstrated that the area was eminently suited for dairying and this led to a remarkable recovery in the fortunes of the farmers, with the subsequent increase in trading activity within the townships. Butter factories were built at Wauchope and Port Macquarie, commercial banks appeared, municipal government was instituted, a cottage hospital built, the harbour improved with a breakwall to scour the sandbar and allow larger vessels to dock, while sporting and cultural organisations were founded to provide respite for the weary.

The Boer War of 1899-1902 interrupted the normal pattern of growth, with the exodus of some 30 young men to help the mother country fight her battle, but most returned to assist in the development of the valley with a better appreciation of the land of their birth. Little did they know that within another twelve years they would again be called upon to take up arms, many to make the extreme sacrifice.

With the approaching storm of world conflagration, Port Macquarie Profiles documents some of the people and events which formed part of the history of the Hastings Valley up to that era.

Ian W. Symonds.



The Tattersalls Hotel was later de-licensed and ran as a boarding house by Mrs Emily Wall and was burned down on the night of 8th May, 1905, under mysterious circumstances, with suspicion thrown on the owner, who had the furniture insured for \$150 and the piano for \$50. Unknown to people at the time, a coachman named J. Frederick Hall was asleep during the fire and his body was not found until the next morning

Tattersalls Hotel

In prior issues of the Express, mention has been made of the elusive "Tattersalls" Hotel, in the early days of Port Macquarie, but little information was known about it except that it was located on the north-eastern corner of Horton and William Streets, now occupied by Port Sportsway.

Recent research shows that it was first mentioned in Moore's Almanac of 1887, the licensee being Mr Gersbach, but unfortunately, newspapers for that period are missing from our collection and no further mention is made of that family.

Patrick McGann was the owner of the hotel by July 1888 and all five of his children happened to be born there during the period 1891-1897.

Born in Strokesdown, Roscommon, Ireland, he had arrived in the colony

about 1874 and on November 4, 1890, had married Elizabeth Nelson, a housekeeper, in St Agnes Church, Port Macquarie.

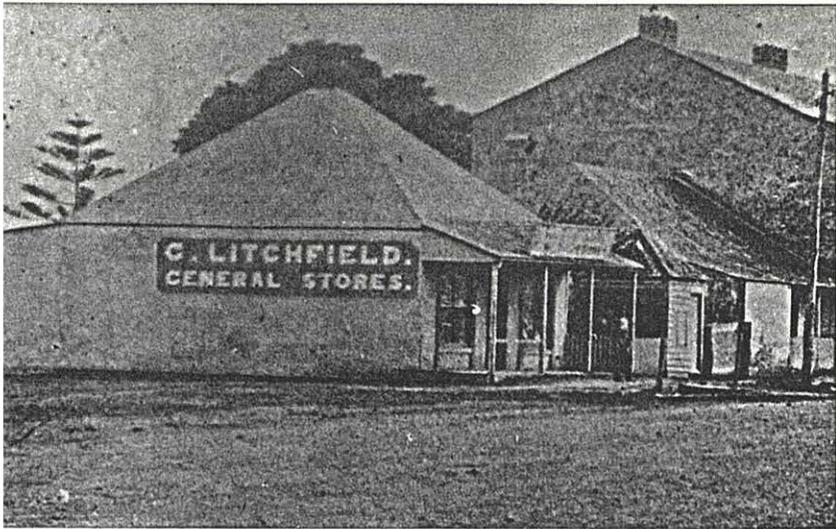
Son John Hanley, was born in 1891, Jane Kathleen in 1892, Josephine Frances on April 29, 1894 but died on October 5, of that same year, Patrick William Hope in 1895 and Elizabeth May in 1897, some months after her father had died in Port Macquarie on September 9, 1896.

It is not known when Patrick first arrived in town, but in July 1888 he had an accident with his horse and buggy in Clarence Street when both he and his passenger, Robert Garbutt, were thrown to the ground and suffered cuts and abrasions.

In that same month, he had purchased land at the Brickfields (near the present swimming pool) from the late John Dick and in 1889 had leased part of it to B. Craven, who began to make bricks on the site.

In 1888, Port Macquarie was still a small village with a population of 778. Hill Street, from James Butler's house on the corner of Lake Road, was a dangerous track covered in thick lantana. Roller skating was the current rage, with skating rinks in the School of Arts and the Royal Hotel, while some of the prices of food were astronomical – rump steak was 3d per pound, sausages 4d a pound, jam 6d a tin and sugar (bright yellow) had risen to 14/- for a 70lb bag.

* * * *



ograph was a copy of the original in possession of Mr Raymond Gordon St, Port Macquarie, which was taken by his father, the nas Dick and was made for the Newcastle Public Library in r 1959.

on the north-west corner of Horton and William St, the site is occupied by Oxley Airlines, while two doors down, the then rrace is now the Commonwealth Bank.

e reclamation of the Kooloonbung Creek, the rear boundary of was only metres from the waters edge.

Litchfields General Store

ark in the history of Port Macquarie for nearly 40 years, ls General Store was situated on the north-western corner of id William Streets, now occupied by Oxley Airlines.

ie convict days of the 1830s, this site was taken up with part of ers barracks, the waters of Kooloonbung Creek lapping the shore etres away (before reclamation works were made).

.itchfield was born circa 1803 as St Werberg, Derby and enlisted h Regiment on June 30, 1821, serving with the 28th Regiment in rn Mediterranean where he married Mary Dugan on May 5, 1827 onia on the Ionian Islands, near Greece.

vice in Ireland, the regiment engaged in escort duties aboard

posted to Port Macquarie, where he was discharged on December 31, 1836. He was appointed Chief Constable about 1837 and on August 6, 1840, bought Lot 9, Section 3 in Horton Street for £37/2/-, where he made a home for his wife and family of six children, three of whom were born there.

Leaving the Police Force in 1853, William converted part of the house into a store in the following year and remained there until he died on December 7, 1868, being pre-deceased by Mary on June 8, 1868.

Son George, who was born in Dublin in 1833, left Port Macquarie for the Victorian and New Zealand goldfields but returned and married Martha Harriett on August 26, 1869 and the couple raised a family of six. Twins Frederick William and George Hastings, Edith Mary, Olive Martha, George Hastings (named after the death of the first twin) and Ethel Sarah.

Litchfields store sold groceries, drapery, fancy goods and ironmongery, while George was also an agent for life assurance, endowments and annuities, "guaranteeing the fidelities of persons holding positions of trust".

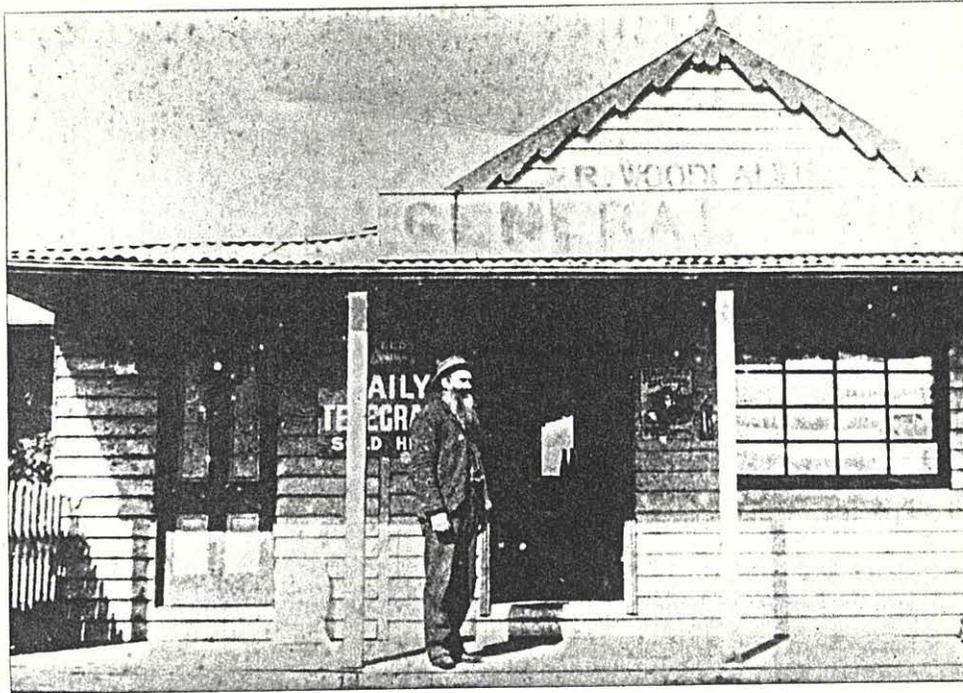
George joined in community affairs, where he was a foundation member of the Masonic Lodge in 1878, a foundation member of the School of Arts and later its President in 1888, a Justice of the Peace and a member of the Licensing Bench.

Martha died on January 2, 1881 at the early age of 36 and George moved to Sydney in 1889 where he had a business as a commission agent at 139 Sussex Street, but he often returned on business for the next few years.

The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney leased the premises and the old store disappeared.

George Litchfield came to rest in Lismore in 1904.

* * * *



When this store commenced about 1880, it was the only business house in West Port Macquarie and was well situated to capture the passing trade coming to the township.

Richard sold the store to Mr Wheeldon early in the 1900s and retired to live in Sydney

Richard Woodlands Store – West Port

Richard Woodlands, born on June 6, 1847 at Port Macquarie, was a son of William Mantel and Mary Ann Cook, who arrived at Sydney on December 26, 1840, aboard the sailing ship “Lalla Rook”.

After a dispute with his father, William Mantel and his wife left the family mansion “Horton Priory”, in Kent, to start a new life in the Colony and he adopted his mother’s maiden name of Woodlands, which has been carried down to the present generation.

Richard Woodlands bought a farm at King Creek near Wauchope, where he grew the staple crop of maize, along with smaller crops of melons, marrows and pumpkins, with some success.

On August 31, 1870 he married Elizabeth Boltwood at Reedy Island, Hastings River and they had a large family of thirteen children – Sarah

Ann born (1871), Mary Elizabeth (1873), Susanna (1875), Arthur Douglas (1877), Vashti (1879), Richard Ashley (1881), Sydney James (1883), Levi James (1886), Stanley (1888), Clarence Victor (1890), Alma Caroline (1891), Vera Olive (1894) and Frederick Charles in (1896).

By 1880 Richard had a general store in Gordon Street, West Port Macquarie, now the site of Doug Tame Furniture stores, which was the only business that side of town. He called the store the “Live and Let Live” and stocked a huge variety of wares including drapery, ironmongery, groceries, fruit, farm produce, toiletries and stationery.

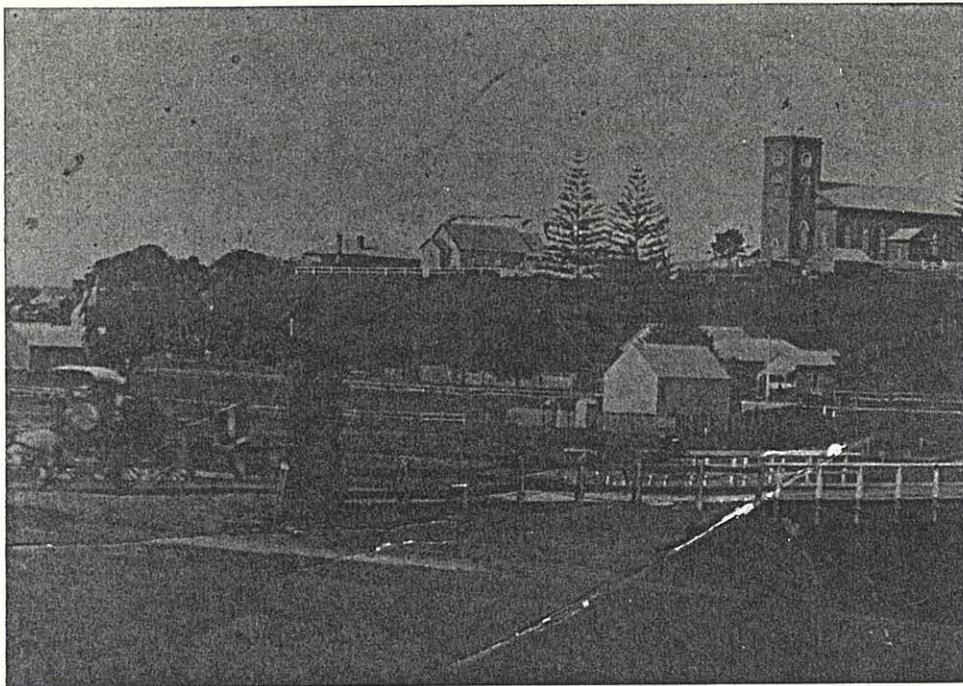
To keep ahead of the heavy competition, he took large weekly advertisements in the Port Macquarie News, enticing customers with muslin at 4d per yard, cashmerettes at 9d per yard, while china tea at 7/6 for a ten pound box and treacle at 3d per pound ensured steady sales. He also had the Government contract to supply food to the needy aborigines who often camped in the nearby bush when not on walkabout.

Becoming involved in community affairs once the shop was established, he was a member of the Agricultural Society, a steward and Sunday School superintendent of the Wesleyan Church, was elected to the Municipal Council in 1894 and later became mayor.

According to a descendant, Vashti Ford (nee Woodlands), the family lost the business due to non-payment of credit extended to farmers who had failures with crops from floods, droughts and disease.

Richard died on October 9, 1915 while Elizabeth followed on September 29, 1930 and both rest peacefully in the Rookwood cemetery in Sydney.

* * * *



Our photograph, taken during Governor Rawson's visit to the town in 1903, is taken from the western side of the Gordon St bridge over Coolenberg Creek and shows St Thomas Church dominating the skyline, then, moving to the left, St. Agnes Catholic church, and John Hayward's house in Hay St.

The Good Templars Hall, in Horton St., can be seen immediately above the Gordon St. bridge, while across the street is the office of the Port Macquarie News and the adjacent Methodist Church.

The Independent Order of Good Templars

There appears to be no authentic records available which document the formation of the Hope of Hastings Lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars in Port Macquarie, but it is probable that the organisation commenced in the 1870s along with the Masonic Lodge which had its start on September 18, 1878.

By October 1882, the Lodge had built its own hall in the principal street of the village, Horton St, on land donated by Benjamin and Mararet Wrigley, situated on the south-western corner of Bridge Street, near the first bridge across Kooloonbung Creek.

This new building was constructed by Anderson and Nelson, built substantially of wood, with three windows on each of two sides, two

smaller windows on the porch and a roof of galvanised iron. It was built to accommodate about 130 people and was completed at a cost of \$110.

The Templars Hall was the first public building erected since the convict era and held pride of place in the hearts of the 773 citizens for some years, being the venue for the first Progress Association meeting as well as the formation of the Municipal Council in 1887.

When the Salvation Army held its first rally in Port Macquarie in October 1888, they gathered outside the Post Office, then marched along Horton Street to the hall for their formal meeting.

At the meeting held on August 2, 1888, the Chief Templar was William Feeman Way, the secretary May Gaul, treasurer Benjamin Wrigley, while the committee consisted of W. Wrigley, C. Way, E. Gaul, H. Wilkins, Miss E. Wilson, C. Lockton and T. Wesley and there were 37 brothers and 29 sisters enrolled.

On September 15, the Lodge bought a Clough and Warren organ for £28, while Henry Wilkinson donated a music stool which he had built, allowing the evening meetings to be livened up a little.

For the Queens Birthday picnic in June 1889, the IOGT was to hold a picnic at Little Nobbys but due to the uncertain weather, they marched up to the old Asylum (still unoccupied and looking dilapidated) where, with the permission of the police magistrate F. B. Hales, several large rooms were used to have an afternoon of games, skating and dancing.

* * * *



Built by the banks of the Hastings River at the then township of Hamilton, the sawmill was the nucleus of a small community with its own stores, School of Arts, school and workers accommodation which grew into the suburb later named Hibbard.

Today, there is little to show of this once proud enterprise which at its zenith, was exporting timber direct to overseas countries from its own extensive wharves, while the nearby slipways built and repaired many of the coastal ships.

Hibbard and Haines Sawmill – Hamilton

The timber industry was a major producer of jobs and income for the population of the Hastings River Valley from the 1880s and the sawmill of Hibbard & Haines at Hamilton played a prominent part in the supply of timber to centres both in Australia and overseas, with steamers able to dock at the mill's wharf on the banks of the Hastings River.

John Hibbard, born at Whitcombe, Somerset in 1834 and Philip Haines, born at Trevethan, Monmouthshire in the same year, both migrated as sawyers to Sydney aboard the "Gloriana" which arrived on July 27, 1855.

John Hibbard married Philip Haines' sister, Maria, in Sydney in 1858 and soon after, the family moved to Nowra in the Shoalhaven district, where son John was born in 1859 and a daughter Emily in 1866. During this period, the firm of Hibbard & Haines was involved in the timber industry, with John Hibbard becoming an alderman of the Nowra Council when the town was incorporated in 1875.

The firm moved to Camden Haven about 1877, but by 1879, the partners had leased land at "Hamilton", on the Hastings River, where they built a new sawmill and wharf near the site of present day Sundowner Caravan Park. This land was part of the early convict Settlement Farm, which, at one time, was owned by Dr William Bell Carlyle, who named it after one of the Hamilton family with whom he was friendly during the late 1830s.

On July 6, 1887, Hibbard & Haines bought the property, comprising portions 34, 35, Parish of Macquarie, from John McDonald and built a store, blacksmith shop and houses for their employees.

The village of Hamilton grew up around the mill and by 1894 had its own school, post office and School of Arts.

In 1912, the Post Master General's Department changed the name of Hamilton to Hibbard to stop the confusion with the Hamilton in Newcastle.

Philip Haines was killed by a falling log at the mill on July 22, 1892 and John Hibbard (Jnr) took a more active role in the sawmill operation, later taking over the firm after the death of his father. The firm also went into shipping in 1883 with the schooner "Alto", followed by the "Jubilee" in 1887 and the "Federal" in 1901.

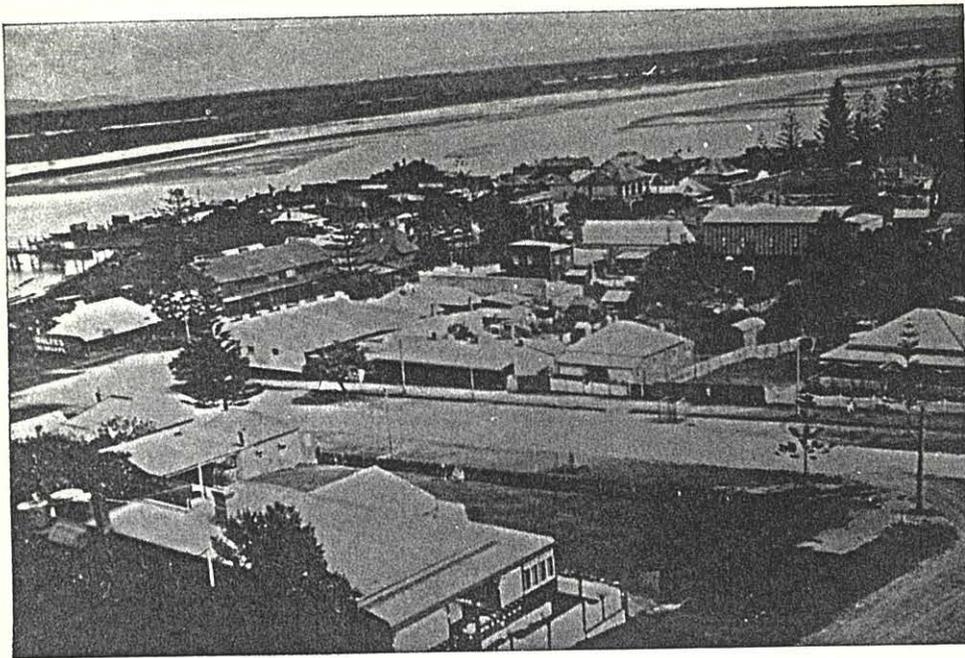
On May 12, 1894, John (Snr) sailed to Fiji on the "Trio" with a full load of timber to establish new business and the next year travelled to England, Europe and the USA to gauge the interest in Australian timbers, but found the market dominated by the jarrah hardwood from West Australia.

Hibbard (Snr) was prominent in community affairs, being an alderman on the council, President of the Progress Association, School of Arts, Athletic Club, Port Macquarie Band and the Cottage Hospital, Secretary of the Masonic Lodge and the Licensed Bushmans Association of NSW.

In later years, he lived at "Elsinore", on the corner of Gordon Street and Hastings River Drive (now the Linden Travellers Hostel) and was reputed to be the first man in Port Macquarie to own a motor car and had a chauffeur to drive him about.

John Hibbard (Snr) died on March 10, 1924 and Maria on December 5, 1929.

* * * *



Built in October 1880, this home stands on land which was bought in 1836 by Thomas Horton James of Parramatta, for £14/6/8 and bought by John Hayward for £80.

The Bank of New South Wales as mortgagee, was the next owner and in 1909 sold the house to Jacob Healey for \$700 who in turn sold it to Allen Arthur Cumming for \$1000 in 1925. Named "La Mascotte", it was modernised in the late 1930s and re-roofed with terra cotta tiles.

The once large garden facing William St. is now taken up by shops, while today the stately home serves as offices for the firm of Priests, Solicitors.

John Haywards House – Hay Street

"The prettiest and most comfortable building in Port Macquarie has just been completed for John Hayward on his allotment of land at the corner of Hay and William Streets, which commands a beautiful view of the whole surroundings.

It is a villa residence built of brick and was designed by Jas. Branch of Sydney. The building measuring 60 feet by 40 feet and contains nine rooms with a kitchen which is a room attached to the house.

The rooms are very lofty, large and well ventilated, the principal one being that situated in the centre facing north and contains a bay window with

porch entrance. The doors are of stained glass and look exceedingly elegant. There are two large halls, one opening to the north, being six feet wide and the other, which is the much longer of the two, is entered from the eastern side and is four feet wide.

A wide verandah traverses the whole length of the north and eastern sides and is enclosed with iron palisading. An underground tank holding 6000 gallons of water has been constructed against the building and completes what should be a very comfortable as well as a most elegant building.

The contractor for the building was Mr. B. Craven of this town, but it is stated that he lost money over his undertaking. This, however, did not prevent him from faithfully fulfilling his task and the building would creditably withstand any examination by the most scrutinising bricklayer.

The woodwork required was executed by Jas. Condon in his usual workmanlike manner, while the construction of the whole was supervised by Jas. Butler. The painting was done by W.H. Henry, who, with his wife and family, has now taken up residence in Port Macquarie.

Mr. Hayward was well satisfied with his work, a thorough master of his trade. Mr. Hayward proposes laying out the whole of the vacant land in front of the house with trees and flower beds, which, when finished, will make this a very elegant country residence."

That was how the editor of the Port Macquarie News described the house in October 1880 and it can be seen in the middle foreground of this photograph, taken from the top of the tower of St Thomas Church in the 1930s.

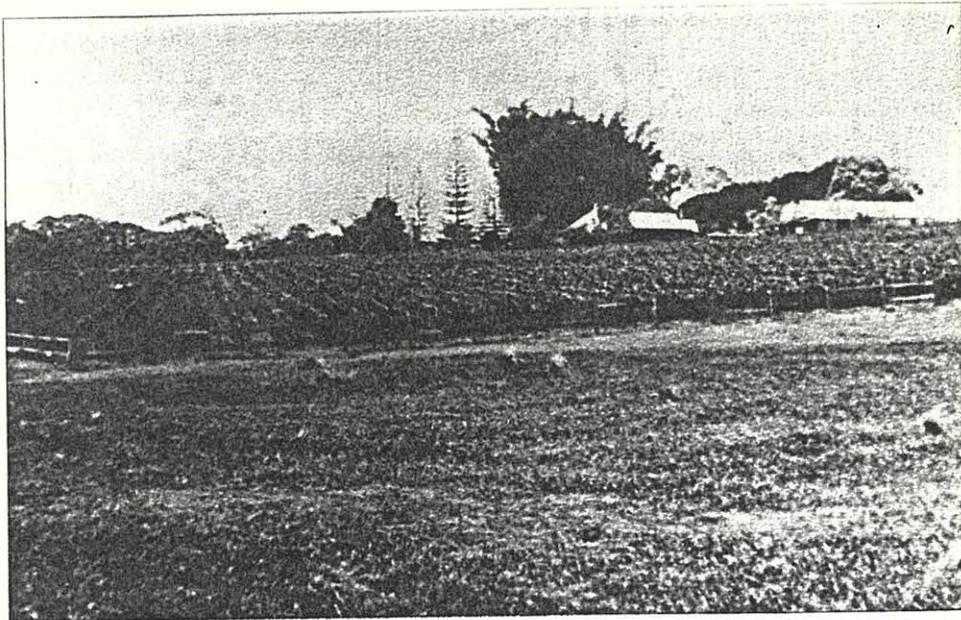
John Hayward, a descendant of Charles and Rebecca (nee Burrows), was born in Port Macquarie in 1856 and was a baker here for many years. After he died on May 15, 1938, the house passed into the hands of the Bank of New South Wales, Jacob Healey, then to A. A. Cumming.

Today it is the offices of Alan Priest, while the front garden has been taken up by Ray White, Estate Agents, on the corner, with the Medical Centre next door.

The bay window is still a distinctive feature of the house and can be readily seen on the right hand side of the building.

Readily recognisable in the photo is the Hastings River in the background with a naked Pelican Island and the start of the Long Bridge which was used to convey stone from West Port to the Southern Breakwall.

* * * *



This 1915 photograph of Douglas Vale shows the thicket of bamboo which is a readily recognized feature even today. The 1862 house has been incorporated within many extensions made over the years, making it one of the oldest existing homes in Port Macquarie.

In 1990, Mr Patsy Dick is the resident owner of the remainder of the property, which is slowly being enveloped by the expanding suburbia.

George Francis of Douglas Vale

While grappling with the perplexing problems of the 1990s, the pupils of Westport primary and secondary schools could well reflect upon the difficulties faced by George Francis, the original occupier of those same grounds nearly 130 years ago, when he struggled to clear, plough, fence and plant the vineyard which was to become well known as "Douglas Vale", named in honour of his wife.

George was born at Maldon, Essex in 1811 and at the tender age of 14 he left home to become an apprentice seaman on board the "Peter and Jane", which traded to the Baltic Sea. In 1835 he shipped aboard the whaler "Lady Jane" which sailed to Davis Straits in the Arctic Ocean, where it became trapped in the ice for five months. During this time the crew suffered extreme privation from frostbite, scurvy and starvation, with 16 of the complement of 65 surviving to reach safety in the Orkney Islands.

George Francis married widow Mrs. Margaret Dodds (nee Douglas) and together with their daughter, Margaret, stepson George Douglas Dodds,

stepdaughter May Dodds (later Mrs Bidding of Maitland), they arrived in Sydney aboard the "Templar" in August 1844. After a short stay in Sydney, the family moved to the Hunter River and by 1847 were in Port Macquarie where George planted a vineyard for Major Innes.

Stricken with gold fever, George joined the throng of hopefuls sailing to the Californian goldfields in 1849, but due to ill health, he boarded the "Rosetta Joseph" for the return journey to Australia. The ship struck the coral of Elizabeth Reef and the passengers were forced to take to the lifeboats where they spent the next nine days. Striking the coast near Smoky Cape, the boats made for Port Macquarie where all 48 passengers were landed safely.

Despite his ordeals, gold fever led George to the Braidwood diggings in November 1851 where he was successful and he returned to Port Macquarie in 1862 to buy the five blocks of land comprising "Douglas Vale" which was on the Oxley Highway nearly opposite the site of the future hospital, bounded by the present Findlay and Widderson Streets.

The family moved to "Douglas Vale" in July 1862 and the first vintage from the Isabella grapes was finished on March 11, 1867, producing 750 gallons of wine which sold for £161/16/6. During its lifetime of 51 years, the greatest vintage was in 1877 when 3200 gallons were produced, gaining prizes at Bordeaux, Amsterdam, Calcutta and London.

George Douglas Dodds was to become a boatbuilder and publican and married Elizabeth Doyle at St Thomas on September 8, 1872. She was the daughter of Christopher Doyle, who was granted the licence of the early "Speed The Plough" Inn in August 1834 and "Douglas Vale" wine graced many tables at that establishment.

George Francis' wife died on August 17, 1878 and during one of his many trips abroad, George married again in England and brought his new bride home to his estate. Meanwhile, daughter Margaret, who was born at North Shields, Northumberland on February 29, 1840, married Napoleon Wilson at St. Thomas on February 16, 1869 and the couple took over the vineyard when George retired, increasing the production in 1884 with the results of a new vineyard.

Their children were George Francis born 1872, Margaret Esther (1880), Leila May (1881) and Norman Tuthell (1883).

George Francis died at "Douglas Vale" on December 4, 1898 and after probate of the will had been granted to executors Margaret Wilson and George Litchfield, his second wife, Isabella, returned to England where she died from the effects of inhalation of gas from a leaking pipe at the home of her granddaughter, Kate Tuthell, at Wednesbury, Staffordshire, on January 26, 1900.

Some of the people who worked on the vineyard for two shillings per day were Harry McLaren, Percy Stewart, James Doyle, Thomas Cain and George Denham.



The extensive photographic files of the Hastings District Historical Society appear not to include a photograph of Michael Spence, but we are fortunate in having this shot of his wife Emily, affectionately known in the district as "Granny" Spence.

Michael Spence Family

The Spence family number among the select few who can claim connections with the Port Macquarie of convict days and through their descendants, have contributed to the growth of the district over more than 100 years.

Michael Spence was born in Perth, Scotland, *circa* 1808 and was granted a free passage to Australia aboard the "Asia", arriving Sydney June 27, 1833. By 1837, he was working for Dr. Jean Baptiste Charles Lamonnier dit Fattorini, a colonial surgeon who was to become involved in many business ventures in the district.

On May 31, 1851, he married Emily Maria Hollis at St James, Sydney, where the couple would have spent their honeymoon before returning to the now free settlement in the north, where Michael was a storekeeper and general agent with a shop in Short St, which was later to become the Post Office, after he had been appointed postmaster on November 1, 1852.

Children of the marriage were William Andrew, born 1852, James Frederick (1853), Henry Burdett (1855), Emily Maria (1856), Edward Denny (1859), Peter Andrew (1860), Margaret Agnes (1863). All would have had to make the daily climb up Clarence St to attend the public school in the old military barracks.

Both Michael and Emily would have been familiar with most of the early convict buildings aligned with the streets of the first town plan of Cpt. Wright in March 1826 – they would have seen Major Innes and his family drive along Old Lake Road, up Munster St, turn left and enter the wide thoroughfare of Church St, said to have been planned as the principal street of the town.

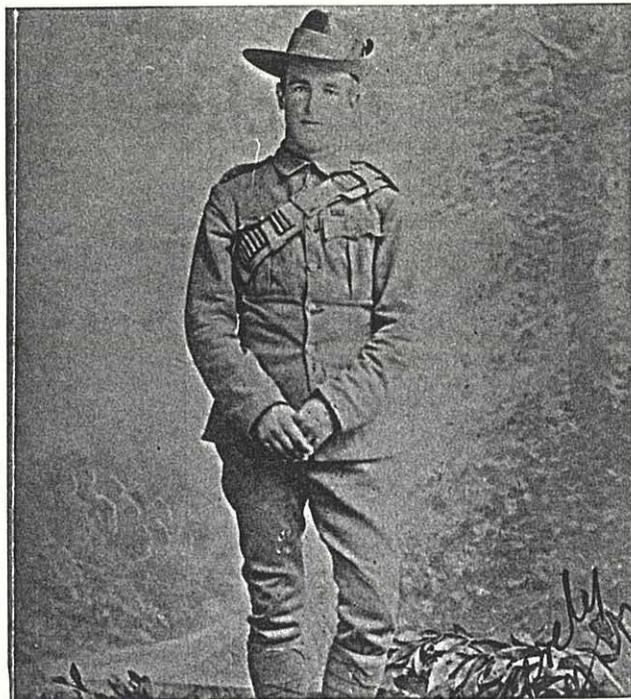
Of the children, William Andrew followed in his father's footsteps and warrants a separate article on his life; James Frederick married Martha Wood and lived in the Muswellbrook area; Emily married William Ringland; Edward Denny died in infancy; Peter Andrew married Mary E. Foster and was a saddler both here and later at Grafton; Margaret married Stephen Donovan.

In January 1859, Michael Spence was one of the 85 householders of the rural district of Port Macquarie who signed a petition praying for the erection of the locality into a municipality. The population of the police district of Port Macquarie was 984.

A counter petition was raised by 120 inhabitants "expressing their unqualified dissent", suggesting that "only a limited number of those who signed the first petition have any stake in the district, while others signed under a misconception of its merits and now desire to remedy the error". Michael was not one of those who changed his mind, but it may be of interest to note that Newman Hollis (Kindee Brook), Edward and John Secombe, J. Rowsell (Glen Esk), E. C. Naylor and Thomas Carney, all signed both petitions.

Michael Spence was a vicar's warden of St Thomas Church, was listed in the 1878 Sands Postal Directory as being an agent at Port Macquarie, while the Government Gazette 229 of 1881 announced his appointment as a magistrate, a position he held until his death on April 15, 1885.

* * * *



"Mick" Spence volunteered for service in the Boer War conflict, but was rejected by the Australian military authorities. Undaunted, he shipped aboard a freighter carrying horses to South Africa, working as a groom and joined Kitchener's Horse.

After being wounded and invalided home, he received a hero's welcome from the good citizens of Port Macquarie and when he was fully recovered he again joined up as No. 1503 Trooper M. Spence with the 3rd. Battalion, Australian Commonwealth Horse and sailed aboard the ss "Manhattan" on the April 1 1902, but peace was declared before the unit saw action.

Michael Mervyn Macquarie Spence

"Mick" Spence, the sixth child of William Andrew and Elizabeth (nee McDonald), was born at Port Macquarie on November 14, 1880 and on leaving school, worked for Mr. Cooke, the road superintendent of the district. When that gentleman was transferred to Cobar, Mick went with him and remained until his death, whereupon he returned to his home town and worked on the weighbridge during the construction of the southern breakwall.

He was one of the early volunteers of the Boer War, when he accompanied a shipment of horses to South Africa, where he joined Kitchener's Horse and was wounded and invalided home, but re-enlisted for another term.

His first letter home was printed in the Port Macquarie News on May 19, 1900. "I have

arrived at Cape Town at last after eight weeks at sea. We all went through our tests today and will have our uniforms tomorrow, when I intend having my photos taken. While at camp, I met Dudley O'Donnell (Mrs A. B. Butler's brother) who is a scout in our regiment – we knew each other at first glance.

If all is well, we leave for the front next Friday. We have very little time except between 6pm and 10am, when we are off duty. Out of our fighting 20, I passed one of the highest for riding. I had a bit of a rough horse, but he left off bucking just in time; I was pretty near done. I also passed the doctor. Dud O'Donnell is a big man, about six feet high.

The embarkation officer said when we unloaded the horses, that he never knew men equal to us with horses and sent us straight to camp with his regiment – Roberts Light Horse.

We had a very smooth trip, but we had very bad tucker and a seven knot boat. We are all stopping at a boarding house at 6/- a day and it is kept by an Australian. I have been down to the prison camp to see the Boer prisoners and Cronje's captured guns. The men are a mixed lot, some old, some very young. The same may be said of the cannon; some of which are like the guns in the Sydney Gardens, while the rest are of the very latest pattern and it puzzles the English how they got them.

Cape Town is full of people. I reckon that what I have seen (what with Cronje's guns) since landing, I would not miss a chance of seeing them a dozen times, neither would a lot of other people. Some of the guns are riddled with shot from the English, while others are not touched.

The people here seem to think that the war will last till next Christmas. I will write from the first place at the front where we are stationed."

Michael Spence also saw service with the 1st AIF, enlisting on June 12, 1916, serving with the 35th. Battalion in France before returning to Australia on December 18, 1918.

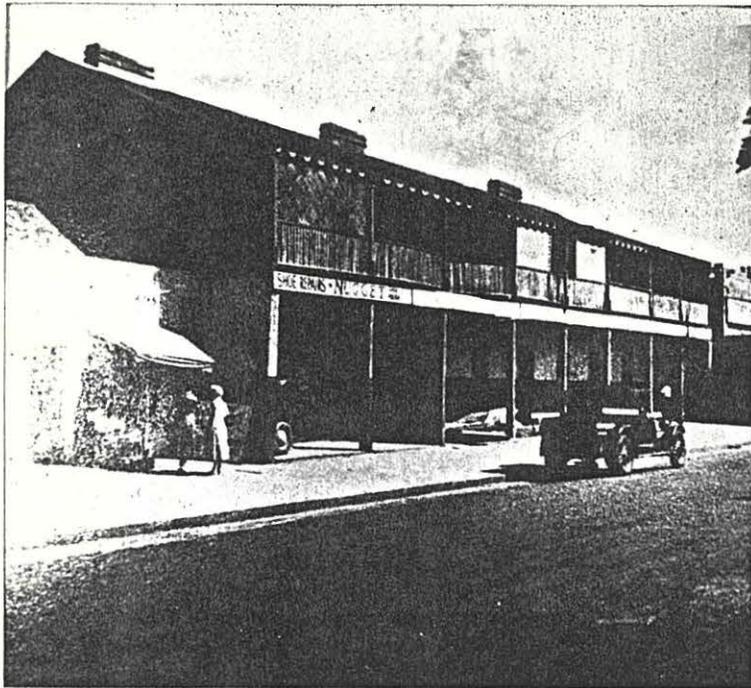
The Spence boys seem to have been imbued with a greater level of courage and determination than most. Elder brother, Hugh, jumped into the water at the wharf to rescue the cook of the "SS Rosedale", who had fallen overboard and disappeared, while shortly afterwards, he dashed out in the path of a runaway horse which had bolted with its sulky in Market Street, snatching a young girl from certain death.

It was not until he had recovered that he realised how close he himself had come to being killed – a shaft of the sulky had pierced his macintosh and made a small cut in his side.

Mick Spence displayed not only outstanding courage, but exhibited real athletic prowess when he climbed hand over hand up a single wire to the balcony of Condon's Commercial Hotel (on Innes Tavern site) when it was ablaze, extinguishing the fire with buckets of water.

He was also awarded the Royal Humane Society's highest award – the Gold Medal, for taking a fishing boat out in a heavy surf on the Bellinger River, to rescue the crew of a schooner which had been wrecked there.

After a lifetime of service to his country and his many friends, Michael Mervyn Macquarie Spence died, unmarried, at Newcastle in 1942.



This 1956 photograph of Tozers Terrace in Horton Street, Port Macquarie, showing the state of the building before renovations were made by the Commonwealth Bank, was dated by examining the notice board shown in the left hand corner of the building, near the cement mixer.

Tozers Terrace – Horton Street

It is now nearly 150 years since the clanking of convict chains or the screams of the tortured wretches, writhing under the vicious lash of the scourger, has been heard in the vicinity of the Commonwealth Bank in Horton Street, once the site of the convict barracks during the 1820s and 1830s.

The first purchaser of that allotment in 1840 was Joseph Simmons, the son-in-law of Henry Cohen, an emancipist, who had once been assigned to Major Innes at his Lake Innes Estate and who later owned the "Speed The Plough" Inn started by Christopher Doyle in 1834 on the site of the present Port Sportsway (1990).

Henry also owned the vessel "Elizabeth Cohen", which traded between Port Macquarie and Sydney for many years, hiring his relative, Abraham

Cohen, once a printer on the early "Australian" newspaper, to run the business which was to become the Port Macquarie Steam Navigation Co. Of Abraham's issue, Nathan was twice to become Mayor of Tamworth, Fanny was to be Lady Benjamin, Edward became Mayor of Melbourne, while grandson Henry Emanuel Cohen became M.L.A. for West Maitland, a judge of the Supreme Court and the first judge of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court.

The next owner of the allotment was the Tozer family, who probably built the double storied building shown in the photograph in the late 1840s or early 1850s. Thomas Norris Tozer, his wife Elizabeth and their children, Harriett, Horatio, Thomas Norris and Lavina, arrived in Sydney aboard the "Magnet" on October 25, 1828, having been engaged by the Australian Agricultural Co. as a superior shepherd and bailiff for their Port Stephens establishment.

Horatio was sent to Sydney for schooling and training as an apothecary and upon graduation, he arrived at Port Macquarie in 1839 with his father and both sisters, his mother having died at Maitland on January 28, 1837.

On May 9, 1841, he married Charlotte Amelia Croft at St James Church, Sydney and their children were:- Adeline Ann Eliza born 1843, Horatio (1844), Vivian Fitzroy (1847), Lavina Eliza (1849), Amelia Mary (1851), Jonathan (1855), Alice (1857) and Gordina Octaviat (1859).

Horatio Tozer was a man of many talents and had a chequered career during his 26 years in Port Macquarie – a fine singer in St. Thomas' choir, he was a keen boating enthusiast and took part in the early rowing and sailing regattas on the river. Besides his general store and chemist shop near the present Innes Tavern, he had a boiling down works with Jeremiah Warlters at the southern end of Short St. during the 1843 depression, was a wool merchant, established a cattle station with Dr. Fattorini at Five Day Creek in the Macleay district, became insolvent on July 27, 1843, but was granted a certificate of discharge in January 1845.

He seems to have acquired all of the Cohen's businesses including the allotment now occupied by the Commonwealth Bank and the building was known as Tozers Terrace for many years. It was built from solid sandstock bricks and included shops on the lower level and living quarters upstairs, with an archway in the middle which led to stables in the backyard.

Horatio's eldest son, Horatio (Horace), was educated at Newington's Collegiate School and at St. Paul's College, Sydney, where he studied law,

entered politics in Queensland and became Colonial Secretary of that State in 1888.

After the death of Thomas in 1862 and Horatio (Snr) in 1865, the Tozer family moved to Queensland in 1870 to join the later Sir Horace at Gympie, where he had a large and successful practice.

Tozer's Terrace had many other owners after 1870, including Percy Hayward which went under the guise of a general store, wine saloon, boarding house and rental premises. The Masonic Lodge used it as their meeting place from 1878 to 1883, Samuel Latham had his solicitor's office there in the 1890s, while a fire in September 1893 caused some damage to the interior.

Following extensive renovations, it was again used for rented premises in the early 1900s, before being purchased by the Commonwealth Bank in November 1951. Despite external appearances, the basic structure of the present building remains as it was constructed many years ago.



Mary Fox was born of Irish stock circa 1834 and married John Platt in August 1856 at the beautiful little township of Beechworth, nestling at the foot of the Southern Alps in Victoria.

After moving to Port Macquarie, the Platt brothers established vineyards just outside the town along the New England Road and when John died on the 17th July 1870, Mary married John Joseph Fenn of "Fernhill" on 30th May 1872.

Mary Fenn of Fernhill

The cultivation of the grape in the Port Macquarie district seems to have commenced on a commercial scale in 1838, when the ex-surgeon superintendent of convict ships, Dr. William Bell Carlyle, established a vineyard at "Hamilton" along the banks of the Hastings River in the vicinity of the present Sundowner Caravan Park.

He was closely followed by surveyor Henry Fancourt White at "Clifton" and some years later, by George Francis at "Douglas Vale", the homestead

till stands, partly hidden by trees and bamboo, just off the Oxley near the Public Hospital.

A smaller scale was the 10 acre vineyard (portion 157, Parish of ...), selected by an immigrant from London in 1862, which he "Fernhill".

John Fenn was born in 1841, a rugged individualist with ambitions to make his mark on the world, a drive which caused him to seek his fortune in the distant colony, where land was readily available at modest prices.

The chocolate red soil, amply drained on the sloping site, proved to be an excellent choice by the amateur viticulturist and the full red Isabella wine gained acclaim at Bordeaux in 1878, Sydney in 1879 and Melbourne in 1880.

In 1870, 1872, he married Mrs. Mary Platt (nee Fox), a widow with six children and the family built a substantial cottage with extensive cellars. John Joseph to indulge in other civic pursuits, where he was a member of the racecourse in 1877, a committee member of the Hastings Hockey Club and a committee member of the School of Arts.

John moved to Fernhill on March 8, 1883 and Mary took over the running of the vineyard, with the help of her own two elder sons, while undoubtedly, younger children would have had their own share of work.

Mary asked the recently formed Municipal Council to open up a road on the western side of her land (Fernhill Road) as she had no access to the England Road.

To this day terms, Fernhill Road marks the western boundary of the vineyard while Old Lake Road was the southern limit, the site being partly owned by Telecom's depot.

John's family, Edwin George Fenn first comes to notice when he ran foul of the authorities on April 27, 1889, being charged with wanton and dangerous horse riding in Gordon Street, having knocked over Mr Childs, returning from a Salvation Army meeting. He later purchased the vineyard from the Platt family and also operated the cordial factory in the area.

A photograph depicts Mary Fenn about 1890, a true pioneer woman, born circa 1834 in Dublin, Ireland, the daughter of Thomas Fox. She had married John Platt at Beechwood, Victoria in August 1862, being a bootmaker from Liverpool, England, who probably came to Victoria on the goldrush in 1851.

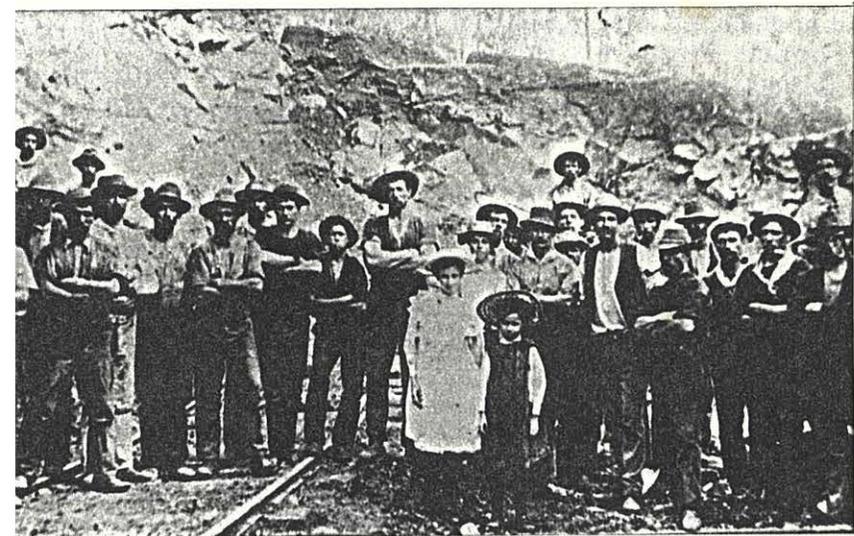
John's youngest of their seven children (one died), was born in Port Macquarie in 1869. His wife, Catherine, was born on April 7 1869. only 15

It is uncertain where John and Mary Platt lived in Port Macquarie, but a Thomas Platt (possibly a brother) had another vineyard called "Woodgrove". Early maps indicate that it was part of four blocks of land not far from "Fernhill" near present day Windscreens O'Brien on Old Lake Road.

After a lifetime which commenced in Ireland, was transposed to the wilderness of the Victorian goldfields, marriage and subsequent removal to Port Macquarie, deaths of two husbands and the raising of eight children, as well as running a property, our grand old pioneer was finally relieved of her earthly tasks on Christmas Eve 1895.

* * * *

Beechworth? see p 25



Photograph shows a group of men who worked at the Aston Hill where the stone for the breakwall was blasted.

Man on the print denotes the quarry foreman, James Pearce, who had been President of the Quarry Sickness and Accident Fund, allowing cases to be treated firstly at the Macleay River Hospital and a local cottage hospital was built in Port Macquarie in 1901, to provide medical and hospital attention here.

Young girls in the photograph are James Pearce's daughters.

Southern Breakwall, Hastings River

In 1821 Surveyor-General John Oxley wrote to Colonial Secretary Goulburn regarding the entrance to the Hastings River. "The bar was repeatedly examined during my stay of ten days and never less than 10 feet of water found on it at high tide, the bottom of soft sand."

The river was quite navigable for the first 70 years of settlement, but the river mouth had always been considered hazardous and could be dangerous in adverse circumstances, as the wrecks of the "Richmond", "Ballina" and the "Diamantina" can testify.

Finally the Public Works Department drew up plans to build a breakwall on the southern side of the entrance designed to direct the main flow of the river over the sand bar, scouring it out and creating a deep

P. Cook and partners won the contract and construction began in 1899. An agreement between Cook and the town mayor, Fred

wooden sleepers from Aston Hill through the streets of the town to the breakwater site.

In present-day terms, the tramlines ran along Warlters St. near St. Josephs Primary School, crossed the Park St. intersection, travelled diagonally through Westport Park, Westport Bowling Club, crossed Kooloonbung Creek in the vicinity of Buller St. on a specially constructed wooden bridge, emerging near the RSL car park in Short St.

In Short St., it travelled northwards past the Clarence St. intersection, passed on the river side of the Post Office, Royal Hotel and Police Station to the commencement of the wall at Murray St.

Forty men were employed on the project, where six horse drawn trucks were utilised to haul the stone from the quarry to a weighbridge near the Police Station, where it was weighed before being tipped.

The contractor was paid 3/8d per ton and at the end of the first year, 45319 tons had been used to build 889 feet of wall at a cost of £9818/13/3.

James Pearce was the foreman and Robert McDuff a powder monkey with the project, but conditions were not to everyone's satisfaction as the letter to the Port Macquarie News alludes:-

"We are made to work from 10 to 11 hours each day inclusive of Saturdays in all sorts of weather and the worst of all, the men are not allowed to smoke during the first nine hours and yet the ganger will stand over the men all day long with his own pipe in his mouth". This drew a quick denial from James Pearce.

The contract was terminated on December 15, 1899 when the government allocation had run out, but following an outcry from the residents of the district, a further interim outlay permitted the resumption of work in February 1901, resulting in an extension of 284 feet.

On October 21, 1899, the workers held a meeting in the Town Hall, where they formed the Quarry Sickness and Accident Fund, electing James Pearce as President, W. Lewis Vice-President, P. Kerr Secretary, James Baldwin Treasurer and the Committee of N. Campbell, R. McDuff, H. Hammond, F. Nelson and James Wilson.

After the payment of £10/10/- to reserve a bed at the Macleay Hospital, the balance of monies held was \$19/2/4. It seems that the only serious accident occurred on March 23, 1899, when Matthew Thompson, an assistant tripman at the quarry, had unlocked a horse from the truck, when he tripped over a stone and the wheels of the heavily laden vehicle passed over him. He was immediately taken up river on the ss "John Gollan" to the Macleay Hospital where his right arm was amputated.



This photograph of Richard Ayres and his family seems to have been a studio portrait, mounted on a card with the words "With best wishes for a happy Christmas and a bright New Year" and was donated to the Hastings District Historical society by the Bourne family of Port Macquarie.

Richard A. Ayres

In these days of rapid technological advances in medicine, dentistry and optometry, it is terribly easy to forget the hardship and inconvenience that our forebears had to endure to obtain relief from pain or receive remedial treatment for defects or deficiencies in the human body.

In the Port Macquarie district during the 1870s, the nearest hospitals were at Kempsey and Taree. Mr. Quist paid only periodical visits to the town to relieve the sufferers of toothache, while optical treatment usually meant a long journey to Sydney.

During the 1880s, Olf Henry Olsen, watchmaker and jeweller in Horton St. advertised his range of spectacles and lenses, while resident chemist A. H. Melville, whose shop stood on the present site of Soul Pattinson's Port Pharmacy, next to the Imperial Photo Co., offered painless extractions to those poor souls suffering in purgatory.

About 1897, Richard A. Ayres and his family arrived in Port Macquarie from Bulli, having purchased Melville's business, but little is known of his

background except that he married Olivia Corinna Foldi, of Milan, Italy in 1893 and they had two sons, Eric L. born in 1894 (later a dentist) and Harold R. in 1896.

An energetic and very capable man, he proved to be a "livewire" in both business and civic affairs, becoming an alderman of the municipal council and mayor in 1903. In a private letter to the Port Macquarie News on July 29, 1899, he suggested four easy ways of vastly improving the township with minimum expenditure – clearing up old Lovers Walk from Home St to Tacking Point Road (in the days before Pacific Drive), clearing and repairing the fencing in the old cemetery (covered in Major Innes' lantana), planting trees in Westport (the council had recently cleared and burned off all native trees), and the erection of urgently needed baths (which had been discussed since the 1870s).

However, he would be remembered chiefly for his individual efforts in getting the first public hospital for the town in 1901. It was through his personal efforts in scouring the countryside, gathering support for the concept of a public utility and the collection of subscriptions for the fund, that the movement gathered public and Government co-operation, particularly from Edmund Barton, the local member of parliament.

At a public meeting held on January 7, 1898, he suggested that the citizens of the town should apply to the government for a site in Westport for the hospital and he followed this up in council, recommending reserve 12899, a seven acre block bounded by Bridge, Park and Waugh Streets, west of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, previously set aside for public buildings on May 8, 1890. However, the Government recommended a larger reserve and donated £258 towards building the establishment.

Besides his chemist shop and dental equipment, Richard purchased a complete set of modern sight testing apparatus, complete with 200 lenses of all descriptions and was now prepared to test everyone's eyesight free of charge and "is able to supply spectacles to suit all sights at reasonable prices". He was also licensed to sell postage stamps in March 1899.

The Port Macquarie Bicycle Club had been formed on October 22, 1898 and Richard had started a cycle depot in the next door shop, being sole agent for Bennett and Woods Ltd, where he sold Imperial Rover and Royal Speedwell (£13/10/), "these machines are the embodiment of the very latest ideas in scientific cycle engineering."

Two of his brothers, S. and A. Ayres paid him a visit on October 28, 1899, having ridden bicycles up from Newcastle.

Besides the council and hospital commitments, he was the manager of the local Nigger Minstrel Troupe, Secretary of the Port Macquarie Band, Treasurer of the Rifle Club that was reformed in August 1899 (from the

war scare in South Africa) and the first Secretary of the Nimrod Fishing Club, which had the quaint rule that all catches on organised outings must be equally divided between financial members.

George Harris, who was apprenticed to Richard Ayres after he had left school, recalled that he first learned to ride a ladies bicycle at the shop, but previously had the task of walking up to the Hospital each morning, collecting all of the prescriptions and after they had been filled, returning with them to the patients. The chemist business must have been very successful, as he employed qualified staff in Clarrie Balcome, Mr. Consoli and Hugh McKinnon, who later opened up his own business in opposition but went broke.

At the public reception for his farewell, held in the School of Arts, the citizenry of Port Macquarie presented him and his wife with a large silver tea set on a polished oak tray as a measure of the esteem with which they were held. When the family left for Liverpool, they did so with the knowledge that the town was in a far better state than when they first arrived.

* * * *



This particular photograph appears to have been taken during a Hastings District Historical Society's excursion through the district in 1963 and shows one of the headstones resting hard up against a trellis fence of a neighbouring house, but it is not known if the grave was also there. About that time, the graves were situated among the homes and were carefully looked after by the inhabitants, but today only four headstones remain and these are grouped in a row within the declared cemetery boundary. The actual grave sites have not been recorded for posterity.

Graves at Hamilton

Tucked away from the prying eyes of both tourists and the general public, almost as though they were shameful reminders of the convict past, four stark sandstone columns mark the site of the earliest agricultural gardens of the penal colony, the homestead of one of our distinguished medicos and the final resting place of at least six of the early pioneers of the area.

Situated on the right hand bank of the Hastings River, only a few miles from Cpt. Allman's original landing place, nestling under the broad leaves of young frangipani trees, the headstones may be reached by turning off Hastings River Drive into Hibbard Drive and proceeding to the rear of the Sundowner Caravan Park.

Governor Lachlan Macquarie named the area Allmans' Plains on November 6, 1821 and recommended cultivation be undertaken from the present Hibbard ferry crossing, to Settlement Point Road. Although not

terribly successful, the gardens were in use until 1832 under the superintendence of Henry Harding Parker, who occupied a brick home built on the site and whose daughter, Catherine Ann Louisa was born there on March 7, 1831.

The first sales of "Settlement Farm" land were auctioned on November 30, 1837, with Lot 34 of 42 acres (near the ferry) going to John Terry Hughes, Lot 35 of 49 acres to William Manners Clarke, while a further adjacent 10 blocks went to Charles Steele, Henry Betts, John Terry Hughes and Matthew Charlton.

Dr. William Bell Carlyle bought both Lots 34 and 35 on which the Superintendent's house and granary stood and it was here that he established his homestead "Hamilton" and built a flourishing vineyard. Born in Scotland in 1788, he had first visited Australia as surgeon superintendent on the convict ship "Asia" on December 28, 1820 and was to make a further five similar voyages before settling at Port Macquarie in 1836.

With the doctor, a bachelor, lived an esteemed friend, Mrs. John Stephen with her family of four sons and two daughters and her spinster sister, Maria Sara Hamilton. Mrs. Stephen was Mary Matthew Hamilton before her marriage to John Stephen, who was appointed Commissioner of Lands on May 31, 1828 and who practised as a solicitor in Melbourne, where he later died.

Their eldest daughter, Claudia, married Charles Christian Dutton at St James Church, Sydney on October 28, 1834 at the tender age of 13, but she died at "Hamilton" and was buried in the garden, *circa* 1838. She is reputed to have married at her mother's request and had asked that only the name Claudia be used on her headstone – this headstone has since disappeared.

The Hamilton estate was mortgaged to Maria Sara Hamilton for £2000 on July 8, 1843 and following the death of Dr. Carlyle on September 5, 1844, the property passed from Miss Hamilton to James Young of Sydney for £300 on December 26, 1850. Dr Carlyle was buried next to Claudia in the gardens.

Of those known to be buried in this little cemetery are:- James Young, who was born at "Moor Court", Romsey, Hampshire in 1798 and married Maria Druce in 1825, arrived in New South Wales aboard the "Woodlark" (Cpt. Bloomfield) on December 8, 1849 with his family.

William Brown, of Glasgow, died on September 24, 1855 aged 38 and was laid to rest in the gardens, but nothing is known of him – he was possibly working for James Young.

George Smith, born in Aberdeenshire on May 16, 1829 and described as "a late merchant of Melbourne", died there on June 10, 1857 aged 28 and was interred beside the others.

One of James and Maria's fourteen children, Maria Druce Young had married John Cockburn Johnstone in Port Macquarie in 1854, but he died at Hamilton on June 1, 1856 aged 33.

James Young died on June 19, 1859 and was buried in the gardens of "Hamilton", the sixth known burial, but it is possible that others also rest in peace here.

Hamilton was sold to John McDonald in 1883, then to John Hibbard and Phillip Haines on July 6, 1887, who built the sawmill there, which was to be a feature of the landscape for many years and which was to give it's name to the suburb of Hibbard in 1912.

With the passage of time, the estate was cut up for closer settlement, roads constructed to give access to residents of Narimba Close and Hibbard Drive, while the little cemetery, proclaimed on July 20, 1889, struggles for survival amidst the encroaching growth of suburbia .

Of "Hamilton House", bricks were still being dug up as late as 1970, while Mr A.F. Manstead erected a new residence on the site of the earlier edifice.

The research notes of Mrs Dorothy Edmunds were used extensively in writing this article. Our photograph shows the headstone of George Smith, but the circumstances of its location are unknown.

* * * *



The Edwards Family form part of the history of Port Macquarie, with various members having shops in the town covering a long period of time. George William Edwards was appointed the first town clerk of the Municipal Council in 1887 and served in that capacity for 47 years.

Edwards Family of Port Macquarie

When the history of the Hastings Valley is finally written, numbered among the early pioneers of the district would be Thomas Eacott Edwards, who first crossed the bar at the mouth of the Hastings River in 1834 aboard the schooner "Ann".

Born at Bradford, Wiltshire, England *circa* 1792, the son of Thomas Edwards and Elizabeth Eacott, he became a cloth manufacturer in that commercial centre of the British textile industry, before arriving in Sydney on the "Lady Castlereagh" on May 1, 1818.

After a chequered career in Sydney, which included employment as a clerk to Mr. Justice Barron Field of the Supreme Court, he was appointed Crier of the Court on May 17, 1824, accumulated interests in farming and a grain mill, before becoming bankrupt on July 26, 1830.

On September 9, 1826, he married Elizabeth Reynolds the daughter of William and Ann (nee Willis), at St James Church, Sydney, but she died the next year. Reverend John Dunmore Lang officiated at his wedding to Eliza Winnicott on January 1, 1828, and son Thomas was born on February 3, 1829 and Sarah Ann on June 7, 1830.

At Port Macquarie, Thomas was appointed watch-house keeper at the gaol, while wife Eliza became the Matron of the female factory, where their combined salaries were 2/3d per diem with rations, slop clothing and free quarters thrown in.

At a later date, Thomas was a shop keeper, while his family increased with George born 1832, William Emanuel (1833), Eliza (1837), and Mary Ann (1839). Thomas (Snr) died on July 9, 1852 and Eliza married Patrick Hughes.

Thomas Eacott (Jnr) bought land in Horton Street, Allotment 2 of Section 10, on September 4, 1854 for £21 and a quit rent of one peppercorn, if demanded. He later acquired the adjoining lot 3, next to Dick's Tannery and this was known as "Edwards Corner", well into the 20th. century.

Trading as Edwards & Sons, his store sold drapery, groceries, sewing machines, ready made clothing, boots and shoes, best flour and American axes. He had married Alicia Armstrong at St. Thomas Church on January 26, 1850 and they raised 13 children.

Of his progeny, son John, who had been appointed Inspector of Nuisances in March 1893, was the centre of a legal controversy when he charged Mayor W. A. Spence with allowing stock to stray on waste land at the foot of Hay Street. In his defence, Mayor Spence deposed that Edwards had never been appointed under the Seal of the Council, was therefore not an officer of the Council and could not prosecute citizens. Although Spence won the case, the Judge summed up with "Owing to the improper conduct of the Mayor of the Borough, the case is dismissed". This verdict was to lead to his voluntary resignation shortly afterwards.

Another of his sons, George William, was appointed the first Town Clerk on June 7, 1887, with a commencing salary of £16/10/-. He was to have some difficulty with the Lands Department in 1888 when he changed the name on the deeds of his land from George Winnicott to George William. It is not known how this family name came to be issued with the deeds.

Contracting pleurisy in February 1896, his condition became critical, resulting in an operation by Dr. Boelke, following which he asked the Council for leave of absence, leading to the employment of Robert Davidson, the editor of the Port Macquarie News, as a replacement. He was not to return until late 1898, but was to prove to be a loyal servant for a record 47 years. A gentleman of genial disposition and kindly nature, he remained a bachelor throughout his life and left this world on January 26, 1939.



This 1928 photograph of the cottage hospital shows the various additions which were made to the original building over the years and the picket fence which was built by W. Rosenbaum fronting the unformed Morton St. Shortly after the opening ceremony in 1901, the Management Committee realised that no provision had been made for a mortuary and this was quickly built so that the government subsidy could be claimed. Government regulations also required that a separate ward be provided for contagious diseases and this was also built at a later stage and was often used as a private ward when not required for isolation purposes.

The First Cottage Hospital, Port Macquarie

The first military hospital was built in 1823 near the site of St. Agnes Catholic Church and following the departure of the penal colony in 1847, it was gazetted as a public institution on November 11, 1848, control being transferred to a civilian board, which ran it until its closure on October 9, 1867, due to the lack of public support.

It was not until 1893 that Mrs. James Butler (nee Helen Blair), commenced raising funds for the establishment of a new hospital in the area, but it was the arrival of Richard A. Ayres, chemist and dentist, of Horton Street, that provided the impetus for a concerted effort to bring this ideal to fruition.

Unfortunately, the prevailing economic conditions forced the postponement of most plans until 1894 and it was not until 1899 that the organising committee was well established.

River excursions, balls, penny collection cards and bazaars were held to raise funds, but it was through the exertions of Richard Ayres in travelling

throughout the district collecting subscriptions, that a sound financial position was reached. At a monster ball held in the Town Hall on July 28, 1900, Dr. Grace Boelke wore a black brocade dress with pink chiffon trimmings, Mrs. Halpin was attired in a grey corded silk costume with guipure lace trimmings, while Mrs. Jacob Healey was dressed in a white cashmere skirt and cream silk bengaline bodice.

A. E. Pountney had offered his half acre block on the corner of Gordon and Hindman Streets as a site for the hospital, but this was rejected as being too small and the Municipal Council, through Alderman Ayres, applied to the Lands Department for reserve 12899, bounded by Bridge, Waugh and Park Streets, but once again, this was rejected as being too small. The Department recommended a 20 acre site just west of Horton Street adjoining the aboriginal camping reserve and this was gladly accepted.

On April 24, 1900, the first hospital committee was elected by subscribers, with John Hibbard as President, Jas. Butler and R. A. Ayres as Vice Presidents, W. A. Spence Secretary, Rev. H. S. Buntine as treasurer and a committee of P. J. O'Neill, H. B. Nicoll, D. Bain, J. R. Andrews, P. H. Secombe, H. St. John, J. D. Wilson, Jas. Gamack and W. Webber.

Messrs. Brownlow and Nicholls were the building contractors with a price of £738/6/6. J. Baldwin won the contract for the site clearing, while W. Cunning constructed the two-railed fence around the property and W. Rosenbaum built the picket fence and gates in front of the hospital.

In the planning stages, the works committee used the plans of the Bulli Hospital as their model, with modifications made by supervising architect, W. F. Burrows and Jas. Butler as supervising builder. Brownlow and Nicholls exceeded their completion date by 14 weeks and had to threaten legal action to obtain their full price.

Dr. Edwin Doudney became the first medical officer with salary of £50 per annum, Nurse M. McLean from Taree was appointed Matron and Miss Annie Woodlands won the position of probationer nurse from Misses V. Woodlands and M. Windeyer.

On a day "full of glorious sunshine, refreshingly tempered by cooling sea breezes", Robert Davidson M.L.A. opened the new hospital on Kings Birthday, November 11, 1901 and this was followed by a huge banquet in the afternoon and finalised with a ball that night.

The hospital was to serve the area well for the next 50 years and today, nearly 90 years ahead, the next generation of service is about to be launched.



The restored "Roto House" is today a classic example of the type of home built by the more affluent persons in the late 1800s and is the Headquarters of the Parks and Wildlife Department, with its attached Koala Hospital, renowned for its work throughout the area.

Much of the history of this family can be gleaned by a visit to their stately home, while a large amount of John Flynn's work as a surveyor is preserved by the Hastings District Historical Society.

John Edmund Flynn of Roto House

John Edmund Flynn was born at "Green House", Bulanaming St., Redfern, N.S.W. in 1854, the third child of John Flynn and Mary Cavanagh, who were married in 1847. Both were immigrants from Ireland, the former from Queens County who arrived in 1839, while Mary Cavanagh, an orphan from County Cork, came to live with her uncle and aunt in Bathurst St. Sydney.

In 1859, John and Mary and their five children took up a large property on the Marthaguy Creek in the Coonamble district, called "Willewa", the children receiving their education under the care of a tutor and governess. John Edmund

later went to St Mary's College, Lyndhurst and after matriculation, studied at Sydney University where he graduated as MA in 1879.

Electing to become a surveyor, he served his time with Mr. Pennyfather on the Richmond River and on qualifying, was appointed to the Lands Department in Sydney, being transferred to Grafton in 1883. It was here that he met Jessie Louisa McDougall, the daughter of Police Magistrate, Andrew McDougall and the couple became engaged to marry.

After taking up private practice and moving to Port Macquarie, the couple were married in July 1887 and rented a half house in William St. from Mrs. Becke, later moving to "Pacific Cottage" owned by Cpt. Kingsford of the Pilot Service. The young surveyor was engaged in laying out the towns of Wauchope, Telegraph Point, Laurieton and Kendall, as well as opening up land at Pappinbarra, Gum Scrub and the Comboyne Brush.

In 1889, the couple bought some 20 acres of land on the outskirts of the town and on September 1, 1890 a contract was drawn up with James Condon to construct a ten-roomed house for £667, to be named "Roto House". Of their children, Nora M. was born on July 6, 1886, followed by Desmond J. (1888), Ormonde H. (1889), Kevin K. (1891), Kathleen M. (1892) and Neil A. in 1894.

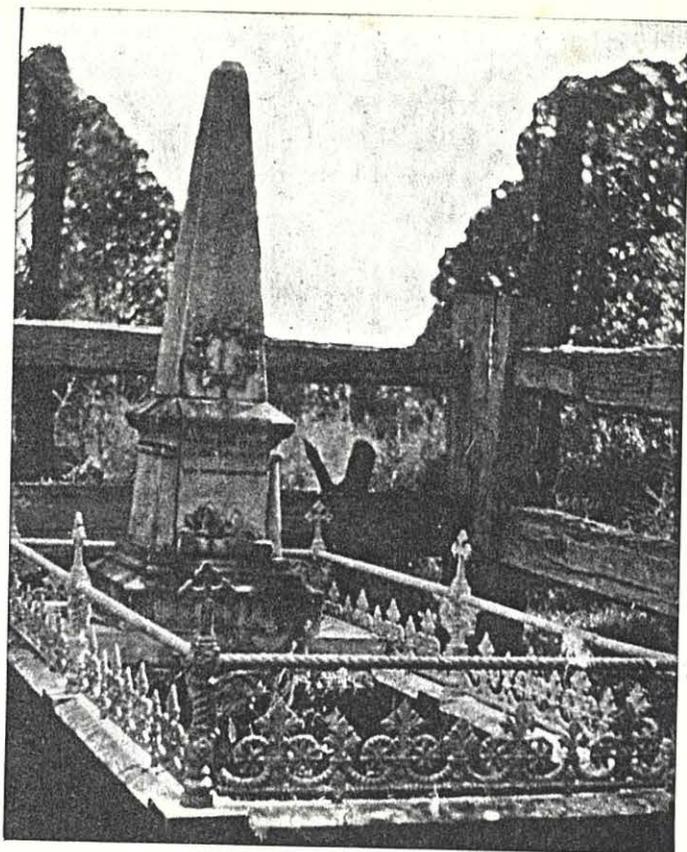
In civic affairs, John Edmund was involved with local government, the Cottage Hospital, the School of Arts and the Agricultural Association as well as being a pillar of St. Agnes Church. His wife Jessie, who was born at Roxborough House, Baulkham Hills in 1862, was an active member of the Red Cross where she received a long service award for more than 20 years work, as well as interests in the Cottage Hospital and the Agricultural Society.

Of their offspring, only Desmond married and his wife, Elizabeth Grainger, died soon after giving birth to a daughter, Patricia, the Flynn name only being perpetuated by the street and beach near the early homestead.

Desmond's first daughter was stillborn and was buried under the Norfolk pine in the front garden.

John Edmund Flynn died on October 26, 1933, followed by Jessie Louisa on September 5, 1946 and after all descendants had left the family home, "Roto House" fell into disrepair until it was resumed by the Minister for Lands in 1969 for use as the Macquarie Nature Reserve. Today it is well known as the headquarters for the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the associated koala hospital.

* * * *



George Allen Johnson's grave stands hidden among light timber at the rear of houses lining George Allen Johnson Close in the village of Sancrox, no public access being provided to the hallowed grounds. It is sad to recall that in its prime, the sawmills and wharves created a hive of activity, with ships waiting for berths to load timber. Today, the small settlement is once again showing signs of activity, with people building homes in the quiet surroundings.

George Allen Johnson – Sancrox

When Governor Lachlan Macquarie decided to open up the land in the Hastings Valley to free settlement in 1829, Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell despatched James Ralfe and assistant Mr D'Arcy to the region to undertake a survey of the area, to be commenced from the south-west corner of a reserve for the future township of Hay.

Hay was named after Under-Secretary Robert William Hay. This area of land later became known variously as Haytown, San Roch, Saint Rock,

Sunken Rocks and Saint Croix, but the name Sancrox survived all others and it was gazetted as such on January 23, 1892.

When the village was laid out, it was situated on the banks of the Hastings River in the vicinity of the early crossing point to the proposed penal colony site on Rawdon Island and in addition to the area set aside for private dwellings, there were four acres for public buildings, two acres for schools, a 230 acre camping reserve and a 560 acre Common.

Trustees of this Common gazetted on December 24, 1861 and known as Sancrox South, were Henry Warlters, William Bransdon, Wesley, Muscio, Francis Warlters and Edward Heydon.

On October 14, 1892 an area of about 20 acres was set aside for a cemetery, conveniently situated off the road from Spencers Cutting to the punt crossing at Narrowgut (now closed).

Off the present day Sancrox Road, in the western part of the village, is George Allen Johnson Close, and behind Mr. Thompson's Lot 34, hidden amongst light timber, lies the monument of the early pioneer who gave his name to that street.

The post and rail fence surrounding the grave has collapsed, part of the iron work is missing, but the marble headstone is remarkably well preserved.

George Allen Johnson was born at Carrick, Tasmania in June, 1845, and as a young man, went to New Zealand, where he was engaged in the timber industry, marrying Harriett Peacock at Invercargill on September 22, 1875.

Four sons were born before the family returned to Australia and took up residence, firstly at Laurieton and later at Cooperook.

In 1890 they moved to the Hastings River and bought a property at Butchers Yard, Gannon's Creek, named "Hastings Park", where the first family home was built of bush poles and stringy-bark slabs.

Shortly after, George Allen established a sawmill at Wauchope at the rear of the then public school (near the present swimming pool), but in 1899 these interests were transferred to twin mills at Sancrox, where a small village of 15 houses, a store and wharves grew up, some of the families being Levick, Lee, Dark, Branch, Cook, Williams and Kelly.

Much of the timber from the mills was shipped to Sydney and sold through Allen, Taylor and Co. and provided the wooden paving blocks for the streets of Sydney.

On the morning of May 3, 1901, George Allen Johnson was manually

turning a winch at the mill, when he over-exerted himself and collapsed, complaining of chest pains and he died within the hour.

His eldest son, James M. Johnson managed the mill until 1904 when it was sold to Nicholas Cain, but in 1906, the complex was burned down and all of the mill workers homes were moved elsewhere.

The Johnson home was removed to Wauchope, where it was later used as the C.W.A. and Baby Health Clinic for some years.

* * * *

The Nobbys Monument – John William Hume

Visitors to our town may ponder the reason for erecting a monument atop “The Nobbys” (named after a similar feature near Newcastle), but few would realise the poignant details commemorated by that stark concrete obelisk, readily observed when travelling along today’s Pacific Drive in Port Macquarie.

John Hume married Emily Hayes Fenton, the second daughter of William Thomas Fenton, a ropemaker of Jamaica and his wife Elizabeth Bella Kendall and the couple were selected by the British and Foreign School Society for training as teachers at their Model School in London, where, after completion of their studies, they were sent to Australia aboard the “Francis Spaight” which reached Port Jackson on Decemer 31, 1839.

Their first child, John William, was born in Sydney on June 18, 1839 and following in his parents footsteps, became a teacher at the Kent Street School. On December 16, 1861 at Wattle Flat, Bathurst, he married Elizabeth Hamey and their children were an un-named child born in 1862, Evaneline Emily Eaton (1863), Beatrice Elizabeth (1865), Walter Scott Kendall (1868), Anne Constance (1870), Eaton Hamilton (1872) and Archibald Douglas in 1874.

After a period at Armidale, the Humes moved to the Hastings Valley where John William opened a Presbyterian School at Wauchope on December 11, 1865 and in 1868 was the first teacher at the slab and shingle building built on Thomas Suters land on the corner of High and Cameron Streets, Wauchope.

His brother, Kendall Hume, was also teaching at the half time schools at Huntingdon and Beechwood.

In May 1871, J. W. Hume was transferred to the public school at Port Macquarie and it was here on May 25, 1874 that he, with fellow teachers Henry Gardner and Miss Mary McDonald (later Mrs. John Bourne), Miss Kingsford and other pupils, held a picnic on J. L. Ruthven’s land at “Arncliffe”, some distance from the beach.

In the afternoon they walked down to visit “Big Nobbys” where Mr. Hume, while trying to negotiate a very steep and slippery ledge of rocks, lost his footing and fell into the seething cauldron of foam near the entrance to the cave. Without hesitation or regard to his own safety, Henry Gardner plunged into the waters to assist his friend and managed to grasp Hume’s hair, but soon lost his grip amidst the whirl of the heaving seas and despite repeated attempts, Hume’s body disappeared. Mary McDonald braved the swelling, perilous seas to offer her outstretched arm to Gardner,



The concrete monument commemorating this sad event is an outstanding feature of the coastline to the east of the town, commanding the highest point of a craggy headland which can be reached by the more adventurous.

The history of the obelisk itself is quite strange – it has had to be renovated twice during its lifetime, being struck by lightning on both occasions.

When replacing the cement rendered notice recalling the tragic event, the students unfortunately deciphered the incorrect date, with the consequence that the present date of May 10, 1874 is incorrect.

but realising that a third life might be sacrificed, Henry declined, an outstanding display of selflessness which cost him his life.

Henry Gardner was believed to have been a bachelor, but Elizabeth Hume was left destitute with a family of six children whose ages ranged from 10 years down to one month.

It is not known what the people of Port Macquarie did to assist the family but the teachers of Armidale “in the absence of any general movement for the relief of the family”, opened a subscription list for the Hume Relief Fund and a Gardner Memorial Fund.

The carvings on the cement monument are almost unreadable today, so it is very pleasing to know that the students of St. Josephs Vocational College are replacing this with a brass plaque, courtesy of the Hastings Council Cultural Award.

* * * *



The butter factory was a landmark in Westport for many years, providing jobs for many of the town's workers until it was demolished to make way for the more central site at Telegraph Point. A wharf was eventually built at the river end of Park St, for the cream to be unloaded from the launches.

Port Macquarie Butter Factory

When Cpt. Francis Allman's expedition arrived at Port Macquarie on the April 17 and 18, 1821, to establish a new penal colony, the three ships carried 182 personnel, six months provisions, the necessary stores, tools, implements and slop clothing along with one bull and two cows.

By 1828, the government herd numbered 229 cattle and "the milk and butter are most liberally distributed among the free inhabitants of the Settlement and the soldiers who have families, from the dairy at Government House".

In the early years, both the military and the free settlers experimented with sub-tropical crops such as sugar cane (the first in Australia), cotton, tobacco and castor oil, as well as the staple maize and wheat, but by the 1880's these had given way to the more reliable products of the land.

It is interesting to note the manifest of the "Wellington", which left for

Sydney on August 25, 1888:- Passengers – Mrs. Smyth, Miss Nicholls, Messrs W. Hayes, R. Green, C. Freeman, Bennett, Clinton, Chapman, Warroll, Barlow. Cargo – 804 bags of maize, 12 hides, 98 pigs, 2 coops poultry, 14 cases eggs, 8 boxes fish, 5 kegs whiskey, 8 casks wine, one bullock and 32 cedar logs.

It was not until the 1890's that the dairying industry was established in the Hastings district, mainly at the instigation of ex-preacher, Robert Davidson, who, as Editor of the Port Macquarie News, used the editorial columns to convince farmers to change from subsistence type farming to the more reliable dairying.

In 1892, the Hastings River Dairy Co-operative Co. was formed at Wauchope with Robert Davidson as Chairman of Directors. But it was on December 16, 1897 that the Australian Dairy Co opened the £2317 butter factory at Aston, Port Macquarie, on one acre of Mary Holland's land at the corner of Park and Warlters Streets, where two wells had been sunk to secure a good supply of water.

These were later used as the town's first reticulated water supply, being piped across the Long Bridge, built to haul stone from the Aston quarry for the construction of the southern breakwall.

The General Manager, A. L. McIntyre, called on Mayor Fred Hayward to open the factory by turning on the tap of the separator, setting in motion the machinery capable of producing 15-20 tons of butter per week.

After an inspection of the factory, about 70 guests retired to the School of Arts in Clarence Street, where, after a sumptuous feast provided by A. A. Cumming, toasts and speeches were given by the Mayor, Rev H. S. Buntine, D. Bain, R. Davidson, Rev R. Johnston, J. Hibbard, W. H. Morris, W. Ellis, A. P. Hall, Rev Penny, G. Lindsay, P. Secombe, G. Branson, M. Fagan and T. D. Wilson.

Ironically, the only available report of this event comes from the one and only copy of the Hastings River Herald published by William E. Best on December 23, 1897, now held by the Historical Society.

* * * *



Robert Davidson was to spend 46 years of his life in Port Macquarie with occupations as diverse as church minister, journalist, politician and farmer and even filled the post of Town Clerk when the incumbent was absent on medical leave of absence.

Reverend Robert Davidson

Reverend Robert Davidson was born at 8am on September 4, 1856 at Mauchline, Scotland, a son of fancy-box manufacturer, John Davidson and his wife, Mary (nee Dalrymple) and following his education in his home town, he entered Glasgow University where he studied to be a Presbyterian Free Church minister.

After his ordination, he married his childhood sweetheart, Jeanie Logan Muir on August 31, 1883, and on December 28, they sailed for Sydney on the ss "Sorata", being met by Reverend Gordon, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly, who sent the couple to the Hastings River to work under the Church Extension Committee.

He was inducted into the Port Macquarie charge on March 23, 1884 and because the Manse was occupied by the Wilson family, he moved to a two storied building near the foot of Clarence Street, known as "Edinburgh House", where daughters Mary Calderwood Dalrymple and Jean Logan Muir were born on June 5, 1884 and August 19, 1886 respectively.

After moving to the Manse in Murray Street, four sons and a daughter were born: Robert Alexander Boyd (1889), Agnes Gillies Walker (1898), John James Muir (1892), William Eric (1893) and Douglas Neil in 1895.

Following nine years of preaching to his flock, his health broke down and he was forced to resign his ministry on October 7, 1893, whereupon he bought out A. E. Pountney's Port Macquarie News and became its Editor, but he kept his interest in the church by becoming Session Clerk.

He used the editorial columns of his paper to convince farmers to diversify their interest and was instrumental in introducing the dairying industry to the Hastings Valley.

On February 8, 1896, he was appointed Assistant Town Clerk and Valuator to the municipal council when George W. Edwards, the Town Clerk, was on extended sick leave for two years.

The family home "Gilmorehill" was built on the corner of Grant and Gray Streets, the present day site of the Salvation Army's Bethany Nursing Home.

Failing in a bid to enter the first Federal Parliament in March 1901, he had a landslide victory in contesting the seat of Hastings and Macleay, standing as a free-trade advocate in July of that same year.

His supporters in Port Macquarie formed a Freetraders Association and the columns of The News were filled with lists of people who openly backed him.

He was a staunch supporter of the North Coast Railway and fought hard to get it extended along the coast, while as befitting his work as parliamentary representative of this area, he officially opened the first cottage hospital in Port Macquarie in November 1901 and the first bridge over the Wilson River at Telegraph Point on April 9, 1902.

After serving three terms as sitting member, he returned to Port Macquarie where he took up dairy farming, but due to his failing health, he and his wife retired to Kiama on the South Coast following a farewell from the grateful citizens of his adopted town on September 25, 1929.

On August 5, 1931, at Forbes Hospital, there passed from this world, a truly remarkable man.

* * * *



On the approach of his 85th birthday, Jack Walsh is still entering data in the Society's computer, plays bowls and is active in all things historical. On a conducted tour of Rollands Plains in September 1991, Jack re-visited his old bakery at Bonnie Doon, the remains of the oven still standing.

Jack Francis Walsh

As an active member of the Hastings District Historical Society, a slightly built man with greying hair, who recently celebrated his 83rd birthday, sits at a computer for two days each week entering genealogical data pertaining to the pioneers of the Hastings Valley, a task which now contains details of over 9000 people.

The background of Jack Francis Walsh, a foundation member of the Society, begins in Limerick, County Clare, Ireland, when James Walsh and his wife, Johanna (nee Fahey), emigrated to Australia in 1841. After some time at Morpeth, the family moved to the Hastings District in the 1850s where they took up market gardening at Rawdon Villa, near Rawdon Island Creek. It was here that James died on October 5, 1871, aged 60 years.

Son, Francis, who was born at Morpeth on April 15, 1842, married Catherine Barrie and spent most of his life at Kempsey and Wauchope where he was a JP,

a committee member of the Show Society and the Hastings District Progress Association. He built the Presbyterian Church at Huntingdon in 1878 for £45 (now in Timbertown) as well as the first public school at Wauchope.

John Walsh, a son of Francis and Catherine, was born at the East Kempsey Hotel on May 9, 1874, and was a baker at Wauchope, Taree and Ulmarra before becoming a marine engineer and serving on overseas shipping. Returning to Port Macquarie about 1903, he worked aboard the tug "Undaunted" as engineer and was in the crew of the Blackman's Point Ferry, before buying his own launches "Shamrock" and "Ostrea". These he used to pick up cream from the farmers on the Hastings, Wilson and Maria Rivers and deliver it to the butter factory at Port Macquarie.

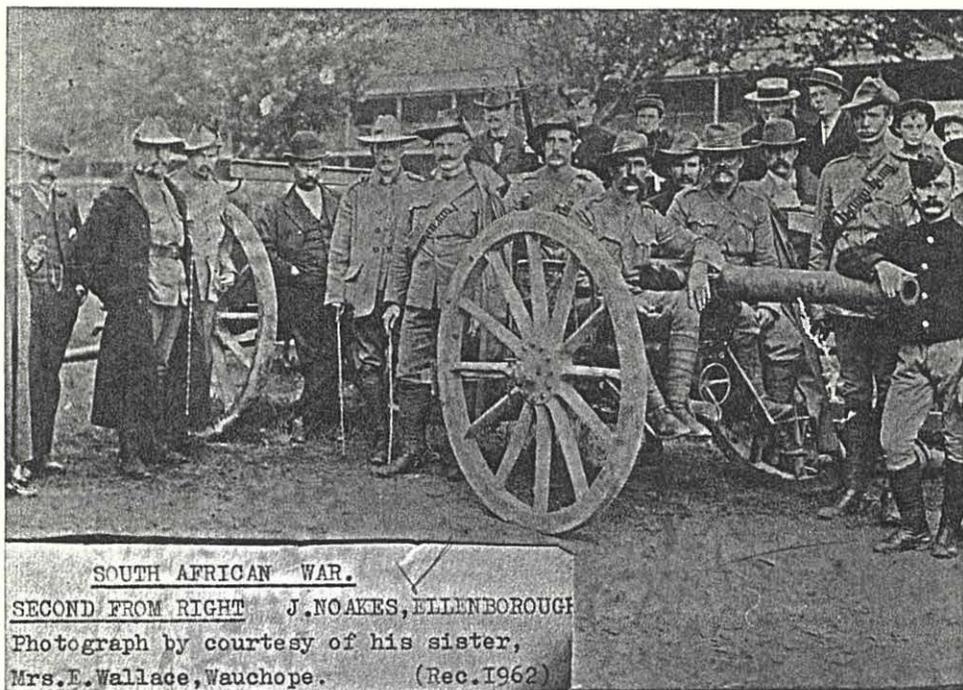
On April 5, 1905, he married Theresa Adelaide O'Doherty and their children were Edna May Estell (1905), Jack Francis (1907), Gladys Josephine Florence (1909), Theresa Maud (1910), Lorna Dulcie Barrie (1915) and Colleen Faith (1926).

Jack Francis was born in the family home in Bridge Street, West Port, on October 24, 1907, and was educated firstly at the convent in Horton Street and various schools at Wauchope, Kempsey, Greenhill, Glenthorne and Beechwood. Introduced to the bread trade at the early age of eleven, he had to stand on a kerosene case to be able to cut, weigh and roll the dough when he was helping his father after school hours or on the weekends.

As a young man he took jobs in the farming, timber and tinsmithing industries, but it was in the bakery trade that he spent most of his life, working for Mr. Benson at Hibbard for 22 years and Cheers and Debenham at their bakery on the corner of Short and Clarence Streets for 19 years. In between these jobs he also ran his own bakery at "Bonnie Doon" at Rollands Plains, where he would bake one day and do the deliveries to houses on the next.

Jack married Anne Maud Edwards on April 5, 1947, and their surviving child, Roslyn Annette, was born on May 7, 1952. After Anne passed away, Jack re-married Mrs. Helena Margaret Ardron (nee Casley), and the following year he retired to play lawn bowls, but still keeps his hand in by baking his own bread and pies and is kept busy making Christmas and wedding cakes which he also decorates. In the early years of the Society he contributed greatly to the documented history of the area and was responsible for much of the huge photographic collection – a man of many talents.

* * * *



SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.
 SECOND FROM RIGHT J. NOAKES, ELLENBOROUGH
 Photograph by courtesy of his sister,
 Mrs. E. Wallace, Wauchope. (Rec. 1962)

Since the publication of this article in November 1991, further research has uncovered a further 15 enlistments from this region. Unfortunately, information on their backgrounds is still scarce, but is continuing.

Boer War Veterans, Hastings District

With the commencement of hostilities between the British Government and the Boers in South Africa in October 1899, the Colony of New South Wales reacted quickly to the call to arms from the mother country.

A squadron of NSW Lancers, under the command of Capt. Cox, had proceeded to Enland earlier that year, to participate in the annual military tournament at Islington and for training at Aldershot Barracks. When war broke out, this unit embarked for South Africa on October 18, 1899 and reached Cape Town on November 2, where they were attached to General French's command and employed on patrol duties in the Colesburg district.

In the same month, further drafts of the Lancers were despatched from Sydney, the forefront of some 16,463 men and 16,357 horses from all States in Australia who were to take part in the conflagration, which included the Royal Australian Artillery and a unit of Nursing Sisters.

With a population of nearly 1,888 people, the Hastings district farewelled

at least 27 known volunteers to the front, who served with British and Australian units, all of whom miraculously survived to return to Australia. Before hostilities commenced, a group of men from Port Macquarie, including John Walsh, James Condon and James Bourne, had emigrated to South Africa for business purposes and were also caught up in the conflict.

We are greatly indebted to these men, their families and the editor of the Port Macquarie News (Robert Davidson) who published the letters sent home from the war theatre, which will preserve a little of the history of this era as a written memorial to the sacrifices made by the youth of this district. We are particularly grateful to the Noakes family, who not only sent three of their sons to assist in the war, but who also donated a copy of "Records of Australian Contingents to the War in South Africa 1899-1982", from which we were able to identify many of the units with which the men served.

John Henry Baldwin – 3rd NSW Imperial Bushmen.

Reginald Lindsay Cadden – NSW Citizen Bushmen and 3rd NSW Mounted Rifles.

Guy L.H. Doudney – NSW Lancers.

Donald Cameron Kennedy – Imperial Bushmen.

David Peter Noakes – 1st NSW Mounted Infantry.

William Arthur Noakes – 3rd NSW Mounted Rifles.

Robert R. Noakes – 1st Battalion, Australian Commonwealth Horse.

Edward Southwell Gowrie Ruthven – Imperial Bushmen.

John Lowry Ruthven – possibly a British Regiment.

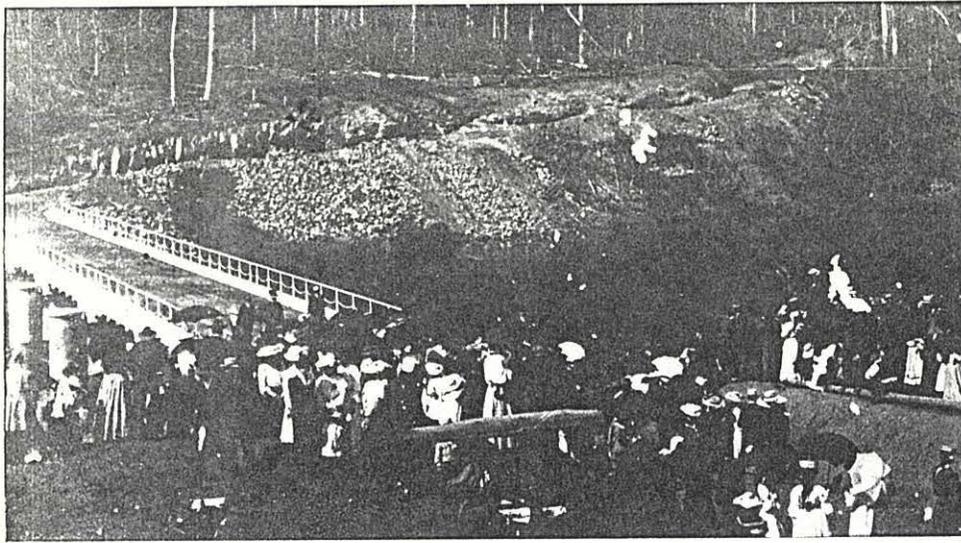
Michael Mervyn Macquarie Spence – Kitchener's Horse.

William Patrick Trim – Imperial Bushmen.

James Walsh – Cape Special Police.

Thomas Joseph Williams – possibly 1st NSW Mounted Rifles.

Our photograph, kindly donated by Mrs E. Wallace (née Noakes) shows David Peter "Jack" Noakes second from the right. The Hastings District Historical Society Inc intends to publish a small booklet containing men's letters from South Africa and including details of their service and family background. The Society would like to contact descendants of any of the men mentioned or others from the district who also served, when we can supply copies of letters and other information already collected.



The first bridge over the Hastings River was built near Wauchope and was named after Duncan Bain of "Letterewe", Wauchope, a pioneer of the district and a prominent figure in civic affairs in his time.

Opening of Bain Bridge

The Port Macquarie News reported a major event in the history of the Hastings Valley which occurred on the August 14, 1907:- "A perfect day prevailed for the opening of the bridge at Camerons Falls on Wednesday last. Large numbers of ladies, gentlemen and children from all parts of the district began to assemble at the picturesque spot quite early in the day and by noon there were between 700 and 800 persons present, about 100 having arrived from Port Macquarie in Mr. Walsh's new launch. The Italian String band was present and played selections throughout the day.

The bridge is of the low level type and stands on Monier cylinders with concrete arches. It is constructed of beam timber and contains six 45 feet and one 35 foot spans covering a length of 300 feet and is enclosed with a handrailing and is a unique structure, reflecting great credit on the builders.

The bridge was formally opened by Robert Davidson M.L.A., who was introduced by Mr. P. J. O'Neill (Shire President), while the christening ceremony was carried out by Mrs. Graham (Snr), of Korie Island. Mr. O'Neill said he had a very pleasing duty to perform, one of the most pleasant in his life and that was to say a few words in honour of opening of the first bridge across the Hastings River.

The agitation for it had extended over 15 or 16 years and was commenced by the Beechwood Progress Association and the first thing towards it was

the building of a stone crossing, about which a great deal of comment was made and though it may appear as having been money thrown away, yet to his mind it was not. When the stone was washed away, it was almost impossible to cross the river, but they then had a better chance of pointing out to the government, the necessity for a bridge.

There was a great deal of agitation 8-10 years ago and it was in Frank Clarke's (M.L.A.) time, that money was first put on the estimates for the bridge. Then afterwards Mr. Davidson became the member and he (the speaker), thoroughly recognised the support and assistance he had given in this matter and he was sure that gentleman never lost sight of it and he supposed he very often wished the Beechwood Progress Committee to Hong Kong . . .

In reply, Robert Davidson remarked - "The bridge would cause a marked advance to the district, especially to Beechwood and be a great boon to communication, except in time of flood. The late Duncan Bain had some of the grand qualities of the race from which he sprang and no matter how he and that gentleman were opposed to one another in different matters, they always met and shook hands as friends. He missed that gentleman's face from the bridge, because he would have recognised that his hopes were at last fulfilled and they could only now regret his loss. This bridge was part of his work and he was sure the good work done by Mr Bain and his father during the days that were given them on earth would remain green in the minds of many of those present during their lives.

Mrs Graham was then called upon to christen the bridge, "The Bain Bridge" and the bottle was broken. The visitors then entered on picnicking pursuits.

* * * *



Neville and Pearl Anderson were both foundation members of Port Macquarie Historical Society in 1956 when Neville was elected the first President. After the amalgamation of that body with the Hastings District Historical Society, he was President during 1966-1983 and today, both are still active members.

The Anderson Family

Visitors to the well appointed Hastings District Historical Society in Clarence Street, Port Macquarie, would be unaware of the huge financial gamble which was taken by the five trustees of the embryonic committee to acquire the convict built 1836 building to house the Society's records and artifacts.

When a public meeting was held at the council chambers on October 15, 1956, to form the Port Macquarie Historical Society, Neville Anderson was elected foundation president, but soon after, this body amalgamated with the Hastings District Historical Society from Wauchope.

In February 1963, the council required the five trustees to be guarantors of a £7,800 loan to purchase the building:- Ron Howell, Raymond Dick, Spencer Alex Bowman, Clarence Rae Lynne Eiggins and Neville Andrew

Anderson were each prepared to mortgage their homes and businesses to ensure the repayment.

Our story focuses on one of the five men, Neville Anderson, still a member of the society after 35 years, whose service to the community was recently recognised by an Achievement Award from citizens of the community.

William Anderson, a wheel and shipwright, was born at Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1804 and arrived in Sydney aboard the "Red Rover" in 1832, along with fellow passenger, Bridget Mead of County Cork, Ireland.

The couple were married in Sydney by Reverend John Dunmore Lang on November 16, 1832. A son, David was born at The Rocks, Sydney, on February 5, 1835 and married Elizabeth Phillips from Port Sorrell, Tasmania on May 25, 1866 and their children were Caroline, born in Tasmania, Florence, Eva, William (1874), Melvina (1875), Sydney D (1879), Beatrice (1881), Thomas Leslie (1883), Jeanette (1875), Ivy (1887) and Elwyn E (1889).

David and his family were engaged to do restoration work on the Royal Hotel, Port Macquarie and the family lived in a house owned by Lt Wilson in Hay Street, close to the present Garrison Building.

The Royal had been re-built with the convict pattern bricks made at Lake Innes by Major Innes and were required to be cement rendered, William Nicholls having been brought from Sydney to do this job.

David Anderson and Bill Nicholls were the successful tenderers for the construction of the Town Hall in 1892 at a cost of £169/17/6 – the brick came from the demolished asylum. David also helped in the building of the first St Agnes Church in 1878; the first timber bridge over Fernbank Creek, John Hibbard's house, "Elsinore" (Linden Travellers Hostel) and the spiral staircase in Hayward House in Horton Street.

His son, William was born in Port Macquarie on January 10, 1874, and worked as a butcher for the McInherneys of Settlement Farm at their butcher shop in Horton Street (site of Dymocks Book Store), before starting his own butchery in Clarence Street and later his own shop at the site of the ill-fated Star Hotel on the south-western corner of Horton and William Street.

Neville was apprenticed to his father and later had his own butchery at 64 Clarence St. He married Ulwyn Pearl Moy on the 26th November 1932 and they had four children; Lauraine (1935), Maureen Joy (1937), Ian Robert (1948) and Judith Gail (1958). Playing football and cricket in his youthful days, Neville joined the Rechabite Lodge, the Oddfellows and the Masonic Lodge, (which he joined in October 1930) and is still a member. Pearl joined the Historical Society with her husband and is renowned for her work as a conservator and lacemaker, many beautiful examples of which are readily seen in the museum.



Charles and Margaret Wilkins were married at St Thomas Church in 1846 and were to spend the next 54 years living quietly in the town, where both Charles and his son, Charles, were to serve as undertakers.

Charles Wilkins

Charles Wilkins, blacksmith, who was born in Somerset about 1791, was charged with horse stealing at Middlesex on the 6th July 1814 and received a death sentence which was commuted to transportation to Botany Bay for life and arrived at Sydney aboard the "Baring" on the 7th September 1815. The shipping indents, which were used as a means of physical identification, described him as being aged 28, 67 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches tall, a Protestant with black hair and brown eyes.

On the 29th July 1816 at Sydney, he married another convict, Elizabeth Barnes, from Tiverton, England, who had arrived on the "Mary Ann" with

a sentence of 14 years. The couple raised their family of five children in their George St. home, where Charles had a thriving business and employed other men to assist with the orders. He received his conditional pardon in August 1825 and the 1828 census tells us that Elizabeth had her ticket of leave at that time, while the family owned two cows.

Of particular interest is the fact that Charles was granted his absolute pardon on the 8th February 1835 "so that he may accompany his wife to England to recover property bequeathed to her."

Son Charles was born in Sydney on the 13th February 1825 and was trained as a carpenter, coming to Port Macquarie under contract to the Government. At St. Thomas Church, on the 1st September 1846, he married Margaret Fahy the daughter of the well-known Michael Fahy, a corporal in the 39th. regiment who came to Port Macquarie in the penal days and following his discharge from the Army in 1832, was made Superintendent of the convict establishment at Rollands Plains.

The children of Charles and Margaret were Elizabeth, born in 1847, Charles (1849), Rebecca Mary (1850), William (1852) and Henry Thomas (1871). The eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married John Stuart Dick, Rebecca Mary married William Campbell and Henry married Sarah Elizabeth Ramsay.

The Wilkins family appear to have been law-abiding citizens who played their part in the community, for in the 18 years of newspaper reporting before Charles death, the Port Macquarie News only mentioned the family three times. In 1882, Charles moved his cabinetmaking business to new premises in Horton St. opposite Thomas Hayward's boot warehouse, while on the 2nd February 1889, he sued Mrs McKell for funeral expenses, followed in two weeks time by being fined 10/- for failing to register his dog with the council.

For many years, Charles was the coffinmaker and undertaker for the town and his name was invariably mentioned in connection with the funeral arrangements for burials in the town. His signature is recorded for posterity in the archives of the Presbyterian Church for the 1870s, when he agreed to contribute towards the support of the new Minister, Reverend John Ayling.

Charles Wilkins passed away on the 10th September 1900 – a momentous year which saw the beginning of Federation, the Boxer Rebellion and the Boer War unfold, the new bridge at Kempsey opened and a massive famine in India.

* * * *



Our photograph shows Sir Harry and Lady Rawson sitting on the verandah of the cottage hospital and although names are not mentioned on the back of the photo, Robert Davidson is readily recognised standing on the right of Cpt Share, with mayor Richard Ayres next to him. Matron Margaret McLean (from Taree, the first matron) stands behind Lady Rawson.

Governor Harry Rawson's Visit – 1903

After months of planning for the visit of the Governor, Admiral Sir Harry Holdsworth Rawson, the afternoon of Saturday, November 21, 1903 saw the vice regal party, which consisted of Sir Harry and Lady Rawson, Miss See, Cpt H.Share (private secretary), Hon J. Perry (Minister for Education), W. Thomson (MLA), Sub Inspector Goulder (bodyguard) and Sub Inspector Sykes (escort party), met outside "Thrumster" by Mayor Richard Ayres and some 500 loyal subjects.

The Port Macquarie Band under the baton of Mr C.Gotting was driven in a waggon by Mr S. J. Woodlands and led the procession of horsemen, coaches, buggies and drags which stretched for a mile for the journey along the New England road into town, passing along Gordon St which had

been decorated with bangalow ferns, flowers and bunting, through five archways which had been erected across the roadway in Gordon and Horton Streets.

The party were driven to John Condon's Commercial Hotel in Horton St (now Innes Tavern), where they were met by a guard of honour of 12 boys dressed in cavalry uniforms, from Blackmans Point and Hamilton schools, led by Mr C. E. Woolford, while pupils from the three local schools sang the national anthem under the banner of Mr H. O'Connor.

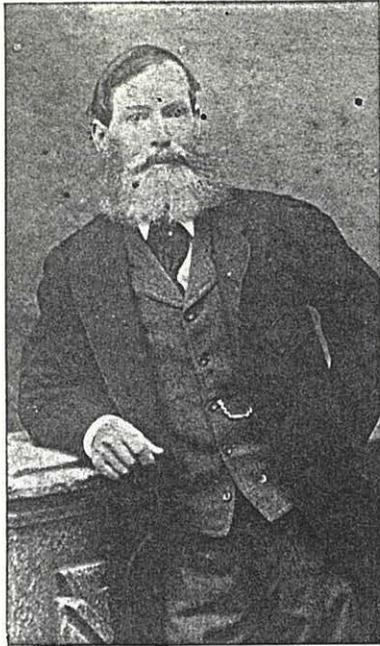
In the evening, Robert Davidson (MLA) escorted the Governor and party to the decorated Town Hall for the official reception by the Mayor and his aldermen, before being driven to the Agricultural Association Hall for a "Conversazione" – an informal gathering to meet the people. As the party took their seats, Miss Iris Kingsford presented Lady Rawson with a shower bouquet (arranged by Miss Blair), while a faultless display of dumbell drill by Mr Woolford's pupils preceded a piano duet by Misses Edwards and Flynn. This was followed by Mr A. Harley rendering a song in his rich baritone voice, Miss G.Doudney played a violin solo, "Crown Diamonds" and concluded with Mrs A. B. Butler's singing "Tatters".

The formal part of the evening was a civic reception and supper at the Masonic Lodge No 69 in Hay St, after which the party retired to their lodgings.

On Sunday, the vice regal party attended a service in St Thomas church conducted by Rev C. M. Thomas and this was followed by a visit to the recently constructed cottage hospital.

This official visit by a Governor of NSW was the first since that of Lord Belmore some 34 years ago, previous visits being made by Governors Macquarie, Macleay and Fitzroy. The next morning, the party left by coach for their onward journey to Kempsey.

* * * *



These photographs of Allen and Emma Argent were taken by the Elite Studio in Kempsey. Allen Argent first worked at Lake Innes as a gardner, then a labourer at the Brickfields at Port Macquarie before leasing a farm at "Cogo", and leaving the area to pioneer the Argents Hill district. Argents Hill and Argents Point near Lake Innes were named after the family, but seem to have disappeared over the years.

Pioneers of Argent Hill

Allen Argent, the son of Abraham and his wife Phoebe (nee Pashe), married Emma Marsh, of Toppersfield, Essex at Stanbourne, Essex on May 4, 1850 and the couple eked out a miserable living by the husband working as a farm labourer in an orchard and his wife adding to the income by plaiting straw hats. Allen and Emma and their two children, Rebecca, born 1852 and Matilda (1854) arrived in Sydney aboard the "Lloyds" on August 3, 1855 and shortly afterwards, took the coastal steamer up to Port Macquarie where Allen was employed as a labourer by D. Frederick MacKellar (the grandfather of poetess Dorothea MacKellar), who had leased Lake Innes from the bankrupt estate of Major Archibald Clunes Innes.

The children born in Australia to Allen and Emma were William Albert (1856), Joseph (1858), Susanna Eliza (1860), Isabella (-1862), John (1863), Phoebe (1865), Emily Jane (1867), Hepzibah (1869), Mary Jane (1872) and Emma (1876).

Allen next took a job at the brickfields in Port Macquarie, but about 1861, he leased part of "Cogo" estate, a farm of 1653 acres, which had been the marriage portion of Margaret Innes at Rollands Plains, and which, in 1843, had seen the massacre of three cedar cutters by aborigines. A fourth man, George Spokes, escaped, resulting in the hanging of one of the perpetrators, Terryridge, outside the gaol in Clarence St on October 25, 1843, a futile gesture of imperial justice.

Here the family grew wheat, maize, melons and vegetables as well as rearing cattle, pigs and poultry. Their 12 year tenure at "Cogo" was marred by tragedy when young Isabella, in helping her elder brothers burn off tree stumps, had her clothing catch alight and she died from her injuries on September 20, 1868.

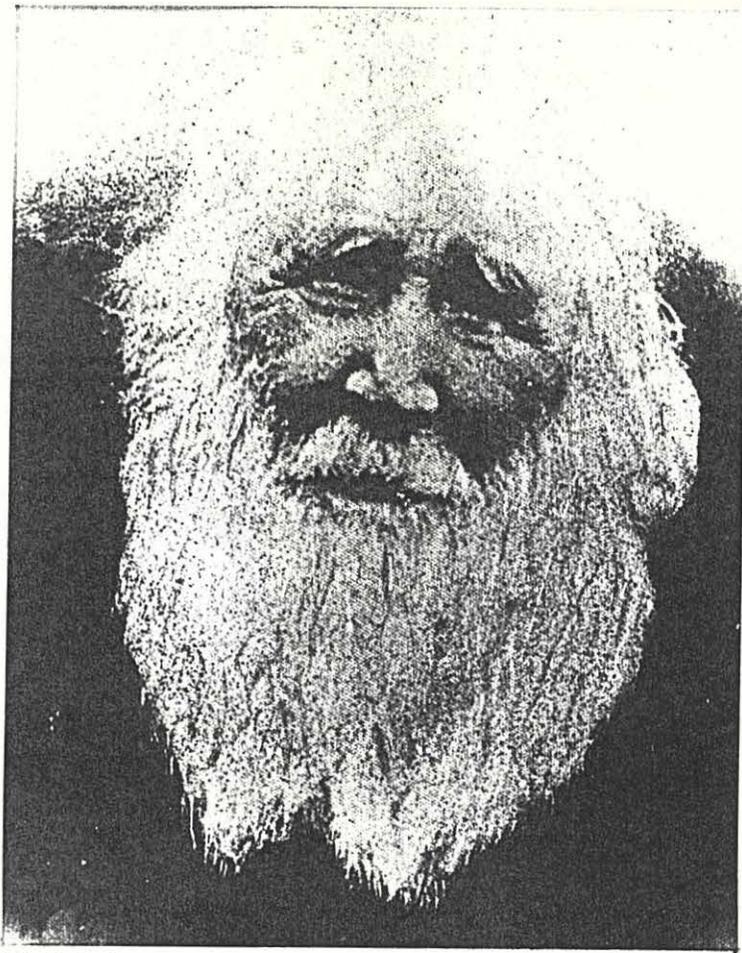
Lured by the stories of good stands of red cedar, Allen, with his two elder sons, Willie and Joe, along with Frank Grace, set out for the Nambucca River to establish a new home and earn a fortune by cutting the cedar. Selecting a rich piece of land some eight miles west of Bowraville, the party built a slab hut, felled the timber and burned the brush, while Frank Grace used his bullock team to cart the cedar for marketing.

In 1870, the rest of the family were moved the 100 miles by bullock carts, the journey from Kempsey to Stuart's Point, Scotts Head, Boat Harbour (where the Nambucca was crossed) to Bowra, over the Sugarloaf Mountain and finally to "Argents Hill", took 14 days.

Eventually a group of families moved to the area, erecting a store, post office and church, the village taking its name from the pioneers. Frank Grace married Rebecca Argent, six of the Argent children married six of the Ballard family, who arrived in 1879 with their 13 children, while other families included the Robinsons, Mackay, Brown, Churchill and Fuller clans.

Allen and Emma are both buried in the little cemetery up on the hill, just past the site of their first slab hut, now the centre of a thriving rural community which they helped to develop and which took their name. Mrs Hepzibah Ballard, their last surviving child, joined them on December 27, 1962.

* * * *



"Big Bill" Delaforce was transported to Australia for a minor offence and on the completion of his term, bought land at Rawdon Island, where he farmed for many years until he became too feeble to work. He then went to his son Frederick's farm at Fernbank Creek where he saw out his days. There are many of his descendants still living in the area.

William Delaforce

One of Port Macquarie's more celebrated convicts was William Delaforce, who was born at Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, near London on the 28th May 1817 and as a carter's boy of 17 years of age was charged with housebreaking at Middlesex on the 3rd July 1834 and sentenced to seven years transportation.

After detention in the Portsmouth and Newgate gaols awaiting disposal, he was shipped aboard the "Hooghly" and arrived in Sydney on the 18th.

November 1834 and was assigned to another emancipated convict named Samuel Terry, of Mount Pleasant, who had arrived in chains in 1801 and after serving his time, became one of the richest men in the Colony of the 1830s.

The convict shipping indents describe him as being aged 17 years, could read and write, a Protestant, single, a carter's boy of London, 5 feet 3 inches tall, ruddy and freckled complexion, with brown hair and blue eyes, a man and anchor tattooed on the inside of the lower right arm, an anchor and DWD and several small moles on the inside of the lower left arm.

Sent to Port Macquarie in the "William Fourth", he worked on the road gangs for some time before he was sent to Lake Innes to labour for Major A. C. Innes.

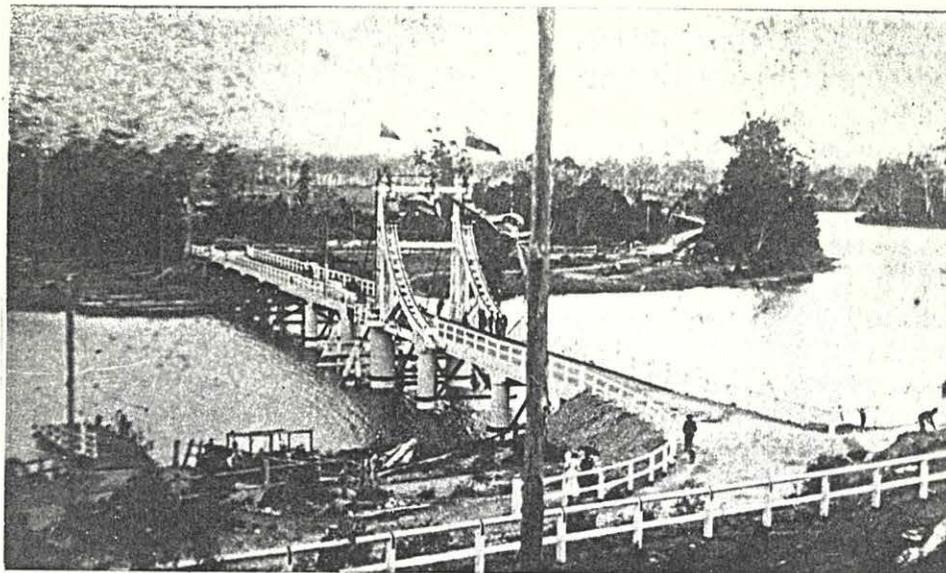
Receiving his pardon in 1843, he determined to seek work away from the environment of the penal establishment but was arrested at Maitland and charged with being a runaway convict and spent some time in Newcastle and Sydney gaols before he was able to satisfactorily establish his identity.

Returning to Port Macquarie by walking the 250 miles on foot, he saw the last of the poor creatures constructing the massive Kooloonbung Creek weir and bridge. For it, timber was cut from the Tacking Point scrub and dragged to the site and stone was carted from Aston Hill. The huge task of cutting away the red dirt from Dick's Hill to make the extension of Gordon St. and the approaches for the bridge, is the greatest reminder of the toils of the convicts. The story is told that in his later years, "Bill" was asked if there were any banks in the town in his early days – his reply was to the effect that there was only one big bank; the huge bank of red dirt cut from the hill for the weir. It is also believed that he wrote the small book, "The life of an ex-convict of Port Macquarie."

On the 10th October 1851, he was married to Frances Jane Sheehan at St. Andrews Church, Port Macquarie, by the Rev William McKee, with the witnesses being Alfred Moncroft and Mary Salmon. The children of the marriage, all born in the region, were Lucilla (1852), Joseph (1854), Isabella (1856), William (1859), Frederick (1862) and Clara Jane in 1865.

It seems that William and Jane leased or rented land in the Blackman's Point district, but later he was to buy his own farm on Little Rawdon Island where the last two children were born.

When Bill Delaforce died at his son's farm at Fernbank Creek on the 7th July 1900, his obituary declared that "he was a straight-forward, hard working and honest man, one whom, if he could not do his fellow-man a good turn, would not do him a bad one. He brought up a large and respectable family, most of whom are settled on this and adjoining rivers".



The bridge over the Wilson River at Telegraph Point was constructed after those at Taree and then Kempsey and was only built after the local populace had given unqualified support to their member of parliament, Robert Davidson, in his determined drive to replace punts over the rivers in the district. The punt which the bridge replaced can be seen to the left of the photograph, this being later used for the crossing at Hibbard.

Opening of Telegraph Point Bridge

When settlement beyond the limits of location was first permitted in 1836, there were two methods of access to the New or MacLeay River from Port Macquarie. After crossing the Hastings River on the convict-manned Blackman's Point ferry, travelling could be by water up the Maria River to Mariaville (or Boat Harbour), then on to Kempsey, or by a dray track on the south side of the Wilson River as far as Ballyngarry (Ballengarra), where the river could be crossed, thence over the mountain to Dungay Creek near Wittittrin.

April 9, 1902, was a memorable day in the lives of the good folk of Telegraph Point, for it heralded the opening of the new bridge across the Wilson River in the vicinity of the punt crossing where the telegraph line from Kempsey to Port Macquarie first spanned the water in 1869, the culmination of many years of agitation by the local residents.

Although funds had been allocated in 1892, nothing had been done by the central government until a public meeting of irate citizens had called for government action "to make communication more rapid, especially in times of flood". Work on the project commenced in September 1900, to the

design of the Public Works Department, with the resident engineer W. F. Burrows working under the supervision of E. M. De Burgh and was built at a cost of £8500.

The 400 foot long bridge consisted of four timber compound truss spans, four timber beam spans, with an iron opening span of the counter-balanced bascule type, which permitted the passage of the timber barges which plied the river.

The organising committee for the celebrations consisted of Messrs W. C. Cutler, E. C. Naylor, William Webber, J. T. McIntyre, R. T. Smith and the Rowsell brothers and at 1.30 p.m., the procession (which had been formed at the Post Office), marched to the new bridge, led by the Port Macquarie band under the baton of C. Gotting.

The christening ceremony was jointly performed by Mrs H. L. Wilson (possibly the oldest resident) and Miss E. Rowsell (daughter of Mr William Rowsell) and as the champagne bottles were broken, both ladies distinctly named the structure "The Telegraph Point Bridge". It was then officially declared open by Robert Davidson M.L.A. and toasts were proposed by W. Warlters (JP), O. O. Dangar, H. R. Bridson (JP), P. S. Basche, James Gamack, R. T. Smith, R. A. Ayres, A. A. Cummins, and E. C. Naylor.

A banquet for 300 guests was then held, followed by a sports meeting, while a Grand Ball held on the bridge itself that evening concluded the festivities.

This narrow, single lane bridge was to do sterling duty for the next 72 years when it was replaced by the present magnificent structure in 1974 for a total cost of \$1,600,000. Our photograph shows the early bridge, gaily decorated with flags and bunting while the discarded punt (which was eventually to be sent to open up the Hibbard ferry service), can be seen at the left.

* * * *



There appears to be no known photographs of James Lahey (Snr.) available and the accompanying portrait shows James (Jnr.) and his second wife, Eliza Mann, who took over the Lahey property until his retirement in 1935.

James Lahey of Yarrows

The files of the Hastings District Historical Society contain a wealth of information on events and people associated with this district since its inception in 1821, but in many cases, the documents are incomplete because research through official channels can be costly or because contact with descendants has been lost through the efflux of time .

One interesting personality was James Lahey, a soldier with the 41st Regiment, who was born in Kilkenny, Ireland in May 1807, married a very young Martha Eaton, of Limerick, Ireland at Arnee, India on November 29, 1829 and their first two children, born in India, were John, (1832) and James (1835).

Very little information is known surrounding the events in India, but on March 1, 1837 John Lahey was convicted at Bellary, Madras of attempting to stab the unit adjutant, was given a seven year sentence and transported to Australia aboard the "Patriot" which arrived on February 1, 1838. As usual, a detailed description is given in the ships indents – a Roman Catholic aged 30, married with two children, able to read and write, of dark sallow complexion, a little pock pitted, brown hair and grey eyes, eyebrows meeting, a scar on the ball of his left thumb, arms and breast hairy.

James appears to have been assigned to Major Archibald Clunes Innes at Lake Innes Estate in Port Macquarie and after he received his freedom in 1844, he signed an agreement (dated June 22; 1844) with the Major to undertake the management of the Yarrows Wool Pack Inn for a remuneration of £30 per annum. This hostelry was apparently located on the banks of the Yarras Creek, opposite Yarras station.

In the meantime, the family was increasing, with Augustus Dowling born in 1839, Dowling John (1841), Joanna Martha (?), William (1843), Margaret (1848), Michael (1851), Edward (1853), Kyran (1855) and Catherine (1857).

At a later date James bought 40 acres of crown land on the old New England Road, to which was added a further 62 acres and this property, "Katarally" (Katavally) became a popular stopover for the wool wagons on their way to Port Macquarie, from which place the bales were despatched by sea. On the return journey ,the teamsters backloaded with oranges from James extensive orchards, some of the fruit trees of which were still visible around the site of the homestead for many years after.

James Lahey, soldier, convict, publican and grazier, died on May 24, 1887 and was buried at "Catcoeey", Yeldhams private property at Yarras and his son, James, continued to run the property until he retired in 1935.

Some of the families who were connected with the Laheys were Wellard, Mann, Hollis, Mumford, Andrews, Stace and Cook.

Our photograph shows a well-dressed James Lahey (Jnr) who was to become well known in the district.

* * * *



This photograph of members of the Rollands Plains Rifle Club of 1906 is also interesting because of the modes of dress and headware of that era. Braces and not belts were in vogue, while it is surprising to note the number of vests being worn in this sub-tropical climate. Of particular interest is the man at the back row, third from the left, who appears to be wearing a military style jacket, possibly a relic of the recently finished Boer War.

Country Rifle Clubs – 1906

Although the rifle and gun were standard items of equipment for farmers in the early years, it would seem that rifle clubs were not formed in this vicinity until 1896, when the first inkling of unrest among the Boers in South Africa became known, leading the civic fathers to call for the formation of volunteer rifle corps, based on quasi-military lines. This led to the formation of a civilian rifle club in Port Macquarie in 1899, which was assisted by the government in the way of a grant purchase, a range of Martin-Henry rifles and ammunition.

In the outer districts, the formation of similar clubs took a little longer and it was not until February 11, 1905 that a meeting was called at James Harrower's Bonnie Doon Hotel by interested members residing in the Rollands Plains area.

On the 25th of that month, intending members were given a talk by Robert Davidson and H. Kerle from Port Macquarie, on some aspects of the

formation of such a club and its objects. Thirty members were enrolled and selected James Gamack as president and H. R. Henderson as secretary. Mr R. A. Bell, manager of the North Coast Steam Navigation Company offered a splendid silver cup valued at five guineas for future competition. Despite all the enthusiasm and good intentions, the club did not get under way, but no suggestion for the rapid demise was given by the Port Macquarie News.

On June 17, 1905, another successful meeting was held at the usual watering hole, where the defunct rifle club was reformed, new officers elected and again, 30 members signed up. Commenting on this new development, the "News" observed:-

"Surely there are sufficient men of the right stamp and sufficient energy to form and maintain such a commendable institution. We hope a central position will be chosen for the range. Efforts are being made towards clearing the recreation grounds and a government grant has been applied for."

This central position may have been the bone of contention for the previous administration.

Meanwhile, the good folk down river at Telegraph Point decided that if Rollands Plains could do it, so could they. The "News", of August 5, 1905, reported that the "Telegraph Point Civilian Rifle Club" had been formed at a meeting held in Keough's hotel, with Arnold Weber (the local teacher) as Club Captain, B. D. Keough Secretary and T. Keough, Treasurer, while committee members were G. Herbert, E. Sharpe, T. C. Munday and P. Keough.

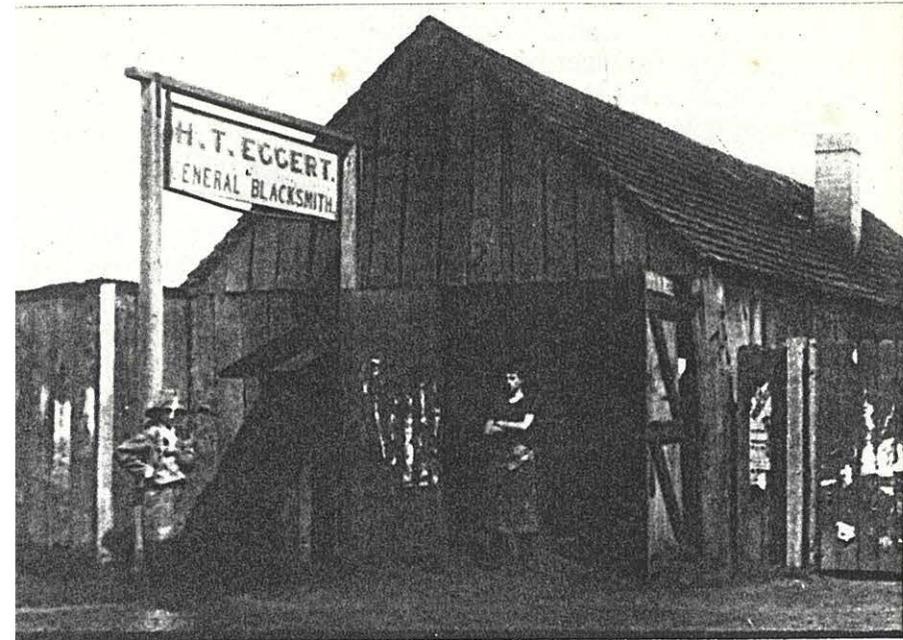
The first shoot for the Telgraph Point Club was held on September 15, 1906, with Arnold Weber firing the first shot and secretary Hattersley getting the top score for the day.

These two clubs often teamed together in competitions before joining in the larger regional shoots. Our photograph of the Rollands Plains team of 1906, shows 18 of the 50 club members, not all of whom are known. Back row, right to left:- Joe (Ern) Campbell, George Cutler, George Herbert, Harry Vogle, Harry Cutler, William, Cutler, unknown, Campbell, unknown.

Front row – Percy Workman, unknown, unknown, Jim Harrower, George Workman, Nelson or Jim Spokes, ? Campbell.

We are indebted to Mr Bill Little for supplying the names.

* * * *



photograph of Henry Thomas Eggert's blacksmith shop in High Street Wauchope is a good example of the type of construction for the period 1899.

Henry Thomas Eggert – Blacksmith, Wauchope

Richard Tobias Eggert, the son of Christian Eggert and his wife Doris (Doresler), was born about 1828 in Feltau, Prussia and emigrated to Australia in 1859, was naturalised on July 11, 1866 at Wingham (probably changing his forename of Henry) and later was described as a widower and settler at Burrill Creek on the Manning River. On May 20, 1869 he married Mrs. Elizabeth Martin (nee Watson) at the Methodist Chapel at Wingham and the couple had four children.

Henry Thomas, was born at Wauchope on March 22, 1870 and after completing his schooling, was indentured to blacksmith Walter G. Sinfield, on March 1, 1885, at his shop at the river end of Cameron St., which had been built for him by Thomas Wallace. When Mr Sinfield became ill (he died of typhoid at St. Henry's Hospital, Sydney), Henry bought the shop in August 1893 and was to remain there until he bought Noakes & Sinfield in High Street in November 1899.

In February 1902, he had Mr. Maxwell start building him a new cottage

correspondent for the Port Macquarie News recorded:- "At Wauchope House, Wauchope, on Tuesday morning, Rev. A. Rudd had the pleasant task of uniting in holy matrimony, Henry Thomas Eggert and Esther Gertrude, the youngest daughter of Mr. J. R. Andrews of Wauchope House. The bride looked beautiful in a cream silk dress, trimmed with white lace and wearing the usual veil and wreath of orange blossoms. She also carried a handsome bridal bouquet.

The father of the bride gave her away. Miss L. Andrews attended as bridesmaid and was charmingly attired in pale blue silk with white satin trimmings. She also wore a handsome gold brooch, the gift of the bridegroom. Mr Horace Eggert attended as best man. Afterwards the party sat down to the wedding breakfast at which the usual toasts were honoured. The newly married couple left very soon after the ceremony for their honeymoon, which is to be spent on the Blue Mountains. The bride's travelling dress was of blue cashmere, with white silk trimmings."

The couple had five children, with Stephanie Esther Gertrude born in 1903, Joseph Andrew (1906), Henry Jesse Watson (1908), Carl Vincent Dudley (1913) and Sadie Traline.

Henry was to play his part in the life of Wauchope, being involved in the football and cricket clubs as both a player and a committeeman, was the Sec./Treas. of the Good Templars, a trustee of Wauchope Park, Vice President of the School of Arts and a member of the first Wauchope Progress Association.

On May 4, 1944 only one month and two days before the launch of the greatest armed invasion ever seen ("D" Day, Europe), Henry Thomas Eggert departed this earth at 51 Cobar St., Dulwich Hill, Sydney and was to be joined by his life partner on January 7, 1950.

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About the Author

Ian Symonds was born and educated at Mackay, North Queensland and served for sixteen years as a radar technician and pilot with the RAAF before resigning his commission and joining TAA as an airline pilot in October 1964.

With his wife, Margaret and family, he lived for 23 years at Sunbury, Victoria where he was the foundation President of the Sunbury Art Group, foundation Vice-President of the Sunbury Genealogical Society and an active member of the Sunbury and District Heritage Society.

In 1985 he published his book, "Bulla Bulla – An Illustrated History of the Shire of Bulla", a six year project which resulted from his interests in both art and history.

Choosing Port Macquarie as a place for early retirement in 1988, he is currently a researcher with the Hastings District Historical Society.