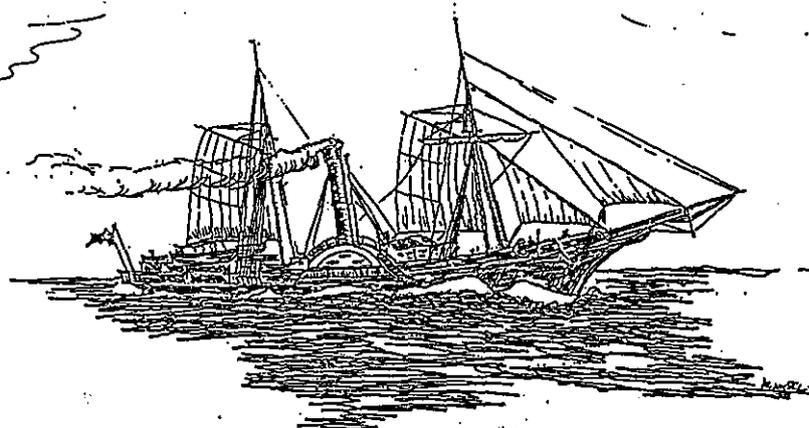




THE  
HASTINGS DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



THOMAS COOK.  
CONVICT "SPECIAL".  
PORT MACQUARIE.

1835.

HASTINGS LIBRARY  
N.S.W.



AN OCCASIONAL PAPER  
WRITTEN BY GWEN GRIFFIN  
APRIL 1988.

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\* THOMAS COOK \*  
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On the very wet Good Friday morning of April 1st, 1988, the *William the Fourth*,<sup>1</sup> a replica of the famous sailing steamer of that name steamed over the bar at Port Macquarie at 7am and docked at the jetty at the foot of Hollingsworth Street.

Her mission, during her short stay of this Bicentennial Year, was to undertake a series of short trips on the Hastings River on behalf of her sponsors, the Rotary Club of Port Macquarie West. It was also an opportunity for the people of Port Macquarie to recall the first historic crossing of the harbour bar by the first steamship of that name to be built in Australia over one hundred and fifty years ago.<sup>2</sup>

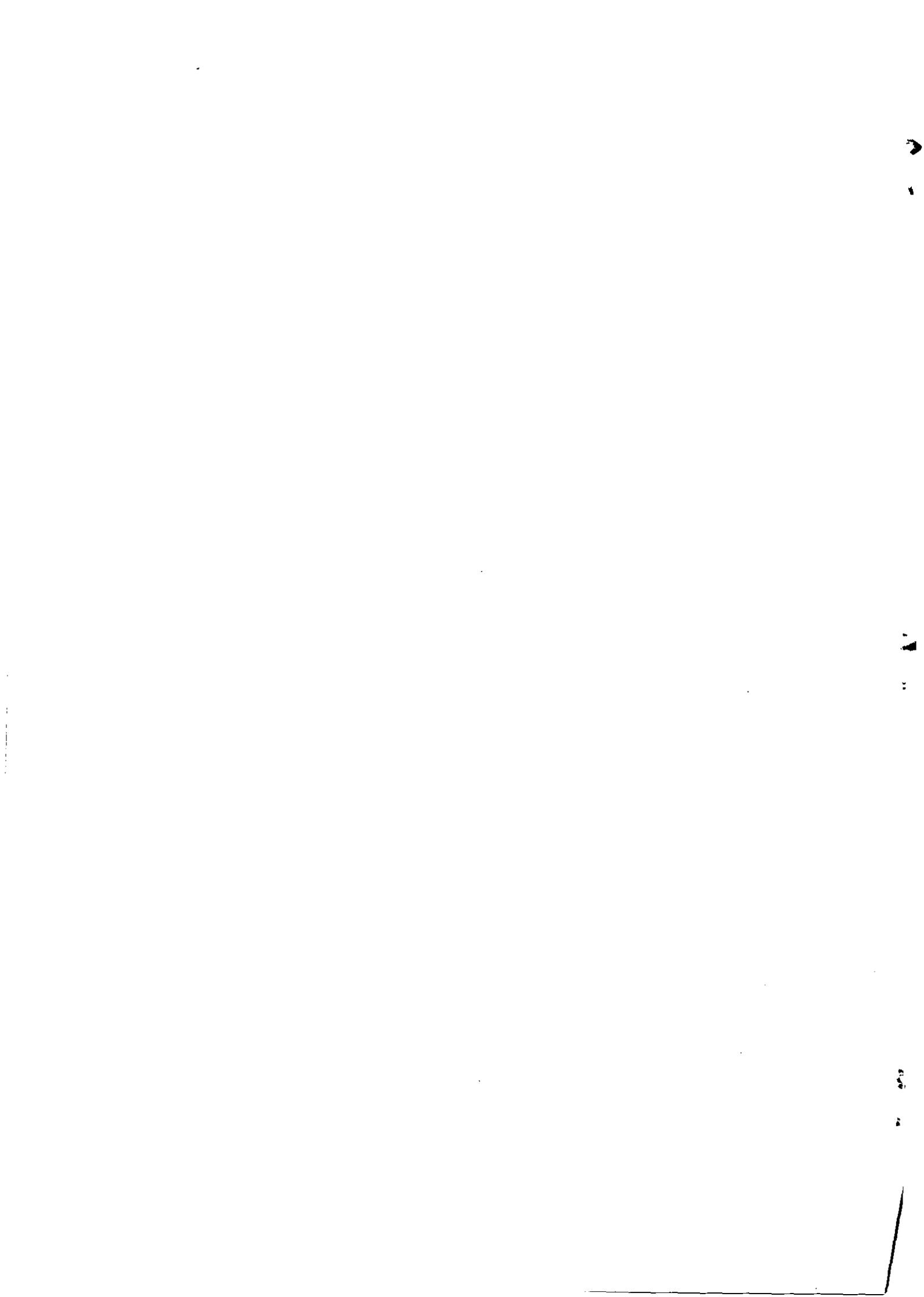
The opportunity to sail on her was an unforgettable and pleasant experience for me. When I stood on the deck of this surprisingly quiet vessel as it drew closer to this glorious place, I had time to wonder whether the same emotions stirred in the hearts of the many convicts who had crowded the deck of its counterpart during the many trips it made during the years 1835 to 1837. It was then that my thoughts turned to Thomas Cook, one of the thirty male prisoners being conveyed from the hulk *Phoenix* in Sydney on the 10th November, 1835.

Thomas Cook was the third son of John and Mary Cook, who resided with their family of eight children in Whitchurch, a small country town in Shropshire, in England,<sup>3</sup> whose history extends to the time of the Roman occupation when it was known as Mediolanium and in King Alfred's time, Westune.

Like his brothers and sisters, he was baptised there in the Parish Church of St. Alkmunds<sup>4</sup>. His eldest brother, John, was baptised in 1808, George 1810, then Thomas in 1812, followed by Joseph 1817, Mary 1820, Henry 1824 and Elizabeth 1828.

The Cook family must have been of some standing in Whitchurch, for Thomas obtained a position in the solicitor's office of William Hill Watson in May 1826, when he was 14 years of age. He followed this occupation even after the death of his employer in 1828, when he was employed in the office of Benjamin Lakin, until 1830.





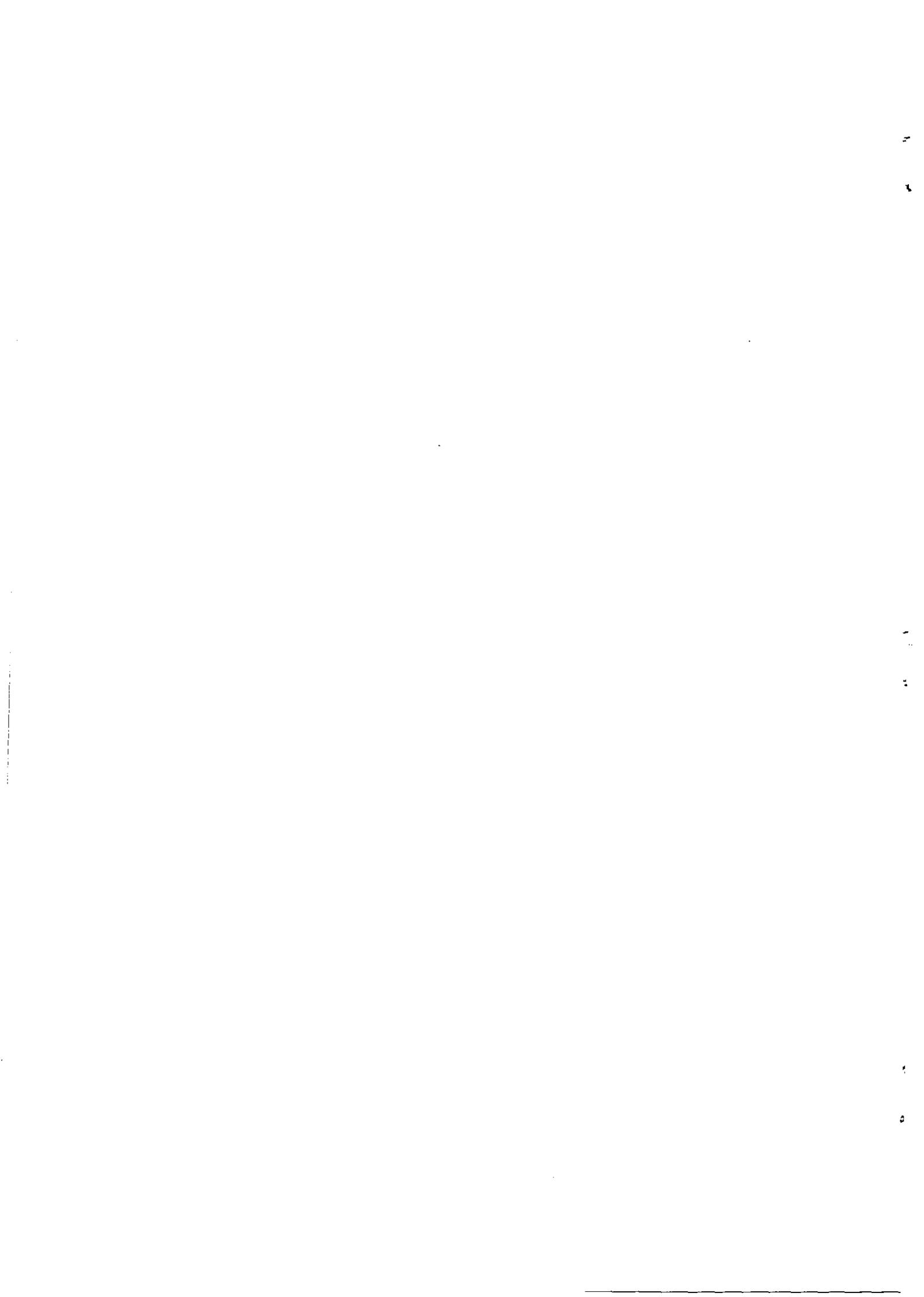
Unfortunately, he became too friendly with Thomas Salisbury Richardson for together they concocted and wrote two menacing letters to William Churton, an auctioneer in Whitchurch. Churton was not prepared to put up with that nonsense and took immediate action which resulted in Richardson receiving two years' imprisonment and Cook fourteen years and transportation.

So the particulars of this attorney's clerk became another record in the Convict's Indent. It states that he was five foot nine inches tall, of ruddy freckled complexion, with a large burnt scar on each side of his mouth under the right and over the left side. His hair was dark brown and he had brown eyes. The indent clerk noted too, that he could read and write, that he was a Protestant and was single.<sup>5</sup>

After being confined to the convict hulk *Leviathan* and employed in the dockyard at Plymouth, Cook embarked on the transport *Surrey* for Port Jackson under the superintendance of the Surgeon - Superintendent Colin Arnold Browning<sup>5</sup> on the 18th July, 1831. Browning took an interest in this young fellow and Cook became his clerk and dispenser until their arrival in Port Jackson. It was Browning probably, who influenced Cook's appointment later in the Office of the Principal Superintendent of Convicts at Hyde Park Barracks.

By 1833, Cook must have realised the hopelessness of his situation and turned to drink for consolation. On April 1st, he was sentenced to seven days on the treadmill for drunkenness and was sentenced on the following May 15th to be confined to cell on bread and water, for arriving back to the Barracks in the early hours of the morning. He was developing a reluctant attitude to authority and after an incident of supposed insubordination, which covered such trifling acts of behaviour as failure to salute an officer or take his hat off to him, found him appearing before a Bench of Magistrates charged with insubordination by the Superintendent of Hyde Park Barracks, Ernest August Slade. For this he was sentenced to a road gang at Honeysuckle Flat on the Bathurst Road, ninetyone miles from Sydney. As his sentence had not expired, he was transferred to another road gang with five hundred other convicts at Mount Victoria, constructing the Victoria Pass. Fortune shined on him briefly, he was called to Sydney for six weeks during the absence of a bookkeeper.





When he returned to the road gang he found the conditions much improved. He found the convicts enjoying juicy steaks and chops and no one wondering where these tasty morsels came from. This luxury was supplied unknowingly by a nearby property owner who soon had the police at the camp seeking the thieves. Notwithstanding all Cook's protests of innocence, he and four others were impounded in a stockade in chains and denied blankets for warmth. They were barely alive fourteen days later.

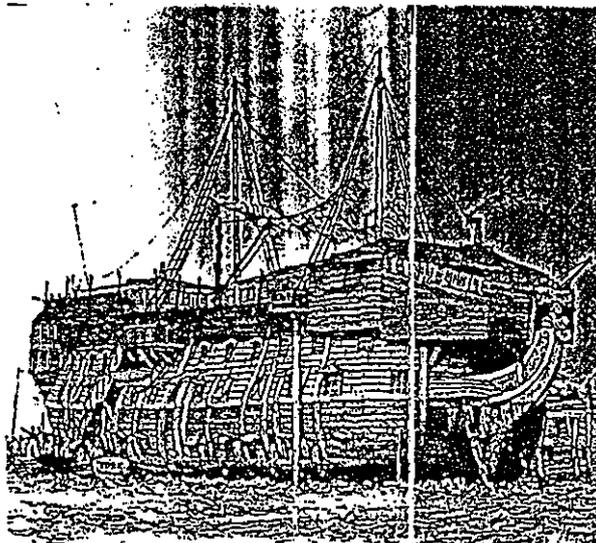
Progress on the road continued and after a few months at the advent of the harvest in the central west, each convict gained a respite from the gang and was assigned to a free settler to assist with this important work.

Twelve months later Cook had wangled a job in the Office of the Surveyor-General. It was not for long, however, he seemed to be seeking trouble. For assaulting a fellow prisoner, he found himself again in a stockade in chains and another twelve months with the road gang.

When his sentence came to an end in September 1835, he was transferred to Hyde Park Barracks suspected of forging certain documents that could lead to the early liberation of some of his fellow prisoners in the road gang.

The authorities were not amused and had little compassion for this troublemaker and Cook found himself imprisoned on the hulk *Phoenix* in Lavender Bay.<sup>7</sup>

It was here in Australia's first prison hulk that Cook found the company of an old English gentleman most cheering. Neither were interested that their floating gaol was once a condemned convict ship that had been severely damaged by striking the rocks known as the *Sow and Pigs* in 1822, or that she had been purchased for One Thousand Pounds by the colonial authorities to be converted to hold prisoners destined for the penal settlements. Both knew they were in gaol and their future unknown.





So they remained until the 10th November, 1835, when both were detailed for despatch with others to Port Macquarie, on the *William the Fourth*. After being inspected on their arrival by the military commander, Captain William Lonsdale, of the 4th Regiment<sup>a</sup> they were then ordered to a road gang at Rollands Hill<sup>a</sup> about twenty miles from the Settlement.

Again harvest duties in the area withdrew him from the road gang to assist at Captain Geary's property Glencoe, on the Upper Wilson River. Geary had been appointed Harbour Master in 1832 and soon after his arrival to the district had acquired this property of 2,500 acres. Apparently, he was a kindly man and showed consideration to Cook when he was stricken with a severe attack of dysentery.

In his book, *The Exile's Lamentations of the Biographical Sketch of Thomas Cook*, he described how he had been called to the settlement to receive a letter from his parents, at the time he was recovering from his illness. He goes on to tell how he was overtaken on his journey to Port Macquarie by Captain Geary, who questioned him on how he felt and advised him to call on the Surgeon, Dr D.A. Ackroyd. Apparently Dr Ackroyd had a reputation among the prisoners as a "butcher", and now as the effects of the complaint was wearing off, Cook decided not to put himself at the mercy of this man. This was obviously a mistake which was to lead him into further trouble and create embarrassment to Captain Geary.

It came to a head when Cook had rejoined the Road Gang and Captain Geary had casually mentioned to his brother-in-law, Captain Lonsdale, that he had returned Cook to it because of his debility from dysentery. Lonsdale questioned Geary's failure to apply to the surgeon for relief and to Geary's astonishment, Lonsdale said he would bring forward a charge against Cook for feigning sickness, with Captain Geary as his prosecutor.

Cook was soon made aware of the trouble ahead when he was brought before Lonsdale in irons. He describes this meeting and how his protests were brushed aside by an angry Lonsdale who in a voice like thunder shouted:

*I will deal with you, you scoundrel, I'll fleece you"*

and then sent him to Roach the Scourger, whose strict orders were that Cook was not allowed to shelter from the hot rays of the sun or speak to the gaol gang, or straighten his back.

Fortunately for Cook, Roach commiserated with his pleas that the punishment would lead to his destruction. Together, and by the skilful use of the cat-o-nine tails by Roach, they managed to convince Lonsdale that the punishment had been carried out.



A treadmill





It was this that convinced Cook that he had to escape and on the following day absented himself after dinner, determined to make a break to Sydney, three hundred miles away. After journeying eighty miles, he found himself after six days, in a thick forest near Dingo Creek in the Manning area. Compelled by heavy rain to seek shelter, he found himself confronted by a party of Aborigines whose warlike appearance ran shivers of fear down his spine.

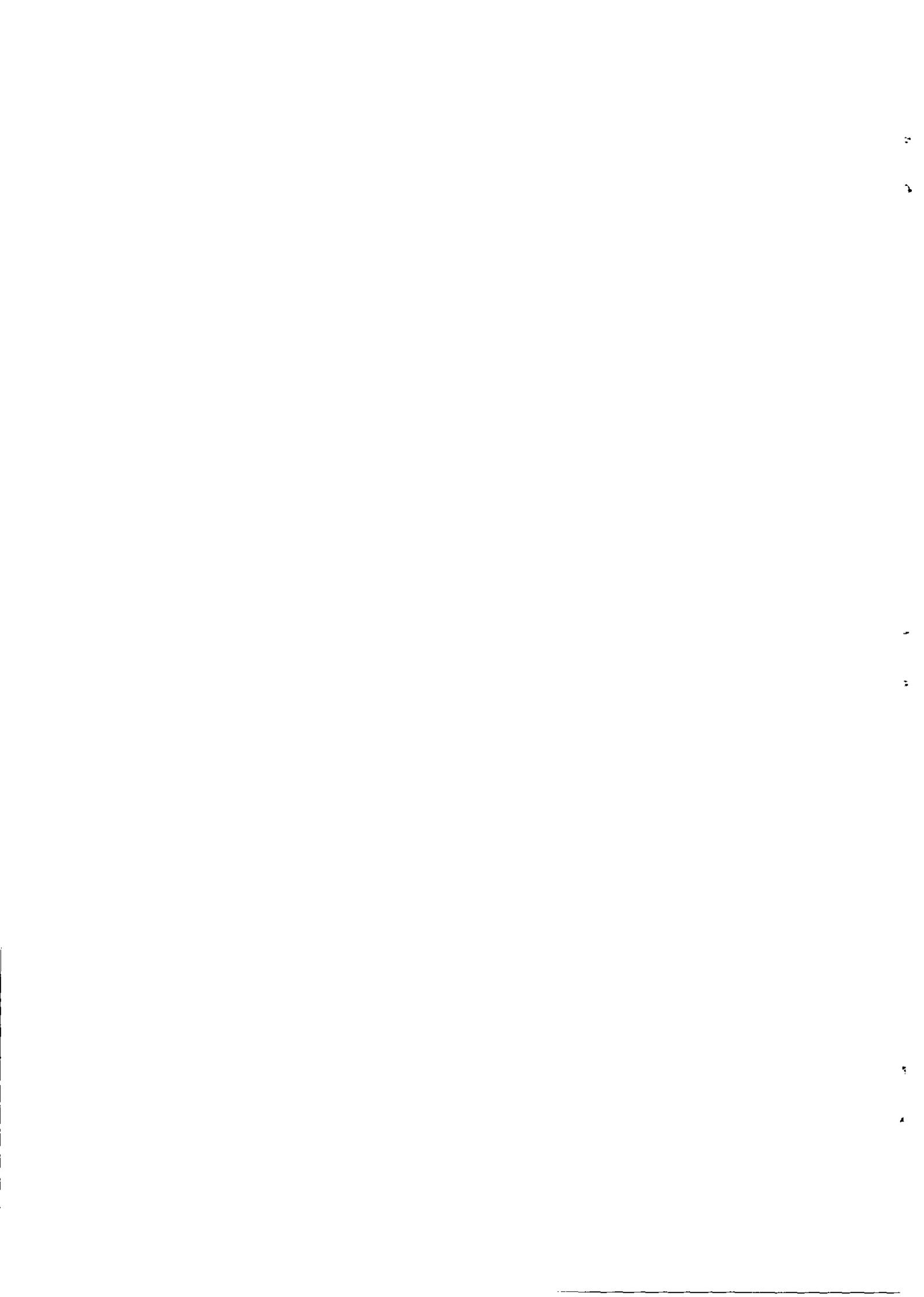
His rescue from the Aborigines by a party of six constables under Stephen Partridge the Superintendent of Convicts, sent to find and return him to the settlement, meant that all his hardships were now renewed. Again he was able to win the confidence of his superiors and Partridge was to show great kindness to him and managed to get Captain Lonsdale's permission to have Cook employed to procure gravel for the walks in Lonsdale's garden. So pleased was Lonsdale with the result, it was that, which brought Cook within the pale of his consideration, and to lead to Cook's transfer to the Department of Works.

It was here, while carrying sawn timber from the saw-pits and stacking it in the yard<sup>10</sup>, that he was again made aware of "man's inhumanity to man", and describes how he saw a number of blind men manacled to a chain and marched for two or three days to and fro on the causeway facing the windows of the Commandant's quarters. He writes in horror of the effect that the flagellation of an insane man and a blind one on the triangle had on him and questioned the purpose to enact these unheard of cruelties and the sanity of this outburst-

*He would make the deaf hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see and the foolish to understand, by means of the triangles and the cat o'nine tails"*

It was as though this social order was creating a new genus of mankind.





Although not a member of the Gaol Gang, he was able to observe that it consisted of about forty men in irons guarded by armed prisoner constables and occupied in the task of removing a bank of earth to form a road opposite the Commandant's quarters. Among these too, punishment was liberally meted out and hardly a day passed without someone being brought to the triangles. He heard of George Giddons who fired a pistol at the constable Melbourne in attempting to kill him and his three accomplices who were sent to Sydney, Giddons to be hung and the other three to Norfolk Island for fourteen years.

Cook's second attempt was short and dramatic. About 7.30 pm one evening, he escaped from the yard of the Prisoner's Barracks,<sup>11</sup> having made plans with a friend to stow him away on a vessel about to leave the port. When he reached the beach a constable surprised him and fortunately for Cook, the shot that the constable fired missed him. He quickly retraced his steps back to the barracks before the bell rang for the eight o'clock muster into the sleeping wards.

His next attempt to escape on the 5th February 1836 saw him flee towards the mountains in the west. About a mile and a half from the Settlement he met a sawyer who told him to collect from his house nearby bread and supplies to carry him to the Australian Agricultural Station, one hundred and ten miles further on.<sup>12</sup>

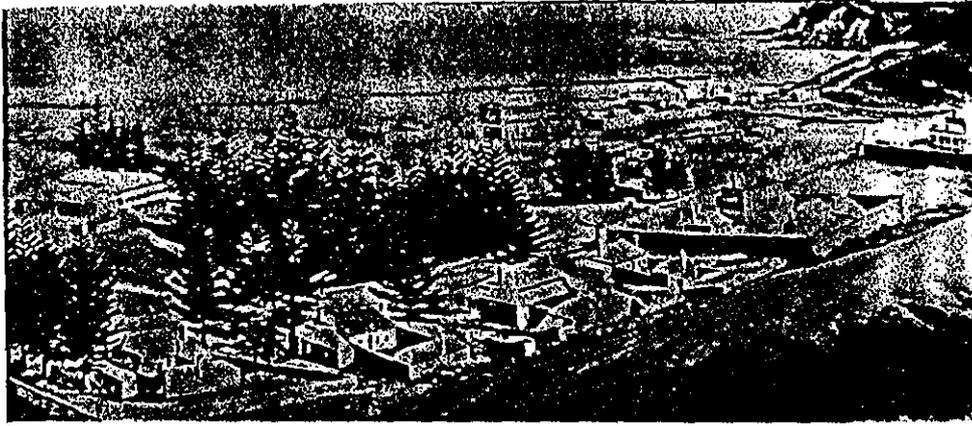
At the sawyer's house he met a man who had escaped a week earlier who begged Cook to take him with him as he was frightened that he would be lost in the bush if he went alone. Together they set out when at the foot of the Broken Bago mountain, Cook's companion injured his ankle and they were forced to rest a few days in great fear of being apprehended or killed by the Aborigines.

Taking the sun as their guide, they moved on to the Manning River which divided the district of Port Macquarie from that of Port Stephens, where they met an aboriginal man with a boy. Asked of what tribe he belonged and what was his name, the aborigine answered, *Tribe sit down, gonyah merry close up*. Knowing then that the tribe was close by they thanked the man and gave him tobacco and feeling free of the Port Macquarie tribes and the police, they crossed the river and headed towards the A.A. Company's station.

They parted company at Tellegherry<sup>13</sup>. Cook had decided that he should pose as a free man to earn enough for a passage to Sydney by obtaining work in the Maitland area.

Cook found work splitting slabs for a rough building for Mr Andrew Lang. He had only been employed for about three weeks when he was recognised by a man named Shea, an oversser for Mr Terry Hughes. Shea did not give Cook away but he was shortly taken into custody again, not as an escaped felon, but as John Jones, a wanted convict with a fifty pound reward on his head, who resembled Cook in appearance.





*Idyllic Norfolk Island was turned into a penal settlement for hard core convicts. This view of the main buildings at Kingston was made in 1843.*

Constable McDougall took every care that his worthy prize would not escape and chained him to a beam of his house and manacled him to his servant for the night, and in the morning, marched him ahead of him on the road to Maitland. Again the opportunity to escape presented itself when they stopped at a waterhole for a drink and Cook was able to make good his escape by making a dash into the scrub where he remained hidden during the night from the mounted police as they galloped in every direction looking for him.

Still manacled with the basils of the handcuffs embedding themselves into his wrists, he found an old settler whose son had a great regard for Cook, who broke them with a hammer and although he offered him shelter, Cook refused his offer for he realised that he could get fourteen years imprisonment in return for his generosity.

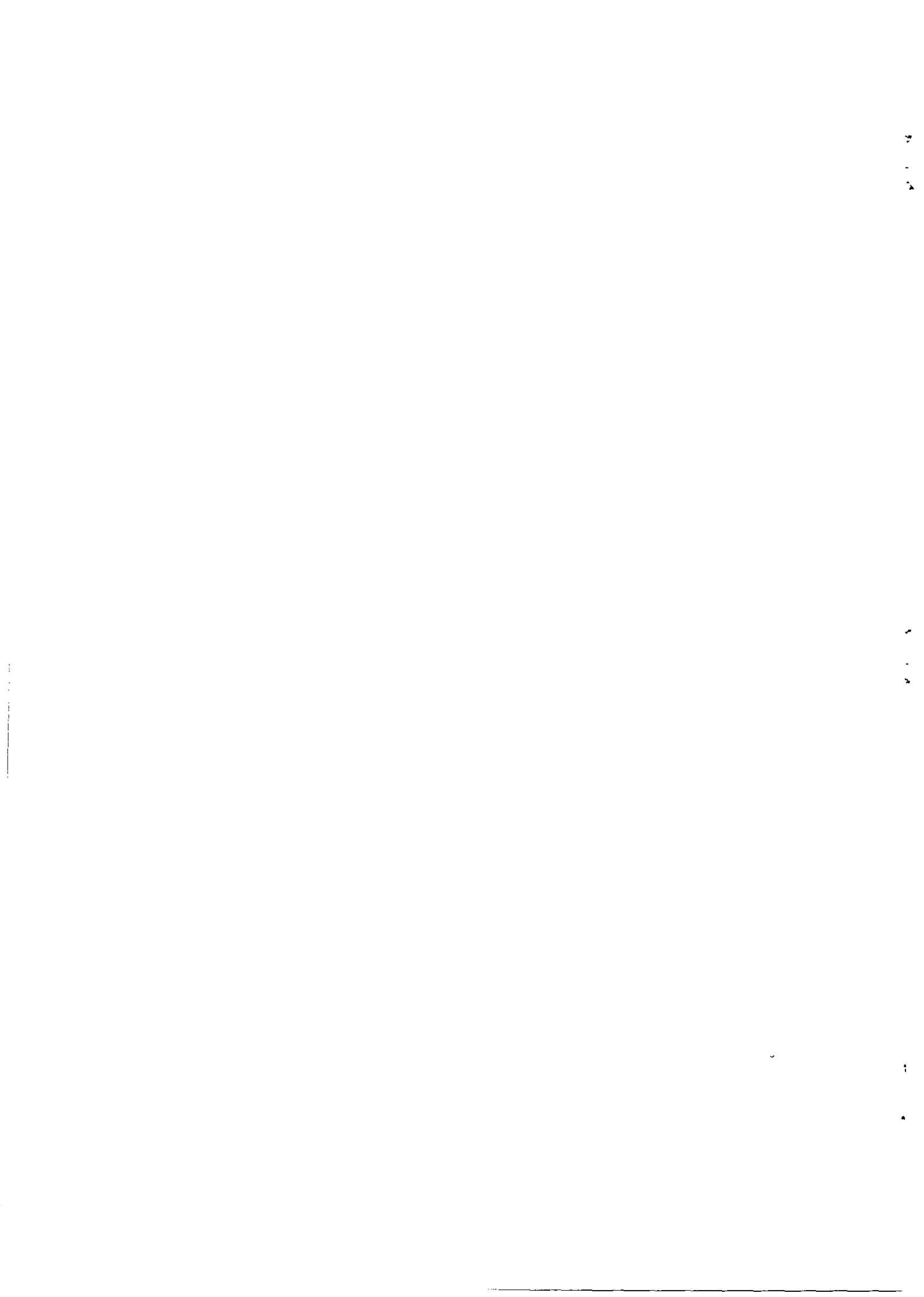
Again he took to the bush like a hunted animal and after two nights in the mountains at Wallorobba, he met a shepherd who gave him some tea. Thinking he was safe at last, he was off his guard when two armed constables arrested him. They escorted him to Maitland where he appeared at the Quarter Sessions in May 1836 and on a plea of guilty of forgery was sentenced to transportation to Norfolk Island for life.

Fortunately for Cook, Alexander Maconochi's Mark System which encouraged good behaviour had superseded the cruel and brutal system of the past and on the 6th October, 1841 he was returned to Sydney.

In a despatch to Lord Stanley dated 31st May 1844 the Governor, Sir George Gipps, reported in a return of convicts supposed to have escaped from the Colony during 1843, that Thomas Cook had again absconded from Port Macquarie on the 21st August, 1843.

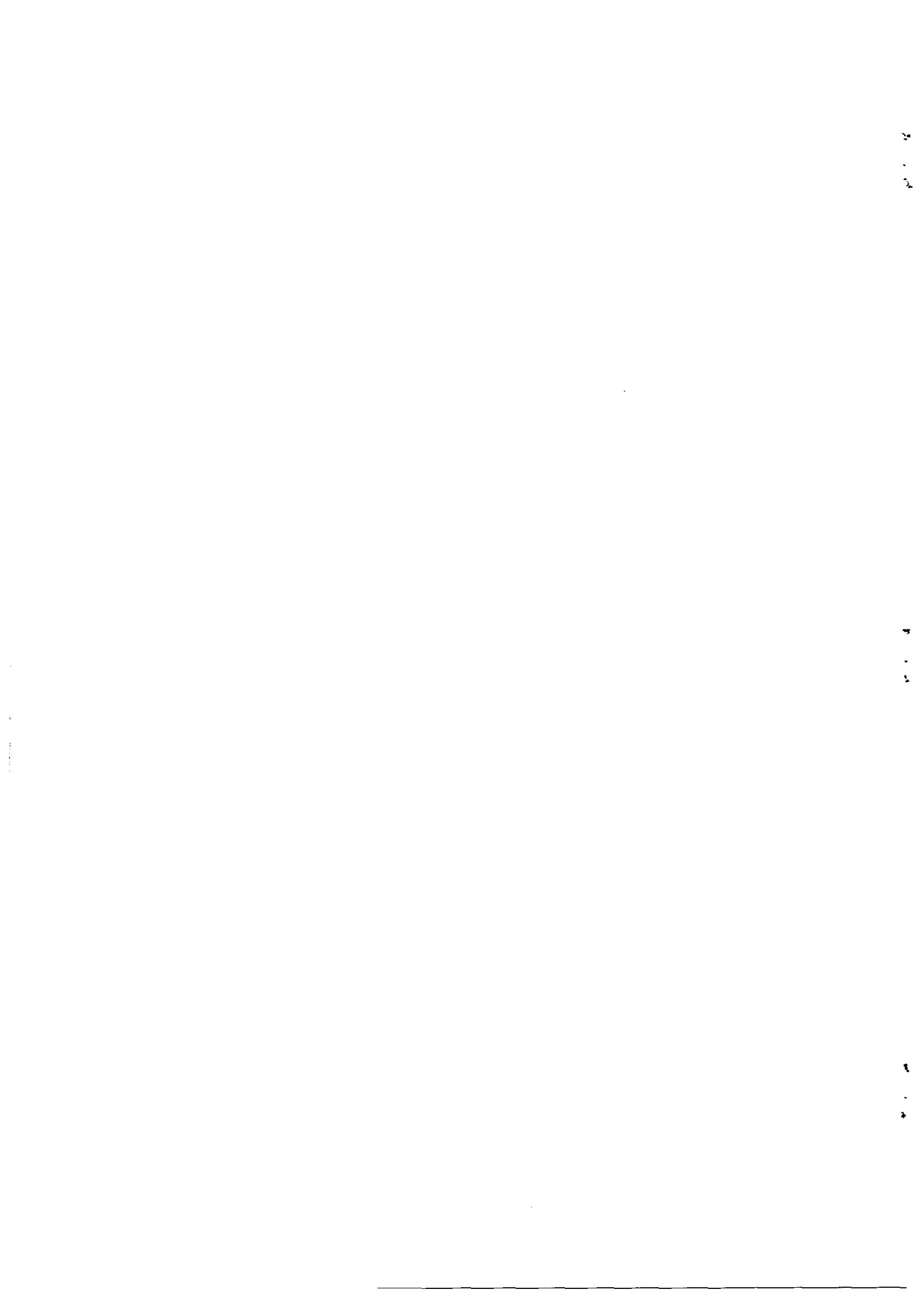
His movements after that lie in mystery. Probably one day there will be an answer.





## NOTES

1. A Bicentennial project commenced 1983. Built at Clarence Town, N.S.W. Keel laid 1985.
2. Built at Clarence Town, N.S.W. by Marshall and Lowe for Joseph Hickey Grose. Launched 22nd October, 1831.
3. This town in Salop, England, derives its name from a white church built by the Normans. In Roman times the town lay between Deva (Chester) and Uniconium (Wroxeter). It was also the birthplace of Sir Edward German (1862-1936) composer of "Tom Jones" and "Merrie England." Treasures of Britain, Drive Publications Ltd. London, 1976.
4. Built in 1712-1713, the present church is the fourth to be built on the same site. The third church collapsed in 1711.  
Ibid.
5. Convict Indents, Enclosure no. 2. Sir George Gipps to Lord Stanley, dated 31 May 1844.  
Historic Records of Australia.
6. The Surrey was a 461 ton schooner built at Harwick, England in 1811. She sailed from Plymouth on 17 July 1831. She carried 200 male convicts losing only one, a tribute to her Surgeon Superintendent.  
*The Convict Ships 1787-1868.* Charles Bateson, A.H. & A.W. Reed Sydney, 1974
7. Lavender Bay is named after Lavender, the hulk's boatswain. It was first called Hulk or Phoenix Bay  
Ibid.
8. Lonsdale had married Mrs Geary's sister before Cook arrived in Port Macquarie. It was thought that he was in charge of the military detachment at the settlement.  
*Port Macquarie - A History to 1850* edit. F. Rogers Child and Henry Publishing Co. Sydney, 1982
9. Cook's diary entry probably confuses it with Rollands Plains, the site of the Government Agricultural Farm.
10. The saw pits and timber yard were situated on the waterfront close to the northern end of Munster Street, Port Macquarie.
11. The Prisoner's Barracks were situated at the intersection of Munster and Clarence streets, Port Macquarie.
12. Probably the present town Stroud.  
*Sir Edward Parry. Extracts from the diary of Early days of Port Stephens* Cambridge Press, Newcastle.



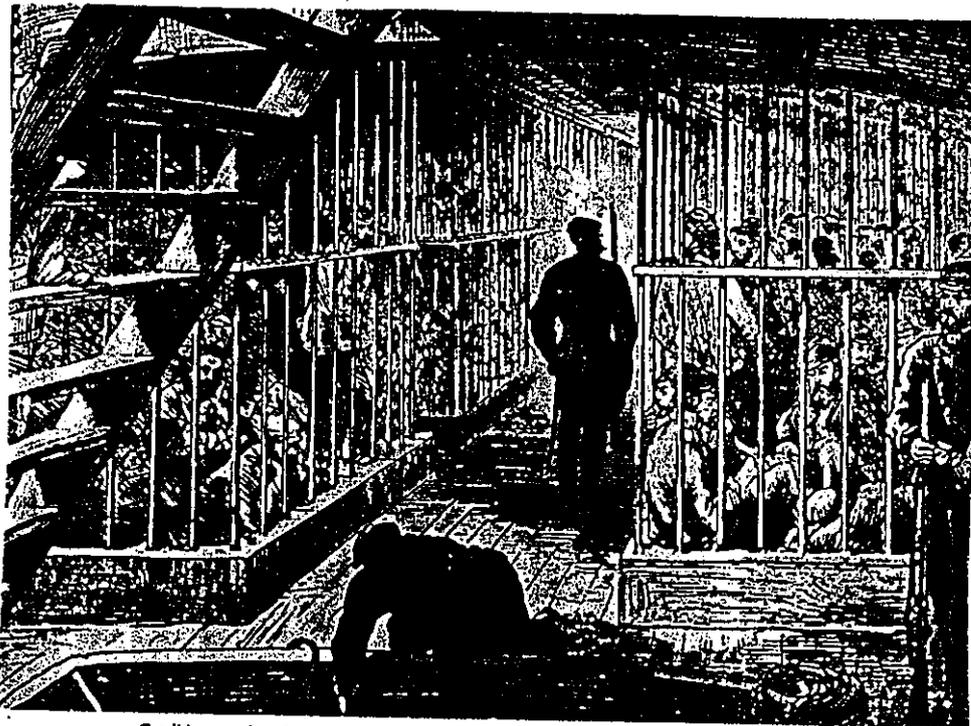
NOTES CONT.

13. Tellegerry was the residence of the A.A. Co's Superintendent of Stock. It was situated two miles from Stroud on the Karuah River.  
Ibid.

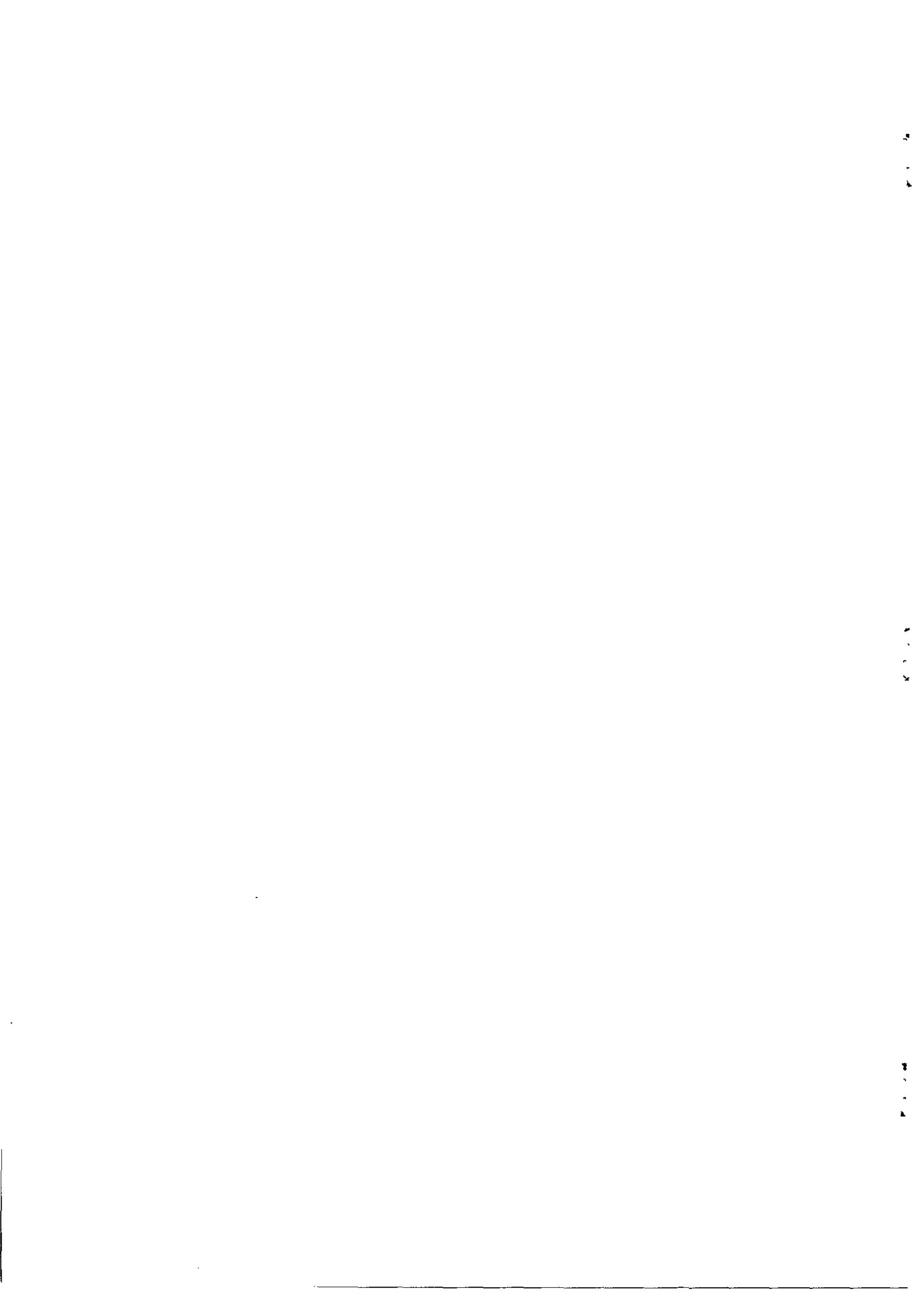
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Hastings District Historical Society Records and Research Section  
*Port Macquarie - A History to 1850* edited by Frank Rogers  
*The Norfolk Island Story* Frank Clune  
Bernard Hart - Port Macquarie News 1982  
Ian Finkel - sketches  
Ron Howell - editing.  
Madge Roughley - Word Processing

GWEN GRIFFIN, 1988  
Hastings District Historical Society.



*Conditions on board a convict ship were wretched and prisoners died in great numbers.*

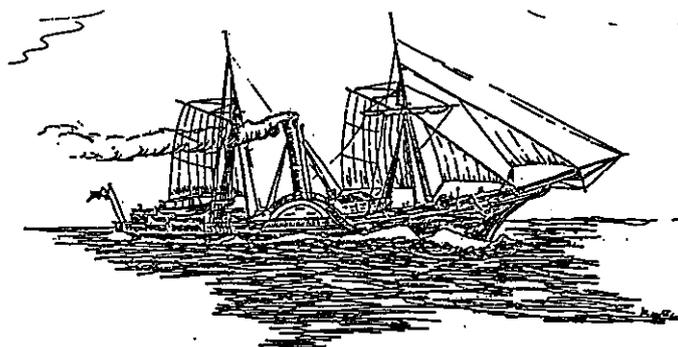


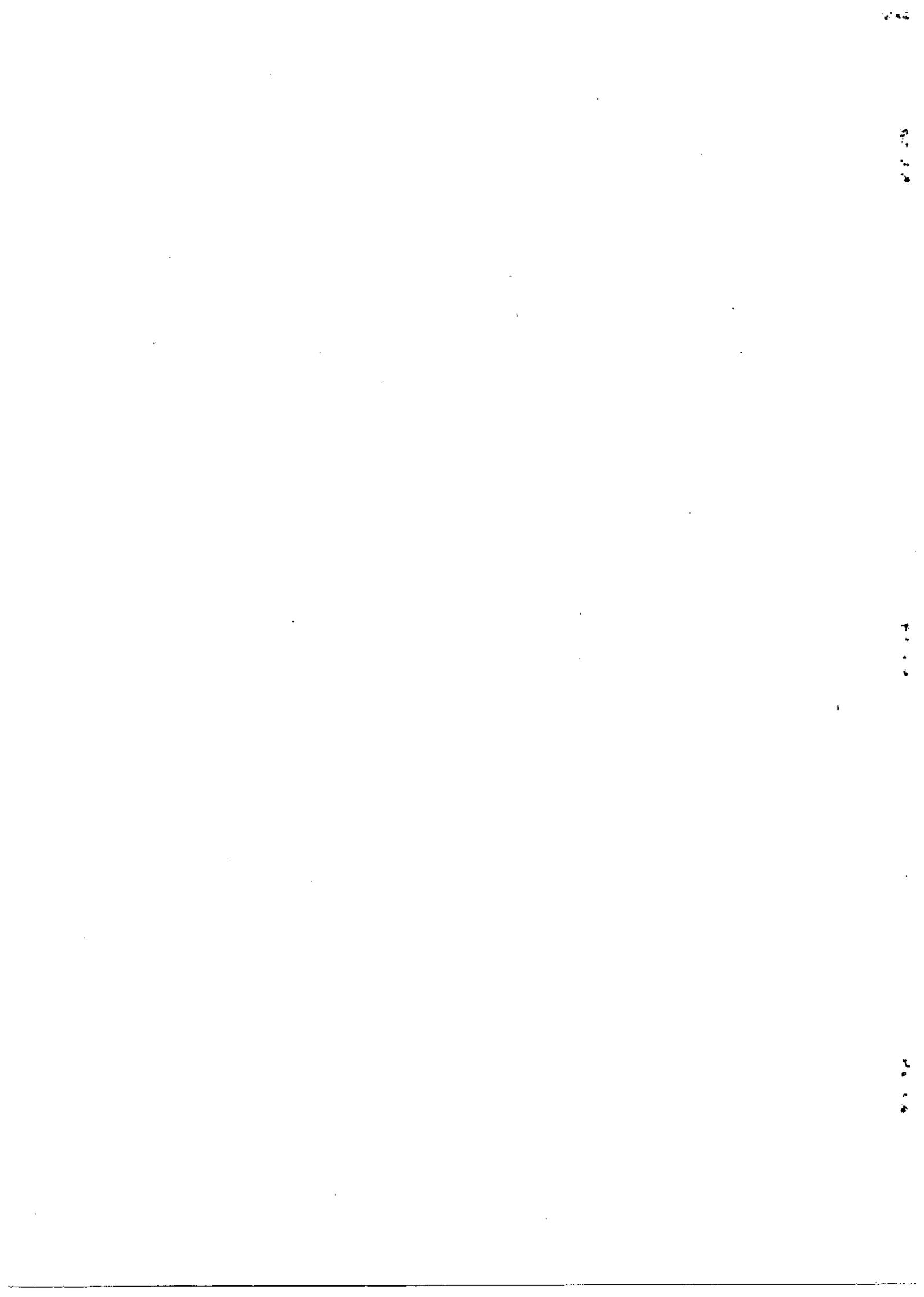
# "WILLIAM THE FOURTH"

Convicts conveyed from the Hulk in Sydney to Port Macquarie.

10th November, 1835. 30 Prisoners - Male.

ALLEN	John	"ENGLAND"
ATKINSON	James	"GUILDFORD"
BAILEY	George	"ALBION"
BREWER	Edward Campbell	"ROSLIN CASTLE"
BUSHELL	John	"HENRY PORCHER"
CANDY	Robert	"LADY HAREWOOD"
CLUFF	Thomas	"TELLICHERRY"
COCKROFT	Isaac	-
COLLIER	John	"MARY ANN"
** COOK	Thomas	"SURREY"
DALEY or NUGENT	James	"BACKWELL"
DEVINE	John	"ENGLAND"
EUSTACE	John Clare	"JOHN"
FALLOW	Patrick	-
GORDON	James	"BACKWELL"
GREEN	John George	"PEGASUS"
HAY	James	"ASIA"
JACKSON	John	"MORLEY"
JONES	Alfred	"ENGLAND"
KING	William	"ENGLAND"
LOUGHRAY	James	"LADY NUGENT"
LOVELOCK	James	"ENGLAND"
LUPTON	William	"ENGLAND"
PINK	William	"MARQUIS OF HUNTLY"
RYAN	Timothy	"ELIZA"
SHAW	Benjamin Ashby	"ROSLIN CASTLE"
STANTON	John	"MARY ANN"
TAYLOR	Thomas	"ROYAL ADMIRAL"
WALSH	Martin	"ROSLIN CASTLE"
WICKS	Richard	"ARAB"







PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

# CHRONICLE

Vol 1 No.1 March 1997

ISSN 1328-4304

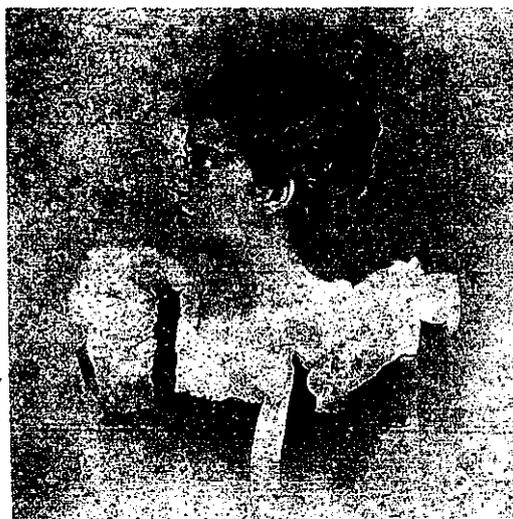
## CLASS OF 1893



**Dr. Paul Boelke**

The harsh bright lights from the new acetyline gas lamps adorning the walls of the Town Hall did little justice to the swirling gowns of the women of Port Macquarie as couples danced the night away on the brisk evening of 28th July 1900.

The cream of society was represented at this monster ball organised by Mrs James Butler (Helen Blair), in aid of the long awaited Cottage Hospital, a project which had the keen support of the entire district, since in the past, anyone in need of constant nursing care had to travel to distant Kempsey over dusty, bumpy roads; a nightmare journey even in these modern day coaches.



**Dr. Grace Robinson**

Mrs Jacob Healey was dressed in a white cashmere skirt and cream silk bangaline bodice, the epitome of matronly elegance befitting her husband's position as a leading businessman of the town. Mrs William Halpin, owner and hostess of the Club Hotel in Clarence Street, was attired in a grey corded silk costume with guipure lace trimmings, while Mrs W.A.H. Slade, the Commercial Bank Manager's wife, wore a simple black silk gown with black lace trimmings.

Among the couples on the dance floor, as described that evening by a reporter from the Port Macquarie News, was an elegant pair, obviously devoted friends judging by the

animated conversation they engaged in, he dressed immaculately in black tie and tails, eminently complimenting his obvious Prussian appearance, she wearing a black brocade dress with pink chiffon trimmings which aptly suited her rather delicate femininity.

Few people there that night would have realised the struggle against adversity that Drs. Paul and Grace Boelke had made to complete their training as medical practitioners from Sydney University, both having been close friends during the three year course and graduating together in 1893.

Paul Wilhelm Rudolph Boelke was born in Berlin on the 4th April 1863, the son of a wealthy and eminent medical family, who expected their progeny to follow their chosen path of medicine and practise in the fatherland. Destiny was to dictate otherwise and although it is unknown if religious persecution or the threat of conscription for military service caused the rift from his native land, Paul Boelke arrived in Australia on the "Salier" in 1887 to begin a new life.

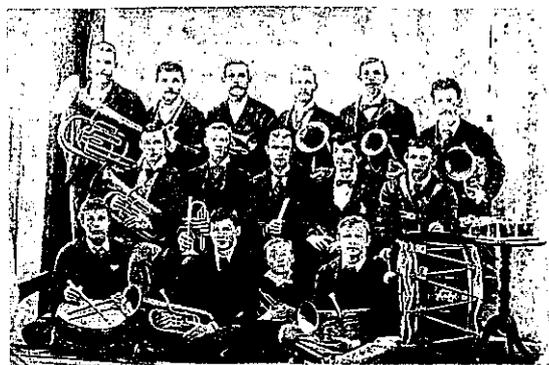
Upon the completion of his degree and subsequent graduation as a Doctor of Medicine, Dr Boelke accepted the position of Government Medical Officer at Port Macquarie, a post which, although not offering a great challenge to an ambitious young man, provided the newcomer with a salary befitting his meagre requirements, while at the same time allowing him to establish his own practice.

Grace Fairley Boelke (nee Robinson) was native-born, but her struggle against perceptions that women doctors were unnecessary evils of modern society caused her career path to be a rocky road to freedom of choice.

Jill Buckland, in her book "Mort's Cottage"-Impressions of Sydney People and Their Times 1838-1988, traces the life of Grace

Robinson and her ancestors and allows us to glimpse some episodes of this woman's battle against the ingrained hierarchy of the medical fraternity.

Thomas Robinson and Anne Fairley, both of Anglo-Irish descent, were born in that beautiful English seaport town of Whitby, situated at the mouth of the River Esk and overlooked by the ruins of the Abbey of St Hilda. The naval training ground of Captain James Cook, it was also here that Thomas and Anne took their marriage vows on the 4th August 1818, a union which resulted in three children, somehow conceived between the many travels of Thomas to Europe and America before he finally settled in the Derwent Valley at Hobart.



**Port Macquarie Band 1900**

Listed as a shipbuilder and gentleman, Thomas established his residence in Hampden Road, Battery Point, where he was joined by the patient Anne and her family who arrived on the "Wave" in 1833. One son, Thomas Charles, was to pursue a career in accountancy and departed for Sydney in the late 1850s, and is listed in the first Woollahra rate book, 1860-61, as residing in Watsons Bay, a small hamlet boasting a population of 237.

Thomas Charles Robinson married Eliza Agnes Butler in St. James Cathedral in 1867 and the couple rented "Mort's Cottage" in Double Bay before moving to Cavendish Street, Kingston(now Concord), where Grace Fairley

entered the world on the 4th July 1870.

At the tender age of five years, Grace attended St Vincent's Sisters of Charity College in Darlinghurst, and over the years developed into an exceptional student, passing her Junior Certificate and matriculating to Sydney University. Intending to study medicine, she passed the compulsory first-year Arts and received entitlement to a three year study at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

Grace Robinson was not the first woman medical student at Sydney University Medical School. This honour went to Dagmar Berne, who enrolled in 1884, but after four years study and some failures, she was convinced that she was being victimised and left to go to London, where she graduated as a physician in 1893. Two years later she returned to Sydney and practised in Macquarie Street, but after developing tuberculosis she died in 1900 aged only 34 years.

The next to attempt the course was Iza Coghlan, who enrolled the year before Grace, but after Iza had failed her final year, they graduated at the same time. However, it was Victoria who claimed the first Australian born woman to become a doctor. Dr Constance Stone took her degree in the United States and confirmed it with a British degree in Toronto. After working in London, she returned to Melbourne and fought for women's rights.

Melbourne University was to be the battle ground for women medical students and graduates. Margaret Whyte graduated in 1891 at Wilson Hall with First in the Honours list for her year, where such distinction would automatically ensure a place on the resident staff of Melbourne Hospital, but the Board flatly refused her appointment. After growing tired of waiting, Dr Whyte joined the Women's hospital.

Despite the furore from Victoria, Sydney University refused to adopt a forward-looking

approach to the subject of women doctors and Grace Robinson was shortly to be the subject of renewed debate about graduates. Even the Sydney "Bulletin", which had been an opponent of women's suffrage for many years, had conceded by 1889 that women in medicine were inevitable, although they still felt that "higher education for women was a monstrous farce, being of no practical use to man, other than as a badge of class superiority, still worse would be its effects on woman, who has no judgement, only imitative faculty."

Although not generally welcomed in University circles, women students were tolerated despite the outburst of the Dean of the Medical School, Professor Sir Thomas Anderson-Stuart, that "she would be better employed if she got a nice frock and a nice man."

However, Grace received no discrimination from her tutors or male fellow students and she passed all of her examinations without a single failure, gaining Dr McCormack's prize for surgery in her third year and taking out the first prize for midwifery and second prize for medicine in her final examination.

Impressed with his female student, Professor Anderson-Stuart condescended to recommend Grace for the position of resident Medical Officer at the Children's Hospital, Glebe, but it was then that Dr Grace Robinson was confronted with the prevalent social attitudes of the Victorian era concerning women doctors. The Children's Hospital Committee, which at that time consisted mainly of women, rejected Professor Anderson-Stuart's nomination purely because of her sex. Following the lead of Queen Victoria, who vehemently opposed women entering the field of medicine, they flatly refused her appointment despite the precedent set for previous male graduates.

Dr Grace Robinson, MB, ChM, disappointed with the outcome of her long studies, departed Australia soon after graduating and travelled extensively throughout Canada,

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England and the United States ostensibly to undertake the study of the industrial welfare of women and children. Her co-student, Dr Paul Boelke travelled north to Port Macquarie to take up his post of Government Medical Officer.

Shortly after returning from her overseas tour, Grace Fairley Robinson and Paul Boelke were married at the house of the bride's parents at 72 Cross Street, Double Bay in a ceremony conducted in accordance with the Lutheran Church. Following the wedding, the couple returned to Port Macquarie, where it seems, Dr Grace assisted with her husband's private practice. A careful scrutiny of every edition of the Port Macquarie News during the term of the Boelkes' sojourn in the seaside town failed to reveal a mention of Dr Grace Boelke, apart from her attendance at the Hospital Ball. There was no mention of her commencing practice under her own name, although shortly after her arrival, Dr Paul Boelke advised the public that he would visit Wauchope on certain days. As this meant a long drive up and back in a horse and sulky and entailed a full day away from his home, it is conceivable that Grace looked after the medical practice in Port Macquarie during these times.

The owner/editor of the newspaper was ex-Reverend Robert Davidson, a generally forward-thinking man, described by a contemporary as "a cultured and thoroughly conscientious man" whose maiden speech when he represented the district in parliament was addressed to The Womens Franchise Bill. Whether the Victorian attitude to women doctors was still prevalent in the town is not known, but as other social doctrines took such a long time to be adopted by this community, it is probable that the issue of women doctors was not acceptable to the majority. Certainly Davidson knew Paul Boelke quite well as the pair were involved in many clubs and organisations together and in a small community like Port Macquarie, it was impossible not to have known other members' wives.

It seems that as Government Medical Officer, Dr Boelke was primarily responsible to Sydney for the general health of the district, being the official representative required to ensure compliance with all health regulations within public institutions. He filled the post of Public Vaccinator and Medical Officer to the gaol, which seems to have left him ample time for his own practice, Dr Stokes being the resident medical practitioner at that time.

He seems to have thrown himself into the civic affairs of his adopted town with some fervour, the first organisation with which he became involved being the Town Band. This group had a long history of ups and downs and seemed to exist as long as the salary of the Bandmaster could be paid. In September 1895, the good doctor replaced retiring member, W.A. Spence as a committee member, in the days when "Professor" Hales was the paid musician.

The band made its money by running special functions at which it would play an appropriate selection of items. Moonlight excursions up the Hastings River as far as "Glen Ewan" were a particular favourite of the people, when as many as 60 people would book the vessel out, the accompanying band playing some old favourites such as "Gems of the Season", "Adelina", "Merry Moments" and the fantastic "Village Maiden".

Another feature which was generally enjoyed by the populace was the musical recitals held in Horton Street near the town green in the summer evenings, where a selection of stirring marches such as "Advance Guard" and "Balaclava" along with favourite waltzes "Village Festival", "Excelsior" and "Rainbow" entertained the crowd for many hours, they showing their appreciation by donation. However, with the majority of the money raised going to pay for the Bandmaster's salary, it can easily be seen that much of the enthusiasm of the members would wane during bad times.

The School of Arts also benefitted by

Paul's commitment, where he was its President for three of his eight years in the town, long before the days of free libraries. It was started in July 1882 "for the moral and intellectual good of the community... exercise a jealous censorship over the class of work that will be provided....books that will make the mind healthy and more retentive...the exclusion of all those that tend to prostitute the highest gift of God.." A meeting place of the intellectuals of the town, where debates, a game of draughts or a quiet perusal of the latest periodicals from London could be enjoyed by members.

Another interest which was probably shared by both the Boelke doctors was that of the Dramatic Society, where Paul was to become its President for two terms. This group was quite active around the turn of the century, producing a number of plays and theatricals which were well-received by the locals. This was one of the few organisations in which women could play a major role in both production and administration, but it was usual for males to dominate in the choice of President.



### **The Cottage Hospital**

Being present in town during the whole period of the Boer War (1899-1901), the good doctor took an active interest in the Civilian Rifle Club, which was initially formed to provide some military training for the future defence of Port Macquarie. A committee member of the first Volunteer Rifles, he would have been well-pleased with the response from the "Mother Country" for a call to arms to subdue the arrogant Boers, a total of 27 men volunteering

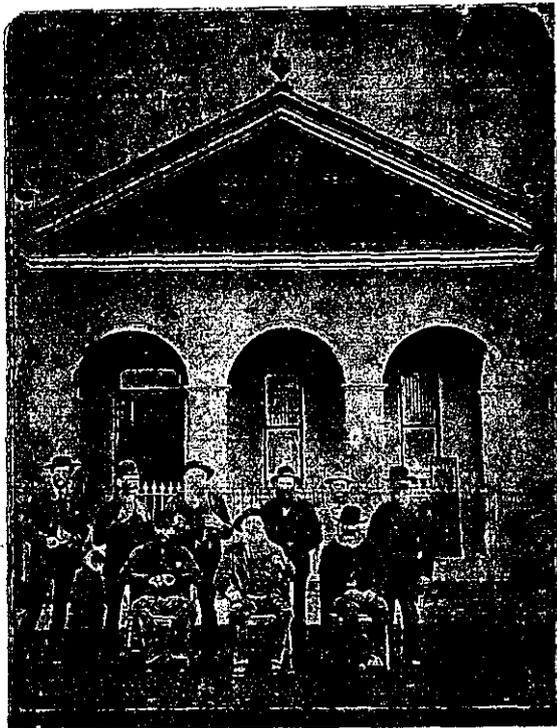
for the military forces. Although Dr Boelke's own native land was supporting the opposing forces in this conflict, he seems to have given full backing to the British ideals. He took part in many of the club's shoots, where he was quite a reasonable shot with the new Martin Henry rifle.

As an initial subscriber to the Cottage Hospital during the intense drive for funds by the local live-wire chemist, Richard Ayres in April 1896, Dr Paul Boelke would have been keen to see the institution established in the town, where his patients could receive the best of medical care and nursing. However, he and his good wife and partner were not to see the benefits of their donations as they were destined to leave shortly before its completion in November 1901.

For more recreational purposes, Paul became the Vice-President of the newly established Tennis Club, but once again his good wife did not receive a mention, even in the lists of players reported in the "News". Living in Hay Street, they would have had only a short walk up to the courts, which were built on disused land in Church Street. The Hastings River Jockey Club was another of his interests, although these were generally limited to meetings held over the festive season. Whether our good doctor was a betting man is not certain, but at the "Settling Up" which was usually conducted in one of the local hostleries at the conclusion of the day's events, his name is not mentioned.

Although very little is known of our husband and wife medical team during their stay in Port Macquarie, Dr Paul Boelke has left behind a memento which still carries on to this day. In conjunction with School Inspector Stewart Wright and James Butler, he compiled a history of the local Masonic Lodge 1878-1899 which was printed in 1900. The same cannot be said for Dr Grace Boelke, possibly the first woman graduate from Sydney University Medical School, who received no recognition in her own right for her achievements.

Selling the practice to Dr Bartlett in 1901, the couple moved to a cottage at 28 Church Street, Hunters Hill, which they leased until their own home was built on land next to the public school at 25 Alexandra Street. They conducted their own practice, Grace joining the staff of the Prince Henry Hospital and Paul taking rooms in Buckland Chambers, Liverpool Street, where he specialised in the "Koch" treatment of tuberculosis, named after his mother, Henrietta, nee Koch



**Town Hall 1892**

Grace Boelke had become involved in championing the cause of women entrapped in sub-standard housing, bad diet, poor children's education and interminable pregnancies, which was the lot of poverty-stricken families in the poorer suburbs of Sydney. In 1909, she joined the School Medical Service as an assistant medical officer and became the State medical director of the Berlei Company, while in 1912 she was instrumental in forming the Professional Women's Association, with the object of improving the standard of life for these people. Grace became the president of the National Council of Women and also stood

as convener of the Standing Committee on Health.

In 1914, the Boelkes sold their Hunters Hill home and moved to Manly, where they built a new home on the corner of Fairlight Street and Bolingbroke Parade. It was about this time that Grace Boelke retired from the Department of Health after a dispute with the British Medical Association and became renowned as a pioneer in many fields of social reforms and an eminent woman of Australia.

Dr Paul Boelke died at his Manly home on the 25th September 1923 and a broken-hearted Grace departed for the United States, where she undertook a study of the effects of the prohibition laws of that country, she being a strong advocate of temperance reform. She travelled extensively in the following years, visiting countries in Europe, Canada, South America, Japan and China, as well as those in the British Empire.

In 1926 she was elected vice-president of both the Town Planning Association of New South Wales and the State branch of the Australian League of Nations Union, a reflection on the wide range of interests in which she embraced in her latter years. Returning to live in Double Bay at 4 Guilfoyle Avenue early in the 1930s, Grace made one final move to Potts Point, before she died at Wyuna Private Hospital at Manly on the 17th February 1948 aged 77 years. She willed the greater part of her large estate to the Royal Society of Medicine in London, a defiant act, probably aimed at her disillusionment with the medical authorities in Australia.

Ian W. Symonds

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## THE BANK OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney was the first financial institution to open a branch in the fledgling township of Port Macquarie in 1840—a time of great industry in this region, with huge quantities of wool from New England being brought down the Walcha road, bullock teams lining Horton Street waiting their turn to unload their bales at either the wool stores or direct to the sturdy ships at the wharves.

With the cessation of convict transportation later during that same year and the reduction of the penal colony and the associated military about to begin, coupled with a disastrous economic depression throughout the Colony, the bank was forced to close its doors in 1844, leaving the town without banking facilities for 40 years.

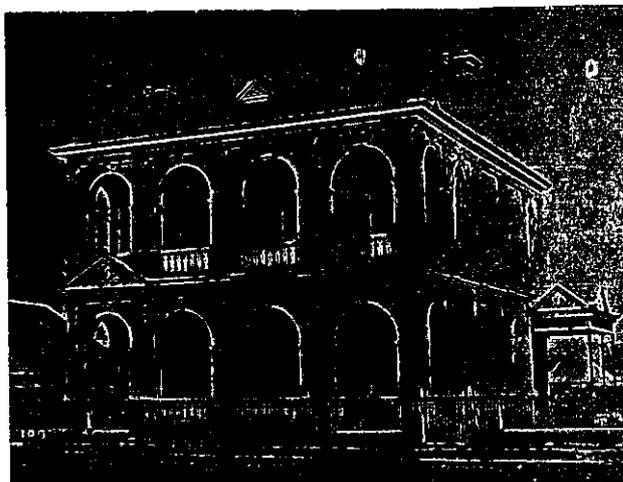
The Bank of New South Wales, which had been formed in 1817 under the auspices of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, first became interested in opening a branch in the town during 1879 and on July 6, 1880 it opened its doors at rented premises in Clarence St in a two storied building once known as Liberty Hall, the original home of Commander Thomas Caswell, Royal Navy.

The first manager was a young Queenslander, John Christy Waraker, who had been branch manager at Ipswich, Toowoomba and Roma in that State, before transferring to Young and later Sydney. The first customer of the bank was William John Smith, a contractor, who opened his account on July 29, to be closely followed by George Bransdon and Bernard Cavanagh, both on August 3rd.

In 1882 the bank bought Lot 3 Section 3 in Horton Street from James Butler, this block of land being originally granted to Michael Fahy, a Corporal with the 28th Regiment, who arrived in 1827 and

who sold the land for \$20, the deeds passing through the hands of Henry Mace and in 1868 was conveyed from George Halliday, the early flour miller, to James Butler.

The "Wales" must have moved to a building on their land at 35 Horton Street some time prior to 1891, when Jacob Healey, a Lincolnshire immigrant, won the contract to build new premises for the bank. The Port Macquarie News of October 24, 1891 commented:—"This new structure is to occupy the site of old premises now in use by the bank. The building will be a great ornament to the town and will give increased facilities to carrying on the large business conducted by the local branch of this institution, besides providing very comfortable apartments as a residence for the manager."



Bank of New South Wales

During construction, the bank and its staff moved to temporary quarters in Condons building, immediately opposite. The architect, Varney Parkes, had the immediate problem of soothing the worried brows of Head Office executives who had heard that the hardwood used at Port Macquarie was not suitable. The building was described as a two storied structure with brick walls and slate roof and was completed in 1893 at a cost of \$2675, while nearly 100 years later, this imposing building still stands

as a fitting tribute to the skill and workmanship of the builder.

William John Macdonnell succeeded Waraker in March 1882 and it was he who built an astronomical observatory in the backyard of the premises and was to become an authority on the subject in later years, assisting in observing the transit of Venus from Transit Hill in 1882. Edmund William Ellis of Emmaville was the next manager in 1885, to be followed by a succession of trained staff over the years, while the building was renovated in 1912 and 1980, with major alterations in 1978. The iron fence shown in the photograph now does duty at the Historical Society

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#### ADVERTISEMENT

His cold not cured, his head on fire  
with drinking whiskies neat  
He swore and cursed to vent his ire  
and raved just quite a treat  
But now he swore off drink for good  
he knows a thing now sure  
Woods great peppermint cure.  
P.M. News 22 Jul 1899

#### CRICKET FIXTURES

The selections for the cricket match to be held between Port Macquarie and San Croix on Saturday 28th October 1882 are:-

Port:-

W.A. Spence, W. Featherstone, E. McInherney, P.A. Spence, F. Webber, Jas Condon, H.C. Brown, J. Hayward, C. Partridge, A. Pountney, A. Small,

San Croix:-

T. Warlters, H. Warlters, C. Casey, J. Newberry, W. Lockton, M.O'Neill, W.O. O'Leary, W.O. O'Connor, G. Paterson, H. Woodlands, H. Kendall,

P.M. News 21 October 1882

#### Medical Wheels

There arrived by the S.S. Macquarie on Wednesday last a motor bike for Doctor Streeter, who will use it in conjunction with his motor car when carrying out his medical work. The doctor is now well equipped for rapid transit to emergency cases. The application of motor power to road traffic has proved of immense benefit to those requiring medical aid in this land of magnificent distance.

The good doctor, however, apparently hedges his bets where the advent of motor power was concerned, for in the same issue of The News was this paragraph "While Dr. Streeter's groom was leading a horse attached to a sulky through the doctor's gate on Tuesday night, the animal bolted, smashing the vehicle to pieces. The horse escaped without injury."

P.M. News, August 1911

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#### ACCIDENT

The Revd. M. Walker wrote to the municipal council, stating his car collided with a cow in the main street. Only prompt use of the brakes saved injury to both Mrs. Walker and himself. The letter was referred to the Nuisance Inspector.

P.M. News, August 1914

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PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

# CHRONICLE

Vol 1 No. 2 June 1997

ISSN 1328-4304

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
MAY 13 1905

## DISASTROUS FIRE

WALL'S BOARDING HOUSE BURNT TO THE GROUND  
THE CAUSE A MYSTERY  
HEROISM OF THE RESIDENTS  
THE SPREAD PREVENTED



The remains of Mrs. Wall's boarding house, previously the "Tattersal's Hotel", on the north-eastern corner of Horton and William streets, are still evident in this photo of Port Macquarie

The Social which was being held in the School of Arts on Monday night last, was brought to a sudden and abrupt

termination about midnight, when the cry of "Fire." rent the air, and it was most fortunate that there was such a gathering

about at so late an hour to immediately begin fighting the flames. It was soon ascertained that Wall's boarding house was on fire. Men rushed; women screamed - some went into hysterics; dogs barked, and there was a general patter of feet up the street of excited men, women and children to the scene. It was too late; flames were issuing from the doors and windows of the building, and were being carried onwards by the south-westerly draught which swept over the town. "That building must go!" cried someone in a crowd of perhaps twenty men, "but we must try and save Donovan's, and the other buildings adjoining." All the while the furniture and effects were being carried out into Horton Street from the buildings on that side, and also into William Street from the buildings around the corner. It was a pretty wild scene! Buckets of water plied freely onto the roofs, for Donovan's was already alight under the galvanised iron, and most of the spectators thought that nothing could possibly save it; still this plucky gang of men - some on the roof - kept an almost continuous flow, even from the buckets, on the burning buildings; axes were used to break in doors and windows; and wet blankets were hurled onto the roofs. Equally busy was another gang around in William Street, trying to save the buildings up that side. A commercial traveller (Mr. Green) was even up an old building at the back, working away like a nigger. And almost all Port Macquarie stood in the streets and watched the old boarding house being devoured by fire! It creaked, and cracked, and flared, and all of a sudden, about 30 minutes after it began, there was a "Crash!" and the main portion of the building fell in - sending up only a huge heap of sparks. This was all desirable; the building burnt with such match-like rapidity gave a better chance of getting at

the other buildings - for Donovan's kitchen at the back was burning vigorously. There was still a dangerous chimney on Wall's corner; it was cracked, and had a cant to one side, and the men were passing within range of it with their buckets. At last it came down but did not reach far. The men eventually got all the burning buildings put out. But this was not all - the worst was yet to come!

It transpired during the progress of the fire that Mrs. Wall had shut the place up sometime after 9 o'clock, and she had left one boarder in the house - a coach driver, Fred Hall - who had previously told a friend that he was tired, and was going to bed. This unfortunate fellow was seen no more alive. Mr. Ted Gibson and Mr. Chas Mclean were about the first who noticed the fire, and the former tried to get in back and front, while the latter gave the alarm at the School of Arts. Not being able to get in, he climbed the verandah post, while a third party went for an axe. Gibson entered several rooms upstairs, calling aloud, and pulling the clothes off several beds, but could make no one hear. He got abreast of the driver's room, the door of which was closed, and as it was dark, and he did not know the house, he retreated, believing there was nobody in it. He then came down, but went up again afterwards, and threw down some articles of furniture till hunted by the flames.

Nor did anyone seem to miss the unfortunate victim for some hours, until when it was known that he went to bed, and no one could trace him after the fire started, then there was considerable speculation as to his whereabouts. The fire having burned down considerably by about 2.30 a search party located what appeared to be a man's ribs sticking up, beneath where he had been sleeping, and this proved to be only too true, for after willing

hands put out the fire around the spot, the body was dug round and recovered by Mr. James Pearce, and others, who had been working heroically, under the supervision of Senior-Constable Lawler.

Most of the crowd had now left the street, but a number of the workers stood by the smouldering remains and kept a diligent watch till daylight.

A few articles, including the piano, were saved from the boarding house soon after the fire was discovered.

The town is to be congratulated on having such an able staff of workers in its midst, as but for their indefatigable efforts a number of other houses must have gone. Amongst those who deserve the greatest praise, we noticed - James Pearce, senr. Jas. Pearce, jnr. R. Ayres, S. Donavan, N. Spence, S. Banks-Smith, ; Green, J. Hayward, W.C. Melville, N. Denham, P. Hallet, L. Fry, H. Bridson, jr. Senior-Constable Lawler, E. Gibson, C. Mclean, C. Ochs, and a host of others.

Messrs. J. Healy, D. Stewart, and F. Hayward very generously placed buckets, axes &c., out of their stores at the disposal of the workers; while Mrs. McDonnough kindly opened her house free for refreshments for the fatigued men.

The building was not insured. The furniture was insured in the Liverpool and London and Globe Co. For L200.

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#### CORONER'S INQUEST

20 May 1905

The District Coroner Mr. J. Y. Butler, J.P. held an inquest into the circumstances attending the burning of Wall's boarding house, Port Macquarie, on the night and morning of the 8th and 9th insts. Senior-Constable Lawler conducted the case for the crown, Mr. S. Banks-Smith, solicitor,

appearing for Mrs. Wall. Messrs. E. Edwards and H. Dunlop, representing the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Co., also appeared on behalf of the Company.

The following evidence was given;-

Senior - Constable J.T. Lawler deposed to having seen the fire from his residence at 12.10 a.m. , and immediately going to the scene. He saw flames coming through two top windows at the back of the building, and that there was no hope of saving the buildings. He was informed by persons present that there was no one in the building. He then assisted to save the adjoining buildings, Mrs. Wall was not present, and the only article saved was the piano. He had failed to find out how the fire originated.

To the Coroner- He believed the furniture and piano, and wearing apparel were insured for (pounds) 200. He had no suspicion as to any person setting fire to the building. He had investigated several statements made in connection with the fire and found them to be without foundation. He afterwards found out that a person was burnt in the fire, and found the body about 3 a.m. The fire lasted about two hours. It was impossible to save any part of the building.

O.C. Ochs stated that he saw the fire from his residence about 12 o'clock, in the north-east corner of the building at the top. He went to the scene, and the flames were still at the top, he then assisted to save furniture, and to keep the fire from spreading. He could give no reason for the fire; he knew nothing of Mrs. Wall's affairs.

Edward James Gibson stated that he was near the N. S. Wales Bank about midnight on the 8th inst. With Chas Mclean ; the latter said "there's a fire down there!" they both ran towards it; he then

sent Mclean for assistance. He went to the back and saw the fire coming out the top and bottom windows at the north-east corner; he tried, but could not open the back as it was locked; on finding the front door also locked he climbed the verandah post, found the doors open, and entered upstairs; he smells no kerosene; he went nearly to the staircase calling out "Fire!" as loudly as he could all the time. The fire was in the top, and he had hold of the stair case at the bottom; he was positive it started in the north-east of the building; he was the first man on the scene. He came down the post again, and found several persons there. He assisted to bring the piano out. Then he went up the post again and threw down several articles from upstairs; everything was in order; if he had known Hall was in a room when he first went up he could not have saved him. He then assisted to save the other buildings.

Charles F. Mclean gave evidence to the effect that he ran to the School of Arts on seeing the fire. He said to Mrs. Wall "Your house is on fire!" she said "It's a lie!" He then saw her fall as though fainting, but saw her at the fire afterwards. He assisted to save other buildings.

Emily Wall deposed that she kept a boarding house and fruit shop, having a three-year lease on the place. She had the furniture insured for (pounds) 150, and the piano for (pounds) 50, the policy being effected by her late husband. She valued the contents of the building at between (pounds) 300 and 400. No one was pressing her for money, she had money in the bank, and was doing a good business. She was taking part in a social on the night of the 8th inst. . She took cakes to the School of Arts at 9.45 o'clock, and went home again. There was no fire in the kitchen. She did not want to stay at the hall as she had not finished dressing. The

reason she did not stay at the Hall was on account of her late trouble - losing her husband.

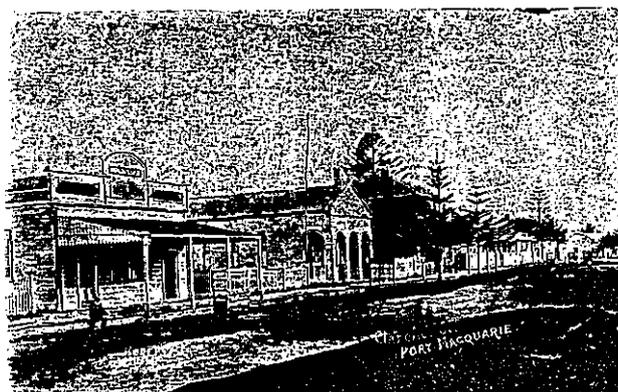
When she went home she lighted the light in the Hall, then she went to her bedroom and got dressed. She then stood at the door and under the verandah waiting for the time to pass, as she did not want to go to the Hall till near supper time. She spoke to Mr. Donovan about 10.30 p.m. Before leaving, she looked in the dining room and the kitchen with the lamp to see that everything was right, and there was no sign of fire. She locked the front door and carried the key with her. She saw a man in the street whom she did not know, as she walked away, nearly at her verandah. She passed him and looked back, and saw him standing about opposite the stool under the verandah. She turned round and walked back looking closely into his face, as she wondered what he was standing there for, and wanted to see who he was. She said "Goodnight," and he said "Goodnight, Mrs Wall!" she said "I beg your pardon I thought you were Louis Edward." He stood there, and she went into William Street, and closed a little gate leading into her yard. Then she went up William Street, down Hay Street, and to the School of Arts. She passed Mr Healey at the corner of the School of Arts. It must have been nearly 11 o'clock then. She went into the School of Arts and never left after that. She had a coach driver boarding at her house whose name she did not know. She saw him at tea on the night of the social.

About 9.o'clock the young man came to the door and said he would go to bed. She said he ought to come to the social and have a cup of tea. He said "No; I feel crook and will go to bed." She got him a candle and said "I'll be going round to the Hall, and I'll be locking up the

house, you won't mind." He said "No, I'll be all right." He said goodnight and she said goodnight, and he went upstairs. He seemed to be more talkative at 9 o'clock than at tea time, and she thought he had had a few drinks. She nearly always went the back way to the School of Arts. She found out after that the man was burnt. She had (pounds) 5 in single notes in the house and some silver; she lost her gold watch and other valuables, besides her own and her children's clothing, and that of the boarders. She knew Mr. Mitchell, and thought she was on good terms with him. She never told him that if Hinton cancelled the lease she would burn the place down. She said if Hinton waited till she burnt his house down it would stand there for many a year. Mitchell asked her if she heard from Hinton, and she told him, yes. He asked her was he saying anything about the place, and she said not in particular. He said that he heard Hinton was offered more rent for the place, and he thought it was very mean for Hinton to try and take it from me. He said he would rather see a firestick put into it than Hinton to take it away from her. Mitchell was boarding with her then, and she thought he was a friend; he often did her a good turn. She was at his house the morning after the fire; she saw him, and Mrs. Mitchell was very kind. Some person told her the place was on fire the night of the social; she was not able to go to the fire she got such a fright. The deceased slept in a room immediately over the kitchen near the stairs; there was a small table in the room and window curtains; the window was up at 4 o'clock. She thought the wind blew the curtain on to the deceased's candle, and it caught fire; she did not know whether the deceased smoked. She thought she was on good terms with everybody in Port Macquarie.

To Mr. Banks-Smith - The conversation with Mitchell occurred just after her husband's death; she did not think Mitchell was sober at the time. She never had any trouble with Hinton, and the rent was never in arrears.

Kate Smith stated that Mrs. Wall came to the School of Arts about 9.30 or 9.45 p.m. with refreshments and left again. She returned at ten minutes to 11 and there was nothing unusual about her. She never left the Hall afterwards until the alarm was given.



School of Arts on the left of Town Hall

Jacob Healey deposed to having left the School of Arts at 10.45 p.m. on the night of the 8th and passed Mrs. Wall at the School of Arts corner. He went home, and it was 5 minutes past twelve when he left again to go to the fire, which he saw from his verandah. It was coming out of 4 windows in the north east corner of the house. He helped to break the front door in, being anxious about persons sleeping; the back stairs was alight. He was told there was no one in the house, and they then got the piano out; he smelt no kerosene. He had no suspicion that the place had been set fire to but thought it

originated from the fireplace; the building was beyond saving. Mrs Wall was charged for material sold by him to repair her house. He had, in business, found her straight, and thought she was doing a good business.

Wm. Woodlands said that he was at the School of Arts at midnight on the 8th, when he heard there was a fire. He ran down and saw Wall's house on fire; it was coming out of the top end window; he noticed no fire below; he saw the fire from Blair's shop and Donavan's ; did not conclude where it started ; he assisted generally.

Mrs. Wall recalled, said she had repairs effected to her house just before the Show at a cost of (pounds) 10 or 12, and had not been paid for them. No one was present when she was talking to Mitchell; he was sympathising with her.

Harold R. Dunlop, stated he was inspector for the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Co. On the way from Taree in the coach on Friday night he and Mitchell were talking casually about the fire and he seemed to be concerned about the driver being burnt, and said if it had not been for him they would have buried him like a dog; and that he had gone to the postal officials and got the deceased's parent's address, and communicated with his father. Mitchell told him that Mrs. Wall said she was going to burn the place down, and he replied that it was a terrible thing to say; Mitchell then said if she did do it she should be hanged or get 7 years, and witness said she would get longer if she did it. He took it that he had a grudge against Mrs. Wall. He was very sore over the driver:

To Mr. Banks-Smith - He never told me when Mrs. Wall said she would burn the place down, and I never asked. I told him that he ought to be careful what he said,

and told him he ought to give evidence; he said he had not been subpoenaed.

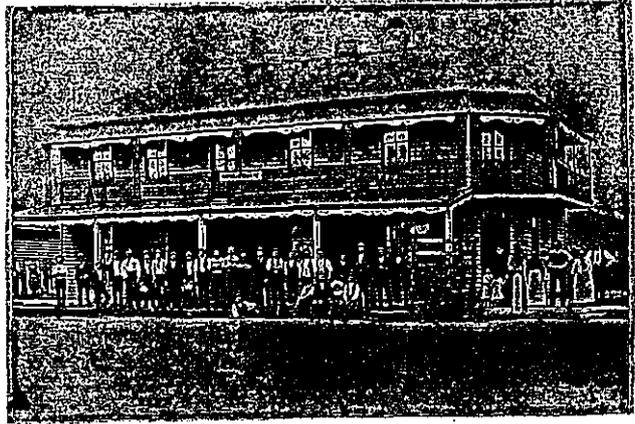
James Mitchell deposed that he was a coach driver , resided in Port Macquarie, and knew Mrs. Wall ; he also knew her late residence. He was at Camden Haven on the night of the fire. He remembered when Mrs. Hall's husband was drowned. About a fortnight after that fatality witness had a conversation with Mrs. Wall at her shop. Mrs. Wall told him that Mr. Hinton was not treating her too good - he (Hinton) wanted her to paint the house - and she said "I'll see him in h---- first before I do it." She also said "I'll burn it to the ground; I'll get even on him, you'll see." She was sober and not peculiar when she made the statements. It did not strike him as being funny that Hinton should press Mrs. Wall to renovate the premises. He said to Mrs. Wall "You will get nothing out of that; it will be no good to you." He did not board at Mrs. Wall's, but they were friends; he had however, boarded there at one time. He had spoken to her since the fire. He had made no secret about the information tendered in his evidence that day. In cross examination, witness stated that he did not remember telling anyone about Mrs. Wall's remarks after the statements had been made to him. The building was painted, but he never inquired who got it done. He knew the man who was burnt in the fire, the witness and others inaugurated a subscription list to pay burial expenses. He obtained the deceased's relatives address from Mrs. Moxham. He would swear that he complained to no one about the conduct of the police - not even to Mr. Dunlop, the insurance agent. He (witness) must have been boarding at Mrs. Wall's for five or six months. He was always the best of friends with the late Mr. Wall, and would not have liked to have seen Hinton treat the widow

badly. He heard that Hinton had been offered more rent for the place, above what Mrs. Wall was paying. He (witness) did not say to Mrs. Wall "I'd rather see a fire-stick put in it than he take it away from you." He was not a teetotaller, but was positive that he had not told anyone of any conversation until after the fire. He did not say to Mr. Dunlop that the police were going to bury the deceased man like a dog; he said that they (the police) were going to bury him like a pauper. He said of Mrs. Wall that if she burned the place down she deserved seven years; he told Mr. Edwards that also.

Mr. Edwards had told him that Mrs. Wall was to get the insurance money, and he then said that he would like to see her get seven years. He could not say whether Mrs. Wall burnt the place down or not, but he thought the affair very funny when he remembered what she had previously told him. None of Mrs. Wall's evidence relative to him was true; her evidence was false, and his own true as far as he knew. He did not sympathise with Mrs. Wall. A portion of Mr. Dunlop's evidence was also untrue. Mrs. Wall did not relate to him the circumstances in which she was left, and never hinted that she was going to insure the furniture. He heard that the furniture was insured about three weeks before the fire. He could not swear that Mrs. Wall had committed perjury. Mr. Dunlop did not ask him to attend the inquiry and give evidence.

Percival John Bourne deposed that he was in the street the night of the fire, and his attention was first drawn to something being amiss by noticing an odour resembling that emitted from burning clothing. He could not make it out, and went home. Eventually he heard that Mrs. Wall's place was on fire. He did not notice Mrs. Wall at the School of Arts, nor did he

notice any lights in her house when he passed. He arrived home about 11.40 p.m. and there was no sign of fire then.



#### Tattersall's Hotel

Patrick John Kerr deposed to having been in the street on the night of the 8th instant but noticed nothing in the way of an out break of fire prior to returning home. He was in the vicinity of Wall's place during that evening.

John Haywood stated that at about 9.30 on the night of the fire he was sitting on his verandah. About that time he saw a light go into the second window in the back of the boarding house near the north-east corner. About ten minutes afterwards; the light disappeared. About 11.30 p.m. he had occasion to go on to his front verandah but he noticed no lights in the direction of Wall's at that hour. He then retired, but later got up again on hearing a call of "Fire." All the north-east corner of the building seemed to be on fire. He could not say how the light got into the window earlier in the night. If the fire had been lighted outside he must have seen it. He was present when the body was found ; it was found straight down from where he

had seen the light in the window. The body when found, was lying east and west.

Vernon Becke deposed that he resided at the back of Harley's shop, in close proximity to the place burned down. He went to bed about 10.p.m. on the 8th instant, but was reading until nearly 12.o'clock. After being aroused by the call of "Fire." He proceeded in the direction of the glare. The fire then appeared to be on the bottom portion of the premises. He never noticed anyone knocking about the premises that night.

Ecott Edwards deposed that he was an insurance agent, and represented the Liverpool and London and Globe Co. The late Mr. Wall insured his furniture and household effects about last December for the sum of (pounds) 200- the furniture for (pounds)120; clothing and linen (pounds) 30, and piano (pounds) 50 - altogether the amount was (pounds) 200. Only the piano was saved from the late fire. The insurance was taken out in the name of Amos Wall, but he believed it was now transferred. He asked Mrs. Wall if she would like it transferred into her name, and this was done.

The endorsement of transfer appears on the policy. Mr. Wall valued it at (pounds) 360 ; he (witness) valued it at (pounds) 300 - that was the furniture, including the piano, and it was insured for (pounds) 200: That was last December. He had not seen the furniture since last December, and could not say if Mrs. Wall had added to it since. The shop appeared to be well stocked at the time of the fire. He noticed no difference at the time of the fire; for insurance purposes it would, exclusive of stock, be worth (pounds) 300. He could not give an estimate of the value of the stock. The stock was the same as usual the day before the fire.



Speed the Plough Hotel.

The coroner returned the following verdict:-- " I find the said premises, situate at the corner of Horton and William Streets, Town of Port Macquarie, in the State of New South Wales, on the morning of the 9th, May, 1905, were totally destroyed by fire, but how the fire originated, whether accidentally or otherwise, the evidence adduced does not enable me to say." The Coroner made the following remarks ; "The evidence at this inquiry has been most lengthy and exhaustive, and every matter of detail has, to my mind, been thoroughly thrashed out. I might say that great credit is due to Senior-Constable Lawler for the manner in which he has placed the evidence before me ; he left no door open from which he could produce reliable evidence."

At the conclusion of the inquest Mr. Dunlop thanked Senior- Constable Lawler, on behalf of the insurance company, for the able manner in which he had conducted the case.

The Senior-Constable briefly acknowledged the kind remarks.

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The District Coroner commenced an Inquest on Tuesday morning as to the cause of the death of Frederick Hall, whose charred remains were recovered from the debris of the recent fire at Mrs. Wall's residence.

Senior-Constable Lawler, Emily Wall, James Mitchell, and Constable Brown gave evidence when the proceedings were adjourned until the following morning.

On resuming, further evidence was given by Senior-Constable Lawler, Emily Wall, Const. Brown and William Woodlands.

Senior Constable Lawler had charge of the case.

It would appear from the evidence that the deceased was a coach-driver in the employ of Mr. Lambert, mail contractor, and was to have taken the mail out on the morning that he met his death. On the previous night deceased had been in the company of William Woodlands. He had drunk some whisky and a bottle of colonial wine. He left Woodlands opposite Mrs. Wall's about 9.30 p.m., saying he had to get up early in the morning to take the coach out. Deceased then went into Mrs. Wall's house, where he procured a candle from her and went upstairs to bed. This was the last that was seen of him alive. About 11.p.m. , Mrs. Wall locked up her residence (previous to which she informed the deceased that she was going out, and he said he would be alright) at about 11.p.m. and went to attend a social at the School of Arts. At about midnight, whilst at the School of Arts Mrs. Wall was

informed that her house was on fire ; she went into a state of collapse, and when she went to the scene of the fire the whole of the building was demolished, and she and her family lost all their belongings. Considerable doubt existed as to whether the deceased had succumbed in the fire, but all doubts were set at rest when the blaze had somewhat subsided, for the charred remains of the body could be plainly seen among the debris immediately under the room in which he had been sleeping. The remains of the body were removed by Senior-Constable Lawler and others. Only the trunk of the unfortunate man remained, his head, leg and arms having been burnt off. A pipe and a pocket knife found near the body were identified as being his. Very little was known of the deceased in this district, but his father resides at 32 Burton Street, off Oxford Street, Sydney, and has been communicated with by the Police.

The Coroner returned the following verdict:- "I find that the said Frederick Hall, at Port Macquarie, in the District of Port Macquarie, in the State of New South Wales, on the 9th day of May, 1905, died through being burned by a fire which totally destroyed premises occupied by Mrs. Emily Wall, situate as aforesaid, on the same day, but how, and by what means the fire originated, whether accidentally or otherwise, the evidence adduced does not enable me to say."

#### ADDENDUM

To the casual reader of the above mentioned article dealing with the fire in Mrs. Wall's boarding house in Horton Street, there maybe a touch of sadness at the death of the coach driver, Frederick J.

Hall and sorrow at the destruction of a fine residence with the consequent loss of personal belongings by the owner and guests. However, for the older citizens of Port Macquarie this disaster heralded the end of an era in the history of the hotels of the town.

The double storeyed weatherboard structure on the north-eastern corner of Horton and William Streets had marked the site of an Inn dating back to 1834 and the beginning of free settlement. Indeed the smouldering ashes on the allotment were only a short stone's throw away from the original prisoner's barracks of the 1820s, when convicts were used to clear the tea-tree and scrub from the future main thoroughfare of the town, by growing maize, sugar cane and vegetables in their gardens.

Convict, Christopher Doyle may have been one of the felons employed in this activity and may even have worked on that allotment of land which he was to own in a few short years. Convicted at Dublin City in January 1818 at the age of 21 years, the former stable hand from Wexford was transported to Australia on the "Tyne" (Captain C. Reed) for seven years, arriving in Sydney on 2nd December 1819 and at the time of the 1828 Census, was working on a road gang at Parramatta.

On the 2nd December 1824, he was reconvicted for stealing two blankets from Richard Kipple at Windsor and was sentenced to a further term of seven years and despatched to Port Macquarie, at that time the major penal colony for second offenders, where punishment by unremitting hard labour was meant to bring about their reformation. When Christopher Doyle arrived in chains at this northern outpost, the settlement was under the command of Captain Henry Gillman ,

who controlled the lives of 1500 prisoners, including a handful of female wretches incarcerated in the female factory. Although at times conditions were harsh, Port Macquarie never gained the reputation acquired by Norfolk Island or Macquarie Harbour as dens of depravity or human misery.

Receiving his ticket of leave for the district and finally gaining his freedom on 30th December 1831, Christopher decided that his former place of banishment was not only an ideal climatic location , but the opportunities offering to an entrepreneur in the flourishing township were unlimited. His relationship with Mary Wilson, the daughter of the Superintendent of Convicts, William Wilson, certainly helped with his rehabilitation into free society and the couple were married in St. Thomas Church on the 26th December 1831, with the reluctant blessing of the bride's parents.

By a stroke of luck, the young couple were able to purchase the town allotment at lot 9 Section 3, on the corner of Horton and William Streets for 27 Pounds, the original buyers P. Wateron and W. MacDonald not having finalised the full payment before the issue of the title deeds. Shortly afterwards, they erected a double storied building on the site, which became known under the sign "SPEED THE PLOUGH" when they obtained a publicans licence in August 1834.

In 1839 the hotel was leased to Sol Marks and in the following year, Abraham Cohen took over the licence. In the meantime it appears that Christopher and Mary Doyle moved to the Wilson property at Rollands Plains, where they ran the "TRAVELLER'S REST", until Christopher died on 27th May 1847 and

was buried in the Historic Cemetery in Port Macquarie. Mary Doyle returned to Port Macquarie in 1853 and once again took over the licence of the "SPEED THE PLOUGH". Her daughter Elizabeth, (Mrs. Dodds) succeeded her mother in this role for some time, to be followed by her son, Christopher (junior) who seems to have been the last to run the inn, having renewed the licence on 1st Sept. 1871 and leasing the "ROYAL" hotel the following year. Nothing is heard again of the "SPEED THE PLOUGH" and it is presumed to have been delicensed after 38 years of service.

On 20th Oct. 1882, William Hinton, who had previously held the lease of the "COMMERCIAL" hotel in Horton Street, applied for a licence for a renovated house on the site of the former "SPEED THE PLOUGH", but this was refused on the grounds that three hotels were considered sufficient to service the town. Nothing further is heard of the building for a few years, until Moores Almanac advises that a Mr. Gersbach, was the licensee of the new "TATTERSALLS" hotel once the former "SPEED THE PLOUGH"

By July 1888, Patrick McGann was the licensee, and under his patronage, the hotel increased its trade and became a popular meeting place for many of the clubs and organisations of the town. Of course this popularity was purchased at a price - by under-cutting, the rentals charged by other publicans.

The Port Macquarie Band was one organisation which took advantage of the lower prices and hired a room for its meetings, while the Hastings River Jockey Club also used this venue for "settling up" bets, after the races.

Born in Strokesdown, Roscommon, Ireland, Patrick had arrived

in the colony by the "ERATO" on 13th May 1878 and had married housekeeper Elizabeth Nelson, from Armidale, at St. Agnes Church, Port Macquarie, on 4th Nov. 1890 and four of the couple's five children were born at the "TATTERSALLS". On the 21st. Dec. 1895, Patrick transferred his licence to Bernard Cavanagh's "CLUB" hotel in Clarence Street (previously the eastern portion of today's "MACQUARIE" hotel. Unfortunately Patrick died on 9 Sep. 1896, a few months before the birth of his daughter Elizabeth May. Elizabeth McGann took over the licence of the "CLUB" hotel and ran it until she married William Halpin, of the "ROYAL" hotel in June 1900 at Kempsey.

In the meantime William John Trim, from Kempsey took over the lease of the "TATTERSALLS" hotel from Patrick McGann on 21 Dec. 1895 and he held it until 16 May 1896 when he went to the "ROYAL", held by W. McGrath, the latter then transferring to the "TATTERSALLS", a form of publicans musical chairs. Wm. McGrath seems to have been the last occupier of the licensed premises.

On 5 Nov. 1898, Mrs. Hicks advertised in the Port Macquarie News that she had opened "TATTERSALLS" boarding house, while on 27 June 1903, she again advised the citizens that the old "TATTERSALLS" hotel had been renovated, and would continue as a boarding house where oysters and fruit were on sale on the premises. Amos and Emily Wall must have taken over the house soon after, with Emily running the business after Amos had been drowned in the Hastings River. The owner of the building was still William Hinton.

As mentioned in the newspaper article, Emily Wall had been down at the

School of Arts (now the site of the Information Centre), attending a social to farewell Mrs. J. Platt, who was leaving the district to live in the Manning River area.

The "NEWS" of 13th May 1905 also records the social event:-

"The hall had been decorated by friends of the guest, with bangalows etc. and overhanging the platform was the word "FAREWELL" very artistically painted on a white background- this being the work of Mr. Pead. The whole arrangement of the social was in the hands of the Misses Beilby and Smith, while Mrs. McLaren also played a very important part in assisting. Dancing was freely kept going until about 11pm to the music of the piano, violin and accordion played by several ladies and gentlemen present. Mr. W. Newell acted as M.C. and Mr. C.G. Orr was the chairman. Mrs. Platt was presented with a nice silver mounted jam dish and spoons..... Then the proceedings, which were at their best, were brought to a sudden termination by an alarm of "FIRE!"

At the Coroners inquest conducted by well known Port Macquarie businessman John Young Butler, some doubt was thrown on the honesty and

integrity of Mrs. Emily Wall by the evidence of James Mitchell, a supposed friend of the family, who did his best to implicate Mrs. Wall with the causation of the fire. The Coroner seems to have doubted the testimony of Mitchell and returned an open finding.

The finale of the saga relating to the history of lot 9 Section 3 in the township of Port Macquarie was played out with a small notice in the Port Macquarie News of 22nd Aug.1908, which "noted the death of Mr. W. Hinton last when aged 77 years. A former mayor and licensee of the Ballina Hotel, he once owned a hotel in Port Macquarie".

In the years since the fire in 1905, the site has seen many businesses come and go, including Reids, Sentimental Jewellers and in 1997, Laing and Simmons Real Estate.

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# CHRONICLE

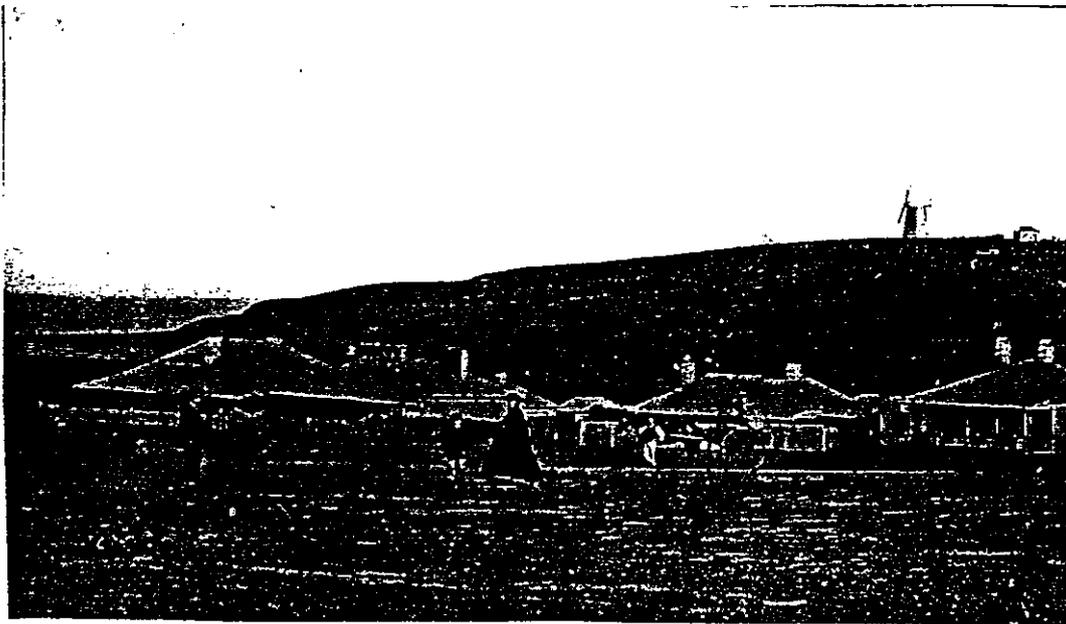
Vol.1 No. 3 September 1997

ISSN 1328-4304

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS MAY 1912

## OLD SIMON OF WINDMILL HILL

by Louis Becke



A RARE PHOTOGRAPH OF MAJOR INNES' MILL ON WINDMILL HILL PORT MACQUARIE. AUTHOR LOUIS BECKE LIVED IN THE HOUSE ON THE EXTREME LEFT.

Seven years ago I happened to pass through a little village named Cross-a-leemy in County South, Ireland when I met a bent old man driving an ancient half-starved cow along the narrow, straggling street. The day was cold, a keen easterly wind blackened the waters of the Irish Channel and

swept over the black wintry fields and around the rugged rocky shoulders of snow-capped Fin Macoul. The old man was but scantily clad, bent with the infirmities of age and a life of toil, and looked miserable to boot. He gave me the usual civil "good day, sor", and I was about to pass on when I stopped and

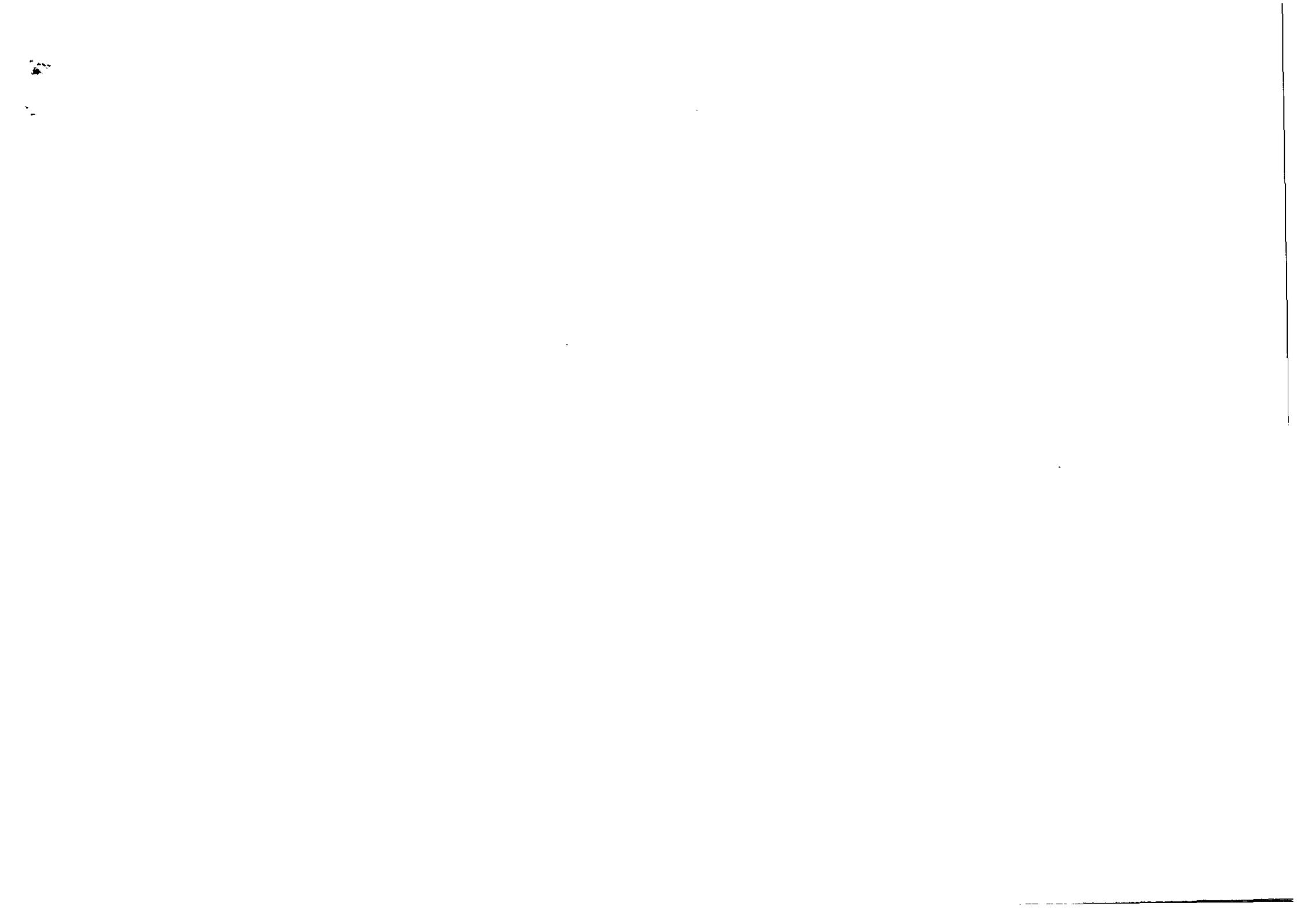


asked him if he would have something with me to keep the cold out. He thanked me, and together we went to the little thatched roofed dwelling kept by one Michael O'Hare, as a combined public house and grocery store and sat down before a blazing fire. Michael drew us two mugs of stout and we lit our pipes and smoked and talked. Somehow my companion's face seemed familiar to me, but although I knew most of the peasantry between Carlingford, Lough and Dundalk I could not place him nor remember the man he was much like; after half-an-hour's chat I bade him good-day and went my way. Then, like a flash, my memory went back to five and forty years - "Old Simon" of Port Macquarie!

Old Simon lived on the Windmill Hill and I am sure that many of my fellow-townsmen will remember the queer old fellow with his stooping figure and long straggling white beard, as he wandered about the town seeking odd jobs. Even then, at his age - he must have been nearly 80 - he had not a lazy bone in his body and contrived to live very comfortably in his old shanty which was westward about a quarter of a mile from where Redgate's old windmill once stood. He had a good vegetable garden with a small vineyard and kept pigs, ducks and fowls - these latter seemed to be imbued with marvellous fecundity - you might notice say thirty full grown fowls in his yard in the morning of one day, and forty or fifty a week later. Very often, he said, his chookies would stray and he would go and look for them at night - the darker the night the more he found.

Old Simon was neither conspicuously poor nor obtrusively honest. It was known that he had saved

up a tidy sum of money and many were the conjectures as to what he would do with it. He spent but little, but did not deny himself a bottle or two of rum every Saturday night to carry him over until Monday morning, and on the intervening Sunday he would usually be visited by a friend locally known as "Old Mother Boshee". She was a lady of about seventy years of age with a complexion the hue of pump leather, short and sturdy, had but three teeth, was as strong as a working bullock and smoked a short clay pipe blackened with age; she also possessed a command of "language" that put the most accomplished bullocky in that respect to the blush of envy and shame. On many Sunday mornings my mother would send me up to Simon's with some of our dinner, smoking hot and under a cover; on such occasions I would usually find Simon and Mrs Boshee seated at the table with a bottle of rum between them, smoking their pipes and talking either of the "old country" or Major Innes of the "Lake" or some other local magnate of the past for whom they had worked. Simon, I think, was a County Clare man, and on the wall of his one-roomed shanty was displayed a venerable flint lock musket of which he was inordinately proud and when in his cup - he drank his rum from a blue cup which I can see before me still - he would declare had done good "service" at Vinegar Hill in '98 and potted many a --- - red-coat. As a great favour he would allow me to sometimes take down and handle the deadly weapon, and I well remember my one day setting a trap for native cats among some lilly pilly trees just over the ridge beyond Simon's house. On visiting the trap the following morning I found a cat in it; the creature was alive and spit viciously at me as I approached. After pelting it with sticks



and stones for some time without effect, I bethought me of Old Simon and the alledged relic of Vinegar Hill. I ran to his shanty.

"Simon", I panted "there's a whopping big native cat in my trap and I can't kill it. Will you come and shoot it?" "I will that; maybe 'tis the same devil ave a baste that got into me fowl house last wake and lift sevin hens dead on me".

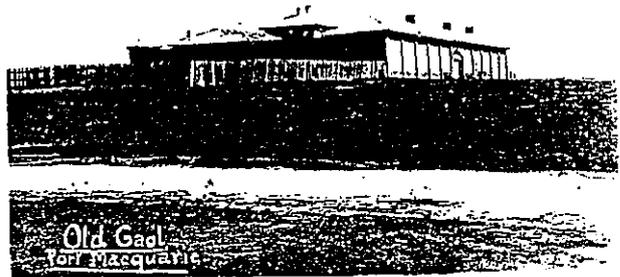
With infinite care he examined the thing that had done such terrible work at Vinegar Hill, muttering and chuckling to himself the while; then from his powder horn he measured out four thimblefuls of powder, rammed it home with much wadding torn from the leaves of a tract given to him by the Reverend Canon O'Reilly, put in five or six small pistol bullets each wrapped up in more religious literature, then a top wad of a piece of rag and finally and carefully primed the pan and shut it down.

Ten minutes later we were in front of the mid-night, blood-sucking marauder of innocent fowl-hood. Kneeling behind a fallen log, Simon knelt down, and levelled the weapon at the writhing spiteful animal.

"'Tis within ten yards I am" he muttered to me "an' the 'ould gun killed a yeomanny man at Vinegar Hill at eighty." Then he pulled the trigger. The concussion threw him over on his back and the report echoed from the Windmill Hill to Nobby's cave and scared every wallaby within two miles, and fragments of native cat were scattered far and wide.

"Sure an' I moight have killed it at

fifty yards" he remarked, "an' I wud have given yez th' skin".



### PORT MACQUARIE GAOL

Simon had a generous heart at times. One sweltering hot day when the grapes were ripe he came to our cottage - we lived between the Gaol and the Pilot Station - and asked to see my eldest sister as he had something to give her. She came and Simon produced from the bosom of his ragged old blue shirt and from next to his bare and perspiring chest some bunches of grapes, some peaches and four newly-laid eggs - a fifth egg had broken in his shirt. He wanted her to eat some of the grapes there and then, but she pleaded indisposition.

One morning I went out collecting mushrooms on Windmill Hill and in the paddocks between Simon's place and Arncliffe. As I passed his fence I looked over to see if the old man was about, and noticed among the other poultry a big Muscovy drake - about the biggest in Port Macquarie. It was my own especial property and had been given to me when a drakeling by a Miss Winnie Blewitt who lived near the windmill. For two days it had been missing and I mourned for it greatly. Its discovery



filled me with joy. Going round to Simon's door I found him engaged in sharpening a scythe.

"Simon," I said, in all innocence, "my big Muscovy drake which I lost two days ago is in the yard with your ducks".

"Is it now! Oh, its a divil av a bird it is. Toime afther toime have I driven it away for he do be enticin' me own ducks to wandher all over the counthry. Sure an' he can climb a fince like a cat. He's got claws on him like an aigle's talons. Catch him an' take him away and put the divil in hobbles".

I caught the creature and Simon lent me a corn sack to carry him home. Halfway down the hill I met Miss Crummer (daughter of Major Crummer). She asked me what was in the bag' I told her."

"Oh, how funny. I am on my way up to Old Simon's. He called at our house a day or two ago and told us that he had a beautiful Muscovy drake to sell - one that he has reared himself and it will weigh over 15 lb. So I am going to buy it if it is all that he says it is".

I said nothing, for I did not want to put my ancient friend away although I well know that he had never kept any Muscovies; nor did I betray his shocking absence of mind to my parents, my own conscience reminding me that I was not guiltless in the matter of paying unobtrusive visits to Simon's grape and passion fruit vines and peach trees in his absence. And, besides that I had an affection for the old man.

In a portion of the paddock at the back of our house there was a small patch of oats growing which Simon

himself had planted. On several occasions we found that they had been exploited by some unauthorised person, so one night one of my brothers wrapped himself in a sheet and waited for the visitor, who appeared about midnight. Setting vigorously to work he soon filled a sack with oat and hoisting it on his shoulder made for the gate. And then a ghastly apparition appeared in front of him and pointed a ghostly, menancing hand at him. With a yell of terror the intruder dropped the sack and was over the fence in double quick time. After that Old Simon showed a disinclination for any more gardening work in that paddock and when my sister one day mentioned to him that the oats he had planted had done splendidly he changed the subject.

Time came when Simon had to take to his bed, with a long illness from which he never recovered. As he grew weaker and weaker the rumours of his hoard brought him many sympathetic friends - people who never before had, as he expressed it, "putt a fut over th' doorstep". One of them one day asked him if he (the speaker) could draw up his will for him and so save the expense of a lawyer. The emphatic reply of the old man cannot be recorded in print except for private circulation, and the visitor departed in a violent hurry as Old Simon made for the musket of Vinegar Hill.

Simon had two clerical visitors during his last illness - Father Quinlivian, who lived next to him and the Reverend Canon O'Reilly. They were really both very kind to him and Simon accepted their spiritual consolations with great impartiality, but he much preferred those of Mrs Boshee which she administered to him with much



frequency from a black bottle.

One sultry afternoon my mother went to see him, taking me with her. We found Canon O'Reilly there. He had brought the old man some calves' feet jelly and was at the moment of our entrance reading to him from the Scriptures. At one end of the room, perched on a stool, was a ragged urchin of ten or twelve years of age named "Jimmy" who had been engaged to stay with Simon and see that he took his medicine and food at the appointed hours; a number of fowls were scratching about the room - which had a floor of earth, picking up crumbs and clucking and cawking after their manner. The heat of the place was most oppressive and when the clergyman laid down his book the silence was most acute. Presently, a big, dissipated-looking rooster found the half of a raw potato in a corner, and with a clamorous kok, kok, kok, called his harem to him to partake thereof.

Old Simon opened his hitherto closed eyes and sat partly up.

"Jimmy," he said in an unusually strong voice, "where are yey, ye young ---. Move yersilf an' drive out thim ---- fowls.

Those were the last words he ever spoke. He fell back on his pillow and in a few minutes Old Simon had passed away.

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One of the most interesting, yet lesser-known sons of Port Macquarie who has laid claim to a place in history was George Lewis (Louis) Becke, who was born in the township on the 18th

June, 1855, the ninth child of Frederick Becke, clerk of petty sessions and his wife Caroline Matilda nee Beilby, both English born. He had five brothers and six brothers and five sisters.

Frederick Becke had arrived in Australia aboard the "James Laing" on the 12th July, 1836 and was appointed to the Colonial Civil Service the following year, marrying Caroline in Sydney on the 7th December, 1839. She was the daughter of a rich Sydney merchant, Charles Beilby who had business offices in George Street, but who had been jailed for two years for fraudulent practices and appears to have lost his fortune in cattle dealing and the search for gold and copper in the Port Macquarie district. Caroline's brother, Edwin Thomas Beilby, also accumulated wealth from business interests, which included a partnership with Walter Scott in the ownership of Row & Co, wholesale druggists.

Following their marriage, Frederick and Caroline lived in Sydney and Newcastle before being transferred to Port Macquarie about 1854, taking up residence at "Clifton", the early vineyard of Henry Fancourt White and later Major A.C. Innes, currently the site of Lourdes Nursing Home. In 1860 the family purchased a block of land at the corner of William and Owen Streets, an original purchase from the Crown by Henry and Elizabeth Cohen, from Ebenezer Bourne, mortgagee for Edwin Thomas Beilby.

Here the Beckes built a home which has been described by our Society researcher, Mrs Nancy Sheather :-

*"The house in which the Becke family*



*lived and where (Louis) spent his first twelve years, was situated on the corner of William and Owen Streets, BECKE'S CORNER. That house and the cottage next to it in William Street were owned by Louis' family, but the corner home was the one which old residents associated with Louis Becke. It was built of sandstock brick, one storeyed, with a low, spreading hip-roof which was thatched. The northern verandah with French windows opening on to it, was supported by plain wooden posts and the floor adjoined and was level with the footpath. The verandah continued along part of the western wall where the main entrance led to a passage running from west to east with rooms on either side. More rooms faced Owen Street.*

*There was a large detached room off the end of the western verandah, probably the original kitchen. A few feet away on the western side was the smaller cottage of six rooms, built in an early style without the passages and with three rooms facing north and three south, opening into one another. There was a verandah on the southern side and another on the north, with French doors opening on to it from the three front rooms.*

*The joinery work in both houses was of cedar and this wood was used in thick slabs in lintels and door jambs, indicative of an early period when cedar was plentiful. Like most early Port Macquarie buildings, the houses were plain, without the refinements in joinery to be seen in other old settlements. As with most other early local buildings, the two houses had neither damp-courses nor basements."*

In 1860, the area where the Beckes decided to build was very

sparsely settled, with only a handful of private residences lining the unpaved William Street, then the only thoroughfare into the village.

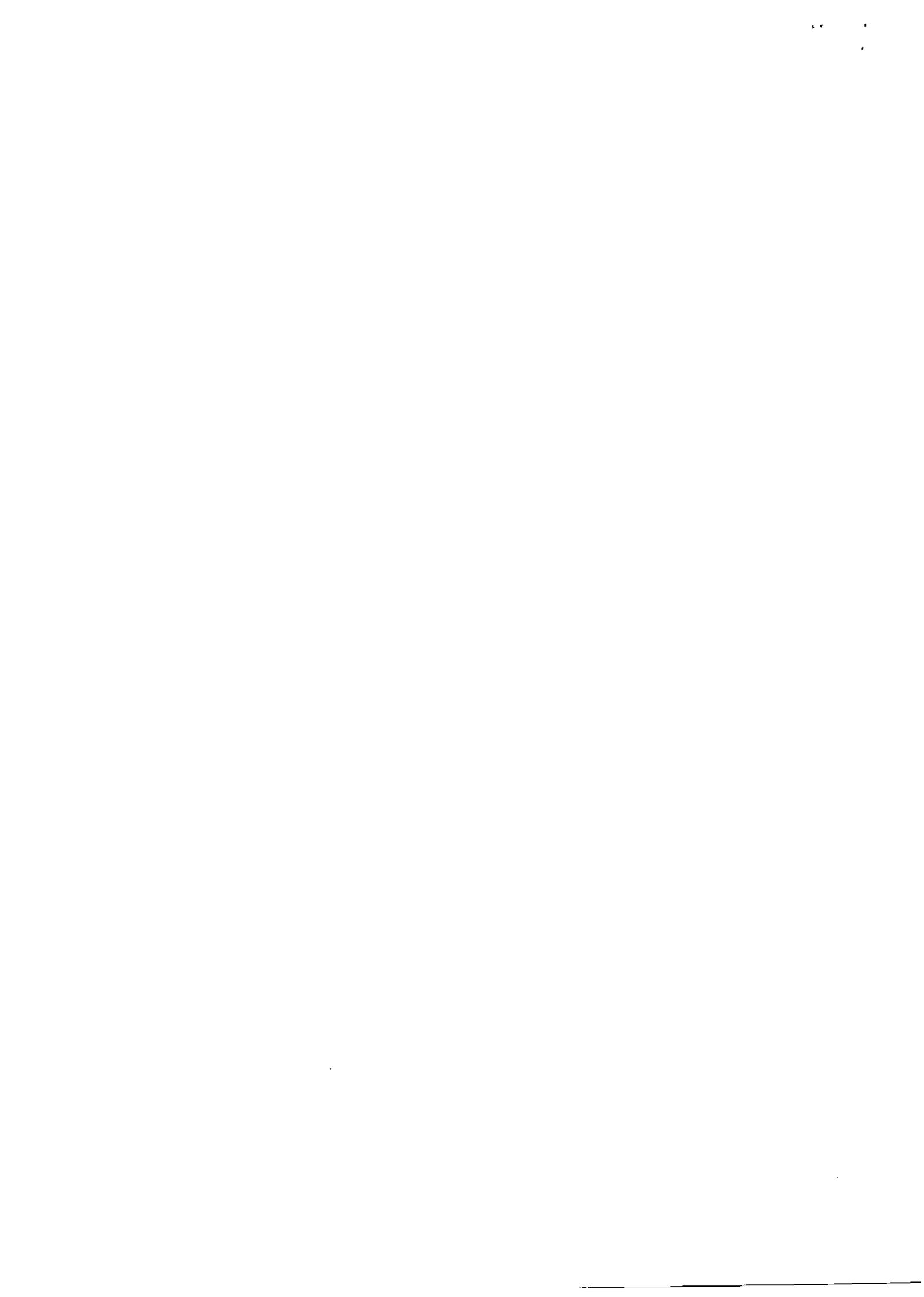


RENOVATED BECKE HOUSE

The Presbyterian Church, Manse and Lieutenant Charles Steele's house were the only buildings on the northern side of the dirt street before one reached the "Speed The Plough" which faced Horton Street. To the east were the pilot houses accommodating the Pilot and his crew, who manned the boat at the nearby boat harbour and hoisted the marine signals at the Flagstaff. Nancy Sheather amplifies the scene :-

*"When Loius Becke was a child, the headland in front of his home, Oxley's camp site, was traversed as it sloped to the beach, by the track which led from boat harbour into town. North-west across open grassland were the walls of the gaol (and the-asylum), east lay the flagstaff and on the skyline to the south stood the windmill, its sails still intact, still functioning.*

*Many years later when he wrote "Some Memories Of Port Macquarie", he told of relics of the "Wanderer" he had found at low tide, wedged in the rocks on the beach below and of a great octopus he*



*had seen swimming in the hull of the "Richmond" nearer town."*

J.W.Earnshaw, in an address to the Australian Society of Book Collectors wrote:-

*"Port Macquarie was established as a penal settlement in 1821 and although signs of the "system" had disappeared, old lags were frequently met with and the grim old gaol still stood on the hill crest and dominated the town. But, all in all, Port Macquarie was an ideal place for a healthy boy to live in, with its rivers teeming with fish, long lonely beaches to the north, quiet sheltered coves to the south and secluded lagoons with wild duck and king prawns for the taking. What more could a lad desire!*

*And then, most fascinating of all to Becke was the ships of a kind that came across the river bar, so clearly seen from his own doorstep. Close by was the pilot station and its old shellbacks with many a yarn to spin. Under the bluff near the Pilot Station, Mary Bryant and her companions repaired their boat and rested before restarting their epic voyage to Timor. Here also, in 1852, Ben Boyd's yacht, "Wanderer" was wrecked shortly after her owner had been killed in the Solomons.*

*Amidst such scenes, Becke spent his boyhood-long idle days on the seashore, or drifting up the river after black bream and flathead and occasionally, more serious excursions to the cattle stations of the main coastal ranges. But all was not play and Becke attended the local school where Blackwood, the drunken master, made his life a hell with petty tyrannies. To the constant floggings on every pretext,*

*Becke ascribes a slight stammer that afflicted him all his life. To escape it all, he ran away with a school friend, red-haired Mary Dick, but their escapade was cut short at Camden Haven, twenty mile away and the runaways were brought home by a trooper."*

Frederick Becke's appointment as CPS clerk at Port Macquarie was terminated in 1866 and the family moved to Sydney, where they obtained the tenancy of "The Nest" at Mosman Bay. This residence had been built by the Mosman Brothers in 1832, the first in that locality and at its zenith, was a self-contained domain, boasting a host of servants, retainers, with bakehouses and butteries and all the necessities for a good life in the country. Young Louis Becke attended the Fort Street Model School, getting there in good weather by rowing his boat across the harbour and leaving it at west Circular Quay.

In 1869, having completed his education, Louis and his elder brother, Vernon were sent to San Francisco to the care of their 21 year old brother Alfred, who had been living in California for some time and had sent glowing reports home of the fortunes to be made. Edwin Thomas Beilby arranged their passages and provided the necessary finance for the boys and they sailed from Newcastle on the barque "Lizzie and Rosa" on the 30th July of that year.

Renshaw again provides some details of their adventures :-

*"The two boys travelled to Newcastle by the crack paddle wheeler "Coonbarra". Here some days were spent while Capt. O'Hagen touted for the last ton of cargo*



*and the last ill-advised passenger. At length, as we have already heard, the "Lizzie and Rosa" up-anchored and cleared the "Nobbys" on the 30th. The voyage proved an unfortunate one from the start. The ship was in bad condition and little had been done in the way of repairs since the previous abortive voyage in March. Heavy weather and adverse winds were met with, the men were continually at the pumps and the scratch crew were openly mutinous and caused continual trouble. ....It was late in November before the "Lizzie and Rosa" sailed into the Golden gate after a voyage of well over 100 days from Sydney."*



LOUIS BECKE

In San Francisco the three brothers had lodgings in Market Street, Alfred working for Schwartz & Kuhn, cigar merchants of Sansone Street, Vernon for Capt.Olmstead, marine surveyor, while Louis was employed by Bancroft & Co, booksellers of Market Street. This was a famous bookshop, founded by Herbert Howe Bancroft, who had collected a mass of historical material dealing with the Pacific Coast. After retirement, he published two great works- "Native Races of the Pacific States" (5 volumes) and "History of the

Pacific States of North America" (25 volumes). Possibly, young Louis had seen some of this material and the literary seed was planted for later sowing!

To relate the complete wanderings of Louis Becke's life and wanderings over the next ten years is beyond the scope of this work and recourse is now made to the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 7, to give a summary of this period :-

*"At 16, he stowed away to Samoa, taking a job in Apia as a book-keeper. He was 18 when he met the notorious Captain "Bully" Hayes who was to become a central character in his later writings. Early in 1874 Hayes signed Becke on as supercargo on the "Leonara" which, some ten weeks later, sank off Kusaie, stranding the survivors there. When a British warship arrived in pursuit of Hayes six months later, Becke was arrested for piracy and taken to Brisbane. Acquitted, he joined the Palmer River gold rush, worked at "Ravenswood" station (1877-leased by the writer's great grandfather (W.G.Symonds) and as a bank clerk in Townsville (1878-79).*

Renshaw tells a slightly different story of this period :-

*"On October 31st, the "Rosario" arrived in Sydney and Becke steps ashore, not yet twenty and with empty pockets but a wealth of adventure and experience. But for all his wanderings, empty pockets must be filled and the urgent necessity of making a living crowded on him. But to a man of spirit that was little consideration, the Palmer diggings in North Queensland were booming and he had a brother in a bank there who*



*could help him over the tight spots. ....from his own tales of those times, we must look for his movements. He tells of prospecting, work on cattle runs, managing a poultry farm and working as a proof reader on the Cooktown newspaper, where he messed up the account of the Emperor of Austria's death. This occurred on the 29th June 1878.*

*A few weeks later, he left Cooktown for Sydney by the steamer "You Yangs" to escape the growing attention of Susie, the charming half caste Chinese daughter of his boarding-house keeper."*

By April 1880, Becke was in the Ellice Islands employed as a trader and in the following February he opened his own store at Nukufetan and it was there, at the mature age of 31 years that he married Nelea Tikena, who died later that same year. To make matters worse, Louis lost everything he owned in a shipwreck shortly afterwards and he arrived in Sydney on the barque "George Noble" with only a few dollars in his pockets.

For the next few years he roamed around the Pacific islands including the Blanche Bay district of New Britain, where Rabaul now stands and at Majuro in the Marshall Islands, before returning to New South Wales in late 1885, suffering from recurrent attacks of malaria. Travelling to the north coast, he appears to have worked as a timber cutter and bush clearer in the Kempsey and Port Macquarie area and on the 10th February 1886 at the Court House in Port Macquarie, he married Elizabeth May (Mary) Stuart Maunsell, the daughter of the District Registrar, Lieut. Colonel Richard Maunsell.

The young couple went to live at Balmain, while Louis took various jobs, including running a poultry farm in the outer suburbs and working in Sydney as a contract draftsman for the Lands Department until they went to Townsville in 1888. A son, Louis was born in 1886, but was tragically killed as a baby by a slamming door, while daughter Norah arrived on the 9th November, 1888, and was followed by Gerald in 1891, who died three years later.

Returning once again to New South Wales, Louis was assistant secretary to the NSW branch of the Royal Geographic Society of Australasia for a few months in 1890, but the call of the islands was still in his blood and he obtained a post as a trader on Niue, or Savage Island, an outlying dependency of New Zealand. Unfortunately his wife's health was affected by the climate and the family were back in Manly again by 1892.

Having difficulty in finding regular work, Becke had already thought of putting his literary talents to work when he met the well-known Australian author, Ernest Favenc, who was impressed with his style of narration and introduced him to Archibald and MacLeod of the "Bulletin". Louis submitted a number of articles to the publishers for trials, the first appearing on the 24th December, 1892, while his first signed story, "Tis In The Blood" appeared in the "Bulletin" on the 6th May 1893.

Becke produced a number of stories under the heading of "By Reef And Palm" which were published at fortnightly intervals and so impressed were Archibald and MacLeod that they arranged for a collection to be published



in London in April 1894, which was reprinted three times that same year. The Australian Dictionary Of Biography gives a good summation of Becke's literary output and subsequent wanderings :-

*"Further collections of stories followed in 1896 and 1897. Becke went on to write 34 books, including six novels in collaboration with W.J. Jeffery and seven on his own account. Bertram Stevens called him 'a born story-teller, an impressionist realist yet without imagination and little conscious art'. Becke later paid tribute to Archibald for teaching him 'the secrets of condensation and simplicity of language'.*

*He sold all his books outright and success brought him no wealth; in April 1894 he was declared bankrupt. In 1896 he separated from his wife (who tried to divorce him in 1903 and 1910) and left for England accompanied by his daughter Nora and by Fanny Sabina Long (1871-1959). In London Becke was received as a celebrity. He and Sabina lived in Eastbourne, where their two daughters (Alrema 1897 and Niya 1898) were born; and later in Ireland and northern France; he visited Jamaica in 1902. He raised finance in 1908 to back an expedition to the Pacific to record folk-lore. On the 22nd July, before leaving for Suva via New Zealand, he and Sabina went through a form of marriage at St. Pancras Register Office."*

Back home in Sydney by 1909, Becke and Sabina were living at 15 Clarence Street, but for the next two and a half years, Louis was constantly shifting from one address to another, drinking heavily, burdened by a growing

poverty and stricken with a malady that was finally to claim his death. By this time, his income from literary works was much diminished, Sabina seems to have deserted him, while daughter Nora was *"quite a distinguished person in London-one of the greatest linguists in Europe"*.

Then early in 1912, he renewed his connections with his place of birth after seeing a description of the Port Macquarie Agricultural Show in the "Daily Telegraph". On the 19th March 1912, he wrote to Mr A.E. Pountney, the publisher of the "Port Macquarie News", commenting on the article and enquiring if he knows of a small furnished cottage for rent for 6-8 weeks.

On the 27th March, he wrote to say that he was coming up to Port Macquarie shortly, getting a room in town temporarily. In the meantime, Mr Pountney had advised that Miss Halliday's cottage was available, but on the 2nd April Louis apologised that he was not able to take up the offer immediately, as he was engrossed in furnishing a long account of Sydney shipping of 1856-70 and writing the "True Story Of Captain 'Bully' Hayes" (25,000 words) for an American magazine. He also advises that he will send a copy of "Port Macquarie- When I Was A Boy" to Pountney.

Altogether, he wrote a series of ten letters to Mr Pountney including a form of contract by Becke to write a series of 12 articles, each of 1200 words within six months, for one and a half guineas each. The last of these letters, carefully retained by the Historical Society, advised that he has posted the first manuscript and was writing another. He concludes by saying that he was coming to Port Macquarie accompanied



by a friend, Alister Smith, but this did not eventuate.

In February 1913, Becke was living alone in a room at the Yorke Hotel, King Street and on the morning of the 18th February, his battle with cancer was over. He was found by a maid, sitting in his chair at a table strewn with pens and paper. Friends from the "Bulletin" arranged for his burial in the Waverley cemetery. His old friend, Henry Lawson penned these words in remembrance of his fellow writer :-

*Who'll miss the well loved stuttering speech?*

*Who'll mind the distant date.*

*When by the mast and palm fringed beach*

*These halting words had wait.*

*Who'd dream these sad, kind manly eyes, when traders were "in holts",*

*In summer isles of paradise could glint behind a colts?*

*We only know by reef and palm-the world be made his own-*

*(The later wounds, without a balm, are better never known)*

*We live and fight by day and night in carking care and strife*

*And take our pen in death to write the story of our life.*

*Farewell my friend-'twill ne'er be told-or told in printed line*

*(Your destiny in days of old were strongly linked with mine)*

*I trust my track shall run as true. though come it late or soon,*

*When my name shall be missing, too, from "some birthday in June".*

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Before closing this chapter on the life of Louis Becke, it should be related that in the early years of the then

Hastings District Historical Society, an unrecorded donor presented the members with a photographic album, said to have been owned and compiled by Louis Becke.

The contents are the record of two tours by rail and bicycle which were made in 1910 and 1911 by the photographer and a friend, Mr C. Newcombe, both of which commenced and ended at Warwick, Queensland. The areas traversed were as far south as Armidale and west to Coonabarabran, from Apsley falls and Walcha down the old road to the Hastings Valley, then up the coast through the Macleay and Nambucca valleys.

There are only a few photographs of Port Macquarie and it is mainly here that some doubt is cast on the authenticity of the album. Referring to the early tombstones up on Gaol Hill, (lately named Allmans Hill) the author writes of the graves of officers bearing the date 1820, while another entitled "Across The Harbour" was really taken from the western side of Cooloonbung Creek looking towards the eastern part of the town.

There are no known officers buried in the first cemetery, while the penal settlement was only commenced in 1821. On both points, Louis Becke would or should have known the historical details, while he was very familiar with the harbour and the creek. The visitor also photographed St. Thomas Church and described the box pews and the circular interior of the square tower. He informs the reader that troops sat in the gallery while the convicts stood beneath it at the back of the church. This was never so in St.



Thomas and although Louis' childhood recollections could only go back to about 1860, he would have known that the gallery was not built until 1844, when most of the convicts had gone. Maybe this was just poetic licence used to enhance the story!

Similarly, on the travels down the early road from Walcha to Port Macquarie there is no mention of the inn at Yarras or the "Traveller's Rest" at Long Flat, facts which should have been well-known. It does seem strange that if the photographer was Louis Becke, he did not photograph his old family home, which by this time, had been vastly renovated, both cottages having been joined to make one building.

At South West Rocks, a photo was taken of Trial Bay gaol and the accompanying comments said that it had never been used since its completion. Having worked for a period at the Macleay River Times he would have known that prisoners were incarcerated there from 1886 until 1903.

Our researcher, Mrs Nancy Sheather, studied this aspect in November 1975 and recorded some of her findings. Louis Becke always wrote his letters and manuscripts and it was said that copy for the printer was impeccable, even a year or two before his death. The notes in the album are in typescript and the likelihood of his having typed them is remote.

Again, although certain excerpts show a degree of familiarity with the subject, in many cases the style is not that of Becke.

Nancy Sheather's conclusions?

*"It would be pleasant to think that he came home on his bicycle with his camera in 1910 and was the owner of the album. Could this have been so? UNPROVEN!!*

*Ian W. Symonds*

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#### Port Macquarie News

It is interesting to recall that in the early days of settlement, Port Macquarie was supposed not only to become self-supporting, but also to have a surplus to be sent to Sydney as well. This would include wheat, as bread was the most important of the basic foods (unlike today).

This not only meant growing wheat but, it had to be threshed (grain separated from the husks) and then grinding the grain to make flour.

Just how the former process was done is not clear. Before mechanical means were invented it was done with flails. A flail was a kind of whip, the thong being replaced by a hinged stick. The wheat was simply beaten with these. To get rid of the chaff, the resultant mass was flung into the air by shovels, the wind blowing away the lighter husks, while the heavier grain dropped straight down.

.At Port Macquarie various mills were used, tread- mills with convicts, a tide mill was considered, and a bullock mill. In the end it was left to Major Innes to build a wind mill, on the land still called Windmill Hill. He needed an experienced miller, and the N.S.W. government sent him George Halliday. Unfortunately Mr. Halliday had worked at a water-mill, so he had to adapt to the windmill type, as no suitable stream was available.

As time went on, it was realised that wheat, like sugar, was not a reliable crop in our climate.





PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

# CHRONICLE

Vol 1 No.4 December 1997

ISSN 1328-4304

**PORT MACQUARIE**  
**CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS**  
**IN**  
**BY-GONE DAYS**



CHRISTMAS WITH ANNABELLA:

Annabella Boswell tells us in her Diary about some of the preparations and activities for Christmas in the year 1843, her first at Lake Innes, having arrived in January 1843.

16th December she records: "I have once more tuned my guitar and made resolutions about practising it regularly, but all our spare time is at present devoted to our gardens, which quite repay the trouble we take with them. We are rejoicing also over many lovely wild flowers. At Christmas the gay blandfordia grandiflora is in its full glory, and the lovely fringed violet, which is a marked contrast, is also very plentiful."



"On 23rd December my Uncle returned from Sydney, accompanied by the Honourable Captain Hope, a brother of the Earl of Hopeton, and certainly the tallest man I have ever met. On Christmas Day most of the party went to the lake for a sail. I stayed at home to fill the epergne, but first had to go to the lower lawn to be initiated into the art of catching grasshoppers, which is a very laborious undertaking. I would go

as many months without fish rather than undertake to catch half-a-dozen grasshoppers. Mr. Massie & Mr. Montgomerie dined, in addition to our house party. It was very late when dinner was announced, the cook imagining it was a holiday (and making it one) had gone to sleep."

The next year 1844 Annabella records: Wednesday 18th December: "I scarcely know myself, I have been so industrious of late; in fact, we have all been equally busy. Dido has wrought wonders in the shape of a new white dress and other garments, the great thing being to have as many new things as possible for New Year's Day. She has also made herself a bustle almost as big as herself, and I, not to be outdone, have put a new width into mine. I have also made two dresses."

Monday 23rd December, she continues: "My uncle returned from New England, bringing quite a numerous Christmas party, as we hoped he would do. We were all delighted to have him home again and see him looking so well. It rained heavily all night, and on Christmas day was still so wet we could not go to Church, but after luncheon it cleared sufficiently to allow us to go to the new garden for fruit - apricots and Chinese peaches..... The new Footman, George, who has been here some weeks and is a very good servant, went off very hastily today, having appropriated a number of things, chiefly clothes from Bachelor's Hall, and distributed them as Christmas Gifts."

Continuing: "We had a very merry Christmas time 1846 - 1847. My Uncle brought a party from New England with him; we also had the Messrs. MacKay and two Messrs. M'Douall staying with us, and the usual visitors came from Port Macquarie to dine. We rode almost daily.

*...We did not fail to welcome in the New Year, but early that morning the Steamer left Port Macquarie, and with it went most of our guests."*

*It was in March 1847 that the new Governor, Sir Charles Fitzroy and Lady Mary Fitzroy, arrived in Port Macquarie for a visit to Lake Innes. In December that same year, Lady Mary was killed when her Carriage was upset, having just left Government House at Parramatta on their way to spend Christmas in Sydney.*

*Because of this Annabella records:*

*"The year closed rather sadly: we spent a very quiet Christmas, and had no house party. ....On New Year's Day the usual guests rode out to dinner. The kindly welcome was unchanged, but we all felt that "bad times" meant something we had never before realized - in as far as they had brought cares and anxieties to our elders - and other troubles might follow."*

*By the next Christmas Annabella had left Port Macquarie - "I little thought then that dear Lake Innes would never be my home again. I re-visited it once only, five years afterwards."*



*PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
Saturday 30th December 1882  
Local & General News:*

*Christmas Day - Boxing Day  
&  
New Year's Day*

*U*nfortunately the weather here on Christmas Day was very rainy, and precluded the indulging in Picnics or, indeed, any out-door sports or recreations. It was nevertheless, kept up by a thorough

*cessation from business; and reading, and such indoor amusements as were available, took the place of the usual out-door pastimes.*

*Boxing Day was, on the other hand, blessed with very fine weather, which was enjoyed immensely.*

*In another column will be seen a full report of the Regatta which took place on that day and was the great event of the Christmas Week.*

*Next week which commences the New Year will be devoted to the Annual Races of the Hastings River Jockey Club, and these will take place on Tuesday the 2nd, Wednesday the 3rd & Thursday the 4th Proximo, as advertised.*

*At Ennis there will be a Public Tea Meeting on New Year's Day, in Riven (sic) Hill Paddock at 4pm, to which the Drogher is engaged to convey passengers, and leaves Port Macquarie at 12 noon as advertised.*

*Other localities in the district will have their sports, of which we have not learned the particulars.*

*REGATTA - BOXING DAY: took place at the mouth of the River Hastings opposite Settlement Farm.*

*The fresh air and bright looking newly washed vegetation added charms to the surrounding landscape, and the many joyous groups of old and young, in holiday attire, that gathered under the magnificent shade trees of Settlement Farm was a sight seldom witnessed in this locality.*

*At a comparatively early hour, the town of Port Macquarie was almost deserted. The beauty of the morning enticed the townspeople to an early start, and all available vehicles and horses were brought*

*Wesleyan Watch Night Service: We are requested to draw attention to the fact that there will be the usual Watch Night Service in the Wesleyan Church, Port Macquarie on New Year's Eve (Sunday Night) commencing about 11pm. The Rev. J. Beale will preach on the same day at 11am and 7pm.*



*Edward and Hepzibah Wesley*

(ADVERTISEMENT)



NEW YEAR'S DAY 1883

PUBLIC TEA AND MEETING  
AT  
ENNIS

TEA IN RIVEN HILL PADDOCK AT 4PM

MEETING IN WESLEYAN CHURCH  
AFTERWARDS

DROGHER WILL LEAVE PORT TO  
CONVEY PASSENGERS  
AT 12 NOON.

ADMISSION, ON GROUND.  
ADULTS 1/6 (one shilling & sixpence);  
CHILDREN ONE SHILLING; PER;  
DROGHER, 2/6 AND 1/6.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
December 26th 1887.

**B**OXING DAY ORGY: *The beautiful "Ocean View" grounds of Mr. E. Wesley, situated in the vicinity of "Nobbies", was the scene of a very enjoyable gathering on Boxing Day.*

*During the previous week the promoters of the entertainment, Mrs. Thomas Denham, Mrs. John Branch, and Mrs S. Strutt had issued very kind invitations to their numerous friends to join them on the occasion. In compliance therewith, a large number, full of eager anticipations, proceeded thither early in the forenoon, and by 11 o'clock this pleasant spot presented quite an animated appearance.*

*The different games and amusements, congenial to the tastes of the various members composing the gay company, were entered on and indulged in with zest, and proved an interesting sight to those who chose rather to be seated or recline in the shady copse near. At noon, the company, numbering about 150 persons, seated on nature's soft cushion of verdure, which covered the ground, were treated to a rich and bountiful luncheon.*

*The afternoon was spent by some in promenading the beaches near by, others in following the shady paths which meander through the leafy thickets in the neighbourhood, whilst not a few preferred rather the vigorous exercise to be found in the games.*

*At 5pm the company reassembled for tea, which, after the salutary effect of the fresh air, the gentle exercise, and the genial company, was (if possible) more cheerfully partaken of. Supper over, three ringing cheers were given to the already mentioned ladies for their very great kindness in promoting the picnic, and for the trouble*

and expense they had been to in carrying it out to such a successful issue.

Cheers were also given to Mr. & Mrs. Wesley for their kindness in allowing the use of their suitable ground for the purpose. The company then returned to town, one and all delighted with the day's outing.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
December 15th 1888  
(Advertisement:)

☺☺☺  
JENNINGS PICKERING & CO.

ADVERTISE  
THEIR  
CHRISTMAS GOODS  
NEXT WEEK

IF THE  
WEATHER KEEPS DRY.  
☺☺☺

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
22nd December 1888

**E**XAMINATION: Mr. School Inspector Nolan has been busy during the week examining 13 teachers who have presented themselves for the ordial (sic). The work has been carried out in the Port Macquarie Public School; the pupils attending which disbanded for the Christmas vacation on Friday, the 14th inst.

#### MINSTREL ENTERTAINMENT:

**A** Minstrel entertainment is to be given in the School of Arts, Port Macquarie on Boxing Night, 26th inst. in aid of funds of the United Cricket Club.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
December 1888:

#### NOT WHITE, BUT QUIET CHRISTMAS:

**T**o say that the Christmas passed off very quietly in Port Macquarie we only re-echo the expressions of many others, who aver that they have not spent so quiet a Christmas for many years.

Most people indulged in the custom of decorating their premises with palms and bushes, and this appeared to be the only sign that the season of the Nativity was at hand, unless we mention that service was held in the Anglican & Roman Catholic Churches.

In the afternoon of Christmas Day light rain fell, and no doubt kept many indoors who would otherwise have been about.

On Boxing Day the Rollands Plains Races were the chief source of attraction in the Country, and this meeting drew a representative company from Port Macquarie.

Of course the custom of visiting "The Lake" was indulged in by some, who spent a pleasant day amongst the ruins of the old place; whilst others betook themselves to the cliffs, and spent the day picnicing and strolling on the beach. At night the minstrels catered for the amusement of the public, and they appear to have carried out the task to the satisfaction of all.



**E**DITORIAL: As the season of rejoicing comes round once again it gives us the opportunity to wish our readers a Merry Christmas. Though the past year has been one which has brought many disasters to the Colony and to individuals, it is well that we should have the opportunity of such a time as Christmas of cheering ourselves with the thought that though:

*"Christmas comes but once a year  
But when it comes it brings good cheer."*

Let us hope that it will be "Good Cheer" not only in a plentiful table, but also the commencement of returning prosperity cheering us on to hopefulness which will lead to more effort to take advantage of the opportunities before us.

**PUBLIC HOLIDAY:**

The Mayor, Mr. James Butler, has received a telegram notifying that Tuesday January 2nd. Has been appointed a Public Holiday in the Police District of Port Macquarie.

**HOLIDAY AMUSEMENTS:**

Wauchope Races take place on Tuesday and Wednesday next. A Steamer excursion up the river on Tuesday- promises to be well patronised while private parties will be scattered all over the place bent on pleasure and picnics.

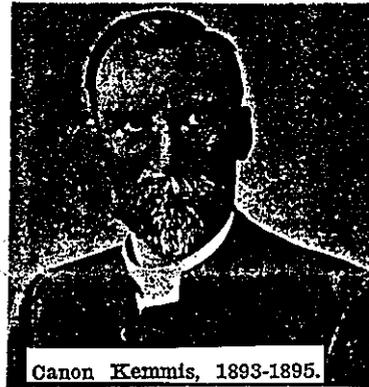


**CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS:**

The Christmas Holidays passed off very quietly and orderly in this district. There was the usual display of decorations about all the Business Houses of the town.

On Christmas Day services were held in the Church of England and Roman Catholic Churches both morning and evening. Rev. W.H.Kemmis and Rev. P. Kiely conducted them respectively.

The Church of England was very tastefully decorated on Saturday evening with Bangalows, Ferns etc.



Canon Kemmis, 1893-1895.

Selections from Jackson's formed the musical part of the evening.

On Boxing Day several pic-nic (sic) parties were afloat. The day was intensely hot, but at 12 o'clock a heavy thunderstorm, accompanied by a stiff southerly wind, came over the district and cooled the air a bit.

The employees of Messrs. Hibbard & Eaton's Mill accompanied by their wives and children and a few friends (making in all about 150 persons) proceeded in one of the Mill Punts to the pleasant little place of Haytown. Here everyone was landed and a very pleasant day was spent. Mr. W. Gillespie helped to make things a bit lively going up and down the river with his old friend the Concertina.

The return trip was made at half-past five o'clock; reaching Hamilton about 7.30pm. Songs were given by two or three gentlemen aboard and some of the pupils of the Hamilton Public School.

A Dance was indulged in at night in the School of Arts, Mr. W. Gillespie supplying the music. About 20 couples attended, and things were kept lively until the small hours of the morning, when the company dispersed.

The neat little boat "S.S. Thistle" ran a trip as far as Wauchope, with about 50 persons on board of her, getting down to Port again a bit towards morning.

The Wauchope Jockey Club Races were commenced and a good day had by all.

North Shore and various other places of pleasure were well patronised. There were no amusements in the town at all at night.

Christmas passed off more quietly than it has done for years. The anticipations as to what a dull Christmas time we were going to have, were not realised however, as the Stores were doing a brisk business on Saturday Night, Santa Claus having to stock up for his perennial visits to the children.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
Saturday 21st. December 1895  
Local Items

**W**ho Next?: Mr. James Condon leaves by the "Rosedale" on Sunday to catch the "S.S. Thermopylae" which sails on Tuesday next for Cape Town. Mr. Condon intends to settle down in Johannesburg, where two of his brothers are already located. Mr. Condon will be much missed in Cricketing and Football circles, as

for a long time he was a very efficient Secretary & Treasurer for the local Cricket Club and later on was Secretary of the Football Union.

As a member of the School of Arts Committee, his place will be hard to fill, where his business knowledge was often of great benefit to the other members of the Committee. We wish him a pleasant voyage and a prosperous career in Johannesburg.

THE PORT MACQUARIE BAND:

**O**n Christmas Eve the Band will perform in Horton Street, commencing at 8pm, and will render a very choice programme. A collection will be taken up in aid of the Band Funds.

On Christmas Day at 9.30am, on the Post Office Green the Band will render Christmas Carols & Anthem.

CHRISTMAS CARDS:

**C**hristmas Cards in great variety, great bargains: Come at once.  
D. STEWART & CO.

NEW STORE:

**M**r. Sam. Latham has opened a Grocery Branch in his Business Premises at Litchfield's Buildings.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
28th December 1895

CHRISTMAS EVE:

**T**uesday night was a busy one with the various Storekeepers in the town, and a look round at the business being done, was sufficient to show that times had improved from what they were twelve months ago. The various stores were not only bright inside with the tempting goods for sale, in the shape of nice things for the Christmas Dinner, but pretty things to adorn the outer man, and especially the fair sex, while toys

of all descriptions were awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus later on, so that the children should have their share of enjoyment.

Outside the shops were a mass of evergreens, while flags were also floating in the breeze. At one place indeed the Union Jack surmounted the Stars & Stripes, so as to give more effect to the news that America had been downed through a mistaken sense of duty on this occasion.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
26th November 1904  
(Not quite Christmas)

**H**OW THE NEWS IN BRIEF WAS  
PRESENTED:

Snakes!  
No rain.  
Bush Fires.  
Dusty Roads,  
War news slow.  
New Wharf finished.  
Water Carters busy.  
Fish beginning to bite.  
Red Oxide Miners busy.  
Good water on the Bar.  
Xmas Day on a Sunday.  
Good Steam communication.  
Port Arthur not taken yet.  
Port Cricketers play Rawdon Island at Haytown to-day.  
Port has only lost one match this season.  
Mr. McLean takes over the Commercial Hotel on December 1.  
J. Stanbury is training on the Shoalhaven to row G. Towns (the Champion), for £1,000 and the World's Championship.  
New South Wales has 65 paid Police Magistrates, Victoria 19.  
The nourishment in three baked bananas, weighing 1lb., is equal to that of 26lb. of bread.



In Bega district one dairyman has a Jersey Cow from which he takes 12lbs of butter weekly.

Alstonville Butter Factory turned out 51 tons of butter last month - a record for that institution.

(The above is an exact reproduction of News in Brief, and how it was presented in the Port Macquarie News on November 26th 1904.)



HEAT WAVE IN 1905:

A heat Wave, the like of which hasn't been experienced since, (to 1982) enveloped the Hastings District in January 1905.

Temperature on the Upper Hastings ranged from 110 to 118 degrees, and never receded below 95 degrees at any time throughout the closing days of the old year and the opening days of the new year.

There wasn't a cool spot at Rollands Plains and the glass there read at 98 to 116 for several days on end.

Mr. Joe Campbell's house at the Plains was burnt to the ground, and several other people had building totally destroyed.

Bush fires raged everywhere on the Lower Wilson and "some people fainted clean away." Houses were burnt down at the Hatch and Pleasant Plains.

At Wauchope, the iron roofs were taken off several homes to stop them igniting in the heat; farmers had to stand by helpless and watch their crops ruined by the heat. 50 or 60 men were engaged all day Sunday and Monday fighting fires and at one time the town seemed doomed to destruction. Only true British pluck saved it.

The cool breeze deserted Port Macquarie, where the heat was shared with the rest of the district.

EXTRACT FROM PORT MACQUARIE  
NEWS - EDITORIAL  
17th December 1910.

VANDALISM:

**G**reenery for decorative purposes will be required in the course of a few days, and we ask those who are interested in Shelly Beach scrub to assist by every possible means in preserving it from spoilation. The cutting of palms by carters - often for church decoration - should be strictly prohibited, and we hope prosecutions will follow further vandalism in this direction.



PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
December 1911:

STREET LIGHTING:

**I**n our opinion, those who fail to see a prosperous future before Port Macquarie have their eyes closed to current events.

Year by year fresh dwellings are being erected; the population of the town is increasing; the unimproved valuation of lands within the Municipality every year shows an increase - this year to the extent of 800 pounds, and there is general prosperity.

The influx of visitors this Christmas taxed the public accommodation of the town to the utmost, and afforded substantial grounds for the acceptance of the assurances of Mr. Lee, ex-Minister for Works, which he repeated once more on his annual holiday among us the other day "that the people of Port Macquarie have no conception of the progress the town would make, aided by the North Coast Railway, within the next ten years."

Bearing these things in mind, it seemed to us that we are ripe for a forward movement,

and we trust that the prospect of 1.1/2d (one-and-a-half pence - Less than 2 cents today) lighting rate will not be allowed to weigh with Ratepayers.

(News - December 1911 - Pushing for Gas lights in the streets).



N. CAIN'S COASTAL CO-OP.  
S.S. CO. Limited:  
S.S. MACQUARIE.

**P**rogramme for Dec., 1924.  
Subject to alterations arising from strikes, weather, Bar conditions, or any unforeseen circumstances.

LEAVES PORT MACQUARIE:

Tuesday.... Dec 2.....11am  
Saturday.... " 6..... 4pm  
Tuesday..... " 16.....10am  
Saturday.... " 20.... 2pm  
Wednesday.: " 31....10am  
Tuesday..... Jan. 6....5am

LEAVES SYDNEY

Saturday... Dec. 4.....1pm  
Saturday.... " 13....noon  
Thursday.... " 18...2pm  
Monday.... " 22...8pm  
Monday.... " 29...noon  
Saturday.... Jan. 3...5pm

Note:- Vessel will dock for painting after her trip to Sydney from Port Macquarie on 6th December and "S.S. Ballengarra" will be placed in running for one trip.

This magnificent and up-to-date Steamer has every convenience for the comfort of passengers, carries a thoroughly competent Steward and Stewardess, and makes the passage in 16 hours.

FARES - £1 Each Way.  
W.A. SPENCE - Local Agent.

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS  
Boxing Day 1950;

**O**n Boxing Day 1950, Cecil McWhirter entered the water twice off the Southern Breakwall and brought ashore an 8-year old boy, then a man. Another man drowned when his small fishing boat filled and sank. Cecil McWhirter was awarded the Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal and a Certificate of Merit.



**F**or a 10 day period every Christmas for many years, crowds flocked to the "Bill Thomas Talent Quest". It was one of the early publicity winners for Port Macquarie.

Bryson Taylor, ABC Song Leader: Myra O'Neill (of a local family and one of Australia's foremost sopranos) were Guest artists at the 1950 concert for the finals night of the popular Talent Quest run by Bill & Mrs. Thomas for the Catholic Church each Christmas Holidays.

A 15-year-old Tamworth girl, Dulcie Chaffey, won that year's quest. People in their thousands each year attended the talent quest, which gave much publicity to Port Macquarie, as did the Information Sheet which Bill first published in his own right in those years. The Quest celebrated its 10th year in 1958.



BIKINIS WON'T PARADE:

**A**ldermen of Port Macquarie Municipal Council were up in arms at their December, 1954 Meeting: "There won't be any girls parading in Bikinis here at Xmas time," they declared.

The Aldermen were re-acting to a request from the Chamber of Progress, which sought a donation of £250 (pounds) from the Council for publicity purposes and

permission to stage a Carnival on the Green.

Ald. Stanfield threw down an entry form for the Beach Girl Quest (it depicted a fairly well covered girl in a bikini) and asked his fellow Aldermen. "Would you allow your children to go to see that?" He said he would turn in his grave if council gave any money "towards prizemoney for a thing like that." (Wonder what he would say today!).

Ald. Kenny said the Chamber people were not lacking in hide and it was a "colossal impudence" on their part to ask for money.

Ald. Baxter agreed and said Flat owners and Hotelkeepers (there were no Motels then) should provide the money.

Ald. Walker said he would do all he could to keep his children away from the Carnival, and he felt council was morally bound not to support it.

Ald. Cowan and Bale were the only two prepared to give it a go, though Ald. Bale hedged his bet, "provided none of the money went to a Bikini Parade".

Ald. Cowan said the Aldermen should be broadminded; people could stay away if they didn't approve. "What is a girl in a swim suit? I take no notice of that," he said.

Then came an Editor's note in brackets: This prompted further remarks from some of the Aldermen which weren't in keeping with the morals they were expounding.



**7,000** people were in West Port Macquarie Park on the night of December 31, 1970 to welcome the New Year. Apexians organised the Gala concert and manned the food and drink stalls.





PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

# CHRONICLE

VOL.2. NO. 1. MARCH 1998

ISSN 1328-4304



## EDWARD DENNY DAY - POLICE MAGISTRATE

*Still dominating the landscape at Port Macquarie despite the myriad of changes during its 150 years reign, St. Thomas' Anglican Church is a repository for a small portion of the history of the town, retained in the form of plaques on tablets adorning its walls, which commemorate some of the prominent personalities that have graced the community. It also serves as the last resting place for Captain John Rolland, who died on the 16th November 1824, whose grave is under the first pew in the nave of the church, off the South side of the centre aisle.*

*However, on entering from the Western door, a visitor's eye is attracted to the brilliantly lit Eastern Window, the sunlight highlighting the attractive mural of this stained glass window depicting St. Thomas the Apostle, which was gifted in 1906 as a memorial to Police Magistrate E.D. Day Esq. who was appointed a trustee in the church in 1854. At the base of the window completely obscured by the woodwork at the rear of the Altar are the words:*

*"To the Glory of God & in loving memory of E.D.D. & M.D. by A.C.S., M.D. & P.M.D.*

To understand and appreciate the significance of this inscription, the letters E.D.D. and M.D. refer to Edward Denny DAY and his wife Margaret who lived in Port Macquarie for a short period; Edward being the Police Magistrate of the struggling settlement.

Edward Denny Day, the son of Reverend John Day, of the Church of Ireland, was born at Tralee, County Kerry, Ireland in 1801 and at the age of nineteen years, enlisted as an Ensign with the 46th Regiment of Foot (South Devonshires), but later transferred to the 62nd Regiment (The Wiltshires) where he gained a full Lieutenancy while serving in India in 1833. However the climate in India affected his health and after taking sick leave, he resigned his commission in 1834.

On the 5th May 1834 he departed from Portsmouth on the Convict ship "William Metcalfe" (Captain E.A. Lindsay) which sailed direct to Hobart with a compliment of 240 souls and arrived at the Derwent without losing a life. Day continued on to Sydney, where he arrived on the 7th October and in January of the following year, he was appointed as a clerk attached to the Executive and Legislative Councils on a salary of \$100 per annum, transferring to the Colonial Secretary's Department soon after.

The "Australian" of 8th January, 1836 announced to the public that Edward Denny Day had been appointed Police Magistrate at the Vale of Clwydd (Hartley-Lithgow area) west of the Blue Mountains, with salary of \$200 per annum. Here he had two assigned convicts in 23 year old Sarah Jiggins and 31 year old George Harding to do the hard work.

On the 19th May 1836 he married Margaret Raymond at St. James Church, Sydney, in a ceremony conducted by Reverend Richard Hill. Margaret was the fourth daughter of James Raymond, who with his wife and family of nine children had arrived aboard the "Thames" on the 11th April 1826, and was appointed Australia's first Postmaster General on the 6th February 1829. Day's marriage into the family of such an important personage enhanced his

advancement, for after only ten months at the Vale Clwydd, he gained the much sought after post of Magistrate at Maitland (\$330) where he replaced Mr. Campbell.

An admiring Hunter River settler gives a glimpse of Day's Judicial mercy:-

"The inhabitants of Patrick's Plains had last week the benefit of Mr. Day's assistance on the Bench, where the weight of his intelligence was very apparent- the old school were almost taken aback, when a servant of a gentleman, one of those out and out dreadnought youngsters, was brought up, who had allowed his hair to grow over his countenance, as if he intended passing himself off as one of the other sex; Mr. Day suggested to his brother Magistrate on the Bench, that such a fancy was unbecoming the man's situation, and he was ordered down and underwent the necessary hairdressing by the flogger, before the case was gone into. The same man very properly received fifty lashes for giving an improper answer to the Court. Such is as it should be - but will never be in some of our Police Courts."

Unfortunately, Day's tenure at Maitland was short-lived, for in September of that year, one Patrick Grant arrived in Sydney bearing a dispatch from Lord Glenelg which appointed him Police Magistrate at Maitland. Grant happened to be married to Glenelg's sister, so seniority took precedence in allotting appointments!

Sir Richard Bourke replied on the 10th October:-

"My Lord,

I have the honour to receive your Lordship's dispatch appointing Mr. Patrick Grant to the Police Magistrate, Maitland in this Colony. The dispatch was delivered by Mr. Grant himself, who is to proceed immediately from hence to Maitland to enter on his official duties. Some little delay occurred in perfecting the arrangement owing to my having nominated in the last year a gentleman to fill the appointment, whom upon Mr. Grant's arrival it became necessary to replace. The gentleman I have nominated, Mr. Edward Denny Day, is a

retired officer from the 62nd Regiment, having sold out to settle and marry in the Colony. His conduct as a Magistrate and his private character are so highly respected at Maitland as to have procured an application to me signed by the Justices and other persons of property and station in the neighbourhood, requesting that if possible I would permit Mr. Day to remain among them.

This being out of my power, I have named him Police Magistrate at Mussel Brook, being one of the three new appointments on the list of Police Magistrates authorised by the Council at its last session. The number of Police Magistrates provided for by the Council for the year amounts to fifteen; for the next eighteen. In appointing Mr. Day to Mussel Brook from the 1st instant, I have in some degree anticipated the appropriation, but in filling up this appointment and two other of the same description in remote districts of the Colony, I only comply with the repeated and earnest desires of the Settlers....

I have etc.

Richd. Bourke"

Despite its growing pains and the fact that it was the second largest town in the Colony, Maitland in 1837 was remarkably free from crime. This letter is of interest:-

"Sir,

During the Police Magistracy of Mr. Campbell at Maitland there was no town in the Colony that was so orderly - that presented so little crime. His energetic and merciful line of conduct gave comfort to the assignees of servants, and made his place a sinecure.

If possible, the new Police Magistrate there, Mr. E.D. Day, in his propriety of dispensing justice exceeds his predecessor - he seems to possess three great qualifications as a Judge; viz; wisdom, justice and mercy; and does very much credit to his nominees and appointee."

In October 1837, Day moved to Mussel Brook - four or five houses clustered around a weatherboard public house and a store owned by George Forbes. Day could not obtain a house for his wife and child ( the first of eleven

children) in the village and was obliged to leave them in Maitland for twelve months, while he accommodated himself in a small shabby slab hut.



With Day's appointment to Mussel Brook, officialdom in Sydney enlarged his area of Jurisdiction to include Merton and Invermein, meaning that his Bench duties took up a large proportion of his time. On Mondays he held a Court of Petty Session at Muswellbrook in a temporary "Court House", on Tuesdays at Merton and Invermein on Fridays. This circuit involved a deal of travelling on horseback and each week he covered more than 100 kilometres. Undoubtedly an increase in salary to \$300 made up for the increased workload. In time, Day had the services of a C.P.S. clerk, Carden Terry Williams, a Chief Constable with four police constables and the required scourger.

He was also granted the use of nine assigned convicts including 14 year old William Hollingsworth.

From Roger Millis' epic novel "Waterloo Creek" we find that Day had the rest of the duties "spent attending the routine affairs like applications for Tickets of Leave, issuing warrants, arranging for subpoenas and keeping abreast of the never-ending correspondence. As well as the usual petty cases which could be disposed of with the lash, he had to deal with more serious charges such as assault, stock stealing and fairly frequent burglaries requiring committal for trial to the nearest Quarter Sessions at Newcastle.."

In March 1838, Captain Day bought land in Muswellbrook, upon which he built a cottage for his family, which was soon to be enlarged with the arrival of his daughter Aphrasia Charlotte, a sister to Henry Wyatt, his first son. Between 1840 and 1857, Edward and Margaret's family was to grow with the arrival of Margaret (19 June 1840), Agnes Raymond (7 Dec. 1841), Edward Denny (21 Sep 1843), Justina Fanny (28 May 1845), James Raymond (23 May 1848), Maitland Tyrell (9 Feb 1850), John Nodes Dickenson (21 Nov 1851), Phoebe Mary (8 Mar 1855) and finally Sydney Bolden (14 Jan 1859). The last two children were born in Government House, Port Macquarie.



Government House

Then in June 1838, Governor Gipps put Capt. E.D. Day in charge of a party to apprehend the murderers of a large number of aborigines at Henry Dangar's station at Myall Creek, a tributary of the Gwydir River (Big River in those times) south-east of the present day Moree. With a detachment of eight troopers led by Cpl. George McKnight, he set off from Muswellbrook

and in four days was camped on the Gwydir River near Bingara, where he set up a base from which he could scour the countryside and interview stockmen. Being completely new to the district, he had much to learn quickly; both of the country and the inhabitants. He travelled hundreds of kilometres to speak to stockmen from stations scattered throughout the area, including the overseer of John Allman's station at Yarrowitch. (The son of Captain Francis Allman first Commandant at Port Macquarie). Young Allman had two shepherds mutilated and bludgeoned to death by the blacks at a hut of Heneage Finch, the supervisor of a survey party putting in the road from Port Macquarie to New England.

Most persons were tight-lipped and had not seen nor heard anything of any supposed massacre of the sable brethren. Or as Day put it when he had returned:-

"I have had to encounter every obstacle that unwilling witnesses could throw in my way with the view of shielding the guilty parties from punishment." However, a letter from one William Hobbs, written from "Peel's River" on July 9th, gave Day his first hard evidence:-

"Sir,

I beg to acquaint you that about a Month since I had occasion to leave Mr. Dangar's station on the Big River for a few days. On my return I saw near the Hut, the remains of about 30 Blacks, principally Women and Children. I recognised them as part of a tribe that had been at the Station for some time and who had since they first came, conducted themselves in a quiet and proper manner. I was informed that a party of White men had come to the Station who securing them, had taken them a short distance from the Hut and destroyed the whole of them.

I should have given information earlier, but circumstances having prevented my sooner coming down the country."

Upon visiting the site of the massacre, the Police Magistrate saw that the area had been tampered with in an endeavour to disguise the atrocious

events. Instead of a large pile of half-burnt logs and charred skeletons with detached skulls, there was only a large quantity of bone fragments among the ashes. Day gathered a few specimens as evidence - a part of a jawbone, a child's rib and a number of teeth.

Despite all efforts to thwart his enquiry, Day took only 47 days to complete his investigation, arrest his elusive quarry and bring them shackled back to Maitland. He detained eleven of the twelve perpetrators of the mass murder, seven of whom suffered the extreme penalty of the law, the first time that white men had been hanged for the murders of aborigines in New South Wales. It is interesting to note that not long after this trial, the Sydney "Gazette" demanded a fresh inquiry into the so-called "Port Macquarie Massacre", where a 'bagful of blacks ears' was allegedly produced as proof of the success of a retaliatory man-hunt, but it was rather part of its continuing vendetta against the local Police Magistrate, the 'degraded creature', William Nairn Gray, than a larger crusade on behalf of the Aborigines."

Returning to his home and family in Muswellbrook, Edward Denny Day resigned his office and pursued private businesses from his home and land at "Oldholme" in Maitland. However his peaceful life was again interrupted - this time with the "Jewboy Gang", a bunch of bushrangers who had been terrorising the district. Day's evidence at the subsequent trial tells of the events leading up to their capture:-

"I reside at Maitland, shortly before then, I was Police Magistrate at Muswell Brook; on the 21st December, I was at Muswell Brook on my own private affairs; I received information on Sunday evening of twenty of a party of bushrangers being out and took steps to collect a party of men to go in pursuit. I started about seven next morning. I had ten mounted men and a black boy. I took the direction to Scone, and passed through it. I continued in pursuit till six that evening. I came up about fifty miles from Muswell Brook with the bushrangers, at a place called Doughboy Hollow.

About half a mile off the road, we saw some

drays encamped and some smoke; there were horses tethered and men in their shirt-sleeves making a rush for the opposite side of the gully, where their encampment was. I saw about six or seven men. We galloped in amongst them; a great many shots were fired on both sides. I can speak positively to Davis (Jewboy) having fired at me; Davis rushed up from the gully, evidently to get behind a tree; whilst he was running I fired; he turned and fired at me. I was not more than twenty yards from him, he then ran towards a tree, and resting his gun in the fork of a tree, fired at me through the branches. I returned the shot, and wounded him in the shoulder.

Five prisoners were taken in less than five minutes after we charged them. Shea, Marshall, Merett, Davis and Chitty were the men there; they had arms, there were ten or eleven guns and a great many pistols and seven horses. Glanby was taken the next morning; a good deal of conversation took place between the prisoners; they were very communicative. Davis and Marshall kept us awake all night telling stories. I did not hold out any inducement to them; as they came out, I asked their names; they gave a history of all their proceedings without my inducing them to do so; Shea said there need nothing more to be said about it; it was he who shot Mr. Graham and no one else; these were his very words.

David said he had always opposed the shedding of blood; for he knew if they once committed a murder, they would not reign a week; and as he said this, he looked to right and left, and said "As you see, we have not reigned a day."

During his stay in Maitland, Day involved himself in the civic affairs of the burgeoning town and was a foundation member of the Australian Immigration Association, Maitland Branch, which met at the "Rose Inn", West Maitland on 26th March, 1842 for that purpose, George Wyndham was elected to the chair and after preliminary discussion, E.D. Day Esq. moved and H. Dangar Esq. seconded that "the gentlemen present at this meeting do now proceed to enrol themselves as members of the Association." E.D. Day was then selected as Chairman of that body. He was also

instrumental in obtaining a gaol for the town and laid the foundation stone on the 16th February 1844. The facility was completed and ready for occupation by December 30th of that year. When Sir George and Lady Gipps toured the district in October 1844, Edward D. Day accompanied the Vice-Regal party.

However, it was the laying of the foundation stone of the West Maitland Hospital in January 1846 that Captain Day remembered with pride. The Sydney Morning Herald of 30 January, 1846 gave the following account:-

"The anniversary day was celebrated in West Maitland by the laying of the foundation stone of the Maitland Hospital on Campbell's Hill. The ceremony of laying was performed by E.D. Day Esq., who had been appointed by His Excellency, Sir George Gipps to act for him on this occasion....." The Maitland Mercury recorded the address given by Day:-

"Ladies and Gentlemen, On behalf of His Excellency, Sir George Gipps I have the honour to lay this, the first stone of the Maitland Hospital. I regret deeply that His Excellency could not in person, perform this ceremony; for I am well satisfied that he would have derived considerable gratification from being present on an occasion of so much interest to all benevolent and charitable persons..... We shall thus, my friends, in addition to the reward of an approving conscience for aiding in a work that we cannot but believe will be acceptable to the Father of all Mercies - the Giver of all Good - enjoy the happiness of seeing established amongst us, a spirit of goodwill towards each other and kind and friendly communion, which I sincerely hope every passing day will augment and confirm."

Meanwhile, his business affairs were not prosperous and eventually he faced bankruptcy, but the sequestration order was blocked by the refusal of the chief creditor, W.C. Wentworth to sign the papers. Instead, Wentworth secured Day the position of Superintendent of Police in Sydney in 1850 and on leaving Maitland, the citizens presented him with a handsome silver cup and purse of sovereigns, the cup being

inscribed:-

"Presented to Edward Denny Day, Police Magistrate in Maitland, as a memorial to the esteem in which his exemplary conduct as Magistrate is held by the inhabitants of Maitland, Morpeth and Newcastle and in admiration of his zeal and intrepidity evinced in the capture of the notorious bushrangers upon the Liverpool Plains in December, 1840."

The "Resurrection" Window in the Chancel of St. Peter's Church of England, East Maitland is also in commemoration of him.

As Superintendent of Police in Sydney, Day was in charge of the Guard of Honour for the departure of Sir George and Lady Gipps for England and on another occasion he attended the Mayor's Fancy Dress Ball, where he was reported to have been intoxicated and removed from office. The Maitland Mercury rushed to his defence and reported that Day was not dismissed but had resigned his post.

When he was appointed Police Magistrate at Port Macquarie in 1853, to relieve Major Crummer, the Mercury commented:-

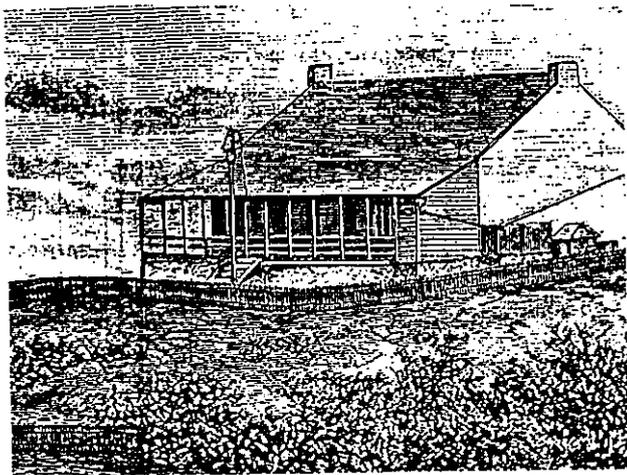
"Speaking from our experience of Mr. Day as Police Magistrate in Maitland, we congratulate the inhabitants of Port Macquarie on having obtained the services of one of the most able, efficient and active Stipendiary Magistrates in the Colony.

As far as our means of observation have extended, Mr. Day has performed the duties of his recent appointment with his customary energy and watchfulness, but the extent of the country committed to the supervision of the provincial inspector, put it out of power of those gentlemen to perform their duties satisfactorily either to the community or themselves."

#### PORT MACQUARIE

Port Macquarie in 1853 was virtually a ghost town, still suffering from the withdrawal of the military and convicts, the demise of the large landholders and the effects of the exodus of people to the gold rushes. The village consisted

mainly of vacant houses, many in advanced stages of disrepair - the Court House had recently been condemned as unfit for habitation and the huge convict administration buildings were empty and abandoned. The Day family, which now included nine children, would have occupied "Government House" in Clarence Street, while the elder children attended the school on Gaol Hill, where the dilapidated ex-convict Barracks were still in use, the pupils under the charge of Thomas G. Hird.



The following year, Frederick Becke (Father of our renowned author Louis Becke), Clerk of Petty Sessions, arrived to assist Magistrate Day in his duties while the town's notables would have included the well-known names of Tozer, McInherney, Blair, Litchfield, Doyle, Spence, Young and Butler. Then in March 1855, the Day's tenth child, Phoebe Mary was born in Port Macquarie and was baptised by Reverend John Cross at St. Thomas' Church, in the following month. Their last child, Sydney Bolden Day was born on 11th January 1857.

Little archival information is available to relate the activities of the township during E.D. Day's term of office here. It is known that he was involved in an investigation into the suitability of the "Historic Cemetery" for the township. Thomas O'Reilly, replying to Day's enquiry replied on behalf of the Church of England;-

"With reference to the letter of the Surveyor General of 20 January last, wherein it is directed that you will obtain from the Clergymen

of the different denominations a report as to the eligibility of the site marked out by the Licensed Surveyor Ralfe for a general cemetery, for the town of Port Macquarie. I beg to state that having consulted the Churchwardens, we agree that in consequence of the distance from the Church, the difficulty of providing wheeled vehicles, as well as the unnecessary expense it would entail, the site is wholly unsuitable."

However it appears that the general populace were not so affected such that today we have preserved that same hallowed ground for posterity, despite preceding generations of neglect and even attempts by latter Councils, to sell the land which harbours the last resting places of some 1400 souls.

Before his departure to take up duties in Maitland in 1858, once again to relieve the aging Major Crummer, Captain Day had seen many of the old pioneers of the town depart for "greener pastures" - Rev. John Cross, the doyen of the ecclesiastical population for so many years, Captain Georg Jobling from "Goolawa" on the North Shore and Dr. James McIntyre, once the Colonial Assistant Surgeon of the convict days, who refused to witness any flogging greater than 25 lashes - identities who had been part of the history of the settlement.

Upon his departure, Captain Day was presented with a costly silver tea service at a function held at Phillip's "Macquarie New Inn" in Horton Street (later the Commercial Hotel and Innes Tavern before its demolition to make way for the Port Central shopping centre).

The inscription read:-

"Sir, We the undersigned inhabitants of Port Macquarie, Hastings River, Rollands Plains and Manning River regret to learn that you are about to proceed to Maitland. During the period that you have been in our midst, our several districts have been distinguished for good order, and also the absence of serious offences. In the administration of justice, you have at all times combined firmness with mercy. At the same time you proved yourself a terror to evil-doers and praise to them that do well, in so doing we

*conscientious discharge of duty. We cannot close this address without expressing the interest we take in your excellent wife and family and assure you that they carry with them our most cordial wishes for their future health and happiness. In conclusion we beg your acceptance of the accompanying piece of Plate, commemorative of your departure."*

*Appended were the signatures of 237 gentlemen who subscribed to the testimonial.*

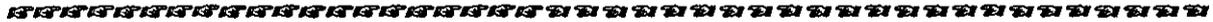
*Edward Denny Day returned to Maitland to be greeted with deputations and addresses of welcome by his people and he served them for another ten years as Magistrate until his retirement in 1869, "beloved by his old friends and the terror of small boys".*

*After a lifetime of public service he died there on the 5th May 1876 and was followed by his wife on the 24th February 1878. Both are buried in St. Peter's Cemetery, East Maitland.*

*Many years later, his daughters, Aphrasia Charlotte Scott, Margaret Day and Phoebe Day (later Mrs. W.J. Donaldson) had a window in the East Chancel of St. Thomas Church Port Macquarie erected in his memory.*

*The tray presented to him in 1849 was passed on to Charlotte's daughter, Agnes Raymond on her marriage to Sydney Francis Kemp on 5th December, 1894 and upon his death in Brisbane in 1953, passed to his son, Raymond William Haddon Kemp, thence to his son, Sydney Phillip Haddon Kemp on 26th November 1969.*

*I.W. Symonds*



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*Produced by Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.  
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PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

*CHRONICLE*

VOL.2. NO. 2. JUNE 1998

ISSN 1328-4304

*LIFE IN EARLY PORT MACQUARIE*

*AS TOLD BY TWO DAUGHTERS*

*OF*

*MAJOR WILLIAM KEMP*



## MRS. J. H. YOUNG

The following account is the story as told originally and written without alteration by the Sydney Mail, Christmas number, Wednesday December 8<sup>th</sup> 1926. It told the story of a pioneer family of Port Macquarie titled "Ninety Years Ago".

Written by Mrs. J. H. Young (nee Ellen Kemp), (pictured on the cover) the daughter of Major William Kemp and his wife Marie Susannah (nee Blakiston). She had arrived with her family to Sydney, in December 1837, on the ship *Asia*.

The ship brought 187 convicts to New South Wales. Major Kemp was sent to Port Macquarie in command of the military detachment at the settlement, from where he retired to take up land on the Macleay River.

The reminiscences given in these pages probably contain the most vivid picture that could be obtained from the lips of any living person of what life was like in Australia nearly ninety years ago at the beginning of the white man's colonisation. Memory is a fleeting thing. A span of three-quarters of a century will efface much. Ordinarily many details have disappeared at the age of 93, which was that of Mrs. J.H. Young when she related what is set down here, but the memory of her childhood days was so extraordinarily fresh and clear that we have been given one of the most interesting stories of the pioneer families that literally carved their homes out of the Australian bush.

Mrs. Young is the widow of J.H. Young, who made his mark on N.S.W. Parliamentary life between 1880 and 1901.

Born on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1834 at Chatham, Kent, England, she married James Henry Young at St. Thomas' Church, Port Macquarie on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1859 and eight of their ten children were born in the Port Macquarie area. James Henry died in 1908 and Ellen on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1928.

### HER STORY:

“IT is a far cry now to the year 1837, yet it was December of that time that my family came to Australia landing in Sydney from the sailing ship *Asia*, 523 tons — six months on the passage. After a short stay in barracks in Windsor we came to Port Macquarie with my father's file of soldiers. The 'Settlement', or the 'Camp' as it was then called, was perhaps the most picturesque town that could

well be imagined. It was not then entered by travellers by the Dam, as now but by the 'Long Bridge', nearer to the sea, the remains of which were still to be seen some years ago. The Soldiers' Barracks were in later years used as the 'National School', and the cottage we lived in was pulled down and the street continued past the residence of Police Magistrate — then Mr. William Nairn Gray — which was styled 'Government House', a one storey house with many rooms, covering a lot of ground, and with a large and pretty garden. Many retired officers were there: Captain Gordon, Major Oakes and Major Innes at Lake Innes, about seven miles out of town.

“They were kindly days. People meeting would say, 'You are from home; what part, how long?' and so forth; and there was a strong link between these strangers in a strange land, and the door of hospitality was seldom shut. Many were the gatherings of pleasure at Lake Innes. Being Scotch, there was music from the bagpipes, played by a Highlander in full dress, for the dances. The Major had stations, and the managers being present he felt indeed a chieftain of the olden time. Bachelor's Hall was full, also the house, and the festivities were kept up for days together. At one time they entertained the Governor, Sir Charles and Lady Mary Fitzroy.

“Dr. Moncrieff, Dr. McIntyre and Dr. Mollison were in the town. The English Church was managed by the Rev. John Cross, whose daughter married Dr. McIntyre; the Presbyterian Church by a handsome young man, Mr. Purves; and the Commissariat was run by Mr. Akroyd [sic]. It was a thriving little town, and even a ship was built some time before we came under the supervision of Captain Geary. But it was not a success. It was launched. A fog came on suddenly and the ship was lost to view, and that was all that was ever known about it. It was a mystery.

“About two miles out of town was Settlement Farm, belonging to Captain Steele; and close to it another holding owned by Dr. Carlyle [seemingly the district abounded in Doctors]. His cousin Mrs. Stephen, and her five children lived with him. Later he died, and the others married or left. A little graveyard nearby marks the resting-place of one married daughter, Claudia Dutton aged 18. [See

1996 publication "Port Macquarie: The Winding Sheet" for her story with many others]. Captain Wauch lived seventeen miles away, and built a handsome house, 'Wauchope'. Now it is a town with Quarter Sessions. I omitted to mention that Captain Morton lived in a corner house.

"There was also another family in town, Dr. & Madame Fattorini — French people, about whose identity there was mystery. Some years later, dying, Dr. Fattorini admitted to the then officiating Minister that he had no knowledge of his own parentage. An unknown person had put him to school where atheism was taught, and later in a doctor's profession, and then disappeared. Madame had died years before, and he had married a sister of Horatio Tayer [sic, should be Tozer], who took over the store in Horton Street from the Cohens.



" 'Christy' Doyle was an old identity in the Inn-keeping way, and his daughter was famed for her piano-playing for the amusement of the guests. Later another one of his daughters took up a hotel — Mrs Dodds. It was Dodd's Corner. Most of the pioneers were expecting in a few years to build up a fortune and return to their own dear land, and so were kind and helpful to each other. Those in the bush would come quite trustingly when necessary to the townfolk for hospitality, who welcomed them as guests. Many of these young men in the bush were 'scions of nobility,' younger sons come to seek their fortune in this wonderful new land, where they said we were 'upside down, and seeds grew on the outside of native fruit'.

"My father had some inspections to make in the Commissariat Department, and he condemned some of the food sent for gaol consumption, also returned gifts of prime tongues and pickled pork which were sent to him, as, coming from the contractor, he could not accept them. About this time a sixth son was born to him, so he decided to leave the Army; and he bought a cattle station on the Upper Macleay, fifteen miles from the river, inland in mountainous country. Everything was booming and high-priced, and he sent up his eldest son, then aged 15, to take over the station from White and Apreece. One day my brother and his stockmen were travelling, when some bushrangers came up. However, they said: 'We won't hurt you — your father has been kind to us with our food; but we want anything you may have to eat.' My brother had some sandwiches with him, which they took thankfully, and then asked them not to move for an hour after they themselves left. My three other brothers came up to the station by Piper's Creek, otherwise Boat Harbour, under the care of an older man, and my father and mother, my sister and self, and two small brothers — one a baby — all went to Rollands Plains and stayed some days at 'Glencoe' with Captain and Mrs. Geary.

"Then one day we all started for our new home, some 20 miles away, in a dray drawn by bullocks which did the journey in a day, over very rough country, and reached the station — a long low building of about seven rooms, with a bark roof kept in place by thin logs horizontally and perpendicularly fastened together by strong wooden pegs. The verandah was unfloored — just the plain, smooth earth, not far from the creek. The walls were upright slabs; no glass windows — just boarded shutters with iron bolts to fasten them. The door of my mother's bedroom opened on the verandah, the only fastening an auger-hole in the sapling doorpost and a long wooden peg. The bark roof was very faulty, letting in rain with every shower, so that our poor piano suffered and was ultimately spoiled.



"The open fireplace in the kitchen embraced nearly the whole end of the building, and held a log of such large size that two men with poles would lever it in, and it would last a week. At night the live coals were covered with soft ashes, and would soon revive in the morning; so the fire was seldom allowed to go out, for it was slow getting sparks from the flint and steel or charred rag, and the only matches were sulphur, lighted by a difficult process of squeezing them between a piece of doubled cardboard. The damper shovel, a long slab shaped at one end, was used for scraping a place in the fire for the damper; but it had other uses.

"The dingoes were numerous then, and howled most dismally round the home, and this would set our own dogs howling, also. One night there was an unusual noise. My father went out, followed by the family. By the light of a home-made tallow candle there was our little dog Nettle engaged in single combat with a dingo, long-haired, quite double her size. Nettle had some of the bulldog in her make-up and fought furiously; but my father got the damper shovel and, watching his chance, came down on the dingo's head with it. The animal gave one blood-curdling howl and lay dead, and we terrified children hid our faces in mother's petticoats while Nettle sat up triumphant, her tongue lolling out, breathing fast and hard; and then she was rewarded with some nice food. She used to kill snakes, leaping on them and seizing them by the throat and shaking them, then flinging them to a distance, repeating this until the snake was dead. But one day a snake bit her, and she died.



"Nettle had some of the bulldog in her make-up, and fought furiously with the dingo."

"The brooms of that day deserve mention. They were made from tender twigs from bushes which grew by the creek; a great number of twigs tied lightly round a wooden stick. These brooms were effective, but heavy and difficult to clean corners with, and after a time the leaves shed; and so they often wanted renewing.

"My brother and others once a year mustered the herd and counted the cattle, and for some days they were 'tailed,' which really meant grazing them on the flats amid the mountains and bringing them to the paddocks at night. Sometimes they would camp on the run for some days and burn grass and they started cheerfully with one blanket on the saddle, with which they rolled themselves at night on the bare earth under a tree, a fire at their feet and their quart and pint pots, which fitted into each other, hanging on the saddle, and a damper, which is really the sweetest bread you can eat, and a piece of cold boiled salt beef. But let us not forget the flint and steel and scorched charred rag, and how they struck the flint and steel together until the sparks flew into the charred rag and smouldered, and then the distended cheek and gentle blowing until it blazed, and the soft bark from a bush tree rubbed, and then the fire was made and the cattle were branded.

"One of my earliest memories was a day when about 20 blacks came on to our verandah, mostly with loose ropes, made of 'possum or kangaroo fur cut in strips, round their waists, with foot-length bunches of the same hanging before and behind, and their boomerangs, womerahs, etc., pushed through their girdle, their spears mostly in their hands. Some were utterly nude, to my father's great horror. He exclaimed and gesticulated, all to no purpose. They rolled their eyes and that was all. Then they travelled away, poor wandering creatures. At times one or two men would come, the gins meekly following with the children and luggage — namely, an opossum-skin rug, beautifully made, sewn together with sinews of animals and needles made from small bones. This rug was round the gin's shoulders, also a net bag made from a sort of twine, which they themselves made from some native plants. This hung from the gin's neck, and contained the family valuables, and generally a piccaninny next to her body, who made a sort of seat of the net.

"Beside the creek, or near it, they would rest, and presently would tap-tap at some tree with thick, soft bark, and a sheet or two of it was got by help of a

tomahawk. Then two forked sticks with a sapling across were erected and the sheets of bark laid across it, and this was the family home for some little time. The lighted sticks they always carried were made into a fire close outside, and the attendant dogs — poor starved creatures — sat around with the family, and if food were scarce there were little gnarled trees, called dog-trees, and in them were found white grubs with pink eyes, about as thick as a little finger and nearly two inches long. Sometimes they roasted them, but oftener ate them raw; but at times they caught a fat bandicoot, and even an iguana or snakes. Both these last had white flesh like fish, and with cobblestones from the creek they made an oven in the ground, and a fire therein. Then the ashes were cleared out and the bandicoot was put in, sometimes hair and all, at other times skinned and wrapped in leaves; and when done it looked and smelt tempting, and the eyes of the family and dogs all centred on it, and the children picked off little tempting morsels. But the men ate first, then distributed to the wife and babies.

“Another source of food was the root of the conjevoy, which the gins used to hammer between two stones to take the acrid juice out of it. Soon another family would arrive, and so until a number were collected, and then they would sit up half the night, the gunyahs near together, and talk and laughter filled the air. I wish I could tell you what they spoke about, but their musical language was unknown to us; and next day they would visit us, never vulgar or rude, but with the politeness of a courtier — as my mother said, ‘they were fresh from the Hands of their Maker.’

“They quickly caught a few words of our tongue. Almost all had curly hair; very rarely was it straight. Sometimes we would try to make one or two useful, but they quickly tired and disappeared. Sometimes they speared the fish; at other times they knew of a weed which they would throw into a waterhole, and apparently the fish became intoxicated and floated on their sides to the surface, and were an easy prey. After a heavy feast they would lie each in their own home and sleep for many hours. Perhaps we children would wander to them and find all were gone and no traces left.

“Here let me speak of what is becoming a lost art — the graceful throwing of the boomerang. I have seen them thrown. With a leap forward, as lithe as a wild animal, the right arm and body bent backwards, the boomerang took its flight, whizzing

round, reaching a great height, returning in a circle and falling at the feet of the thrower. As time went on father tried to get them to work, one to clean knives, but discovered that instead of dusting the bathbrick off them with a cloth he drew them softly to and fro between his toes. He was a boy, and, wandering away to New England, a tribe there speared him. Another used to bring us wild turkeys, and we would get ‘sugar bag’ from them in exchange for our food; and it was wonderful how they would see the tiny little bees who make this honey (defenceless little creatures without a sting, and about half the size of a common house-fly) by just gazing into a tall gum-tree. ‘I see’ m bee,’ they would say, and then get a tomahawk and cut a notch in the bark, and put a toe into it. Then cut another notch, and climb and cut alternately, and so reach the top. Sometimes the gins would follow in the same steps, but never without a strong vine round the tree held in both hands, and jerk upwards at each step. The honey is thinner and more acid than that of the English bee, and the wax dark.



“Things rose to fabulous prices. Flour actually went from £40 to £80 [pounds] a ton. A wheat crop was sown and duly reaped and stacked by some of the assigned servants, nine men in my father’s employ. Then one night my father awoke to see a great fire, and the stack was burning quite beyond extinguishing. One of my young brothers stole into the huts and discovered the boots of two of the men damp from dewy grass. My father promptly got rid of the owners of the boots, and so began his wakeful nights. About that time my father went to Sydney for three weeks, and the woman servant told my mother that one of the men ‘Long Tom,’ said to the

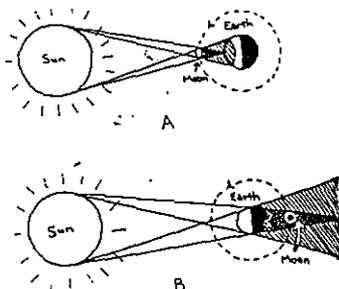
rest of them: 'The Major is away, and there is only a woman and children over us, and I mean to behave well. I hope you all will,' which they did. Our water was brought from the creek in a cask on a large fork of a tree, and the bullocks brought it up.

" Shall I ever forget the day my poor mother (no one about) essayed to use an axe for the first time? She wanted to break a small front log, instead of which she hit our only kettle, which was nearby, and it broke all round, like a piece of china. How she wept over it, and we had to use one of the three-legged pots and hang it on one of the chains from the cross-piece over the fire. Those were the only saucepans in use then. They boiled our salt beef and vegetables.

"For baking, the Camp-Oven was our baking apparatus, a fire above or below, or very hot ashes; and it took a steady hand to lift the lid and inspect the cooking and not spill the ashes. There was also the long-handled frying-pan, about five feet long, so that the face should not be scorched.

"The damper, which was baked in the hot ashes, was made of flour and water, with a pinch of salt, and had to be well kneaded, almost requiring a man's strength to do it. An opening in the glowing hearth was made for it, soft ashes spread over it, then the larger coals; by-and-by it was turned, the other side up, and when it came up and was dusted with a switch of hair from the cow's tail it was a beautiful brown, and beautiful to eat if you had young teeth. Of course, we made our own tallow candles in moulds of six and twelve. The 'dash churn' made our butter.

"We were without almanacs in those days, and my father's watch, as well as the clock, gave up work and stopped indefinitely at times. One afternoon the sun disappeared and night came on; the fowls went to roost. The remark was made that the day was short, and we took our evening meal and quietly prepared for going to bed, when it lightened, and presently the sun came out. We extinguished the candles, the fowls got down from the roost, and the sun shone out for an hour or so. Later we heard there had been a total eclipse of the sun.

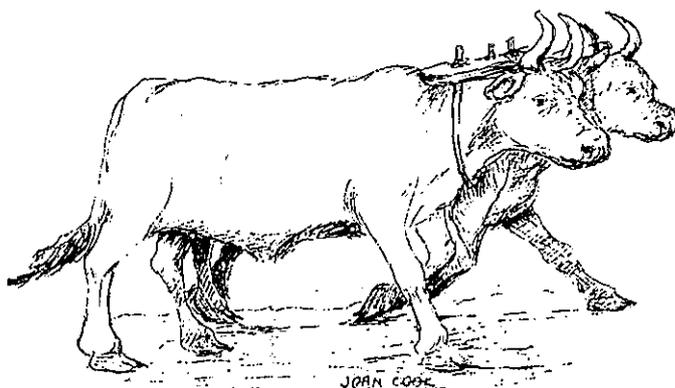


A, solar eclipse; B, lunar eclipse

"As time went on prices for cattle — and indeed, for everything — went lower and lower; there was no income, and it became a matter of pride how long one could make one's clothes last, for ruin faced everyone for years. Excepting a few shillings for the hides, cattle were valueless. Then boiling-down for the tallow was begun. An establishment was started by Mr. John Warne three miles from Belgrave, the residence of the Commissioner for Crown Lands, who was also the Blacks' Protector. First Mr. Robert Massie, afterwards Mr. E.C. Merewether, previously aide-de-camp to Sir George Gipps, at stated times would visit our station and others officially, galloping up with two orderlies following, with sabres clanking, in full uniform. Later Mr. Merewether dropped the orderlies, and came alone and dined with us.

"It was about the year 1849 that, on top of Steel hill at Colonel Gray's home at Huntingdon, near Hastings River, and about 17 miles from Port Macquarie, we heard that a skeleton of a man was found lying on a slab of rock; but no one troubled to ascertain whether aboriginal or white. Some thought perhaps it was a bushranger. In 1851 I visited the spot, and it was a most singular work of Nature. The skeleton was gone, but where he had lain was on a square block of rock filling in one end of a small chamber flat on the top surface, the front as though chiselled by machinery, and the edge cleanly cut."

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It would appear that this following article was made by Mrs. Annie Stewart, who was the daughter of Lieutenant Gall, and it was her widowed mother who later married Rev. F.R. Kemp. This copy is among letters which she wrote to the late Mrs. H.H. Parker.

## LIVED IN THREE WORLDS

MRS. RICHARD N. KING: Maria Susanna, sister of Mrs. J.H. Young, and also daughter of Major Kemp, born on 21 December 1830, at Chatham, Kent, England. She married Richard King on 23 June 1858 and died on 9 August 1929.

*N.B MRS. KING DIED PEACEFULLY, AFTER A SHORT ILLNESS, ON THE NIGHT OF FRIDAY, 9TH AUGUST 1929, AGED 98 YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS. IN THE FOLLOWING DECEMBER SHE WOULD HAVE ENTERED HER 100TH YEAR.*

Up to the end of 1928, Mrs. King had annually visited her youngest son, Dr. A.A. King, of West Maitland, who had a fine residence on the outskirts of the town, 130 miles from Sydney.

He also having a summer residence on the South Coast, and being a medical man of note, he had, two months previous to his Mother's death, moved to Macquarie Street, Sydney. His home — at North Sydney. Since Mrs. King's Widowhood, early in 1901, she had lived in Sydney and had a companion and perhaps no one in Sydney had so many daily visitors, which included her youngest daughter, and later, her eldest daughter and many relatives. She had many grand-children and great grand-children who visited Sydney from time to time, and from South Africa, her fourth son and his wife paid her two visits, and not long before she passed to her rest. Interred at South Head.

(Extract "The Sun" newspaper, December 1928.)

I LIVED IN THREE WORLDS — MEMORIES OF  
99 YEARS.

HER STORY:

"I seem to have lived in three different worlds." That is how Mrs. M.S. King, of Darlinghurst, feels



when she looks away down her long 99 years of life. The people in the fairy stories who are able to set a magic watch to different centuries, and thus talk to folk who have lived in long-forgotten times have no more interesting conversations than those who talk to Mrs. King. Small, active as she rises to show the correct way to sit down when wearing a crinoline, her white hair smooth and thick and shining, her memory going back clearly for nearly a century, she is one of the most interesting and wonderful women in Australia. The three different worlds are England in her early childhood, N.S.W. in the days of the convicts, and today.

"I arrived in Sydney when I had just turned seven, in 1837, the year Queen Victoria was crowned", she said. "We started our voyage from Tor Bay in June by the sailing ship *Asia*. Captain Freeman was the Captain and Mr. Notely one of the mates. We landed in December...my Aunt, Lady Bremer, sent us the latest magazine, which arrived soon after we did, with the illustrations and account of the crowning of the young Queen."

Mrs. King's father, Major William Kemp, of the 80th Regiment, was placed in charge of 200 convicts. He had a small detachment of 40 soldiers. "Once my brothers, hearing that the Governor of the Port Macquarie Gaol had ordered the flogging of a prisoner, placed a ladder to the wall to see. They enticed me up the ladder to look too. I can still see that man tied to the triangle, stripped to the waist, with two men plying their cat-o'-nine-tails alternately. It did not take me long to hurry down that ladder again, but it is a horrible memory.

"My father had a station 'Boonongii' 45 miles from Port Macquarie. Once he sent one of my brothers there on a message. On the way my brother was held up by bushrangers, who ordered him to give up his horse and rations. He was overpowered and had to comply. One of them happened to enquire who he was. 'Are you a son of Major Kemp? — that alters things. Major Kemp is the only Governor who has never had his prisoners flogged." They gave him back his horses, and asked if they might have his boots. 'You see, we're bootless!' He could not well refuse. Our convicts never needed punishing in the 18 years my father had charge of them.

"When we lived at 'Boonongii' it was not unusual for us to ride the 45 miles to Port Macquarie for a dance. We had to wear our crinoline wires round



our waists, collapsed and tied. Our dresses went in a valise strapped to the pommel. We rode side-saddle, our long habits sweeping almost to the ground. At that time Major Innes, of Lake Innes, used to give house parties for ten or twenty people. Their home was run on the lines of an old English home. We used to dance scotch reels to the pipes, and lancers, Sir Roger de Coverley and the quadrilles. My father thought waltzing improper." But the flapper of eighteen fifty got her way.

"Papa dear, is it not unfortunate that we must give up going to parties at Lake Innes?" "What do you mean, my daughter?" "Not being allowed to waltz, it is no use going, for we must always refuse our partners." "Even early Victorian fathers had to give in.

From the end of the convict days dates the domestic help problem. "Women, when I was a girl, and for years afterwards, had no time for sport. We did our own baking, soap and candle making. We made our own dresses, and even did the menfolk's tailoring. There was no one else to do it.

"When I married my husband, Mr. R.N.King of Boolooroo Station, Moree, our stores took six months to be delivered. We used to fill sheets of foolscap. It was easy to remember one ton of flour, half-ton of sugar, but when it came to little things like cinnamon, arrowroot or candied peel, the ordering was difficult. To be out of a particular grocery for six months was no joke.

"Though I actually saw a shepherd speared by a black, nothing ever happened to me or my family.

"A journey to Sydney or Port Macquarie meant riding to Narrabri, and then taking the coach. We were there twenty-three years."

Being essentially a country woman, Mrs King's recollections of Sydney are not so clear. She can remember when Darling Point was chiefly bush, and when a four-horse coach went up William Street. People walked in from Darling Point and caught the coach somewhere about Kings Cross. She can still see Sydney streets in her mind's eye, people with women in crinolines.

Knitting is her pastime, and it is not so long ago that she went to the Ambassadors, "just to see what it was like."

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Compiled by Gwen Griffin

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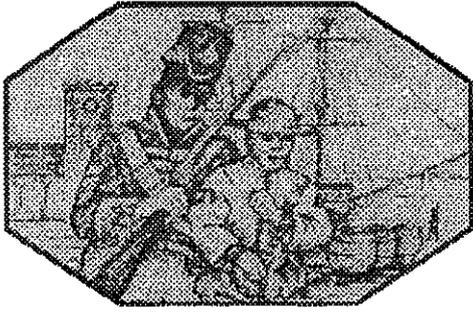
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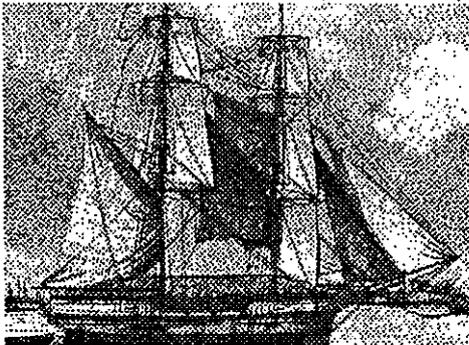
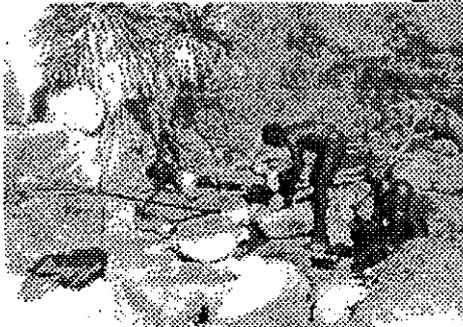
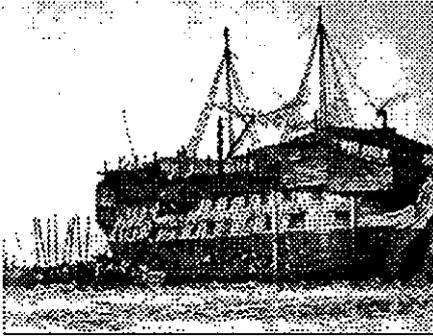


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 2 No 3 September 1998

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Captain Francis Allman  
First Commandant  
of  
Port Macquarie penal settlement



Commandants were many during the years Port Macquarie was a Penal Colony 1821 until the early 1830s, when free settlement was commenced. More of the other Commandants at a later date.



### CAPTAIN FRANCIS ALLMAN

Captain Francis Allman of the 48th Regiment was the first Commandant of Port Macquarie.

He was born on 1 November 1780 in County Clare, Ireland, the second son of John and Harriet (nee: Jans) Allman. On the early death of his father, Francis and his two brothers were little more than boys – Francis 14 years old – when they entered the army.

Francis (or Frank as he was sometimes called) took part in many great military operations and subsequently joined HM 28th Regiment of Foot, and was present at the terrible Peninsular Battles of Talavera (1809), Burraco (1810), and Albuhera (16 May 1811), for which he received a medal. At Albuhera, Captain Allman entered the action in the morning in command of a company of 100 men. In the evening, after the battle, six men only answered to the muster roll, leaving 94 killed and wounded in the field.

Among the latter was Captain Allman, who had received a fearful sabre wound in the head, the effects of which he suffered up to the time of his death. The division to which Captain Allman's regiment was attached had been literally cut to pieces and when surrounded by the enemy not a redcoat except the dead or dying was to be seen near him.

He received the full force of a French Dragoon's heavy sabre on his bare head whilst engaged with two of the enemy.

A French captain, a Freemason, recognised the sign of the brotherhood, saved his wounded enemy from the certain death

which awaited him and, having made him partake of some brandy from a flask, saw him safely conveyed to the rear and had his wound dressed by the French surgeon before he left him to return to the field, where, in a few hours he received his own death wound.

Whilst he was a prisoner of war of the French, their doctors actually set about positioning a silver plate in his head. This plate caused premature baldness and a slight droop in the corner of one eye. He remained imprisoned until 1813.

In consideration of his wounds, Captain Allman was granted a life pension of one hundred pounds a year.

With the Peninsular War, Captain Allman's military services ceased and having returned from France he shortly afterwards sailed for the Colony of New South Wales. He was in charge of his Company of the 48th Regiment and one of those unhappy cargoes of criminals which Great Britain, in those days, sent to her penal settlements. It was here in this floating prison, surrounded by men of every line of crime, that Captain Allman taught the great lesson to those who witnessed his conduct, of how much may be done by kindness and many a fellow passenger of the convict ship in after years (we are told), spoke of the 'Captain' in terms of affectionate gratitude for the many acts of kindness he had done for him on the voyage.

Shortly after Captain Allman arrived in Sydney, on 30 April 1818 aboard this transport, *Minerva*, accompanied by his wife Sarah (daughter of James Wilson, Paymaster, and Sarah, nee: Stirling) whom he had married in Gibraltar in 1807, and their

three children, Francis William born in 1813, Sarah 1814, John James in 1815 and, after their arrival, Maria in 1818, and Harriet in 1820, he was selected by the Governor of the day, Lachlan Macquarie, to form the penal settlement of Port Macquarie as its first Commandant and Magistrate in 1821, he being described as:

*'a very steady, good officer and perfectly competent in all other respects for such an important charge.'*

Governor Macquarie had recorded in his diary of 30 April 1818:

*At 8 o'clock this morning the two male convict ships, Lady Castlereagh Commanded by Captain George Wallden with 300 male convicts from England, and the Minerva commanded by Captain Wm. Bell/Ball with 160 male convicts from Ireland anchored in Port Jackson.*

*The former ship having sailed from England on 22 December 1817 and the latter from Cork on the 1st January last, neither of the ships having touched anywhere during the voyage, nor lost a single man. Mr James Craigie, Surgeon Superintendent of the Lady Nelson and Lieutenant Botteridge of the 48th Regiment commands the guard.*

*Mr Hunter is Surgeon Superintendent of the Minerva and Captain Allman of the 48th Regiment commands the Guard on board that ship.*

And in his diary of 25 November 1820 Macquarie records:

*The Government schooner Prince Regent sailed this day for Port Macquarie conveying Mr. Oxley, the Surveyor General, to survey and make a report on the capabilities and local advantages of that port for establishing a settlement there for the transportation of convicts under colonial sentences.*

*Mr. Oxley is accompanied by Captain Allman of the 48th Regiment on this service, it being my intention to appoint this officer as Commandant of the new settlement.*

Captain Allman had received his instructions from Governor Macquarie on 16 March 1821, to be implemented on his arrival at the new Penal Settlement.

In another entry in his diary of 17 March 1821 Macquarie recorded:

*This morning early, the expedition commanded by Captain Allman of the 48th Regiment embarked for*

*Port Macquarie on board the Government vessels Lady Nelson -- brig, Mermaid -- cutter, and Prince Regent -- schooner. The expedition consists of the following number.*

*1. Captain Francis Allman -- Commandant*

*2. Lièut. William Wilson -- Act. Engineer.*

*3. M A Fenton -- Ass. Surgeon*

*2 Sergeants, 2 Corporals, 1 Drummer, 33 Privates, total troops 41. Mr. Stephen Partridge -- Supt. Of Convicts and Public Labour, 1 Convict Doctor -- Cooke, 60 convict artificers and labourers, women and children.*

On 21 March 1821 Macquarie again recorded: *The expedition for Port Macquarie sailed finally this morning for its destination with a fair wind, having been detained lying at the heads for the last four days by contrary winds.*

Not all was smooth sailing with this voyage, as Captain Allman wrote to Colonial Secretary Goulburn on 19 April 1821:

*Sir,*

*I beg leave to inform you for the information of His Excellency the Governor that the Detachment under my command as well as the prisoners arrived here in good health on the evening of the 17th & 18th Inst., the Mermaid not having been able to cross the bar until the tide after the Prince Regent and Lady Nelson.*

*Our passage was unusually long owing to adverse winds having been obliged to put into Port Stephens on the evening of the 22nd Ult. where we were detained by north easterly gales until the 5th Inst., we arrived off Tacking Point early on the 6th, but unfortunately the sea ran so high on the Bar, that it was impossible to attempt going in as it was blowing a heavy gale of wind from the South West, we were obliged to run for shelter to Trial Bay, where we were also detained until the morning of the 17th.*

*I am sorry to inform you that the Mermaid and Prince Regent have met with serious accidents, the former got aground in passing the Bar, and remained striking very heavily, from one o'clock in the afternoon till eight at night, with little hope of saving either the vessel or people, she being in the midst of breakers, but fortunately at high water she floated, and came in with the loss of her rudder, and one of her stern planks stove in.*

*The Schooner in coming in the evening before struck on a sunken rock at ½ past seven o'clock, but*

soon got off, having unshipped her rudder, the Pintals and Braces having been torn away.

I much fear those vessels will be obliged to wait the return of the Lady Nelson with a new rudder for one, and such copper work &c. as the Masters have required from the Master Attendant of the Dockyard. If it is possible that our means will allow it, the Schooner shall be repaired with as little delay as possible.

I shall not lose a moment in getting the Lady Nelson unloaded and sending her to sea: I hope at furthest she will sail on the 20th or 21st as her speedy return will be of great consequence.

Having taken an accurate account of our bread and flour, I find from this day inclusive, our remaining stock will be out in seventy three days, but we have six months beef.

I have appropriated two of the tents for the reception of provisions & stores: The detachment and prisoners are employed in hutting themselves, agreeably to His Excellency the Governor's orders, and as the weather is particularly fine, I hope in a day or two to have them well sheltered.

It is with much pleasure I have to report upon the general good conduct of the prisoners and have no doubt from the cheerful and willing assistance I receive from every one under my command, but that this infant settlement will fully answer His Excellency's expectation.

I have the honor to be  
Sir  
Your obdt. Humb. Servant  
(Signed) "F. Allman"  
Captn. 48th Regt. & Commandant

Finally Captain Allman was able to hoist the flag of King George III and proclaim the name of Port Macquarie, thus confirming John Oxley's discovery and naming it in 1818 after Governor Macquarie. He also erected a signal post and flagstaff, soon after arrival on a headland half a mile from the river entrance (called Flagstaff today). From here signals were made to vessels seen off the coast or approaching the harbour.

On 21 April 1821 Allman wrote to his friend Captain Piper the following letter:

Dear Piper,

I am sure you will be glad to hear that our little community has at last arrived here in safety after a voyage of 31 days. We met with nothing but heavy gales of wind from the day we left Sydney 'till the day of our arrival (the 17th) and to end the voyage struck on a sunken rock in the harbour which carried away our rudder, but we have surmounted all difficulties and are now very happy 'tho living on the King's Own for the last month. Your pumpkins were invaluable, we have still half a dozen left.

Tell Mrs. Piper, with our kindest remembrances, that her valuable present to Sarah is very well and no small ornament to the Government Domain. I trust in a short time she will increase our stock, which must always be designated Piper's breed.

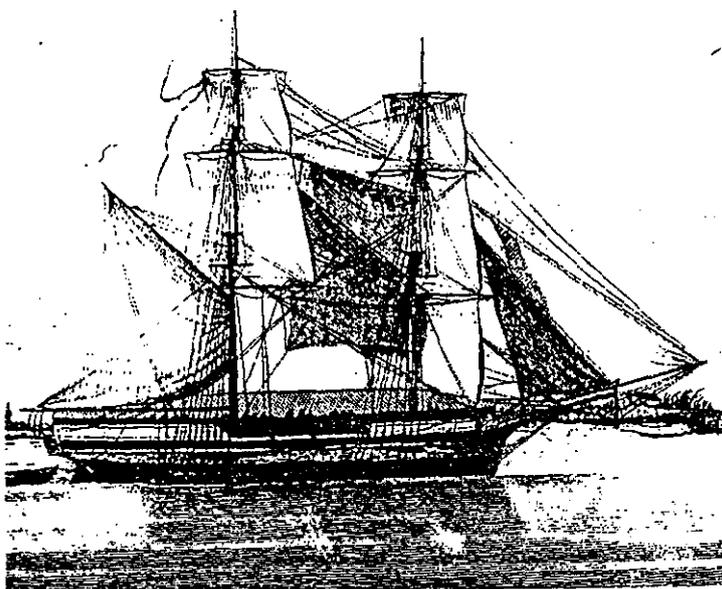
We are all delighted with this place and hope in a very few months to be able to see any of our friends in Sydney who may venture so far to the northward. It really is a delightful country and ought to be made a respectable settlement. I should have no objection, from what I have seen, to put off the red coat and remain.

From our protracted voyage anything in the shape of drinkables is nearly exhausted. I must again trespass on you by letting Gilbert Smith have 10 or 15 gallons of spirits on my account.

Mrs. Allman, Fenton and Wilson join in best wishes for the health and happiness of Mrs Piper and yourself and little ones, and believe me to remain, dear Piper.

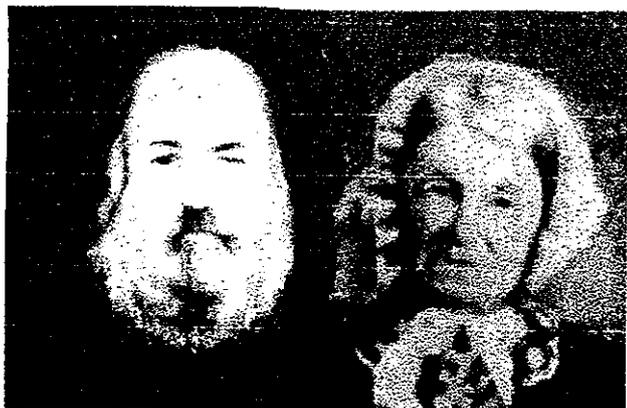
Yours sincerely  
Your most obliged,  
F. Allman

PS Mrs. Allman hopes Mrs Piper will remember her very particularly to Mrs Bloomfield. It is scarcely fair



VIEW of the LADY NELSON in the 'PHANES.

to ask you to write to us who have so much business of greater importance, but should you have a leisure moment to throw away it will be a great gratification to poor expatriated out of the way people such as we are.



By June 1821 Allman received word that a letter from William Hutchinson, Principal Superintendent, had been sent to F Goulburn, Colonial Secretary which stated: *that some Mechanics and Crew for a Whale Boat had volunteered their services for Port Macquarie, and were embarking on board His Majesty's Colonial Schooner Prince Regent with Kent as the Master. These men were sent not for any misdemeanors but were to be allowed the same indulgences and rations as the men already at the Port Macquarie Station.*

Allman submitted a report on 3 August 1821 to the Governor showing how the Crown prisoners at this settlement had been employed from 25 June to 24 July.

*The increased means I have lately in brickmakers, bricklayers and a good house carpenter, have determined me to erect more permanent huts than those we were at first obliged to submit to; for want of bark they were generally composed of branches of the tea tree and long grass, affording but different shelter from the inclemency of the weather, which proved uncommonly severe, and with all the caution I was able to enforce, subjected us to many accidents from fire, by which a great part of the men's clothing was often burnt.*

*I have changed the temporary camp to a more elevated spot, that I had originally occupied on the beach, was from the necessity of being obliged to centre round our stores, which, with the limited means we then had, could not be transported.*

*I am sorry to say this arrangement totally puts it out of my power to comply with that part of His*

*Excellency's instructions, directing the cultivation of fifty acres of wheat, and the like quantity of corn, but I confidently trust His Excellency will see by the enclosed return that at present I have not a single man to spare for agricultural purposes; indeed the necessity of preventing a recurrence of what we have been exposed to from most severe cold and rain, will I hope be my excuse.*

*I further beg to state for His Excellency's information, that the temporary barracks I am erecting are at the prescribed distance from the situation pointed out by the Surveyor General for the permanent town.*

*On the 22nd ultimo. we lost one man, James McMahan, a prisoner of the Crown, after a protracted illness [read his story in Port Macquarie the Windingsheet - a Port Macquarie Historical Society publication], but am happy to state that the settlement are in good health and spirits, and everything going on to my entire satisfaction.*

*From the number of young children on our settlement, and to whose strength an increase of one has been added on the 25th Instant, a few milch [sic] cows would be most acceptable, the two His Excellency having ordered to accompany us being nearly dry.*



*I have the Honor to remain  
Sir  
Your most obedient humble servant  
F Allman Capt. 48th Regt. &  
Commandant*

During October 1821 it was obvious Allman was experiencing some problems as the following letter to F Goulburn Esqr. Colonial Secretary, Sydney, indicates:

*Since enclosing the letter I did myself the honor of addressing to you yesterday, I have been obliged to secure, and have conveyed on board His Majesty's Colonial Cutter, Snapper, a prisoner of the Crown...for the purpose of sending him to Sydney, he having been since his arrival here from Newcastle in a constant state of mental derangement.*

*He has with much difficulty been prevented from destroying himself, and has several times attempted the life of the persons in charge of him.*

*I have been induced to take this step, having no proper place of security, and take this opportunity of acquainting you that no medicines have yet arrived*

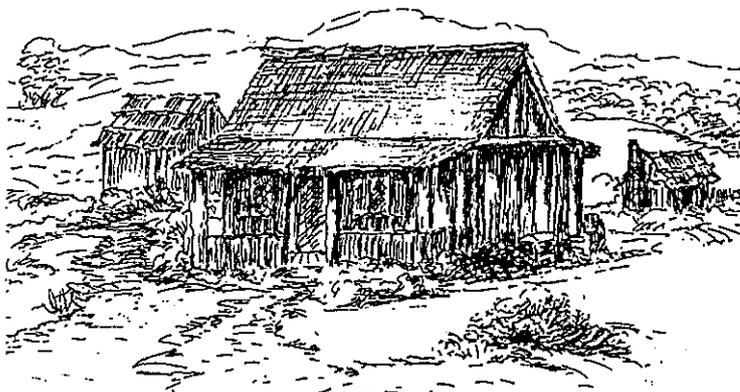
here for the use of the prisoners. Mr Fenton, who attended them up to yesterday's date having nearly exhausted all those sent to him for the Detachment of the Military.

G Cook, the Medical Hospital Assi., who is at present in charge has made a requisition for those most wanting, as well as a few instruments, which I trust will be attended to.

I have the honor to be  
Sir  
Your most Obedient  
Humble Servant  
Frank Allman, Commandant

By November 1821 the natives were becoming hostile and causing problems in the Cedar Camp which was located about 25 miles from from the Settlement, and as a result two prisoners were speared, John Simpson and William Penny, with Simpson dying from his wounds. (See their story also in Port Macquarie the Windingsheet.)

It was at this time that Mr Richard Neave was considered to be a qualified person to act as Harbour Master and Pilot, with his Salary being fifty pounds per annum and to be victualled from the King's Stores with the usual allowance of spirits included, and provided it met with His Excellency the Governor's wishes.



Governor Macquarie visited the infant settlement in November 1821 where he occupied Allman's cottage and found it 'very neat and comfortable, the barracks clean and commodious, the soldiers in good order, and ninety four convicts healthy, well clothed, and without any

complaint whatever.'

In December 1821 Allman reported the loss of two men in a whale boat, the arrival of Lieutenant Wilson's sister on the *Lucy* and the loss of some of her baggage during rough seas. A Crown prisoner was killed by a falling tree, and the natives were still causing problems to the cedar getters which was preventing them from working. ...As I was anxious to get some particular Rose Wood for His Excellency the Governor I ordered Lieut. Wilson with one third of the Detachment to accompany them, they succeeded in bringing it down which has delayed the sailing vessel one day.

As we must in future have such strong Detachments of the Military as covering parties, and when there is a possibility of firing on the natives I should think the presence of a Commissioned Officer desirable -- in consequence I respectfully suggest a reinforcement of a Subaltern and 15 men at this settlement.

The above additional force will enable me to receive here fifty more prisoners which I will be ready for by the return of the *Lucy*.

Steady progress was made in building, farming and in sugar cane culture, which he pioneered in 1821. His discipline was regular, but not in any sense oppressive.

On 16 January 1822 Allman reported that... a gang consisting of twelve of the most daring of the runaways lately sent here from Newcastle made their escape from the settlement last night with a view of getting to Bathurst...nine were captured three refused to surrender, one was shot and another most seriously wounded and a third was either killed in the thick brush or made his escape... The nine prisoners brought back I immediately ordered to be punished with fifty lashes each, being the extent of what I am authorised by my instructions to inflict.

Being ill in the settlement caused many problems, especially if an operation was necessary, as the following letter from Commandant Allman to the Colonial Secretary on 22 May 1822 explains:

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that John Gough a prisoner of the Crown has been ordered by

*me this day to embark on board H M Col'l Cutter Sally, for the purpose of being conveyed to the General Hospital Sydney, the Medical Assistant in charge of prisoners at this station deeming it necessary to have an operation performed which I do not think it would be prudent to allow him to attempt.*

It is to be hoped that the prisoner was able to withstand the long sea trip and survive long enough for the operation.

The first year of the settlement had strained his military men to the limits, especially in the cedar camp where more trouble was always looming with the natives, and even to having to send some of his soldiers to Sydney to be 'dealt with' for shooting one of them. Allman then received word that the new Governor, His Excellency Sir Thomas Brisbane, was getting tough with convicts who had had their death sentences commuted.

*He was advised that any convicts who were sent to this settlement under Commutation Warrants were to be wrought in double irons for life, that should they effect their escape from this settlement, His Excellency has resolved that so soon as they are again apprehended they shall be executed.*

Allman had no choice but to agree, and he carried out these orders on at least one occasion.

It is interesting to note that Allman sent a memorial to His Excellency Sir Thomas Brisbane regarding his loss of baggage during his voyage to Port Macquarie, stating that:

*Your Memorialist having been ordered on detachment on the 17th March 1821 for the purpose of establishing the Settlement of Port Macquarie, and as the three Colonial vessels which were placed under his direction for the transport of the troops, prisoners, tools and equipment of the expedition, were scarcely large enough to stow the Government property, your memorialist was obliged to let the whole of his baggage be carried on the deck of the Mermaid cutter, she being the largest of the craft.*

*Unfortunately this vessel struck on entering the harbour and remained for eight hours in a most*

*perilous situation, a heavy sea incessantly breaking over her deck during the time, by which your memorialist had the misfortune of a great part of his baggage being washed overboard, or destroyed by salt water, by which among other things he was deprived of a considerable stock of bed and table linen, as well as the wearing apparel of his wife and five children, to replace which even in part has already put him to an expense of more than what is allowed to Captains for the loss of heavy baggage on service, viz. one hundred and twenty pounds.*

*Your memorialist humbly represents to your Excellency the distressing way so great a loss placed him in, arising more particularly from the local situation of this infant establishment and submits to your favourable consideration his claim for remuneration.*

*And shall as in duty bound ever pray.*

*F Allman, Capt. 48th Reg.*

This memorial, believed to have been written well after the event, was dismissed by Lord Glenelg, who ruled that 'such loss was a hazard of the Colonial Service, although he conceded that the circumstance was unfortunate.'

21 August 1821 ended the voluntary period for the prisoners who had come with 'Port Macquarie's First Fleet' to establish the penal settlement. Allman requested that during the next month when a vessel was available, they might be returned to head quarters. Nineteen of these were returned to head quarters on the *Lady Nelson* on 21 October 1822 with Commandant Allman stating: *...that I do not consider any of them to have conducted themselves improperly here. Twenty Leg Iron are also forwarded by the same conveyance.*

September saw the overpowering of a guard and the stealing of a whaleboat which the settlement could ill afford to lose.

George Cimitiere Francis and Sarah's sixth child was born at Port Macquarie on 22 November 1822.

Under Allman's command, the Port Macquarie settlement progressed steadily,

and he had done as he was instructed, 'to keep the convicts constantly employed and their bodies enured to hard labour and kept at work from sunrise to sunset, allowing only a reasonable time for their meals.' At dawn and dusk the bell announced the beginning and end of labour and the mustering of gangs every day. These second-offender convicts had overseers, selected from the best-behaved men among their ranks, who were responsible for the working and orderly conduct of gangs of thirty men.

Lieutenant William Wilson, the Acting Engineer, had the responsibility of reading the prayers every Sunday morning after the muster and inspection of the convicts to see that they were *clean and well-dressed as circumstances will admit of.*

No spirituous liquors, wines or beer would be permitted, except for the civil officers and the members of the 48th Regiment. Foreign and private colonial vessels were forbidden to touch at, enter, or have any intercourse with, the settlement.

Allman's work at Port Macquarie was completed in April 1824, and he had reason to be pleased with the success of the settlement he had established. Granted there had been some disappointments, but he was personally satisfied with the result when he handed over control to the next Commandant, Captain John Rolland of the 3rd Regiment.

Captain Allman was to have proceeded to India in command of three Companies of the 48th Regiment, having been selected by his Commanding Officer, Col. Cimetiere for that duty, when unsolicited (on his part) he was offered the situation of Commandant at Newcastle, on condition that he should retire on half pay. This he unfortunately did, and shortly afterwards the situation of Commandant of Newcastle having been done away with, Captain Allman's large family of eight children, (as it was at Newcastle that Frederick George was born on 16 May

1827, and Mary Ann on 18 June 1829) and the necessity of educating them, rendered the sale of his commission in the army a necessary but deeply regretted step on his part, for he had loved his profession with a love that remained unchanged to the last.

After becoming a 'settler' for a time at which he was not successful, he retired to Yass in 1846. He died on 24 October 1860, aged 80 years and was buried with full military honours in the Church of England Cemetery, Yass. Sarah Allman died at Yass on 6 February 1864 at the age of 75 years. Their son born at Port Macquarie, George Cimetiere Allman, died on 25 October 1872.

It is written that Captain Francis Allman's success in life was not that he was flamboyant, but rather that *he was a kindly, considerate man who respected people.*

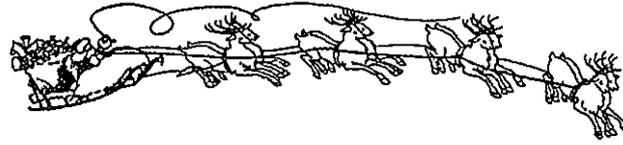
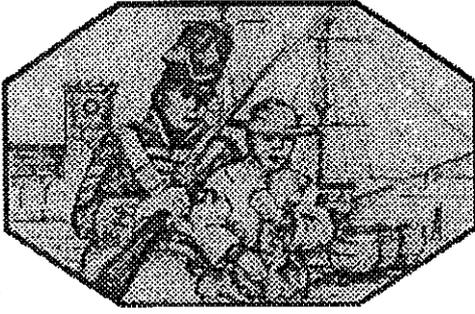
One wonders what would have been the beginnings of Port Macquarie if not for that French captain, who so courageously risked his life to save his Masonic brother.

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Compiled by Gwen Griffin. Artist: Joan Cook  
Cover design: Val Broxson  
July 1998 for

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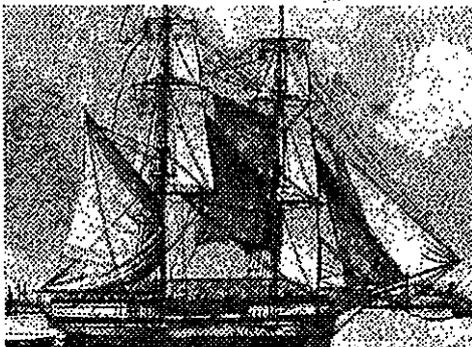
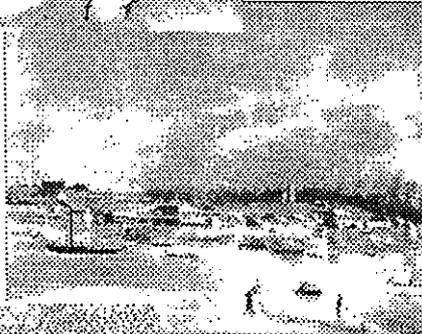
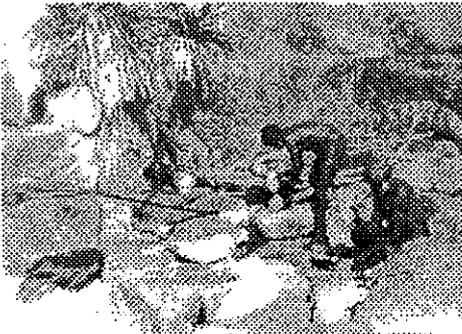
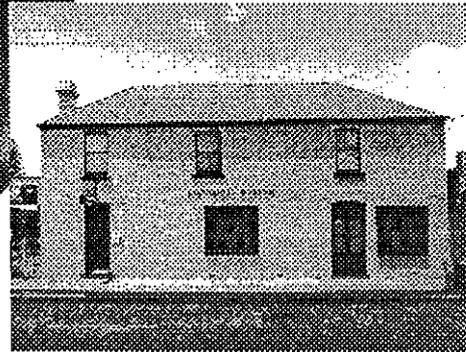
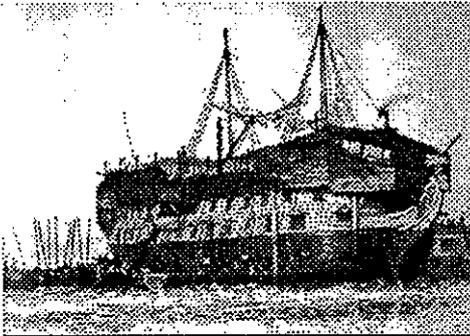


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 2 No 4 December 1998

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Maude Keena  
Remembers the  
'Good Old Days'

*From all accounts, Port Macquarie has always been an interesting place to live, but, as many of the town's older generation will tell you today, never more so than in the last decades of the 1800s and the early part of this almost complete century.*

MAUDE KEENA

Maude Keena was born Maude Menhinick Cleave to Thomas Cleave and Emily Ann (nee: Menhinick,) at Hibbard, Port Macquarie on 19 May 1884. She was the second child of these English migrants who had recently arrived in Australia, with their first child Emily Mary being born in Sydney in 1882.

Her father was a well-known underwater diver and shipwright and it was the former skill which landed him in Port Macquarie.

On 13 March 1884 John Hibbard, the owner of a large sawmilling complex at Hamilton, now called Hibbard, wrote a letter to Thomas Cleave: (copy from Mrs Olive Mansfield, a daughter of Thomas Cleave):

*Dear Sir,*

*I write you respecting what I was speaking to you about when in Sydney viz. constant employment here. We will give you constant employment at the wages you stated £2.15.0 per week, but shall require you at once as we have the wreck of the steamer RICHMOND. We have tryed [sic] to float her with canvas bags but could get no pumps powerful enough to fill the bags.*

*We shall have build [sic] pontoons of timber to float her. She is only damaged in the bottom and not to any great extent. She is worth going to some trouble to get her off. She is in a good place on the rocks about a quarter of a mile inside the Bar and close alongside the chanell [sic].*

*We shall also require 4 good shipwrights beside yourself to get the job through quickly. Will you engage 4 at the usall [sic] wages. You will know the sort of men required but thay [sic] will only be required for building the pontoons, say a months work or longer but we have to build a slip for hauling our punts up to repair them and may get that done at the same time.*

*As soon as you can let me know by wire if you can come and when as we must get oregan [sic] pine from Sydney for the pontoons. We shall have to put them inside in the fore hold as we can get no chains under forard the after end [sic]. Thay [sic] can be put outside.*

*Hoping to hear from you shortly as delays are dangerous especialy [sic] in wrecks. It may come on*

*bad weather and damage her. The pontoons will be built at the mill. Please dont [sic] neglect to let me know. All desires to be remembered kindly to you and Mrs. Cleave. Hope you are both well. All as usual here.*

*Yours respectfully  
John Hibbard*

The *Richmond* was wrecked on 21 January 1884 and the remains were once visible projecting from the sand at the Camping Reserve near the breakwall.

Thomas Cleave ultimately began the salvage work, but whilst underwater, the life-lines upon which he depended were neglected by the men on the surface. There was a brawl, and when the diver was remembered, he was hauled up half dead. He naturally refused to descend again, and the work was suspended. He had made several lengthy dives down to the sunken vessel in the old helmet and canvas diving suit with two men pumping air down to him.

Thomas Cleave later practised at Hibbard as a shipwright and built a house for his wife and young family, which now included other children who were born at Port Macquarie: Jane on 26 May 1885, who remained single until her death on 15 December 1967; Daisy V, born in 1887 and died in 1888; Olive born 1889 who married Albert L Mansfield; and Emily who was born in Sydney, married Percy E Reid and died 18 July 1947.

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### MAUDE'S STORY:

This is an account of Maude's life and times as she originally wrote it.

"Mr. Hibbard found the timber for the men to build their homes and the men would help each other build their houses. We lived at Hibbard for quite a few years, not far from the Slip. Father bought a 12 acre block of land where Tuffin's Lane turns into Boundary Street, from Mr. Webber who they boarded with. There was a vineyard on the property, and my father had our second home built there.

"The small tugboats used to go out sounding the Bar and towing the vessels up to Hibbard. They used to bring the stores up from Sydney and load up with timber to take back. Some of the tugs, *The Alert, Unique, and Undaunted* and later the *Harrani*,[sic] the little fishing boat owned by the Petersen Bros.

"Vessels: *The Queen, Empress of India, Trio, Fedral, Jubilee, Candidate, Louser, Messle*. [sic] They also brought all the oyster rocks back when they came back from Sydney for ballast. *The Candidate* went ashore on the Town Beach, and in later years Mr. Hayward had some vessels built and Mr. Cain at Wauchope also had the *Macquarie, Wauchope, and Hastings* built. The *Rosedale* was another old Steamer that used to come to Port, also the *Melinga*.

"We used to sell grapes for 1 ½ pence a pound and 13 pounds in a bucket for one shilling. There were also peaches we sold for two pence and three pence a dozen, they were yellow Mondies and very good too, but we don't see them today."

(Maude's earliest recollections are of her school days at Blackmans Point, and later at Hibbard.)

"We used to walk to Blackmans Point school every day from Hamilton, but when Mr. Hibbard built the school in Hamilton we all went there. Mr. Harris, the Blackmans Point School teacher, also left to teach at Hamilton. It wasn't like today with a teacher for every subject. Mr. Harris had to teach us everything."

"A lot of children attended old Hamilton School and we had every subject. There were quite a lot of people living at Hamilton in those days and the only way to get around was to walk. I think only Mr. Hibbard had a buggy, Mr. Sonter had a horse and dray, which he used to cart the stove wood into town, and Saturday afternoon was the ladies shopping afternoon.

"Mr. Sonter used to put boxes up the sides of the dray for the ladies to sit on and take them into Port to do their week-end shopping. My father used to get 12 shillings a day, that was supposed to be a big wage. I don't know what the Millmen got. Anyway they were a happy crowd in those days, much more than they are today.

"Mr. Hibbard had a new home built and a store and when Mr. & Mrs. Hibbard went into their new home, they made a School of Arts out of their old home. My father used to go down every night, I think they closed Saturday and Sunday nights. That is where we learnt to dance. Mrs. Hibbard and Mrs. Corrigan, who were sisters, taught us to dance, we used to do a wonderful lot of dances. Mr. Hibbard had the Hall built, I think he supplied the timber, and the Millmen built the Hall.

"Some of the dances we used to do -- the Waltz, Polka, Pin Polka, Schottise, Prince of Wales Schottise, Barn Dance, Lancers, Quadrills, Alberts, Waltz Cotillions, Sircashin Circle, Maizurka, Vaziv-ana, and later the Lambert Walk, Maxina and Valetta and the Ballroom style Waltz. They danced to the Concertina played by Mack Sonter and I think one of the Higeles played the violin. Mr. Sam. Strutt was our M.C. and he wouldn't allow them to have more than two dances together at the dances, so that gave everyone a chance to have a dance -- no wallflowers, which was very good.

"The Church of England Minister used to come once a fortnight -- Sunday afternoons, and the Methodist once a fortnight, and Mr. Car, and Mr. Robins used to come Sunday afternoons for Sunday School. One Sunday, after Sunday School there were five of us girls walked down to Clifton House, which was always supposed to be haunted. When we got down there, my sister



Emily and Minnie Herbert went to the front rooms, and Edi. Herbert and myself went around to the back kitchen, there was a corn sack hung up at the kitchen window, so we went back to the others and said there is nothing around there, of course that wouldn't do them, so we all walked around to the back again, and when we got there the corn sack was pulled up and there was a man looking out the window. Well, we heltered and skeltered down to Mr. Dicks'. Mr. Dick was looking over the front fence, so we told him and he said 'why that is old Barney Turnham', so we found the ghost.

"We used to have some very nice parties, one would give one and another and it would go around and we used to have some good dances. We had one of the best dancing floors around. My sister Emily used to give music lessons on the piano, we used to sing quite a lot. Some of the old people that used to live at Hibbard: Hibbard, Caines, Lewis, Wilson, Way, Ringland, Fry, McInherney, Smith, Sargeant, Corrigan, Collins, Malcombe, Strutt, Dick, Stewart, Sonter, Turner, Branch, Webber, Hollis, Kirkwood, Lee, Nelson, Caffery, Welshford, Mrs. Way, Mrs Lee, and Mrs. Smith were old Mid-wives, [sic] they used to look after the babies, Morgan and later Lovenforce, Lee, Corrigan, Crozier, McInherney, Nicholl, Kewen, Stewart.

Blackmans Point: The School Master Mr. Harris, Mr. G. Hyde, W. Hyde, J. Hyde, Gardner, Manning, Master, Lockton, Bones, Smith, Fowler, Freeman, Clapson.

"Mr. Morgan was killed at Hamilton while working, he was the first patient taken to the old Cottage Hospital where he died.

"Two of the Manning's children were drowned crossing the river in a punt -- the punt started to leak and they were both drowned, a boy and a girl.

"Mrs. Stewart and Mrs. Strutt took their children up the river on one of the log punts for a picnic, as the school holidays were on, and when they were coming home the children went up to the nose of the punt and started pulling the bark from the logs and throwing it overboard. One of the men went up and told them not to do it, and of course when he came away, they started up again and Jacqueline Stewart fell in and Mr. Strutt who was on the house of the punt dived in clothes and all from the house of the punt and they think Jacqueline must have grabbed him around the neck and they were both drowned. Mr. Sam. Strutt was a very fine build

of a man and very strong. It was a very sad time. [Port Macquarie News reported this 1905].

"Phillip Haines, a very old man, I think he might have been related to old Mrs. Hibbard. One of the vessels that came up from Sydney had a hole in her, so Mr. Haines wanted my father to let him have the diving suit to go down to see about it, but my father wouldn't let him have it. He told him to go and see Mr. Hibbard. Mr. Hibbard wouldn't let him have it, he told him it had perished, so he was not to go. So he went up the river on one of the log punts about a week after and one of the logs rolled on him killing him while they were loading the punt.

"Some of the old people who lived up the back of where we lived, W. Bransdon, Wardell, Trotter, Mr. J. McInherney -- I think he was a brother of Mrs. Hibbard and some who lived down below our place -- Lee, Baldwin, Foster, Nelson, Kirkwood, Mr. W. Staples used to smoke sea-mullet and roes, which were really beautiful, which we don't get today. Mr. D. Lee had a fruit and vegetable shop.

"The blacks used to file past in May to collect their blankets in Port, which the Government used to provide and the Afghans would go north for the sugar cane cutting, some of them would call in sometimes, but not many. My sister Olive would be planted out of sight somewhere until they had all passed.

"Mr. Delaforce used to walk down from up the river somewhere and he would have his shirt bulging out with oranges for the children around.

"Mr. George Cain used to go around the streets in Port ringing a Bullock Bell to let the people know there would be a sale on that day.

"They used to have some wonderful Regattas in those days down at Settlement Farm. Skiff races also boat races for both men and women and sailing boats and on shore catching the greasy pig, and walking the tight-rope and of course the Band would be out there playing, and we used to buy pineapples for six pence each.

"We also had our Sunday School picnics at Settlement Farm, we used to play all sorts of

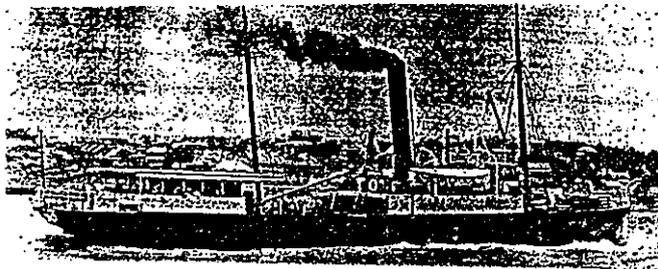
games in those days, young and old together.

“At Christmas time the men used to go from house to house on Christmas night and have a sing song and a drink and some cake. We would all go to North Shore on New Year’s Day, they used to go in the Oyster Punts at first, and when Mr. Staples bought a launch, he towed some of them down, and when we got down Mr. Bill Dick would go out to the beach and gather pippies, in those days they were very plentiful, there was no mixed bathing. Mr. Dick would come back and start frying the fish they caught, they were Whiting mostly, they were pretty plentiful in those days, and I’ll say no one could fry fish like Mr. Dick. I think he used Lucca Oil [?]. Of course they all took frying Pans and the left offs from Christmas and after dinner, they would all go over a creek and the old and young would play games, we all had a wonderful time. The next day would be the races, we all used to go out to the course, and the men used to go into the course, and the women and children would stay in the paddock and have a picnic, they were wonderful days.

“My father and old Mr. Jim Dick were walking the beach on the sea-side one day, when one of them kicked his foot against a nail in a slab of wood and they said they had better turn it over, which they did, they said it would be dangerous and when they turned it over they found the letters S.O.S. on it. Those letters were meant for the *Sovereign of the Seas*. I think it might have been the Pirate’s Boat that was supposed to be scuttled up near Point Plummer [sic].

up at Glen Innes a few years ago, we met some friends up there and they told us that if we were at Glen Innes at the time the Show was on, be sure and not miss seeing it. Matron Jobson, her niece Beryl, and Alf and myself went up to the Show, and I was never more disappointed in anything in my life. They had a large Marquee and we sat there for three quarters of an hour waiting for a cup of tea and we didn’t get one, so walked home and had one, The Glen Innes Shows were not to be compared to the Shows they used to run in Port Macquarie.

“We used to go and take orders for the grapes on Friday afternoon and deliver them on Saturday morning. My father took Em. and I to Sydney where we stayed with some friends, Mr. & Mrs. Sleeman, who lived over at Roseville on the North Shore Line. Mr. Sleeman used to make all sorts of wines out of fruit he used to grow, he had some Chinamen working in the garden, they had a very nice place.



“When we were coming home in the old *Rosedale*, it was blowing a Southerly gale and the Captain didn’t know whether to come in or stay there, whatever, he decided to come in and we bumped three times coming over the Bar.

“When the Boer War broke out the War news was always posted outside Blair’s Shop, and after school, Jane and I would copy the news down in our notebooks and take it home and give it to my father, and he would take it down for the men to read at the School of Arts.

“Mrs. Fry had two boys, Lew. & Spence in their family and one girl Emily. Minnie Herbert married Lew, they had five children in the family. One night Lew went out to Catti [Cathie] shooting and he was drowned, they thought he got caught up in the reeds. She was left with five children, very hard in those days.

“They used to have a wonderful Show in Port. They all took a great interest in things at the Show. There would always be plenty of Blacks at the Show and Regattas, as well as Whites. While



"My sister Emily married Mr. Percy Reid [8 January 1908], they had eight children in their family. They lived at Rollands Plains, and I married Alfred Leader Keena on 22 March 1909.

"We also lived at Rollands Plains. My husband had a Blacksmith Forge there and he used to do all the Bullock Trucks up and shoe horses.

"He built a beautiful sulky out of silky oak wood, there is no mistake it polished up beautiful, he got first prize in the Show for it. While we were there he built our first car, I think between 1910 -- 1911.

"When he was building it he couldn't find a place to put the water tank to cool the engine down, so Les Mansfield [his brother-in-law] who was working with him at the time, used to run behind carrying a jug of water to cool the engine down.

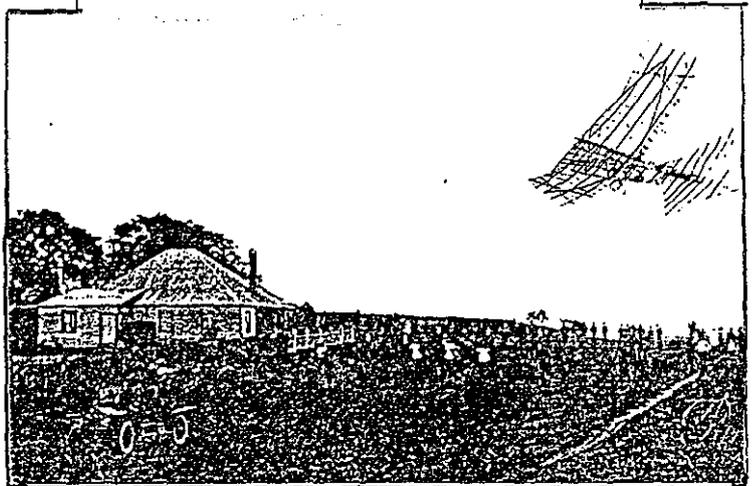
"We used to come to Port in it, and the first time we came down, there was a very big crowd around and I was a bit shy didn't like going near it.

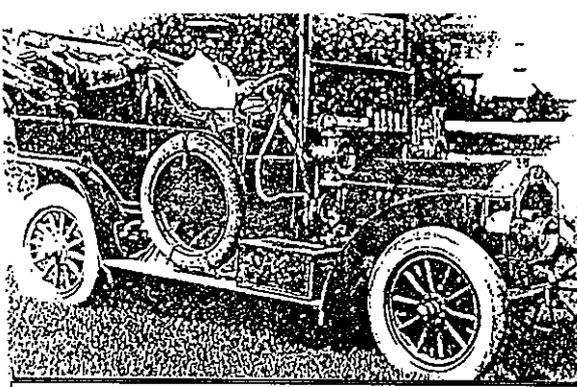
"Mr. Harris our old School Master came along shaking hands and said; 'I didn't think you would ever have a car', and I said; 'no I didn't either'. We had it for some time, and one day we sold it to Mr. Clune, who worked on the Cream Launch, and then my husband went to Sydney to the first Motor Show and he brought home a car which had two bucket seats. While we were on the Plains Mr. Sawtell, I think he had the first Motor Car, he used to run passengers, he used to bring Dr. Deluca up and they would always stop at our place. They came one day and I was at the piano playing 'Under the double eagle March' and when

I had finished the Dr. came in and said you played that good, we bring our music. the next time we come up, so they brought them up, Mr. Sawtell brought his violin and the Dr. brought his Clarinet so we had some music. I used to go in most for marches and waltzes.

"My husband made the springs for the under carriage of Dr. Deluca's Plane. I think Mr. Henry Wilkins did a lot of work on it. I think the Dr. designed it. The Dr. asked us down for the day on the Sunday before the Monday they were to fly it. We met Mr. & Mrs. Branch there. I think it was the Mr. Branch that has the Nursery near the Plaza [now Table Street]. The Dr. had a son called Joe, he said: 'Joe said he didn't want his neck broken yet, what about Mr. Keena?', I said: 'I don't think he wants his neck broken either'. They were to fly it on the Monday but they didn't until the Monday week, when Mr. Sawtell towed it behind his car, and when it came to the end of the rope it went down.

*It was on Thursday July 21 1910 when Dr. Paul Deluca launched an un-manned and un-powered glider from a street [Gore] in West-Port. With the assistance of Mr. H.T. Wilkins [Undertaker], he constructed a wooden bi-lateral bi-plane of the Bleriot type, with measurements of 30 feet by 24 feet and weight of 130 pounds. With the assistance of Mr. Sawtell's car, the machine required three attempts before it became briefly airborne and rose to a dizzy height of 60 or 70 feet when it turned and crashed to the ground. The car a 25 HP De Dion Automatic Inlet valves low tension magneto -- started off battery.*





*The above picture shows: Jacob Healey's Automobile a De Dion, Registration No: 1313, was a 25 horse power roadster, incorporating an automatic inlet valve and a low tension magneto which started from a battery.*

*Jacob sold this machine to Dr. Deluca while Mr. E.A. Sawtell acquired it in 1910 and sold to Mr. Stacey in 1911. John Hibbard (Snr) was reportedly the first man to own a car in Port Macquarie and hired a full-time driver for it.*

"My Father, Thomas Cleave died on Tuesday 29 August 1916 while we were at Hibbard. A few years later Les Mansfield bought a home from Mr. McGilvery over in West Port near where the old Pound used to be, and came in there to live and my mother came in there to live with them. By that time Alf had built up his Motor Business which he leased to Mr. C. Branch when he got the Hall going. My sister Emily who had married Percy Reid lived at Ballengarra, they had a family of 7 children. Percy had a Bullock team and used to draw logs from the Upper Plains down to Ballengarra Wharf where the log punts would come up from Hamilton and get the logs and take them down to the Saw-Mill at Hamilton where they would be sawn up and the timber stocked ready for the vessels to come from Sydney to take it away.

"They lived up there for many years. They sold up at last and went out to Wagga Wagga to live 600 miles away from here. They had another daughter at Wagga that's eight children, a good family. [Former members of the Port Macquarie Historical Society, Jock and May Roy, recently went back there to live. May was one of their daughters.]

"My Mother, Emily died [20 August 1919] while living with Mrs. Mansfield she just seemed to fade away, [both are buried at Port Macquarie.]

"A Mr. Charles used to show Open Air pictures and Alf sought him out and I think showed them up in the old Show Hall, before we had our Hall

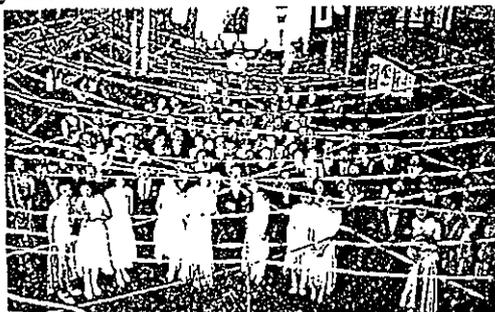
finished when he had got the plans done out and the ground and timber. The War had just ended and Mr. Och came up one morning and told him he was building a Hall for Ossie [his son]. Ossie had just come home from the War and brought an English Bride home with him. Anyhow Alf. told Mr. Och he had put his money into it and he could not go back and of course the two Halls went on, there wasn't enough people about to keep the two going.

"Alf had a good supper room at the back of the Hall, a cutting up room, where we used to cut the sandwiches, he used to make the tea and coffee down the back for the dances, as we got a good many of the big Balls. There was a Hospital Ball on one night and our Mayoress Mrs. Hill had brought two large jars of boiled custard for the trifles, and Alf was making the coffee for them and he saw the two jars of custard on the bench and of course thought it was milk, so tipped it into the coffee, it didn't hurt the coffee, but Mrs. Hill had to go home and make more boiled custard for the trifles."

*Brothers, John & Vern Keena -- members of Port Macquarie Historical Society, had a joinery shop on the northern side of Keena's Hall, on the site now occupied by Fair Dinkum Bargains. The joinery shop later became Joe Lee's Garage then Dick Gentle's hardware. Dick Gentle enlarged his hardware store and took over the Civic Hall which was at the time owned by Hatsatouris, then K and L Press purchased Dick Gentle's Hardware and also bought out the nearby Hudson's Hardware at the same time, this was then taken over by Mario Constanza and called Mario's.*

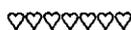
"We used to go around from house to house collecting cakes, scones, butter, sugar, tea, to the Butcher's for meat, they used to give us Corn-meat, or tongue. We used to buy the ham, eggs. They used to cut the lettuce up fine and make the salads, cut beetroot up very fine and put on the top. Someone used to go and collect the things promised the morning before the dance. Each one belonging to the Ball Committee would also bring a cake each, they used to make sponge cakes for the trifles. The Bakers would also give some loaves of bread. Others would be in decorating the Hall. They used to have the Hall beautifully decorated. They used to give a lot of prizes for

the best evening frock and the best pairs, Lady & Gent. The best dancers, the best comic and my husband and I used to look after the floors well and have them in good trim. I think we had about four long tables in the supper room. They could do with a good Hall, with a good supper room today, as there is not a Hall big enough to run a good Ball today. I think we were at the Hall for 20 years off and on...



"...We used to get a lot of Flower Shows. Mr. Westley used to take a great interest in doing the flowers for the Shows, he had a wonderful garden out at Nobby's which he took a great interest in. When we were out at our old home at Hamilton, Mr Westley always came and pruned the grape vines and ploughed between them and chipped around the vines. He used to walk into the Methodist Church every Sunday morning. He was a wonderful worker for the Shows and Flower Shows.

"When my mother, father and my sister Olive went to England for a trip, Mr. Westley went with them, also a cousin of my mother, who lived in Sydney and on the voyage home Mr. Westley met Mrs. Westley who was coming out to her sister, and a few years after he went over to South Australia and married her and brought her home. They were both wonderful workers for different things in the town. We often went out to see them, and Mrs. Westley and I would walk to Nobby's down near Downes' Park and along to Shelly Beach to gather shells, there used to be plenty of shells there."



Always a keen worker, Maude Keena took as her one big cause in life [they did not have any children] the Women's Hospital Auxiliary of which she was a Foundation member.

She was honoured in 1977 by that organisation

with a special birthday party for her 92nd birthday, held at the then Sandcastle Motor Inn. She had been presented with a Life Membership Award from the Annual General Conference of the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW held in Sydney on 27 September 1977. She had given years of service for the Hospital Auxiliary at the Hastings District Hospital, Port Macquarie and was their patron.

Until her middle age Mrs Keena lived well out in the country far from any hospital; but since coming to live in Port Macquarie in a house opposite the recently closed hospital, she had been a keen worker for the hospital at all times. Apart from regularly attending meetings, sewing bees and all auxiliary efforts, she had been a quiet worker behind the scenes, visiting lonely patients, doing washing for those patients and taking flowers from her own garden regularly to the hospital for general use in foyers and wards.

In 1968 the Australian Red Cross also gave her an award for her 50 years of service to them.

"Although we didn't have the modern conveniences of today [1977] there was always something going on and everybody knew and helped each other. It was a great time; we got through the First World War alright, but it was the great depression followed so closely by the second World War that changed everything, I don't know, but things never really seemed the same after that. Everybody changed and along with it a whole new style of life evolved. The years have been good to me, however."

Alfred Leader Keena died on 15 June 1961 and Maude Menhinick Keena died at Lourdes Nursing Home, Port Macquarie, aged 97, on 24 November 1981.

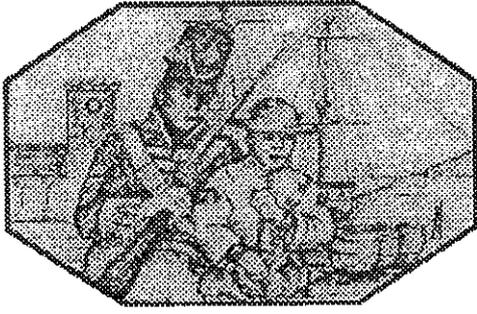


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Files of Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc. Records & Research Section, Keena Family Files, and Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.



Compiled by Gwen Griffin – Cover design: Val Broxson  
 December 1998 for © Port Macquarie Historical Society  
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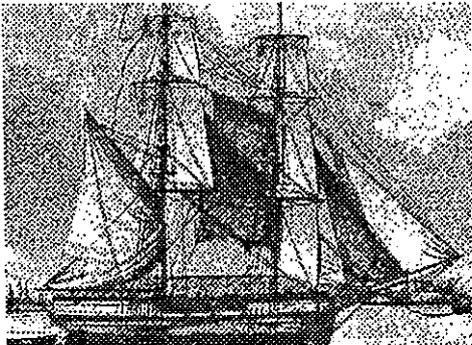
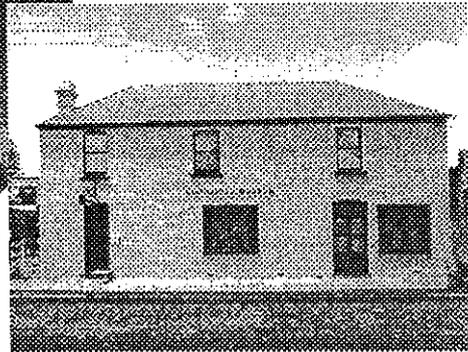
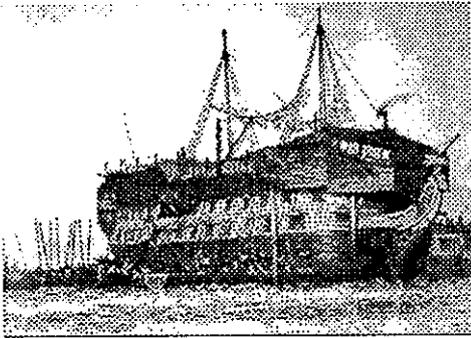


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 3 No 1 March 1999

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



An MBE for Matron Jobson

## **A** N MBE FOR MATRON JOBSON

*So ran the headlines in the Port Macquarie News of Tuesday 11 June 1968.*

Her Majesty the Queen had made Miss (Matron) Vera Jobson (pictured below) a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services rendered in this community, particularly with the Red Cross. Matron Jobson's name was included in the Queen's Birthday Honours List announced at the previous weekend.

The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire was instituted by King George V in 1917, in recognition of important services rendered to the Empire. It consists of the Sovereign and five classes: Knights Grand Cross and Dames Grand Cross (GBE), Knights and Dames Commanders (KBE and DBE), Commanders (CBE), Officers (OBE), and Members (MBE).



Who, you ask, was this lady of Port Macquarie to be given such an honour?

Vera Jobson, during an interview in March 1980 at the Hastings District Hospital, gives us the following insight:

She was born at the Rectory in Cowra to Henry and Mary Jobson on 13 May 1888. Her father was the Church of England Minister. He was a native of Hull in England. After service at Cowra he was transferred to Kempsey, and after a period to Warialda.

At Kempsey he was troubled with asthma but had no trouble while living at Warialda. He died following a visit away from the town. His buggy was bogged in a creek at Gravesend Road so he swam across the creek to get help from a station property – Gravesend station – run by Onus Bros. They then sent out a party to search for the buggy. It was found still in the creek with the horses in the shafts. However, the ordeal was too much for Rev. Jobson and shortly after his return home he died of a strained heart.

Matron Jobson started her nursing training at Casino. She stayed for six months and then went to Glen Innes Hospital where Matron Eyre was in charge. For the first six months she was on probation after which she received five shillings (5/-) per week. Her time at Glen Innes lasted for five-and-a-half years, and she rose to the position of Acting Matron when the Matron was on holidays.

In 1923 two vacancies for Matron were advertised, one at Walgett and the other at Port Macquarie. She favoured the Walgett job because the pay was better, but following a telegram from Port Macquarie saying '*Come at once*' her mother persuaded her that she was more needed in Port Macquarie. Her mother even came to the train with her to make sure she got on the right train.

On her arrival at Wauchope the only person on the platform was a little man who approached her and said '*I have been sent to meet you, but you are too early and we are not ready for you*'.

When she arrived at the hospital she was met by the President of the Board, Mr Duncan Stewart, and her new staff. Mr Stewart explained that the woman who did the washing had just washed the counterpane (an outer coverlet or quilt for a bed; a bedspread) and it was not dry. However, he did go down to his store and get a new one. (Duncan Stewart was a storekeeper in Horton Street for many years and Mayor from 1910 until 1915.)



At that time the hospital was a one-storied cottage hospital with an average of five patients and it was staffed with three nurses. The only doctor was a Scotsman, Dr Sproule and there was also one doctor in Wauchope, Dr Begg. There was a cook who had a small boy named Robbie. The kitchen had a wood stove and there was an urn on it which was always kept full of hot water. Matron recalls making some large calico bags and before an operation the instruments were placed in the bag and dunked in the hot water.

In the operating theatre all the bowls were enamel and the steriliser was a "Schimmelbach", a heavily plated vessel which was heated over a primus stove (hence the need for the calico bags). Mr Pountney, editor of the newspaper gave £100 for a new steriliser. The operating table was very old and primitive and it was a "red letter day" when Miss Agnes Hill presented them with a new one. Miss Hill's brother was the local Member of Parliament.

There was a wardsman named Charles Peck who had been a chef on one of the shipping liners. On one occasion when the cook was sick the wardsman took over at short notice and produced a breakfast of cold meat, bread, butter and tea. He did, however, make a queen's pudding for dinner. On another occasion when the wardsman was painting the hospital young Robbie tried his hand at it; when his mother saw the mess he was in she said *'I'll give you a good hidin'*. Robbie ran off and got under the hospital and it fell to Matron to get him out. Many years afterwards "young" Robbie came and visited her.

The men's ward had a long stove in the middle which provided warmth to the ward. The beds were very low and this made it difficult to handle patients.

Dr McLaren and Mrs Ross canvassed all the different districts to sponsor new beds. This was a successful project; the old beds were taken to the tip and new beds and mattresses were installed with the donor's name on the bed.

The women's ward was painted green and yellow which made the patients appear jaundiced so Matron had the wards repainted cream and white.

## DR. NICOL McLAREN

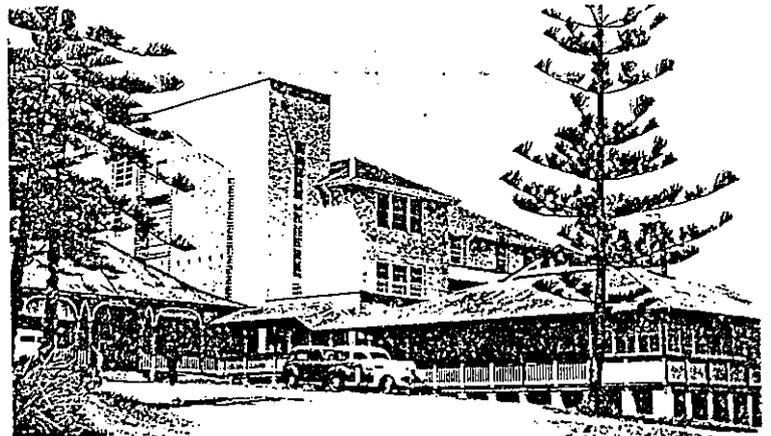
(This is part of a story Bernard Hart wrote about 1979 when interviewing Matron at her home where she spoke of Dr. McLaren).

'Resourcefulness, a scalpel and boiling water were the main tools of trade in bringing life into the world and preventing it from leaving. In those days the local hospital was not always the certain venue for treatment and surgical operations. Often enough, the kitchen and the kitchen table served as the operating theatre, the bedroom the delivery room, and when time ran out, there was many a roadside birth.'

## FAMILY DOCTOR

'This was the era of the family doctor as we knew him, when kindness and a personal interest in one's family were very much part of the treatment and the cure. The years that followed, ushering in new techniques and discoveries didn't necessarily demand a change of habit. At least that was the philosophy of Nicol McLaren. He remained a family doctor well after he retired.

'Apart from being matron I was also the chemist and anaesthetist, so many a time I helped him during operations under the make-shift conditions. I remember coming back from one baby show when we had to call at a house to treat a 17 year old boy. We put him on the kitchen table and doctor extracted all his teeth.



MURRAY VIEWS NO. 26. DISTRICT HOSPITAL, PORT MACQUARIE, N.S.W.

## HOME DELIVERY

‘He was wonderful to mothers. Many a time he would be called to a home to deliver a baby. He would never leave until the mother was made comfortable and the father could handle the situation. Often this meant changing the bed sheets, washing the baby and delivering him to his mother’s arms, and then getting the fire stoked up if the husband happened to be away out on the farm at the time, probably not aware his wife had given birth and that it was all over.

## A BLACK NIGHT

‘There are so many things, so many incidents involving Dr McLaren I’d like to tell you, and also about his colleague Dr Murphy, but I just can’t think of them all at once. I’m getting on a bit, you know. [She was 91].

‘I remember one occasion when Dr McLaren demonstrated his ability with the paint brush. The episode started when someone loaned me an old kerosene heater to warm up the isolation ward. It was a very small room in a very small hospital. It was about 1925. I soon found out the thing was very inefficient and gave off clouds of black smoke. However I got used to it. Each night I turned it up high until it warmed the room and then gradually turned it down during the night. Then I told the nurse on duty how to work it.

‘One morning the duty nurse came running into my bedroom, “Matron”, she said. “come quickly! It’s all black”. She forgot to turn the thing down. The ceiling was black. The walls were black and a mother and her baby in the ward had black faces.

‘Well, Sister Fahey and I got to, with the help of the little wardman, and scrubbed and scrubbed and scrubbed, but the paintwork was never the same, so we decided that if the Board would buy us the paint, Sister and I would paint out the room. I didn’t fancy the idea of doing the ceiling and was up on the ladder having a go at it when Dr McLaren arrived. He wanted me in the operating theatre urgently, as he had just arrived with a patient in a bad way.

‘After the operation we were having a cup of tea when I noticed Doctor was missing, yet his car was still parked outside. Eventually I tracked him down. He was dressed up in a boiler suit finishing off the ceiling. He was always there at the right time.

‘Dr McLaren and I have had a long association here; we have been judging babies in this and adjoining districts for the past 30 years – and we are still doing it. [1968].’

The hospital suffered from growing pains, but the Health Commission would not make money available for a new hospital, even though by then there was a daily average of 20 patients. However, Matron let it be known that a local poultry farmer, Mr Jackson, had given a donation of £25,000 after the First World War. Further donations of £12,000 were made from Sydney and a new hospital was begun.

Matron Jobson served as matron of the Hastings District Hospital for a period of thirty-three years, from 1923 until she retired in November 1956.

On her arrival, Matron Jobson knew nothing of the hospital nor the town and district, but well remembers her first introduction to it.

The then treasurer of the board, John Hill, told her the hospital would probably have to close at the end of the month. Despite this and other crises – including a determined effort back in 1946 to have the district hospital moved to Wauchope – she saw the daily average of patients rise from five in the Cottage Hospital (pictured below), where she started, to a daily average of fifty in 1968, in the three-floor brick hospital in Morton Street. This is as much a tribute to the nursing profession as it is to those responsible for its being here. (A new Base Hospital has now been built and this particular brick hospital building is used for other purposes.)



There were still a few people about in 1968 who recalled the feverish activities at that time of establishing the new hospital: the deputations, the representations, the oysters, the lobsters, the beer, and the critical public meeting which packed the Civic Hall. Matron Jobson believed that what eventually swung the scales in Port Macquarie's favour and gave it the district hospital was the fact that bequests of a substantial amount were forthcoming.

Many people caused problems; "Doubt" Digby and Bob Stanfield, were one too many, for those who sought to take the hospital away, and it is more than coincidental that Mr. Les Kenny MLC, (the local member) unofficially laid the first brick for the then new hospital. It was Mr Charles Orr, a former Mayor of the town, who got out the poster 'Your Hospital is in Danger' and filled the Civic Hall to capacity at the most famous public meeting Port Macquarie had ever had. Mr Digby, was Hospitals' Commission Secretary.

The Port Macquarie News well remembered this meeting. 'Port had a Camden Haven speaker well primed up, too well in fact. He said all the right things about why Camden Haven people would sooner have the hospital here but ended up with "there's no more wonderful site anywhere on which to build a HOTEL!!!"'

Matron Jobson saw the new Nurses' Quarters opened in March 1947, and the foundation stone for the hospital laid on the same day. It opened in October 1951.

## Hastings District Hospital

The Board of the above requests the pleasure of the company of

*Mrs. H. A. Mc Laren*

at the Laying of the Foundation Stone of the New Hospital and Opening of Nurses' Home, Port Macquarie, at 3 p.m.,

**Wednesday, March 26th, 1947**

by the Hon. G. A. Kelly, M.L.A., Minister for Health and Afterwards at a Banquet in the Oxley Hall at 6.30 p.m.

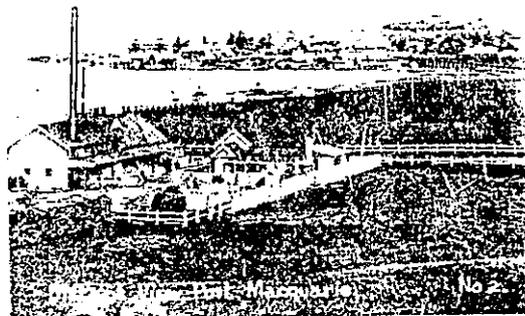
W. T. FOWLER  
CHAIRMAN

R.S.V.P., 19th March

A. Z. StJOHN  
SECRETARY

Water was one of the new hospital's early problems. Can you imagine running a hospital without hot water? Even the cold water supply to the hospital came from tanks: A big step forward came when engineers from an army camp at Wauchope during World War II ran a pipeline from Mison's Well to the hospital (which was down near the old butter factory pictured below, in the area where St. Joseph's Schools are now located) to the hospital.

This same supply served the camping area, hotels and motels for some years – and the chemists made a fortune from tummy aches!



'We seemed to just get over those early problems of the hospital closing down, when the depression came. The hospital was threatened with closure again, and there was a suggestion of nurses taking a wage cut.' Matron said.

The Port Macquarie News of August 1931 reported: 'During the year ended June 30, 1931, only 50 operations were performed at the hospital, 24 in major category, 26 minor. The medical officer's report said there were 182 admissions to the hospital during the year and that the number of patients for whom no charge was made totalled 45. He considered the number of deaths (16) high, "but six of these cases were in hospital less than 24 hours".'

The widely respected Dr Eric Murphy, who donated half of his salary earned at the hospital back to the institution during the depression years, reported: 'A district-wide epidemic of diphtheria in January and February emphasised the lack of isolation wards at the hospital. The women's public ward was used for isolation. It cost less than £1900 [\$3800] to completely run the hospital... Medical salaries totalled £87, nursing and general staff wages were £715, clerical £40. Groceries cost £200, and all other food -- bread, meat, milk and vegetables £179.'

Matron recalled during her interview that: 'she had started working for five shillings a week and the wages by the time the depression came weren't such a great deal more then.

'The people of the town and district did much to keep the hospital going with gifts of fruit and vegetables, eggs and poultry, and it was in those times we started our annual linen tea which kept the hospital in linen for many, many years.

'The Cottage Hospital struggled on and then commenced to grow. Two private wards were added (in timber) and then a soldiers' ward was added. The wooden buildings had sprawled fairly well before the new hospital (1951) and the new nurses' home (1947) were built.'

But that hot water was an intriguing story, and matron continues:

'Mr Alf Keena designed and built our hospital a hot water service, and the ingeniousness of it was admired by the hospital authorities and the Public Works people. Mr Keena and Mr Mansfield got an old boiler from the Hibbard Sawmill and Mr Kenny made the cover for it. Mr Keena then lagged it with flock from a mattress (I remember his wife complaining about that) and he piped hot water all over the hospital building and to the operating theatre. And those acetylene gas lights we had; you have no idea!'

Among Matron Jobson's 'firsts' at the hospital – was the first class of six trainee nurses, of these two managed to graduate as sisters.

(Pictured below with Matron in c1928 are: L to R. Sister Bartier (Mrs H Bourne), Matron, Nurse Muir and Nurse Smith).



In connection with the training of nurses she recalled an indiscretion on her part – ordering a skeleton without the authority of the board.

'The deceased was going at a bargain rate of £50 and matron just had to snap him up.

'The day the huge crate arrived everyone was wondrous including me, and when it was unpacked to reveal the full size skeleton in one piece one of the nurses promptly had hysterics.

'An anonymous donation of £25 relieved me of my trouble with the board and [in 1968] today the same skeleton is still used for training purposes at the hospital. But times have changed now.'

Some others to work with Matron Jobson during 1946 and 1947 were:

Board Members: William Fowler, President, Billy Ross, Ted Kennedy, Alf Keena with Dr. McLaren. The Secretary was Miss Alma St John.

Sisters: Fahey, Burns, Austin, Steel and others.

Nurses: Joy Frost, Toohey, Swanson, Esme Spokes, Reid, Val Keena, West, McRae.

Some of the hospital cooks: Mrs Keith, Mrs Denham, Mrs Dick, Esme Worth, Gladys Fowler and Elaine Fowler.

Wardsman: Ernie Gearing, scrubbed board floors.

Rouseabout: Les Whoolahan and Dar O'Brien.

Laundry: Gladys, Ellen and Joan Raddatz.

Matron Jobson was the first woman made a Justice of the Peace in this district.

#### A SECRET -- NOT VERY WELL KEPT

In 1968 Matron was asked 'Is your age still a secret?', 'Yes; it is still a secret. But I'll tell you this: I'll be a hundred some day; I'm getting on that way, and I believe a person's age depends entirely on the condition of the body and state of the mind. I had no time off at all for sickness during my 33 years at this hospital: I did have my appendix out, but that was while I was on holidays. Seeing a doctor as far as I am concerned is the worst thing in the world!'

Being matron meant more than nursing sick people in Matron Jobson's career. There was a

occasioned Matron Jobson taking a sister from the hospital with her and travelling to schools at Comboyne, Yarras, Byabarra, Telegraph Point and Rollands Plains. She made three hazardous trips to each centre, gratis, in her car provided by the hospital to give the children the necessary three injections.

‘During the war years I was the only nurse available to do the things that had to be done. I remember one trip I had to make into the bush to a dead man. It was night time, in the blackout days; we had to have those shields over our headlights, and the track was a muddy one.’  
It was not only in the course of duty, when called on by police or doctor, that Matron Jobson had gone out into the night; the people in a great many homes in Port Macquarie were grateful to her for services rendered one way and another.

Matron Jobson had many treasured possessions in her home on the corner of Kennedy Drive and Swift Street. Among them were gifts from many friends, gifts from the Board of Directors, from the Women’s Auxiliary, and public acknowledgement – in 1956 – from the shire and municipal councils to mark her retirement after 33 years of service.

She gave much of herself to this community of Port Macquarie and Matron Jobson’s imposing list of other community services are:

- Fifty years of service and membership of the Red Cross, acknowledged by the Red Cross Badge and Laurel Wreath, plus a citation.
- First President of the Women’s Hospital Auxiliary and continuing for 20 years; still a member in 1968.
- Past President of the Far West Children’s Health Scheme.
- **Original Member and Senior Vice-President of Hastings District Historical Society. (now Port Macquarie Historical Society).**

- Worked for Crippled Children’s Society.
- Patron of the Girl Guides.
- Foundation Member of the CWA.
- But it was to the hospital – and to the sick – that Matron Jobson devoted so many years of her life, for her nursing career began in 1918 and in all she gave 37 years to that noble profession.

For many years Matron Jobson reaped her rich reward in the great number of friends she had here and the tremendous respect that she had engendered throughout the Hastings River district for she was indeed a wonderful woman.

Recognition from Her Majesty the Queen filled her cup completely; it was but a just reward for duty nobly done.

(I, Gwen Griffin, was privileged to know this amazing lady and in her latter years used to take her Meals on Wheels, my children with me on most occasions. It was a great experience to stop awhile and chat to her about all topics and it was only having other meals to deliver that made us leave her wonderful company. Many was the time I left her meal to the last as she would say, ‘I don’t mind being last; their need is greater than mine and besides we can chat awhile longer’. A great lady I will never forget.)



**DEATH OF MATRON JOBSON**  
(Port Macquarie News 23 September 1983)

**FORMER MATRON DIES:** A Funeral Service was held at Cessnock on Tuesday afternoon for a former Matron of the Hastings District Hospital, Miss Vera Jobson. Miss Jobson was Matron at the hospital for 33 years until she retired in 1956. She died at the weekend [Saturday 17 September 1983] aged 95.

Although a patient at Cessnock House for the past four years, Miss Jobson financed the refurbishing of the ward about 18 months ago.

She was awarded the MBE in 1968 for her services to the Crippled Children's Association, Red Cross, Far West Health Scheme and the CWA Association. Miss Jobson was born at Cowra in 1888 and trained at Glen Innes. She is survived by her sister Mrs Ilma Brown of Cessnock and her brother Bert of Sydney.



### PORT MACQUARIE COTTAGE HOSPITAL

It is thanks to Matron Jobson that any of the Minute Books of the Cottage Hospital remain at all. She stated 'that minute books and other books of the Cottage Hospital were burnt by officers of the District Hospital soon after its establishment, but [she] managed to salvage some early minute books.'

The information given below (from notes by Ken Gollan, former member of this Society) is taken in part from a minute book covering the period 6 March 1905 to 1 February 1909.

**MANAGEMENT:** The hospital was administered by a committee elected by subscribers to the hospital. The necessity to be a subscriber as a qualification for office bearers was demonstrated in 1907.

At the annual meeting in January 1907 Mr George Harriott was elected to committee as one of three representatives from Lower Hastings.

At the first meeting of the committee held after the annual meeting Mr J White drew the president's attention to the fact that Mr Harriott 'had informed the collector Mr J Downes that [he] would not become a subscriber as [he] believed that the hospital should be self-supporting.' The President, Mr J Hibbard, stated that 'under the circumstances I am compelled to declare Mr Harriott's election illegal and I instruct the secretary to write to him and explain'.

The vacancy was filled by the next highest on the poll, Mr Frank Warlters.

**NOMINATIONS:** for office bearers were called via letters addressed by the secretary to subscribers, plus a stamped envelope for their reply. The Hastings District was divided into sections and each section nominated its

representative/s. It will suffice to quote the result of the annual meeting of 15 January 1908:-

**PRESIDENT:** Mr John Hibbard (unopposed),  
**VICE-PRESIDENTS:** Mr Frederick Hayward & Mr John Flynn (also unopposed).

**COMMITTEE:**

(A): **PORT MACQUARIE:** 5 required. Messrs D. Stewart, S Banks-Smith, Wm A Spence, Daniel McLaren, Wm Warlters (unopposed).

(B): **LOWER HASTINGS:** 3 required. Messrs Edwin Suters, Frank Warlters, Wm. Bransdon (unopposed).

(C): **UPPER HASTINGS:** 3 required. Messrs Geo Waldron, Geo Lindsay, H B Nicoll. (unopposed).

(D): **YARRAS:** 1 required. Mr John Bransdon (unopposed).

(E): **RAWDON ISLAND:** 1 required. Mr J. Downes Jnr (unopposed).

(F): **LOWER WILSON:** 1 required. Mr Wm Webber (unopposed).

(G): **ROLLANDS PLAINS:** 3 required. Messrs Henry Warlters, Phillip Coombes, James Gammack (unopposed)

(H): **AUDITORS:** 2 required. Messrs J Stewart, Rev. G M Torbett (unopposed).

(I): **TRUSTEES:** 5 required. Messrs John Hibbard Snr, F Hayward, Wm Spence, J E Flynn, A B Butler (unopposed).

After election the committee then proceeded to elect Treasurer (Hon.), Secretary (Paid), Medical Office (Paid), Nursing Staff (Paid), Works Committee, Finance Committee, Visiting Committee...

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References

- Files of Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc. Records and Research Section.
- Port Macquarie News -- Port Macquarie Historical Society
- Jobson Family Files -- Port Macquarie Historical Society
- Valeric Ward nee: Keena.

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Compiled by Gwen Griffin.

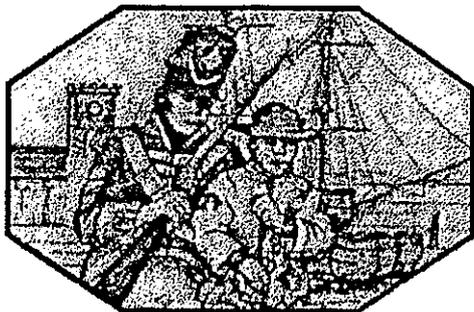
Cover Design: Val Broxson

February 1999

for

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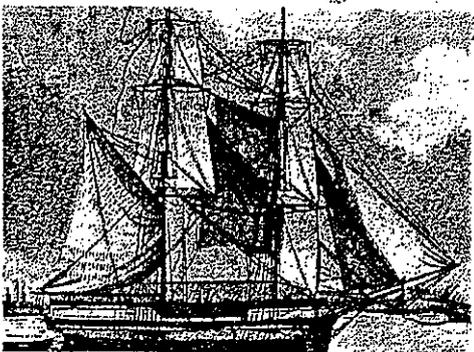
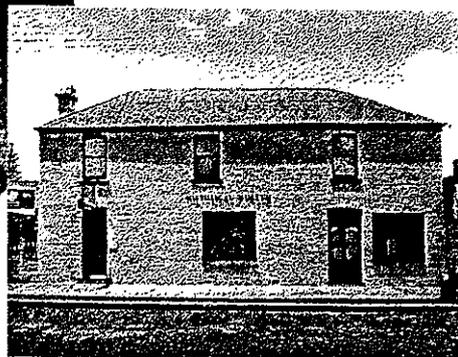
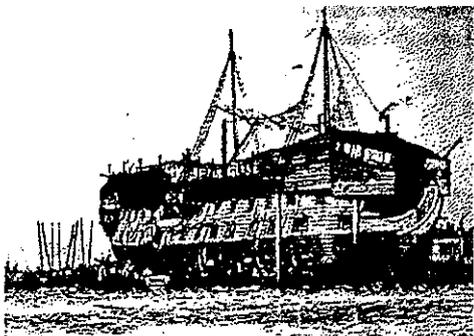


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 3 No 2 June 1999

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



The Other Commandants



# THE OTHER COMMANDANTS OF PORT MACQUARIE

## CAPTAIN JOHN ROLLAND

He was originally stationed in Van Dieman's Land where his services and exploration in the Central North were commended by Lieutenant Governor Colonel Sorrell. A soldier of the 3rd Regiment of Foot, the Buffs, he was the first of six officers of that East Kent Regiment who would serve as Commandants at Port Macquarie between 1824 and 1827. Probably no British regiment played a greater part in determining the future of Port Macquarie than the 3rd Regiment of Foot, the Buffs, who had arrived in New South Wales in 1821 for Garrison and Police duty in the Colony and to relieve the 48th Regiment.

When Captain Allman handed over the settlement to Captain John Rolland and his fellow officer, Lieutenant G.R. Carmac, who was his Engineer and Inspector of Works, he little realised how short a time Captain Rolland would serve.

John Rolland's military career commenced as a Cornet in the 22nd Light Dragoons engaged in India and on his return to England in 1821 saw him appointed Lieutenant. He purchased a Troop in the 3rd Light Dragoons then transferred to the 3rd Regiment following a period of half pay. After serving his time in Van Dieman's Land where he was commended for his services, his appointment to Port Macquarie arose from the transfer of the 48th Regiment to India.

As a 37 year old Captain he still had a promising career. He saw the Port Macquarie settlement emerge with military barracks and quarters, stores and dwellings, an agricultural centre of grain crops to support it and supplement the government stocks at Settlement Farm. He also reported that fertile land on the Wilson River was discovered and reported this to the Colonial Secretary following his inspection.

On 27th April 1824 Major Goulburn, the Colonial Secretary, wrote to Captain Rolland informing him that Rev. Thomas Hassall had permission to proceed to Port Macquarie on the *Sally*. Rev. Hassall, Port Macquarie's first Chaplain later

submitted a report that:

*'He had received every attention from Captain Rolland, and that the school was in good order. The hospital was also well run...I married three couples, baptized six children, and buried five persons'.*

It was during this year that many convicts, as in Allman's time as Commandant, escaped.

The most audacious escape of all in the closed Penal Settlement was when seven prisoners escaped in the private supply vessel *Isabella*. It had been anchored in the harbour and after overpowering the deputy Pilot and the remaining crew, they cut the cable and took the ship away in a strong southwester. [Read about this in 'Port Macquarie the Windingsheet' - a Port Macquarie Historical Society publication.]

It was after this that Governor Brisbane ordered a guard of soldiers be sent on every commissariat trader. Brisbane was also worried about the growing cost of maintaining the penal settlement and to improve efficiency, Rolland suggested rigid economy should be practised in the issue of stores. There were 1,111 convicts at Port Macquarie. Additionally, he said, the settlement needed to aim for self-sufficiency, by producing much of its own requirements, and by increasing exports.

John Rolland's command however, lasted only six months, not long enough to implement significant changes in the conduct of the settlement. Some of Rollands' remarkable understanding of the prisoners under his charge is given in his last despatch before he was fatally struck down with fever. He had written to Sir Thomas Brisbane stating:

*'Instead of feeling remorse for their crimes, they seem to be impressed with the idea that they are more unfortunate than culpable, and desire to evade every employment which may be profitable to the Government to which they are indebted for their bread,... Many, too, merely from finding that food and clothes are supplied in equal quantities to the idle and to the dissipated, to the industrious, and to the temperate, are indisposed to labour for that which they already consider is their own. To correct the propensity to avoid work, from whatever motive it springs, is exceedingly desirable; and although in the absence of all other means, that revolting remedy, the lash may sometimes be applied*



with advantage, yet I conceive that the frequency of punishment lessens its effect.

*Solitary confinement may work powerfully on the man not destitute of reflection; the pains of the treadmill, an excellent punishment, may terrify the idle while it inures him to the fatigues of industrious occupation, to which he was before, perhaps, unaccustomed. But punishments, in whatever variety inflicted, will, I fear, prove insufficient when the hope of reward, that strongest stimulus of human exertion, is altogether removed.*

*From the most authentic accounts which I have been able to obtain of the best regulated prisons, the immediate recompense of a better diet, and the ultimate one of a mitigation of punishment, are held out as the rewards of industry and good conduct. It is to the want of these stimuli to exertion that I chiefly attribute the difficulty of making a return for our expenses'.*

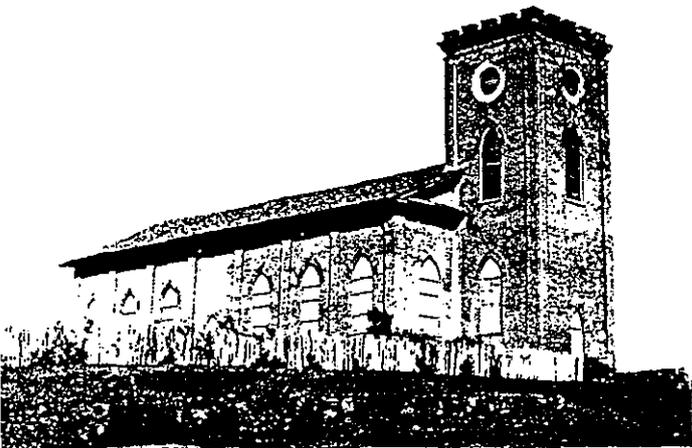
On 16 November 1824 Commandant, Captain John Rolland died, and the Sydney Gazette of 2nd December 1824 reported within his obituary that: *...The Regiment has sustained, in him, an irreparable loss, and the Service has been deprived of the most promising officer. He was 37 years old.*

On 2 November Lieutenant G.H. Carmac also of the 3rd Regiment (Bufs) reported that Rolland was ill and on 20th reported his death...saying also...*As there was no dedicated Burial Ground, it was considered the precincts of the Church, now in progress, was the rightful place where his remains should be interred.*

His grave is still visible in the Church of St. Thomas' in the front South-eastern Pew.

**LIEUTENANT G.R. CARMAC.**

Lieutenant G.R. Carmac, also of the 3rd Regiment of Bufs, acted as Commandant, after the death of Captain Rolland, but only for one month until December 1824. It was he who laid the Foundation Stone for St. Thomas' Church, (pictured below), on the 8th December 1824 in the presence of Rev. Thomas Hassall and the inhabitants of the Settlement, both bonded and free. To date (1999) this stone has never been located.



During Carmac's short time he sent a sample of sugar and rum to Sydney from canes grown from those propagated in Allman's time and he proceeded to have the newly discovered Rollands Plains converted to an agricultural establishment. He received a reply on 15 December 1824 from Major Goulburn which informed him that as a result of the samples of sugar and rum sent from the settlement, the Governor had determined to furnish immediately the means to produce in the year 1826, 200 tons of sugar, and 10,000 gallons of rum.

By January of 1825 Captain Henry Gillman was appointed as the next Commandant.



**CAPTAIN HENRY GILLMAN**

Captain Henry Gillman, in charge of the Penal Settlement from January 1825 to February 1826, was the most controversial of Port Macquarie's twelve Commandants. Prisoner violence, plundering by bushrangers, personal clashes with officers, characterised his command. His most bitter rows were with the Agricultural Superintendent Parker, ordered off the settlement, and the Sugar Plantation Manager, Thomas A. Scott, whom he suspended. In return, however, this belligerent, though effective officer came in for some criticism over a tobacco seizure, and was censured by the 1828 Commission of Enquiry for shipping a quantity of furniture to Sydney for his personal use.

Early in 1825, a shortage of lime at Camden Haven, the source of the penal settlement's supply, led Gillman to search for a new shell bank. The lime needed for Port Macquarie's own buildings, particularly for the three-feet thick brick walls of St. Thomas' Church, (started 1823), was also required for Sydney Town. Masters of all vessels returning to Port Jackson, after transporting convicts to the settlement, were told to backload with as much lime as possible. Meanwhile the chain gang were on the job building a road from the Settlement to the Limeburner's station.

Violence erupted at the settlement during Gillmans's time, firstly in February 1825 with



William Hodges being shot and the murder of William Elliott -- these stories can be read in "Port Macquarie the Windingsheet".

Bushrangers, escapees and runaways from Moreton Bay arriving in the settlement were all causing problems for Henry Gillman. He took the opportunity to send a dispatch complaining that his military force was insufficient for their many duties, as large vessels with provisions were being unloaded outside the bar, guards were needed for the security of the boats discharging their cargoes. When a gang of bushrangers broke into the house of Sugar Plantation Manager Thomas Scott and stole some property, Captain Gillman gave a graphic description of the gang leader, Gough, who was caught:



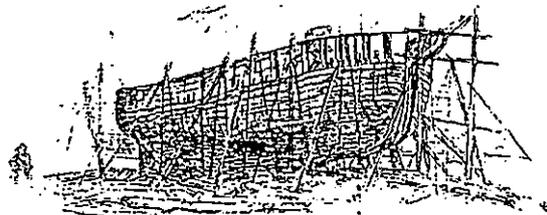
*A man on whom severity and rigour are alike unavailing. Notwithstanding the severity of the punishment he has undergone in the Colony -- exceeding 3000 lashes -- and having had, at this settlement, his lower jaw shot away by the military, and privation at Macquarie Harbour, from whence he lately escaped, yet outrage at all times seems to be most congenial to his temper and feelings.*

Although women convicts had been sent to the penal settlement as early as 1822, when Captain Allman had been in command, it was not until February 1825 that Port Macquarie's infamous prison, known as The Female Factory, a title given to it by Captain Henry Gillman, was built, just behind where the present St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church stands today. Gillman suggested that the women should be employed in dressmaking and asked for wool and other materials to be sent from Sydney. Nothing is known of the quantity, or quality, of the dresses produced.

April 1825 saw the ill-fated cutter *Sally* and a private schooner, *Mary Ann* wrecked on rocks south of the bar. A third vessel, the private cutter *Brisbane*, was badly damaged. After the vessels reached the outer harbour, a sudden wind shift, forced them on to rocks. Commandant Gillman reported. 'Most of *Sally's* iron-work, rigging, spars, copper and stores, were saved before she broke up'. *Mary Ann* quickly went to pieces. The vessels were wrecked in the same place where the *Lady Nelson* was driven in April 1821.

Among all of Henry Gillman's achievements, his

pride and joy was a ninety-two ton brig, *Mary Elizabeth*, built under his direction and completed at Port Macquarie in October 1825, which arrived safely in Sydney, on December 26, on her maiden voyage. John Holmes Overseer of Shipwrights at Port Macquarie who helped to build and sail the vessel failed to get a Ticket of Leave as promised by Gillman, (probably in a moment of exuberance). Gillman wrote to the Colonial Secretary saying Holmes was a man of good character and had not been convicted at Port Macquarie of any crime. But Governor Darling refused in January 1826 saying: 'The exertion Holmes has shown during the time he has been in the Colony is not sufficient to repair the very bad character that accompanied him from England.'



In the winter of 1825, Rev Thomas Hassall, Port Macquarie's Chaplain, in Sydney whilst on leave from the Settlement, made a complaint to Governor Brisbane that female prisoners were allowed to 'roam at large' on the settlement. Gillman was angered that Hassall had gone behind his back and sent a lengthy dispatch explaining various problems that were happening with the women convicts, and that in the six months the Factory had been completed no more than six women had arrived under conviction, and no dressmaking materials had been sent.

During 1825 Mrs. Henry Gillman had sought a Ticket of Leave for Fanny Williams, a well-conducted prisoner assigned to the Gillman household for some time. However Governor Ralph Darling refused the request on the ground that the period of sentence Fanny had served was too short.

By December 1825 it was reported that Rev. Hassall would not be returning to Port Macquarie.

It would appear Governor Darling decided he would tighten up the regulations, and in January 1826 questioned Gillman as to why he had authorised the marriage of the two prisoners, Benjamin Davidson and Ann Clifton, in May







*and he zealously and faithfully discharges them'. Neave's salary was increased from £50 to £75 a year for 'as long as Port Macquarie continues as a penal settlement.'*

It would seem that the Pilot's drinking problem surfaced on 8 July. When he landed from the *Sydney Packet*, Commandant Wright reported he was *'in a state of inebriety'*. Wright told the Governor that the Pilot's conduct had *'heretofore been exemplary. He is conscious of the enormity of his offence and had since expressed great contrition.'*

The Commandant was told to *'use his discretion in continuing him or not'*. Samuel Wright decided against sacking Neave.

With Governor Darling discovering that there were 'upwards of 1600 prisoners' at the settlement, 500 of whom he believed had been transported there under what he termed 'illegal sentences'. In April 1826 Major Henry Gillman and William Carter, Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, were sent to Port Macquarie to select 500 prisoners worthy of remissions. Gillman was well suited for the job, having long observed the prisoners' conduct while Commandant. Gillman and Carter were paid £70 for their five-weeks work in selecting prisoners who deserved a mitigation of punishment.

So in July 1826 Commandant Samuel Wright was told to prepare for the withdrawal of a large number of other prisoners (some had already been removed to Port Stephens for assignment to the Australian Agricultural Company).

Port Macquarie was the most expensive penal station in the Colony costing £1,600 annually to maintain, compared with Norfolk Island £1,200, King George's Sound, £1,000, and Moreton Bay, £800.

In 1826 more than twenty convicts from Port Macquarie, the sugar plantation, the agricultural farms and road gangs escaped. Early in 1826 a prisoner Thomas Kelly accused of attempted rape was escorted to Sydney by Brook Crippen, Overseer of the Bricklayers building St. Thomas' Church, where he was charged before the Criminal Court.

Ralph Darling, during an investigation of the

general laxity and system of indulgences pertaining at Port Macquarie, which he felt was anything but a place of punishment, found that extra provisions to the prisoners at Port (under the heading of 'indulgences') exceeded one thousand a year. The object was, it would appear, to keep the prisoners quiet by indulging them as much as possible.

He immediately asked Commandant Wright for a list of prisoners kept in irons. Wright sent a list with the comment that none of the prisoners sentenced to labour in irons was allowed to have them off, although a few of them, as a reward for good conduct, had been granted the indulgence of wearing light irons.

During Wright's time as Commandant large amounts of cedar were being cut and the owner of the private cutter *Brisbane* took 4,600 super feet in payment for having transported 1,600 bushels of urgently needed lime from a new Camden Haven bank to the settlement. In March, more than 800 logs of 'good cedar' were on the beach at Port Macquarie awaiting shipment and, Commandant Wright told Darling, 15,000 feet of sawn cedar plank could be supplied monthly and double that quantity if more sawyers were released from the sugar plantation. *'But at present there is no cedar plank for exportation owing to the number and magnitude of public works carrying on, namely the Church, a large Granary and extensive additions to the prisoner's Barracks'*.



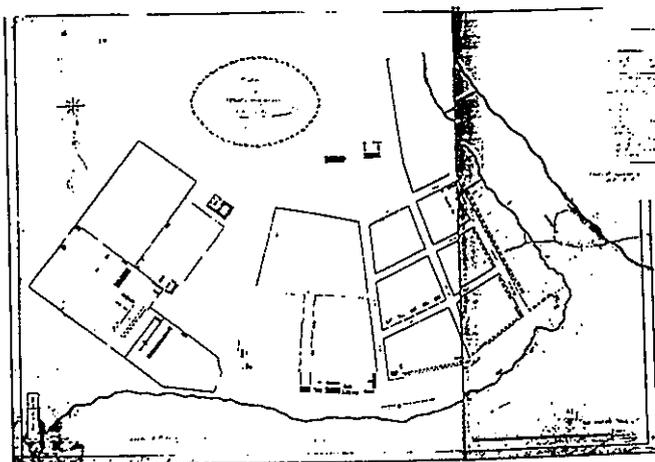
Wright was considering the erection of a parsonage, (which had been mooted by one Commandant to another), and which would require 1,500 super feet of cedar costing £12.10s. In March 1826 the Chief Engineer Alex Kinghorne, estimated the cost of a parsonage house at £837. About 15,000 super feet of other timber, costing £130, would be needed for the roof and floor of the building.



During the time when William Parker arrived at Port Macquarie cultivation was confined to the immediate vicinity of the settlement, with indifferent success. Travelling by boat, he looked for more suitable arable land and chose two sites. One was situated two miles distant (later named Settlement Farm), and the other eight miles higher up the river, known as St. Rocks, now Sancrox. Within a few days 200 convicts were felling trees and burning off. It seemed a badly managed operation, as no attempt was made to remove the stumps of trees in cultivated paddocks, which remained there till 1826, when Commandant Samuel Wright issued a Settlement Order for their removal.

During Wright's term as Commandant the construction of the Church proceeded well. On 7 April 1826, Wright wrote to Chief Engineer Kinghorne: *'For the information of the Venerable the Archdeacon, I transmit herewith the ground and elevation plans of the church erecting at this Settlement, and to report thereon that I have no doubt this edifice may be rendered fit for the celebration of public worship in the course of 2 months, provided the original design is not executed of building a gallery, which I have reason to believe will not be required for that purpose. However a beam has been placed in the walls and which will render the construction of a gallery, at any future period (if found necessary), easily accomplished'.*

During his brief period of service at the settlement, Captain Wright had a plan of Port Macquarie prepared, dated March 1826, (shown below), which embraced most of the settlement, and gave the location and use made of lands and buildings, reveals that considerable development had taken place since the date of the earlier plan of April 1824. Also, by then The Crescent had been renamed Brisbane Street and Henrietta Street had become Elizabeth Street. Presumably, Wrights Creek then acquired its name although neither the creek nor the burial ground which borders it appear in the plan.



Captain Wright was replaced by Archibald Clunes Innes who came to the settlement on 20 November 1826.

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### ARCHIBALD CLUNES INNES

Much has been written about Innes during his time at Port Macquarie, (see our publication 'Riches to Ruin'). For this very short mention we will concentrate on his time as Commandant. Captain Archibald Clunes Innes (Pictured on front cover), first came to Port Macquarie with the 3rd Regiment of Buffs to serve only five months as Commandant. He was twenty six years of age. During his term of office, Innes appears to have administered the settlement in a practical and humane manner.

Among his reports concerning public works was one dated February 1827 stating that the building of the church of St. Thomas', 'was almost finished', and later that 'it had been completed'. Another report dealt with the sugar works at Rollands Plains, and within another he referred to a successful cotton crop.

Innes then tackled the perennial harbour problem. His proposal, which was carried into effect, was that warping buoys should be anchored seaward off the bar to enable vessels to be hauled out of the river mouth against strong winds or adverse tides.

His actions were not free of the Governor's critical scrutiny and various settlement matters were required to be explained. A letter carried by the brig *Amity*, written on 23 April 1827 by Alexander Mcleay the Colonial Secretary (and later his father-in-law when he married Margaret McLeay), informed Captain Innes that it was His Excellency's pleasure that he should return to Sydney by the same vessel.

Before leaving the port he was to transfer control of the Settlement to Lieutenant Owen, whom the Governor had appointed to succeed him. To that gentleman, Innes was to administer the Oaths required to permit him to act as a Magistrate of the Colony.

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**LIEUTENANT THOMAS H. OWEN**

As Acting Commandant, Lieutenant Owen the last of the 3rd Regiment of Buffs to serve from April to October 1827, signed the plans for St. Thomas' Church as Acting Engineer supervising the construction.

*Trusty*, the sloop which carried lime from Camden Haven to Port Macquarie, disappeared on 16 September 1826 with the loss of all hands. At this time Acting Engineer T.H. Owen who was temporarily in charge of the settlement, reported the loss on 9 October: *'No intelligence having been received of her after she left Camden Haven with a cargo of lime for this settlement, it is conjectured that in one of the late severe gales, she must have foundered.'*

On 3 July 1827, Colonial Secretary McLeay communicated to Lieut Owen that the Government approved of the girls at the Port Macquarie School making articles from material supplied and selling them for the benefit of the scholars.

Another vessel *Regent Bird* was launched on 30 July 1827, having been built at Port Macquarie to replace the *Trusty*. The name was derived from the gorgeous yellow and black bird still frequenting the rain forests of Port Macquarie.

Sugar growing was still causing a concern, and with it a constant battle with the elements and the aborigines dropping firesticks as they walked through the canefields.

The last of the Buffs left with Lieutenant Owen. Their control saw a discipline exercised in a humane manner notwithstanding the abuse it created.

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**CAPTAIN CROTTY**

Captain Crotty of the the 39th Regiment was the next Commandant from October 1827 to July 1828. He was tough, methodical and investigative. In the nine months he controlled the penal station, Crotty instigated Thomas A. Scott's dismissal and sacked the free Overseer, John Hillis, and the Chief Constable George Fenwick Jackson. His investigations resulted in the appointment, in June 1828, of the wide-ranging

Commission of Enquiry into irregularities at the settlement. Following the Commission of Enquiry at Port Macquarie in the winter of 1828, there were quick changes in the command of the penal station, reflecting either Darling's poor judgement, or his dissatisfaction with the calibre of a succession of officers.

Captain Crotty after nine months service, was recalled on 8 July. Lieutenant Thomas Meyrick had temporary command until 5 August when Captain Phillip Aubin of the 57th Regiment assumed command of the settlement for eight weeks. His successor Captain Robert Hunt was in charge for three weeks.

Then came stability. Captain Henry Smyth succeeded Hunt and was the longest-serving of Port Macquarie's commandants, his tenure of office being three years eight months. His time as Commandant will be told at a later date with his own story. On Ralph Darling's instructions, Colonial Secretary Alexander MacLeay wrote to Smyth on 7 November 1828:

*'From every-day testimony, it is evident a system of relaxation, petty traffic and abuse has gradually crept into the Settlement, which will require your utmost vigilance to detect and counteract. His Excellency relies on your sparing no effort to secure so important an object and restore the Settlement to its proper character as a place of punishment.'*

Even though the Settlement was thrown open to free Settlers in 1830, Smyth, the last Commandant served until June 1832, with the first Resident Magistrate, Benjamin Sullivan J.P. administering Port Macquarie from June 1832 to July 1836. The last of the Military left in 1847.

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*Compiled by Gwen Griffin: Editor,*

*Cover Design: Val Broxson. - Artist: Joan Cook*

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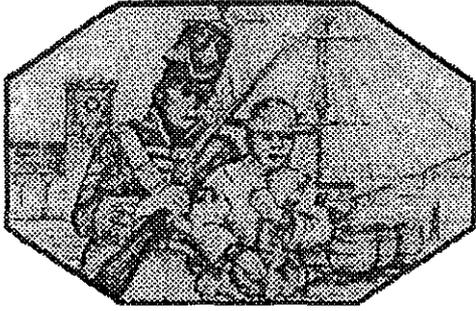
*Hon. Secretary: Mrs Val Broxson*

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations.

In the second section, the author provides a detailed breakdown of the monthly budget. It includes categories for housing, utilities, food, and entertainment. The goal is to allocate funds wisely to avoid overspending and to save for future needs.

The third section covers the topic of debt management. It suggests creating a repayment schedule for all outstanding loans and credit cards. Regular payments are crucial to avoid penalties and to improve one's credit score.

Finally, the document concludes with advice on emergency fund preparation. It recommends setting aside a portion of each month's income to build a safety net for unexpected expenses. This financial cushion can provide peace of mind and prevent a financial crisis.

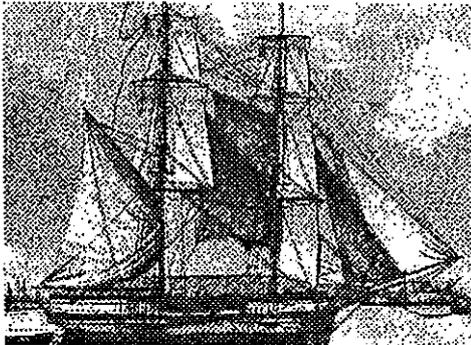
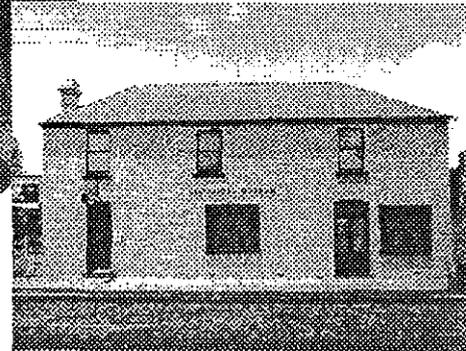
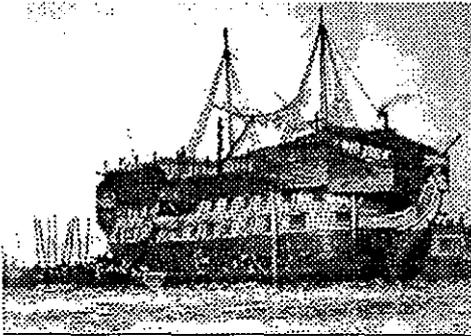


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 3 No 3 September 1999

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Thomas Cook,  
Convict 'Special'

# THOMAS COOK CONVICT "SPECIAL"



## PORT MACQUARIE 1835

On the very wet Good Friday morning of April 1st, 1988, the 'William the Fourth', a replica of the famous sailing steamer of that name, steamed over the bar at Port Macquarie at 7am and docked at the jetty at the foot of Hollingworth Street. She was commenced as a Bicentennial project at Clarence Town NSW in 1983 with her keel being laid in 1985.

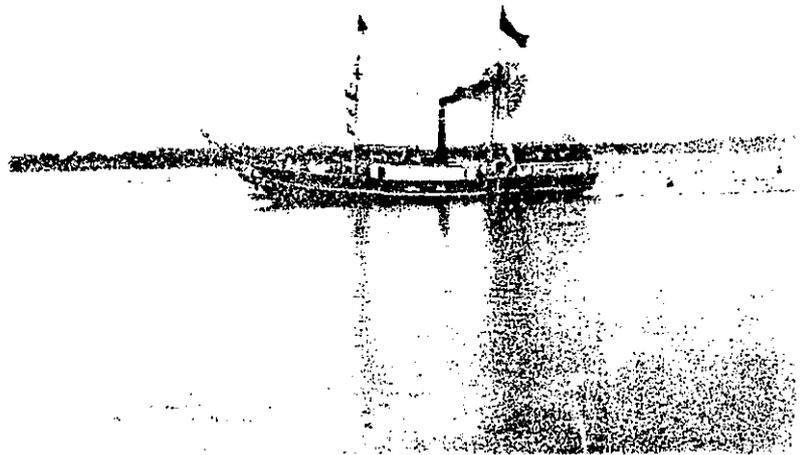
Her mission, during her short stay of this Bicentennial Year, was to undertake a series of short trips on the Hastings River on behalf of her sponsors, the Rotary Club of Port Macquarie West. It was also an opportunity for the people of Port Macquarie to recall the first historic crossing of the harbour bar by the first steamship of that name to be built in Australia over one hundred and fifty years ago. The first 'William the Fourth' was built at Clarence Town by Marshall and Lowe for Joseph Hickey Grose and was launched on 22 October 1831.

The opportunity to sail on her was an unforgettable and pleasant experience for me. As I stood on the deck of this surprisingly quiet vessel drawing closer to this glorious place, I had time to wonder whether the same emotions stirred in the hearts of those convicts who had crowded the deck of its counterpart during the many trips it made during the years 1835 to 1837. It was then that my thoughts turned to Thomas Cook, one of the thirty male prisoners being conveyed from the hulk 'Phoenix' in Sydney on the 10 November 1835.

### *Who was Thomas Cook?*

Thomas was the third son of John and Mary Cook, who resided with their family of eight children in Whitchurch, a small country town in Shropshire, England. (This town in Salop, derives its name from a white church built by the Normans. Its history extends from the time of the Roman occupation when it was known as Mediolanium and in King Alfred's time, Westune. In Roman times the town lay between Deva (Chester) and Uniconium (Wroxeter).

Like his brothers and sisters, Thomas was baptised in the Parish Church of St. Alkmunds. His eldest brother, John, was baptised in 1808, George 1810, then Thomas in 1812, followed by Joseph 1817, Mary 1820, Henry 1824 and Elizabeth 1828.

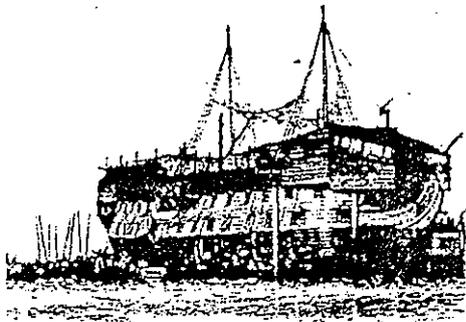


'William the Fourth' replica at Port Macquarie 1988  
(photo taken by Gwen Griffin)

The Cook family must have been of some standing in Whitchurch, for Thomas obtained a position in the Solicitor's Office of William Hill Watson in May 1826, when he was 14 years of age. He followed this occupation even after the death of his employer in 1828, when he was employed in the office of Benjamin Larkin, until 1830.

Unfortunately, he became too friendly with Thomas Salisbury Richardson; together they concocted and wrote two menacing letters to William Churton, an Auctioneer in Whitchurch. Churton was not prepared to put up with that nonsense and took immediate action which resulted in Richardson receiving two years imprisonment and Cook fourteen years and transportation.

So the particulars of this Attorney's Clerk became another record in the Convict's Indent. It states that he was five foot nine inches tall, of ruddy freckled complexion, with a large burn scar on each side of his mouth under the right and over the left side. His hair was dark brown and he had brown eyes. The Indent Clerk noted too, that he could read and write, that he was a Protestant and single.



Convict Hulk

After being confined to the convict hulk 'Leviathan' and employed in the dockyard at Plymouth, Cook embarked on the transport 'Surrey' for Port Jackson under the superintendence of the Surgeon, Superintendent Colin Arnold Browning.

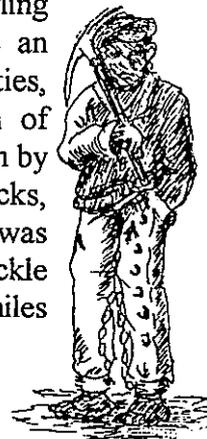
(The 'Surrey' was a 461 ton schooner built at Harwick, England in 1811. She sailed from Plymouth on 17 July 1831 and carried 200 male convicts, only losing one - a tribute to her Surgeon Superintendent.) Browning took an interest in this young fellow Cook and he became his clerk and dispenser until their arrival in Port Jackson. Probably it was Browning, who influenced Cook's appointment later in the Office of the Principal Superintendent of Convicts at Hyde Park Barracks.

By 1833, Cook must have realised the hopelessness of his situation and turned to drink for consolation. On April 1st, he was sentenced to seven days on the treadmill for drunkenness and was sentenced on the following May 15th to be confined to the cells on bread and water, for arriving back to the Barracks in the early hours of the morning.



Treadmill

He was developing a distinct dislike for authority and after an incident of supposed insubordination, which involved such trifling acts of behaviour as failure to salute an officer or take his hat off to authorities, found him appearing before a Bench of Magistrates charged with insubordination by the Superintendent of Hyde Park Barracks, Ernest August Slade. For this he was sentenced to a road gang at Honeysuckle Flat on the Bathurst Road, ninety-one miles from Sydney.



As his sentence had not expired, Cook was transferred to another road gang with five hundred other convicts at Mount Victoria, constructing the Victoria Pass. Fortune shined on him briefly, he was called to Sydney for six weeks during the absence of a book-keeper.

When he returned to the road gang he found the conditions much improved, with the convicts enjoying juicy steaks and chops and no one wondering where these tasty morsels came from. This luxury was supplied unknowingly by a nearby property owner who soon had the police at the camp seeking the thieves. Notwithstanding all Cook's protests of innocence, he and four others were impounded in a stockade in chains and denied blankets for warmth. They were barely alive fourteen days later.

Progress on the road continued and after a few months at the advent of the harvest in the Central West, each convict gained a respite from the gang and was assigned to a free settler to assist with this important work.



Twelve months later Cook had wangled a job in the office of the Surveyor-General. However it was not for long, as he seemed to be seeking trouble. For assaulting a fellow prisoner, he found himself again in the stockade in chains and another twelve months with the road gang.

When his sentence came to an end in September 1835, he was transferred to Hyde Park Barracks suspected of forging certain documents that could lead to early liberation of some of his fellow prisoners in the road gang. The authorities were not amused and had little compassion for this troublemaker and Cook found himself imprisoned on the hulk 'Phoenix' in Lavender Bay. (Lavender Bay is named after Lavender, the hulk's boatswain. It was first called Hulk or Phoenix Bay.)

It was here in Australia's first prison hulk that Cook found the company of an old English gentleman most cheering. Neither were interested that their floating gaol was once a condemned convict ship that had been severely damaged by striking the rocks known as the 'Sow and Pigs' in 1822, or that she had been purchased for one thousand pounds by the colonial authorities to be converted to hold prisoners destined for the penal settlements. Both knew they were in gaol and their future unknown.

So they remained until the 10th November, 1835, when both were detailed for despatch with others to Port Macquarie, on the 'William the Fourth'. After being inspected on their arrival by the Military Commander, Captain William Lonsdale, of the 4th Regiment, (Lonsdale had married Mrs Geary's sister before Cook arrived in Port Macquarie. It was thought that he was in charge of the military detachment at the settlement), they were then ordered to a road gang at Rollands Hill, (Cook's diary entry probably confuses it with Rollands

Plains, the site of the Government Agricultural Farm.)

Again harvest duties in the area withdrew him from the road gang to assist at Captain Geary's property 'Glencoe' on the upper Wilson River. Geary had been appointed Harbour Master in 1832 and soon after his arrival to the district had acquired this property on 2,500 acres. Apparently, he was a kindly man and showed consideration to Cook when he was stricken with a severe attack of dysentery.

Thomas Cook later wrote a book, 'The Exile's Lamentations' and in this he describes how he had been called to the settlement to receive a letter from his parents, at the time he was recovering from his illness. He tells how he was overtaken on his journey to Port Macquarie by Captain Geary, who questioned him on how he felt and advised him to call on the Surgeon, Dr DA Ackroyd. Apparently Dr Ackroyd had a reputation among the prisoners as a 'butcher', and now as the effects of the complaint was wearing off, Cook decided not to put himself at the mercy of this man. This was obviously a mistake which was to lead him into further trouble and create embarrassment to Captain Geary.



It came to a head when Cook had rejoined the road gang and Captain Geary had casually mentioned to his brother-in-law, Captain Lonsdale, that he had returned Cook

to it because of his debility from dysentery. Lonsdale questioned Geary's failure to apply to the surgeon for relief and to Geary's astonishment, Lonsdale said he would bring forward a charge against Cook for feigning sickness, with Captain Geary as his prosecutor. Cook was soon made aware of the trouble ahead when he was brought before Lonsdale in irons.

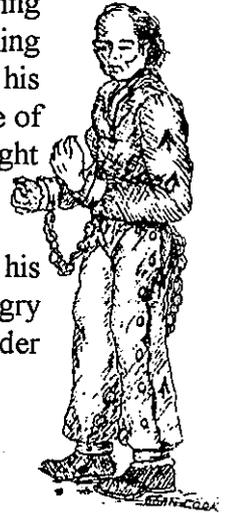
He describes this meeting and how his protests were brushed aside by an angry Lonsdale who in a voice like thunder shouted:

*I will deal with you, you scoundrel,  
I'll fleece you.*

He was then sent to Roach the Scourger, whose strict orders were that Cook was not allowed to shelter from the hot rays of the sun or speak to the gaol gang, or straighten his back. Fortunately for Cook, Roach commiserated with his pleas that the punishment would lead to his destruction. Together, and by skilful use of the cat-o'-nine tails by Roach, they managed to convince Lonsdale that the punishment had been carried out.

It was this that convinced Cook that he had to escape and on the following day he absented himself after dinner, determined to make a break to Sydney, three hundred miles away. Having travelled eighty miles in only six days, he found himself in a thick forest near Dingo Creek in the Manning area. Compelled by heavy rain to seek shelter, he was then confronted by a party of aborigines whose warlike appearance sent shivers of fear down his spine.

His rescue from the Aborigines by a party of six constables under Stephen Partridge the Superintendent of Convicts, sent to find and return him to the settlement, meant that all his hardships were now renewed. Again he



was able to win the confidence of his superiors and Partridge was to show great kindness to him and managed to get Captain Lonsdale's permission to have Cook employed to procure gravel for the walks in Lonsdale's garden. So pleased was the Captain with the result, it brought Cook further consideration, and he was transferred to the Department of Works.

It was here that he was again made aware of 'man's inhumanity to man', while carrying sawn timber from the saw-pits and stacking it in the timber yard situated on the waterfront, close to the northern end of Munster Street, Port Macquarie. He described how he saw a number of blind men manacled to a chain and marched for two or three days to and fro on the causeway facing the windows of the Commandant's quarters. He writes in horror of the effect that the flagellation of an insane man and a blind one on the 'triangle' had on him and questioned the purpose of enacting these unheard of cruelties, and the sanity of this outburst:

*He would make the deaf hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see and the foolish to understand, by means of the triangles and the cat o' nine tails.*

It was as though this social order was creating a new genus of mankind.

Although not a member of the gaol gang, he was able to observe that it consisted of about forty men in irons guarded by armed prisoner constables and occupied in the task of removing a bank of earth to form a road opposite the Commandant's quarters. Among these too, punishment was liberally meted out and hardly a day passed without someone being brought to the triangles. He heard of George Giddons who fired a pistol at the constable Melbourne in attempting to kill him, and how he and his three accomplices were sent to Sydney; Giddons



to be hung and the other three to Norfolk Island for fourteen years. (You can read about this episode in 'Port Macquarie the Windingsheet'.)

Cook's second attempt at escape was short and dramatic. About 7.30 pm one evening, he escaped from the yard of the Prisoners' Barracks, having made plans with a friend to stow him away on a vessel about to leave the port. When he reached the beach a constable surprised him but fortunately for Cook, the shot that the constable fired missed him. He quickly retraced his steps back into the barracks before the bell rang for the eight o'clock muster into the sleeping wards.



His next attempt to escape on the 5 February 1836 saw him flee towards the mountains in the west. About a mile and a half from the settlement he met a sawyer who told him to collect, from his house nearby, bread and supplies to carry him to the Australian Agricultural Station, one hundred and ten miles further on. (This was probably the present town of Stroud.)

At the sawyers's house he met a man who had escaped a week earlier who begged Cook to take him with him as he was frightened that he would be lost in the bush if he went alone. Together they set out. When at the foot of the Broken Bago mountain, Cook's companion injured his ankle and they were forced to rest a few days in great fear of being apprehended or killed by the aborigines.

Taking the sun as their guide, they moved on to the Manning River which divided the district of Port Macquarie from that of Port Stephens, where they met an aboriginal man with a boy. Asked of what tribe he belonged and what was his name, the aborigine answered, *Tribe sit down, gunyah merry close up*. Knowing then that the tribe was close by they thanked the man and gave him

tobacco and feeling free of the Port Macquarie tribes and the police, they crossed the river and headed towards the Australian Agricultural Company's station.

They parted company at 'Tellegerry' which was the residence of the Australian Agricultural Company's Superintendent of Stock. It was situated two miles from Stroud on the Karuah River. Cook had decided that he should pose as a free man to earn enough for a passage to Sydney by obtaining work in the Maitland area.

Cook found work splitting slabs for a rough building for Mr Andrew Lang. He had only been employed for about three weeks when he was recognised by a man named Shea, an overseer for Mr Terry Hughes. He did not give Cook away but he was shortly taken into custody again, not as an escaped felon, but as John Jones, a wanted convict with a fifty pound reward on his head, who resembled Cook in appearance.

Constable McDougall took every care that his worthy prize would not escape and chained him to a beam of his house and manacled him to his servant for the night, and in the morning, marched him ahead of him on the road to Maitland. Again the opportunity to escape presented itself when they stopped at a waterhole for a drink. Cook was able to make good his escape by making a dash into the scrub, where he remained hidden during the night from the mounted police as they galloped in every direction looking for him.

Still manacled with the basils of the handcuffs embedding themselves into his wrists, he found an old settler whose son had a great regard for Cook. He broke them with a hammer and although he offered him shelter Cook refused his offer for he realised that he could get fourteen years imprisonment in return for his generosity.

Again he took to the bush like a hunted animal and after two nights in the mountains at Wallorobba, he met a shepherd who gave him some tea. Thinking he was safe at last, he was off his guard when two armed constables arrested him. They escorted him to Maitland where he appeared at the Quarter Sessions in May 1836 and on a plea of guilty of forgery was sentenced to transportation to Norfolk Island for life. Fortunately for Cook, Alexander Maconochi's Mark System which encouraged good behaviour had superceded the cruel and brutal system of the past and on the 6 October, 1841 he was returned to Sydney.

In a despatch to Lord Stanley dated 31 May 1844, the Governor Sir George Gipps, reported in a return of convicts supposed to have escaped from the Colony during 1843, that Thomas Cook had again absconded from Port Macquarie on the 21 August, 1843. His movements after that lie in mystery. Perhaps one day there will be an answer.

GWEN GRIFFIN

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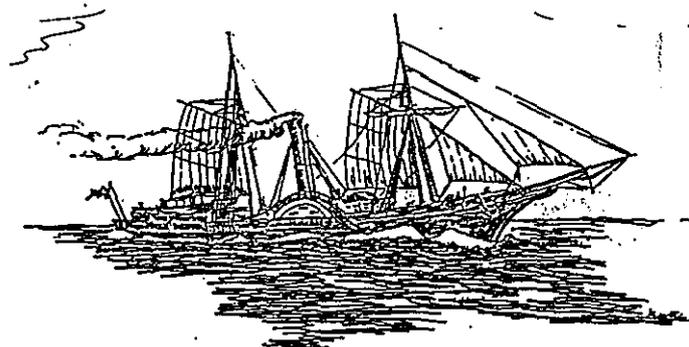
Compiled by: Gwen Griffin.  
Artist: Joan Cook  
Cover Design: Val Broxson  
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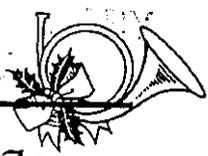
# "WILLIAM THE FOURTH"

Convicts conveyed from the Hulk in Sydney to Port Macquarie.

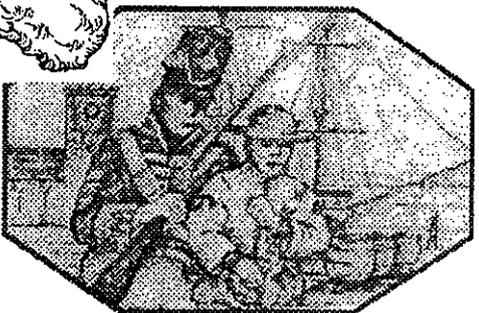
10th November, 1835. 30 Prisoners - Male.

|                 |                 |                     |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| ALLEN           | John            | "ENGLAND"           |
| ATKINSON        | James           | "GUILDFORD"         |
| BAILEY          | George          | "ALBION"            |
| BREWER          | Edward Campbell | "ROSLIN CASTLE"     |
| BUSHELL         | John            | "HENRY PORCHER"     |
| CANDY           | Robert          | "LADY HAREWOOD"     |
| CLUFF           | Thomas          | "TELLICHERRY"       |
| COCKROFT        | Isaac           | -                   |
| COLLIER         | John            | "MARY ANN"          |
| ** COOK         | Thomas          | "SURREY"            |
| DALEY or NUGENT | James           | "BACKWELL"          |
| DEVINE          | John            | "ENGLAND"           |
| EUSTACE         | John Clare      | "JOHN"              |
| FALLOW          | Patrick         | -                   |
| GORDON          | James           | "BACKWELL"          |
| GREEN           | John George     | "PEGASUS"           |
| HAY             | James           | "ASIA"              |
| JACKSON         | John            | "MORLEY"            |
| JONES           | Alfred          | "ENGLAND"           |
| KING            | William         | "ENGLAND"           |
| LOUGHRAY        | James           | "LADY NUGENT"       |
| LOVELOCK        | James           | "ENGLAND"           |
| LUPTON          | William         | "ENGLAND"           |
| PINK            | William         | "MARQUIS OF HUNTLY" |
| RYAN            | Timothy         | "ELIZA"             |
| SHAW            | Benjamin Ashby  | "ROSLIN CASTLE"     |
| STANTON         | John            | "MARY ANN"          |
| TAYLOR          | Thomas          | "ROYAL ADMIRAL"     |
| WALSH           | Martin          | "ROSLIN CASTLE"     |
| WICKS           | Richard         | "ARAB"              |





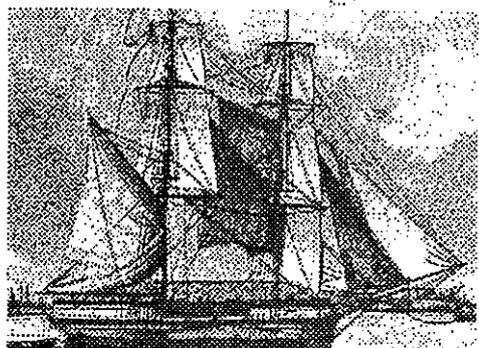
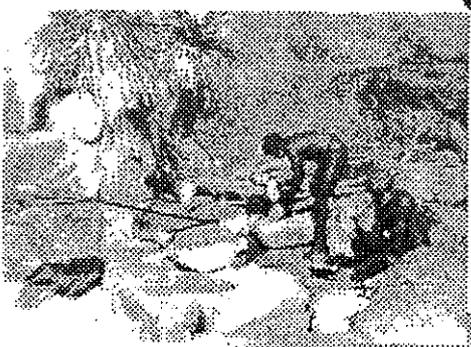
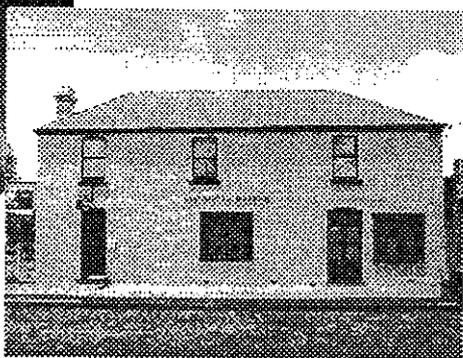
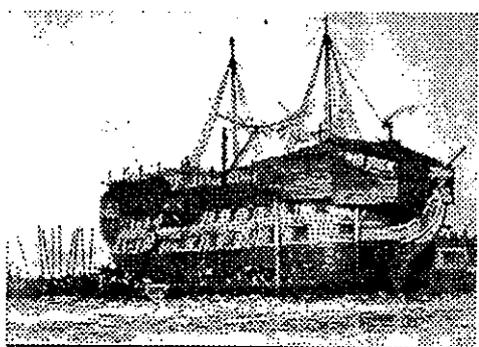
Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.



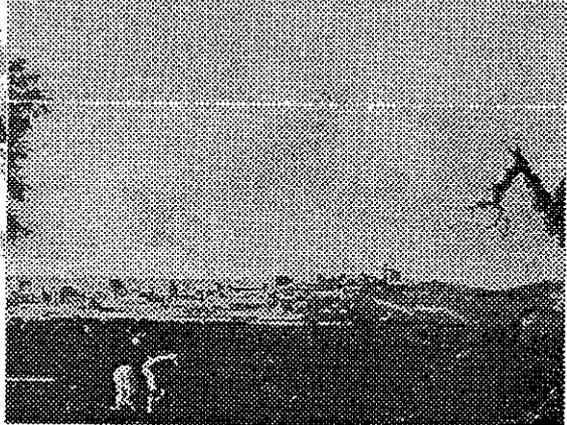
# Chronicle

Vol 3 No 4 December 1999

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Joseph Backler  
Convict Artist

## JOSEPH BACKLER CONVICT ARTIST

Joseph Backler, was an artist and landscape painter who had arrived in Australia on the ship *Portland* on 26 March 1832, to serve a life sentence.

Aged 19 and single, he could read and write, was Protestant, with his native place given as London. Five feet five inches tall, with a fair and freckled complexion, sandy hair and hazel eyes he had a scar on the top of the forefinger of his left hand. He had not been convicted of any previous crimes.

Joseph was prosecuted on 30 June 1831 from the Newgate Gaol for the County of Middlesex, England held at the Old Bailey, on three indictments. Each of these contained four counts of 'forging two orders' worth respectively ten pounds and five pounds, for the payment of money and attempting to pass them knowing them to have been forged. He was found not guilty on the forging charge but guilty of passing forged orders. He was originally sentenced to hang, but this was later commuted to transportation for life.

He was described as a labourer, with his parish of residence given as St Anne, Westminster, St Andrew, Holborn, and St Luke, Chelsea.

It would appear that the not guilty verdict for forging was ignored, as his indent and other places still recorded his crime as forgery, instead of guilty of passing forged orders.

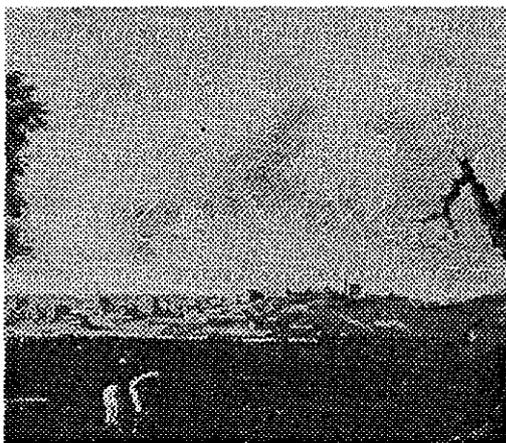
On arrival he was assigned to Major Mitchell for draftsman duties in the Surveyor General's Department.

A year later he committed his first colonial misdemeanour, by 'absenting himself' which led to his being confined in Hyde Park Barracks for three days. He was finally transported to Port Macquarie by the *Isabella* to serve a sentence of nine years.

During his time at Port Macquarie, Backler painted at least five landscapes of the settlement. Most of these are undated, and could have been painted over several years. These paintings, said to be 'stylistically derived from English naïve or provincial art', are intensely interesting as they illustrate the buildings only a few years after Port Macquarie was thrown open to free settlement in 1830, having been a closed penal settlement since 1821. They are mostly painted from the western and northern shores.

The originals of these oil paintings are housed in the Mitchell Library, and at first were attributed to George Edward Peacock until one was cleaned in January 1965, when the signature of 'J Backler' was found incised into the paint layer in the lower right hand corner. Stylistic similarities between it and other paintings suggest they were by the same artist. Three are of Port Macquarie from almost the same position; a few changes were made to some of the buildings and the people. These differences were not at first noticed by the library until, on a recent trip to Sydney, I drew their attention to the man on the horse, believed to be Major Innes. He is leaving the township in one painting and coming into the town in the other. This discovery now makes five paintings of Port Macquarie by Joseph Backler.

Thomas Dick, a descendent of a pioneer family of Port Macquarie, had a great interest in the history of the town and took many photographs. He presented two of these paintings to the Mitchell Library in memory of his parents. How he came by these is not known. Another painting was donated by Sir William Dixon.



Early Port Macquarie (undated)

Despite his talents Backler was not able to keep out of trouble and again appeared before the court. At the Police Office, Port Macquarie, on 26 April 1834 he was tried for 'applying for and receiving firearms illegally under false pretences'.

Frederick Finley, Special Constable and Overseer in charge of the old Bullock Station stated:

'On Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. the prisoner accompanied by John Donohue, late special constable, now in the Iron Gang, met me on the Carriage Road to the Bullock Station and the prisoner stated he wanted my musket as, that of Johnson of the Flagstaff where he, the prisoner was staying, was away and that Johnson was in the habit of shooting wild fowl for the officers of the settlement for which purpose it was required.

'I gave it to the prisoner, from his expression it is required. I understood

him to mean he had proper authority to ask for it; I believed from the manner in which the prisoner had/had been employed as Tutor in the settlement, that his motives were not to be suspected and I gave him the musket accordingly. I have not received back the musket. I gave it to the prisoner openly in presence of John Bushell and several others stationed there.

I afterwards found the musket had not been taken to the flagstaff to do which was the prisoner's pretence in procuring it. I enquired for it of the Overseer or Constable at the flagstaff, Johnson alias Longston.

Signed: Fredk. Finley

Sworn before us

26 April 1834

Signed Benjamin Sullivan JP, Archd.  
C. Innes JP, Wm H Geary JP.'

George Johnson alias Longston, per; ship *York*, Constable at and Overseer of the Flagstaff, having been sworn states:

'I did not commission the prisoner at the Bar at any time to receive a musket for me. I am not aware that he used my name for a musket; he has not taken at any time (to my knowledge) a musket to the Flagstaff.

Signed: George Longston.

Sworn before us [as above]'

Having been found guilty Backler was sentenced 'to be worked in irons for six calendar months'.

A few days later he was again before the court, on 30 April 1834, being charged with: 'making away with Govt. property entrusted to his charge'.

Frederick Finley, Special Constable, having been sworn states:

'On Wednesday last 2<sup>nd</sup> ult. the prisoner at the Bar applied to me for a musket I had in possession appertaining to the Police, stating that

it was required for the use of the Overseer of the Flagstaff. I accordingly gave it supposing he had due authority to make that application, I have not received the musket back again, nor do I know what has become of it.

Signed: Fredk. Finley.

'Sworn before me, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1834

Signed: Benjamin Sullivan JP'.

He had several other court appearances, with various punishments.

29 June 1835: 6 months in irons for absconding.

30 September 1835: 50 lashes for cutting his irons.

17 April 1836: 6 days in the cells for being out after hours.

29 July 1836: 50 lashes for leaving his station.

John McKorkell had been transported to Australia on the *James Laing*, and had committed a colonial offence, which resulted in him also being sentenced to seven years transportation to Port Macquarie. McKorkell had been assigned to E W Hardy Esq.

Joseph Backler, at this time was on loan to E W Hardy and both were charged on 29 July 1836 with 'leaving their station without permission'.

Edward W Hardy Esquire, being sworn, states: 'On Sunday morning last the prisoners at the Bar left my farm shortly after sunrise, and did not return until four o'clock in the afternoon - they had no permission to be absent from either myself or my Overseer'.

Signed: E W Hardy.

The sentence was ordered by Benjamin Sullivan JP: Fifty lashes each and returned to their master.

It appears that Backler received the fifty lashes with McKorkell being recorded as having received only twenty-five lashes. No reason is given.

Both were then up before the court again with a second charge of 'disobedience of orders'.

E W Hardy Esq. being sworn states:

'On Sunday last finding that the prisoners at the Bar had left my farm, I tracked them to the hut of a Sawyer named Smith in a neighbouring brush. I enquired of Smith if he had seen the prisoners, when he informed one that they were there at work for him in the brush, and that he would not have employed them had they not stated that I had given them permission to hire themselves out on that day, in order that they might procure extra rations.

'I know that they were at work for I heard their voices, it was only a fortnight ago that I acquainted the prisoners that they were not on any account to work for anyone but myself.

Signed: E.W. Hardy

Sworn before Benjamin Sullivan JP  
29 July 1836'.

Both men were found guilty and sentence was ordered by Benjamin Sullivan JP: 14 days in the cells and returned to their Master.

26 July 1839: Joseph Backler received 14 days in cells for harbouring a female assigned servant.

15 April 1840: 3 days in the cells for going into a public house without leave.

It would appear Backler was applying for a Ticket of leave at this time as the following despatches of the Governor of New South Wales in July--December 1840, show:

'From Lord J Russell, Downing Street,  
London, 9 July 1840.

Sir:

I transmit to you herewith for your consideration an application addressed to the Secretary of State for the Home Dept. by Mr. Oswald, M.P. on behalf of Joseph Blacker [sic] who was transported to N S W in year 1831 for forgery.

'Joseph Backler: *Portland* (1) 1832.  
Police History:

'15 May 1833: 3 days cells,  
absconding, Hyde Park Barracks.

'26 April 1834: 6 months in irons:  
Applying for and receiving firearms  
illegally – minor false pretences – Port  
Macquarie

'29 June 1835: 6 months Irons,  
absconding Port Macquarie.

'Joseph Backler *Portland* assigned on  
his arrival viz. April 1832 to Major  
Mitchell for his department. Now at  
Port Macquarie since 1835 [he was  
actually here earlier than stated].

'Joseph Backler would not be eligible  
for a Ticket of Leave until January  
1844 – but for punishments he has  
received he would have been eligible  
in March 1840'.

Enclosed in Lord Russell's despatch on  
28 June 1840, was the following  
memorandum supporting Backler's  
application for a ticket-of-leave.

'My Lord, I have the honour to lay  
before your Lordship the case of  
Joseph Backler, and to request that you  
would be pleased to take into your  
Lordship's consideration.

I have etc, James Oswald.'

## 'MEMORANDUM

Joseph Backler was transported to New  
South Wales in 1831 for a Forgery  
committed in London of no great  
extent.

'He was about 18 then of age. His  
education had been good, born of  
parents in a very respectable rank of  
life, but had never benefited from  
paternal oversight or example. His  
abilities are very good, especially in  
the way of painting on glass, in which  
department at Art his father employed  
himself in London.

'He is now at Port Macquarie, and the  
length of his stay there it seems entitles  
him, according to ordinary practice, to  
some relief or remission from the  
severe Rules of that Settlement – if his  
conduct have deserved it.

'His maternal relations, who are highly  
respectable, have lately heard from  
him expressing contrition for his past  
life and giving the best promises for  
the future. They have no knowledge of  
his conduct or present character except  
from his own letters, but are  
exceedingly desirous that any relief or  
remission or benefit to which these  
may entitle him, in the opinion of those  
who adjudicate in such cases, should  
be extended to him with a view to  
promoting his comfort, and as far as  
possible his morals improvement, and  
to effect this it is much desired by  
them that the attention of the proper  
authorities were kindly given to his  
case. His maternal relations live within  
this neighbourhood.

Glasgow, June 1840'.

Another New South Wales Governor's  
despatch, January 1841: a letter to the  
Rt Hon Lord John Russell.

'My Lord,

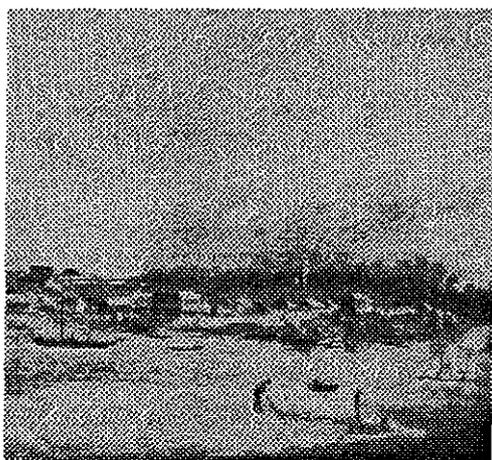
I have the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch of 9<sup>th</sup> July 1840, No. 100, enclosing an application from Mr Oswald MP in favour of a convict named James Backler.

'This prisoner is attached to the Surveyor General's Department and had been in the District of Port Macquarie ever since his arrival in the Colony – his conduct, however, has not been such, I regret to say, as would justify my recommending him for any present indulgence.

'He has been twice sentenced to serve in Irons (a period of six months each time) first, for obtaining firearms illegally and under false pretences, and secondly for absconding.

I have etc, George Gipps'.

Backler's name was recorded as being at Port Macquarie for the Convict Muster of December 1837.



Port Macquarie from North Shore (undated)

It would appear, though, that by February 1842, the Governor had been persuaded to change his mind and Backler was granted a ticket-of-leave for the Port Macquarie district. This was later extended to include Sydney in 1843.

When asking for his ticket-of-leave Backler had stated, 'his continued

good conduct, together with the circumstances of his being an artist by profession and the probability that his services as such would prove an acquisition to the public at large'.

Maybe the female assigned servant who caused the earlier charge of harbouring a female was Margaret Magner, a convict who arrived from Ireland on 3 April 1837 on the *Sarah and Elizabeth* to serve a sentence of seven years transportation to Australia for 'robbing from a person'. Margaret had been tried at the Central Criminal Court on 18 November 1836. Aged 20, she could read, was Protestant, single, and a housemaid from County Cork. She was rather short at only four feet ten inches tall, and had a ruddy freckled complexion, brown hair and grey to blue eyes. She had lost a canine tooth on the left side of her upper jaw, had JG inside her lower left arm, JC on the upper and a W inside her lower right arm.

We do not know why she was at Port Macquarie, but on 7 May 1842 she married Joseph Backler at St Thomas' Church, with the ceremony being performed by Rev. John Cross in the presence of Martin Graham and Katherine Woodison.

Joseph was aged 29 and Margaret 25 with both of them having by this time received a ticket-of-leave. Margaret's (in January 1841) was for the Port Macquarie district but this was altered to Sydney on 3 March 1843 'for so long as she continued to live with her husband – Backler'. As yet no children have been found to this couple. Margaret received her ticket-of-freedom on 27 February 1843 after which no further trace of her has been found.

Joseph and Margaret apparently moved to Sydney where Joseph established himself as an artist. He later travelled to country districts in search of commissions for portraits.

From his house at No 6 Domain Terrace, Joseph advertised he was a 'Portrait, Miniature and Landscape painter in oil and watercolours on very moderate terms'. He also 'made it his constant study to merit the continued approbation of his patrons and employers'.

One of his employers was Messrs Cetta and Hughes of George Street where he was employed until approximately July 1844. They said he was 'unexceptional' in his conduct, which assessment was then included in a petition he sent to the Colonial Secretary for a conditional pardon.

He pleaded that he had a wife to support, and enclosed various recommendations of his character, but to no avail.

During 1844 Joseph had been involved in insolvency proceedings.

In 1846 the New South Wales Governor's Despatches state:

'List of 500 persons who have applied for Second Class Conditional Pardons to take effect in the Australian colonies including New Zealand, who are recommended by His Excellency, Sir George Gipps as worthy of that indulgence under...Act of April, 6<sup>th</sup> Victoria, Cap 7...

16. Joseph Backler, *Portland* (1) 1832, Life'.

It would be mid-1846 before he received his Second Class Conditional Pardon.

On 1 September 1846 he was advertising in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that he was in Goulburn and that he had painted interesting views of Goulburn which were much admired. He even went as far as putting in a locomotive with its train which the locals felt was 'too much in advance of the times and that they would have liked it better had it been a little higher coloured'. In that district he stated that he was being successfully engaged in painting portraits and that many ladies and gentlemen of that area and the surrounding districts had sat for the purpose of having their likenesses taken. Before this he had been in Yass.

Backler entered a portrait in the First Exhibition of the Fine Arts held in Sydney from June to August 1847. The art critic in the *Sydney Morning Herald* said [he] 'should study good paintings if he wishes to excel as a painter of good portraits'.

Following on from this Backler seemed to be caught up in artistic controversy and on one occasion it was suggested that a picture 'was a copy'. Backler took exception to this and wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* in June 1850 saying that this was 'insulting and unjust'.

In the 1860s he travelled to northern New South Wales and Queensland and it was there that he painted a portrait of Sir George Elliott, the first speaker of the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

He painted portraits and landscapes in Tenterfield in the 1860s and some of these were still in Tenterfield in 1917.

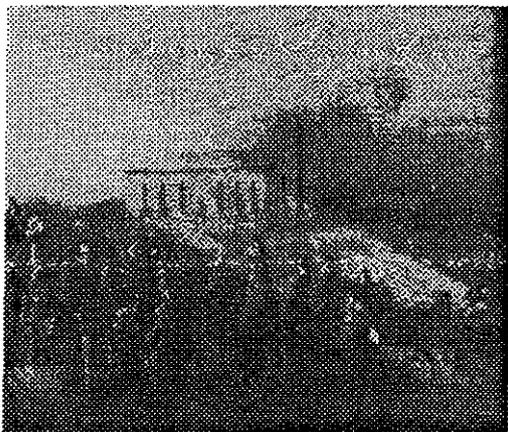
Perhaps he again visited Port Macquarie. To our knowledge at present, there have not been any

portraits found of Port Macquarie people.

With the very early landscapes of Port Macquarie there is a painting of St Thomas' Church during the period Major Innes was living at Innes House, which is also attributed to Backler.

His painting of St Thomas' is almost identical to a black and white photograph presented to the Mitchell Library by Miss Amy Warlters, of Wauchope, in memory of her mother Eleanor Warlters. This photo shows a half-round brick wall on the eastern end of the church where the carriage of Major Innes entered to allow the ladies to alight, and not show their petticoats. In Backler's painting this wall is missing and there is a slight difference in the area where this once was.

It is known that this wall was removed during the 1830s when Backler was serving his sentence at Port Macquarie. Maybe there is another painting by Backler, not yet found, which was later photographed by the Warlters family.



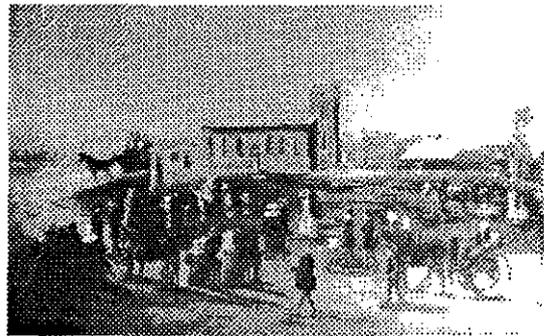
The Backler Painting of St. Thomas' Church

Backler's landscape paintings of Port Macquarie show the early settlement during his time here. They could possibly be the first visual record of the waterfront and St Thomas' on the hill well before the cutting and the 'big red bank' in front of the Historic

Cemetery was formed by the Ironed Gang. (c.1843).

An exhibition is shortly to be held in Sydney, at the Mitchell Library, showing all the Backler paintings. This is a 'must see' exhibition, particularly his portraits which were ever only meant to 'capture the likeness of his subject'. However, it seems as though most of his subjects were very pleased with this convict artist.

Joseph Backler died in Sydney in 1895; his father was registered as Joseph and his mother as unknown.



Walters' photo of St. Thomas' Church

Colour prints of these paintings of Port Macquarie are now on sale at Port Macquarie's Historical Society Museum.

GWEN GRIFFIN

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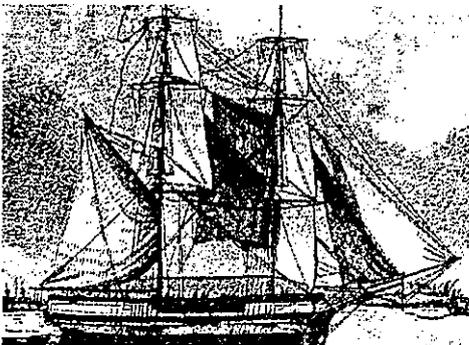
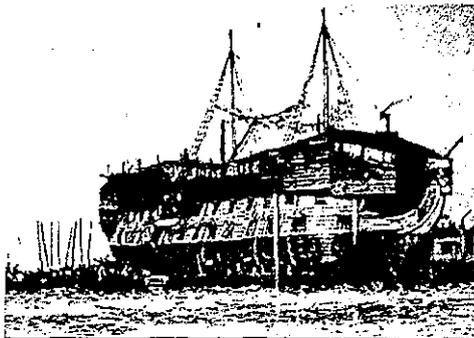


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 4 No 1 March 2000

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Jane Mary Nunn  
Port Macquarie's own Centenarian

# *JANE MARY NUNN PORT MACQUARIE'S OWN CENTENARIAN*

Jane Mary Nunn, the eldest daughter of Mr & Mrs James Blair, was born at the home of her grandfather, Mr Jeremiah Warlters, *The Royal Oak Inn* Short Street Port Macquarie on 28 May 1854.

Her father, James Blair, had come to Port Macquarie from Scotland at the age of eight years with his parents James and Mary (nee Young) Blair and other members of the family in 1839.

Her mother, Elizabeth, was the fourth daughter of Jeremiah Warlters and his wife Jane Rebecca, daughter of Captain William Stewart.

Her great great grandfather, Frederick Meredith had arrived in Sydney on the ship *Strius* with the First Fleet in 1788, and after returning to England came back on the ship *Bellona* as one of the first eleven free settlers to the Colony of New South Wales.

At the age of two years Jane Mary moved with her parents to *Palm Cottage*, at the Glebe, a property owned by the Rev. Wm. Purves. She resided there until nine years of age, when her parents acquired their own home, *The Homestead*, in 1863 on the corner of Savoy Street and Old Lake Road.

Her education was commenced at the Ladies Private School in the Presbyterian Church. Later she attended St Thomas' Church of England Day School, where her teacher was Mr Norton, and she

finished her education at the Public School with Mr Lobban as her teacher. Jane was always very fond of gardening and took a keen interest in all the shows where fruits and flowers were exhibited and she won many prizes.

When eighteen years of age she joined St Thomas' Church Choir and also assisted with Sunday School classes and all functions connected with the church. She remained a member of the choir for 26 consecutive years with her sister Eleanor being organist for 23 years during the same period.

A very competent dressmaker, she made all manner of garments and did this on a large scale until she was 35 years of age.



JANE MARY NUNN

On 23 February 1889 Jane Mary, then aged 34, married William Dudley Nunn, a farmer of Port Macquarie aged 38. The service was conducted by Rev. Robert Davidson at *Laura Cottage*, according to the rites of the Presbyterian Church. Their witnesses were J Mulligan and Ellen Blair. William, born in Bombay, India, was the son of William John Nunn, late Lieut. 26<sup>th</sup> Camerons, and Fanny nee Tilbrook.

William and Jane made their first home at *Sticklers*, a small cottage by the racecourse. Later they purchased a property fronting the Wauchope Road whereon they built a home *Wyoming*. This home with additions was still standing in 1962.



JANE MARY & WILLIAM DUDLEY NUNN

Their married life was of short duration with William dying in the Hastings District Hospital, Port Macquarie, on 15 June 1907. There were no children from the marriage.

After her husband's death Jane disposed of the property and returned to the old home in the Glebe to care for her aged parents and three bachelor brothers. Her mother lived to the age of 80 and her father to 92 years. After they and her brothers had passed away she left the old homestead and had a small cottage built nearby where she resided alone for many years.

At the age of 90 years she went to live with, her sister-in-law, Mrs Grace Blair and her niece Lorna (Mrs Harry Goodwill) who cared for her very kindly until the time of her death.

On the occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and in the years following, the Ladies Guild of St Thomas' Church gave her a small party at the home of Mrs Blair, which she thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated.

#### JANE MARY TURNS 100

On her 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary her party was held at the parish hall; invitations were sent out and relatives attended from all parts of the State.

The following report of her party was printed in the *Port Macquarie News* of 3 June 1954:

#### 'MRS. NUNN ENTERTAINED.

'Displaying remarkable interest in the proceedings, Mrs Jane Mary Nunn, of Glebe Road [Lake Road] celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday at a party in the Church of England Sunday School Hall on Friday afternoon last.

'The party was arranged by the members of the C of E Women's Guild, and the hall was overcrowded to overflowing. Relatives came from many parts of the State to be present at the party.

'Mrs Nunn received a hearty welcome when she arrived at the party, which was enlivened by her more than occasional interjections during the speechmaking and reading of telegrams.

'Mrs Nunn almost brought the house down when Mr Phil. Lucock's telegram [Federal Member for Lyne] was read; 'Oh, yes', she said, 'I have to vote for him to-morrow.'

'Introduced by her husband, the Rector, Mrs Gerry, as president of the Guild, told how Mrs Nunn had been first given a party by the Guild when she was 90, and one each year since. Matron Jobson and Mrs McLaren Snr. had always accompanied them to the party which was always held at Mrs Blair's home. The Guild extended good wishes to Mrs Nunn and hoped to see her go on having many more happy birthdays.

'Among the congratulatory telegrams received were from The Queen, the Governor General, the Prime Minister, and the Premier.

'The Queen said she was much interested to hear Mrs Nunn was celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, and sent her congratulations and best wishes.

'The Governor-General said his wife joined him in sending congratulations; Mr Menzies said it was a grand occasion for Mrs Nunn, and Mr Cahill wished her continued health.

'The Municipal Council, Oxley County Council, the Post Office Staff, the P & C sent telegrams along with hundreds of others. Mr C Blair read the congratulatory telegrams and Archdeacon Gerry the cards.

'There were messages from all parts of the State, and from Queensland.

'Mr O Gustafson, of Sydney, and formerly of Port Macquarie, referred to Mrs Nunn as dear cousin Jane, and said what a joy it was for his wife and daughter and himself to be present, and wish the centenarian happiness and health and many more happy birthdays that they might keep coming up from Sydney for them.

'Mr Gustafson outlined the family history, and said it was remarkable that Mrs Nunn, now 100, was of a fourth generation of Australian families.

'On the Blair side, James Blair came here about 1840, said Mr Gustafson, but Mrs Nunn, listening attentively, said it was in the 1830's.

'James Blair, after a five months voyage on the *Hero of London* arrived here from Edinburgh. He was accompanied by his wife, four daughters and two sons. Of the sons, James married Elizabeth Warlters, and in their family of six sons and three daughters was Jane Mary, the Mrs Nunn who was their guest that day.

'Descendants of three of the sons - James, Tim and Robert are members of many well-known families in Port Macquarie to-day.

'On the Warlters side, Jeremiah of Herefordshire came here in the *City of Edinburgh* in 1824. He married Jane Stewart, the daughter of Capt. Wm and Caroline Stewart, and their family



Patron: Major General Gordon Lindsay Maitland, AO OBE RFD ED (RL)

## PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

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## NEWSLETTER March 2000

### President's Report

We have had a busy start to the year so far. At our Coffee Morning we were honoured by a visit from our local MP, Robert Oakeshott, MLA, who presented us with a new flag. Old members leaving and new people joining. Several new items of equipment have been installed, together with attendant hiccups. The Records and Research department is bustling with renewed enthusiasm, with computer-literate members volunteering to do some typing. The Future Development Committee has met again and we soon hope to review the remainder of the draft plan from Mr Ed Clode, heritage architect.

Please support our outings – Alice goes to a great deal of trouble to organise them - without her tireless efforts we probably wouldn't have any.

### February Coffee Morning report

It was 'full house' in the Meeting Room of the museum for this month's Coffee Morning, hosted by Ila Brennan.



Alice Walker, Connie Fuller, Joan Cook and Ila Brennan

President Joan Cook had the happy task of wishing three members a happy birthday, one of whom, long-serving member Connie Fuller, cut a cake to celebrate her 80<sup>th</sup>.

Presentations were made to long-serving members, Ken and Audrey Huxley, who served 15 years on the desk, Ken also formerly doing duty as our Treasurer. Others to receive awards were Eileen Hooker and Avis Whan.

Local MLA, Robert Oakeshott, presented the Society with an Australian flag to replace the one stolen from the flagstaff on New Year's Eve. He thanked members for their efforts in researching the facts in Port Macquarie's history.



President Joan Cook being presented with a new flag by Robert Oakshott, MLA

The speaker for the morning was Clive Reeve, who recounted how he went on a walking tour in the Cradle Mountain area of Tasmania. This is part of the high plateau country, which encompasses a large National Park. The group of 8 people, each carrying a 9-kilo pack, set out to walk 70 kms over 5 days. It took some time to adjust the packs to be able to walk with relative comfort. The weather is very changeable in this area, having only 32 clear days each year.

Three guides accompanied the group, carrying packs of 20 kilos, including food supplies. The track varied, but was always steep. Each night the party sheltered at a hut where there was gas heating but no electricity. Meat was provided for the evening meal on the first 2 nights only.

Along the way were many small lakes, with spectacular scenery. Wildflowers were in abundance along the track, including the Tasmanian waratah, which differs markedly from our NSW variety, especially in size. On the third day it rained and became cold, with snow falling during the night. Boardwalks protected the

terrain in some areas and made the going relatively easy. In other places the track led over the roots of trees, which was very hard on the feet. Clive concluded that the walk was a challenge but he found the experience in the wilderness worthwhile. Ila thanked Clive for a most interesting talk and made a small presentation to him.

## March Coffee Morning



This month's Coffee Morning will be held on March 15<sup>th</sup>. The speaker will be Jenny Mannings, author of a recently published book entitled 'Australian Quilts, A Directory of Patchwork Treasures' - a copy of which we have in our research library. Included in the book is an article and photo of our beautiful grand-piano cover. Also, some of the wall-hangings in the Senior Citizens' Centre, depicting the history of this area. This was begun at the instigation of the late Glad Stanford, a member of this Society. Next month's general meeting will be on Friday April 7<sup>th</sup> at 2.00 p.m.

Keep Wednesday March 22<sup>nd</sup> free for a delightful river cruise along the Maria River, on the boat 'Helen'. Time - 10.00 a.m to 2.00 p.m cost is \$10.00 per person. Bring your own lunch and possibly morning tea. It should be a very pleasant four hours, if it doesn't rain!

A lace display, including lace from Pearl Anderson's collection, will take place at the museum on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of March.

We welcome new members, David Martin, John Martin, Kathleen Connors and Carol Summerhayes.

## From the Committee Meeting

The microfilm reader has at last been installed and is now fully operational. We can now not only read old issues of the Port Macquarie News but print out selected items too - a great time-saver and a boon to our researchers. A revised version of the 'History Trail' is now on sale and is .50cents as it now includes a few photographs and easier-to-read maps on two A3 (large) pages.

Repairs to the front of the building will be done in the next few weeks. The doors are rotting and the wall behind the window frames is being washed away. A grant from Council will help pay the cost. Roof shingles on the small roof in the courtyard are in such poor condition that they need replacing. To prevent anyone being injured by falling shingles they will be taken down until we can replace them. A concrete path, from the front gate to the front courtyard, has been suggested and removal of the strip of garden adjoining the wall of the heritage building, as recommended by the heritage architect. The path would also give museum visitors wheelchair access, which has been a problem for some time.

A sporting exhibit will be on display soon. Colin has canvassed local sporting bodies for the loan of some Olympic artefacts, but we also have a few of our own - if

we can find them. It is hoped to have the display open until after the Olympic games in September.

Val has sent some photos of artefacts, together with information about each one, to AMOL (Australian Museums On Line). This should appear on the Internet in the very near future, on the 'Home Page' of AMOL, for anyone who is searching for museums to visit during their holidays. There should also be a link to our museum's 'Home Page', where they can find out more about us and fill in a Research Request form if they need research information. A similar service will be performed for Camden Haven Historical Society and St Thomas' Church; the latter being co-recipients of the grant for the camera.

This year's history classes will take a different form from that offered in the past. Starting on June 22<sup>nd</sup> the subjects and presenters will be:-

|                |                                |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Gwen Griffin   | The lifestyle of convict women |
| John Ingram    | Transport in the early days    |
| Ian Goulding   | The Boat Harbour               |
| Alice Walker   | Education                      |
| Andrina Dawson | Dress and fashion              |
| Ralph Ferrett  | Federation                     |

Classes will be shorter this year - of one hour duration, the cost being \$25.00 for the 6 lectures or \$5.00 each.

## The Camden Haven Pilot Station

The former Pilot Station at Dunbogan was open for inspection on February the 19<sup>th</sup>. The cottage, boatshed and signal sheds are now under the managership of Camden Haven Adult and Community Education. Grants have been received from the Ministry for the Arts, the Dept of Land & Water Conservation and Hastings Council, to repair and refurbish the buildings. They will be used for environmental education and will also be available for the use of environmental writers. The situation of the buildings is delightful, overlooking Pilot Beach and the entrance to the Camden Haven River, while up the hill, to the rear, is Kattang National Park.

Joan Cook and Val Broxson visited the Camden Haven Historical Society in Laurieton, where Val took some pictures with the digital camera for the purpose of placing them on the Internet. The Camden Haven people are grateful for this publicity at no cost to themselves.

## Obituary

The death at the age of 90 years of Mrs Elsie Turner, was announced recently. Mrs Turner and her sister, Miss Brayne, were both early members of our Society. They taught at the Port Macquarie Primary School; two members of your editor's family being among their pupils in the fifties. Mrs Turner donated some of the beautiful silver on display in the Museum and also the cutlery in the dining room upstairs.

Editor: Connie Jones

Production: Val Broxson

comprised one son (William) the grandfather of Messrs. Wm and Harry Warlters, and seven daughters. Elizabeth was Mrs Nunn's mother.

'Mr Gustafson referred to the descendants of both sides of the family as all good citizens.

'Mrs Nunn was a great advertisement for the healthfulness of her old home town; and Mr Gustafson said he believed many more people who live here would go on to be 100.

'Mrs Nunn, he said had been a remarkable woman. She had observed all the natural laws and the laws of God, and was a happy natural philosopher. She was blessed with an array of friends around her, and bore out the axiom that what we put into life we get out of it.

'Mr Gustafson made special reference to the care and friendship of Mrs Nunn's sister-in-law, Mrs Grace Blair and her family. Dr McLaren had also been a good friend.

'A beautiful sheaf of flowers was presented to Mrs Nunn, and there were other presents.

'Three birthday cakes, one from the Guild, one from Miss Lucy McInherney, and one from Mrs Higgins, all beautifully iced, adorned the official table.

'Mr 'Mick' Farrell, a descendant of the other branch of the family, said it was one of the proudest moments of his life that a relative of his should live to be 100. He hoped Mrs Nunn would see yet another 100. He was pleased to see all the near relatives represented at the party, for which he thanked the Guild. He presented the flowers to

Mrs Nunn. Mrs Nunn stood and cut the birthday cakes, and a great cheer went up for her.

'On the table was a vase of red and white camellias, cut that day from a tree Mrs Nunn planted 80 years ago.

'Mr Charlie Blair, of Sydney, was happy to respond on behalf of his aunt. He doubted her word that she didn't feel up to it, because she was generally most voluble. He was proud of their aunt, and pleased to see such a gathering, something he had been anticipating for some time. He expressed thanks on behalf of his aunt for all the kind words said, for all the good wishes, and to the Guild for the party.

'After being photographed with her relatives and friends about her, Mrs Nunn was reluctant to leave.

'Pleasing it is to conclude that she has been well since the big event.'



JANE MARY NUNN WITH FLOWERS ON HER 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY.



JANE MARY NUNN WITH FAMILY GROUP AT ST THOMAS' PARTY 24 MAY 1954

Back row:

Jane Owen Furnifull, Mabel Whybin nee Farrell, E Farrell, Mrs Geoff Warlters, not known, Mr Geoff. Warlters, James A McKey, Mrs Otto Gustafson, Mabel Thursby nee Furnifull, Otto Gustafson, Margaret Gustafson, Mrs Jimmy Blair, Mrs W Carter (Eva Blair), Mrs W Richards, Olive Blair, Charlie Blair, Gordie Blair, James Macquarie Blair, Mrs W Wedon (Eileen Blair), Mr D M Warlters, Mrs D M Warlters, Warlters (Taree), wife of Warlters (Taree), Mrs D Warlters, W Warlters, Lorna Reid, W H Reid.

Front row:

Mrs I E Blair (wife of Herbert Leslie), Mrs C Branch (Doris Blair), J McKey (Nina Blair), Sarah Margaret White (nee Furnifull), Mrs H Goodwill (Lorna Blair), Grace Blair (wife of T Y), Mrs Gordon Blair, Jane Mary Nunn, Miss Lucy McInherney, Eileen Kemp (nee Farrell), not known, Mrs Reid (nee Warlters), Anne Warlters, Hannah Griffen (nee Furnifull) absent.



GROUP PHOTO: Mrs Nunn, Mrs J Hayward, Mrs J Blair, Mrs Mary McLaren, Mrs Tim Blair, Matron V Jobson (partly obscured).

*Port Macquarie News Thursday 24  
May 1956:*

**'PORT MACQUARIE'S GRAND  
OLD LADY WILL BE 102 ON  
MONDAY**

'As well as Guild members, several of Mrs Nunn's friends were present, including Mrs Richards, a daughter of Mrs Blair's who accompanied her mother from Sydney by plane on Saturday.

'It was unfortunate that Matron Jobson, who had also returned from Sydney on Saturday to attend the party had to return to Point Clare where her sister, Mrs Bevan had passed away.

'During the afternoon 22 school children from the Adventist School with their teacher visited Mrs Nunn and sang several hymns. Mrs Nunn was so appreciative that she said she would like to do something in return, so she sang 'When mothers of Salem brought their children to Jesus' and 'I think when I read the sweet story of old'.

'The children made a presentation and wished Mrs Nunn a happy birthday. Before taking their departure they said a prayer of appreciation to Mrs Nunn for her fine Christian example over her long life for her well being and future continued health and happiness.

'Mrs Nunn also sang several popular ditties for her friends present.

'A very nice afternoon tea was partaken of and a beautiful birthday cake which had been made by Mrs Bert Higgins.

'Among old friends present were Miss McLaren who celebrated her 87<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 1<sup>st</sup> and Mrs Hallett.

'Many beautiful and useful gifts and a large number of cards, telegrams, letters and floral tributes were received. A floral tribute from Mr Sawtell (brother-in-law) with 102 designed in Geraldton Wax took pride of place.

'Mrs Blair thanked the ladies in her usual charming manner, to which the reply was that it was a pleasure and an honour to be able to make the visit.'

In Jane Mary Nunn's latter years, Grace Blair's daughter, Mrs Lorna Goodwill, had resided with her mother and had assisted in caring for 'Aunty Ginny' as she was familiarly known.

She was justifiably proud of the fact she was 'the only native born centenarian in the history of Port Macquarie.' In January 2000 she still is.

Having a very retentive memory, she was able to remember clearly incidents from her childhood and recount many anecdotes connected with the early history of Port Macquarie, gleaned from her pioneering parents.

Throughout her long life Jane Mary Nunn enjoyed comparatively good health except for the last twelve months of her life. Her advancing years gradually took their toll, culminating in her admission to the Hastings District Hospital on 19 October 1956, and she passed away on the 19 November 1956 in her 103<sup>rd</sup> year.

*Port Macquarie News  
Thursday 22 November 1956*

**'PORT MACQUARIE'S OLDEST  
RESIDENT DIED ON MONDAY.**

'The grandest old lady Port Macquarie has ever had or is ever likely to have -

passed into the hands of God and eternity at midday on Monday, when Mrs Jane Mary Nunn went to meet her maker at the age of 102 years and six months.

'Yesterday afternoon, her body was laid to rest in the C of E portion of the Port Macquarie cemetery, hallowed ground which she saw come into being and take in many hundreds of people before her turn came.

'Jane Mary Nunn was born at Port Macquarie on 28<sup>th</sup> day of May 1854 in *The Royal Oak Inn*, a building on the Short Street corner now owned [in 1956] by Cheers and Debenham [bakers]. She was a daughter of the late Mr & Mrs James Blair, a family among the earliest settlers.

'Mrs Nunn led a model life. At a very early age she found a love for other people, and she grew up very close to her church. She had the proud record of singing in the church choir for 26 consecutive years.

'Life here will be different somehow without Mrs Nunn. She seemed to be the link with the beginning of things where Port Macquarie was concerned and the people took it for granted that she would live on and on.

'Her life was a happy one; she knew no serious illness, and was possessed of all her faculties almost to the last.

'In her fading years she had the loving care and attention of her sister-in-law, Mrs T Y Blair, and her niece, Mrs Harry Goodwill.

'Mrs Nunn was married in her father's home, Glebe Road, to the late William Dudley Nunn. There were no children.

'The Ladies Guild of the Church of St Thomas' honoured Mrs Nunn's birthday each year with a small party for her, and the deceased lady was one of the gayest and happiest souls at her one hundredth birthday party in the church hall two-and-a-half years ago.

'Possessed of a sense of humour and a good memory, Mrs Nunn had on numerous occasions entertained those around her for hours on end with stories of the early days – some of which would make one's hair stand on end.

'The late Mrs Nunn had a philosophy on life and upon it she acted.

'Lead a good life, and do all the good you can for others', was her gospel.

'As a result, she not only had the distinction of being the first person to be born in Port Macquarie and live here for 100 years, but as well she was regarded as the 'grand old lady of our town'.'

Compiled by Gwen Griffin  
January 2000

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#### REFERENCES

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*Port Macquarie, 170 years of settlement – 17 April 1821 – 1991*: Hastings District Historical Society Inc. 1991.

*Port Macquarie News*

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Compiled by Gwen Griffin – Editor

Cover design: Val Broxson – Artist Joan Cook  
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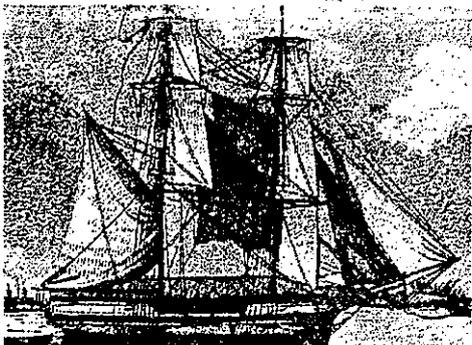
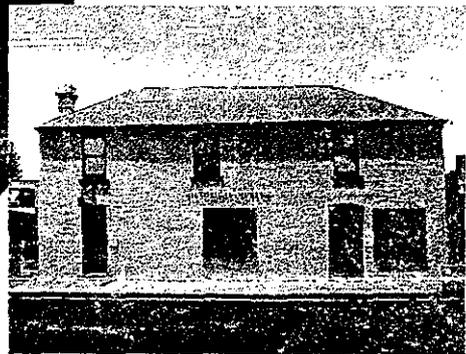
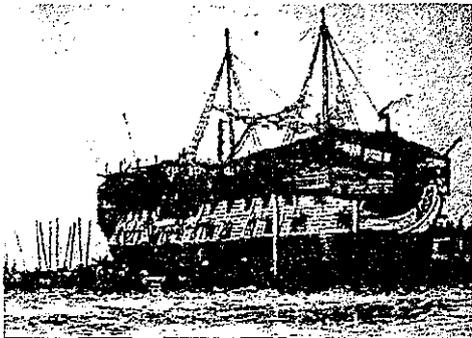


Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

# Chronicle

Vol 4 No 2 June 2000

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



70 years of Change at Port Macquarie  
by Nora Flynn written 1957

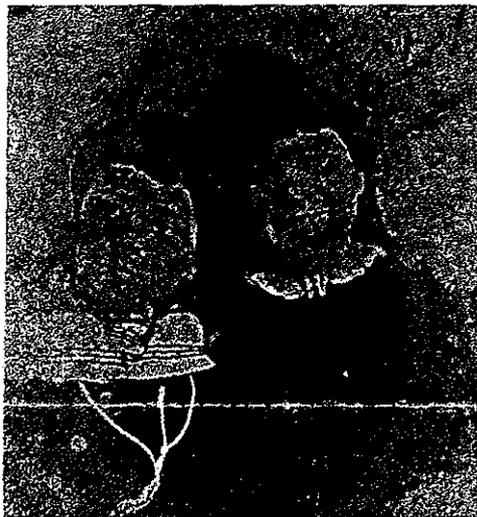
# SEVENTY YEARS OF CHANGE AT PORT MACQUARIE

BY

NORA M FLYNN - WRITTEN IN 1957

Looking back seventy odd years ago, it really seems like another world.

When my father, John Edmund Flynn decided to leave the Lands Department and strike out for himself, he accepted the position of Licensed Surveyor at Port Macquarie. Coming from a thriving well kept town like Grafton, with its bright social life, Port Macquarie must have seemed like a dead town.



Des and Nora Flynn

He was engaged to my mother, Jessie McDougall, third daughter of the Police Magistrate of Grafton, and considered his chances were better as a private surveyor than under the Government.

He travelled to Sydney by the old paddle wheel steamer *City of Grafton*, and came to Port by the North Coast Steamship's Company *SS Murray*. When they arrived, the bar was too rough to cross, and for the Pilot boat to go out, so they had to go on to the Macleay, and come back overland. He arrived in Port in March 1885, just in time for the first Agricultural Show, and Mr Ruthven, and Mr McDonnell introduced him to all the notabilities. John Butler was the Show Secretary, a position he held till he died.

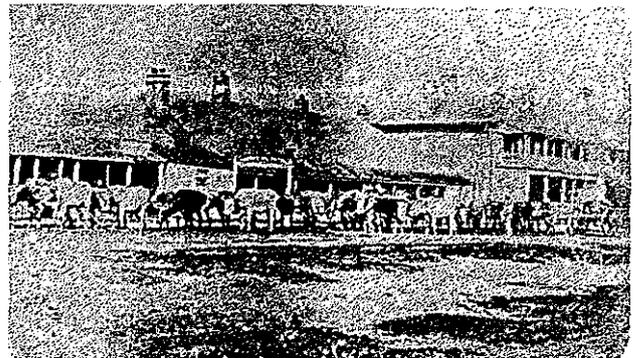
There were only 800 people here at that time, and there were a lot of crumbling old brick places, but not many decent cottages. There were two sawmills, Jennings in Clarence Street, and Hibbard & Harris at Hamilton, as Hibbard was called then, but there were very few timber houses. Bricks were still made on the brickfields and continued to be made there for years.

The Bullock teams were a feature of the town. I especially remember Dennis Kilmurray, and Walter Cunnings; their bullocks were beautiful animals, and used to bring huge logs up to eight feet in diameter, right through the town to Jennings's Mill, and to the wharves – the Government one at the bottom of Horton Street, and the North Coast Co's wharf in Short Street, to the detriment of the streets.

The roads were dusty and rutted in the summer, and bog holes in the winter. There was no Municipal Council then, or Shire Engineer. The Superintendent of Roads and Bridges, or Road Super as he was commonly called, was Mr Baker; he had his office in Horton Street, (and after Hay Street), next door to what is now the Palace Private Hotel. [Western side of Hay Street, where Port Central is now situated.] He was in charge of all the roads on the river, and had not money or men to do much.

There was no hall; the infrequent balls were held in the old Asylum, but that was condemned as being unsafe, and demolished about 1889. The Agricultural Hall was built about that time, and could be used for dances, but there was no hall in town. The School of Arts had been started, and was struggling along in Horton Street. Dr Goode, who followed Dr Cortis, was very enthusiastic and his wife started a movement to build a School of Arts Hall, but that was later, about 1889.

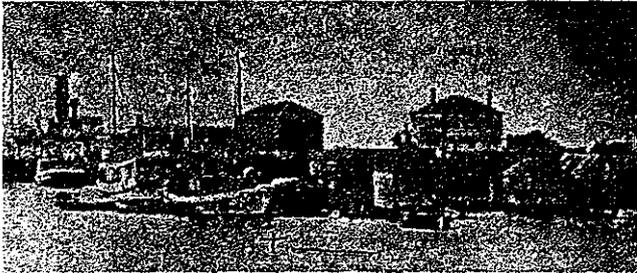
Horton Street, William Street and Clarence Street had been made by the convicts, but they were continually cut by the bullock teams; there were no trees in the streets, and the footpaths were grassy verges, kept trimmed by the stock roaming everywhere. There were no street lights.



Two bullock teams in Horton Street

Mr Maunsell was Police Magistrate; the only bank was Bank of New South Wales, situated in Horton Street,

opposite side of the street to the present bank. Mr Nolan, School Inspector, who lived in Dr. McLaren's House in Hyndman St. [Elsinor, now Linden Hostel], Mr Kennet was the only Solicitor; Dr Cortis at the corner of Hay and Clarence (now a Garage) [In 2000, Garrison Building]. It was a two-storey brick house, traditionally the doctors' house, till Dr Doudney built Waterview about 1902. [South-East corner of Clarence and Munster Streets]. Mr Harry Melville the chemist; The Ruthvens at Arncliffe [In Arncliffe Avenue] – the James Butlers at Coolenberg, the Fosters at Clifton [now Lourdes Nursing Home] – the Davidsons at the Manse; the Dunlops at the Vicarage, Mr Henderson at the School followed by Mr Hattersley.



White double-storey house is Edinborough Hall

Mrs Wilson had a guest house in Edinborough Hall [sic] in Clarence Street, and cared for a succession of gentlemen boarders for years. Mr Mulligan was Postmaster, with Mr Dobbie, Assistant. Captain Kingsford was in charge of the Pilot Station. Alfred Kingston was Captain of the drogher *Samson*.

Dad did not see very much of Port the first few years; he had a room and an office in the Royal Hotel, which was kept by the McDonoughs. He always had a great regard for Mr and Mrs McDonough and the family; they looked after him till his marriage in '85. [1885] Tom McDonough served his time in the field with Dad, and was a surveyor at Bathurst till he died.

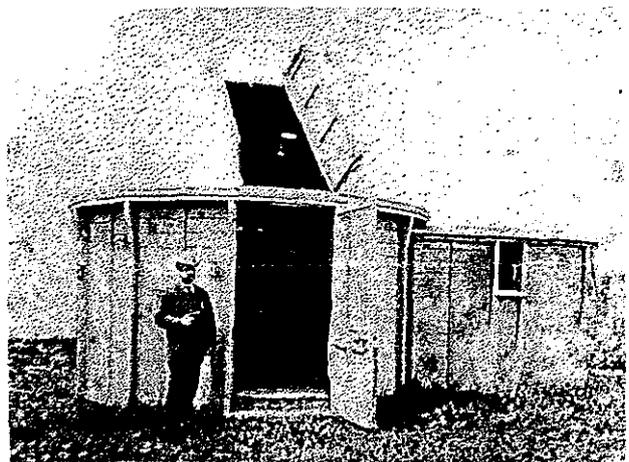
The roads in the country were either shocking, or non-existent. The New England Road, which is what we call the Wauchope Road [now Oxley Highway], and the Blackman's Point Road, [Hastings River Drive] were the only ones kept in order. For years Dad's camp travelled by packhorse, and when it was practicable, by spring cart. The land was just getting opened up, Bellangry, Gum Scrub, Pappinbarra. Wauchope consisted of a school and Post Office on one of Duncan Bain's farms. Somewhere about 1890, Mr Bain instructed Dad to survey the first subdivision on Wauchope Township. There were four streets in the first subdivision. Along the rivers there were settlers, but they were not very prosperous. The only outlet for the produce, mainly timber, maize, pumpkins, poultry, pigs, was the weekly steamer, and prices were very low. Still, living was cheap, and people made their own fun. The Pilot Station was very important at that time. Captain Kingsford was in charge, and the men were

Smith, who married Miss Kingsford, Sheppard, Leask and Blaney. They sounded the bar regularly, and kept a round the clock watch for ships passing; much more frequently than they do now. For passengers going North they would signal the *City of Grafton* or the *Kallalina*, both running to Grafton, and they would take the pilot boat at boat harbour, thus avoiding the bar, weather permitting. The only alternative was a three-day coach journey, and Mother never attempted it. One time, about 1889, Dad chartered a coach and four, from the livery stables in Grafton (Walsham's) and we had a lovely trip. I can remember it, though I was only four. We stayed at Woolgoolga, Fernmount and Kempsey. I remember the Fernmount Hotel best.

Besides the Bank of New South Wales, there was the Post Office Savings Bank. When the Commonwealth came into existence in 190[1], Mr Stacy managed the Savings Bank in a cottage beside the Commercial Bank, both now occupied by Marshall's Café [now Go-Lo]. Mr Stacy did not last long, and the bank was removed to the Court House until the Commonwealth Bank came into existence, when it reverted to the Post Office. After the Savings Bank closed in Mr Lang's time, and the Commonwealth Bank took it over.

The Bank of New South Wales was in a little cottage in Horton Street, till it moved in 1886 to Clarence Street in Mather's building, where the Fun Fair now stands, [2000, where Ritz Arcade is in Clarence St.] and remained there till 189[3], when the present building was erected.

Mr McDonnell was a noted astronomer, and had his Observatory at the Bank, taking it to Mosman when he left Port. He also had a wonderful collection of old Roman and Greek coins. I was too young to take much interest in those sort of things, but I often saw them later in Sydney, and also his Observatory.



William John McDonnell's observatory

The Commercial Bank opened by W A H Slade in 1886, in a little building where Marshall's Café stands, and remained there till the present Bank was built in 1917.

The Slades left that year and Mr Hargraves was appointed in his place.

Mother and Dad were married on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1885. They came to Sydney for their honeymoon, and stayed at the Wentworth in Church Hill. It was run by Mrs Maclurcan then, and was called Wentworth House. The Proprietress was an old friend of Dad – he lived there for a time before he went to Grafton.

He had trouble finding a suitable house, and eventually took one facing the Town Beach in William Street. It was owned by Mrs Becke – a large house, bungalow style, with a verandah front and sides and a strip of garden in front about six feet wide. It was originally built in the very early days as an Officer's residence – very solid brick, with walls at least two feet thick. Mrs Becke lived there with her son, Louis. She was a widow, her husband who was Clerk of Petty Sessions being dead some years.

Louis Becke was an author and journalist; he was a frequent contributor to the *Sydney Bulletin* and wrote several novels, the only one I can think of was *By Reef and Palms*, a tale of the South Sea Islands. They had several of his novels in the old School of Arts, which was burnt down about 1917, and I think they are all out of print.

The old house, corner of William and Owen Streets, had about nine or ten rooms, and a backyard extending to Church Street. Mrs Becke had divided it into two flats, only they did not call them flats in those days. Our part had a drawing-room and a bedroom in front, a hall, and a bedroom and dining room behind, a kitchen, and maid's room, and shed, which served as a laundry. A good well was the only water, with a hand pump – no tanks. Mr and Mrs Palmer lived next door, where a shop and flats now stand, and Mrs Bridson, Senior nee Ellen O'Reilly, sister of Canon O'Reilly where the Oceanic Flats now stand. Later she built beside Mrs Palmers', and known as Marine Villa, lived there till she died. Hugh Bridson and family lived there till about 1914.



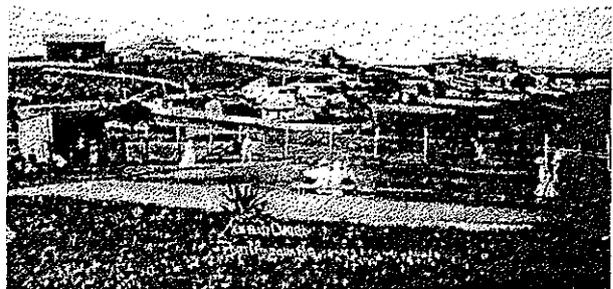
Beck's house

Mother and Dad brought all their furniture up with them in the *SS Murray*, and in transhipment, the piano fell overboard. The North Coast Co. paid compensation, and they got another piano from Sydney, but Mother always lamented the loss, as the new piano had not as good a tone as the other.



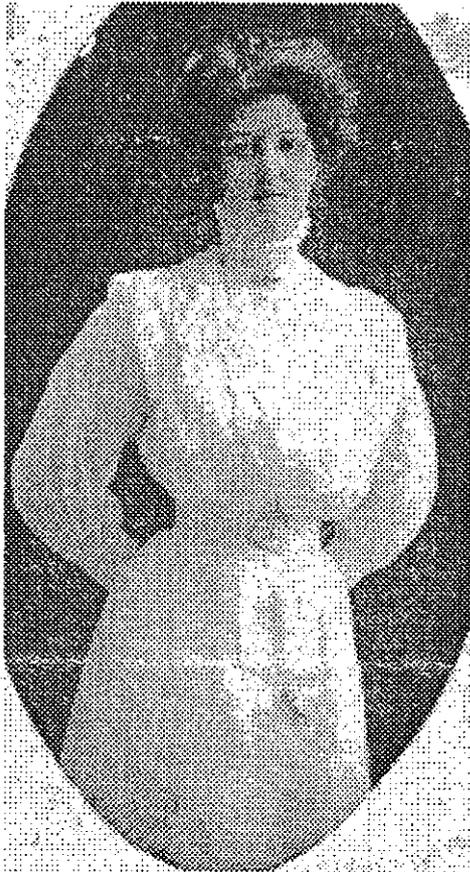
Mr and Mrs Flynn on their honeymoon in 1885

Dad was away in camp most of the time. She [Mother] saw a lot of Mrs Palmer who lived next door, Mr Mulligan at the Post Office was one of her greatest friends, and Mrs Harry Melville, Chemist's wife, Mrs Ruthven at Arncliffe [Arncliffe house was where Melrose Flats are now in Arncliffe Avenue] was older than Mother, but they had a lot in common. The only tennis court was down in Anderson's paddock, where the Port Motel stands; later they built two courts up in Murray Street, beside the Church of England grounds, and they played there till the present courts were built by Mr Mowle, who was Mayor from 19[36 to 1941] and one of the best Mayors we had. He and Mr Ayres stand alone in the old timers' memory as Mayors.



Tennis courts in Anderson's paddock

I was born on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1886, just twelve months after Mother and Dad's wedding. Grandmother McDougall came down to be with Mother, and it rained solidly all the two months she was here. There was no drainage to speak of, and the yards were under water when it rained heavily. Boots and books developed coating of mould, and it must have been very uncomfortable.



Nora Flynn

Mrs Becke was a formidable old lady, and neither Dad nor Mother liked the job of giving notice. In the end Pacific Cottage became vacant, when Mr Hicks, the Government Surveyor left. It was a nice old brick cottage, owned by Captain Kingsford, and we were there for four years, (now Manchester Unity Flats) [2000, Oxley Cove] till Dad bought a property of 75 acres along the Lover's Walk (now Pacific Drive) and Everard St, Hill St, and Herschell St. Practically all of it was tall timber and brushwood, - the only houses along Lord Street were old Mr Rosenbaum, and an old house in a large paddock, where Mr Maunsell, the Police Magistrate lived - bought afterwards by Mr Welch, and latterly Mr Lee. Willy Wesley lived next door; his property faced the Lover's Walk, extending from Tacking Point Road to Ocean Street, and he lived in a little shack on the North-East corner. Later he built a nice house, and started a camping ground; his vineyard was in the corner of Lover's Walk and Tacking Point Road, now called Sunshine [sic.correctly Sunnyside]

Crescent. There were no made streets between that corner and Home Street, Lover's Walk called that for a hundred years - started at Home Street, about where Cross St joins it, and was a narrow track, too narrow for vehicles to pass in places, with trees and bangalows meeting overhead, and the ground carpeted with ferns, rock lilies, everlastings, and the trees covered with staghorns and elkhorns.

Roto marched with Wesley's property, and extended to Everard Street, where Arncliffe [property] carried on to Home Street. There were no streets from Lord Street to Lover's Walk to the beach, till after Dad's death in 1933, when Mother gave Flynn Street in exchange for Savoy Street, which cut through Roto just behind the house. Swift Street was opened about 1936, and Hill Street soon after. Swift Street was between Wesley's two blocks, and was fenced, and partially cleared, and to get to the beach you had to go through Wesley's gates. Tacking Point Road was called that from Smith's Bridge near Hill Street, up Lord Street, round Swift Street, Sunnyside Crescent, and on to Pacific Drive at Wesley's corner.

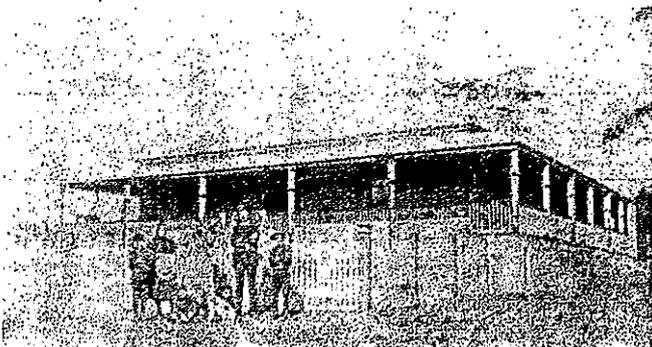
It was very boggy in a lot of places, especially near where Boyne's house [sic]. Lord Street ended about Smith's Bridge, or corner of Hill Street. It was only an apology for a street in 1890, with a bog near Rosenbaums. Buggies and carts went through the bog, and there was a big log, squared off, for pedestrians at the side. Later the bog was corduroyed, but was very bad for years. All the hills were covered with timber and scrub south of Hill Street. Cross Street was formed half way up the hill, where Ruthven's had a big gate, leading to his property. A lot of roads were enclosed, parts of Owen, Chalmers, Cross, Hill, Herschell, Swift, Oden. Lord Street was known as the Tacking Point Road, south of Hill Street. It carried on at the top of the hill, thence into Swift Street as far as what is known today as Sunnyside Crescent, and joined the Lover's Walk at the corner of Wesley's vineyard. Mother told me that formerly the Tacking Point Road went over Perk's Hill, but I don't remember that.

Wauchope Road was the New England Road, or the Manning Road - Kempsey Road was the Blackman's Point Road to the punt, and the North Coast Road officially ran from the junction of the roads along Fernbank Creek Road, but most travellers came by Port, and in 1930 when the Oxley Highway was opened, the Main Roads made the Port Road part of the Pacific Highway when it was re-named. In 1964 when the Dennis Bridge was finished, the Pacific Highway went straight on to the Bridge. [sic]

Dad bought Roto, partly Crown Land, and partly land that had been taken up, and never cleared. We children thought it paradise; there were 60 acres in the original transaction, and about 15 acres added the next year. The original 60 acres had a substantial paling fence right round the boundary, and several of the cross fences were

paled, in order to keep out the wallabies and paddymelons, which were numerous. Old Mr Hollis built the fences, split post and palings, and did the ploughing.

Where Mrs Scholes now lives was part of the corn paddock, and at first the crops were good. Dad loved the land, though he was away too much to do a great deal himself. We had a good vineyard, and an orchard with peaches, loquats, pineapples, quinces, mulberries, plums. The vineyard was in the corner where the Caratel is now, and the orchard where Mrs Schednerling [sic] lives. The barn, a very substantial building was the North side of Savoy Street, in Owen Street, which ran up to Tacking Point Road. When Mother gave Flynn Street to the Council, we got Savoy Street closed, and Owen Street straightened, and lead into Flynn Street. Owen Street South was cleared and subdivided by Mr Cooper, who bought it about 1936. The barn was a big place, and all the feed was stored there. There were a lot of cattle and horses, and they all used to come up to the barn to be fed. The big scales hung from the rafters, and all the spare harness, pack saddles, etc., corn shellers, corn crackers, and tools of all sorts, ploughs and harrows, and several pairs of oars, though it was a long time since Dad had done any rowing. In Sydney he belonged to the Sydney Rowing Club, and had a lot of cups and trophies which we still have.



Roto House 1898:

Orm, Nora, Mother, Dad, Des, Kev, Neil, Kath & Pete.

Potatoes were another crop which was successful, particularly when the ground was new, also oats, sorghum; the men in the Camp when the Camp was home for a few days, worked at the clearing, and we always kept a man servant, who slept in the room off the buggy shed, known still as 'the boy's room'. We had a Cook-General, and a Nurse, and there were six in the family, so the house was not too large; there were ten rooms, four bed rooms, drawing room, dining room, office, maid's room, kitchen and pantry, storeroom – no bathroom: I doubt if there was one in town, except in the hotels. We had a shower in the laundry, detached – and for the rest, people always had the baths in the bedrooms. When Mother got rid of the servants, which was in '93 [1893], when Dad, in common with most

people, lost money, the maid's room became the bathroom and was used for years, till a bathroom was built.

Roto was a paradise for children when we came out to live in '91 [1891]. The place was all timbered, some of it very tall trees, and thick scrub. The house paddock was partially cleared, and the rest was in process of being cleared. Mr Hollis had a full time job for years, fencing, clearing, building fowl and chicken houses, bails, calf pens, stables etc. He did not build the barn, which was a large substantial building. Part of it blew down in a gale after Dad died, and a man who rented the paddocks pulled it down, and erected bails with a concrete floor.

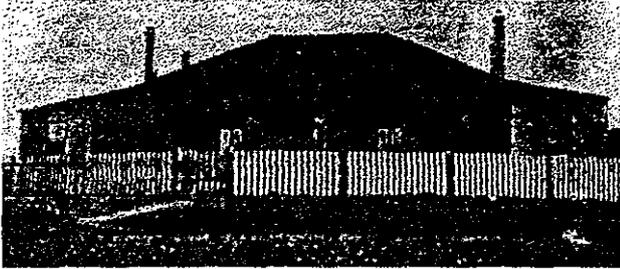
I was about four when we came out to Roto but I remember how we revelled in the change – our nurse used to take us out every afternoon, and there was always something new to find, wild strawberries, gooseberries, lilli pillis, geebung in abundance, and the vineyard and orchard, planted the year before – Mr Hollis again – were just coming into bearing. Ferns everywhere and sally wattles – no tea-trees up near the house – but plenty down on the flat. Mother and Dad were both bird-lovers, and Roto was a sanctuary – no one was ever allowed to shoot on the property. There were plenty of small birds, jacky winters, willy wag tails, and wrens of all sorts. Plenty of swamp pheasants, parrots, regent birds, dragoon birds, dollar birds. Wallabies and paddymelons were numerous, and it was a continual job to keep the fences intact. After a few bush fires, a lot of the palings were burnt, and Dad did not bother doing much more cultivating after. But about thirty head of stock, and half a dozen horses or more kept the grass down.

We had Governesses (Josie Bourne, daughter of Mrs Bourne taught us for years, and was excellent); the boys went to the Public School, and then to Mr Little's Grammar School in the Church of England Sunday School room. After, Mr Grattan had the school, and Kev and Kath, and I think Neil, were educated for some years. The boys all went to St. Joseph's College in later years.

We had buggies and sulkies, and some, but not many, of the people in town had vehicles. Mrs Foster, Mrs Ruthven had carriages; when Mrs Foster went away, Mrs Slade bought her carriage. The Vicarage people always had a buggy and pair, and all the country friends, Wilsons, McIvers, St Johns, Cutlers, etc. had buggies. The McIntyres, when they lived at North Shore, used to row in to Port – after they moved to Burrawan Street. Alf Cumuning had a livery stable, and any one that wanted a horse or vehicle knew where to go. But the majority walked everywhere.

The Diamond Jubilee in 1897 was a great event to us. We all went up to the Vicarage to see the fireworks display – the first organised one we had ever seen, though Mr Wright, at Arncliffe, the School Inspector,

used to stage an annual picnic for all the school children, and we were always invited. There must have been a couple of hundred children there, and he and Mrs Wright were wonderfully kind. After tea, we generally stayed on for games, and sometimes Lantern Slides. When they moved Mother had a monster afternoon at Roto, to say good-bye, and Mrs Wright was made a presentation of a silver-backed toilet set.



Arncliffe House in the 1930's  
when owned by Harry and Janet Griffin

We had birthday parties, picnics on the beach, parties at Mrs Hewitts, Mrs Alick Butlers, Davidsons, Bridsons, Buntines at the Manse, Thomas at the Vicarage, and of course at home. There were six of us, and only seven years between us, so we all grew up together. We had only simple pleasures, not even movies, but we enjoyed everything.

When I was thirteen, I used to go to Mr Thomas for music lessons. He was a wonderful teacher, and equally good at piano, organ and violin, but I think violin was his first love. He wanted to be a musician, but his parents thought otherwise. The Vicarage was a popular place. Mr Thomas had two children by a former wife, who died before he came to Port, about 1896, I think, and Mrs Thomas had one son, Hugh, who was born in Port. Mrs Thomas had a cousin, Una Thornbury, who always lived with the Thomas, and we adored her, she was older than our family, but Charley and Madge were about Ormonde and Kev's age. Mrs Thomas had a nice voice, and Mr Thomas used to play a Violin Obligato with her, at the concerts.

The School of Arts was a wonderful boon to the town before that there was only an occasional circus, but after it was built, about 1890, all the travelling shows would call. The Fisk Jubilee Singers used to come periodically, and the Kate Howard Show, and many others. We had Kate Rooney one time, and Marie Narelle another, both with a good company. Mr and Mrs Kennedy, who Mother and Dad knew in Grafton, with their three sons, Lance, Keith and Laurie, who all became famous, came more than once. The Grattans, who had a Grammar School in the Parish Hall, were both professional actors, used to put on plays; one I remember was the first time I had seen La Tosca. There were quite a lot of locals who got their training from the Grattans, Mabel Spence, Bob and Lucy McInherney. All dances were held in the School of Arts Hall, and for any big affair, such as the

Hospital Ball, the Council would lend the Town Hall, next door, for a supper room. There was a small shed outside where the men used to boil up the water. For small affairs, supper was handed round from the small supper room at the back of it. It was burnt down during the First World War by a Fire Bug.

[What a shame this wonderful story of early Port Macquarie ends here.]

[Mr John Edmund Flynn was born in 1854 at Redfern when it was but a small green suburb of Sydney. He was the second son of Mr and Mrs John Flynn owners of Willewa Station, who were among the old pioneers in the Coonamble district. He died suddenly at Roto on Thursday 26 October 1933 from heart failure, aged 79 years. He was buried from St Agnes' Catholic Church.

[Jessie Louisa Flynn was born in 1862 at Roxburgh Place, Baulkham Hills. Her father was Police Magistrate at Grafton. Having been in failing health for some time, she died at Roto on Thursday evening 15 September 1946 at 7pm in the presence of her family, aged 83. She was buried from St Thomas' Church of England.

[Their children were: Nora M, Desmond, Ormonde, Kevin, Kathleen, and Neil.

[Desmond was the only child to marry.]



(Back) Dad, Nora, Desmond, A McDougall  
(Front) Neil, Mother, Kath



On Tennis Court, Roto, from back left - Kevin, J Price, Lou Bridson, J Hogg, Pender McIntyre, Lena Bridson, C Kirke, G Wilson, Mother, V St John, Dad, Nora, ?, Kath, Neil, N Kelly, Mary Klacby.

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Edited by Gwen Griffin

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Photos: Nora Flynn and Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.Files.

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Compiled by Gwen Griffin – Editor

Cover design: Val Broxson

June 2000

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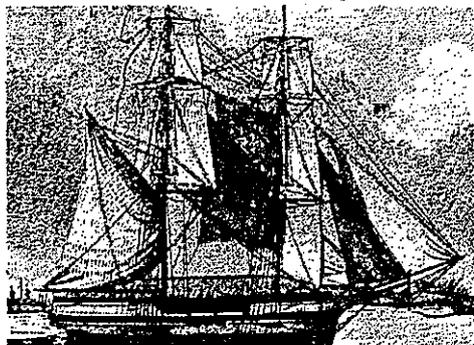
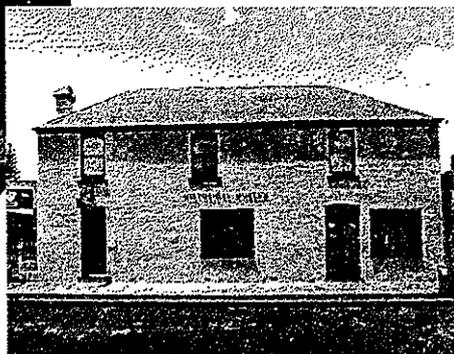
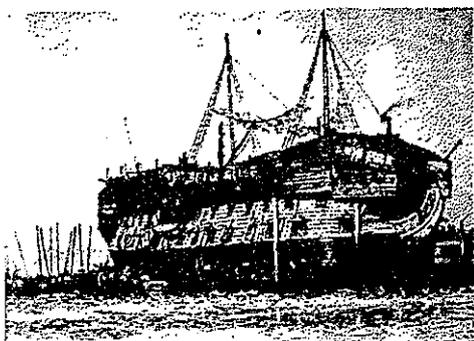
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# Chronicle N.S.W.

Vol 4 No 3 September 2000

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Stewart Kennedy  
Early Port Macquarie

# DUNCAN STEWART KENNEDY

By Gwen Griffin – from an interview recorded in 1986.

Former Mayor, Duncan Stewart Kennedy who has just celebrated his ninetieth birthday is, I believe, one of Port Macquarie's living treasures.

The second of five children, he was born in Port Macquarie on 12 April 1910, to Edward Angus Kennedy and Catherine, nee Bain, at Nurse Way's Hospital, which was located north of where the Telecom Tower is today on the corner of Grant and Church Streets. The day of his birth was the very day that the spectacular Halley's Comet went over the town lighting up part of the sky.

His father, who was of Scottish descent came from the Manning river area and wasn't very keen on farm life or the land and was one of the first schoolteachers to come to Wauchope, teaching both Aboriginal and white children alike. He taught two days in Wauchope and then rode out to Rollands Plains. His mother was one of the Alexander Bain family, who had arrived in Australia from Scotland in 1840. They came from Morpeth up to the Hastings where in company with Mr Donald Cameron they purchased the 'Crosslands Estate' from Mr William Cross, son of Rev. John Cross, first Rector of St Thomas' Church at Port Macquarie. Alexander called his portion 'Letterewe' after his old home in Scotland. Eventually, he purchased what they then called the 'Eucmen Creek Estate'. This estate took in all of Wauchope west of Cameron Street in a straight line to Broken Bago, along the northern face of Broken Bago and back to where the Port Macquarie pumping station is on Korie

Island and down to where the Railway Bridge crosses the Hastings River at Wauchope today.

After Stewart's father finished teaching school, and as there was no money in those days, especially in school teaching, he eased himself out of the scholastic field and started up a fruit and barber's shop in Wauchope. After getting that business going he started manufacturing cordials. Stewart and his siblings as children worked in the factory from 8am before they went to school when they collected the empties from the hotels and fruit shops and then washed them, with Stewart pumping the water. They would then go to school and come back and start the same job over again. Stacking and labelling was all done by hand. They really hated school holidays and Christmas time because everybody wanted to drink cordials, and they had to work day and night.

Eventually Stewart's father tired of that business and came down to Port, bought a place out of town which became 'Kennedy's Pineapple Farm' for £1500 (one thousand five hundred pounds) in its raw state in April 1922. This property, of 100 acres, had 55 acres cleared. This was done by hand implements and manual labour which was very heavy and laborious, with no mechanical labour. 45 acres were left as bush. In 1937, this property then known as 'Kennedy's Tropical Fruit Farm' had 35 acres of pineapples, 8 acres of bananas and 7 acres of grapes. The fruit crops were sold locally and in adjoining towns as well as sent by rail all over New South Wales.



Kennedy's Tropical Fruit Farm

Here's an example of some of the prices:

18 graded pineapples in a bushel case to any railway station with freight paid cost 10/- (ten shillings).

Single pineapples 4d (four pence) to 8d (eight pence).

Grapes ½ bushel case containing 26lbs (pounds) Isabella grapes 6/8 (six shillings and eight pence).

Bananas sold by the dozen, top grade, 10" (ten inches) size, 4 d (four pence) a dozen; if a customer bought two dozen they were given a complimentary dozen passionfruit.

There was of course no chance of getting financially wealthy on those prices. Wages were very low only £3 to £4 (three to four pounds) per week.

The cleared area of their land was sold about 1970 and by 1990 had about 400 houses built on it. The bush was left as it was at that time. The northern boundary was where Fantasy Glades is located, in a line that ran south to behind the Shelley Beach store. It then came back westerly onto Kennedy Drive (named after this Kennedy family) just back from Eric Williams' fruit stall and northerly up to where you come up the hill and you are able to see Port Macquarie. This venture was very successful even though there wasn't much money about in those days.

In 1922 there were only eight houses near them. Graham's, Kennedy Drive, Mrs

Dennis, southern end of Lord Street, Webbs' place, on the corner of Lord and Herschell Streets; Flynn's, in its present situation (1986 - The Flynn Estate). Along Lord Street to Campbell's; then Tom Rosenbaum the elder; then along to William Rosenbaum the elder; then Nurse Spence's Private Hospital, where Baker's Court now stands (1986). The primary school was next.

Stewart went to school in Wauchope until he was 12 years of age and then to Port Macquarie Primary School, leaving at the age of 14 years to work on the farm. As children they walked to school each day the 2½ miles or 4½ kilometres, rain or shine. In those days Kennedy Drive did not really exist, it was only a bridle path for horseback riders and gradually with local endeavours was worked up in stages to a horse and sulky roadway. Finally about 1930 it was trafficable to drive motor cars or motor utilities from Swift Street through to Orr Street, which is now the southern end of Kennedy Drive.

Working on the farm Stewart did all manner of work with his remuneration being pocket money. He lived and worked on the farm until 1956. His first real money was when he received 6/- (six shillings) a day painting the lighthouse as a labouring hand with Mr Willie Wesley who lived at Nobbys Beach, for 10 hours a day, with the employer being the Australian Navigation Department.

In 1940, Stewart applied for war service with the Air Force. He was not accepted. Later he was seconded to the Department of Defence Foodstuffs to supervise the supply, growing, harvesting, transport and distribution to Army, Air Force and Navy establishments throughout Australia. He was in charge of production of fruit and vegetables by direction of the Department of Defence for three and a half years. Owing to Stewart's two other brothers being in the armed forces overseas, as was

his sister Jean in the Field Medical Services, and he being away on call to Defence Foodstuffs, the family's showpiece, the Tropical Fruit Farm disintegrated into nothingness. All the fruit plants and vineyard collapsed due to no labour being available to carry out the necessary maintenance and lack of agricultural know-how. These kinds of fruit were considered non-essential to the war effort.

The farm was then turned to vegetable growing to supply Sydney and Melbourne vegetable markets with various necessary vegetables. This followed the cessation of the contract growing for Defence Foodstuffs at the war's end. While there was a reasonable living in growing vegetables for the civilian markets, the annual returns financially were very, very ordinary, but at least provided an occupation and living income. By 1956 vegetable growing was on the decline locally because of the introduction of mechanised vegetable growing in more suitable areas of Australia on large and expanding programmes where mechanised machinery was able to utilise vast acreage on low-cost/high-volume programmes, combined with refrigeration and chilling facilities. So local vegetable growing steadily diminished to very minimal areas and eventually became uneconomic and not viable under present day operations and conditions.

1956 became a turning point in Stewart's life: he made a decision to leave his manual farming activities and to branch out into other areas, namely transport and agencies. He transported vegetables to Sydney, Newcastle and occasionally to Melbourne, then back-loaded building materials, mainly, terra-cotta roof tiles, earthenware pipes and house fittings for water and sewerage, bricks, fibro, timber and assorted building materials as well as many miles of fibro pipes to mineral sand-mining companies operating their leases

along beaches from Diamond Head to north of Port Macquarie. This was heavy and tiring with especially long hours. It involved loading, driving, unloading and then loading for the return journey back to the Hastings area and again unloading it. This, together with the agencies for these supplies, was worthwhile financially, especially if it was run on a sound business basis.

After driving truckloads of goods etc. for 700,000 miles night and day, Stewart, at the age of 62, again made a decision: this time to sell up his business and work operations and retire to use the years left to him to do those things near and dear to him. Things like playing golf, bowls, fishing and, not least, woodturning and cabinet work with all their intricacies and variations making hundreds of excellent pieces of furniture in those scarce but magnificent timbers, Australian red cedar and Australian rosewood.

At Wingham in October 1937 Stewart married Annie Mary Wilson. Mary's parents were from Aberdeen in Scotland and had arrived in Australia in 1912 and settled at Wingham. Stewart and Mary had three daughters. Mary's life was fully occupied as a mother and a home-maker for their family as well as being a talented musician, playing the piano and organ in churches for 50 years, as well as being accompanist at civic functions and community affairs. Mary also did beautifully artistic oil and china porcelain painting.

Together they had worked on the farm harvesting vegetables and selling the fruit and vegetables as an ongoing extra occupation. After leaving the farm, they built two enterprises, one being at 80 William Street. In 1966 they built 'Spiral Towers' at 87 William Street which was a building of eight flats and an office which Mary supervised and cared for, operating them as holiday units. This again entailed

a lot of thought, care and tactfulness dealing with clients. This building, and the half an acre of the best ground in Port Macquarie, was where the best house in Port Macquarie was during his *youth as a young fella*: Hallet's old home 'Glencrest'.

'Spiral Towers' was eventually sold to Jardine and Mathieson of Hong Kong (which had a subsidiary operation in Australia) in 1973.

After that Stewart and Mary went on a couple of world tours. Since then they have been living in retirement in Morrish Street which Stewart says was in the old glebe lands of the Church of England and was named after Canon Morrish who had earlier presided here in Port Macquarie.

#### STEWART'S COMPLETE CHANGE

In former years of Port Macquarie, embracing 1945 to his retirement from civic affairs, Stewart always had an urge to participate in things worthwhile and for the advancement of the community as a whole, and especially for the benefit of the local population. His father had also been interested in community affairs, being on the Hospital Board, School of Arts and giving two or three nights in the Library, and also as the head of the Oddfellows Lodge. He was quite a singer as well.

At the end of the Second World War Stewart was asked to stand as a candidate for the Port Macquarie Municipal Council. At the 1945 December elections he was elected and continued to serve for another 32 years. On six occasions he was elected as Mayor: 1955, 1956, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1971. He is the longest serving alderman (as they were then called) on the Port Macquarie Municipal Council since its inception.

In 1948 he was elected to the then named Oxley County Council which had been

formed to administer and control electricity distribution in the Hastings Valley. It consisted of three delegates elected from the Hastings Shire Council, and three delegates from the Port Macquarie Municipal Council. Stewart served for 26 years on the Oxley County Council and was the longest-serving member on this Council until its amalgamation into the present-day (1986) structure when it was still titled Oxley County Council [now in the year 2000 it is Northpower]. He was fully involved in the decisions and policies, which led to the electrification of the Hastings Valley.

He was Chairman of the Oxley County Council in the years 1958, 1960, 1963, 1974 and 1975. He was also elected to the New South Wales Local Government Association for three yearly terms to deal with policies and matters affecting local government councils in New South Wales: to promote, examine and define local government strategy for the New South Wales Government. Another phase of his local government activity was to serve for six years as a member of the North Coast Regional Council for Development. This Council was concerned with all factors and policies affecting the activities, lives, living standards and future aspirations of the population of the North Coast Region from Gloucester to the Queensland border.

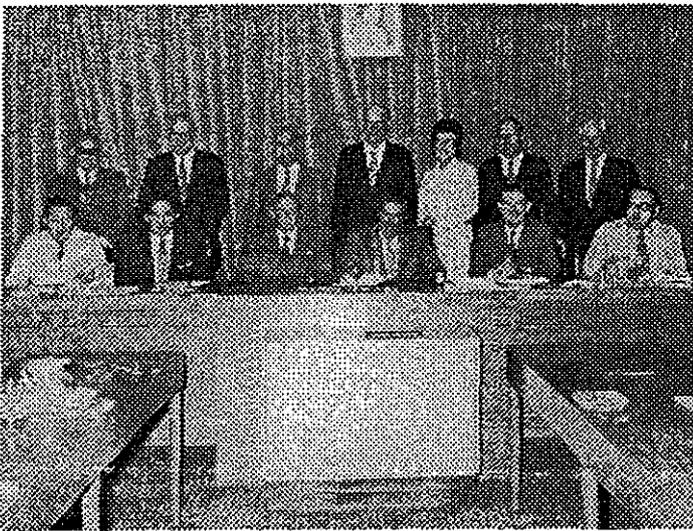
It was only during the last five years of his time as an Alderman that these members were ever paid for their services. In 1977 the figure was \$1000; prior to that it used to be about \$10.00 per meeting, and in the early days, nothing. In Stewart's time the Mayor received £200 (two hundred pounds).

On three occasions when standing for election to the County Council, Stewart won when his name was the one drawn out of the hat, to resolve a tied vote.



Stewart with Governor Sir Roden & Lady Cutler in the 1970's

Several aldermen gained Stewart's respect and with these men, he had a good relationship when they met at their fortnightly council meetings. To name a few: Charlie Huxley, Jim Boardman, Keith Westerweller, Cliff Gott, Peter Hatsatouris, Mac Adams and John Griffin.



1974/75

Back row from L to R: Alderman C C Adams, Ald. K G Westerweller, Ald. Peter Hatsatouris, Ald. J H Osborne, Ald. C V Yeo, Ald. J G Griffin, Ald. D S Kennedy.

Seated from L to R: Chief Health Surveyor D R Perry, Engineer J G McMahon, Ald. K N Stevenson (Deputy Mayor), Ald. N F H Matesich (Mayor), Town Clerk W G Alcock, Deputy Town Clerk R J Kelly.

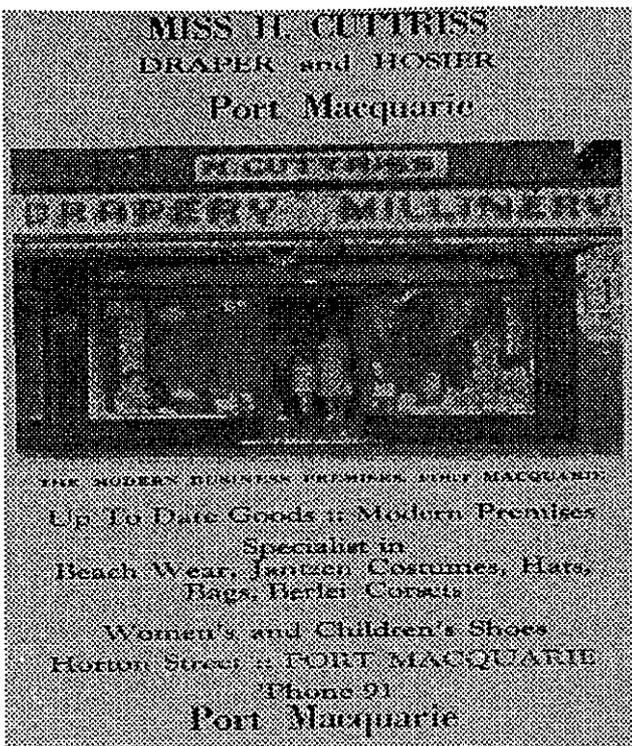
With hindsight, Stewart found this a worthwhile part of his life, encompassing educational and commercial issues and wide-ranging evaluation of the problems

and policies of local government. He actively participated in the decisions of council.

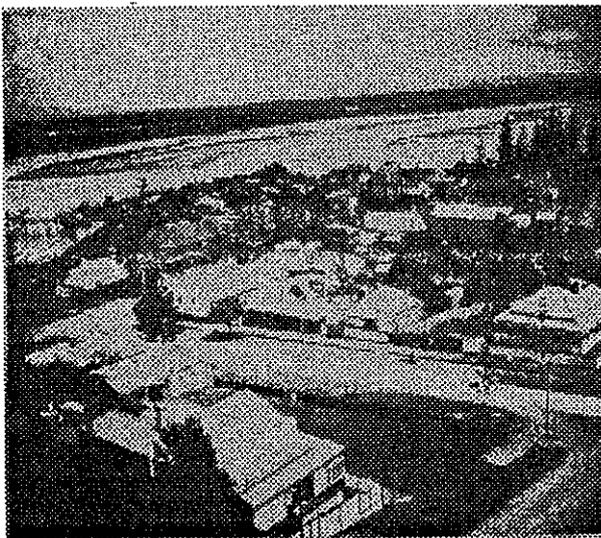
### EARLY PORT MACQUARIE AS REMEMBERED BY STEWART KENNEDY IN 1986

*Starting at the School of Arts which had been on the corner where the Civic Centre is in the year 2000 on the corner of Hay and Clarence Streets and going down Clarence Street. Next to it was a spare block of land, then came the Council Chambers, after that an old convict type built place in which a family by the name of Ryde lived [this was during Stewart's school days]. Where Hatsatouris's theatre is, was Bennett's Boarding House, a big weatherboard house which fronted Clarence and Horton Street. Adjoining it was Tom Harlett's cabinet-maker's shop, then a dentistry and Charlie Orr's chemist shop (Charlie owned it freehold). Next there was a lane which was the entrance to Condon's Hotel - which previously had been the Commercial Hotel and later the Tourist Hotel. [In 2000 it is Port Central]. Next was a restaurant run by Jim Hyde which later was Bill Doak's garage. Fred Condon's jewellers was next in Absolom's building. Roper's menswear and mercer's shop was next and then a fish shop and milk bar. Another entrance, where Peter Hatsatouris had a restaurant, this was later where Walder and Twohill had an electrical shop. Further along was the entrance to the old Empire Theatre at the back of Walder and Twohill's. Then Harlow's menswear, mercer and outfitters where Max Starr later had his Menswear store.*

*Then came Roy Rosenbaum's garage and Cuttriss' drapery and ladies wear; next to them going south was Granny Blair's (Mrs Jimmy Blair), which was where there was a two-storey building [in 1986 Michael Leonard's hairdresser]. Next block was vacant ('Woolies' [Woolworth's]) was*



in 1986), [and before them had been Ryan's chemist shop]. Next came Consoli and Sawtell's gift shop with some beautiful things, next a little restaurant owned by Flynt White, then Blair's paper shop [still in 2000]. Allan Cummings grocer shop came next, and on the corner Perce Hallett in the same building which extended up to William Street East.



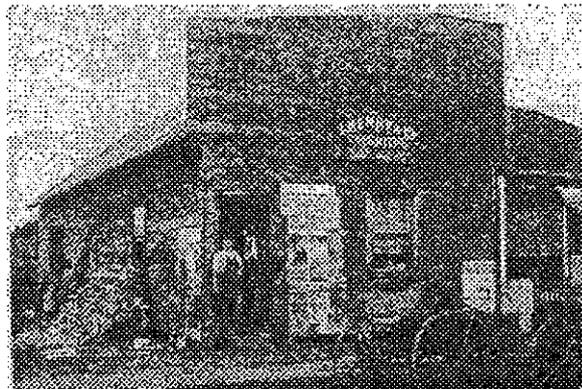
William Street

Going East up William Street, we next come to a low set of buildings, early settler's buildings, which was a terrace of four. I don't know who lived in them, and next to them was Andy Lonsdale 'that

Rosewood fella' who was the Assistant Postmaster; after him came an open block of ground and then on the corner was Perce Hallett's home [where the ANZ Bank building is in 2000].

Then, going down Hay Street, was another little old cottage that Mrs Bourne used to live in - and was still there in 1986 and next the cottage that Jack Staples lived in with another adjoining where Peter Hatsatouris lived. We then came to another low old type building that about four different families lived in and when I [Stewart] was a very small child an old 'fella' by the name of Spence lived there. Then on to the present [1986] Council Chambers [now in 2000 part of the Port Central building] which was another residence. Next came a spare block of ground where the School of Arts only occupied about a sixth of it and the Council used it to house their graders and other machinery.

On the other side, coming up Clarence Street from the harbour end, the first place was Sid William's Bakery and then two cottages, one occupied by Sid Williams and the other by Roy Rosenbaum. The next building was a small cottage - can't think who lived there, and next came Les Kenny's tinsmith shop; he used to make tanks and was the only tinsmith in town in those days.

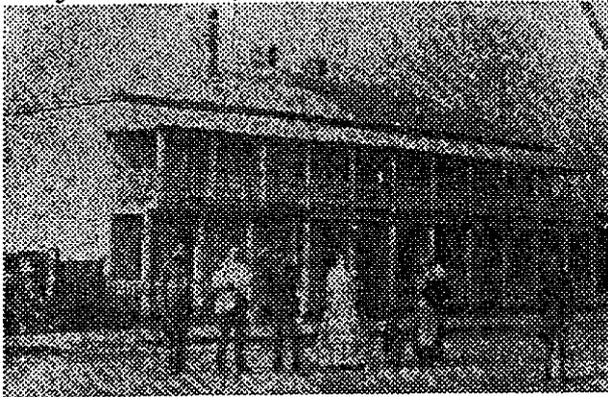


Kenny's Tinsmith

Away from him, on the corner was a garage that Stan Tisdell had, but prior to

that, there was an old building, where a photographer used to be and a 'fella' by the name of Channells had a barber's shop there also. That was on the corner, after that it was knocked down, then it became the Tisdell Garage. In 1986 there are offices on this site which is Ralph Andrew and his [toyshop]. [In 2000 a Real Estate office]

On the other side of Clarence Street was the Club Hotel, which was opposite Peter Hatsatouris' Theatre [2000 Macquarie Hotel]. It ran up to where the TAB and those people are on the corner where Norm Usher's Key Real Estate is [1986 - in 2000 it is where the Pancake Place is], Charlie Harriott's residence used to be there before that. Then around the corner into Hay Street there was nothing much until you came to the Masonic Hall and adjoining it was Bill Marshall's cordial factory on the harbour front which adjoined the Royal Hotel.



Club Hotel

Stewart says, *the reason for living his whole life on the Hastings was that parents were unable to finance their children's education away from home. Some parents made unbelievable sacrifices to send perhaps one child in a family away to obtain further education in Sydney. As he looks back Stewart remembers many of them becoming prominent Australians. It was not lack of brains, it was lack of money that was the deciding factor, so most of the children of that era became local artisans, farmers or fishermen.*

Port Macquarie has always been a place of scarce employment. Work was nearly unobtainable; there was no money here. The money that came to Port Macquarie arrived by the people who came to live here. Port Macquarie in 1922 had a population of 2500 people. There was the public school where it still stands and another school next to St. Agnes' Church, which was run by them. The business centre of the town was in Horton Street. Commercial activities were shipping of timber, rough sawn poles and piles for wharf construction and telephone lines and girders for heavy constructional purposes in Sydney.

Milling of timber was done at the Hibbard, Haytown and Bago Mills which employed many and produced a tremendous amount of sawn timber for house construction, both locally and for sending to Sydney by boat-loads, as the harbour was fully navigable for boats up to 1000 tons. Its growth in the future lies in its pleasant climate which attracts tourists year by year in growing numbers with many eventually retiring here. Port Macquarie's real growth began with the availability of choice land for home building, adequate supplies of water and sewerage schemes and the aerodrome facilities.

Sadly, since Stewart and Mary gave this story, Mary has passed away.

We wish Stewart good health and many more birthdays, maybe he will go on to be our first locally born male centenarian.

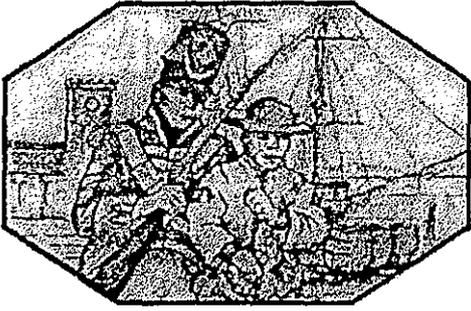
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 Oral History by A Weiley & N Taylor 1990

Compiled by Gwen Griffin - Cover design Val Broxson  
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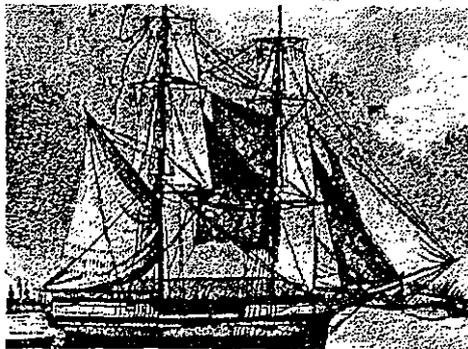
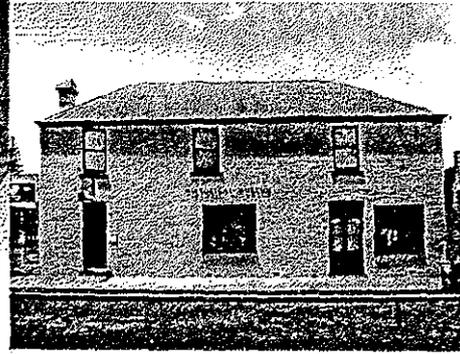
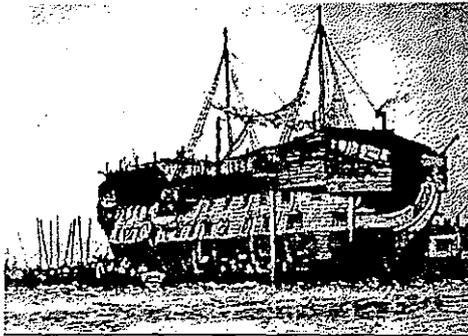
Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.



# Chronicle

Vol 4 No 4 December 2000

ISSN 1328-4304



This Month....



Edmund Barton  
Federation in Port Macquarie

HASTINGS LIBRARY  
N.S.W.

## THE FIGHT FOR FEDERATION IN THE HASTINGS MACLEAY

1898

When Edmund Barton came to Port Macquarie in July 1898 to promote Federation, little did he know that three months later he would be a Member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales representing the Hastings Macleay Electorate. There was nothing to suggest that one of the greatest political battles in the history of New South Wales was to be held in an area considered politically insignificant. By the end of September, Port Macquarie and Kempsey were very well known.

A well-respected, capable, experienced politician, Barton had been involved in much of the groundwork done by several conventions working towards a Constitution for Australia that would be acceptable by the colonies. He found it an exasperating experience because of the hundreds of amendments, but eventually managed to create a document which was presented to each colony for approval.

Because of general public apathy towards Federation, Barton had decided to resign from Parliament to promote the Commonwealth concept. Until his arrival at Port Macquarie the citizens there had shown little interest in the matter. The previous year when an attempt had been made to establish a branch of the N.S.W. Federal Association, a well-publicised meeting to be held in the Town Hall had been attended by only three persons!

A General Election had been planned for July 1898. The incumbent, Mr. Clarke, was expected to be returned in this remote rural area without any difficulty. Even though that eventuated, by the end of September political events occurred which made Port Macquarie and Kempsey well known throughout Australia and the English-speaking world.

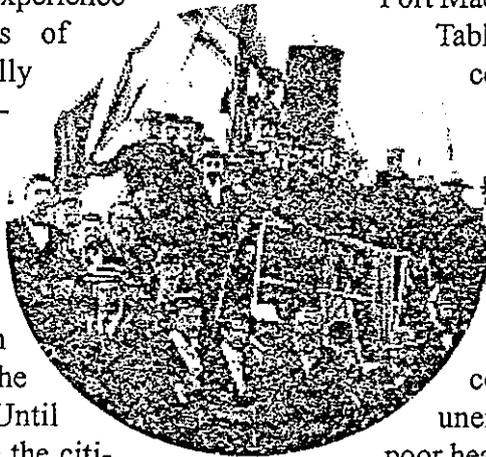
Port Macquarie had evolved into a municipality by 1887 after many excruciating experiences that created attitudes of caution and a sense of economic insecurity. The great pastoral farms had suffered as cheap convict labour disappeared and the disastrous depression of the 1840s took its toll. An optimistic move into sugar production proved to be a false hope when frosts demonstrated the frailty of that business in temperate climes. Wheat-growing was proven to be risky unless a paddock could be found that was dry enough to avoid "rust". Sheep raising on the moist coast also faced problems so that the wool business was better left to inland graziers where the drier climate made it easier to control foot rot and related diseases. A road built to connect

Port Macquarie with the New England Tableland area was a successful commercial venture until trains running from Sydney to inland farming areas captured that market. As the town existed basically to service a rural community, every time farming enterprises suffered the whole community felt the pain of unemployment, low salaries, poor health, and social disadvantages.

The climactic discouraging event was a great state-wide depression which struck with unprecedented force in 1891 bringing in its wake crashed banks, insolvencies and failure in many directions.

By the mid 1890s there was great anxiety for security. The Government helped satisfy that need by making new policies on land. Smaller acreages became available on easy terms.

The concern the primary producer had was for an adequate income. State parliaments had passed tariff laws to protect the interests of their own people but with talk of an approaching unity for Australia, the possibility of free



trade between states was being promoted. The Hastings community was very vocal about the need of protecting themselves from other colonies (often referred to as "foreign") where entrepreneurs used very cheap labour (convict, Chinese, Kanakas or Pacific Islanders). It was an advantage for any politician who might come into the area claiming to be a "protectionist".

The editor of the Port Macquarie News (operating since 1882) kept the community informed of steps towards Federation but there was **not much interest** shown by the average person until the arrival in town of important politicians seeking support for their viewpoints. These men were very carefully examined to see whether or not they were protectionists or free-traders.

At the General Election in 1898 Frank Clarke was re-elected as Assembly Member for the Hastings-Macleay. His opponent, Mr. Vivian, was a **freetrader** to be treated with caution. Vivian was a very enthusiastic supporter of Federation but the majority of voters supported Clarke because he offered them security through protection from outside competition. Clarke's promise to foster local industry and keep the people employed was more appealing.

The Hastings-Macleay was a **new electorate**. Earlier the Hastings and Manning had been a political entity when protectionist, Mr. J. H. Young, had been returned to become one of the most influential politicians in the New South Wales Assembly. There were some who thought the electoral boundary change was political chicanery but the truth was the new Government land policy had brought an influx of settlers into the Macleay River district and the transposition was a reflection of growth. Dairying had developed into a good occupation not only because of the availability of land but because of scientific improvements (paspalum grass for instance) and better transportation. Towns that serviced primary producers were also experiencing development as a

consequence. Kempsey had grown into a centre that was larger than the older town of Port Macquarie. Political changes on the north coast were therefore inevitable.

- Meanwhile, Edmund Barton, a politician admired greatly as a man who had risked his personal legal business to spend most of his time promoting Federation, arrived in Port Macquarie before the General Election. Although Barton had supported free trade policies earlier in his career, he was careful to proclaim to him the one issue most important to him, Federation.

Although Mr. Barton was not personally involved in the election of July 1898, he was considered to be the leader of the Federation movement in general.

Successor to Henry Parkes as leader in the Commonwealth push, Barton encouraged development of independent Federal Leagues that sprang up in many parts of the country. Both Barton and his Victorian friend, Alfred Deakin, travelled extensively promoting the Commonwealth concept and the idea of Leagues with the logo "One People, One Destiny, One Flag".

At the time of the 1898 General Election, Barton had been travelling to many country places seeking opportunities to speak to the public about the proposed federation of colonies. While he was staying at the Royal Hotel, a deputation from Kempsey led by their Mayor invited him not only to speak on Federation at Kempsey, but to put forward his name as a candidate in the on-coming campaign. He agreed to talk on Federation in Kempsey, but declined the invitation to get involved in the local contest. Later he remembered the encouragement of support offered by the Kempsey representatives.

Articles and books on Federation and other current events were available to country people at their local libraries. The Port Macquarie School of Arts had a section entitled "Commonwealth Literature" in which were

the following volumes: "The Federal Conference of 1890", "Debates of the National Australian Convention of 1891", "Debates of the Federal Convention" in two volumes, "Debates in the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly on United Australia 1890", and "The Australian Commonwealth Bill".

When the time for the Referendum was set, rules including the dates of voting were left for each colony to decide. New South Wales voting was held on June 3rd. The Government of Premier Reid ignored the clamour demanding reform of the method of counting, with the result was that, even though the final YES total was substantially more than the NO vote, the referendum to approve a Commonwealth of states was lost.

The failure of the 1898 referendum created quite a political furore. Premier Reid was blamed for his indecisiveness, the newspaper, "Daily Telegraph", was condemned by the Federalists because it had used scare tactics to get a NO vote, and Edmund Barton declared Mr. Reid "would not go straight and preferred his devious way for the sake of keeping office in New South Wales". After consideration, Barton decided to look for an opportunity to get back into the Assembly because he concluded that any further action for federation would have to be from within the larger body if the attitude of the New South Wales Government was to change for the better.

It came as a surprise for all when Frank Clarke announced several weeks later that he had decided to resign. Supporters of Clarke saw this as a gracious step-down so that the very popular Mr. Barton could act in his place, but others claimed that there had been a political discrepancy. When Mr. Barton entered as a contestant in the by-election that followed, he took the viewpoint that Mr. Clarke had been too "high-minded" and consequently had been forced to resign.

September 1898 was truly a time of political

intrigue in Port Macquarie. After a quiet start, the tempo of the by-election built up into a crescendo that would have given satisfaction to any student of drama. When it seemed that Mr. Barton would win the by-election easily, a cryptic advertisement appeared in the Port Macquarie News:

"To the Electors of the Hastings and Macleay,  
Do not pledge your Votes.

A Ministerial Candidate will oppose  
Mr. Barton"

This was a crucial time for Premier Reid and his Protectionist supporters. For more than five years Reid had held power in New South Wales but the July election had seen his number of followers drop dramatically. Now the situation existed where political power was almost equally balanced in the Assembly. To govern effectively, Mr. Reid depended heavily on support from the Labour Party to keep the balance in place, so it was crucial that his side should poll well in the Hastings Macleay by-election.

A report in the September 24 Port Macquarie News reflects the intensity of the battle:

"The contest from the beginning almost developed into one of the most hotly contested elections that the colony has seen, not only because of the issue that depended upon the result, but because of the assistance that was rendered by prominent speakers from both sides of Parliament, as well as others. Mr. Barton received the aid of Messrs John Sea and W.P. Crick M.L.A. together with Mr. W.H. Vivian, a former candidate for the constituency, and Mr. G. Lewis, at one time Electoral Officer for the Colony, while Mr. S. Smith was assisted by the Premier, Mr. G.H. Reid, Mr. Griffiths M.L.A., and the Minister for Works, Mr. J.H. Young. The whole electorate was fairly deluged with oratory".

The excitement of the election campaign is expressed in a letter to the Editor of the Port Macquarie News which stated:

"The electorate of the Hastings and Macleay

hitherto almost a *terra incognita*, has suddenly sprung into prominence. Maps have been consulted, the chances of the candidates discussed, and the effect it will have upon that great *desideratum*, Australian Unity, fully taken into consideration. It behooves us then to act with calm judgement, fully recognizing the great importance of the issue, the destiny of which rests in our hands”.

Barton wrote a letter through the “News” addressed to the electors criticizing the New South Wales Government as being “provincial” and contrasting it with the progressiveness of the three colonies that had already approved the Commonwealth Bill. He then presented his own case “as a Federalist of unswerving resolution, passionate in his love for his country”.

Campaigning politicians generally followed the accepted routine of the time that included a great parade led by a band with lots of noise and banners, followed by speeches, toasts and dinners at convenient centres. In Barton’s case, the Port Macquarie Band met him at the wharf, escorted him into town and then led a parade of twenty-four decorated vehicles full of enthusiastic supporters that followed a course up and down the main streets to the Star Hotel. This was followed by an address from the balcony of Mr. Condon’s Hotel where more than four hundred people listened, cheering or groaning at the appropriate moments to express their approvals or disapprovals of what was said.

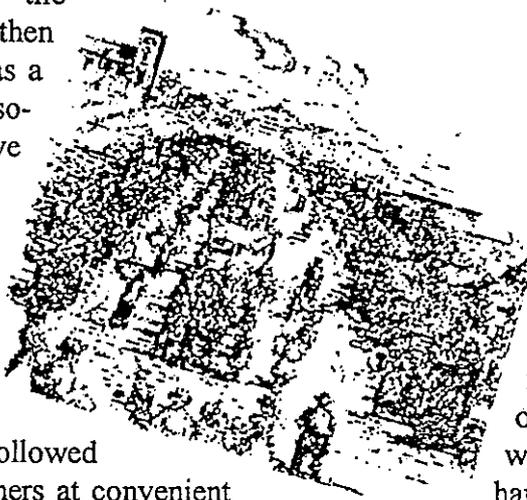
Once elected, Barton became the Leader of the Opposition and began a campaign to force the Government to modify its approach towards Federation. Reid’s political position was very weak and he knew too well that Barton’s party had received more votes than his. It was a critical time for Reid as he depended on those not of his party to keep him in as Premier. It was

time for Reid decided to negotiate and to be more co-operative.

Another conference of Premiers was called to determine how New South Wales could be persuaded to accept the Commonwealth Bill. Several amendments were made including one that would appeal to Sydney supporters...the location of the capital “in the State of New South Wales.....not less than one hundred miles from Sydney”.

The amendments made all the difference as revealed in the New South Wales results

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>1898 referendum</u> ..... | 71,595 YES..... |
|                              | 66,228 NO.....  |
|                              | 5,367 MAJORITY  |
| <u>1899 referendum</u>       |                 |
|                              | 7,420 YES.....  |
|                              | 82,741 NO.....  |
|                              | 24,679 MAJORITY |



On Polling Day (June 20, 1899) in Port Macquarie, results were recorded on a board in front of Williams’s shop. There was little excitement as had happened during the by-election. Large numbers of people stood watching as information by electric telegraph from Sydney was transferred on to the board. By eight in the evening it was clear that Federation was about to happen.

When Barton resigned as Leader of the Opposition, August 1899, the Port Macquarie News Explained: “the object for which he had entered the House had been accomplished”. Barton was then chosen to lead a delegation of five to London. These Australian politicians performed well, persuading the Imperial Government that the proposed Constitution was adequate.

On September 17, 1900, Queen Victoria proclaimed the Commonwealth of Australia would come into being on and after January 1, 1901.

It was Christmas Day 1900 when Edmund Barton accepted the invitation to form an interim Cabinet so that preparation could be made for the first Commonwealth election to be held March 1901. Voting confirmed Barton's appointment as Australia's first prime minister.

There was great celebration for both Commonwealth Day on January 1, 1901, and for the opening of the Commonwealth Parliament May 9, 1901. Details of celebrations can be found in the Port Macquarie Historical Society's publication, Federation Comes to Port Macquarie.



*The band led the parade along Horton, William and Grant Streets.*



*These ladies at the Port Macquarie Showground supervise celebrations by schoolchildren. Celebrating "Commonwealth Day" in Port Macquarie.  
Artist: Joan Cooke.*

*Decorated bicycles were popular during the parade at Port Macquarie.  
Artist: Joan Cooke.*



Produced for the Port Macquarie Historical Society December 2000.

Author: Ralph Ferrett.

Proof read by Beryl Ferrett.

Sketches by Joan Cooke.

Production by Geoff Pearce.

CELEBRATIONS-JANUARY 1901

5.

*Impressions of Federation Day as seen on this page will be part of a special display at the Museum.*



Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

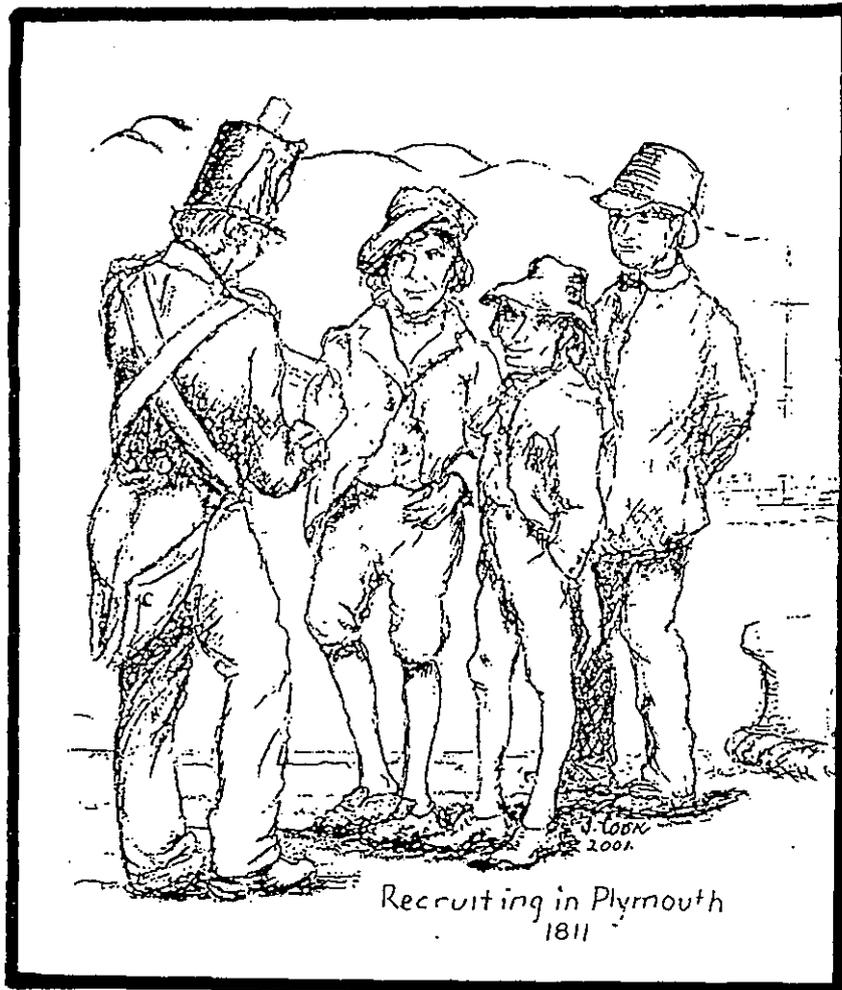
# Chronicle

YEAR OF FEDERATION

2001

Vol 5 No 1 March 2001

ISSN 1328-4304



**Stephen Partridge**

**1793 - 1878**

**Soldier - Settler**

HASTINGS LIBRARY  
N.S.W.

# STEPHEN PARTRIDGE

1793 - 1878

1

Whilst not a 'native born' Australian, Stephen Partridge came to this country at 21 years of age in the service of the Crown. As a soldier turned settler he played a significant part in the transition of Port Macquarie from a penal settlement to a civilian, administered community and an established coast port town.

A very few of the official party who landed in Port Macquarie in 1821 would have lived for more than the 56 years that he spent living here before his death at the age of 86, in 1878 and survived by descendants still living in the greater Hastings area.

## England 1793 – 1814

Details of the early life of Stephen Partridge, before joining the Army at Tiverton, Devon, England, are sketchy and controversial.

War Office records state that he was born at 'Armitage' in the Dorset Parish and 'attested into the 46<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot at the age of 18 on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1811. Height 5'6 ½" [169cms], at 24 he was 5' 8" [173cms], Trade – carpenter, complexion – fresh, eyes – grey, hair – light and 'visage' – round. Over the next two years he served in Kingsbridge, Plymouth, Jersey (Channel Isles) and the Isle of Wight. He was obviously literate, as he served for three months in Jersey in a recruiting role. Later documents in his handwriting show a well-formed copperplate style.

His birth certificate states that he was born in Cookham, Somersetshire (both details disputed) and was baptised on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1793.

A youthful marriage is documented in Brixham, Devon to Sarah Cook on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1811, and promotion to Lance

Corporal and an eight-day furlough (leave) in November of that year the leave may have been for bereavement as at that period leave was a privilege rarely extended to the lower ranks. As his second marriage later in Sydney, he was described as a widower.

In 1812 he joined the main body of the regiment and in 1813 left Plymouth as one of the thirty-strong escort on the convict transport *General Hewitt* bound for the colony of New South Wales.

Small by present standards, at age 21 his healthy appearance would have contrasted with the degenerate condition of many of the prisoners in his charge, some of whom could have spent years in the awful river hulks in England, before transportation to Australia where they arrived in 1814.

## Sydney 1814 – 1821

On the 4<sup>th</sup> July 1814 Stephen Partridge was promoted to Corporal. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1816 he married Sarah Williams at St Phillip's Church. With Sarah's impending confinement in May 1817 coinciding with his 46<sup>th</sup> Regiment leaving for India, he transferred to the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, with a loss of rank, which he quickly regained.

It is feasible to believe, as his descendants' claim, that he accompanied Surveyor John Oxley and others on 'expeditions of service into the interior'. Unfortunately only names of Officers were recorded in reports at that time.



His skill as a carpenter and his enterprising spirit were instrumental in supplementing his army pay and singling him out for notice by his superiors. From 1816, records show that he received payments from the 'military chest' for 'repairing carts damaged during Government expeditions by Military Detachment in search of absconding prisoners' and for extensive work on Sydney Hospital.

In 1818 he was lured by an offer of a Colonial appointment if he would resign from the army (which he was entitled to do, having served the required seven years) – 'unless a man wishes to obtain a pension'. He accepted the appointment and became the Overseer of His Majesty's lumber yards, sawyers and carpenters. Regular payments from Police Funds to Partridge are noted in Governor Macquarie's diary.

This position he held for two years before his selection to go to Port Macquarie as Superintendent of Convicts with 'quarters and rations, at an annual salary of one hundred pounds £100.0.0 [\$50.00]

In consequence of the increasing escapes of convicts from the second colony, Newcastle, and this introduction of free settlement with its assumption of respectability, Governor Macquarie sought a more remote site for 'the containment of refractory prisoners'.

After many months of exploration and examination of the area's navigable waterways and with favourable reports from John Oxley and John Thomas Biggs ('Commissioner of Enquiry in the Affairs of the Colony'). It was agreed to 'the formation of a new settlement at Port Macquarie to replace

Newcastle as a place of punishment for refractory convicts'.

To establish the new colony, Governor Macquarie chose captain Francis Allman, aged 40, a seasoned soldier of the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment to lead the expedition. The second appointment was that of Lieutenant William Earle Bullwer Wilson, aged also of the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment, a bachelor who was to act as Engineer and Inspector of Public Works. The third was a 'civil officer', Stephen Partridge, 30 as Superintendent of Convicts and Public Labour.

'The entire expedition comprised of Captain Allman, Lieutenant Wilson, Mr. Fenton (military surgeon), Mr Partridge, two sergeants, two corporals, one drummer, thirty three privates, one medical hospital assistant, three carpenters, two sawyers, one blacksmith, one tailor, two shoemiths and forty labourers.'

On the 17<sup>th</sup> March the party of 102 including Mrs Allman and two children, Mrs Partridge and two children embarked on three vessels, the brig *The Lady Nelson*, the cutter, *The Mermaid* and the schooner, *The Prince Regent*. However they were detained outside the heads and finally sailed on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1821.

The delay was not the end of their problems. Adverse winds and high seas battered the tiny fleet, which was driven off course many times, seeking shelter in Port Stephens and Trial Bay. Eventually *The Prince Regent* became the first ship to cross the treacherous bar of the Hastings River on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1821, unshipping her rudder. *The Mermaid* ran aground and only *The Lady Nelson* arrived without mishap.

## Port Macquarie 1821 – 1886

The new colony was placed under strict military administration. This system of government presented many opportunities to men employed in an official capacity. In 1822 Partridge volunteered to lead a party on a persistent but vain land search for convicts escaping on one of the only two boats in the colony, the other being 'with the pilot on duty of survey'. The search was abandoned and the party returned by ship from Port Stephens.

His influence became obvious when an application by him for the transfer of his brother-in-law and his mother, from Sydney, was successful.

Many tenets of the law permitted loose interpretations and though Partridge was never actually charged within ten years, there were episodes when breaches of the law, with Partridge involved, led to criticism of and changes to the law.

Free enterprise, especially in the production of food, was encouraged at all levels of the community and trading in produce, principally pork and poultry, became an important factor in the daily life of the colony and Stephen Partridge was known to have been – 'the most considerable dealer in the settlement'.

Written testimonials neutralised accusation of 'malversation' or 'appropriation' of Government property, when the system was 'deemed to be more at fault than the man himself'.

With the advent of free settlement in 1830, the privileged behaviour of the old establishment became noticed by the more alert and critical newcomers

and Stephen Partridge did not escape their attention. Complaints and accusations of irregularities were brought to the notice of authorities.

In his subsequent defence, testimonials of his character were presented, extracts of which have been preserved. These included a letter from Captain Allman in 1822, to the 'zeal and activity evinced by the meritorious person since his appointment at the formation of the settlement'.

In 1830 with the opening of free settlement, Governor Darling endorsed the issue of a spirit licence for a 'public house and meeting place for Port Macquarie'.

On Partridges application, Captain Allman once again testified –

'He has resigned as Superintendent of Convicts ... intends to serve the public in the future in a new character but as faithfully as ever ... had the good fortune to give satisfaction to every Commandant and was by each strongly recommended to his successor as an 'active and zealous officer which at the same time he had in an extraordinary degree of the goodwill of the prisoner population'.



From the Report of Commissioners into the affairs of the colony 24 May 1830

'Mr. Partridge has always been considered very active and industrious in the discharge of the duties of his situation, and as a well meaning and well conducted man. His conduct came particularly under our review as having been at one time the most considerable dealer on the settlement and as having been under the suspicion of trafficking with the prisoners, even subsequently to the promulgation of the regulations against that practice. Though from our own observations and from the general history of the settlement on which he has resided almost since its formation, we are not prepared to acquiesce in the character he has received from all the Commandants for Activity and Zeal in the discharge of his duties. We are, notwithstanding, satisfied of his being a steady and well conducted Man and quite undeserving of the imputations, which have been cast upon him of feeding his stock with Government corn and other practices of similar nature.

Referring to his deficiencies rather to the vices of the system under which he has acted, than to himself, we believe that under a better system his duties as superintendent would be respectably discharged'.

Perhaps as a result of the reports on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1830, Stephen Partridge was issued with the first licence at £25.0.0, [\$50] to operate a 'public house and meeting place in Port Macquarie. 'Gratis' for one year then

an annual rent of £5.7.6 [\$10.75] to be paid to the Government, for ever'.

He was permitted to open, operate and reside at his "New Inn" in the allocated house in which he occupied as Superintendent of Convicts; once described as a 'weatherboarded barrack' with extensive 2 acres [1 hectare], kitchen gardens. This substantial house of seven rooms was situated adjacent to the wharf, at the northern end of what is now known as Hay Street.

By September a second licence was issued, this was to a Charles Farrell for the same 'gratis' year and rent as Partridge, but Farrell's "Settler's Arms" was operated from his house of '... two rooms and a skillion ...'. Of which Farrell was later to complain as 'inadequate for me and my numerous family'.

Five more children had been born to the Partridges' since arriving in Port Macquarie, they were:-

|                 |    |      |
|-----------------|----|------|
| James           | in | 1822 |
| Joseph          | "  | 1823 |
| Susannah        | "  | 1825 |
| Rachel France   | "  | 1827 |
| Stephen William | "  | 1829 |

In The same year of 1830 Mrs Partridge died.

Stephen's venture as a publican could be regarded as one of the regressive phases of his life.

With the influx of new settlers there was a dramatic increase in the demand for land both in and outside the town. A new alignment of streets was ordered in 1831 when the surveyor was brought in, which when carried out, removed a considerable portion of the Partridge property and despite a second

licence to 'retail Wines, Malt and Spiritous Liquors', by 1833 the "New Inn" was declared bankrupt.

Stephen felt impelled to apply to the government for a grant in compensation. Which included such as '... the profits of one hotel would hardly meet the expenses of one moderate family ... 18 months since the death of his wife ... he has seven children ... the little capital he has accumulated by his industry and economy, which he had hoped to set up his offspring in a respectable sphere of life, diminished'.

It is not known if he received compensation, but several positions were proposed for him but none of them were taken up. In 1832 he was advised to apply for an allotment somewhere between Hay and Murray Streets which was granted on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1833.

As early as 1830 he had been promised a grant of land but this was not implemented until 1879, when he commenced paying a 'quit rent' of £5.6s.8p [\$10.68] on 640 acres [1,581.44ha], which he later sold to Major A. C. Innes and these became known as and still retain the name of 'Thrumster'. A further fifty acres [100ha] on Limeburners Creek was rented by him from a school teacher at the 'quit rent', of 8s 4p [83c per annum]. Mention was made of a house 'fronting onto Horton Street' between "William and Bridge Streets and several 'exchanges of land'.

In 1834 he married for the third time a 4' 10 ¼" [148cm] Irish convict nursemaid, Julia Cotterdown.

Partridge was 43 and Julia 18 (or 20) at the time of the marriage. She had been assigned to Partridge as a nursemaid

(which was in contravention of the law which forbade single female convicts being assigned to "single" men). However as Mrs Partridge she was to bear him six children:

John William  
Margaret Marion  
Richard Stephen  
Sarah Julia  
Ann Caroline  
Margaret Susanna

In 1835 he became a Police Constable, at per annum £80 0s 0p [\$160.00] or £100 0s 0p [\$200] if 'he does not occupy public quarters'.

In 1836 he again became Superintendent of Convicts until the office was abolished in 1847 with the transfer of government from the military to civil administration. On 'requesting pecuniary compensation for the abolition of his office', he was awarded a gratuity of 2 years salary, £88 0s 0p [\$176.00].

The 1841 Census shows the number of persons in Stephen Partridges' household as nine males and six females. The 1869 - 70 Electoral Roll described him as a Free Settler.



As the colony developed the acquisition of land became a primary consideration for families determined to settle in the district, despite the decline of the economy since the withdrawal of the military. Variable weather did not distract from the insatiable hunger for land to satisfy the needs of many large families. Stephen Partridge was well aware of the situation.

From his earlier position as a minor, but important official, Stephen Partridge was to be remembered as having served through the terms of all six commandants governing the establishment and the withdrawal of the military regime, the expansion of the colony to a free-trading port and deeply involved in the every-day life of the colony.

Once, in his own defence when threatened with exposure of his own dubious activities, in an altercation with a surveyor over re-alignment of land and illegal labour, he is recorded as declaring

'You may do as you think proper, for my part, if all the people in the colony were watching me, I should do as I act now. I care for nobody.'

This could well be his epitaph.

He died 'of decaying old age' on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1878 at the ripe old age of eighty six and was interred in the old burial grounds at Port Macquarie having spent 56 years in the colony.

His wife Julia survived him and died on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1889.



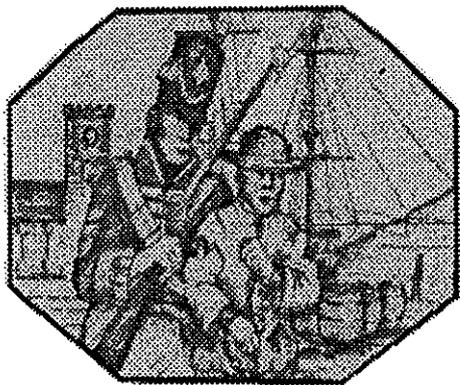
his licence for the  
"New Inn"  
27 August 1830



**'active and zealous officer, which at the same time he  
had in an extraordinary degree of the goodwill  
of the prisoner population'**

*Cover design, illustrations and collation by Joan Cook using records from the Records and Research Department of the Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc, 15 February 2001 © to Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.*

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PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

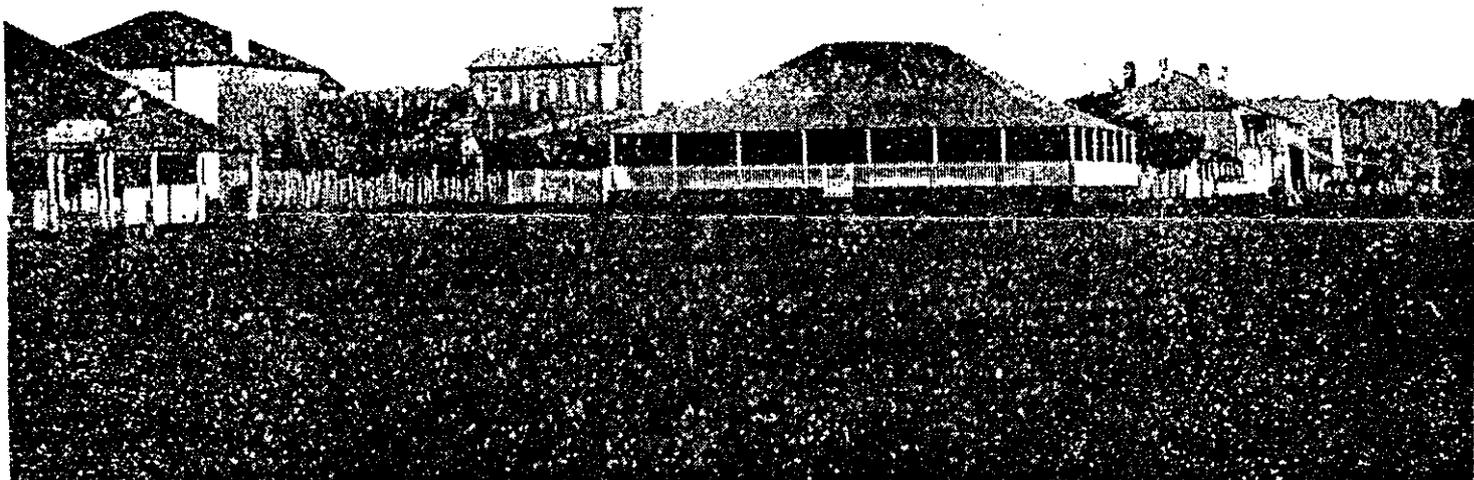
# CHRONICLE

-YEAR OF FEDERATION-

2001

Vol 5 No.2 June 2001

ISSN 1328-4304



PAGET HALL

HASSELL STREET  
PORT MACQUARIE N.S.W.



## PAGET HALL

Former member of the Port Macquarie Historical Society, now deceased, Mr Jack Walsh gave a talk many years ago to this Society on the old historic cottage *Paget Hall*.

Jack said: *Paget Hall, like so many of the old places [at Port Macquarie] are only memories, by different stories that had been printed in the Port Macquarie News.*

*Situated on the corner of the two main streets, Horton and Clarence, this cottage is credited to have been built by convicts for Captain Thomas Constant Paget Morton. Supposedly built of stone it had big wide verandahs with wide frontage to both streets.*

*It is told that he ruled this home with a 'rod of iron'.*

*It is not known when it was built, but one report states it was built about 1836 when Morton is believed to have come to Port Macquarie.*

In a letter written by Eliza Betts (daughter of Captain Morton), to her Aunt Miss Chappell in Devonshire, England, she quotes the following:

*Kew Cottage, The Glebe,  
29th January, 1838*

*My Dear Aunt,*

*It gives me much pleasure in writing these few lines to acquaint you of my marriage to Mr. Henry Betts, whose family reside in Sydney, with whom Ellen and ourselves are on a visit. I have no doubt Mamma had mentioned to you my engagement to Mr. Betts some time since, and that it met with her and Papa's approbation.*

*We have been enjoying ourselves very much, dancing and music form our evening's amusement, both of which, my dear Aunt, you are aware I am extremely fond of.*

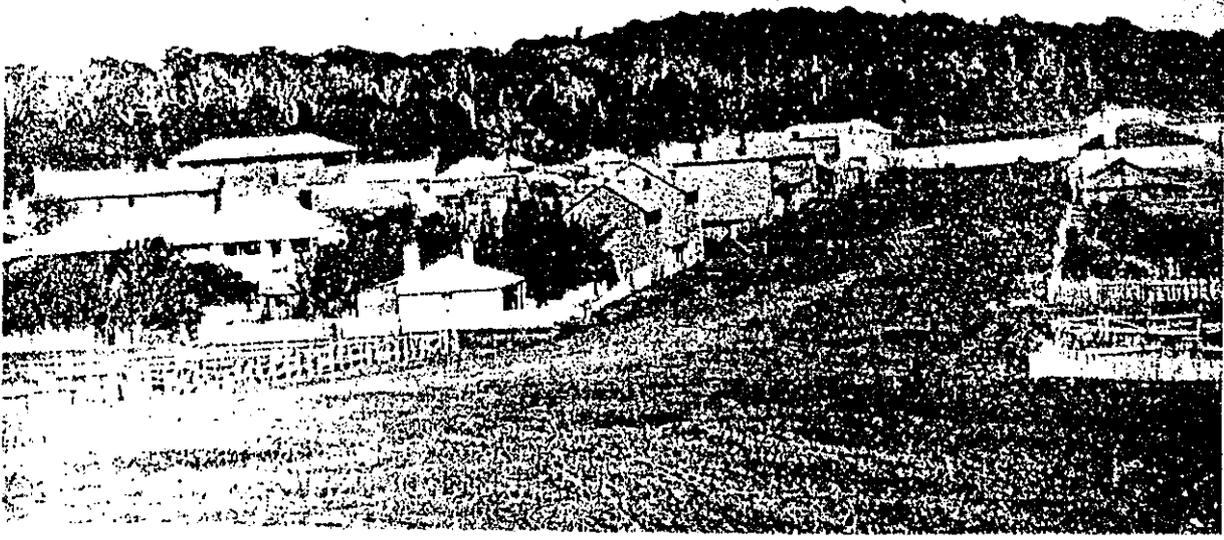
*Mr. Betts' family consist of his mother and two brothers and one sister. One of the brothers sailed for England last March. They received very satisfactory letters from him a few days since. I regret extremely that I did not write by him, as it is his intention to visits all parts of England and the Continent ere he returns to Sydney.*

*We were married on my birthday, 21st December when I was 17; perhaps you may say much too early in life, but you must recollect, my dear Aunt, that the difference of climate accounts for young people marrying earlier than in old England, the same as in India.*

*Papa, the Lieutenant, Thomas Constant Paget Morton, has built a very nice house in Port Macquarie and has some idea of disposing of his farm and cattle, provided he can meet with a suitable offer - a great many highly respectable families have visited Port Macquarie lately, with a view of purchasing land for grazing purposes, and I assure you it is a very thriving district. We have a steamer running every week from Sydney, and a passage is generally made in 30 hours.*

*... This climate is delightful in winter, neither too cold nor too warm, and I am seldom unwell ... Mr Betts, tho' unknown, begs his kind regards and with every good wish for your health and happiness.*

*Believe me,  
My Dear Aunt,  
Your ever affectionate Niece  
Eliza Betts.*



CLARENCE STREET, PORT MACQUARIE

This early photograph looking west down Clarence Street shows on the left, the fenced area originally reserved for a village market (now Port Pacific), then across Murray Street on the corner, Fred Pead's house (Formerly Todd Holden Garage). Adjacent to it and marked by trees, the last vestiges of the early stream, where a convict drain now takes water under Clarence Street. Next is the Historical Museum, the Garrison building, the two-storied Liberty Hall of Lieutenant Thomas Caswell (Art Gallery) and on the corner of Horton Street, Paget Hall (Ritz Theatre) of Commander T.C.P.Morton.

*Captain Morton, [Jack Walsh continues] like so many officers of that era, had distinguished service as a Naval Officer in the Napoleonic Wars. He is also reported to have served with Nelson at Trafalga. His reward was a grant of 10,000 acres of land in the Colony of New South Wales, supposedly at Morton's Creek, with that creek being named after him. He had little interest in farming so resided in the house he had built, 'Paget Hall', raising a family of three daughters.*

Mr Roy L Betts, youngest son of Eliza and Henry Betts, wrote to (the then named, Hastings District Historical Society, Port Macquarie) in October 1959 with the following information:

*He [Thomas Constant Paget Morton] left three daughters and it [Paget Hall] was handed down on my mother's side. Only two of us survive now. The house was demolished (with difficulty) about thirty years ago but the old convict-built stone well, which supplied the town with water in times of drought, proved a hard nut to crack, so I was told, and was covered over. [There is also a report that when Dymocks Book Store was being renovated this well*

*was found and again quickly covered over].*

*Mr Betts continues: I revisited Port, to my sorrow, in 1938, for a holiday but only stopped a couple of days. Gone was the quiet, lovely, old fishing village with grassy streets and interesting old buildings. Little remained but the old church where I was a choir boy for three years. The old convict gaol had vanished, which was a crime as it was a living history. [demolished by the Council of the day in 1917]. It faced the sea away up on Gaol Hill and as a small boy I had the run of it with the policeman's sons, who had the keys. We revelled in the ghastly contents, cat-o-nine tails etc., as boys would. Tozer's old building in the front street had gone [now the Commonwealth Bank building], [as was] the home of Louis Becke, the author of South Sea Tales.*



LOUIS BECKE'S HOME

On the south-west corner of William and Owen Streets, Port Macquarie, is the home of Louis Becke, the well-known author of south seas adventures. Originally two separate houses, it was renovated and combined into one building in 1896 by Fred Condon and was sold to W. A. H. Slade, the manager of the Commercial Bank.

*The big old wool store on the waterfront likewise. Port had become an ordinary country town like hundreds of others. The Port I lived in was dead and gone.*

*The harbour was the worst. It had been almost tree encircled and deep with a regular passenger line of steamers and numerous big sailing ships. The unsightly breakwaters were useless and caused the harbour to fill up with sandbanks. There were no fish either. In fact everything was wrong to me. I climbed Big Nobby, a tangled mass of dense undergrowth and photographed the old monument close up.*

*I have a unique book of large photos taken by a former Manager of the Bank of N.S.W. about 1884. They are whole plate and most of them so clear you would think they were taken last week instead of nearly 80 years ago. One panorama taken from the church tower extends from the West Port Bridge to Windmill Hill with a schooner being towed over the bar by a tug. The photos extend out for just five feet and are apparently mounted on white linen. One photo of the original Bank of New South Wales is probably the only print in existence as the Bank had to leave a blank when they issued a book of the old buildings - the only blank in the book. Had I known they could have re-photographed it. It has the date 1885.*

*There is an old Grandfather Clock which I remember well in our hall, where it stood for over 80 years. When my brother, who worked in the Bank of New South Wales moved from Port before World War I he couldn't transport it, so left it in the care of Willy Spence to look after or sell. Both of them are dead years ago but the clock survives and tourists have told me about it. It is of course ours, but I have nothing in writing whatever - it was all so long ago. It would be wonderful for your Museum. [never located].*

*The old book is a bit delapidated but most of the photos are clear and its age is of course a great attraction. I think your Museum is the proper place for it and not the Mitchell Library and you will get it - but not at the moment. [we did receive this magnificent album] You can also have a smaller book of newspaper cuttings concerning Port and dating back to 1898.*

*Another tablet on the wall at St. Thomas Church is of another ancestor, Dr. Henry St. John Madden, who died in 1873. [see his story in the Society's 1996 publication - Port Macquarie the Windingsheet].*

*Still another ancestor was Sir Francis Drake and I was told that a silver model of his ship "The Golden Hind" was stolen in the early days at Paget Hall. When our family broke up many precious possessions seemed to have vanished - rare old pictures on yellow parchment and possibly valuable. Only one remains 'The Satyr' - clever, but quite repulsive and used to scare me as a kid.*

*The inheritance we should have received was wasted through lack of care and general disinterest. After all, Captain Morton bought a ship load of belongings from England ...*



**EARLY BANK OF N.S.W.**

The Bank of N.S.W. first became interested in opening a branch in Port Macquarie during 1879 and on July 6, 1880 it opened its doors at rented premises in Clarence Street in a two-storied building once known as "Liberty Hall", the original home of Lieutenant Thomas Caswell, R.N. In 1882 the bank bought the property in Horton Street and shifted to the new premises sometime prior to 1891. During construction of the existing building in 1893, the Bank moved across the street to Condon's Building until the new quarters were completed.

*Signed: Roy L. Betts.*

Jack Walsh continues: *Paget Hall was used in the last 20 odd years as a boarding house. In the 1920's Mr Herbert Smr. and his wife conducted it as such, followed by his son Ernest.*

*Thomas Constant Paget Morton was born at Appledorn, Devonshire, England in 1787. In 1802 at the age of 15 years, he entered the Navy and served under Nelson at Trafalga. On 23 April, 1818 he married Eliza Thomson May Chappell in the Parish Church of Northam in Devonshire, England, by the then Parish Priest Thomas Little. Eliza had been born on Sunday 28 June 1795 and was baptised on the following day by her grandfather, the Rev. Samuel May of Brynsworthy. She was the daughter of James and Catherine Chappell. It is believed that in 1832 Morton sought permission from the Admiralty to emigrate with his family to the Colony of New South Wales. Being on the retired list, permission was readily granted. This report goes on to say, that for service to King and Country, he was granted 10,000 acres of land near the settlement of Port Macquarie. The land was near the present town of Wauchope, including a stream now known as Morton's Creek. Also that he was not interested in agriculture persuits. He preferred the life of the Manor at Paget Hall.*

*With the Morton family came Elizabeth Fulford, who when giving evidence at an inquest in 1841 stated: I came free to the Colony in the service of Lieutenant Morton in which I still continue.*

*In 1855 the Admiralty granted him the rank of Commander Retired, giving him a more authorative air to his way of life.*

*The couple had three daughters, Eliza, Ellen and Maria, but no sons. Morton was concerned that his Morton line in Australia would be destined to fade out. Eliza (as*

*mentioned) married Henry Betts, a storekeeper. Henry Betts died and later Mrs Betts remarried to Dr Henry St. John Madden who died as we have said in 1873. Thomas Constant Paget Morton willed his property to his son-in-law Dr. Madden, who was a medical man but he did not practice in Port Macquarie.*



Roy Betts (born 1887 -grandson of Henry & Eliza)  
with Mrs N Wilson of Douglas Vale

*Another daughter Ellen married P.H. Henderson at Armidale in 1856.*

The following is a copy of a letter written by Ellen's father:

*Port Macquarie*

*2nd June, 1856.*

*Sir,*

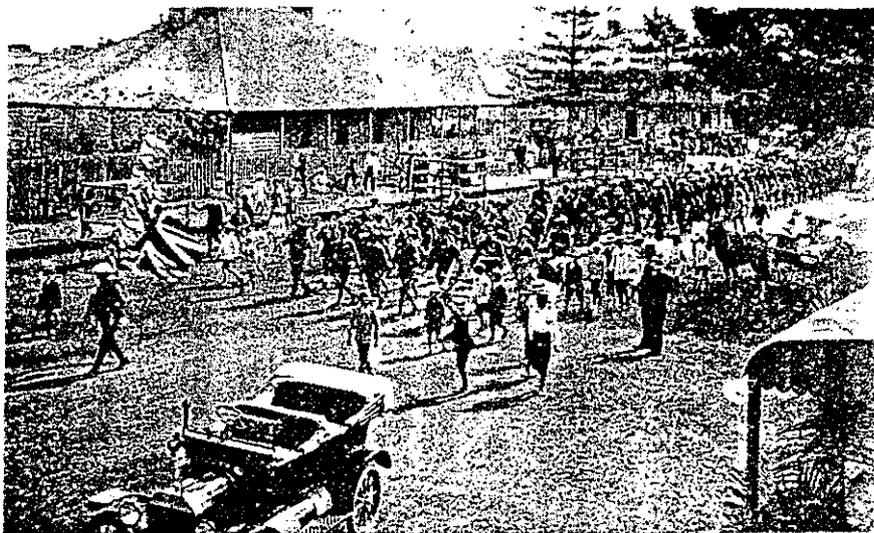
*It would have been desirable for us to have seen each other before deciding on your marriage with my daughter, but as I am prevented by old age and you by your official duty from taking so distance a journey, we must decide it by writing.*

*As I have always heard the most honourable mention of your name and know that you are in circumstances to provide for a wife, I hereby give you my free consent to marry my daughter.*

*I am Sir  
Yours sincerely  
T.P.M.*

#### NORTH COASTERS ARRIVING

On arrival at Port Macquarie the "North Coaster" recruits are shown marching up Horton Street, turning right into Clarence Street, passing the well-known "Paget Hall" built by Thomas Constant Paget Morton, but at this stage possibly owned by Henry Betts who married one of the Morton girls. Marching up to the Showgrounds, led by an Army band, the contingent is spearheaded by a recruit carrying the Union Jack about to pass the polished automobile in the foreground.



It is interesting to read an obituary written in a newspaper in 1919 for a Miss Warlters which gives the following in part:

*... The deceased lady who was born in 1832, was, so far as we can learn, the oldest native of the district, though of course not the oldest resident, as we still have a few very venerable patriarchs amongst us. She first saw the light in a house which stood on the site now occupied by Paget Hall, at the corner of Horton and Clarence Streets, Port Macquarie. [This would seem to indicate that there was a dwelling there before 'Paget Hall']. The old house mentioned, which is still occupied and in a good state of repair, was erected at a date not within the memory of any person now living. The span of Miss Warlters' life embraces changes so vast, not only in this district [Port Macquarie- Hastings] but in the country as a whole, that a wide range is given to the imagination in trying to get a proper conception of them. Her lifetime covers the whole period of settlement here with the exception of about a dozen years. When she was a year old the total population of the State (bond and free) was only 70,070 ... Port Macquarie in 1833 had 550 inhabitants, of whom 114 were free and 436 were convicts...*

An Auction Sale advertised in the Port Macquarie News of Saturday 3 March 1934, says:

#### *AUCTION SALE - W. Landrigan*

*Under instructions from the Administrators of the Estate of the late Mr. Francis Herbert, will sell on Saturday, 17th March on the property at Port Macquarie at 2 p.m. THAT CORNER BLOCK, known as Betts' Corner, with a Substantial Brick Building thereon, and having a Frontage of 67ft. 10in. to Horton Street with 123ft. 6in. To Clarence Street. For further particulars apply to the auctioneer. W. Landrigan Auctioneer, Wauchope.*

The News also reported that the Auction should provide some keen competition for its acquirement. But this was not to be, as The Port Macquarie News of Saturday 24 March 1934 reported:

#### *TOWN PROPERTY*

*Last Saturday Mr Landrigan, Auctioneer, Wauchope, submitted the land and building, situated on the corner of Horton and Clarence Streets, in the estate of the late Mr. Francis Herbert, to public auction. This was passed in at £1270, [1270 pounds = approx. \$2540] and may be disposed of by private treaty. The Port Macquarie News of Saturday 31 March 1934 then reported the following:*

#### *SOLD PRIVATELY*

*We are given to understand that the property known as Betts' corner, recently offered by auction in the estate of the late*

## HORTON STREET

Probably taken about the turn of the century when the trees in Horton Street were very young, this view looking south from near the existing Post Office, shows on the left, Paget Hall (now Ritz Theatre), the Commercial Hotel (later Innes Tavern), while on the right of the street Tozer's Terrace (now Commonwealth Bank) and the Bank of N.S.W. are readily indentified.



*Mr. F. Herbert, and passed in at £1270, has been disposed of privately to Mr. T.A. Hudson.*

The Port News on Saturday 28th July 1934 reported: *Just recently two town properties have changed hands. Mr T Hudson sold what is known as Bett's Corner, fronting Horton and Clarence Streets, to Mr. David McAlary, of Boggabri. The same gentleman has also purchased two allotments facing the golf links, and hopes to take up residence here shortly. Mrs J. Pearce has disposed of the property now occupied by Mrs Brenton, fronting Hay and Clarence Streets, to Mrs A Stewart, who is at present in occupation of the first mentioned property.*

## DEMOLITION OF ANOTHER HISTORIC BUILDING

The Port Macquarie News on Saturday 19 June 1937 reported: *Work will commence shortly to demolish the old building at the corner of Horton and Clarence Streets, Port Macquarie where an up-to-date theatre and six modern shops will be erected for Messrs. E Hatsatouris and Sons. The theatre will be one of the most modern and luxurious theatres in New South Wales, with a seating accommodation for 900, beautiful foyers luxuriously carpeted, concealed neon lighting throughout the theatre, latest seats with 300 lounge chairs in the dress circle. Mr Kenworthy is the Architect who is responsible for the construction of the State Theatre, St. James, The Capitol and most of the largest and important theatres in*

*Australia.*

By the 14 August the News was reporting: *... closed footpaths for building of theatre by Building and Proprietary Ltd. Sydney.*

The cottage was demolished in 1937 as the Port Macquarie News reported in its newspaper on 27 August 1937: *The old home called Paget Hall situated on the corner of Horton and Clarence Streets is now being demolished by the contractors for Messrs Hatsatouris and Sons new theatre and shop. This means the disappearance of another of the towns old buildings.*

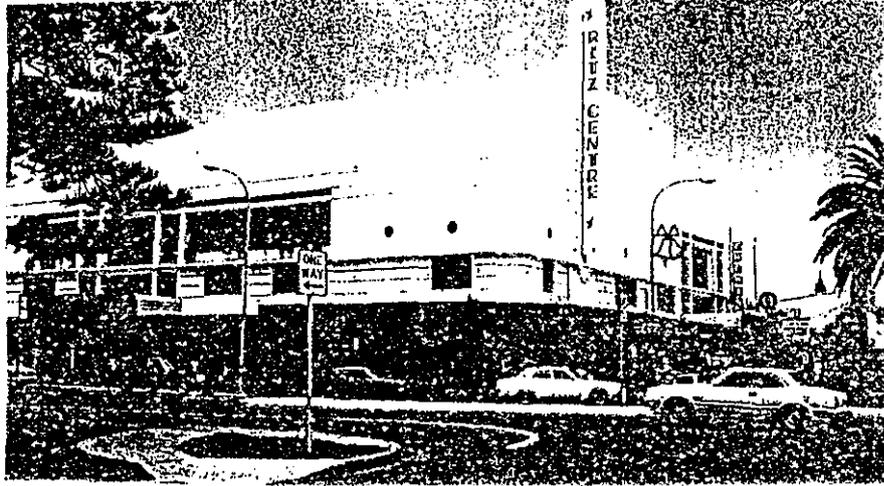
Another News report on 4 September 1937; *New Picture Theatre: The site of the new picture theatre for Messrs. Hatsatouris and Sons, Paget Hall corner, has been cleaned up by Mr Ashworth, and the material disposed of. The contractors began the excavation work this week for the foundations and the corner has been a hive of industry.*

## THE RITZ THEATRE

*Port Macquarie's New Palatial Theatre*

*£20,000 Monument of Entertainment*

*The Ritz will be officially opened on Monday next, December 20th at 8p.m., by the Mayor of Port Macquarie, Ald. E.A. Mowle, and a representative gathering of distinguished citizens present. The Ritz Theatre is the last word in modern theatre*



construction, and equal to any city theatre. A magnificent programme will be screened for the opening on Monday, also, on Tuesday and Wednesday. There will be Wings of the morning, in beautiful colours, with the screen's new sensation Annabella, the beautiful French screen star; Henry Fonda, and the world's famous tenor, John McCormack. Also good supporting programme. O'Kay for Sound - easily the funniest picture ever produced. And the most tuneful show of the year, featuring Australia's own rollicking baritone, Peter Dawson.

The next programme will be on Thursday, 23rd, and Friday, 24th December, including Zane Gray's, Arizones Mahony, with Buster Crabb and Walter Langer's, Vogues of 1936, in beautiful colours. One of the most beautiful and spectacular musicals ever made. Monday 27th December, Bobbie Breen, in Make a Wish and Hop-a-long Cassidy in Trails Dust Paramount's spectacular outdoor drama.

Tuesday 28th, and Wednesday 29th December - Ronald Coleman in The Prisoner of Zenda. Only the best pictures will be screened at The Ritz. Plan and reservations at, The Monterey Cafe - admission prices: Lounge 3/- [three shillings= 30 cents] (plus tax), Dress Circle 2/6 (plus tax), [two shillings and sixpence=25 cents], Reserve Back Stalls 1/11½ (plus tax) [one shilling and eleven pence and a half-penny= about 19 cents], Front Stalls 1/6

(Plus tax) [one shilling and sixpence=15 cents]. [Port Macquarie News Saturday 18 December 1937].

The News again reported on Saturday 25th December 1937 - Christmas Day: the following: *The Ritz the new palatial Port Macquarie Theatre, erected to the order of Messrs. E Hatsaturis and Sons, was officially opened on Wednesday evening by Ald. E. A. Mowle, Mayor of Port Macquarie. There was a large attendance at the opening night, people from all parts of the district being present. It was unfortunate that some who had booked seats for the original opening night, Monday 20th December had to cancel their bookings owing to other arrangements. Nevertheless the ceremony was a red-letter day for Port Macquarie, and the programme was thoroughly enjoyed...* [a much longer report was given but it is too long for this particular article].

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#### REFERENCES

Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc. Records & Research Files and photographs.  
Talk given to Historical Society by member Mr Jack Walsh.  
Cover Design: Gwen Griffin and Port Macquarie Historical Society with illustrations by Joan Cook.

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# CHRONICLE

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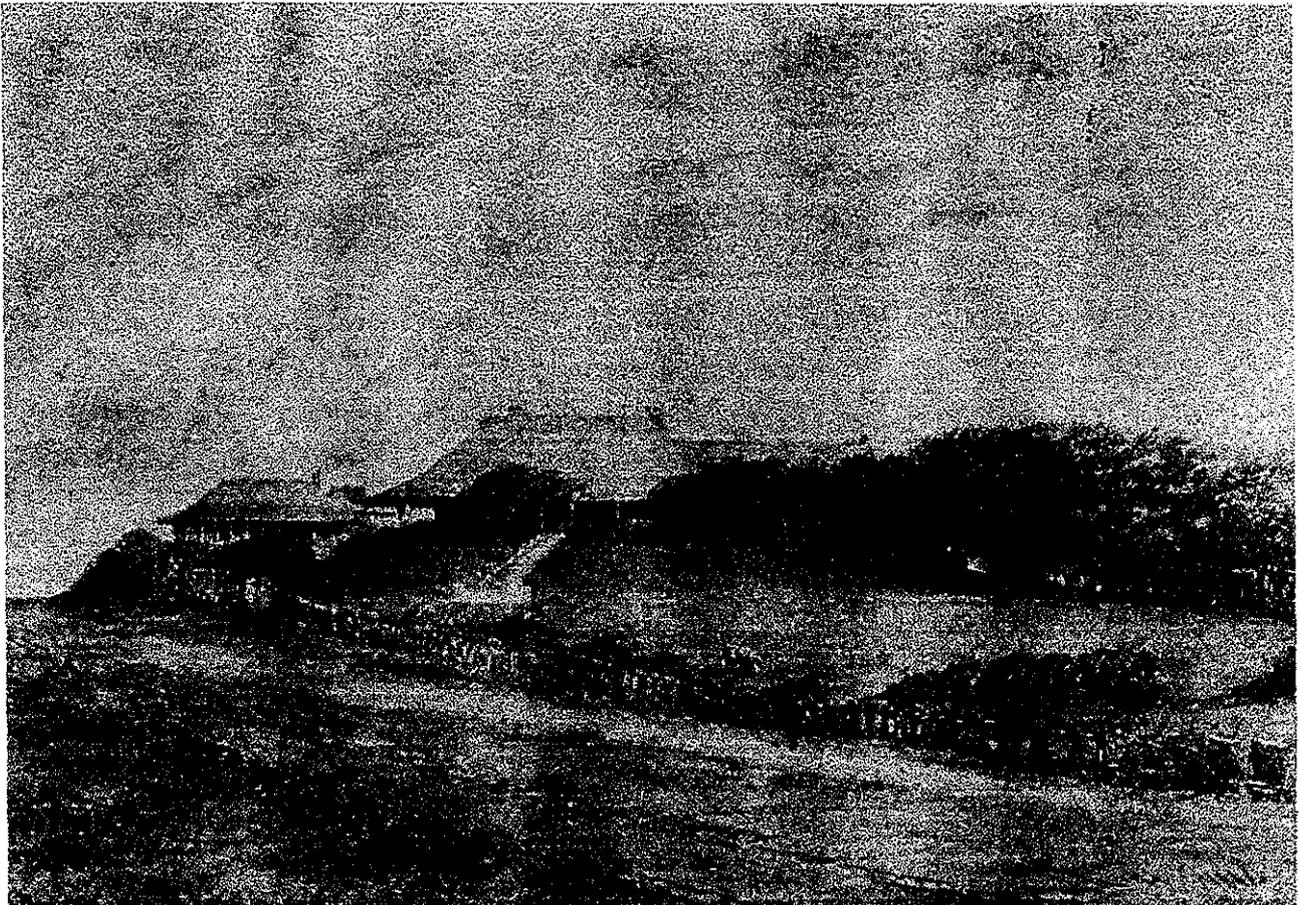
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Vol 5 No.3-September 2001

ISSN 1328-4304

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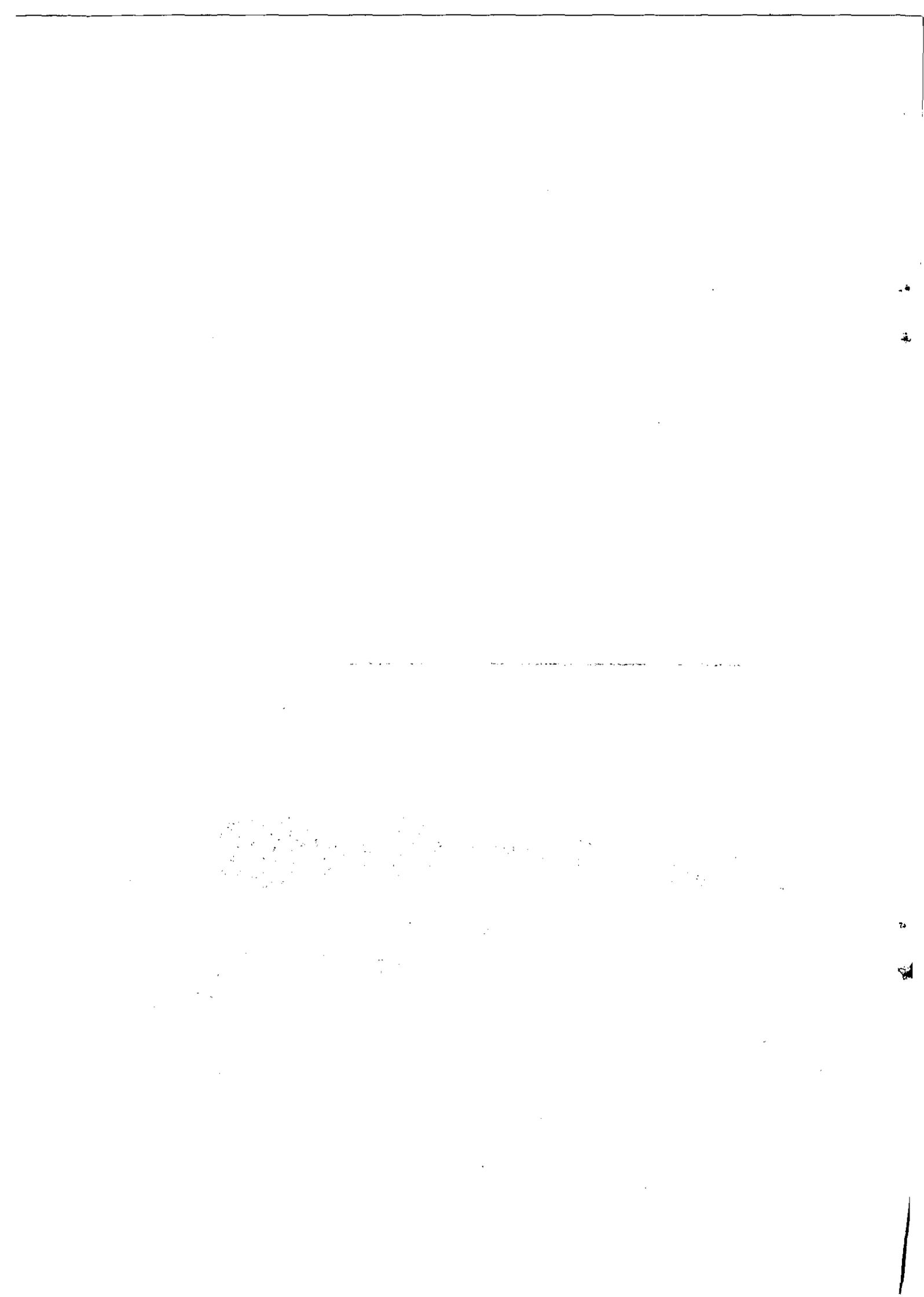
## PORT MACQUARIE'S GOVERNMENT HOUSE



by Gwen Griffin

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## GOVERNMENT HOUSE - PORT MACQUARIE THE HISTORY

The first Government House at Port Macquarie was possibly built of logs and perhaps included slab walls which were plastered. We cannot be sure where or when it was constructed, but in November 1821 when Governor Macquarie arrived on a visit to the Penal Settlement he wrote:

*Saturday 3 November 1821: We proceeded from the landing place immediately to the Commandant's House, a very comfortable neat cottage, where Mrs Allman and her children gave us a hearty friendly welcome. Both she and Captain Allman made the point of my taking a room to sleep in instead of the tent which I purposed [proposed] doing. I availed myself of their hospitality.*

*Tuesday 6 November 1821: ... There is also an abundance of excellent timber for building purposes growing close to the town and along the banks of the Shoal. Fine verdant hills immediately to the rear of the town afford pasturage for cattle. It is intended to reserve those hills for a Common, for the use of the town, after enclosing a certain proportion of them for a Government Domain.*

*Having thus fixed on the site of the future town of Port Macquarie I directed Mr. Meehan [the Assistant Surveyor-General] to lay down a plan of it on paper and submit it for my final approval.*



Government House foundations- Photo - Mr. Ian Cupit

John Uniacke, came free to New South Wales and was soon appointed Surveyor of Distilleries, Sheriff and Provost Marshall. In 1823, in company with Mr Oxley and another Surveyor, Mr Stirling, he called at Port Macquarie.

Uniacke wrote:

*This place has been settled as a penal settlement ... Government House stands nearly in the centre of the town on a handsome esplanade open to the sea. To the Northward, which commands the whole town, are the military barracks calculated to hold one hundred and fifty men, each of the married men having a small cottage garden. On the right of the hill are two handsome cottages which are used as Officers' quarters ...*

A plan of the settlement prepared in April 1824 by H. Langdon for Captain Allman illustrates ... *the town which was originally called 'The Camp'. This plan [not shown] shows ... On the rising hill eastward were the Commandant's house and, overlooking all, the military barracks and cottages for non-commissioned officers and married soldiers ...*

Captain John Rolland, in the early part of his time as the second Commandant in 1824, set apart and enclosed about four acres of ground to grow vegetables for the prisoners. This enclosure in 1829 was dignified by the name of a Demesne (Domain).

With the arrival of Commandant Henry Gillman in January 1825 to succeed the deceased Commandant, John Rolland, we find that the Government contributed to the

food supply locally from its own gardens and domain at Port Macquarie ... Free persons only were supplied with dairy produce from the Government House Dairy ...

Gillman, in 1825, rebuilt Government House on a grander scale. *This spreading verandahed residence stood on the site now the corner of Clarence and School Streets. Above it, the military establishment comprised officers' quarters, one and two barracks built of brick, a guard-house of brick, two non-commissioned officers' houses and eight married soldiers' houses. Between the latter line of houses and the lumber yard was a small building described as a temporary school house; and between Government House and the gaol, on the boundary which divided the military garden from the government, stood another building, the post office.* (This is believed to have been a Military Post Office).

During 1825 there were 1500 prisoners at Port Macquarie with a large Military detachment. This is believed to have been, at the time, the largest military/convict population in New South Wales.

### GOVERNMENT HOUSE HAPPENINGS

Some of the events known to have taken place:

It was during the time of the first Commandant, Captain Francis Allman, that the first Sugar Cane grown in Australia was planted at Port Macquarie.

Mrs Gillman was known to have had a convict servant, Fanny Williams. Another convict, Sarah Acton, was a Washerwoman at Government House.

We know also that Government House had - *Sash Windows* - from an article written in the newspaper: *The Sydney Monitor*, of 16

*February 1829.*

*... Captain Gillman of the Buffs, (now Major in the 69th), was formerly Commandant at Port Macquarie...The same commandant who could scourge a father for preserving the chastity of his daughters, from the brutal attempt of a modern Tarquin, was of course an unkind husband. His amiable and accomplished lady, suspecting one day that a female was under the sofa, lifted the sash window of the Government House at Port Macquarie, to call for aid. The Captain took up the poker, and swore he would break her arm if she persisted! Mild and meek as she was, her feelings at this time amounting to an agony of fear and resentment; she either forgot to desist, or wilfully persevered. The Captain struck her with the poker and broke her arm! ...*

Captain Crotty was Commandant, October 1827 to June 1828, he had seven men growing potatoes, pumpkins, cabbages, melons, peas, beans and etc. Silver snuff boxes, plated Emu-eggs and jewellery, brass and military spurs and wire birdcages along with furniture, was also being made especially for him, by a convict silversmith and convict cabinet-makers, contrary to Government Orders.

In 1828, it was reported that maize was stored in the lofts and floors above and about Government House. Five acres of maize was grown in three little fields at the metropolis, the residence of the Commandant. (150 bushells annually). Small quantities of excellent Castor Oil was also made.

Written in the 'Daily Diary of Port Macquarie', we read the following: *Monday 15th February 1830, Government House: commenced new shingling in fine weather. Tuesday 9 March 1830: Shingling of Government House finished.*

Government House was a complex of six brick buildings all in good repair, when free settlers arrived in 1831. The Commandant's House was fifty-five feet by thirty-three feet, with a separate kitchen, washhouse and laundry while two side buildings were used as an office, servant's room and pantry, and a Court House surrounded by verandahs.

Across from Government House were the Military Barracks which consisted of nine brick and two slab buildings. One brick building had two rooms each with accommodation for fifty men. There was a cookhouse, bakehouse, a brick guardhouse, and a stable for three horses. Also there was a large cell and a small cell. The Lumber Yard contained a large brick building one hundred and sixty-two feet by twenty-two feet, divided and used as blacksmiths' and carpenters' shops.

In 1831 Government buildings worthy of note were, Government House, the Military Barracks, St. Thomas' Church, Hospital, Parsonage house near the corner of Clarence and Murray Streets, the Watch house, Police Office and Factory for female prisoners behind Government House in the vicinity of William Street, as then planned.

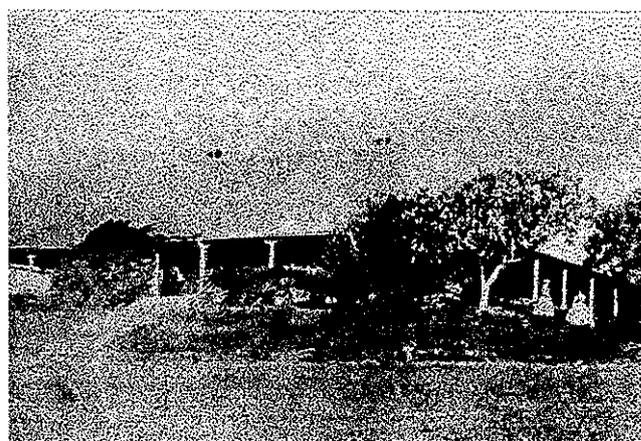
A further despatch stated:

*...The grounds in 1831 about the present Government House and buildings will be also thus bounded by Murray Street and the extension of William Street and as the further extension of the town may interfere with these ...*

Some of the buildings erected by the Government during the 1820s were by 1831 crumbling. At this time there were more than sixty government buildings of which twenty-five were of brick, eighteen were slab constructed, and the remainder were timber or wattle-and-daub.



Government House - Port Macquarie



Major Crummer's daughters standing at side of Government House in 1867 - note: Captain Sinclair, Police Magistrate, standing at top of front steps

The second Prisoners' Barracks were built on the hill above the Lumber yard from Murray street eastward. These very substantial buildings in Clarence Street, not shown on the plan of 1831, were described by a visiting journalist in 1868 as about the finest range of buildings in Port Macquarie and in excellent repair, although very old. These buildings were later used as an Asylum).

St Thomas' Church is the only building left standing, and functional from the Penal

Settlement's first decade.



Government House Foundations - Photo Mr. Ian Cupit

The Calendar and Directory, published in 1832 by James Raymond, Postmaster of New South Wales said ... *278 miles from Sydney is the settlement or town of Port Macquarie ... There is a Church, Government House, Commissariat Store, Barracks and Etc ...*

Mrs J.H. Young, who came to Port Macquarie in the 1840s said: *It was perhaps the most picturesque town that could be imagined.* (She was the daughter of Major & Mrs William Kemp). The Kemp family lived in a cottage near Government House, which was then the residence of Police Magistrate Mr. Gray. In describing Government House, Mrs Young wrote: *it was a one-storeyed house with many rooms covering a lot of ground and with a large and pretty garden.*

In 1851, a traveller visiting Port Macquarie stated (in part): *Mr. Halloran was Clerk of Petty Sessions, and resided at Government House, which was in fine order...* In 1858, Mrs Elizabeth Wilson died at Government House, Port Macquarie, aged 62 years. She was the wife of John Mudie Wilson a Clerk in the Commissariat Department at Darling Harbour who had died in Sydney in 1852. Mrs Wilson was the mother of Mrs Mary Halloran, wife of Mr. Halloran. Mr. Halloran

was later Sheriff of Queensland.

Major James Henry Crummer a Waterloo Veteran who had been awarded the Waterloo Medal for bravery, came to Port Macquarie as Police Magistrate in 1858. He lived in Government House and died there on 29 December 1867. His Greek wife Aikaterini Georgia Plessas, believed to be the first Greek woman in Australia, continued to live at Government House for a time. She died in Sydney aged 97 on 8 August 1907.

Major Crummer was replaced by Captain Sinclair. In 1868 two political celebrities, Mr. W.A. Forster and Mr. John (later Sir John) Robertson paid a visit to Port Macquarie. Shortly after their arrival in the township the ministers were visited by Captain Sinclair, the Police Magistrate, who at that time was residing in Government House. On learning that the ministers intended inspecting the various public institutions of the place proffered to drive them round to those establishments in his 'dog cart'.

The Clerk of Petty Sessions Registrar, James Potts Ormiston, son of Robert Ormiston, late Clerk of Petty Sessions, Sydney, was living at Government 'Cottage' when he died in August 1873.

It is not known for sure when Government House was demolished, but, at the Progress Committee Meeting held in September 1885 we find the following: *The Chairman requested the secretary to read a largely signed petition in favour of having Government House paddock, Port Macquarie surveyed and submitted for sale. After carrying out these instructions, Mr. G. Litchfield moved that the petition, as read, be received by the committee, and forwarded by the secretary to the Member for the district, with a request, that the*

*matter be placed before the proper department. The motion was seconded by Mr. P. Daniher, and carried unanimously.*

16 September 1885: *The secretary was instructed to ascertain when Government House paddock at Port Macquarie, was to be offered for sale.*

All of this took place before a Municipal Council had been formed. After over twenty years of wrangling a Municipal Council came into being in 1887.

On Tuesday, 27 September 1887, at the ninth meeting of the newly formed Municipal Council: *correspondence was read from the Department of Lands intimating that the Government would not align the streets wholly at their own cost. Also from the Department of Lands, that the Application of Council for the use of the Government House paddock had been referred to the District Surveyor for report.*

At the 20th Meeting of Council, 13 February 1888, *the Mayor called the attention of the Council to the neglected state and dangerous condition of the Asylum building and Council urgently requested that the Government galvanize the roof as a preventative against fire. (By that time the School of Arts had been built).*

The Port Macquarie News on 4 August 1888 stated: *A letter was read from the Department of Lands, in reply to an application forwarded by the Council in August last, to have the Government House paddock subdivided and sold, which stated that in view of the report of the District Surveyor, the use of the paddock would be granted to the Police Magistrate until the projected allotments had been laid out and sold, and that the reserve would be placed under the control of the Council.*

In January 1889, the Port Macquarie News reported the following: *We hear that Mr. B. Craven intends shortly to commence the brick-making industry in Port Macquarie. At present he has to send to Sydney for bricks for the smallest job, and pay a high figure for the article, to say nothing of freight. He will be able to sell bricks at something like £2.5.0 [Two pounds five shillings] or £2.10.0 a thousand and should find a ready sale for a large quantity at this price. His first kiln will contain 50,000 and will be made on the brickfields so well known for its excellence of clay.*

The old Brickfield was a huge area which went from Munster Street, south of Gordon Street, through to the intersection of Owen and Hill Streets and from Munster Street and Gordon Street southwest to Anita Crescent (The Macquarie Park, Swimming pool area).

2 February 1889 the News reported: *That the Municipal Council had received an application from Mr. B. Craven for permission to burn bricks in Mr. McGann's paddock in the Brickfields. It was not considered necessary for Mr. Craven to ask permission.*

By 9 March 1889 the Brickworks were in full production and several structures of large dimensions were likely to be erected.

The Port Macquarie News reported the following on Saturday 23 March 1889:

#### A SUGGESTION

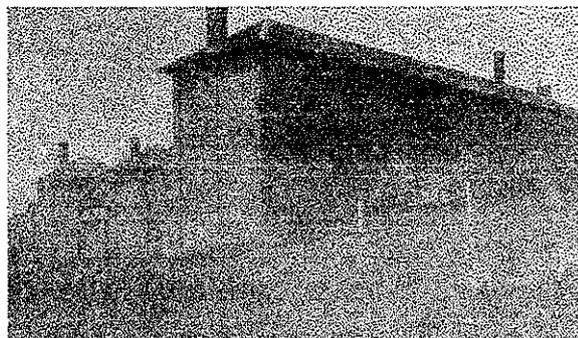
*Now that a suitable site has been dedicated to their use, the Council should make an effort to erect a town hall. Of course we know that a building of any magnitude could not be constructed out of the revenue of the Municipality; but we would make the following suggestion, which we think should meet with unanimous approval. Some time*

ago the Council made applications to the Government to put the old asylum buildings in good repair, but seemingly the authorities do not deem this a wise course, as they have not signified in the slightest degree their intention of complying with the request. This building in its present state, is utterly useless, and instead of being allowed to go to decay, as it must inevitably do, it might be utilised with great advantage to the town, if the Government will only grant permission.

At the 48th Meeting of Council, Tuesday 4 June 1889: It was decided that the Council apply to the Government through our Member, that the Asylum Buildings be handed over to the Council for the purpose of obtaining material therefrom with which to erect a Town Hall.

Finally on the 25th February 1890, at the 66th Regular Meeting of Council: that advice had been received that the Colonial Secretary had approved of the Asylum Building being handed over to the Council, on the condition that the whole of the material is cleared away and the ground enclosed with a substantial fence.

On 6 July 1891 at a Special Meeting to deal with the Asylum buildings: the Council instructed the Mayor to engage Mr. James Butler to sell by Public Auction, the Asylum



*Old Asylum Building*

*Buildings in sections at as early a date as possible.*

By the 101st Meeting of Council held on Monday 10 August 1891, the Council announced that the proceeds of the sale of the Asylum Buildings amounted to £39.15.0 [Thirty Nine Pounds fifteen shillings = approx. \$81.00] be placed in the Bank of New South Wales as fixed deposit for three months. By September 1891, the Mayor was instructed to sell the surplus bricks of the Asylum. But, by February 1893 there was still some uncertainty about the removal of the rubble from the Asylum Yard. It was decided that the matter stand in abeyance until the next meeting, including the acceptance of a tender.

*Out of the material of which it is composed a sufficient quantity of bricks could be procured to put up a building which would be a credit to the town; while the remainder could be sold, to provide funds to pay the cost of erection of the town hall. By this means also, an unsightly, useless, and cumbersome building would be removed, and the land on which it stands could either be used or re-dedicated for some fresh purpose. Surely the Government would have no objection to this. It will be remembered that the School of Arts was started in a similar manner by the sale of material out of old Government House; and if the Council would make the necessary application for permission to utilise the material of the old asylum, we venture to say that they will have the support of every ratepayer who is interested in the advancement of the municipality; and we should no doubt soon see a fine town hall erected in Clarence Street.*

Former Port Macquarie Mayor Mr. Stewart Kennedy, (born at Port Macquarie in 1910) has told me, that in 1919 situated on the old Government House site was a large wooden

building with a Tradesman's entrance. This old building was the home of George and Mrs. Lindsay. Further down on the same block was Mrs. Neville's home. At that time the rest of the site was just a paddock.

### **GREAT DISCOVERY**

In this year, 2001, during excavations for a new building about to be erected on the Government House site, at the corner of Clarence and School Streets, Port Macquarie a wonderful discovery was made. Much of the original foundations of Port Macquarie's old Government House were found to be still intact under the ground.

After careful excavations by experienced Archaeologist, Ann Bickford and her assistants, a beautifully built drain was found intact. A herringbone path of convict made bricks from the local brickfield was unearthed, in very good condition. Walls and fireplaces were found. In the last couple of weeks a privvy was unearthed under School Street by Archaeologist Caitlin Allen.



Drain-Pipe in excellent condition - Photo Mr. Ian Cupit

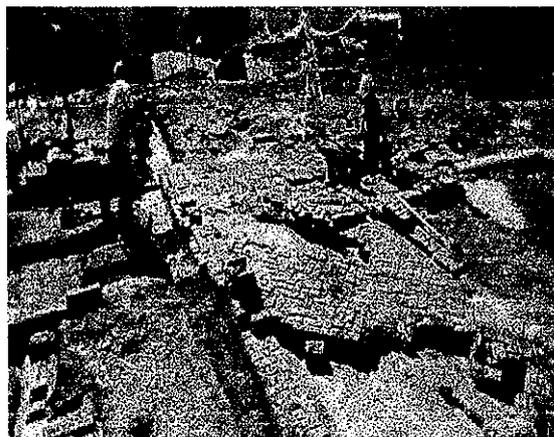
The Australian Heritage Council's Official Statement of Significance says:

*The archaeological remains of the 1821/1825-6 Port Macquarie Government House are significant for their association with the penal settlement established for secondary punishment at Port Macquarie*

*from 1821 -30, the house having served as the home and office of the settlement's Commandant. In the 1820s a number of penal settlements were established in remote locations for secondary punishment, Port Macquarie was the first of these settlements in 1821, followed by Sarah Island, Macquarie Harbour, 1821 - 1822.*

*The archaeological remains are associated with the history of convict transportation in Australia during the 1820s to 1840s. They are evidence of what may be the oldest intended permanent structure in Port Macquarie. The remains are also associated with free settlement in Port Macquarie, the building having been the residence of the Police Magistrate from 1832.*

*The archaeological remains are a rare surviving element of the centre of government in a penal settlement. Government House was both a domestic residence and the centre of administration and control of the whole of the area north of the Hunter Valley.*



Herringbone paving - Photo Mr. Ian Cupit

*The Archaeological remains are significant as one of the few remaining sites with strong associations with the convict system in Port Macquarie and in Australia.*

*The remains are therefore important in the history of European settlement of Australia.*

*Port Macquarie, 1821, was the first place settled in the new phase of 1820s secondary punishment on the east coast of Australia. (Criteria A.4 and B.2.)*

*Government House is closely linked to Governor Macquarie, who established the penal settlement (1821). It was his last major undertaking as Governor and he visited the establishment in November 1821, immediately prior to his departure to England. The site is also associated with Governors' Brisbane and Darling.*

*Government House served as domestic residence and Office for twelve successive Commandants (c1821 -1832) of the penal settlement and their families including the first Commandant, Captain Allman who established the settlement. The site also served as residence for the Police Magistrates of the free settlement and their families from 1832. (Criterion H.1)*

*Government House as evidenced in its archaeological remains demonstrates by its location and aspect the roles and responsibilities of the Commandant. The high vantage point would have provided a panoramic view over the whole settlement reinforcing the administrative and controlling presence of the commandant and his officers. The design and siting of the building provides evidence of the early colonial non-grid layout of Port Macquarie. The siting and location of Government House, and the surviving St. Thomas' Church represents, in built form, the close connection between government and the church. (Criteria A.4 and E.1)*

*The site provides evidence of the building materials and techniques used in Australia at this time, the building being constructed by convict labour. (Criteria A.4 and F1.)*  
*The archaeological remains of Government House, together with its associated artefacts, are a substantial deposit and hold significant archaeological potential. The*

*site has already yielded substantial archaeological evidence of the early nineteenth century development of the town. The remains may further contribute to an understanding of the working of the penal settlement and subsequent free settlement of Port Macquarie and the role of the occupants of the house in its administration and general life. The remains have the potential to contribute to an understanding of the settlement in comparison with other establishments within the convict system. (Criterion C.2)*

What stories these bricks could tell of this early Penal Settlement, the third oldest settlement on mainland Australia, dating from discovery and naming, by Surveyor General John Oxley in 1818, and the arrival of Port Macquarie's First Fleet on 17 April 1821.

Governor Lachlan Macquarie, after whom Port Macquarie was named, was one of three Governors, with Brisbane and Darling, who over the years visited and no doubt stayed in Government House. Governor Charles Fitzroy also came to Port Macquarie in 1847, but he spent a month at Major Innes' 'Lake Cottage'.

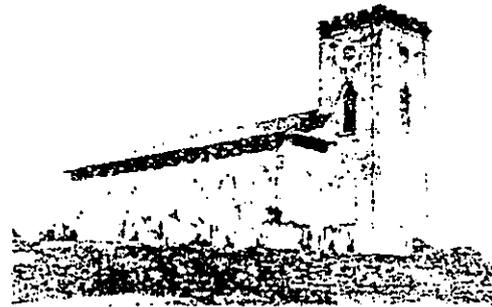
☺☺☺☺☺ **SAVED** ☺☺☺☺☺

After much lobbying by many hundreds of people from all over the world, the forming of a group *The Friends of Port Macquarie's Archaeological Heritage - FOPMAH-* who worked in co-operation with *Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.*, and as always, the hard work of a few, gives this story a happy ending. The site has been saved with an injection of \$1million coming from the New South Wales State Government. This money is to preserve the site, for new plans to be drawn to incorporate these wonderful old ruins into a new aesthetically pleasing complex.

Many thanks must be given to the owners, Architect, and the Developers of this site for their wonderful co-operation during this time.

But, more needs to be done, as we believe this is only the beginning. Ideally we would like to purchase the whole area and make this old Government House site and its historic foundations into something really special. This would make an excellent tourist complex for all to come to see and learn about Port Macquarie's colourful Penal Settlement history, as well as enjoy our wonderful town with its sun, sea and sand.

A much more comprehensive story will be commissioned and written at a later date, but for now, a wonderful achievement for the Heritage of Port Macquarie. We know the underground of Port Macquarie has more secrets to reveal and we look forward to many more success stories such as Government House, now that Port Macquarie has received its 'Heritage Wake-up call'.



The Church of St. Thomas

St. Thomas' Church



REFERENCES

Files of Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc. Records and Research Section. Which includes the following:  
 Photos from Photographic Files  
 Maps from - Map Collection.  
 Progress Association Reports:  
 Municipal Council Minutes.  
 Port Macquarie News.

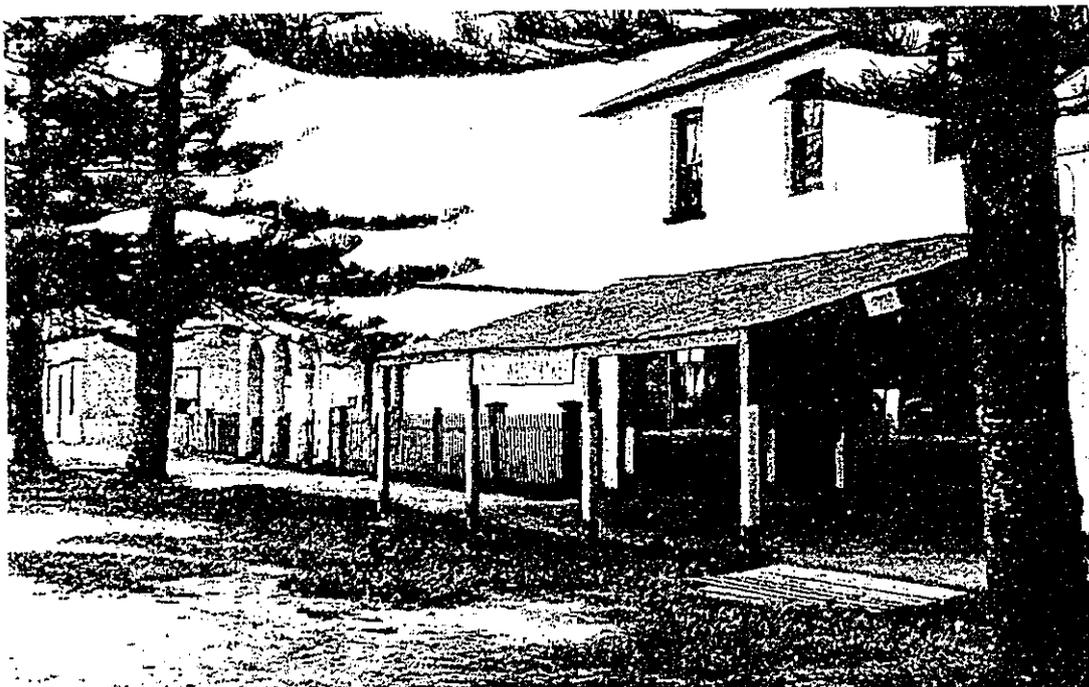
Mr. Stewart Kennedy - Oral History

Photographs: Mr. Ian Cupit.

A.H.C. Official Statement of significance - printed by Natalie Broughton on 12 June 2001.

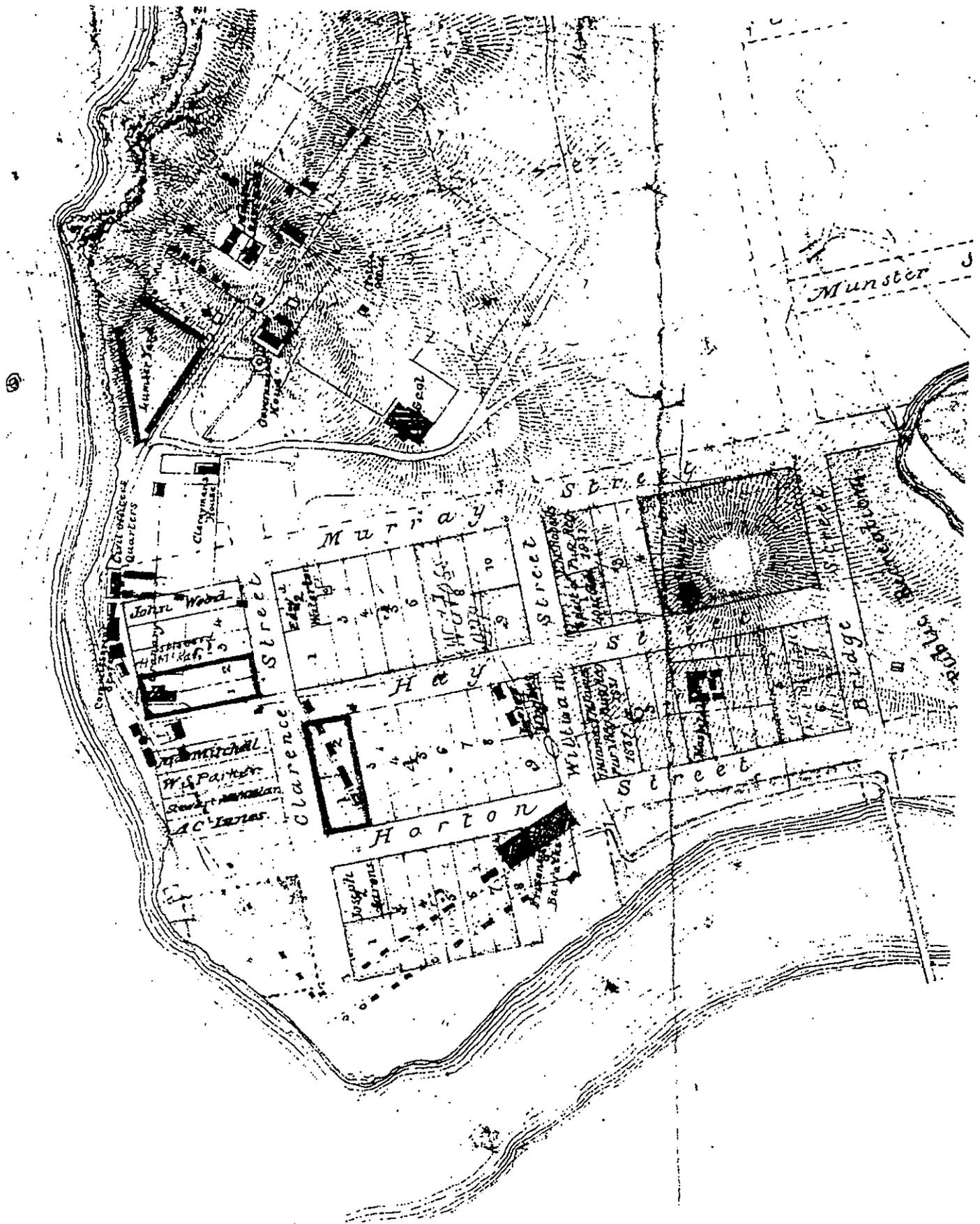
Sydney Monitor Newspaper. (Gwen Griffin)

History of Government House - Port Macquarie: compiled by Head of Records and Research and Editor - Gwen Griffin.- August 2001. © Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc. 22 Clarence Street, Port Macquarie 2444  
 P.O. Box 82, Port Macquarie 2444  
 Ph: (02) 65 83 1108 and Fax (02) 65 83 1108  
 Email: pmmuseum@midcoast.com.au  
 President: Mrs. Joan Cook. Hon Secretary: Norrie Doyle

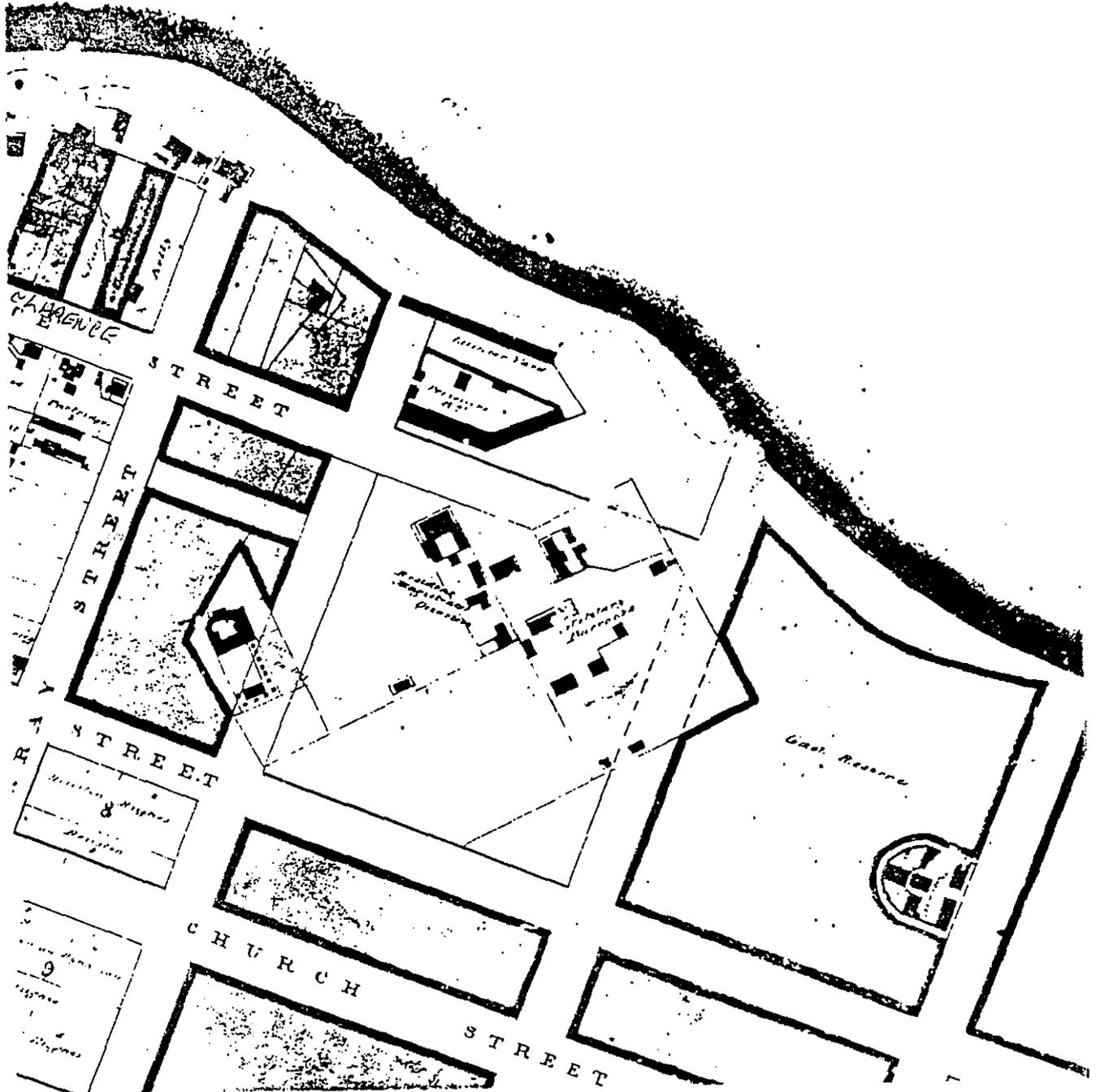


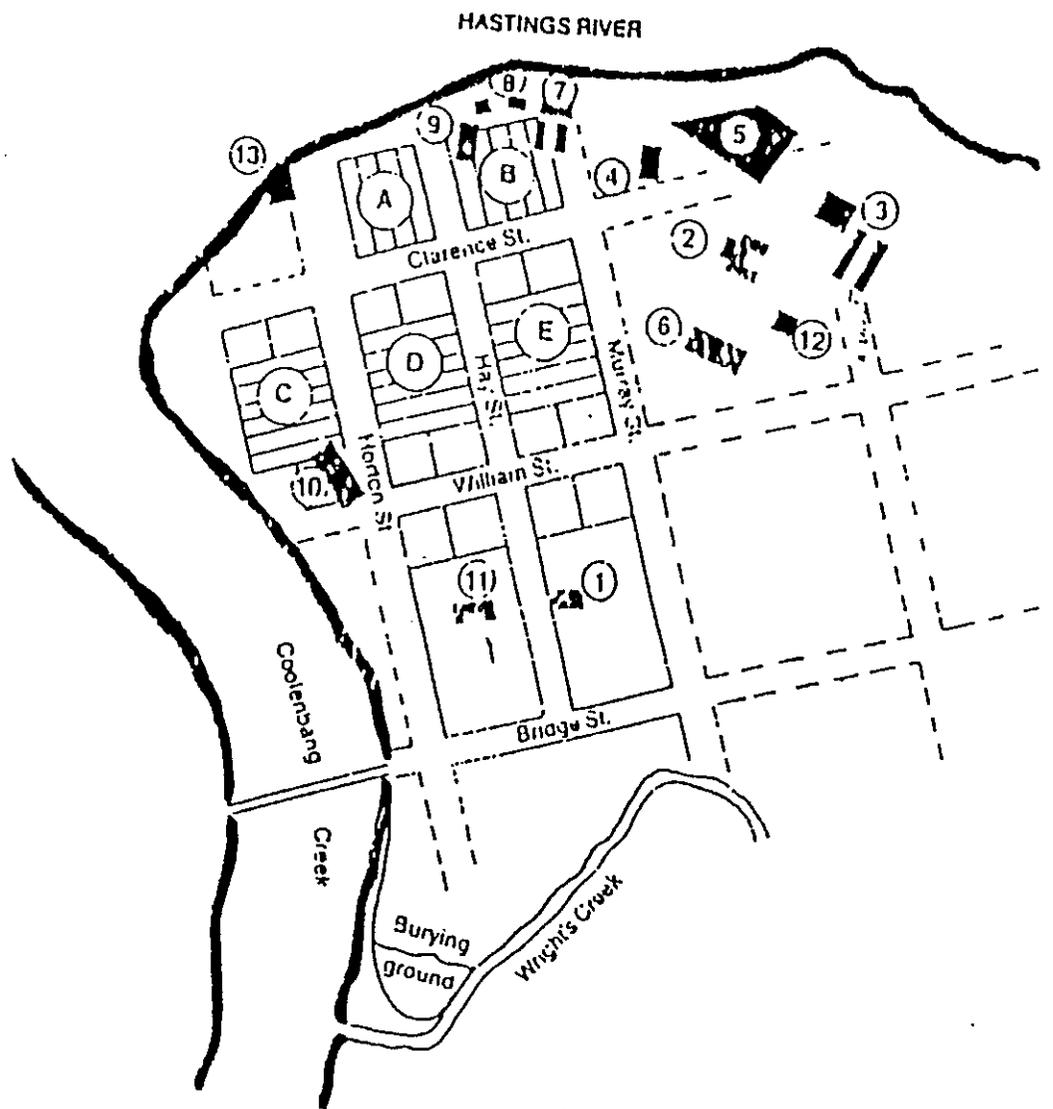
**CENTRAL CLARENCE STREET**  
 This shot of the central business district of Clarence Street shows L-R the new two-storied School of Arts which replaced the earlier wooden building burnt down (now site of Information Centre), the Town Hall built in 1892 (Civic Centre) and S. Worboys watchmaker's shop, built by Lieut. Thomas Caswell and known as Liberty Hall and used as premises of the Bank of New South Wales before 1890.

NEW ARRANGEMENT OF STREETS - SURVEYOR: E.R.D'ARCY - 1831



1840 PLAN OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE AREA AFTER NEW GAOL BUILT





**Principal Allotments**

A Major A. C. Innes, Stewart McMullen,  
W. S. Parker, Lieut. M. Mitchell, RN

B H. McKay, John Wood, J. Allan

C Jeremiah Walters, Joseph Aarons,  
Major A. C. Innes

D Mr Morton, J. Allen, J. Phillips, C. Doyle

E E. McRoberts, S. Partridge, W. Wilson

Owners of allotments at the western end of  
Clarence Street, on the waterfront, were  
W. H. Geary and R. Ackroyd

- 1. St Thomas' Church
- 2. Government House
- 3. Military Barracks
- 4. Clergyman's House
- 5. Lumber Yard
- 6. Gaol and Female Factory
- 7. Civil Officers' Quarters
- 8. Commissariat Stores
- 9. The Granary
- 10. Prisoners' Barracks
- 11. Hospital
- 12. Police Office
- 13. Tide Mill

Buildings and allotments, 1831 to 1833

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PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
INC

# CHRONICLE

Vol 6 No 1 4<sup>th</sup> March 2002

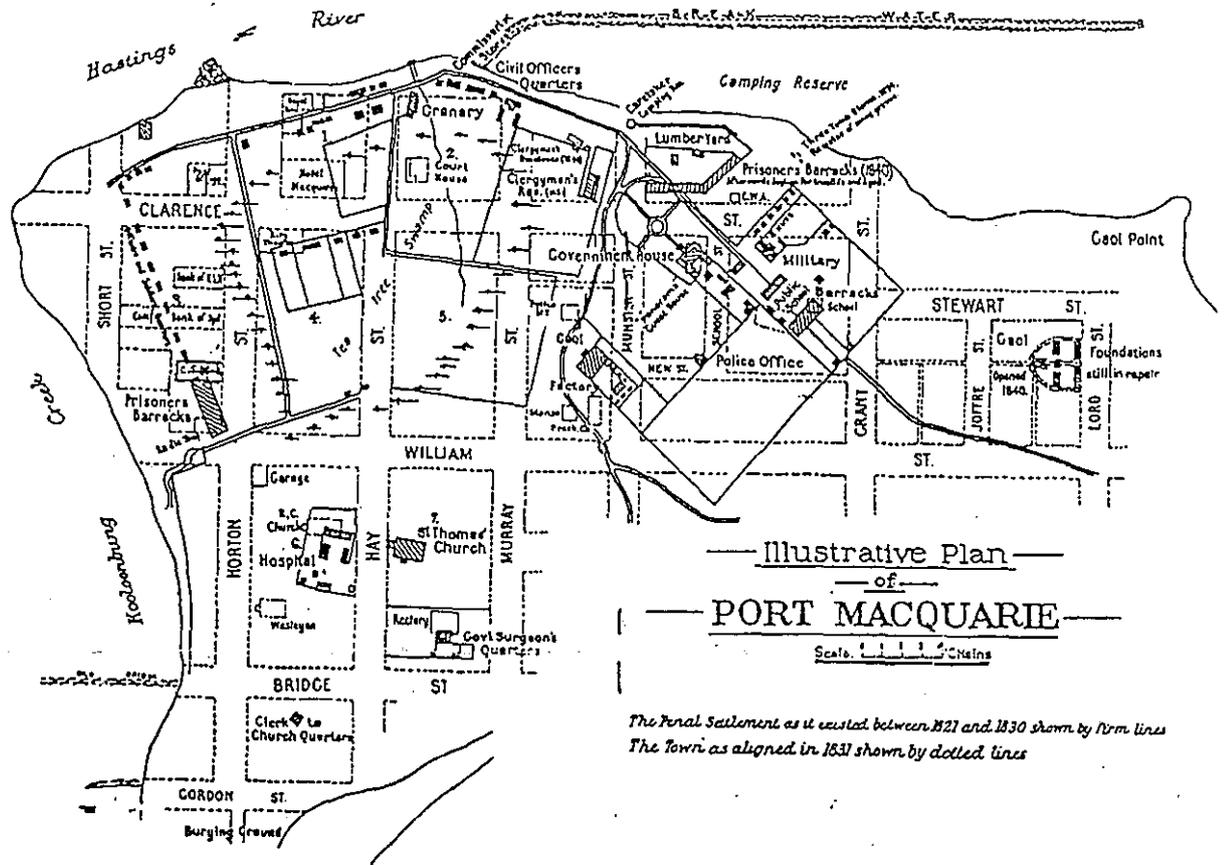
ISSN : 1328-4304

## TOZER'S TERRACE



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## Tozer's Terrace



## In the Beginning

Looking at the CBD area of Port Macquarie today it is hard to imagine the scene which greeted that band of soldiers and convicts who crossed the bar at the entrance of the Hastings River on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1821. Many changes have taken place with regard to the river and the Kooloonbung Creek since that time

The first camp was made close to the stores on the beach because they had not the labour to transfer their goods from the landing place. The town was planned in the area between the river and the creek and this was followed by the occupation of the hill above the river. In the early days a stockade ran along the creek bank, protecting the inhabitants from spear throwing Aborigines. Later Marine Corps barracks and prisoner's barracks were erected on the land which is now the north western corner of Horton and William Streets.

Joseph Simmons purchased the site which was to be known as Tozer's Terrace in 1840. The next owner of this allotment was Horatio Thomas Norris Tozer, who came to Port Macquarie in 1839. Tozer was an apothecary who originally conducted his business from a shop on the opposite side of Horton Street where the entrance to Port Central now stands.

Tozer's Terrace is a stone wall, two storey structure which was possibly constructed in the late 1840s as a public inn and store for Horatio Tozer who came to Port Macquarie as a free settler. Horatio became a very prominent citizen in the town, eventually conducting a number of different businesses.

The Terrace seems to have had a varied career. In its original state it contained according to the diary of Robert Heath Hall, 1851-52 "a general store and chemist shop" as well as the facilities of the inn and a family dwelling upstairs. An archway, through the building, led to stables at the back. In this area Tozer conducted a boiling down works.

The Tozer family left Port Macquarie to live in Queensland after the death of Horatio in 1865. The building, although still in use, fell into a state of disrepair. Around the turn of the century the premises were renovated, to be used as a residence although it still contained a store which was run by a Mr Kirkman.

In the 1980s it is recorded that Mr N Denham, then 95 years of age, could remember when wine was served with cakes and scones in the building.



The above picture was taken in 1952 and is described by the late Peter Alexander in the following way.

*“Location is the western side of Horton Street, Port Macquarie. The old, large building is now the Commonwealth Bank. At one time the accommodation on the ground floor and the second floor was rented out. The driveway to the left of the old Model A Ford utility was the entrance to the stables at the rear of the building for coaches etc.*

*The building with the awning was Alexander's Florist conducted by Mrs. Ina Alexander – light coloured dress in photograph – (wife of Peter Alexander). The stand to the left of the doorway displayed plants and Yates seeds.*

*This business was sold by Ina in 1956. Mrs Alexander occupied the front portion of the shop, and Gussie Nichols' "Men and Boys Shoes" occupied the rear. The front portion was a sub lease from Gussie. The building was owned by the Hayward family”*

On the right of the photo, in the Tozer building, which had already been purchased by the Commonwealth Bank, was the office of Bill Joscelyne, Solicitor, and one time Mayor of Port Macquarie.

Next to that was an area rented by the Lewis family as a family home.

The coaching entrance became Thomas' Real Estate Office and beyond that was the shop of George Hay, Jeweller. Daphne Barnett occupied a top floor flat

### Snippets from a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Diary

October 8<sup>th</sup> 1851. “Horatio Tozer and John Killion went to Smokey Cape to look for gold. They saw a sample of gold but the owner would not give them any information as to the locality where he had found it.”

July 19<sup>th</sup> 1852 “The 2lb (pound) loaf of bread rose to 6d (sixpence) this morning at Tozer's”

September 25<sup>th</sup> 1852 “To Tozer's store. Expended ½ lb. (pound) tea 1/- (one shilling), 2lb. Fine sugar 10d (ten pence), 2 loaves bread 1/-, 10lbs flour 3/4d (three shillings and four pence), 4 soap 1/2d (halfpenny) Candles 8d (eight pence) per lb. 3lbs ration beef 3d., leg mutton 8 ½ d (eight pence and one halfpenny), 3lbs mutton chops 6d

## Commonwealth Bank Comes to Town

(Courtesy Commonwealth Bank Archives)

The Commonwealth Bank traces its association with Port Macquarie to 11<sup>th</sup> December 1871 when the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales founded only three months earlier on 1<sup>st</sup> September, established an agency at the local post office.

Post Offices became a Commonwealth instrumentality upon Federation and were subsequently made available as agencies for the Savings Bank Department (later Commonwealth Savings Bank) of the Commonwealth Bank, following its establishment in July, 1912.

Thus, on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1913, the day the Commonwealth Bank first opened in New South Wales, the 642 post offices throughout the state that had previously represented the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales, including Port Macquarie, commenced operating on behalf of the Commonwealth Bank

This postal agency remained the Commonwealth Bank's main representative in Port Macquarie for the next 34 years.

In June 1938 the Savings Branch return of the Kempsey office suggested the desirability of establishing a branch in Port Macquarie. However World War Two intervened and it was not until 1947 that approval was given to establish a branch in the town.

The Bank's expansion programme was suspended during the war and had resumed in 1946 with 10 new branches opening.

Subsequently the Bank obtained a three year lease, on a weekly rental of £1/12/6 (one pound twelve shillings and six pence) over a vacant block of land owned by Mr Roy Rosenbaum, in Horton Street, adjoining Anderson's Butcher shop which was located on the corner of William Street near the dance Hall (Empire) and opposite a garage,

This branch was established in "emergency prefabricated premises" erected on the vacant land. These buildings were used by the Bank following the end of World War Two when there was an acute shortage of building materials.

In areas where suitable accommodation was unavailable a large number of these branches were opened in "emergency premises" built at a cost of around £1000 (pounds or \$2000). Initially these branches were erected in two weeks. With experience construction time was reduced to five working days.

Early plans were for the Branch to open in September. However the new Branch first opened for business from "emergency premises" providing complete savings bank and trading bank facilities from the outset.

The first Manager was Mr. E T Everingham who came to Port Macquarie from Marrickville where he had been the branch accountant.

Although World War Two was over, rationing remained and Port Macquarie Branch acted as agent for meat and clothing authorities.

With the aim of providing its own premises, the Bank, on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1950, purchased the present site, i.e. Tozer's Terrace, with 90 feet frontage to Horton Street and 165 feet depth, from Mrs M C Ryan for £8850 (pounds), or \$ 17700.

The site was originally part of land purchased by Joseph Simmons at auction on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1840 for £40/15/0 (Forty Pounds and Fifteen Shillings) approximately \$81.50. The title of the land was known as a "town purchase grant".

The modernising of the structure was to provide branch premises, three shops, and four holiday flats. Care was taken to retain the early colonial features of the building.

A bank policy curtailing all major works in the early 1950s delayed the start of the renovations.

Alterations and additions carried out by F C Fripp Pty. Ltd. of Fairy Meadow on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1954 and were completed at a final cost of £26259/10/4 (Twenty six thousand two hundred and fifty nine pounds ten shillings and four pence). The whole of the interior was torn out to be replaced by modern appointments. The floor and walls were surfaced with lino tiles. Fluorescent lighting was recessed into the new acoustic ceiling

Above the Branch and the three shops on the ground floor were four modern two-bedroom flats to be used as bank staff holiday accommodation, self contained and fully furnished. Operations were transferred to the new premises on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1954.

The original prefabricated "emergency premises" were then removed from the leased land and repositioned at the rear of the new premises for use as a staff luncheon room.

In 1959 the population of Port Macquarie was around 4800

Mechanism came to the town in the early 1960s, taking over from the traditional hand posting methods, which had been in operation since the branch first opened.

Saturday morning banking operations ceased in NSW on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1962

The Federal Government on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1963 announced that decimal currency would be introduced. This took place on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1966.

Stuart Devlin, designer of worldwide acclaim in many mediums, among which is coin design, crafted the reverse of the coins while the late Gordon Andrews who achieved an international reputation for graphic, industrial and interior design was responsible for the design of the notes.

In May 1967 alterations carried out by Gill Bros. of Kempsey commenced. These extensions included provision of a new voucher room, a new longer counter providing a third teller's box and provision for a fourth, increased public space, provision of an interview room, new fluorescent lights throughout, sun louvres on the western elevation and the adjoining shop extended. These alterations were completed in November 1967 at a final cost of \$57162/0/0.

In 1975 due to continued growth in business and associated staff increases further alterations and additions were planned including rear extensions, provision of new staff amenities, additional storage areas and the branch fully air conditioned. This work was completed in May 1975 by D Olsen Constructions Pty. Ltd., a local builder.

By 1985 staff numbers had grown to 41 and the Premises were no longer in keeping with the Bank's image.

Alterations were planned, including the taking over of two of the three shops and the staff holiday flats and relocating the manager and loans section to the first floor. The staff room was relocated to the front section of the first floor adjacent to the Manager/Loans area. The existing staff room was converted to a store room.

Facade treatment comprised the provision of "colonial type" windows to compliment the Georgian proportions of the original building. The verandah was removed and replaced with an awning, also blending with the "colonial" nature of the building.

The Commonwealth Bank's enhanced Customer Service Programme, Customer Relations Model (CRM) branches were also introduced in August 1994, initially in Victoria.

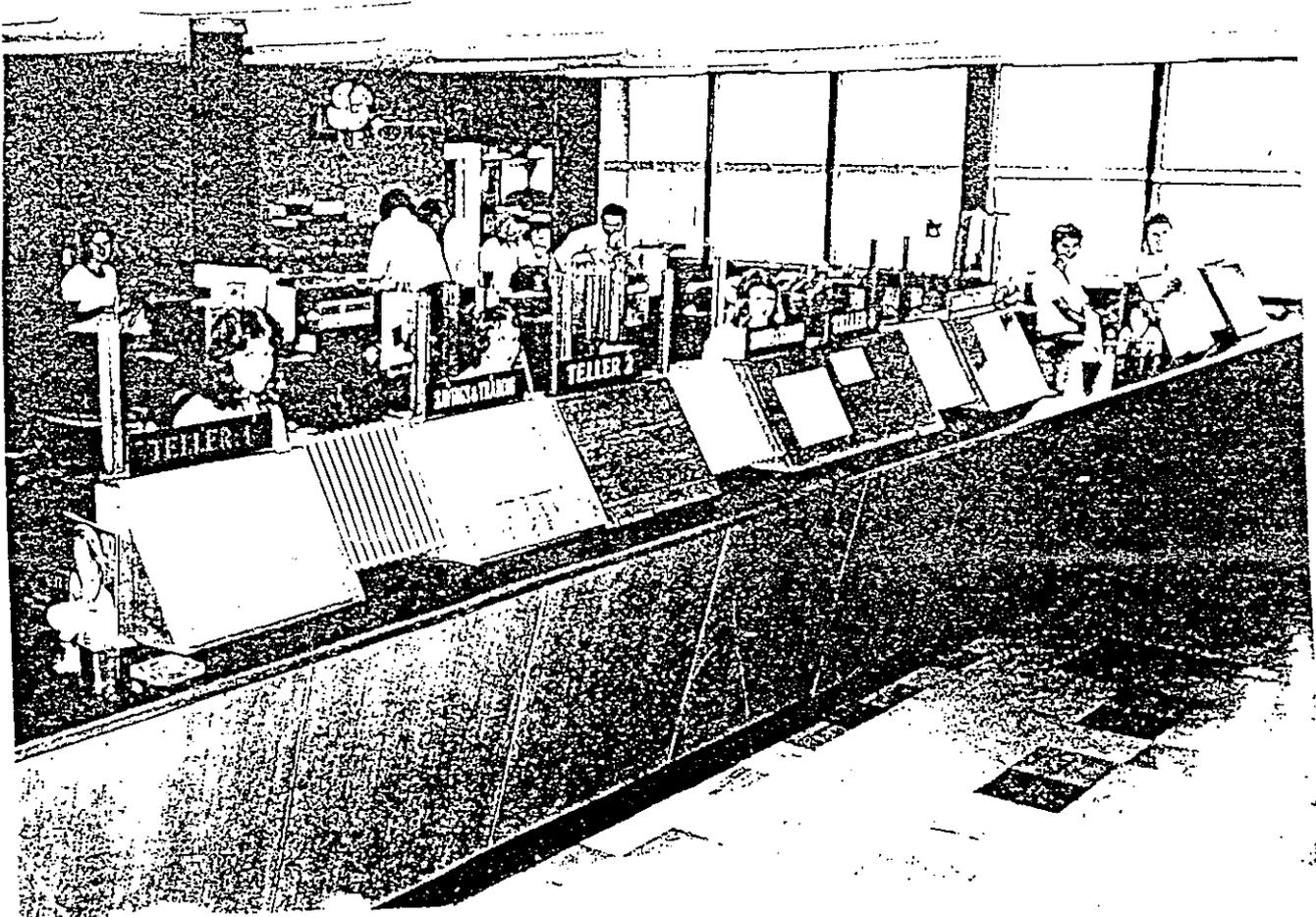
These branches featured a new format of branch interior and design. The new layout separated the areas of customer need - Automatic Telling Machines for electronic banking, customer studios (interview offices) for longer enquiries or for those interviews that require privacy, teller's counters and a customer assistance counter where the customer is greeted on arrival and directed to the area in the branch appropriate to their needs.

Port Macquarie branch was remodelled and refurbished as part of this programme.

It might be said that the Commonwealth Bank has been one of the few developments in Port Macquarie which has taken into account some of the heritage of our town.

Manager of the Commonwealth Bank have been:

|                |      |              |      |
|----------------|------|--------------|------|
| T W Everingham | 1947 | E. Ronaldson | 1949 |
| A A Hay        | 1954 | A J Scott    | 1960 |
| E J Williams   | 1965 | J F Worner   | 1968 |
| K X Cain       | 1974 | K M Bowden   | 1981 |
| C T G Sewell   | 1985 | A T Robinson | 1987 |
| D C Murray     | 1991 | D W Piltz    | 1993 |
| R Madden       |      |              | 2001 |



## Remembering

Wendy Walbridge shares these memories:

I worked in the Commonwealth Bank in Port Macquarie from December 1967 until March 1970 when I was transferred to Canberra.

In those days banks were only open between 10am and 3pm, from Mondays to Thursdays and until 5pm on Fridays. One Christmas Eve which was not on Friday, the Bank closed at 3pm. It was very hot so we had all the windows open (no air conditioning in those days).

We were very busy at Christmas as most things were done manually and we had to cater for tourists. Things were sailing along peacefully and normally until about 4 o'clock when we heard quite a ruckus outside. The accountant went out to see what was going on. There, outside on the footpath, was a bunch of workmen, standing, yelling and waving their cheques about. They wanted us to cash them. It was explained that this could not be done as the bank was closed and the money had been locked away.

The workmen would not listen so the accountant came back inside and locked the door.

Immediately there were workmen leaning through the open windows on Horton Street, swearing and yelling abuse at us. The manager by this time had heard enough, so he pulled down the window and locked it. As you can imagine we staff thought it was pretty funny although I am sure the workmen did not.

The other incident I remember concerning open windows on hot days, was when the local council, in their wisdom, decided to reclaim a part of Kooloonbung Creek. On windy days the red dirt blew in through the windows and coated everything with red dust. We wore white blouses and navy skirts so you can imagine the colour of our blouses by the end of the day.

Today, it is hard to believe that a bank could actually function all day with windows wide open.

**Horatio Thomas Norris Tozer**

D 28<sup>th</sup> October 1865

Port Macquarie Historical Society's Publication  
"Port Macquarie, The Winding Sheet" states

Thomas Norris Tozer, his wife Elizabeth and their children, Harriet, Horatio Thomas Norris and Lavinia arrived in Sydney aboard the ship "Magnet" on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1828, having been engaged by the Australian Agricultural Company as Superior Shepherd and Bailiff for the establishment at Port Stephens.

Horatio was educated in Sydney where he trained as an apothecary and after graduating arrived at Port Macquarie in 1839 with his father and two sisters. His mother had died in Maitland on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1837.

He purchased an allotment of land where the Commonwealth Bank now stands in Horton Street, possibly from a man named Joseph Simmons in the 1840s.

On 9<sup>th</sup> May 1841 he married Charlotte Amelia Croft, daughter of Dr. Jonathon Croft, a Medical Officer in Sydney, at St James Church, Sydney. Their children were Adeline Ann Eliza born in 1843, Horatio 1844, Vivian Fitzroy 1847, Lavinia Eliza 1849, Amelia Mary 1851, Jonathon 1855, Alice 1857, and Gordona Octavia 1859.

As a storekeeper, he ran a General Store and Chemist Shop near where the Innes Tavern (demolished in 1995 to make way for Port Central Shopping Centre) was situated. He had a boiling down works with Jeremiah Walters at the southern end of Short Street during the depression of 1843. A Wool Merchant he established a Cattle Station with Dr. Fattorini on the Macleay, became insolvent but was granted a certificate of discharge in 1845.

A fine singer, he was a member of the choir at St. Thomas' Church. He also took part (and sailing and boating regattas on the river.

Dying at the age of 48 he was buried by Rev. F R Kemp on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1865.

His headstone in the Historic Cemetery reads  
"Sacred to the memory of Horatio T. N. Tozer, obit  
28<sup>th</sup> October 1865 Aetat 49 (sic) years. "Lord is  
strength"

**Horatio, son of H T N Tozer** was educated at  
Scriviner's School Newcastle. He later became Sir  
Horace Tozer, Colonial Secretary for Queensland.

Land granted at Hamilton (now Hibbard), County  
Macquarie, about 8 acres was held in Trust by  
Jonathon Croft (grandfather) for Horatio Tozer, a  
minor, in 1846. This land was a grant by purchase,  
of £28/8/8 (Twenty Eight Pounds Eight Shillings  
and Eight Pence) and paying therefore the quit  
rental of one peppercorn if ever demanded.

20<sup>th</sup> February 1890:

Statutory Declaration of Horatio Tozer of Gympie,  
Queensland as follows "I am the Horatio Tozer  
mentioned in a certain grant from the crown dated  
30<sup>th</sup> April 1846 and made in favour of Jonathon  
Croft in trust for Horatio Tozer, a minor"

Absolute sale of this grant was made to James  
Butler at the price of £60 (\$80) on 20<sup>th</sup> February  
1890 (from Land Extract)

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Friend, business associate and brother-in-law of  
Horatio Tozer was Dr. Fattorini

**Jean Baptiste Charles Lamonnerie Dit Fattorini**  
From "The Winding Sheet"

Dr Fattorini was one of the most colourful identities  
of Port Macquarie in the late 1830s and 1840s. On  
his arrival in the colony of NSW in 1829, with his  
wife Clemence Beaufils, he established a medical  
Practice in Pitt Street, Sydney.

Legends and stories abound regarding this man.  
One in particular is "that he was the son of  
Napoleon, his mother being one of Napoleon's  
Mistresses during the invasion"

He came to Port Macquarie in 1836 as Government  
Medical Officer and later went into private practice.

Dr. Fattorini loved the theatre and encouraged the convicts in the performance of theatrics in the old granary in Hay Street. The decaying edifice was known as "Old Tumbledown" and was certainly the town's first theatre.

In 1842 he successfully tendered to build the Port Macquarie Presbyterian Church and in the following year he also built the Manse"

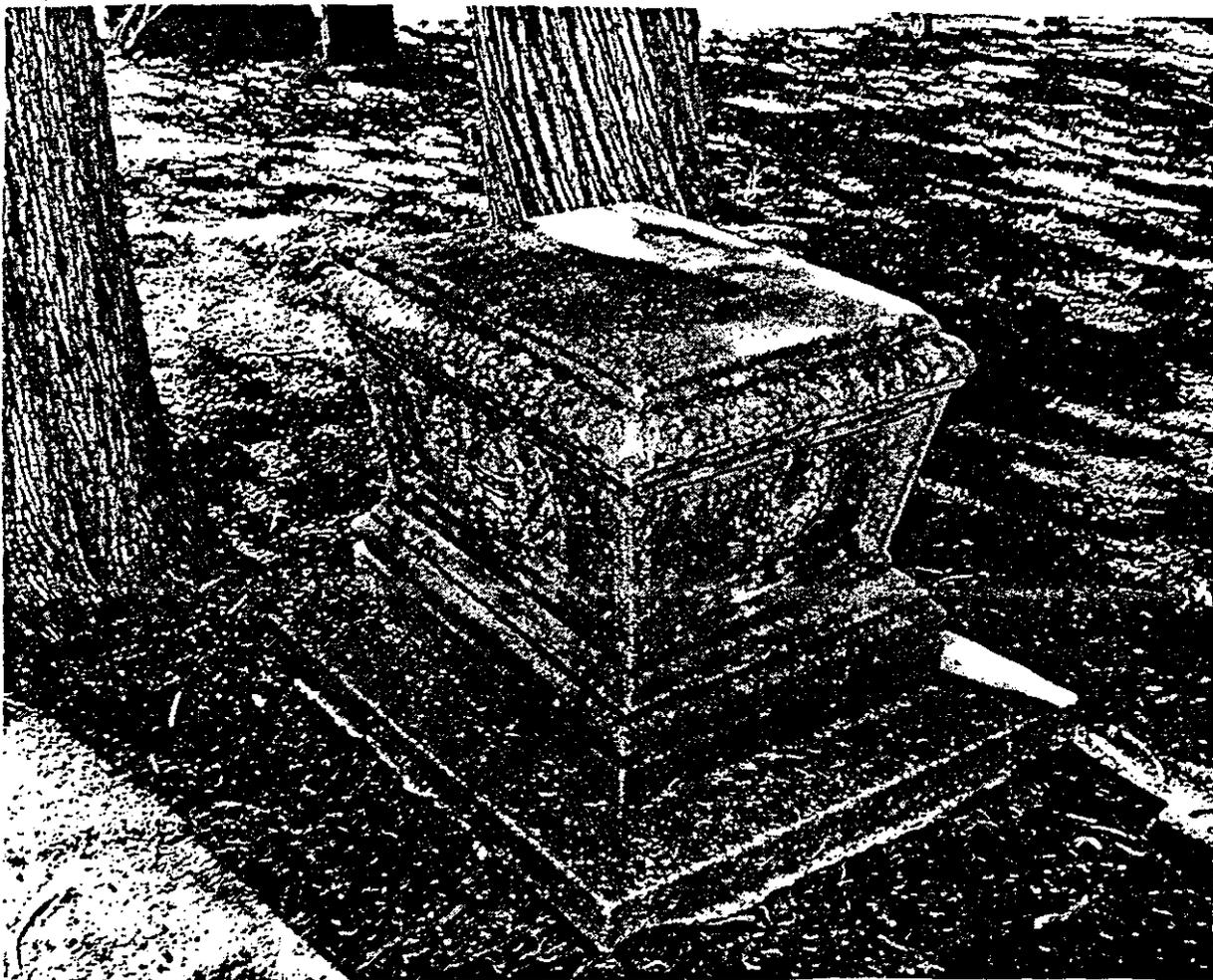
Following the death of his first wife in 1840, he married Lavinia Tozer, sister of Horatio Thomas Tozer in 1842.

Although well respected in the town Dr Fattorini seems to have been singularly unsuccessful as a businessman and so he spent many years in insolvency.

He returned to Sydney after his second marriage, but his wife Lavinia passed away there in 1848, leaving him with the responsibility of a young family.

Returning to Port Macquarie, Dr. Fattorini continued with his failing business interests. He was still unable to gain registration with the Medical Board despite the fact that he had practised medicine since 1830.

He died on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1853 at the age of 66, and was buried in the Historic Cemetery where his *"small unique tomb can still be seen, inscribed on the top and ornamented on two sides with a coronet surrounded by a laurel wreath, while the ends are decorated in a cross also set in a laurel wreath open at the top"*



Fattorini's tomb

Compiled by Pat Schubert using material and photographs from the following sources:  
Port Macquarie Historical Society  
Commonwealth Bank Archives  
Port Macquarie - A history to 1850  
Wendy Walbridge

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PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY INC

## CHRONICLE

HASTINGS LIBRARY  
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Vol 6 No 2 7th June 2002

ISSN: 1328-4304

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## HISTORY THROUGH IMAGES

The Port Macquarie Historical Society has been sorting and computer indexing its thousands of photos for several years and hopefully will conclude this activity by the end of 2003. All the photographs have been made with cameras... devices that record images on glass plate, film or electronic storage equipment (floppy disks, memory cards and the like).

The collection is composed mostly of donated prints that tell us much about persons, families, friends, vacations, celebrations, great events and all manner of information about the town and its environment...a rich reminder of our heritage.

The first recorded photo in Australia was taken in 1841, a time when the convict-built edifice now occupied by the Port Macquarie Museum had existed only a few years.

Paralleling Port Macquarie's growth was the progress of photographic skill. Local citizens first availed themselves of this new wonder by journeying to centres where it was available.



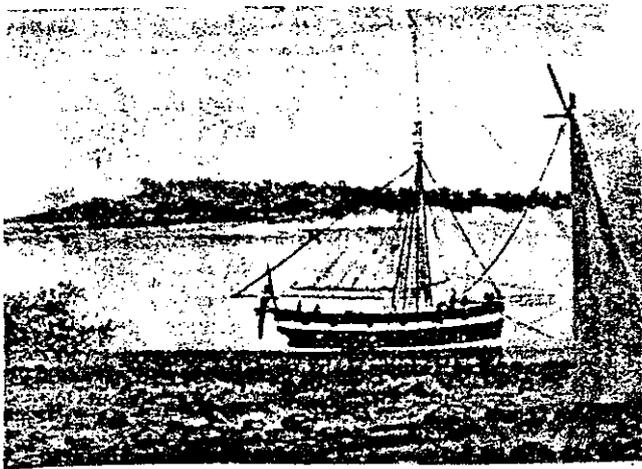
*The "Museum" building c. 1890*

Later, travelling photographers provided services to country areas and local individuals made or bought their own cameras.. Early in the new century, the revolutionary box camera found its way into many homes. Today photography is a part of life and numerous photo albums can be found in most homes.

The earliest record that an image can be reflected by light is credited to Aristotle.

This ancient Greek philosopher noticed that light passing through a small hole in the wall of a room created an upside-down image.

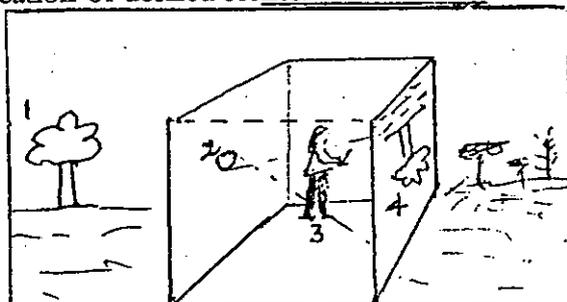
Before photo images were invented artist painters/ sketchers recorded events: Joseph Banks became famous for his drawings of flora and fauna of New South Wales; Phillip Parker King used sketched images to boost his note-making; we are indebted to convict artists for their portrayals of early nineteenth century life.



*Sketch of the "Mermaid" from King's diary in the Mitchell Library.*

The term "camera" was first used by Italian artists who worked inside a dark box-like room... their "camera obscura". Light coming through a small hole on one side of the small room made an inverted image of an object on the opposite side. However, although they could not capture the image the way a modern camera does they could at least copy it. The reflected outline was not sharp but an artist could make a fairly precise tracing and then use his artistic skills to create a more accurate image.

Sometimes the camera obscura was mounted on poles to carry it around the countryside to the location of desired scenes.



CAMERA OSBCURA

As time went by, experiments were made to improve the device. The use of lens and mirror made it possible to reduce the size of the box and to focus a sharp image.

In 1727, when the German scientist, Johann H.Schultze, found that silver salts darkened on exposure to light, the possibility of making the images permanent came to the fore. However, for Schultze, the picture faded after a short period of time.

In 1826, a French physicist, Joseph Niepce, working with a light-sensitive metal plate discovered a process to "fix" the image so that the fading problem was overcome. Niepce is credited with making the first photograph. One of his photos still exists.

A partner of Niepce, Louis Daguerre, while experimenting with light-sensitive metal plates (highly polished silver-plated copper sheets) found that common salt "fixed" his images so they would not fade. The date of that discovery 1839 is usually taken as the beginning of photography.

The exciting advances in photography led a reporter for the Illustrated London News in 1842 to call it a "miraculous" advance in modern science... "and in less space of time than the words can be penned a "coup de soleil" takes off the sitter's head."

Daguerre also found that the use of a concave mirror permitted a shorter exposure time. This made it possible to make portraits. However, as human subjects found it difficult to sit still for the required time, head restraints were used.

**CAMERA OSBCURA**  
(FROM Latin FOR "dark room")

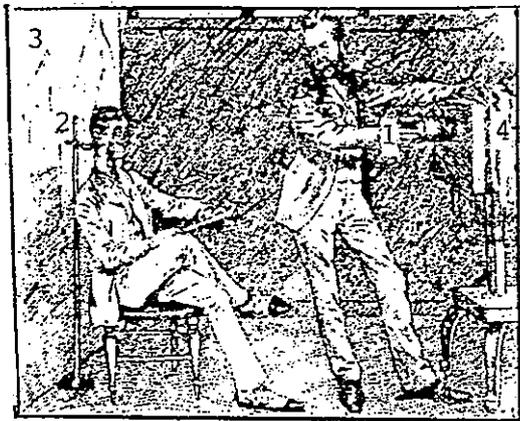
- 1 Outside view
- 2 dark room with one small opening
- 3 artist tracing the image
- 4 inverted image on wall

The Port Macquarie Historical Society has one Daguerreotype image but unfortunately the subject in the portrait is unknown to us.

Many new techniques were applied as photography evolved. In Australia the following methods were practised in the years indicated:

Daguerrotype 1840 - 1860, Calotype 1848 - 1860, Ambrotype 1853 - 1880, Collodion negative 1853 - 1892, Albumen print 1853-1903, Stereograph 1853 - onwards, Chromatype 1855 - 1862, Pannotype 1857 - 1863, Tintype 1858 - 1902, Carte-de-visite 1859 - 1895, Senotype 1863 - 1868, Cabinet 1865 - 1902, Autotype 1871 - 1893, Gelatine negative 1880 - onwards, Panel 1882 - onwards, Opaltype 1883 - 1907, Gelatine print 1888 - onwards, Platinotype 1889 - onwards.

Anyone interested in details of these crafts can refer to the book *The Mechanical Eye in Australia* by Davies and Stanbury, which is available in the Society's library.



This Cartoon is from an issue of the *Bulletin* in 1886

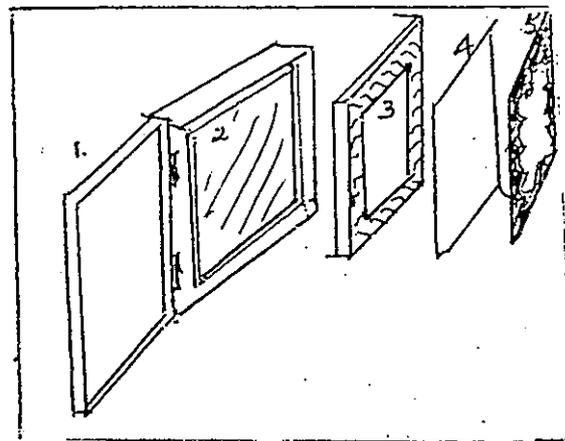
1. The aperture of this camera is manually uncovered and then covered to get the correct exposure. Shutters were available, but still during the experimental.
2. The subject has a neck rest to assist him to remain very still during the exposure
3. A decorative backdrop is being used to create interest in the portrait.
4. The camera plate holder inside the camera has been modified to hold a smaller plate, hence the joke under the cartoon:

*"Smile...Oh, not so much. I only have a small plate in."*

The Ambrotype, popular from 1853 to about 1880, quickly replaced the Daguerrotype because it was cheaper, faster to produce and was not limited by patents. A thin negative attached to glass had a black backing of paint, paper or cloth.

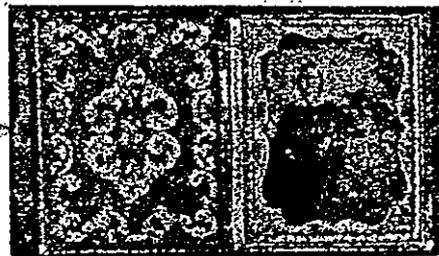
This made the negative look like a positive. There are a few examples of Ambrotype in the files of the Society. Each one is enclosed in an attractive velvet-lined folding case 12 cm by 9½ cm.

The structure of the Ambrotype is demonstrated in the following sketch. When removed from its case away from the black backing (2) the glass (4) reveals a negative aspect.



#### AMBROTYPE

- 1 Hinged case
- 2 Blackened inside of case
- 3 Decorated frame
- 4 Negative on glass
- 5 Front protective glass with decorative mask



In 1839, a British scientist, William Talbot, devised the negative - positive concept.

Firstly he created a light-sensitive paper( a "negative") using salt and silver nitrate; then from this negative he then made a positive print. The advantage was that numerous prints could now be made from the one "negative".

The term, "photography", was coined by a friend of Talbot named John Herschel who suggested to his friend the use of hypo (sodium thiosulphate) instead of salt as the "fixer". Other photographers adopted this new improved method thus making their photographs permanent.

The process of printing in 1840 was as follows

#### 1. MAKE ALBUMEN PAPERS:

Apply egg-white (albumen) mixed with salt to a thin smooth surface.

Cover with silver-nitrate to form light-sensitive silver chloride.

Dry the paper.

#### 2. MAKE PRINTS:

Place one albumen sheet onto a negative in a printing frame.

Expose to sunlight until the image is visible.

Wash in water.

Tone in gold chloride solution to obtain a warm tint.

Fix in hypo.

Wash and dry the paper.

Mount on cardboard.

Because photographic paper was very thin, all pictures were mounted on cardboard. The backing varied according to the photo size.

Common sizes were:

*Panel: 8½ inches by 4 inches*

*Imperial: 6 7/8 inches by 9 7/8 inches*

*Boudoir: 5¼ inches by 8½ inches*

*Promenade: 4 inches by 7 inches*

*Victoria: 3¼ inches by 5 inches*

*Cabinet: 4½ inches by 2½ inches*

*Carte-de-visite: 4¼ inches by 2½ inches*

The mounts usually had information about the photographer.

As mounted photos were now readily available, booksellers and stationers began to employ photographers and offer prints for sale of well-known personalities and of views.

Some stylish studios were made very comfortable for the convenience of their customers and provided many extras such as fancy backdrops; others kept dress-up clothes for their patrons' use during the photography sessions.

Most considered themselves artists, and customers often availed themselves of the colouring service.

One Photographic & Fine Art Studio placed an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald stating: "Every description of Photograph taken, enlarged, and beautifully coloured in Oil, Water Colours and Crayons."



Major Wilson

.. painting or a touched up photo?

A popular development about 1860s to 1890s was the Carte-de-Visite which retained its popularity for about twenty-five years. There are several samples in the Society's collection.

The small photo (4 ¼ inches by 2 ½ inches) mounted on cardboard was a convenient greeting card. A family member separated by miles could easily send one as a personal greeting. Some families managed to accumulate dozens of them. The photographer used the back of the mount to advertise his services. In the 1870s, Cartes-de-Visite were used to identify criminals held in gaols.

PIC carte-de-visite



Front



back

The stereo photograph was created as early as 1854 and this technique was used from time to time on newer photographic developments. (The vividness of stereo brought the reality of war to the world in general.. to the Americans during the Civil War and to the whole world during World War 1. Stereo has continued to be used from time to time and today one can appreciate photos from space and from the bottom of the sea, through the technique of stereo.

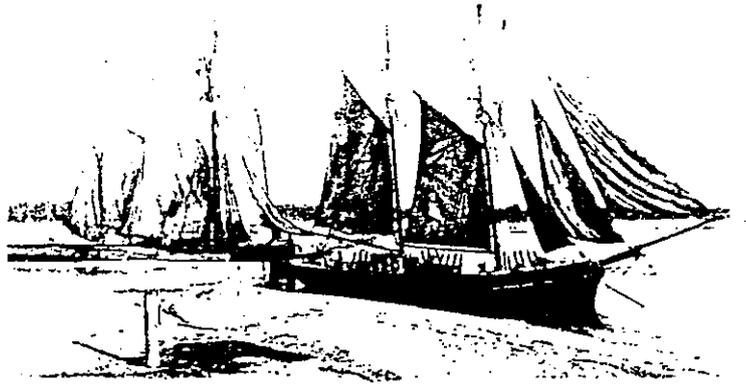
In NASA's 1997 Pathfinder project, a stereo camera provided three dimensional pictures so scientists could understand the topography of Mars and navigate their Rover.)

During the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, local citizens began to take photographs when chemicals, outfits and knowledge became more available. A Sydney Mail advertisement in 1890 announced:

*"Free lessons in Photography are given to purchasers of Lichtner & Co's Apparatus...send for list of amateur photographic outfits."*

Many images of early Port Macquarie that we see in newspapers or displayed in various locations around the town today have been copied from Captain Morton's album.

This retired captain gathered photos taken by William John Macdonnell who was Branch Manager of the Bank of New South Wales in Port Macquarie from 1882 until 1896. Macdonnell involved himself in many community affairs and took a great variety of photos around the town.



*Schooners at Port Macquarie c.1890  
(Morton Collection)*

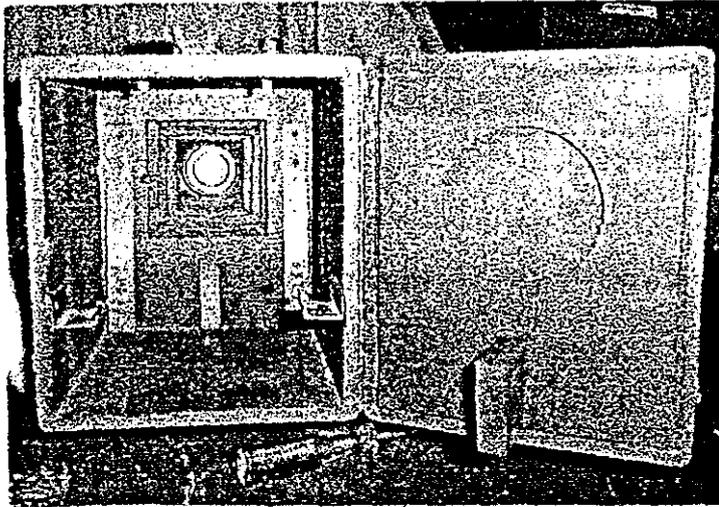


*The Bank of New South Wales c.1890*

The photographs on the cover and the back page of the book "Pictures of the Past" were taken by George Keena.

The Society holds a number of Keena pictures that quickly reveal much about life at the end of the nineteenth century. We learn of transport, tools, clothing, accommodation and the environment.

The first picture below shows the back of one of George Keena's homemade cameras opened to reveal frames that held the photographic glass plates. The following photo, showing George Keena and family, portrays much about farms, housing, clothing and life on the Maria River.

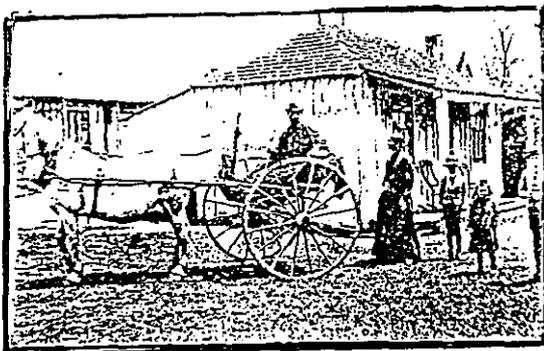


The invention of a flexible transparent roll film in 1883 attracted the attention of thousands of amateur photographers. An American, George Eastman, created a film consisting of a long paper strip coated with a sensitive emulsion. By 1888 Eastman was producing the Kodak box camera, a product easily mass-produced, lightweight and inexpensive. The Kodak slogan stated:

*"You press the Button, We Do the Rest."*

The first Eastman Kodak cameras were sold with the film already mounted inside. The user then returned the camera to the Eastman agent when all the film was exposed. The company developed the film and made prints. The camera would be reloaded with a new film and returned together with the prints to the owner. It was not until 1900 that these convenient "pocket" cameras became available in Australia.

It is interesting to note where Hastings River residents had their photos taken before 1900.



Thomas Dick became famous for his collection of photos of indigenous people.

These pictures had been carefully taken to portray various aspects of coastal Aboriginal life and have been used in various publications throughout the world. The Birpai Headquarters in Port Macquarie has a magnificent display of many of Mr Dick's photos while smaller photos are on display in the Port Macquarie Museum.

Most of the pictures are artistically staged being easily appreciated for the quality of the arrangements.

A random survey of the Port Macquarie Historical Society photo archives revealed the following information:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Photographer</u>                      | <u>Place</u>       |
|-------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1858        |                                          | travelling tourist |
|             | Bridges, Rev.G.W.                        |                    |
| 1859        | Tamworth                                 |                    |
|             | Chandler Bros (travelling photographers) |                    |
| 1861        | Armidale                                 |                    |
|             | Chandler, Andrew (travelling)            |                    |
| 1867-1868   | Singleton                                |                    |
|             | Brown, J.S.                              |                    |
| 1867-1874   | Newcastle                                |                    |
|             | Audet, Jacob                             |                    |
| 1884-1885   | Newcastle                                |                    |
|             | Channon, T.                              |                    |
| 1884-1887   | Newcastle                                |                    |
|             | Boake, B.C.                              |                    |
| 1888        | Branxton                                 |                    |
|             | Ballard, H.B.(travelling)                |                    |
| 1889-1893   | Kempsey                                  |                    |
|             | Keyes, C.V.                              |                    |
| 1893        | West Maitland                            |                    |
|             | Moss, Morris                             |                    |
| 1895-1897   | Sydney                                   |                    |
|             | Eden Society Studios                     |                    |
| 1896        | Port Macquarie                           |                    |
|             | Robins, Chas.H.                          |                    |
| C. 1896     | Kempsey                                  |                    |
|             | McLelland & Co.                          |                    |
| 1898        | Maclean                                  |                    |
|             | Campbell & Cooke ("Paris Studio")        |                    |
| 1898        | Maitland                                 |                    |
|             | Cameron                                  |                    |
| 1900        | Lismore                                  |                    |
|             | Beale & Co.                              |                    |
| 1900        | Newcastle                                |                    |
|             | Boddy, S.A.                              |                    |
| 1900        | Newcastle                                |                    |
|             | Woolston, G.C.                           |                    |

The following advertisement found in the Port Macquarie News in 1898 was an example of a company that travelled to country areas.

The specialty was 'cabinet' size (4½ inches by 2½ inches) but enlarging was also a part of the service.

Although a studio was set up on Horton Street, the photographer also did 'outside work' and expected response from 'surrounding districts'.

For a Few Weeks Only.

**IMPERIAL PHOTO CO.**  
(NEXT DOOR TO OCHS)  
HORTON STREET,  
**PORT MACQUARIE.**

THE above Company beg to announce to the inhabitants of Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Beechwood and surrounding districts that they have opened a Photographic Studio at the above address, and trust with low prices, consistent with good work, to meet with the patronage of one and all.

Prices:—Enamelled cabinets 3 for 6s, 6 for 9s 6d, 12 for 15s 6d.

Groups, private houses and every description of outside-work done on most reasonable terms.

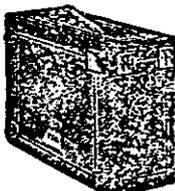
Copying, enlarging etc., and photo frames

Early in the twentieth century the box camera had improved so much that thousands of persons purchased cameras and did their own developing. The advertisement below offered subscription to a photo magazine, a camera simple to use, instructions for taking photos, developing the film and printing the images.

**HARRINGTON & CO., LTD.**  
Photographic Merchants. 93 Queen-st., Brisbane

The More Simple and Popular we can make the fascinating Art of Photography the better for our business.

THIS IS HOW WE DO IT!



7/6

CAMERA

No Better Value procurable at Three Times the Price. SELLING BY THE THOUSAND!

POSTAGE EXTRA.

THE CRACKSHOT is not a toy, but a thoroughly practical Magazine Camera, carrying 6 plates of the popular size, 2½ x 2½ inches. Built of well-seasoned wood and covered with black leather grained material. Rapid Lens, 2 Stops, 2 View Finders, error-free Time and Instantaneous Shutter, Reliable Changing System, by which 6 Photographs may be made in as many seconds.

WHAT THE CRACKSHOT WILL DO.

It will take Snapshots, Views, Groups, Portraits, Moving Objects, &c., and gives SHARP, BRILLIANT PICTURES 2½ x 2½ INCHES. A book of simple instructions enabling any novice to make good photos, is supplied with every Camera.

DEVELOPING AND PRINTING OUTFIT, complete with full simple instructions and containing all necessary materials, viz., Plates, Chemicals, Trishes, Paper, Lamp etc., for producing finished Photographs. If not obtainable from your dealer or stockist—order direct.

PRICE 6/6, Postage Extra.

Send for Copy of New Illustrated Catalogue, Post Free.



Many of the pictures held by the Society are undated. However the few with positive identification that relate to others help place them.

The photo above off Horton Street is clearly dated 1905. Items seen within the picture include: a well-gravelled street with formed gutters, grass edges and footpath; a sulky and a parked car; a telegraph post with five cross-pieces near the Bank of New South Wales; an avenue of trees about one and one-half storeys high, one small tree with protecting wooden slats and a Norfolk Island Pine about two and one-half storeys high; buildings in 1905.

Clothes worn when a photo was taken can also help date the picture. The 1904 millinery advertisement portrayed above shows hat styles of that time. People who posed for the camera tended to wear their best!

We can be grateful that some old photos have been preserved. So many family picture albums end up on the garbage dumps..but we do have about 8,000 photographs preserved by the Society. It is our hope that the community will benefit by this wonderful collection.

Author: Ralph Ferrett

References: *Encarta* Encyclopedia

Davies and Stanbury, *The*

*Mechanical Eye in Australia*

Jackson, N. *Photographers: History and*

*Culture Through the Camera*

*National Geographic* August 1998

Vol 194

Pt Mac Historical Society Inc Photo Files

Interviews with J. & V Keena

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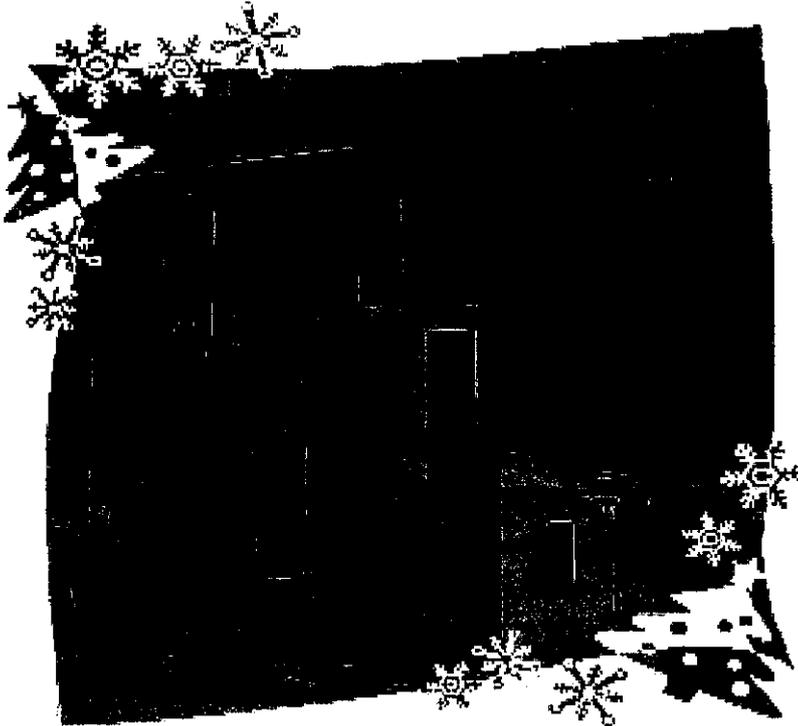




*Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc*

# CHRONICLE

# MERRY CHRISTMAS



**Vol .6 No. 3 December 2002 ISSN:1328-4304**

HASTINGS LIBRARY  
N.S.W.

## THE CHANGING FACE OF PORT MACQUARIE

From the earliest days when Port Macquarie was a Penal Settlement, buildings were being built and pulled down—nothing has changed—so let us look at the 'changing face of Port Macquarie at various times in our history'.

A detailed statement of various employments of the prisoners at Port Macquarie, with remarks relative thereto, was made by Captain John Rolland, the second Commandant in October 1824.

*He said he had: 16 Clerks, 4 Schoolmasters, 1 Chief Constable, 3 District Constables, 45 Overseers, 47 Constables, 60 Stationary Servants, 20 Wardsmen, 5 Bakers, 2 Barbers, 3 Tanners, Miller, Ropemaker, 2 Orderleys, 9 Store Gang, 20 Carpenters, 3 Shinglers, 9 Labourers, 2 Coopers, 5 Builders of Out-houses, 5 Blacksmiths.*

*Some were erecting a female penitentiary and shingling public buildings, brickmakers were moulding bricks, tempering clay, erecting kilns, burning bricks and carrying billets; some of the others were completing sawpits and cells and at the female penitentiary, labourers were attending the bricklayers.*

*Boatbuilders were building a Ferry and keeping the Settlement's boats in repair and watchmen were watching over the public buildings, whilst the clearing gang were stumping and digging ground in the vicinity of the town and rocks were being cleared away making a boat harbour.*

*The Road Makers Gang were digging a well drained ground, repairing roads and bridges and burning charcoal for the Blacksmiths; the Quarry gang were procuring stone for the foundation of a Church and a Well Sinker was sinking a well at the prisoners' garden. The splitting*

*gangs were splitting slabs in the bush for the female penitentiary and public fences.*

*At this time of great activity there were 1111 prisoners in the penal settlement of Port Macquarie.*

---

By April 1836, Port Macquarie had become an open settlement, when, Resident Magistrate Benjamin Sullivan was writing to the Colonial Secretary as follows:

*Sir,*

*I have the honour to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor that Mr. William Wilson Superintendent of Convicts died this morning at half past seven o'clock. In consequence of such demise I beg leave to recommend as the late Mr. Wilson's successor Mr. Stephen Partridge at present employed as an ordinary constable, and to say that I have appointed him from this date to act as Superintendent of Convicts until I may be honoured with His Excellency's commands thereon.*

*I have the honour to be  
Benjamin Sullivan Rest. Magst.*

Then later he is again writing seeking permission to demolish Mr. Wilson's house.

*Sir*

*I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter ...conveying His Excellency the Governor's appointment of Mr. Stephen Partridge as Superintendent of Convicts upon a salary of eighty pounds per annum and twenty pounds in lieu of a house and calling upon me to report whether the house occupied by the late Mr. Wilson formed any part of the Prisoners' Barracks, or so close to them as to answer the purpose of a Barrack Quarter. In reply to the latter part I beg leave to state that the house formerly occupied by the late Mr. Wilson does not form part of*

*the Prisoners' Barracks and is situated in the principal part of Hay and Clarence streets at their respective intersection in a bad state of repair and requiring to be pulled down to open the thoroughfare of the above mentioned streets, previous to effecting which I beg to be favoured with His Excellency's commands thereon. And in regard to the former I beg to state that Mr. Partridge entered upon his duties as Superintendent of Convicts on the 12<sup>th</sup> inst. in consequence of the demise of Mr. Wilson...*

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**CONVICT DRAIN**

Mr. Ray Dick, one of the Port Macquarie Historical Society's earliest members, wrote the following, after the Port Macquarie news published a photo showing Council workmen lifting a lid to reveal the convict drain which runs under Clarence Street.

*This drain is of historical importance and is an excellent example of convict workmanship. When I was going to school the entrance and outlet of this brick drain was visible on the south side of Clarence Street. The open drain had very healthy watercress growing in it. My late great grandfather John Dick had a tannery established alongside this drain, as plenty of water was required for tanning purposes. Alongside this small stream near the harbour, John Oxley and Lieutenant King landed in 1819 to examine the area, which Oxley had discovered the previous year, they reported it was suitable and in 1821 a settlement was established. Near where the stream entered the harbour the first store in Port Macquarie was built, later to become the residence of Sergeant Nettlefield; also a treadmill was established to grind the corn and grain which was grown in the settlement. The treadmill was later replaced by a windmill, on top of Windmill Hill, it was managed by Mr. George Halliday and built for Major Innes.*



The Building on the right was the first store in Port Macquarie; it later became Sergeant Nettlefield's residence. It was situated east of Hay Street, and near where the drain referred to enters the harbour.

*On the west side of the stream a weighbridge was built near the harbour for the weighing of all stone used in the construction of the southern breakwater. Another drain does exist, across Horton Street, commencing in front of the Methodist Church. It is a circular convict-bricked drain and each brick has a dot impressed on it. Whilst I was an employee of council this drain caved in, and a concrete pipe drain was put alongside to carry the water, but the brick drain remains there today. In the area just north of the new Methodist Church [now Southern Cross University site] and near the building line a well of beautiful water existed for many years, and in the dry times the late Jack Axelson and Tom Woodlands drew many thousands of gallons of water to replenish low tanks for domestic uses.*

*Ray Dick - Port Macquarie.*

**NEW BREAKWALL CONSTRUCTION**

The Port Macquarie News of Thursday November 4<sup>th</sup> 1976 reported:

*The present construction of a \$1.3 million breakwall on the North Shore of the Hastings River mouth is intended to complete a plan commenced almost 80 years ago.*

*It was in the 1890's when the first work began on the river entrance to make Port Macquarie a safe harbour for shipping.*

Since then many thousands of dollars have been spent building more than 6000 feet of breakwall to create a deep and stable entrance channel into the Hastings River. The first work on the river entrance was undertaken to accommodate the busy shipping trade, which connected the timber-rich and agriculturally productive Hastings Valley with the Sydney markets.

The plan involved constructing a breakwall on the southern side of the river to create a deep channel by controlling the main river current to scour out the shallow river bar, which from the time of the first settlers have proved a nemesis to all types of vessels. Even when Port Macquarie was first established as a penal settlement for convicts 150 years ago [1976] it was recorded that the entrance to the Hasting River and a safe harbour anchorage, was restricted by a shallow sandbar and submerged reefs.

It is believed the first study of the river mouth was carried out by John Oxley, who on July 18th 1821 wrote to the Secretary of the Colony as follows.

*'The bar was repeatedly examined during my stay of ten days and never less than 13 feet found on it at high water. I placed buoys on those points necessary to mark the channel and established such signs from the shore, as I trust cannot fail to render the access to the port easy and secure for vessels drawing not more than nine feet of water'*

But, the bar was to prove much more treacherous than at first anticipated and was probably the most dangerous of the many ports which sprang up along the North Coast of NSW in the latter half of the last century.

In those early years when ships were the main mode of transport for both cargo and people, the Hastings River gained a somewhat notorious distinction by claiming a number of vessels, most notably the elegant schooner Tilby the Ballina and the steamer Richmond.

## FLAGSTAFF

Because the entrance was far from safe at the best of times and impossible at others, all larger shipping coming to Port Macquarie would anchor off the Flagstaff. Special boats were built to transfer the cargo from ship to shore and these were loaded and unloaded by means of a mast and derrick. A small inlet was cut into the rock for the boats to be unloaded and the cargo placed on horse drawn drays. A rock platform was also created as a terminal for embarking passengers, complete with a flight of steps down the face of the Flagstaff headland. Cattle were swum ashore.

It was a cumbersome method of handling cargo and at times, during big swells, dangerous, so in the late 1890's as the shipping industry became more and more important to the town and surrounding district, it was proposed to make the harbour entrance safe for the big coastal steamers, with the construction of a breakwall. It was calculated that the breakwall would direct the main current of the river over the sandbar, thereby creating a deep channel.

It is understood from the files of the Public Works Department, that the actual construction of the first breakwall commenced in 1897. There appears to have been a number of problems and some confusion surrounding the construction of the southern breakwall, and it is generally accepted it took four years to build. Ray Dick recalls the contract to build the wall was won by a Mr. George Cook and his partner Mr. (Curl) [read as Kerle].

In 1897 an agreement was made between George Cook and the town Mayor, Frederick Hayward, giving Cook permission to lay down rail tracks from Aston's Hill, through the town streets to the breakwall site, at a fee of £1 per annum.

*According to Mr. Dick whose great grand-fathers were among the first free settlers to come to Port Macquarie, a man called Hungerford owned Aston Hill, and he wouldn't allow Cook and Curl to quarry his property. Subsequently the local council took action and allowed the contractors to quarry the land but, Hungerford lodged a court injunction to stop them encroaching on his property. As Mr. Dick relates the case was settled some years later on the steps of the Supreme Court, but it was the end of the job as far as Cook and Curl were concerned, having moved on to a job at Cape Hawke. However it was these two men who first started the breakwall.*

*Work began with the laying of railway tracks on wooden sleepers from the quarry to the breakwall site. The line ran along what is now Bay Street, across West Port Oval and over the first Long Bridge spanning Kooloonbung Creek, around Short Street to the Town Green and along to the start of the wall adjacent to the present Police Station. Specially designed horse drawn trucks were used to haul the stone, some pieces as big as five or six tons in weight.*

#### LONG BRIDGE

*The Long Bridge over Kooloonbung Creek was especially built for the construction of the breakwall and is believed to have been erected early in 1897. The horses would haul the heavily loaded stone trucks to the wall where the stone was either side tipped or end-tipped into position. As Mr. Dick recalls about six tipping trucks were used to carry the stone. When the wall was finished the trucks were stored on some open council property about where the CWA rooms are now. They rotted away there for many years until the steamer Macquarie took them to Sydney, during the first World War, where they were smashed up for their iron and steel content. A weigh bridge was installed at the beginning of the breakwall to measure the*

*weight of the stone.*

*Weight measurement was the agreed method of payment between the contractors and the Government with the contractors receiving three shillings and eight pence for every ton of stone laid. In later years the weigh bridge was used by the harbour pilot and the small shed was used to store navigation equipment. The weigh bridge was in time moved to a bigger premises between Nicholas Cain's wharf and the Government wharf.*

*The railway lines were also pulled up with the completion of the breakwall, but according to Mr. Dick the depressions left in the earth could be seen for many years later. Old stories about the first breakwall say only one accident occurred in its construction. It involved a man named Thompson, who was working on the tipping of the trucks, when he was trapped by one of the falling stones and lost a leg.*

Detailed progress reports were submitted to the Public Works Department, which were condensed into annual reports. Part of those annual reports for the years from 1897 to 1904 read as follows:-

*1897-98: The contractor for the construction of the training wall has made steady progress during the year. Forty men have been employed, and the output of stone was 47,319 tons, extending the wall 889 feet, the total length to date being 1,725 feet. The quarry is well opened up, and shows a good face of stone. The payments made to the contractor amount to £1,181/3/3d, the contract price for stone being 3/8d per ton.*

*1899-1900: The contract for the construction of the training wall at the entrance to the Hastings River was terminated 15<sup>th</sup> December, the expenditure having reached the limit approved by Parliament. The output of stone for the year was 24,264*

tons, costing £4,448/9/7d. The wall was extended 356 feet making the total length 2,081 feet. The channel is straight out, the bar carrying 6 feet at low water.

1900-01: Harbour works – the work of constructing a breakwater at the southern side of the entrance to the Hastings River, which had been suspended in December 1899, was resumed in Feb., 1901, under a fresh contract. The output of stone up to the end of the year was 17,686 tons, for which the contractor was paid £2,917/10/7, the wall being extended 248 feet. The progress made has been very satisfactory, and the quality of the stone is good.

...By 18 Dec 1902 the committee recommended that it was not expedient to carry out the work.

Although it is not clear exactly how much rock was used to build the wall Mr. Dick understands there were a number of problems in consolidating the wall because of the water depth and the unevenness of the bottom. He reports that in one particular section the bottom of the wall is 80 feet wide for most of the breakwall length only a very small portion of the laid rock is visible.

As Mr. Dick remembers the wall sank a lot in the years after it was completed, particularly after one severe gale.

It was probably about 30 years later that the concrete walkway was poured into the top of the wall to strengthen it and also to allow people to walk its length.

Old hands have debated just how helpful the breakwater was to shipping, but it is noted that the 495 ton Macquarie was able to enter and depart from the harbour at high water. From the records it would also seem that ships of increased size began calling here after the wall was built. However, the breakwall still did not re-

move the sandbar completely and by the 1920's the river entrance had again silted up after three years of heavy floods, which are reported to have washed away sandhills as high as 60 feet on the North Shore and opened up the river mouth for about a mile wide. With much of the current lost the channel against the southern breakwall and across the bar steadily became more and more shallow. Boats entering the port were forced to cross the sandbar at the northern end of the river mouth, run parallel to the North Shore and swing into the breakwall channel and tie up at the wharves which extended from the Royal Hotel right around to past the Fishermen's Co-operative at the mouth of Kooloobung Creek.

In 1932 the Public Works Department began the northern breakwall to divert the river back to its original course. This breakwall was never finished, being abandoned at the end of the second war.

Stone for the northern breakwall was taken from the quarry known as Talla Bogie, along the Settlement Shore-Crescent Head Road and taken to the wall site on a specially constructed railway. Two locomotives and a number of stone skips were brought to Port Macquarie by ship, along with railway tracks.

According to one old timer, at first the northern breakwall was only intended to extend 1000 feet parallel to the sea from the north shore tree line. It was thought this would cause a channel to be scoured out down to the southern breakwall. But, it didn't work, apparently because the channel continually turned out to sea at the end of the breakwall. Another 2,000 feet of wall was built before the wall was finally turned seaward opposite the southern breakwall. In all 4,000 feet of breakwater was built in the 10 years from 1932 to 1942.

... It appears from the records that that it was designed to extend further but due to Australia becoming entangled in World War II, and money for such works ceased as did the Coastal shipping which slowed almost to a standstill. Although ten years seems a long time to build the northern wall, in its early years of construction it was built by depression relief works and engineers were confronted with a number of problems. Reports say that the stone was being tipped into sand, and with a workforce of some 30 men, the wall was advancing by about three feet a week. For a long time, until a definite channel began to form, the water would wash around the end of the newly-laid rock and scour out the wall base.

In 1934 when 1,000 feet had been laid, work ceased for 18 months while the Public Works Department studied their calculations to see if a channel would be scoured out to the southern breakwall. When this failed to happen, work was recommenced and the remaining 3,000 feet completed in the next five years. The third breakwall is [1976] expected to take 18 months to complete the first stone laid two weeks ago. The completion date is expected to be February 1978. [As you can see today 2002, this wall is now completed, the building of it will be another story for another time.]



Workmen who worked on the breakwall

In today's Real Estate Market the prices for land and housing in Port Macquarie have skyrocketed. The Port Macquarie News of July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1968 had the following headline.

*\$833 a foot for Horton St. Land.*

*A record price of \$833 a foot has been paid for a prime Horton Street business property. The property, with a frontage of sixty-six feet to Horton Street, has been sold by Port Macquarie R.S.L. Sub-branch for \$55,000, plus agent's commission.*

*The site is on the western side of Horton Street between the Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney and the Bank of New South Wales [now Westpac] and is at present occupied by Porter's Service Centre Ltd., who have agreed to vacate next month.*

*The purchaser was Real Estate agent and Auctioneer Mr. Jim Boardman, who last year acquired the business of Mr. H.A. Rose of Hill Street, Port Macquarie. Making the announcement of the sale of the property to the monthly meeting of the R. S.L. Sub-branch on Friday night, the President, Mr. J.H. Steep, said that authorised by the approval by the Sub-branch at a general meeting the committee had begun negotiations for the sale of the property. He said, the sale to Mr. Boardman was considered by the committee a very satisfactory one. Mr. Steep said that Mr. Boardman had indicated that his intention was to proceed immediately to construct shops on the site.*

*The land which has a depth of 168 feet, also has a rear entrance via a 13foot right of way at the back of the R.S.L. Club premises. [2002 PCYC].*

*Answering a question, Mr. Steep said the property, including an area on which the R.S.L. Club had been extended, had been purchased by the Sub-branch in 1965 from*

Mr. J.L. Kenny for \$50,000. The sale of the Horton Street frontage of the property meant in effect that the Sub-branch had acquired for nothing the land required for the extension of the R.S.L premises.

A motion endorsing the action of the president and committee in disposing of the property was carried without objection when moved by Messrs. Stan Ryder and Gordon Bowie. Supporting the resolution, Dr. H. Hodgson said it was a very good move indeed and, one, which the president and members of the committee were deserving of the congratulations of every member.

The sale was negotiated for the Sub-branch by Mr. Roger Dulhunty of R.V. Dulhunty Pty. Ltd.

According to the minutes of the Management Committee, which were adopted by the Sub-branch, the original offer transmitted by Mr. Dulhunty was \$50,000. The committee had agreed to inform Mr. Dulhunty that this was far short of requirements. Negotiations were then proceeded with on the site and the figure of \$55,000 plus agent's commission agreed upon.

## RATES

Port Macquarie News 6<sup>th</sup> February 1892:

*The Municipal Rates:* - In order to collect up as much of the back rates as possible, so as to secure the £ for £ Govt. subsidy, the council clerk, Mr. Edwards, started on a collection tour of the town on Thursday last, and by Tuesday he had collected over £80 so that there cannot now be a great deal in arrears.

Then in June the same year: Ald Woodlands said he had received a complaint from a person who had been nearly run over at night by a buggy with no lights; the nuisance inspector was nearby and

had done nothing about it. Ald. Butler thought they should dispense with the services of the inspector. The only thing he seemed to do was draw his salary, for which he did not do a hand's turn. Ald. Butler considered that this officer (not a servant in those days) had most grossly insulted the Mayor, who had told him several times to do certain duties, and to which he had paid no heed.

## MRS LENA LENA CAMPBELL

In 1969 in a column 'It happened here early this century' written by 'Violet', we find the following interview:

*Mrs Lena Campbell talked to me about her childhood in Port Macquarie. She was born here in 1889, and started school in what was then the old army barracks on the same site as the present school. [Port Macquarie Primary]*

*She said: Mr. Hatisley was the headmaster and Miss Gates the Headmistress, and she was a bit tough too. There was a well in the school grounds and we used to take pebbles to school and drop them down and listen. It would seem as if you'd be waiting for minutes although I suppose it was only seconds, before you'd hear them land.*

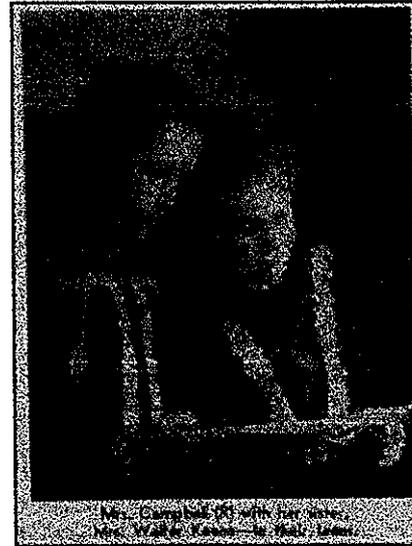
*She told me the story of how she fell off the Long Bridge. It was on a Saturday and we were coming across the long bridge. It wasn't very long built then. The breakwater was built from stone from the quarry in West Port and they had big carts and horses to carry the stone across the long bridge, which had no proper hand rails then. The bridge decking was split logs and you weren't supposed to walk across it, it was only for horses. There were six of us walking across the bridge that day, and I was carrying a basket full of little Sunday School text cards, also a bunch of rhubarb and a few Port Papers.*

*We were coming from town and we'd got nearly to the middle of the bridge and I fell over. I must have caught my foot on one of those old girders. There must have been great consternation among the others. They ran to the end of the bridge and one of them started to take his boots off. Another fellow called out don't stop to take your boots off, she'll drown. There was water under the bridge fortunately otherwise I might have broken my neck. The boy got his boots off and went in and helped me to the bank. Little tickets were floating all the way down the stream.*

*We were going for a picnic that day in the park just over the bridge. We used to have a picnic every Saturday. The boys bring some oysters and bandicoot sweet potatoes. We'd have a nice coal fire in one of the stumps being burnt off. We'd poke at it and get it burning again to cook the sweet potatoes. We'd put the oysters in too and of course they'd crack open. My dad used to take us for walks to the lighthouse all through what was called the Bangalow Scrub. Now it's called a rain forest. We often had a picnic out there. The old home at the Lighthouse was made of brick and stone. When the lighthouse became automatic, my father [Mr. Nicholls] bought the old house into town, brick by brick in a horse and dray and rebuilt it in Hay Street where it still stands. [1968], [2002, Port Central shopping complex now stands over this section of Hay Street, one of Port's oldest streets].*

*Robinson was the Lighthouse keeper. His children used to walk to school every day from out there. My mother and father came here in 1887. My father came to plaster the walls of the extensions of the Royal Hotel. Later he helped to build the Council Chambers. I was born at home because there was no hospital here then. My father built the first hospital. There are not many people still living in the town who can remember these days at*

*the turn of the century, but those who have enjoyed continuous residence have interesting stories to tell. (I shall be talking to contemporaries of Mrs. Campbell. Perhaps some of them may remember the day she fell off the bridge).*



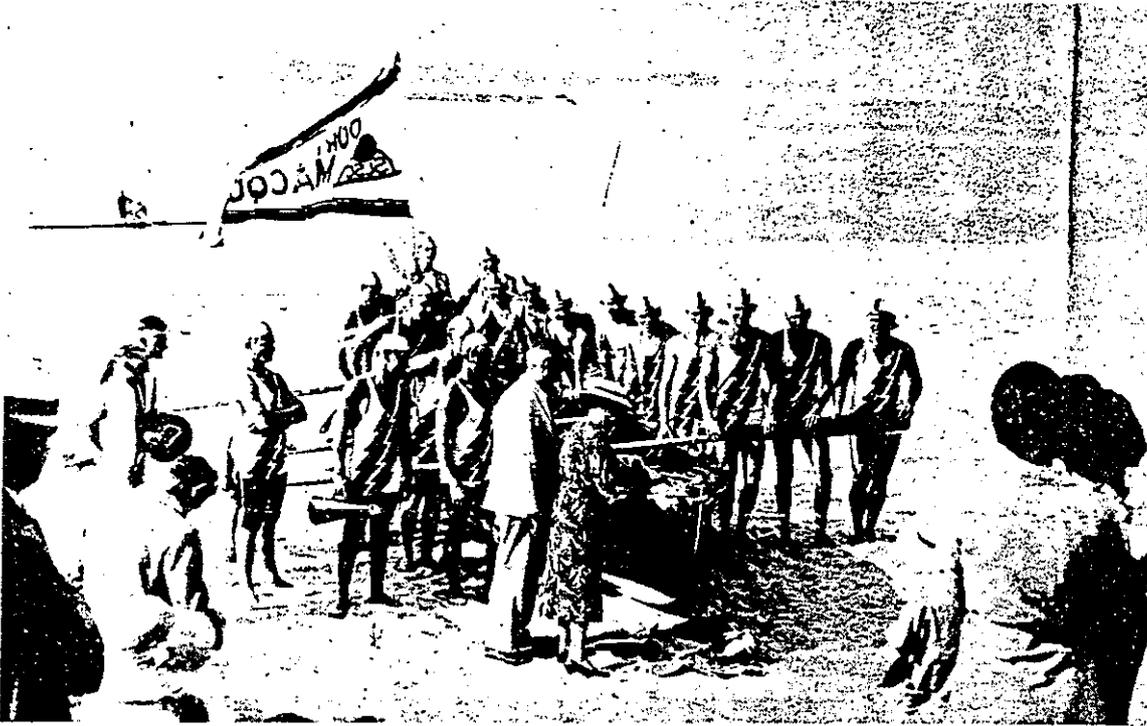
#### *A BARROW JOB 'FINISHED' BY THE BULLDOZER*

So reported the Port News in June 1972.

*It could hardly be described as the end of an era, but it certainly was the grand finale for the earliest days of local government in Port Macquarie when a bulldozer demolished last week the brick town hall – a hod and barrow job – built in 1891/92 at a cost of £187/17/6.*

*After serving the municipality for 76 years, the humble edifice crumpled like a house of playing cards when the dozer leaned against it and the bricks – originally from the old asylum and made by convicts – were carted away to fill a hole in the ground.*

*One thing the bulldozer couldn't erase is a richness in history – with plenty of fire and brimstone – that has emanated from the old building over the years.*



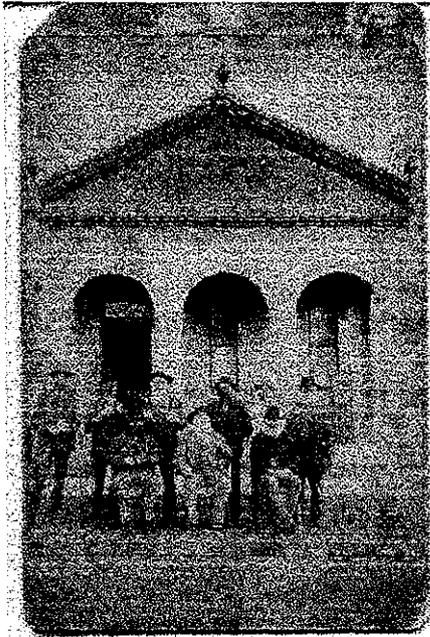
This photograph, taken in 1937, shows the partly constructed northern break wall and the first build-up of sand against the wall.



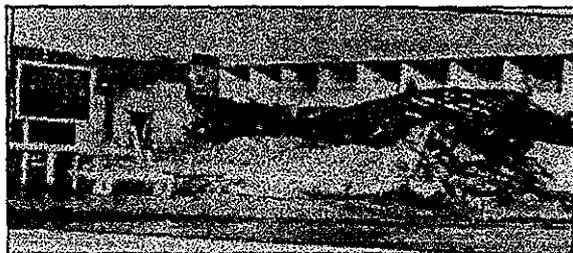
Horse-drawn trucks on rails were used to haul the stone from Aston Hill to the southern breakwall site.



*The town hall had a beginning almost as unhappy as its ending.*



*Municipal Council Building with first Alderman.*



*In the first place, one of the two successful tenderers wrote, on Dec. 11, 1891, to the Mayor and Aldermen: I beg to call your attention to an error in our tender for the erection of the Town Hall. The mistake was made in the addition of items, which in the hurry I had entrusted to my little boy. On the morning following the acceptance of tender, I discovered the mistake...*

*the amount of tender should have been: Carpenter £92-17-6, Bricklayer £95, total £187-17-6. The original tender, or addition, was £169-17-6.*

*But worse was to follow: this from the Dec. 19, 1891, issue of the P.M. News: Within days – the construction work had apparently soon started – a Mr. James Butler (appointed inspector by the Council) wrote to the contractor in these terms.*

*I have to inform you that in consequence of the imperfect manner in which so far the work for the Town Hall has been carried on, it has been deemed necessary to have the walls of same pulled down so as to have the foundations clear for inspection and approval or otherwise... And from the discussion in council that followed:*

*Ald. McInherney: Is it a fact Mr. Mayor, that the building is not square in the foundation?*

*The Mayor: It is.*

*Ald. Hibbard thought the best course would be to have the building reconstructed. The Mayor said he and Mr. Butler were of the opinion the wall should be taken down to the slates, or such distance as from where the work could proceed satisfactorily...*

*The Editor of the News, has this, among other things, to say:...*

*It seems to us that there has been great bungling over the edifice that is to bear the name of a Town Hall, and neither the Mayor or Aldermen, appear willing to admit that the blame is in any way attributable to them. The council, through the Mayor, did a lot of touting, in order to get a quotation as to the probable cost of the structure with which they wished to adorn the town, and one of our townsmen – a competent tradesman – gave an estimate, and was led by the Mayor to believe that his estimate would not be disclosed.*

*This, however, was not the case, and the work fell into the hands of the present contractors.*

*Council apparently had the last say, for when the building was completed in May 1892, and the council was meeting in the Town Hall on Monday June 13, 1892, it was unanimously decided that the account of £5 from the contractors for the lengthening of the building be not paid.*

*This comment from the Editor of the News: What about the extra foot in the Town Hall? Is it the plan or the contractor that is wrong? If the former pay the money; if the latter don't pay. There was no need to waste half an hour over it... some aldermen say what they think, others think what they are not game to say.*

*And with the total obliteration of another piece of Port Macquarie history, here the "News" might interpose an oft heard comment in the famous old Town Hall from a 1960 civic father, Ald. Gidge Munday: My god, what next!*

*FIRST USED MAY 30.*

*The June 4, 1892 issue of the News says the regular meeting of the council was held in the Town Hall on May 30, 1892.*

*Immediately upon the opening of the meeting Alderman Butler took the opportunity to congratulate the Mayor (Frederick Hayward) upon taking his seat for the first time in the New Town Hall. He trusted that the work, which had been carried out so well and harmoniously in the old chambers would continue to be so in the new. Ald. Hayward said he would arrange for an opening ceremony in June 1892.*

*FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.*

*These notes on the early days of local government are by courtesy of the Hastings District Historical Society [2002, Port Macquarie Historical Society]: The first*

*meeting of the council was held in the Good Templars Hall, Horton Street (opposite [old] Methodist Church), on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1887, with all aldermen in attendance. The election to appoint the aldermen took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1887, Mr. A.E. Pountney acting as returning officer.*

*The aldermen were as follows: Mr. J. McInherney (Mayor), Mr. J. Butler, Mr. W. Jennings, Mr. J. Hibbard, Mr. W.A. Spence, Mr. W. Gaul, Mr. F. Hayward.*

*The first business to be discussed was the appointment of the Town Clerk. Six tenders ranging in price from £50 down to £12 were received and that Mr. G.W. Edwards was accepted at £16-10-0. The valuers were then appointed and that of Messrs. R. Woodlands and E. McInherney was accepted at £10-10-0.*

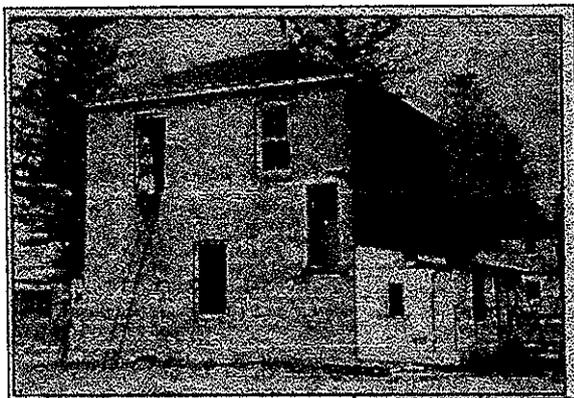
*Vote of £1000 – Council through the influence of its members to apply to the Government for same (this was refused, Council to apply at a later date). The Town Clerk asked to prepare a list of all rateable property for the benefit of the assessors.*

*A decision was made to hold the Council meetings on the first and third Tuesdays in each month at 3 o'clock, p.m. during the winter months. Meetings were then held in the Good Templars, and Mr. John Hayward's Halls and in Mr. B. Cavanagh's rooms. On 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1887 pursuant to notice, Ald. Spence moved – that an approach be made to the Government for that piece of land, about ¼ of an acre adjoining the land given for the School of Arts for a building site for Municipal Chambers, seconded by Ald. Jennings, and carried.*

*The School of Arts building now completed, Mr. R. Henderson wrote advising Council that it was at their service free of cost. The offer was accepted, and Council*

*decided to move their Office thereto. At this time the old Asylum Building was in a very neglected and unsafe condition and the Government was approached and asked to remedy same. This was refused and it was then resolved that the old building be sold in sections.*

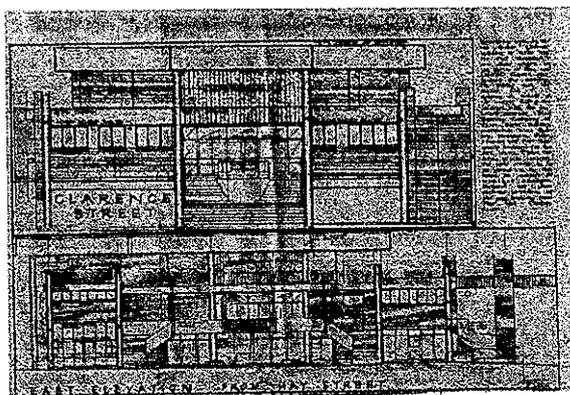
*On 21<sup>st</sup> September 1891, the Mayor moved that this Council should have erected a building to be used for the purpose of a Town Hall at a cost not to exceed £250, on their site in Clarence Street, to enable better facilities for the better carrying out of its duties. The motion was seconded by Alderman Woodlands and carried unanimously. A committee comprising Messrs. Hibbard, Gaul, Woodlands and the Mayor was then appointed to have plans and specifications prepared and submit same at earliest convenience.*



The Port Macquarie News of 1<sup>st</sup> March 1973 showed the "Making way for Civic Centre: Under the picture they reported: *Perhaps the best feature of the picture above is that no more money will go down the drain trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear as it were. First the library and more lately the Council, Senior Citizens and Civil Defence tried to cope with the inadequacies of this ungraceful old building, which – now demolished – left the local scene this week. See Monday's Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> News for details of the building that is to replace it.*

Previously the News reported on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1973:

*Demolition work on the old Senior Citizens' building to make way for Port Macquarie's new Civic Centre, on the corner of Hay and Clarence Streets, commenced this morning. On Friday last, the Mayor Ald. C.C. Adams, on behalf of the council signed the contract with the successful tenderer, Vittali Building Company of Taree. Eight building contractors from Sydney, Newcastle, Taree, Lismore and Port Macquarie tendered for the Civic Centre. Under the terms of the contract, the Civic Centre is to be completed by October 30, subject to weather conditions. Pictured are plans showing elevations of the new building from Hay and Clarence Streets.*



Notes from the Municipal Council Meeting were reported by the Port Macquarie News issue of November 24<sup>th</sup> 1888 as follows:

#### *Tender*

*The following tenders were received for laying drain pipes and sinking a well in Hay Street; E. Edwards, five pounds, P Guthrie, two tenders, six pounds nine shillings and six pounds nineteen shillings, G. Denham, seven pounds ten shillings. On the motion of Ald. Hibbard seconded by Alderman Jennings, the tender of E. Edwards was accepted. No tender had been received for kerbing.*

### *Permit to build*

*Mr. S. Latham on behalf of Mr. G. Wallace, submitted the plan of a cottage he wished to erect at the corner of Hay and Clarence Streets. On the motion of Alderman Gaul, seconded by Alderman Cavanagh, permission was given to construct the premises.*

### *Public Library*

*Alderman Hibbard moved, that the Council Clerk write to the members, and ascertain the proper course to pursue in reference to the establishment of a free public library in connection with the Council. The motion was seconded by Alderman Jennings and carried.*

### OLD MASONIC HALL



The Masonic Temple (since demolished) in Hay St Port Macquarie.  
This temple was consecrated on July 29th 1890

From the Port Macquarie News of December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1888:

**MASONIC LODGE:** *In another part of this issue will be found an advertisement inviting tenders for the erection of a Masonic Lodge in Hay Street, Port Macquarie. The building is to be constructed of brick, provided the work can be carried out at a reasonable price, and in accordance with a neat plan recently procured by Mr. Butler from Sydney. The latter gentleman will supply intending contractors all the information they may require;*

*and we can only hope that a reasonable tender will be submitted, in order that the craft may be enabled to ornament the town by the erection of a building similar to that shown on the plan. It has been decided to invite tenders from the Macleay, Manning and Hastings rivers.*

Port Macquarie News February 8<sup>th</sup> 1890:

*Masonic Hall: The erection of the new Masonic Hall in Hay Street has been commenced. Mr. B. Craven is laying the foundation.*

### COACH AND BUGGY PAINTING

Port Macquarie News, November 17<sup>th</sup> 1888:

*Coach and Buggy Painting: Mr. David Miller, from Newcastle, announces in our advertising columns that he has commenced business in Port Macquarie as a coach and buggy painter, and asks for the support of the public. The fact that Mr. Miller has had very wide experience in several of the large establishments of the Australian colonies is a good index to his capabilities as a buggy painter; but a still more conclusive proof that he is a past-master at the profession is gained from an inspection of the work he has already carried out in Port Macquarie. The first order entrusted to him was from Mr. J. L. Ruthven, who has had his buggy thoroughly renovated; and we have much pleasure in testifying – as all who have inspected the work have done – that Mr. Miller has made an excellent job of his undertaking – the buggy now presenting every appearance of having just left the factory. Mr. Miller deserves the support of the district and we feel sure it will be cheerfully accorded to him, as he is an excellent tradesman.*



**Coach and Buggy Factory,  
Port Macquarie.**

**Thomas Meadows**

(From S. T. Leach, of the Manning River)

**B**EGS to intimate to the public of Port Macquarie that, having taken over the business lately carried on by Mr. David Miller in this town, he is prepared to execute all orders for the

Building of Buggies, Carts, and all kinds of Vehicles on the shortest notice, at Reasonable Rates.

**ALSO BUGGY PAINTING  
AND  
WHEELWRIGHTING in ALL ITS BRANCHES**

ADDRESS—

Next Star Hotel, Port Macquarie.

Port Macquarie News February 8th 1890

Port Macquarie News October 20<sup>th</sup> 1888:  
Advertisement:

**BLOOD AND FIRE  
THE SALVATION ARMY**

*WILL OPEN FIRE in the GOOD TEMPLARS HALL, PORT MACQUARIE, on SATURDAY October 20<sup>th</sup> by an Open Air Bombardment at 7.15 p.m.*

*Great Opening Meeting at 8 p.m.*

*SUNDAY - Knee drill at 7a.m.*

*Holiness Meeting at 11 a.m.*

*Open Air at 2-15 p.m.*

*Free and Easy at 4 p.m.*

*Open Air at 6.15 p.m.*

*Salvation Meeting at 7 p.m.*

*And every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and alternate Saturday and Sunday all day.*

*Salvation without price offered to all*

*All welcome. Seats free.*

*CAPTAIN TANDY & LIEUT. MURPHY.*

*The Hallelujah Lads.*

From the same newspaper:

**TRANSIT OF VENUS**

*Transit of Venus: Mr. Hirst and staff arrived on Thursday evening by the steamer "Ne Oblie" and those gentlemen, with Mr. MacDonnel, our local banker, will now proceed with the necessary arrangements for the observation of the Transit at a lo-*

*cality near Tacking Point. A temporary telegraph line, from Port Macquarie to the point of observation is now in course of construction, the poles for which are already cut, and now being placed in position.*

**For Private Sale.**

5 first-class building allotments, situated in the Brickfield, Port Macquarie.

640 acres of land on the Manning and New England Road, about 5 miles from Port Macquarie; good grazing land, suitable for Dairy Farm; cottage, sheds, stock-yards, &c.; divided into paddocks; partly cleared.

95 acres (farm) at Gowrie; about 66 acres under maize; divided into paddocks; enclosed by 4 rail and paling fence; deep water frontage to Hastings River; cottage, barn, &c.

869 acres of land at Gowrie, adjoining the above, splendidly timbered; would make a good dairy farm; well watered by 2 creeks.

122 acres (farm) Hursley; 60 acres rich land, cleared; 40 acres forest brush; the rest good forest ridge. Terms—4th cash, balance at 3 or 5 years at 8 per cent.

Splendid Station at Yurras, Upper Hastings; will carry 2000 head cattle.

2560 acres of land. This is a grand estate, and well worthy the attention of buyers; this season crops over 1000 bags maize; divided into paddocks; watered by the Wilson River and numerous creeks; house, stables, barns, out buildings, &c. A bargain seldom offered.

80 acres of land, 5 miles from Port, on main road; two cottages, outbuildings, &c., 4 acres vineyard in full bearing, fenced; horses, cart, wine making plant and agricultural implements at valuation. A bargain.

Brick Cottage, best property in the district; beautifully finished; extensive views by sea and land; best position in town; 11 rooms, kitchen, bath, stables, &c., &c. Cheap.

80 acres (farm), Fernbank Creek, about 50 acres of same cleared and ring-barked; improvements consist of cottage, barn, outhouses, stock-yards, &c. A bargain.

420, 420, and 384 acres of rich land (Goolawa), all enclosed and divided into paddocks. Improvements, large stone cottage, galvanised iron roof, kitchen, barn, sheds, and outhouses, &c., situated at junction of the Hastings and Wilson Rivers, one of the best properties in the North Coast Districts. Inspection invited.

Store Cattle and Working Bullocks.

For further particulars apply to

**W. A. FORSTER & CO.,**

Auctioneers,

Brokers, and General Commission Agents,

**PORT MACQUARIE.**

Port Macquarie News Saturday February  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 1889:

*Tender accepted: The tender of Mr. B. Craven has been accepted for the erection of a Roman Catholic Presbytery at Port Macquarie. The building will contain four rooms and the necessary outhouses, and it will be a very handsome structure, if the plan can be taken as a guide. Mr. Craven intends burning the bricks – of which the building is to be constructed – in Port Macquarie, and this work will be commenced at once. The contract price for the dwelling house is 328 pounds.*

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and Research Section - Files and Photographs  
Port Macquarie News

Cover design : Warren Scott and Margaret  
Morgan-Monk

Compiled by Gwen Griffin – Editor

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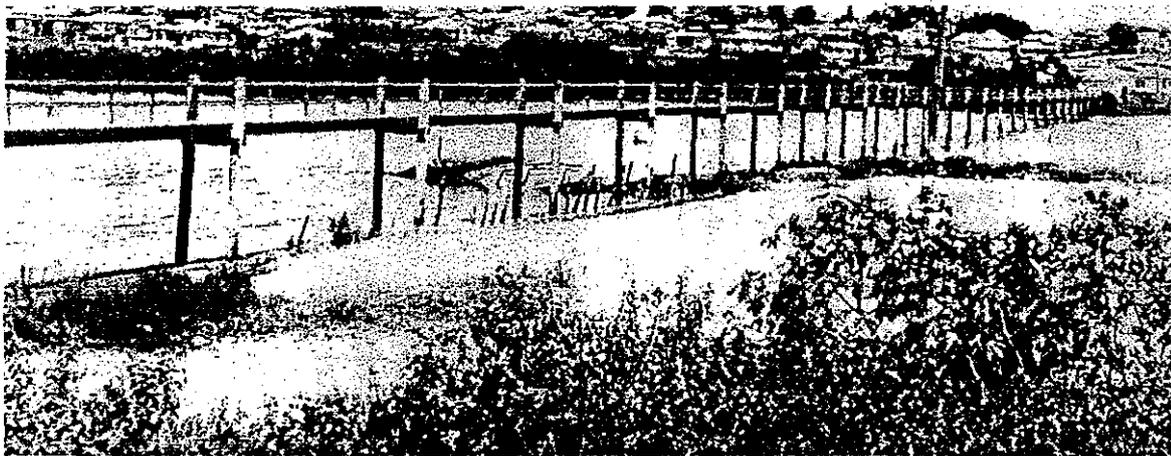
P.O. Box 82, Port Macquarie 2444

PH: (02) 65 831108: Fax:

Email: [Upmmuseum@midcoast.com.au](mailto:Upmmuseum@midcoast.com.au)

President: Mr. Kevin Schubert

Hon. Secretary: Miss Norrie Doyle.

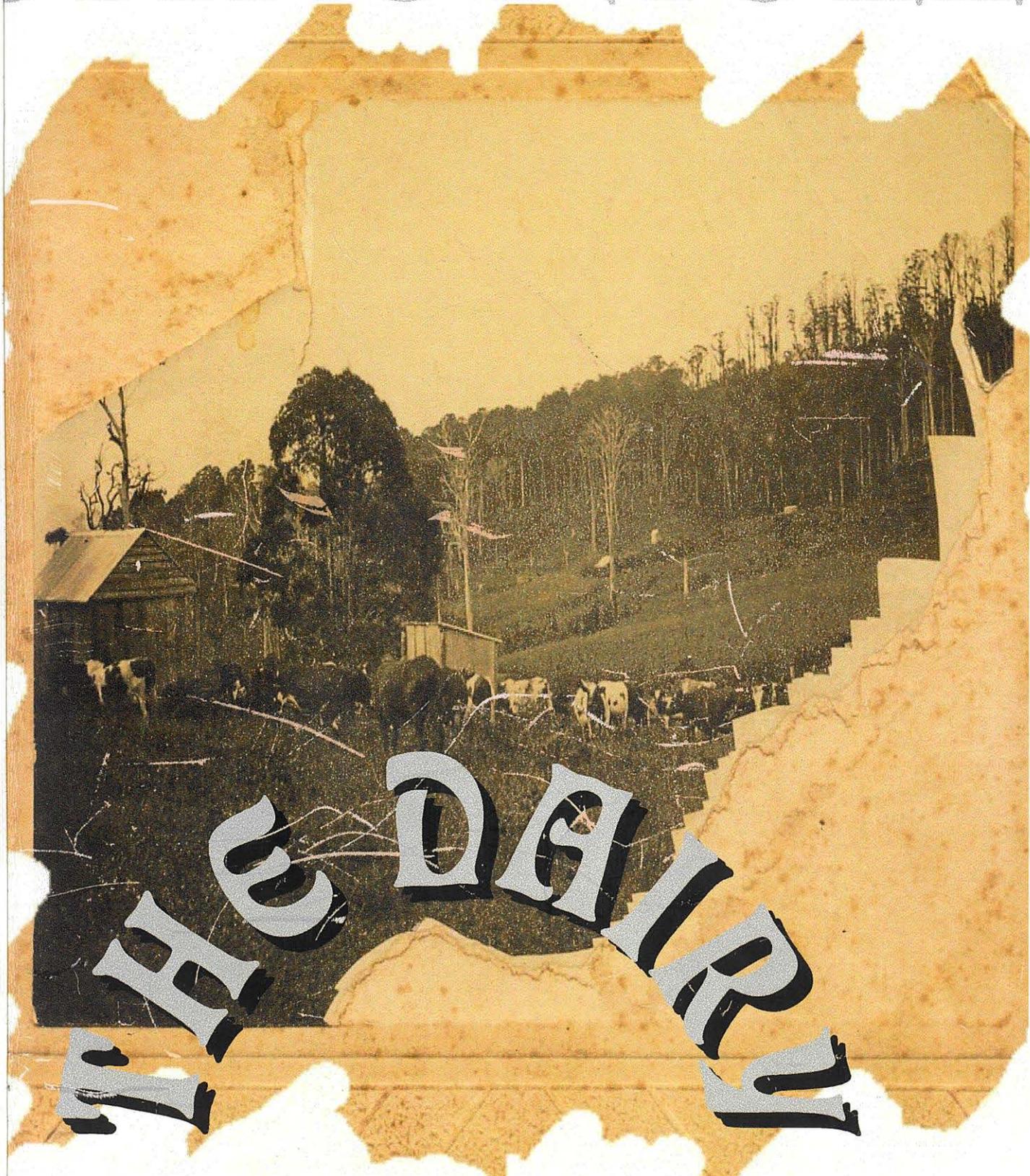


LONG BRIDGE, PORT MACQUARIE

Built in 1897 to transport metal for the southern breakwall from the quarry at Aston Hill across Kooloonbung Creek to the weighbridge, which was situated along the foreshore near Hay Street, the "Long Bridge" was a convenient method for children from Westport to get to school. Horse-drawn trams were used to convey the huge blocks to the site of the southern breakwall.

PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN

# CHRONICLE



# THE DAIRY

## DAIRYING ON THE MID NORTH COAST OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

Dairy production as a specialized business was not feasible in pioneering days due to the lack of a suitable infrastructure. An attempt to sell butter in England in 1870 ended disastrously when the product went rancid and was sold as cart grease!

### **DAIRYING BECOMES POPULAR**

With the terrible depression of the 1890s, primary products such as dairying and timber-getting became very important. Life was physically very hard, but these two activities provided a healthy and certain existence 'in rain, hail or shine.' By contrast there were many jobless destitute persons who wandered aimlessly...some dying by the roadside.

Dairy farming women carried the double burden. Without efficient birth control methods, they often bore many children (families of 10 or more were not unusual), were expected to run all house affairs, and sometimes organize the milking and dairy chores. That would leave the husband more time to work the fields or hold an outside job such as in the timber industry.

With the coming of compulsory education, children also had hard lives. Demands then came from both school and home. The teacher had minimum standards that had to be achieved, children often having severe encounters with that discipline. The farm had chores that had to be performed before school: milking the cows, feeding the pigs, washing utensils and the dairy floor, shovelling manure, helping inside the house, and many other duties.

New markets besides the basics- butter, cheese - started to open up as the challenge to get better quality dairy products was faced. Preserved and concentrated milk

commercial operations beginning in 1890 proved successful.

Sledges & packhorses carried butter for miles over rough tracks and roads from farms to factories and depots.

By the early 1890s, magazines to help farmers were becoming available. *The Australian Agriculturist A Journal for Australian Country Homes* began in 1893. Articles included information on various practical topics such as animal husbandry on how to treat horses with broken knees and how to preserve excess fruit and vegetables so they might get to market safely.

Women enjoyed the magazine too. Fashions and offers of paper patterns from clothes were features.

THE AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURIST.



**WORTH'S**  
Dress Cutting and Art  
Millinery School,  
61 and 63 Sydney Arcade.  
Every Lady her own Dressmaker by Worth's  
Lightning Fitter  
WORTH'S CUT PAPER PATTERNS DEPOT,  
No. 11 Sydney Arcade.  
Come and see Boddie and Sissors, combining  
ease and elegance, cut to fit in 5 minutes.  
WORTH'S LADIES' TAILOR AND COS.  
TIME DEPARTMENT—  
14 and 15 Imperial Arcade,  
SYDNEY.  
MRS. TIBBS, Sole Proprietor.

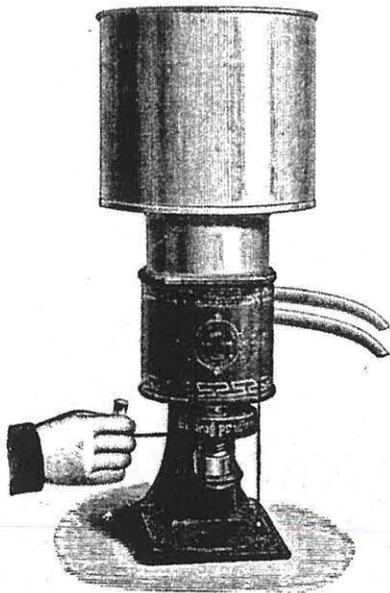
Farmers were encouraged to buy Jersey cattle, "The Kings of the Dairy Herd" because they provided more butter for the cost of their keep. They were "butter machines", the magazines claimed.

Dry milking was now recommended. "Wet milking" had been a habit of wetting the hands by squirting milk onto them... or dipping them into the pail of milk to clean them! "Dry milking" meant washing the



teats of the cow and the milker's hands with water before milking...a matter of hygiene.

Cream separators were now available for those who could afford them. Very few farmers could afford such a luxury.



**Hand Power Separator.**

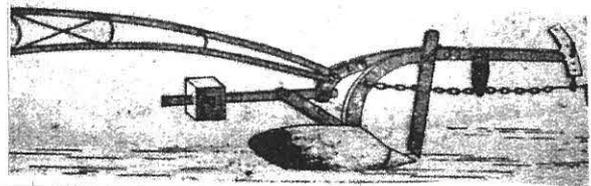
Skim milk was a by-product of butter making so most dairy farmers kept pigs. Instructions for curing, smoking and keeping hams and bacon were available in magazines. *Rub in special mixture of saltpetre, salt, black or brown sugar, allspice, carbonate of soda. Then pack in brine solution 21 days. Hang for about 2 weeks. Smoke for 10 days (dried stinkwort fire). Put in calico bags and hang them until ready for use.*

Farmers' Institutes formed in some areas. Common problems could now be discussed and new ideas debated.

The devastating depression of 1895 was a concern for the whole economy. "Excess development" was blamed referring to "new lines of ocean traders, and great

*trunk lines of railway, carry the products of any one land to the remotest parts of the earth, with speed and punctuality never dreamed of half a century ago."*

New developments for farming were displayed at the Sydney Show of 1895. For the dairyman there was a shed that staged a complete collection of dairying appliances driven by steam including a sterilizer. Also general farm implements were on display showing stump-jump ploughs, cultivators, scarifiers, windmills, stump extractors, scoops, and power machines.



*single furrow Stump Jump Plough*

One technique used to keep milk was 'aeration' which meant pumping air through cans of milk using bellows, and by adding the preservative, Boric Acid. Louis Pasteur's discovery led to pasteurization replacing the Boric Acid treatment and scientific improvements brought refrigeration, both contributing greatly to the growth of dairying.

So important was dairying that in 1895 there was a movement to have it taught as a subject in schools. Some even promoted the idea that there should be dairy schools established with specialists in charge.

Corn growing was an integral part of dairying. An itinerant missionary in 1895 recorded his impression of coastal farms



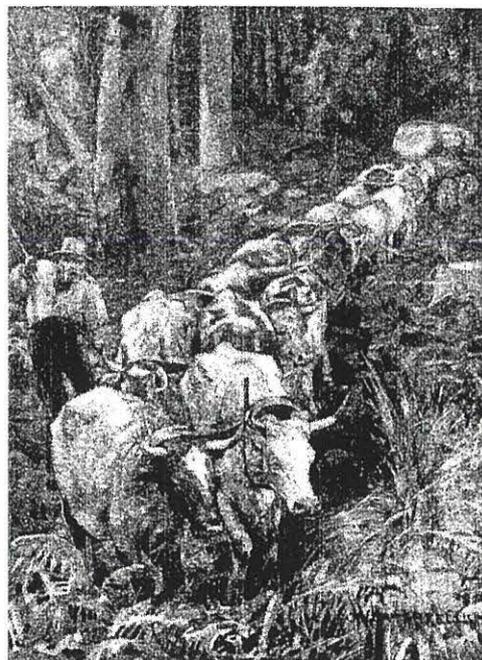
in the Hastings area.: *"The main product of the soil is corn."* He also noted quality citrus fruit and wrote in his diary: *"Fine oranges and lemons hang as golden fruit on the green trees, but not sent to Sydney because of freight and commission agents' costs. Mostly go to waste."*

Peter Norris Drew and wife Anne, typical of coastal farmers, supported a large family with dairying, growing maize (corn) and pigs... *"very little you got for it."* recalls his son, Norrie. Another sibling later explained: *"In those days there were big families and everyone had to be dairying."* All products for sale had to be transported by land to the nearest shipping post, for them, Ballengarra Wharf 17 miles from the farm.

An important income source for farmers was the sale of timber. Peter Drew saved enough to purchase a bullock team and then it was not long before he had a second team. He could drag logs to the Ballengarra wharf where river boats would move them to Hibbard for milling and processing in readiness for the Sydney markets. At least 32 bullock teams were operating in the Hastings River. Timber varieties were tallowood, grey gum, white mahogany, red mahogany, ironbark, boxwood, and others. Red cedar was a rare timber as it had been cut out a generation earlier. However the occasional one brought good money from the Government because it was used extensively in railway carriages.



FEEDING THE POULTRY. 1895



The 1895 *Moore's Almanac*, reporting on the area from Camden Haven to Crescent Head and inland to Mount Seaview, summarized: *"This district exports great quantities of most valuable timber also maize and store and fat pigs. Wine grapes are extensively and profitably cultivated, and rich and strong grapes produced."*

Families were self-sufficient for most of their supplies. They grew their own vegetables, kept poultry for meat and eggs, and sheep and cattle for their own use.

Maize was used as food for pigs and horses. At first, all harvesting and husking was done by hand... very labour intensive work.



Improving their grounds kept farmers busy  
Burning off, rolling logs, grubbing stumps



or moving stones and ploughing were some of the jobs. Then there were 'wet day' activities such as husking or thrashing corn.



Many farmers cleared land for pasture by "ring-barking". When the trees were thoroughly dead, a fire would be started underground in the roots and then covered with dry cow pats. After the base had smouldered for some days, the tree would weaken and fall to the ground permitting sunlight to flood the pasture.

Paspalum Dilitatum was first brought in from South America, there was great excitement because it was a grass not only suited for wet coastlands, but one easy to grow that thrived in both good and poor soils. Also it was an enjoyable sweet crop for cows. The native grasses had been good for milk production but paspalum made it possible to put a greater part of the farm under production, the only disadvantage being that it needed a winter balance such as clover and rye.

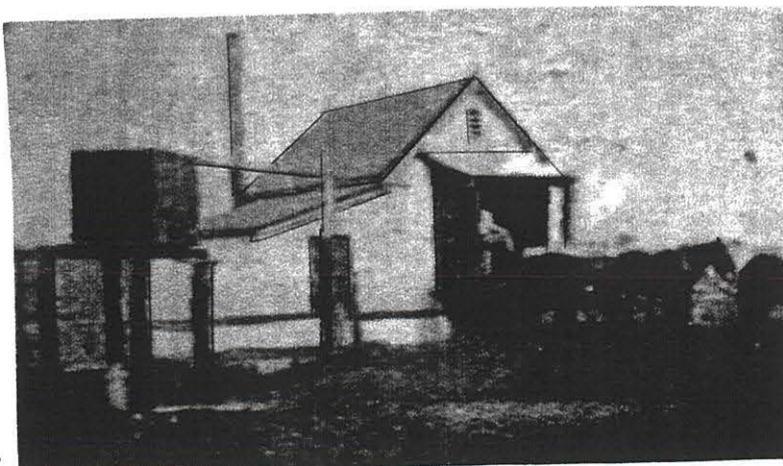
Many farmers increased their clearing of land for pasture by 'ring-barking'. When the trees died, a small tunnel would be made under the tree, a fire started which would be covered with dry cow manure. After smouldering for some days, the roots would weaken and the tree fall to the ground.

Vermin- hares, rats and rabbits- competed for the products of the farm. The Government encouraged their eradication by a system of bonuses paid for destruction of noxious animals. Whitewashing the chicken house helped control lice and other infestations.

When serious sickness struck a family member a doctor would be contacted in a main centre such as Port Macquarie or Kempsey. However, to reach help and then get a doctor to the farm house was often quite difficult because of the lack of good roads. A recollection of the days in 1914 described motor vehicles as low-powered machines that needed to be pushed to get up the hills. Roads could be better described as 'tracks' that turned into mud in wet weather, so it is easy to understand the reason for only a few cars in the Hastings. Family transport was by sulky, buggy or horseback.

Sickness with farm animals was another challenge. All 'doctoring' in that case was done by the farmer.

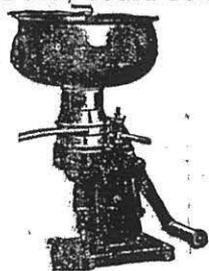
Natural disasters had to be faced bravely. Hail could flatten a ten-acre field of maize in minutes. Excess rain could wash away valuable stock. When forty inches of rain one February washed out many flats on the Maria River beaches near the mouth of the Hastings River were littered with dead animals from upstream.



1895 separating station.



Before 1895 many farmers took milk to a nearby separating station and then returned home with the skim milk which could be fed to the pigs. Gradually separators were introduced as they could be afforded.



Alfa-Laval" Cream Separator

By 1894 there were 23 co-operative butter factories established in various places including *North Coast Pastoral and Dairying* and *North Coast Fresh Food and Cold Storage*.

From 1895 Co-operatives started to appear along the North Coast, beginning at Byron Bay. Two distinct co-operative marketing agencies existed : those capitalised by individual farmers and those capitalised by group manufacturing bodies.

The Port Macquarie Butter Factory, established by the Australian Dairy Company, was opened on 16th December 1897. Many farmers gathered to see Mayor, F.Hayward J.P., declare the factory "open" by turning the tap of the separator. The general manager for the Company explained for the benefit of everyone the method of procedure from the time of receiving the milk until the cream was placed in the churn, and then into the circular butter worker. At the conclusion of that, enthusiasm and appreciation were expressed with three cheers for the Australian Dairy Company.

Mr D.Bain J.P. spoke on the establishment of the factory as a means to unite the whole district, possibly absorbing all the milk in the district. He hoped that at last the Hastings, Wilson and Camden Haven

rivers would come to the forefront of this industry.

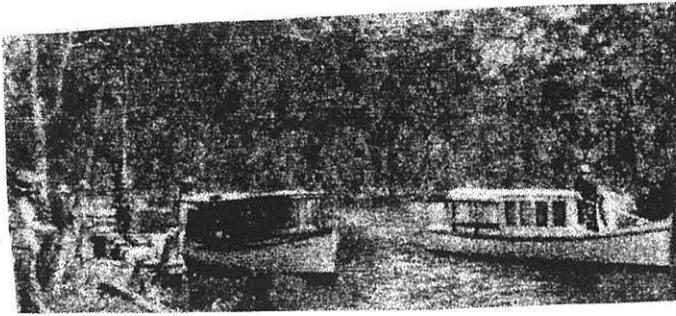
Bain emphasized two points: that farmers should work towards getting the best breeds of cattle possible, and feed them well. He believed the want of feed for cattle had been a failure of the district. The paper reported Bain's words: *"He did not see many people sowing grass for their cattle; this was necessary, but, grass should not be depended on..He would like to see farmers sowing something for winter fodder for cattle...He had seen a number of cattle in the district and there were some good dairy cattle amongst them; but some would be better fattened and sold to the butcher."*

Rev.Robert Davidson ,who once owned property at Rollands Plains, was the first to introduce quality cattle into the Showring. Others such as W.Daley, A.Bain, A.Lindsay, and R.Swan accepted the challenge to produce quality dairy cattle..especially Jersey and Fresian.

The collection of cream created jobs for many persons. Farmers built stands at the roadside where cans of cream would be stored for collection. Vans did the rounds to gather all the cans and take them to the nearest wharf where the cream boat would gather them for delivery to the Butter Factory pier. From there a trolley transported them to the factory.



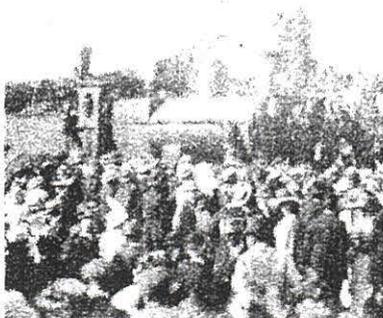




However, it was not all smooth sailing for the river boats. Norris Thompson recalls: *"We would wait for the Oxley boat to come up. Sometimes it would be very late, stuck on sand spit or something, or low tide."*

John Walsh was one entrepreneur involved in the river boating business. With his first boat, the steamer "Shamrock", he picked up cream from farms along the Hastings, Wilson and Maria Rivers and carried passengers or supplies as required. His brother, Maurice Walsh, also ran a boat, the "Ostria", which was later sold to the Port Macquarie Dairy Co-operative. The "Shamrock" burned in 1912, but work continued in another boat named the "Willowree"(exact name uncertain).

By 1910 dairying had expanded enough to support three factories. The Camden Haven Co-operative Dairy Co.,Ltd., had its factory at Kendall; The Upper Hastings Co-operative Dairy Co., Ltd. was a comparatively new company at Wauchope; the Hastings River Co-operative Dairy Co.,Ltd. was based at Port Macquarie. Butter was the main product but some farmers looked forward to switching to milk when the railway line should be completed a few years later, making new markets possible.



*The railway was welcomed with rejoicing, 1915.*

As farms became more numerous at the end of the nineteenth century, the rural political vote became crucial. When the possibility of Federation was the big question, Edmund Barton spent an enormous amount of time visiting country areas. One of his visits is recorded where the Rawdon Island farming community hosted him with an outdoor feast. When the decisive by-election for Hastings-Macleay was held July 1898, Barton was chosen to represent the Hastings Macleay Electorate. The rural vote showed that the farming community firmly supported his concept of Federation: *Rawdon Island 34 YES, 7 NO; Beechwood 55 YES, 24 NO; Rollands Plains 30 YES, 6 NO.*

An article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1904 commented: *"It has taken the North a long while to discover that the country was not made for maize alone....But until dairying brought monthly cheques to the farmers maize was the chief support, and a precarious support too."*

At the turn of the century, much printed material was available to advise the farmer. One source with an article "How to Procure Cattle" had the following instructions:

*"If you wish to milk say 30 cows, select 50 heifers about 18 to 22 months old. Mate them with a good bull. As they come to dairy, select the best for yourself and sell the remainder in the open market."* The library of each School of Arts provided publications on various topics including those by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture. Articles gave information on draining, water usage, natural and artificial manuring, and results of successful garden experiments.



Other magazines discussed useful types of structures. *"Cow-bails, open-sided, with zinc roof, and a roughly cemented floor, should be regularly limed-washed and also washed down with water daily. There should be a can house or dairy house to store the milk or cream. It should be well-ventilated and well-lighted for separating milk and keeping the cream until despatched to the butter factory"*. Other buildings considered necessary were the calf-shed, a barn, a machine shed and a piggery. A silo was recommended for fodder... a new concept for most farmers.

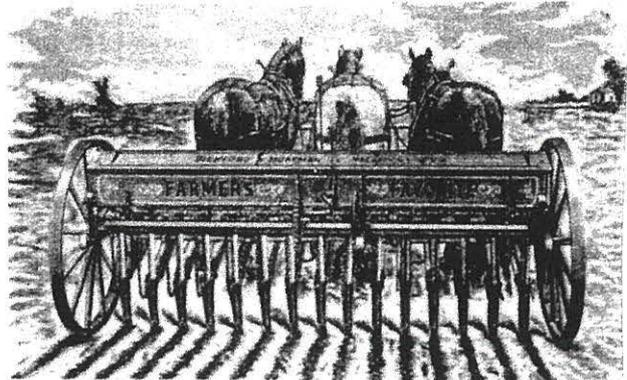
Cleanliness in dairy bails now became a great concern. The 1901 Dairies Supervision Act was designed to prevent the spread of disease through unhygienic conditions in handling milk and milk products.

Refrigeration on ships and in factories was a great boon for farmers. Experiments in 1888 had not been totally successful but by the new century there was great confidence in the new system. Callaghan's book, *Dairying* (1905), stated: *"The export trade has grown...Australia is now well known on the chief British markets for dairy products."* As beef exports expanded, so the outlook for dairy farmers improved as corn was now a profitable product as cattle feed. Callaghan continued: *"Large landowners are recognizing the fact that the time has come when farmers are more valuable to the state than sheep or bullocks. The dawn of agriculture has broken, and closer settlement is destined to follow"*.

The Homestead Act of 1905 made it easy for small farmers to obtain and develop their own farms. With the earlier Grant system, best lands of large areas had been

given to a few families. The Act introduced new principles for land settlement with the result that these large estates were subdivided into comparatively small holdings. The maximum area that could now be selected was 1280 acres, with tenure freehold, subject to perpetual residence and perpetual rent which was only 1.25 % for the first 6 years.

After 1910 farmers cautiously adopted newer mechanical devices. Before that, almost all sowed their seed broadcast with loss to birds, and by the fact that the lack of seed soil cover led to poorer germination. Also that haphazard technique made it very difficult to do weeding between seedlings. The seed drills placed each carefully and created rows that were easily cultivated.



During and after World War One processed milk production expanded thanks to the development of improved cold storage systems. On coastal regions from the Hunter to the Macleay, there were more than 118,000,000 dairy cows producing 43,316,291 gallons of milk; 15,795,808 pounds of butter; and 279,878 pounds of cheese. There were 54,782 swine (Berkshire, Poland, China and Yorkshire strains) providing bacon and ham.



By now, most farmers were supplementing grazing with winter fodder, mostly maize, barley, oats, rye, lucerne and/or sorghum. Most native grasses were considered suitable, but the sowing of imported grasses was extending.

With an increase in dairy exports, the Government now moved to control quality. The Dairy Industry Act in 1915 made it mandatory to test and grade all milk and cream and farmers were paid according to butter-fat content or the amount of butter produced from cream.

(In 1927 a news reference was made of the importance of the grape growing industry in the Port Macquarie area. Grapes were produced for marketable purposes and also for the manufacture of wine. George Francis of Douglas Vale brought great fame to the district by earning a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition for quality wine production.)

By 1928 dairying was the mainstay of the district.

A report in the NSW Yearbook of 1929-1930 discusses the types of cattle in dairy herds. The Shorthorn (especially the Illawarra variety) preponderated, with Jerseys being next in popularity. However, the Ayrshire was found to be better when milk, rather than cream, was desired. By 1935, as well as pasteurised milk, butter and cheese, dairy products included condensed milk and ice cream.

Dairymen now became more involved in timber-getting as a side-line business, especially as the demand grew for railway sleepers, telegraph poles, electric poles, girders, transoms and logs for sawmills. When trees were cleared from their own

properties it made way for improved pastures. Teamsters used horse or bullock teams to move these products to mills or wharves. Motor trucks did not appear in the Hastings area until 1920 and even then roads were impassable in most country areas, especially after rain.



*Farmer uses bullocks for carting.  
Stumps and logs indicate clearing for pastures.*

On 27th July 1934 the Hastings District Co-op Dairy Company moved its factory from Port Macquarie to Telegraph Point. This location was more central to the general dairy industry and was convenient for rail transport. The brick and tile building was completely new although most of the machinery came from the old factory.

Cream for the new plant was collected from Rollands Plains, Wilson and Maria Rivers and Pipers Creek; Hastings River cream went to the Wauchope factory.

The Telegraph Point operation continued until competition from Kempsey became too strong.

World War 2 brought the opportunity for farmers to intensify their cultivation of crops. Many thousands of bags of peas, beans, carrots and broadbeans, together with cases of tomatoes left Port Macquarie for army camps. Intense cultivation continued for 15 years after the war ended when very wet weather of the 1960s to 1970s ruined the growing business. However, so influential had the local growers been in the heyday that the Vegetable Growers' Association of New



South Wales held its annual convention of 1961 at Port Macquarie.



Potato growing for the Armed Forces 1941

A summary of dairying and its trends in New South Wales until 1946 can be seen in the following. ( In more recent years there has been a further decline on the North Coast of N.S.W.)

| YEARS                          | <u>1911-12</u> | <u>1925-26</u> | <u>1930-31</u> | <u>1935-36</u> | <u>1939-40</u> | <u>1944-45</u> | <u>1945-46</u> |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Dairying alone                 | 3157           | 9766           | 14484          | 14969          | 14210          | 12473          | 12157          |
| Dairying and agriculture       | 8258           | 5624           | 3371           | 4066           | 3752           | 3821           | 3578           |
| Dairying and grazing           | 2099           | 1794           | 1148           | 1445           | 1309           | 1639           | 1341           |
| Dairying agriculture & grazing | 4362           | 1734           | 1146           | 1834           | 1433           | 1239           | 1028           |
| Total farms                    | 17876          | 18938          | 20149          | 22314          | 20704          | 19172          | 18104          |

Author: Ralph Ferrett

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- Walsh, Jack, *Memories*

Published by:

Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.,  
 22 Clarence Street,, P.O.Box 82  
 Port Macquarie, 2444.  
 Phone (02)65831108



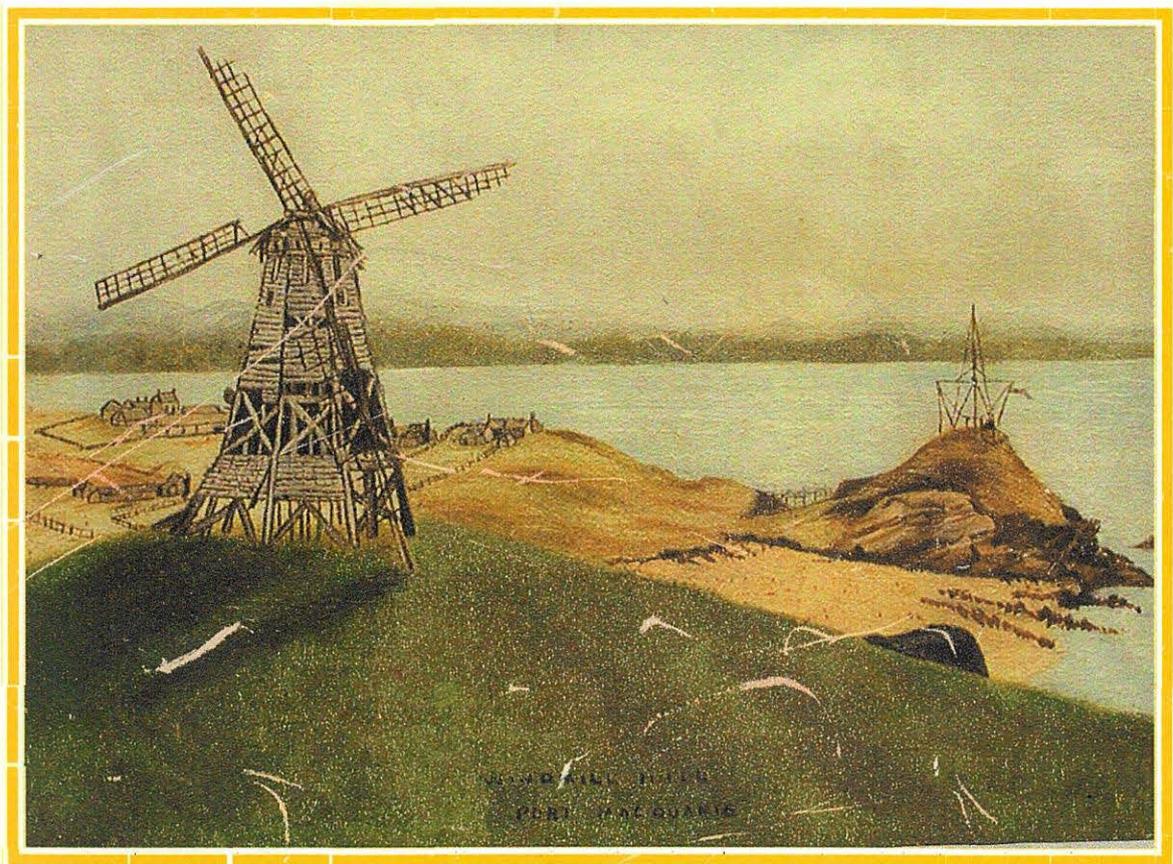
# CHRONICLE

HISTORY  
OF  
PORT MACQUARIE'S WINDMILL HILL

Compiled by: Gwen Griffin

For

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©November 2003 Run **VOLUME 7. No. 2**

**ISSN;1328-4304**

## HISTORY OF PORT MACQUARIE'S - WINDMILL HILL

In 1825/1826 the then Commandant of Port Macquarie's Penal Settlement, Captain Henry Gillman, built a cottage on the summit of Windmill Hill, a high windswept barren hill overlooking the ocean. This cottage had a flat roof and was known as 'Gillman's Folly', a fact recorded on the first survey plan in 1831 and was signed by Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, although an error occurred in the spelling - the plan shows 'Gillmore's Folly'. Many dances are believed to have been held on this flat roof which, was originally built for the sighting of vessels near the harbour.

In 1830 Port Macquarie was thrown open to free settlement. Major Archibald Chunes Innes, a former Commandant at the Penal Settlement decided to return as a settler where he commenced erecting many buildings, including his residence at 'Lake Innes', which formerly had been known as Lake Burrawan. In the centre of the town the Major built a commodious store-room, four storey's in height, with suitable office accommodation. Therein were stored supplies of clogs and rough heavy boots, bundles of course blanketing made at Parramatta, rolls of yellow duck frocking, ready made suits of the same material, quantities of heavy axes about 8 lbs in weight, cumbersome hoes, spades and pronged hoes, leg irons, handcuffs etc. His building activity also led to the erection of the old Royal Hotel, a commodious building, two storeys high with frontages to the harbour and to the west.

In 1831 Major Innes applied for a grant to establish a private Mill. He selected a location on the high land on the coast, a little southward from Oxley beach, but the Surveyor General recommended that this site be reserved for a lighthouse. He objected strongly to this, but although the lighthouse eventually was located elsewhere, (Tacking Point) he was forced to use land a little inland from his selected site and about a quarter of a mile south of the flagstaff. This land was known as allotment 1, Section 36, town of Port Macquarie and the deeds for it were not issued to him until 1839.

In the meantime 1832, the Major was leasing the old treadmill at Port Macquarie, believed to have been located near the waterfront at the Commissariat Store.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1833 Innes received the contract to supply the government with grain and meat etc. On the 18<sup>th</sup> October 1833, five acres of land formerly known as 'Gillman's Folly', was purchased by Innes at auction, and it was here on this land that he built a windmill for gristing.

The first Gristing mill was established at the sugar plantation at Rollands Plains on the Wilson River by the Commandant, Captain Gillman in 1825 under instructions from the Governor. This mill was powered by water and owing to floods experienced, and other matters it was proposed, that, it be abandoned, by Governor Darling. He also instructed that the machinery be preserved for the use of the free settler.

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grain. "In a rising agricultural colony, like New South Wales, it will be a means of considerable public benefit", he wrote to the Governor. Darling refused to let O'Hara proceed to Sydney to explain his scheme. "If the model were sent, however, and a correct description given, it will be duly considered." No more was heard of this project.

At the trial on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1834, of Thomas Burchall, a convict, who was being tried for 'Insolence to his Master and forwarding by his Master's Dray sawn timber without permission to a private individual in the settlement'. We learn the following:

*Major Innes sworn: The prisoner is my assigned servant and I brought him about twelve months ago from my Upper Farm to be employed on the settlement to procure timber for a Windmill which I am erecting upon one of my allotments of land...The timber that I had sent to the Cottage meaning the Windmill...*

The above information gives us a date to when the Windmill was being erected.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> September 1841 Robert Peebles died. From his Inquest held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September we learn the following:

*Alexander Robertson, Free by Servitude, being sworn states: I was employed with the deceased Robert Peebles at Major Innes' Windmill, in this town. On Friday night last we were engaged dressing flour, and the deceased went up with a bag of flour to empty into the hopper of the Mill and in doing so he fell in with it. I went and assisted to pull the deceased out and he complained very much then and also Saturday about having pains*

*about him, and about one o'clock Sunday he went to hospital.*

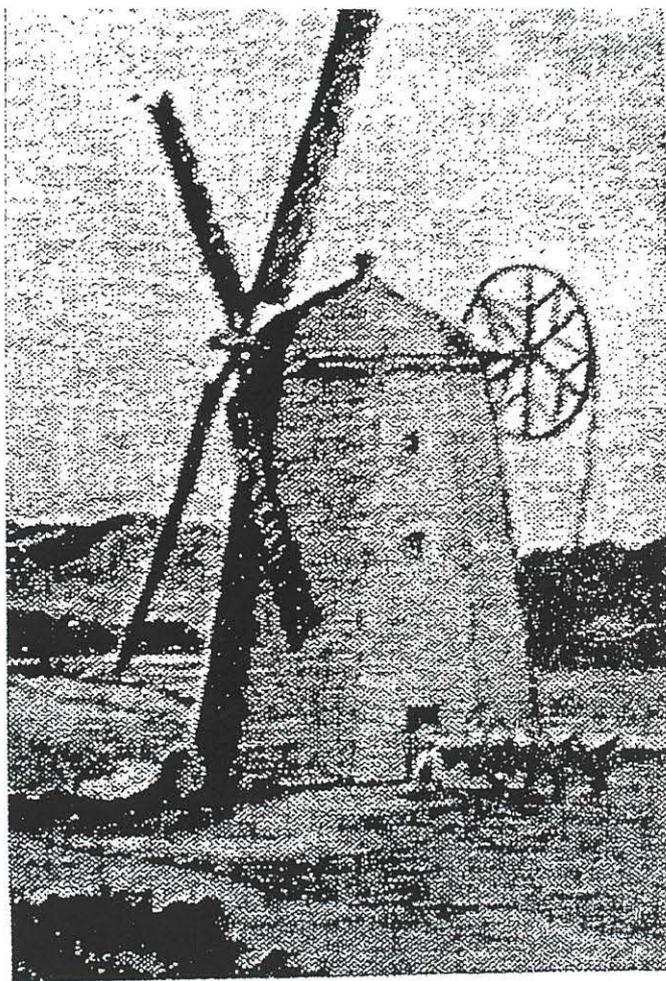
*Robert Gorman, free by servitude sworn states: On Friday last I assisted the last witness in getting the deceased out of the Hopper of Major Innes' Windmill, he complained he was in much pain. On Sunday morning he went to hospital and yesterday (Monday) I heard that he was dead. I believe the deceased was under the influence of liquor when he fell into the hopper. The depth of the hopper is about ten feet.*

Clement Hodgkinson, Surveyor, who describes his visit to Port Macquarie in the 1840's: *On the skyline were the signal post and the fire beacon of the Marine Department, the Windmill and the tall square tower of the church.*

Probably none of the many buildings erected by Major Innes was a more prominent and picturesque landmark than the Windmill. Like St. Thomas' Church it stood out on a hill and was visible from a great distance at sea. The Mill, which was eight-sided covered about 40 feet diameter at the base, and tapered to the top. The top was rounded and came to a centre point and was also detached from the lower structure and was set on runners. On one side of the building were the great arms of wood to take the canvas sails while on the other side was a wheel, grooved to take an endless rope. This rope hung to the ground and when the Miller desired to turn the sails round to the wind, he turned the gear attached to the grooved wheel by means of this rope, which made the whole roof revolve.

The picture shows the main door facing to the south with a team of horses

drawing a wagon-load of wheat to be crushed. The mill was built almost entirely of timber, and all the spur-wheels were of wood, the only iron cogwheel being one of 24 inches in diameter, which was attached to the Mill-stones.



A close-up of the old windmill with its ingenious wooden wheel.

Superintendent Branch supervised the erection of the mill and his records show that the main shaft, which, stood upright in the Mill, was turned out of a large ironbark tree. The lathe used was a wooden frame set up with gear to turn a shaft 40 feet in length. The rough dressed log was set in this frame, and handles were then driven into each end. Four or five convicts were instructed to turn each handle. This primitive but very effective method was responsible for turning out what was regarded as a fine piece of work.

Mr. George Halliday arrived at New South Wales 1830-31. When Major Innes opened his Mill, Mr. Halliday was employed as the Miller.

When the famous write Louis Becke, who was born on 18 June 1855 at Port Macquarie, was a child, the headland in front of his home, Oxley's Camp Site, was traversed as it sloped to the beach, by the track, which led from Boat Harbour into town. North-west across open grassland were the walls of the Gaol (and the Asylum), east lay the flagstaff and on the skyline to the south stood the Windmill, its sails still intact, still functioning.

Port Macquarie's early Gristing Mills – Government Mills.

1821-22: A list of works completed during Governor Macquarie's office included a weather-boarded provision store and granary enclosed with a strong stockade.

1824: 20<sup>th</sup> October 1824 Captain Rolland, (second Commandant) signed a statement of the various employments of the prisoners at Port Macquarie etc.,

among them was named 'a sugar cane grinder' (suggesting the cane was crushed by hand). There were also six prisoners employed at the hand-mill gristing grain. The settlement had a granary to which a treadmill was attached to combine both punishment and a supply of grain.

24<sup>th</sup> December 1824: a letter from Major Goulburn addressed to W.S. Parker—'I have been honoured with the instruction that you are to be ordered to commence agricultural operations on the newly discovered plains near Port Macquarie.'

1825: The first Gristing Mill was established at the Sugar Plantation, Rollands Plains by the Commandant, Captain Gillman in 1825 under instructions by the Governor.

1826: On the north-eastern corner of Allman Street and the waterfront was a building described as 'large and strong, comprised of a granary in front and treadmill in rear.' (Being a former barracks.)

1827: In the Morrisset Report is the following: 'The Mill is fitted up with machinery for grinding wheat as well as canes, and has been principally employed as a Grist Mill. It is altogether constructed of wood etc.'

1832: The Rollands Plains Agricultural and Sugar Establishments closed.

At the Port Macquarie Historical Society's Museum are two Millstones. These stones were donated to the Society by Miss Ena Maud Wilson and her sister Marjorie Wilson. These Millstones were originally owned by their Grandfather Thomas George Wilson, he in turn

obtained them from Major Innes' property 'Lake Innes'. The two stones were installed in the Windmill on Windmill Hill in Port Macquarie. They were in use to grind grain into flour for the residents and convicts. George Halliday was the first Miller in the district. Major Innes had him brought out from England to do the job of Miller. Thomas George Wilson was a man of some substance and he leased Lake Innes for a time, also Clifton where he grew grapes and produced wine, and he purchased property at Rollands Plains, which he called 'Willesbro'. He also had a son who was the Rector of St. Thomas' Church from 1882-1892.

The two Millstones were shifted to his property at Rollands Plains where they remained for many years. This property passed to his son and later to his grandson who then left it to his children. Two of the family were Miss Ena Maud Wilson and Marjorie Wilson and they had the two Millstones shifted from Rollands Plains to their property in Owen Street, Port Macquarie, where they remained for many years in the landscaping of their garden. They were then given to the Museum in 1985 by Miss Wilson, where they were freely transported, by Blair and Thurling, Carriers.

It was in the 1840's that Major Innes' Mill gradually became useless owing to the financial depression of the Colony.

In July 1897 a fierce gale hit Port Macquarie severely damaging St. Thomas' Church and it appears that the Windmill was already a ruin by this date.

The Port Macquarie News of 6 January 1900 reported the following:

*AN OLD RELIC: On Tuesday last, what was known by Port natives near and far as the old Windmill was burnt to ashes. The work of setting it afire was said to have been done by some mischievous boys, but whether that is so or not, it is a great pity that it has been destroyed. Apart from being a relic of bygone days, the old piece of machinery was of more than passing interest on account of the intricate and clever workmanship displayed. The old Windmill was erected in the early days of Port Macquarie but for the past twenty years at least it has been a ruin, which the Port Macquarie people were fond of visiting and showing to visitors. The timber used in it showed very little sign of decay, considering the time and the weather to which it had been exposed. Now the old historic landmark has gone, and we know that there are many who regret its disappearance.*

Thomas Dick in his 'Fragments of history articles' he wrote in 1921 for the centenary year of Port Macquarie records: 'Probably none of the many buildings that Major Innes erected served a more useful purpose than the old Windmill, or was a more prominent and picturesque landmark for many years.'

*Like St. Thomas' Church it stood on an eminence, and was visible from a great distance at sea. Many passengers along the coast have remarked on the fact that they knew their exact location when the Windmill, Gaol and Church hove in sight.*

*Visitors to Port Macquarie in early days who had a talent for painting or sketching evidently found the mill a fascinating subject, judging by the*

*number of paintings and sketches of it still to be found in different parts of the country.*

*I was fortunate enough to trace to Wanganui River, New Zealand, a very fine picture showing the mill in the foreground, and a distant view of the bar and harbour entrance. I secured a copy of this, and along with others of like nature, it helps to form a very interesting pictorial history of Port Macquarie [not found at this time]. The picture under notice has a tragic history.*

*In the thirties Mr. G..... and his wife paid a visit to Port Macquarie and the first named put in some good work with his brush during the holiday. They took the picture to New Zealand, from whence they came. Later during the Maori wars, the artist and his wife and two of their daughters were massacred one night in their homestead. A third daughter was badly wounded and left for dead, but afterwards recovered. This lady still retains possession of the picture, which was painted at a point on the cliffs about 200 yards south-east of the mill. Right in the foreground is a pond at which a girl is watering a number of cows, and with her is a fine looking dog. The picture shows that the structure as of an altogether different style of architecture to that prevailing for such buildings in Sydney at the period mentioned.*

*The Miller in those days had to have a thorough knowledge of the method of cutting or facing the millstones for grinding.*

Note of Interest - Before 1846 and before the Port Macquarie Race Course was opened, horse races had been held on the headland between Windmill Hill and the Flagstaff.

Copy of a letter written by Major Innes to the Colonial Secretary.

*Sydney 9<sup>th</sup> November 1831*

*Sir,*

*I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept. authorising me to take possession of the Five Acres of land therein alluded to, for the purpose of erecting a Windmill at Port Macquarie, and I beg to returning ...to His Excellency for it:- I however regret to add that on examining the Chart at the Surveyors General's Office, I find a mistake has been made in the description so as to give me a piece of land adjoining the one I was desirous of obtaining.*

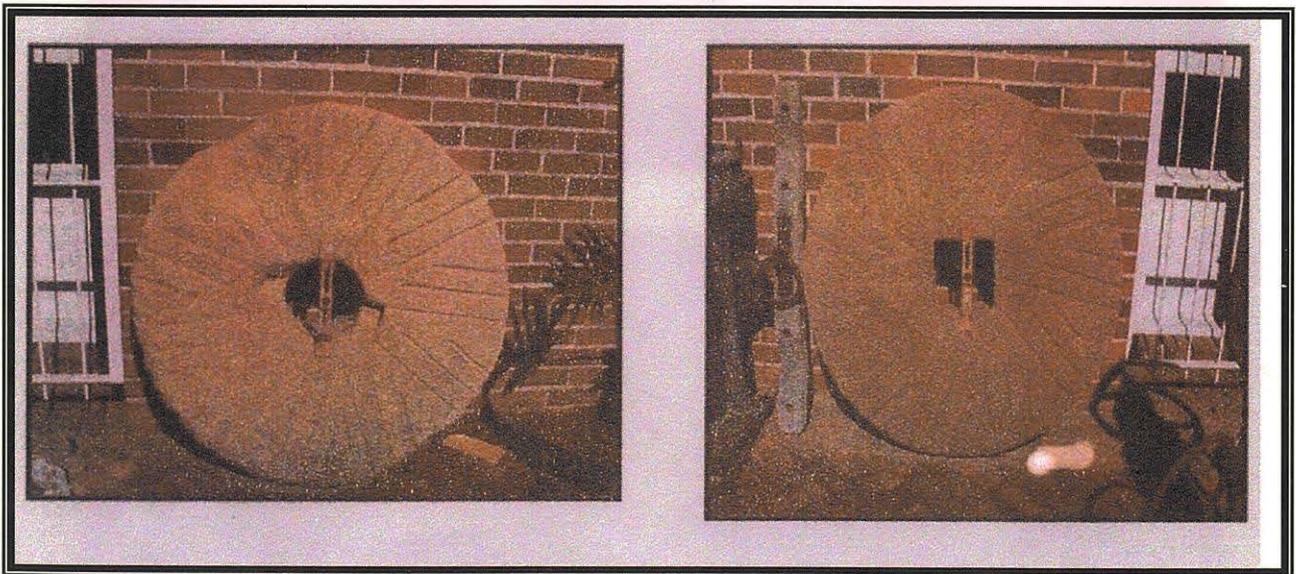
*May I request therefore that you will solicit His Excellency the Governor to permit me to take possession of that described on the Coast in the sketch in the Margin.*

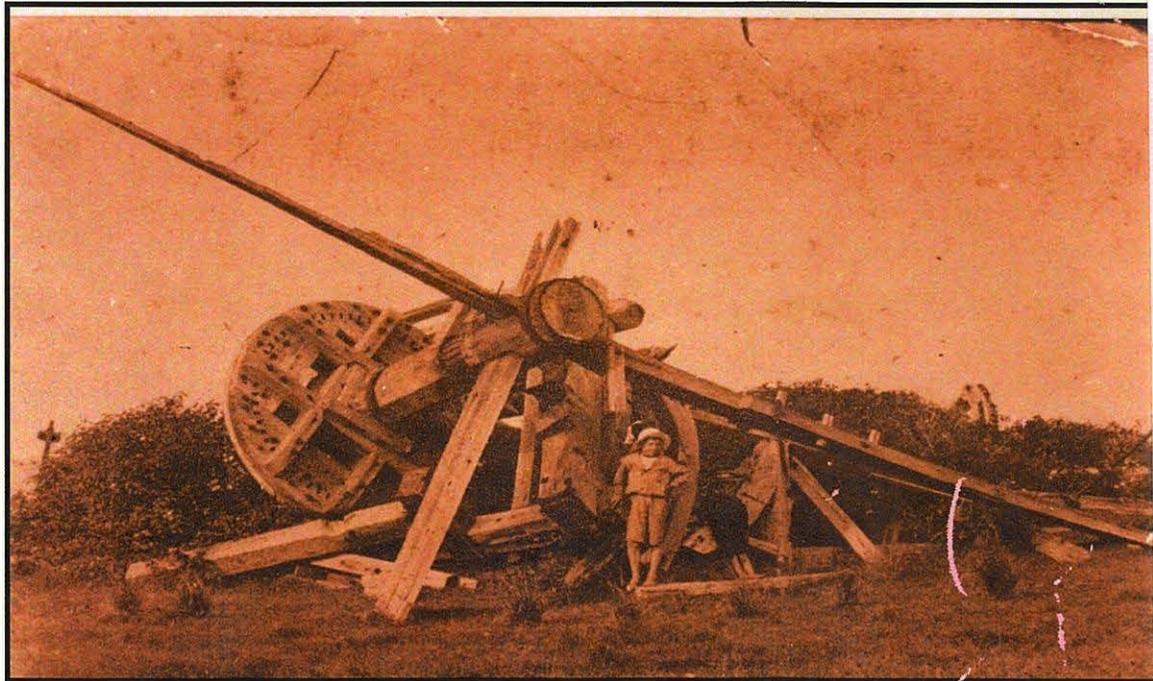
*I have the honour to be*

*Sir*

*Your obedient Servant*

*Archd. C. Innes*





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# Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc

ACN 21 094 844 196

## Chronicle

Vol. 8 No 2

November 2004

ISSN 1328 4304



*After Lake Innes*

*Annabella Boswell and her Gown*

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Chronicle



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**22 Clarence Street  
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# **After Lake Innes**

**Annabella Boswell and her Gown**

Designed and published by PMHS members, using  
the resources provided by the Howell Research Centre  
within the Port Macquarie Historical Society's Museum.

Copies of the photographs featured in this publication  
are available on request

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1994-1995

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# After Lake Innes

Annabella Howell and her team

Project was completed with assistance from the following people  
The project was completed by the following people  
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# AFTER LAKE INNES

## ANNABELLA BOSWELL AND HER GOWN

One of the most precious artefacts in the Port Macquarie Museum is the black satin brocade gown that belonged to Annabella Boswell. This very elegant Victorian gown, lavishly trimmed with lace, and with a small bustle at the back, probably dates from the 1880s to 1890s before the bustle disappeared from fashion. Annabella, with her tall stature would have worn it with distinction. It must have been a “*special occasion*” dress, preserved as it was with Annabella’s diaries, sketches, letters and the Boswell papers. She never wore anything so fine in Australia – this was a frock for the mistress of her husband’s estate in Scotland.

The story of how the Historical Society obtained the gown, along with the precious diaries and other items, is interesting in itself. A young architect, Richard Radcliffe of Newcastle heard about the Innes House ruins and determined to visit them. In 1956 he first visited them, contacting our Society member, Ron Howell who lived in the area. Ron helped “with brushhook clearing strokes” around the perimeter of the Innes House ruins, for Richard to take his measurements. It was not an easy task as most of the ruins lay hidden beneath a thick growth of lantana and Mysore thorn. The resulting plans and drawings Richard made, appear in both the Angus and Robertson edition and in our recent publication of the diaries of Annabella Boswell, written when she lived there in the 1840s.

On a later study tour of the United Kingdom, Richard Radcliffe visited the home of the Boswells in Scotland and negotiated to buy, on behalf of the Society, a trunk that the family called “The Australia Box.” This box had been handed down in the family from Annabella. It contained original manuscripts of the diaries, sketches by Annabella, letters by both Annabella and other family members, family documents, and of course, the beautiful Victorian gown.

A widow of one of Annabella’s descendants was living in straitened circumstances in a converted stable on the family estate. She offered to sell the box for four hundred English pounds, still a great bargain.

Entry number 2463 in the Artefacts Register reads: “*The Australia Box, purchased from Mrs. Boswell, (Scotland) by the Society*” The date is 5.2.1973, and there follows a detailed list of the contents.

After reading “Annabella of Lake Innes”, I felt a great desire to find out what she did after leaving Port Macquarie. She kept diaries while remaining in Australia but not regularly in Scotland. Many of the later diaries have been transcribed and typed out by members of the Society, for which I was grateful, as her old fashioned script is extremely difficult to read. Later letters and journals from Scotland remain as Annabella wrote them. I found these writings just as fascinating as the Lake Innes ones.



**Annabella’s Gown**

# AFTER LAKE INNES

## ANNABELLA BOSWELL AND HER GOWN

In 1848 Annabella, along with her mother and sister, left Lake Innes to visit other relations. Annabella only returned once afterwards for her cousin's wedding. The sisters went to stay with an aunt near Liverpool and their mother visited her own sister at Singleton. In 1850 Annabella went to live on this property called St Clair with her Aunt Anna while her husband was mostly away working on another property. Her aunt had a family of six boys, including a baby and also a toddler daughter. The three elder boys went off to the Kings School in Parramatta, and Annabella tutored the two younger boys and helped her aunt. She wrote that she took great pleasure in teaching the boys and her days were full from early morning to late at night. In the evening they sewed and mended. An old silk dress became two aprons. Nothing was wasted in those days. Hand sewing took up a lot of their time and she often wished that someone would invent a sewing machine. She added at a later date that she did not see one until 1854 and did not possess one until twelve years later.

Stone fruit grew in abundance before the scourge of the fruit fly and the women spent much time engaged in jam making and preserving the bountiful crop of peaches and nectarines. Another occupation was winding silk from silk worms. An aboriginal woman was employed to pick leaves for the insects and to keep clean the hut where they were kept.

Many years later in Scotland Annabella wrote and published a little booklet called "*Recollections of Some Australian Blacks.*" This consisted of observations of the natives near Bathurst remembered from her childhood days there. She described in detail how they made their possum skin rugs and built their shelters. Here she reveals the eye for detail and the excellent memory which made her a superb diarist. She admired the aborigines for their generosity and friendliness and wrote "*they could not be expected to change all their habits at once, why, therefore should people be despised who could not do so*"

It was only natural that she should have the Victorian attitude of belonging to a superior race. Apparently there were sixteen natives living on the St Clair property, but there is no mention of them until Christmas Day, when we are told the cook

made them a large plain pudding and gave them "*a grand dinner of beef, also some Lochinvar wine. Later the stockman gave them spirits and Billy became outrageous, and they did not have a corroboree.*"

A later diary recorded a memory of a native canoe being made at Cati Creek. It consisted of an oblong sheet of bark, the ends drawn together with a sharp pointed stick and fastened with strong vine. She also wrote about an aboriginal boy called Midgee Brown who came from new England and accompanied Major Innes "*on many long and weary journeys in the far bush*" Her uncle was much attached to him, and took him to Sydney on one occasion, but he found civilization not to his liking and ran away.



In these later diaries are some shrewd comments on events of the time, revealing how Annabella matured from the carefree young girl of the Lake Innes days to a thoughtful young woman. In 1849 she wrote about a great protest meeting at Circular Quay on the arrival of a ship with 212 convicts on board. A deputation approached the Governor, Sir Charles Fitzroy, to send back "*its unwelcome freight.*" She added that of course he could not do so, but "*It is terrible to think that our fair land may be made again a penal settlement*" On the same page she noted that migrant ships had recently arrived with 1500 souls.

Visiting the town of Singleton she heard every voice speaking "*of gold, gold and the diggings*" She rejoiced that "*thousands of people will flood to our shores costing us nothing.....they will come free.*"

# AFTER LAKE INNES

## ANNABELLA BOSWELL AND HER GOWN

Those exciting days of the gold discoveries rated several mentions in her diaries. After the two years at St. Clair, Annabella, her mother and sister, took a house in Parramatta. Gold fever was at its height. She wrote *"Our house faced the High Road from Sydney to Bathurst, and the Turon and Sofala diggings, we saw a daily stream of passers by, while we could not get a creature to be of any use to us in unpacking and arranging our furniture"* The sisters managed to unroll the carpet, but trying to put the beds together *"drove us distracted."* They anxiously awaited the arrival of a migrant ship in the hope that they might get some help.

On a visit to Melbourne in 1855, the gold fields were still at the height of production. *"Sometimes we walked to the high road to Melbourne from the diggings to see the Cobbs coach pass. It brought down generally a large amount of gold, and had an armed escort. The driver was seated on a high box seat, six in hand; a man in uniform beside him blowing a horn, the horses going at full speed made a gay and exciting spectacle as they sped past"*

An exciting experience in Melbourne was her attendance at a Regal ball in honour of the Queen's Birthday. It was at the new Government House in Toorak. *"I had never seen such handsome rooms, or so large an assemblage of beautifully dressed people. The rooms were brilliantly lighted by wax candles in Chandeliers: and brackets on the walls, the effect was quite dazzling."* Unfortunately disaster followed when the windows were opened because of the suffocating heat. The candles melted and dripped on expensive gowns and uniforms. What's more, the champagne ran out at supper time!

In January 1850, Annabella used postage stamps for the first time. This was much appreciated as she and her family were great letter writers. Previously, one paid for a letter on receipt.

A momentous occasion for Annabella and her cousin Dido, (Eliza Innes) was their first train ride along the first track built in Australia. She does not name their destination, but it was a short return journey from Sydney. Dido *"took fright at the sight of the engine and said she'd rather not go"* However, their uncle persuaded the two reluctant travellers, and they endured, rather than

enjoyed the return trip. Annabella breathed a sigh of relief when it was over, remarking she felt *"rather seasick."*

In Sydney in the 1850s there were still public hangings. Annabella recorded one taking place with 700 people present, many of them women and children.

A great tragedy of 1857 was the sinking of the *"Dunbar"* when the Captain mistook the Gap for the entrance to Sydney Harbour. Annabella vividly recorded the event. *"Many dead and sandy mutilated bodies were seen at "the Gap" floating in the surface being dashed pitilessly against the rugged cliffs then swept from the sight of the horrified spectators who were powerless to aid."*

The depression of the forties and the withdrawal of convict labour led to the collapse of Major Innes's business enterprises. He obtained a position as Gold Commissioner on the Peel River. Annabella recorded that it was not to his liking and he moved to Newcastle as Police Commissioner. There his wife joined him at the Barracks. The Lake Innes estate was put up for sale, even advertised in London, to no avail. The Major had a bad fall, and Annabella suggested that this helped to cause his declining health and affected his personality so that he could not brook the slightest opposition. He insisted that Annabella's family give up their cottage and join his household in Newcastle. So they went, not altogether willingly, it seems.

In Newcastle Annabella became better acquainted with Patrick Boswell. She had met him before in Parramatta, as he was a friend of her sister's husband and was engaged in station work in the same area of the Lachlan River. Her early impressions of him are far from flattering. *"Mr. Boswell came over for tea and as usual startled the whole assembly with his extraordinary greetings....He certainly is queer."* She also mentions *"his clumsy gallantry"*

Boswell disliked the bush and obtained a position in the bank in Newcastle, in twelve months progressing to Manager. He became very friendly with the Major and Mrs. Innes, hence Annabella got to know him better and must have changed her opinion of him. Nothing is written of

# AFTER LAKE INNES

## ANNABELLA BOSWELL AND HER GOWN

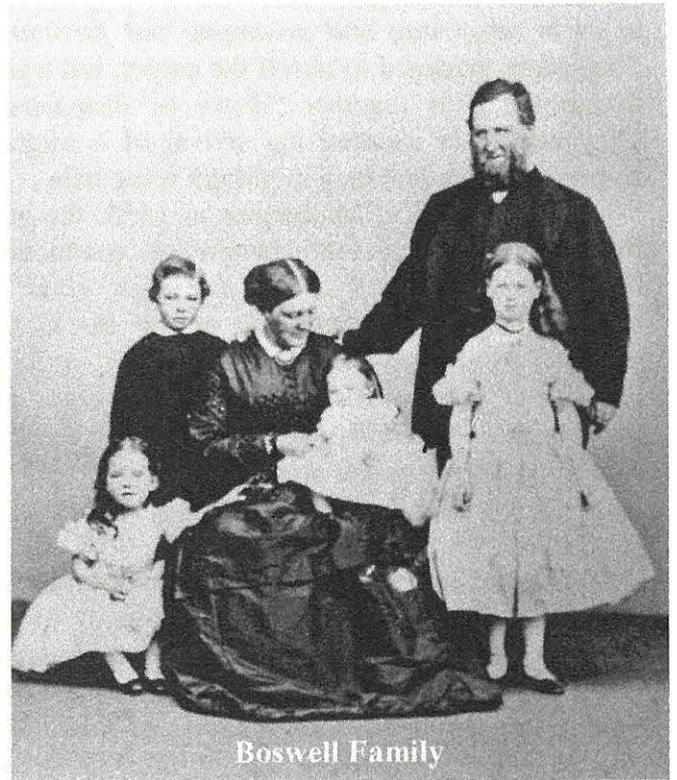
their courtship, such things were private in Victorian times.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June 1856, Annabella Innes and Patrick Boswell were wed, in “*the little church on the hill*”, presumedly in Newcastle where the cathedral is now. Reverend Thomas O’Reilly came from Port Macquarie to conduct the ceremony, assisted by the incumbent, Canon Wilton. Annabella had five bridesmaids and they all walked to the church. There was a large number of people present including her sister with her husband and little boy, who had travelled from their property on the Lachlan River. Her Uncle, she wrote, really enjoyed the occasion and was Master of Ceremonies at the “*grand luncheon*” that followed. Afterwards the couple travelled to Maitland for a short honeymoon, “*a carriage and pair having been brought from there,*” as there wasn’t a carriage of any kind in Newcastle.

Annabella settled down happily in her new home in Watt Street, where the family remained for nine years. She had thought in the past it rather infra dig to work in a bank, but changed her ideas, though she wrote that she couldn’t understand how anyone would prefer it to station life. Shortly after her marriage her uncle was too ill to entertain officers on a visiting French ship, so she undertook her first dinner party. She was worried because neither she nor Patrick spoke French, but friends helped them out and the musical items were enjoyed by all. “*I was so happy when telling dear Uncle about it the next day....It was the last time I ever saw him.*” After his death her aunt and Dido returned to “*their dear old home at Lake Innes*” Then her aunt died the following year.

In May 1857, Annabella’s first child was born and baptized Jane Douglas after Patrick Boswell’s mother. Annabella wanted to call her after her own “*dear Mamma*” but bowed to the wishes of her husband. At Newcastle she had three more children, a boy and two daughters. News from Scotland of property inherited by Patrick caused him to apply for twelve months leave from the bank and the whole family, accompanied by Annabella’s mother, a nanny and another servant girl, embarked on the long sea trip to England. It was 91 days in duration. Annabella, ever adaptable and interested in all around her, found it “*not a day*

*too long*’. The family had two large cabins, the only ones with shower baths, which Annabella found a great comfort. The food, she wrote was good and abundant. Her youngest child, a baby took up much of her time, but Nanny was there to help. She wrote letters with a toy box balanced on her knee, acting as a table.



On arrival in London they took comfortable lodgings and set out to see the sights. Firstly there was shopping to be done. “*I have now got a crinoline of steel, two silk dresses, a black lace shawl and a thing called a bonnet and am pronounced fit to be seen.*”

Among the places she visited were the galleries, museums, the Crystal Palace, the opera, which delighted her and Hyde Park which she found “*indescribably beautiful*” She wrote “*the vastness of London did astonish me.*”

After a hectic two weeks they were off to Scotland. Patrick reserved “*a saloon carriage*” to travel to Ayr where they were to stay with his mother and sister. Here Annabella’s baby was christened Margaret Christian and there was a christening cake with “*a sugar cradle on it which delighted the children.*”

# AFTER LAKE INNES

## ANNABELLA BOSWELL AND HER GOWN

They moved to Garallan, the property Patrick inherited, which was to be their future home. Annabella was delighted with a present from her husband “*a pretty basket carriage and an iron grey pony which I was to drive.*” She did not keep a regular journal in her new home, but there are letters and accounts of special occasions. Patrick resigned his bank position so they never went back to Australia. Annabella found many congenial neighbours and they had many invitations to dine.

From the days of her youth Annabella loved flowers and gardens. Wherever she went, if possible she helped with the gardening. She wrote a special account of her garden in Scotland. Garallan had been an old dairy farm and there was little in the way of a proper garden. Annabella was not dismayed, in fact she was delighted to be able to plan a large garden. The first winter upset her somewhat with everything looking so dead. As the days grew longer, she kept breaking off twigs to see if they were still alive. She wanted lots of flowers and had some early failures. Writing about the great contrast with her experiences at Lake Innes when they first moved “*to a lovely spot nearer the sea, warmer and almost tropical....gardening there was a system of pruning not forcing, so I was not prepared for what I was so lightly undertaking in this cold uncertain*

*climate*” Her husband encouraged her efforts and her garden became her hobby and her passion.

In 1895 Annabella and some members of her family spent many months abroad in Italy. Still observant and alert, she kept a journal of her impressions, delighting in the art and architecture. In 1897, accompanied by her two younger daughters she was in France, enjoying a holiday in the south near Avignon. She writes about the Roman relics and the old papal palace in that area. Her daughters spent many days bicycling around to see the sights. After thirty years away, Australia was still in her mind – she wrote in the south of France of “*a thunderstorm which I quite enjoyed as it reminded me of Port McQuarie (sic) as the whole place does – both in soils, climate and vegetation – seas and skies*”

The diaries and letters of Annabella Boswell reveal a woman who was an intelligent observer with an optimistic and adaptable disposition and a wry sense of humour. She always considered herself an Australian and remembered her early years there with affection. She died in 1916 in her ninetieth year.

Extractions from Annabella Diaries edited by Connie Jones.



Auchinleck House Ayrshire







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# CHRONICLE

Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.  
Volume 8 No.1 April, 2004, ISSN: 1328-4304

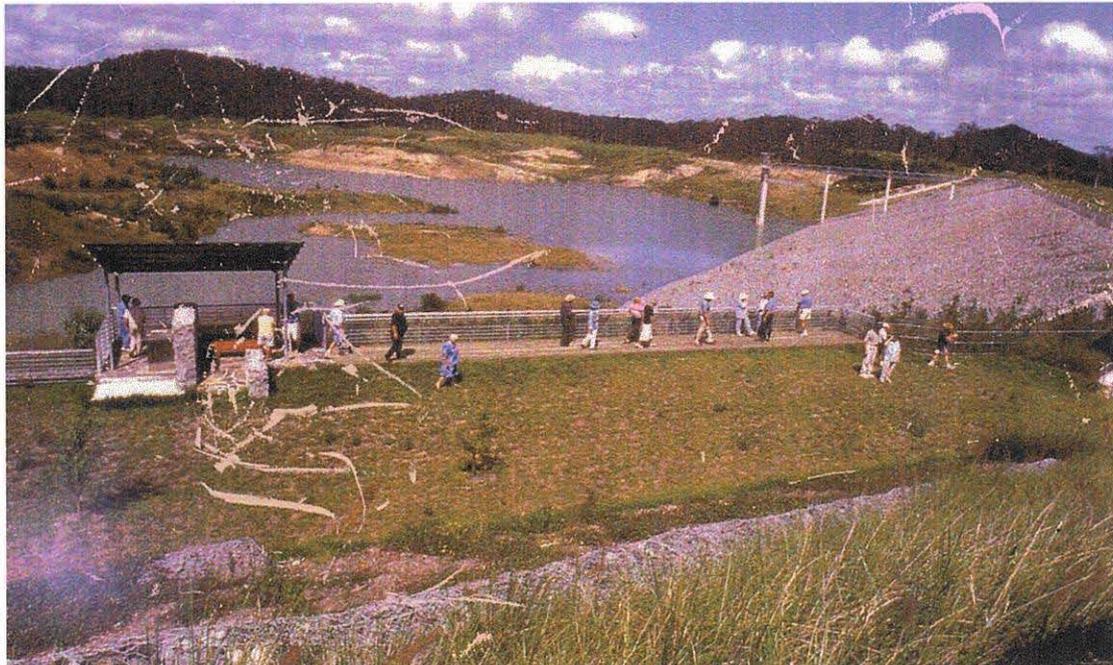
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WELL

## FRESHWATER - FROM WELLS TO WATER MANAGEMENT

Author: Mr. Robert Scott BE (Civil)hons      Water Supply Operations Engineer  
Hastings Council



OUR FUTURE

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## **THE HISTORY OF THE HASTINGS DISTRICT**

### **WATER SUPPLY SCHEME**

# Fresh Water From Wells To Water Management

**Author:**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of time, water and food have remained as the essential ingredients for all life on this planet. Throughout the history of mankind, water has played a key pivotal role in the development and growth of families, tribal groups and communities. Water was the reason for many disputes and countless battles. Yet today it is often taken for granted and in many areas the true value of water is not realised.

Since European settlement of Australia the natural water systems within Australia have undergone massive environmental change within a relatively short timeframe. Dams have transformed raging rivers into trickling streams. Technological advances have seen water pumped further, sprayed higher and generally consumed faster as the years pass by.

In the “*country of plenty*” the finite limit of our water resources is only now becoming apparent. In order to ensure a sustainable future, a quantum shift in the management and consumption of water will be required to ensure that current and future generations will endure the same freedom and prosperity as those generations of the past.

This paper will trace the development of water supplies in the Hastings Region, from the wells of the first settlers to the existing water supply system and into the future.

# Fresh Water From Wells To Water Management

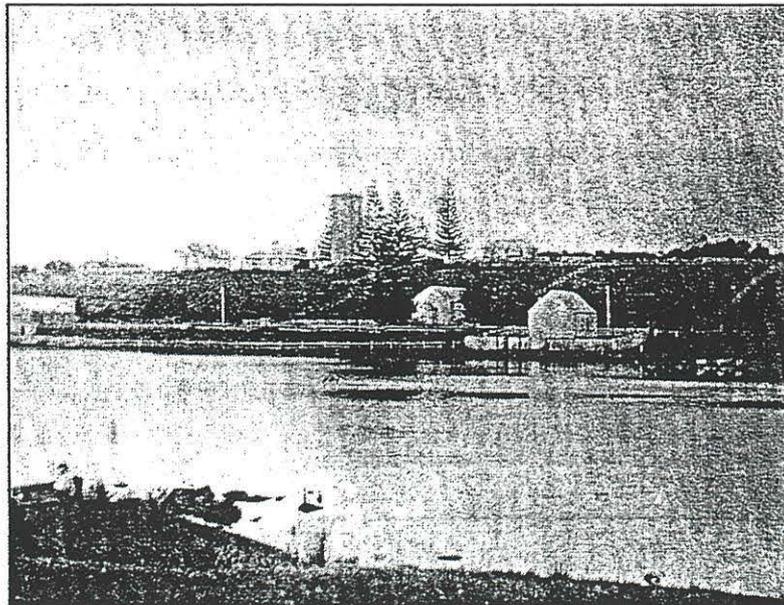


Figure 1 – View Across Kooloonbung Creek Looking East (The Port Macquarie CBD Occupies Much Of This Land Today Courtesy Of Reclamation)

## 2.0 THE PAST

### 2.1 *The Settlement of Port Macquarie – “Securing Fresh Water Supplies”*

Port Macquarie originated as a penal colony settlement in 1821 and was open to free settlement in 1830. Life during the pioneering early settlement days of Australia was undoubtedly harsh and water supplies certainly did not make this any easier. The original settlers relied on fresh water supplies drawn from the nearby creeks, now known as Wrights and Kooloonbung Creeks, as well as other watercourses near the Town Beach Caravan Park and Oxley Beach (which have since been diverted, piped and are no longer visible).

Water was also obtained from an underground stream that runs along the east side of Clarence Street and was believed to have been conveyed through the settlement by a convict constructed barrel drain. Following pollution of this water source, efforts to secure water supplies moved further south, east and also underground.

### 2.2 *The Search For More Water – “Developing Wells”*

As development of the colony proceeded, so did the construction of many buildings and wells for the supply of fresh water. The streams were no longer capable of coping with the increased demand and polluted runoff. Countless wells were constructed on the area of Government Hill, east towards what is now known as Windmill Hill, and also on the reclaimed marshland now occupied by the Port Macquarie CBD (Anderson, 1985). The quality of water was particularly good. However, with some of the wells being quite deep, they presented safety hazards.

Originally these wells were unlined shafts, however, with construction advances many became lined with either timber or clay bricks. Despite their construction over 100 years ago many of the wells are still in existence today either preserved within existing development or filled in and covered over by uncontrolled development in the 1900's.

Originally hand operated windlasses or a bucket were used to extract water from wells. Later hand operated mechanical pumps were utilised and eventually rotary pumps were used. Windmills did not tend to be used in

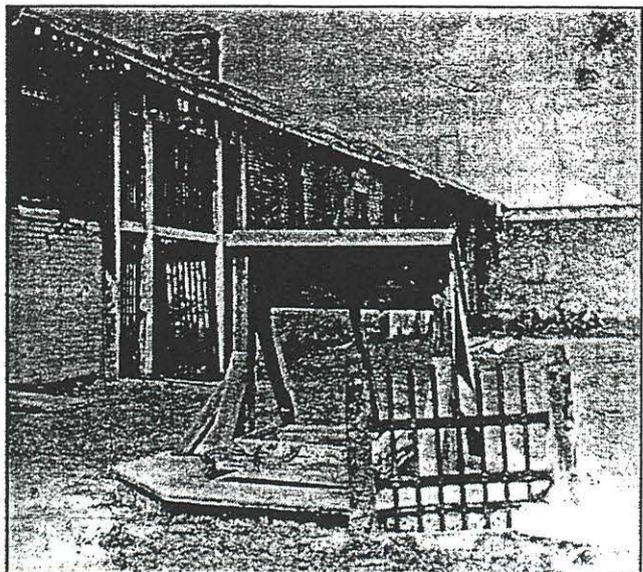


Figure 2 – Water Supply Well Inside Old Gaol  
(still in existence today)

Port Macquarie despite average wind velocities in excess of 4m/s for most of the year (Hastings Council, 2003).

Little did the early pioneers realise, wells (or bores) would remain a fundamental source of water for near a century. During the early 1900's rainwater tanks were used to supplement supplies drawn from the existing wells and creeks. During this time water borne diseases, such as dysentery, were common amongst Port Macquarie residents due to the poor sanitation and contamination of the water supplies.

Wrigglers, or mosquito larvae, consistently plagued household water tanks within Port Macquarie for many years. Often a cup of kerosene was added to the water tank to control mosquito breeding. One milkman in particular was known for his wriggler spiced milk and he was suspected of pulling up at a public hall or church and boosting the contents of his milk cans with unknown quantities of water from the rainwater tanks (Uptin, 1996).

## 2.3 The Hastings Water Supply Scheme – “A Long Time In Development”

### 2.3.1 Dam Water! – “The Hastings First Dam”

As the water needs of the colony grew, so did the means of collecting water, hence the first **dam** in the region was completed. Convicts constructed the original weir, or earth causeway over Kooloonbung Creek upon which the original timber bridge had been erected. This causeway consisted of sandstone (that had been brought as ballast by sailing ships) overlying a natural serpentine rock formation and was used to keep the water above it fresh, hence provide an additional water supply

In a letter to the editor of the Port Macquarie News (Thursday, 15 November 1951), Charles Dick recalled that the original weir across the Kooloonbung was built by a convict chain gang prior to 1843. The design did not include a spillway for release of stormwater flow and the imprisoned stormwater slowly filled the dam to full capacity. In 1848 the dam was washed away on the western side at the weakest point following overtopping during a storm event. A considerable amount of

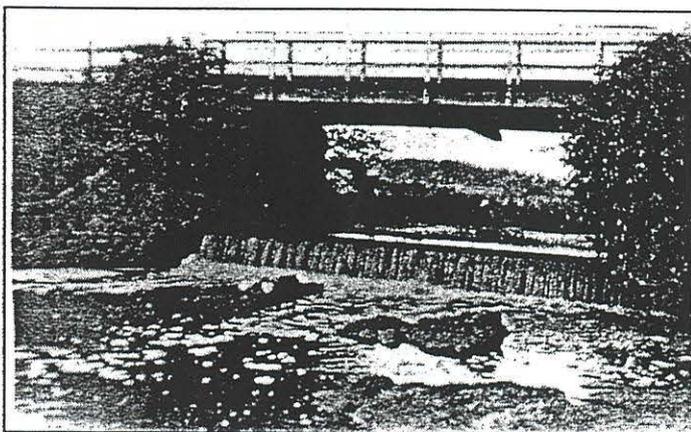


Figure 3 – The Kooloonbung Weir Before Removal In 1979

time elapsed until repairs were undertaken by the Sydney Public Works Council (as the convict system had been abolished within this time).

The stonework of the new weir carried the weight of a new bridge to replace the structure that had been washed away. The finest quality French cement was used in the mortar to bind the stonework and ensure structural strength of the weir.

This was known as the first cement to be used for construction work in Port Macquarie (Dick, 1951). This weir was removed in 1979, restoring natural tidal flow conditions to Kooloonbung Creek.

### **2.3.2 Water Costs – “Buying Water & Water Related Sickness”**

Despite water being stored in tanks and wells people frequently had to buy water from one of the many water carters in town. Essential services such as the hospital were constantly short of water.

Mayor Ryan was one of the very few people who made a fortune in the early days of Port Macquarie's development. It is claimed that a sizeable amount of Mayor Ryan's fortune was made through his pharmacy, which sold medicine to residents who had become sick from drinking polluted water supplies from wells in west Port Macquarie (Uptin, 1996).

### **2.3.3 The Search For More Water – “Port Macquarie/Wauchope - The Parochial Conflict”**

The animosity that typified the dislike and mistrust between up river people (Wauchope) and the seaside (Port Macquarie) people has been responsible for a significant number of complications in the forward planning and development of water supplies within the Hastings Region. Initially, Wauchope refused a joint river water supply scheme because it considered the amount it was to pay was out of proportion to how much Port Macquarie was expected to pay, hence the Hastings Shire Council decided to proceed with a scheme of their own, incorporating the **Blue Creek Dam** concept.

### **2.3.4 Hastings First Reticulated Town Water Supply – “Wauchope Wins The Water Race With Blue Creek”**

A ballot conducted in 1932 by the Hastings Shire Council indicated that 103 voters said no and 49 said yes when the Shire sought to proceed with a 6,000-pound loan to build the scheme at Blue Creek (Uptin, 1996). Nevertheless the Hastings Shire proceeded to develop the Blue Creek Scheme.

Blue Creek Dam was originally proposed by the late Allan Bain, who failed to live to see its completion in 1939. The concept of the Blue Creek Dam Scheme, as expected, resulted in significant public debate prior to its adoption. It was finally chosen as the preferred option on the basis that gravity feeding water into Wauchope would be much cheaper than pumping from the river at Koree Island. The total cost of Blue Creek Scheme was £23,000 pounds. With a capacity of around 14.1 million gallons or 78,800 cubic feet (62ML), Blue Creek Dam supplied the township of Wauchope via an 8” (200mm) diameter asbestos cement pipeline.

Blue Creek Dam was opened by the late Mr L. O. Martin, member for Oxley and Minister for Justice on Saturday, 24 June 1939. The original design of the dam failed to accurately project the growth of Wauchope and by the early 1940's it was apparent that an auxiliary pumping station (river inlet) would be required to allow water to be extracted from the Hastings River at Koree Island, during high demand periods.

Following ongoing concerns about the quality and quantity of supply from Blue Creek Dam, the Hastings Shire Council constructed a pumping station at Koree Island in 1944. This pumping

station included duplicate submersible pumps and was located upstream of the now existing inlets. Two corrugated iron reservoirs were constructed on the site of the present day quarry at Rosewood Road. An 8" (200mm) diameter asbestos cement pipeline was laid into the township of Wauchope (the last section of this original pipeline has been replaced in 2002).

Blue Creek Dam is a concrete arch dam with a height of 19m (63'4"), a crest link of 54m (180') and a total storage capacity of 62ML. Despite the consistently poor quality of water from the Blue Creek Dam, it remained in service until the early 1980's.

After use of Blue Creek declined in the 1970's, the dam remained as an emergency storage up until 1982, when in order to prevent its continual misuse by local water operators, the Chief Engineer has been claimed to have made "unrepairable" modifications to the outlet pipe with a sledgehammer. Blue Creek Dam is now inspected and maintained as a disused supply reservoir.

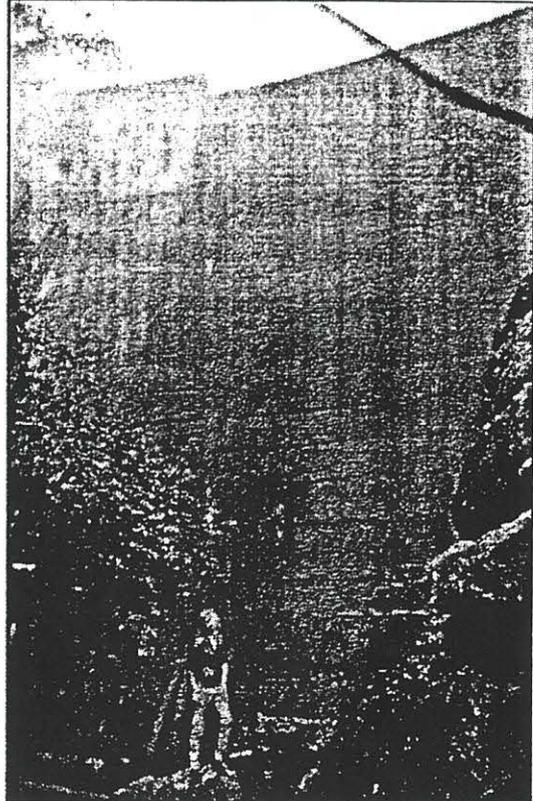


Figure 4 – Blue Creek Dam Concrete Arch Wall

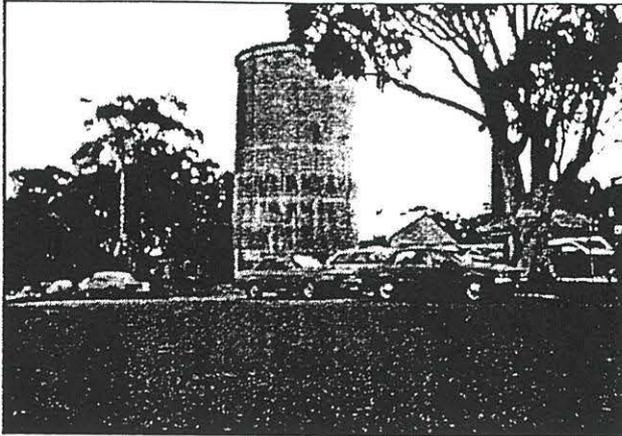
### 2.3.5 Town Water In Port Macquarie – "A Scheme Concept In Development"

The Port Macquarie water supply scheme project was initiated in 1944 with two possibilities of supply being identified in a report by the Department of Public Works. A supply from Harty's Creek, south of Port Macquarie was deemed too expensive. This report favoured supply from the Hastings River, as it was considered reasonably priced at that time. The sand beds at west Port Macquarie were not initially regarded as a potential source of water supplies by the Department of Public Works.

In late 1944, Council suggested the possibility of unlimited supply from the sand beds and despite advice from the Minister of the doubt over the sand beds, the Council were adamant that the sand beds would prove a suitable supply source. In 1945 Council representatives met with and convinced the Department of Public Works to adopt the sand beds as the future water source. This decision followed favourable reports from government geologists and local experience from farmers who had used this source for irrigation. (Port Macquarie News, 1952). The impact this decision had on water supply to Port Macquarie would not be known for over a decade.

In 1945 the concept of extracting water from the sand bed southwest of the residential area was developed. Although this was located close to the area used for night soil disposal, there were no initial concerns over potential contamination of the groundwater. An unofficial figure was expended

over the following years, developing the scheme to an advanced stage including rising mains and reservoirs.



**Figure 5 – One Of The First Reservoirs At Morton Street Port Macquarie (currently disused & likely to be used for effluent reclamation in 2004)**

During 1951 a large supply of steel spun pipes were received and other equipment such as motors for the pumping plant had already been received. Construction of two reservoirs neared completion and tenders were being called for the spray basin (Port News, 1952). Upon completion, these reservoirs were filled with water pumped from nearby from wells until final completion of the first scheme.

In January 1952, the Council instituted emergency arrangements in order to meet the demand of Port Macquarie

during the summer months. Water was pumped from wells and carted at cost to supply many properties within the Municipality. By December 1952, doubts over the suitability of the sand beds as a future supply to Port Macquarie were discussed in an editorial (Port News - 11 December 1952).

In a letter to the Mayor from the Minister for Public Works in December 1952, it was confirmed that the sand bed supply source tests had indicated that it would not be sufficient to supply the current needs of the town.

The Port Macquarie News 7 May 1953 categorised the setback on the sand bed schemes as *“the greatest setback in modern times for Port Macquarie”*.

Following advice from the Minister for Public Works and Services regarding the potential impact on ground water levels from removal of the weir across the Kooloonbung and the failure of test results to verify the viability of the sand bed source, Council and the Public Works Department reached a stale-mate in development of the scheme that delayed the delivery of water to Port Macquarie residents until 1957.

In addition to the apparent conflict between the Hastings Shire Council and Port Macquarie Municipal Council, some sceptics believed that the Coffs Harbour based Public Works Department played a pivotal role in the shortcomings of the early development of the water supply scheme within Port Macquarie.

In a letter to the editor of the Port Macquarie News, Cecil Roberts claimed to have pumped from the sand beds at a rate of 10-12,000 gallons per hour for agricultural irrigation. Despite the Department of Public Works tests, Mr Roberts found it difficult to believe that the supply would be short of Port Macquarie’s requirements. In the opinion of Mr Roberts, the Council was making a grave mistake in pursuing development of the Hastings River supply source

### **2.3.6 *Town Water On In Port Macquarie At Last – “Port Macquarie’s First Reticulated Water Supply System”***

At Council’s meeting of 6 May 1953, the Council resolved to withdraw from the proposed sand bed supply scheme and turn to the Hastings River as a source of water for Port Macquarie. Despite the Hastings Shire’s previous refusal to combine in a single scheme from the river, Council resolved to approach the Shire again requesting their participation in a combined scheme.

Having taken offence to the branding of the Blue Creek Scheme as a “wildcat” by the Mayor of the Port Macquarie Municipality and with their existing water supply scheme providing all of Wauchope’s needs (claimed to be at the lowest cost), the Hastings Shire again declined to join in a combined scheme. The Shire also sighted petty squabbling over repayments, asset duplication/replacement and increased pumping costs as reasons for declining to participate in a combine scheme at this time.

In 1955, Port Macquarie was forced to go to the Hastings River alone in order to secure its own water supply. The Old Koree Island pumping station (now known as Koree #1) and the Rosewood Road Balance tank were constructed in 1955, with a capacity of 8.6 gallons per second (38 L/s) and 250,000 gallons (1.1ML) respectively. A 12” (300mm) diameter cast iron main, which had been claimed to be undersized at the time, was laid from the balance tank to Port Macquarie and a 1,201,200 gallon (2.73ML) service reservoir was constructed at O’Briens Road. This system delivered the first water into Port Macquarie in 1957, however the under sizing of the trunkmain became an issue a few years later in the early 1960’s.

### **2.4 *The Hastings District Water Supply Scheme – “A Joint Supply Scheme At Last”***

At this time the township of Wauchope continued to be supplied with water from the original Koree Island pumping station with the system balancing on Blue Creek Dam. However, in 1959 the original submersible pumping station and corrugated iron reservoirs (constructed in 1944 by the Shire) were decommissioned. The 8” (200mm) asbestos cement pipeline to Wauchope was then connected to the Rosewood Road balance tank and in essence the joint water supply scheme began.

In 1963 to meet increasing water demands the Old Koree Island pumping station was upgraded with duplicate 29.5 gallon per second (130L/s) pumps. Supply was extended to Wauchope with another 8” (200mm) diameter asbestos cement pipeline increasing the capacity to 21.5 gallons per second (95L/s) when delivering to the reticulation and 14.7 gallons per second (65L/s) when delivering to the Sutherland Street reservoir. The Wauchope service reservoir at Sutherland Street has a capacity of 523,000 gallons (2.3ML) and was constructed in 1961. This reservoir was not high enough to ensure adequate pressure in the higher areas of Wauchope and during periods of peak demand it was isolated and the reticulation served directly from the balance tank.

By 1967, the rapid development of Port Macquarie and the commencement of the sewerage scheme in the town had created the need for an increased delivery capacity and for additional storage in the town. Due to the under sizing of the original trunkmain, a booster pumping station

was installed on the trunkmain at Lake Road, increasing the capacity to 63L/s. The Transit Hill reservoir with a capacity of 9.1ML was brought into operation.

#### **2.4.1 Water Borne Contamination – “The Perils Of An Untreated Water Supply”**

During October 1967 a major investigation was undertaken into the suitability & safety of the Hastings & District water supplies for consumption. This was due to a history of acute gastroenteritis in Port Macquarie and the bacteriological testing failure of samples taken from the water supply.

Consequently an inspection of the catchment and supply intake was made with the Chief Health Inspector Mr. De La Rue on October 30th and 31st 1967. In addition the Council's Engineer, Mr. Grogan and Alderman Dr. Brien were consulted regarding various aspects of the water supply, and officers of the Hastings Shire Council regarding the catchment area.

Alderman Dr. Brien was stated that there was a history of acute gastroenteritis, which did not respond to normal antibiotic treatment, in Port Macquarie. It's occurrence was general and not related to any specific areas of the town or sections of the community and extended throughout the winter months as well as the summer months.

At Wauchope there was little history of gastroenteritis and that which had occurred was of a mild variety responding to normal antibiotic treatment. This was attributed to the fact that Wauchope had a separate water supply scheme with occasional augmentation from the Hastings scheme.

This investigation concluded that the water in the Hastings River is subject to contamination from a number of farms and agricultural activities upstream of the intake and that the history of acute gastroenteritis could have been associated with the reticulation of untreated river water.

The investigation suggested the installation of chlorination or fluoridation as the minimum treatment, in order to disinfect the water prior to storage or reticulation. The covering of all storages (reservoirs) was also recommended to minimise algal growth and other contamination (Robins, 1967)

#### **2.4.2 The O'Briens Road Dam – “A Temporary Solution”**

In 1969 due to increased demand 5,000 m of 375mm diameter asbestos cement main was laid from the Lake Road booster pumping station along a more direct route to the O'Briens Road reservoir

A temporary 90.8ML off-creek storage dam and pumping station (using the original Korie Island pumps) were constructed at O'Briens road in 1970. This provided an additional source of water over periods of peak summer demand and helped alleviate the problem of discoloured water following freshes in the Hastings River. In 1973 a chlorination plant was installed at the off-creek storage dam to overcome the ongoing problems with bacterial pollution.

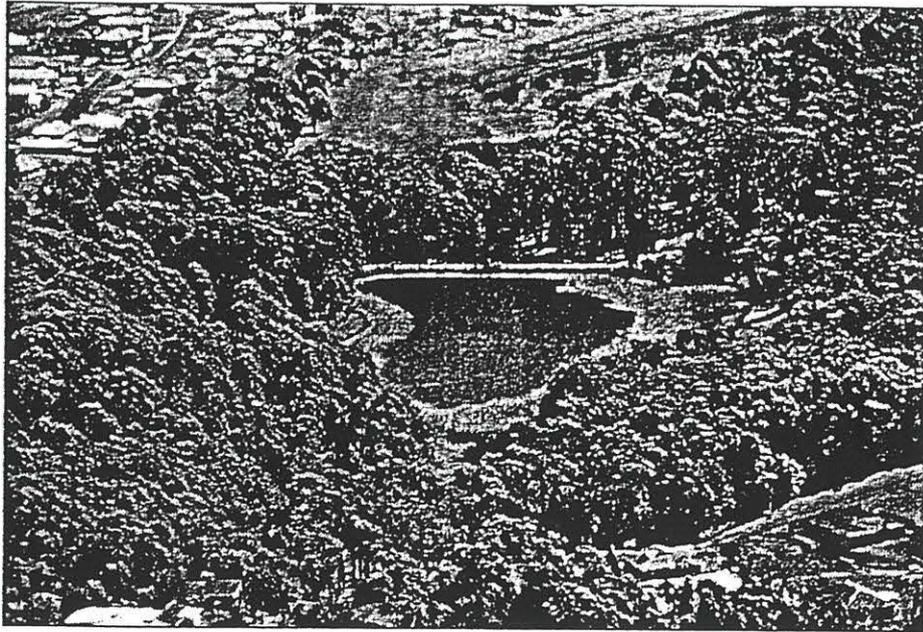


Figure 6 – Aerial View Of O'Briens Road Dam With Port Macquarie Dam In Background

A second booster pumping station was constructed on the trunkmain at Rawdon Island in 1974 increasing the trunk main capacity from 63 litres/second to 100 litres/second. Despite this the scheme was unable to meet the maximum peak daily demands of Port Macquarie and restrictions were imposed in Port Macquarie, not only in the summer months, but for most of the year.

The O'Briens Road Dam ceased to be used in 1978, following completion of the current Port Macquarie Dam. Situated in the catchment area above the Port Macquarie dam it still serves as a barrier protecting the Port Macquarie Dam from catchment runoff and the related pollution.

### 3.0 THE PRESENT

#### 3.1 *The Hastings District Water Supply Scheme – “The First Augmentation”*

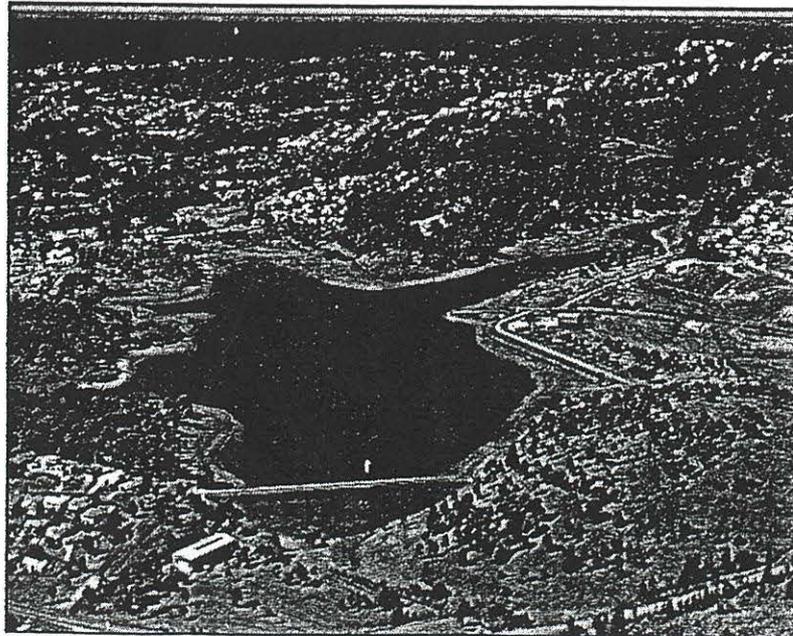
In March 1977, after decades of debate, dispute and great despair from the Port Macquarie residents, the Municipal and Shire Councils agreed to proceed with a \$12 million combined augmentation scheme for both Port Macquarie and Wauchope. The funding of the scheme was split with 79% being paid by Port Macquarie Municipality and 21% being paid by Hastings Shire. This split was based on anticipated populations of 16,500 in Port Macquarie and 4,500 in Wauchope. Although actual development in Port Macquarie far exceeded these figures, there was at the time significant concern amongst the Municipal Councillors that the Port Macquarie Municipality was paying more than its “fair share” for development of the scheme (Port Macquarie News Thursday, 3 March 1977).

In 1979 construction of a 2,500ML off-creek storage dam (Rosendahl Reservoir), located 3 Km south of Port Macquarie, was completed together with the construction of;

- New Koree Island pumping station (now known as Koree #2) (400L/s),
- Another balance tank (3ML capacity) at Rosewood Road, with chlorination water treatment,
- A 525mm diameter asbestos cement main from Rosewood Road to Port Macquarie,
- A service reservoir (11ML) at Widderson Street & a 600mm asbestos cement inlet main,
- A 750mm mild steel rising main to Transit Hill and O'Briens Road Reservoirs,
- An off - creek storage dam pumping station, with chlorination water treatment,
- A 5ML steel reservoir at Bago Road Wauchope,
- A telemetry system providing for automatic operation of pumping machinery at the Port Macquarie Dam and Koree Island Pump stations, as well as remote surveillance of river & dam levels and pumping machinery operation,
- And numerous improvements were made to the reticulation systems of Port Macquarie & Wauchope.



**Figure 7 – Aerial View of Port Macquarie Dam During Construction**



**Figure 8 – Rosendahl Reservoir – The Port Macquarie Off-Creek Storage Dam**

The completion of the first augmentation scheme was a major step forward for both Wauchope & Port Macquarie and for the first time in history water supplies to Port Macquarie were secured.

### **3.1.1 Further Development & Expansion – “Beyond All Expectations”**

Secure water supplies along with favourable market conditions sparked a period of prolific growth that exceeded all expectations for the Port Macquarie area. Hastings Council was formed from the amalgamation of the Hastings Shire Council and Port Macquarie Municipal Council in 1981. Amalgamation brought with it, amongst other things, guaranteed co-operation in the future development of the Hastings District Water Supply Scheme.

In 1982, Council engineers approached the NSW State Government, keen to commence planning for the future water supplies of the growing region. To their surprise, the government agencies declined Council's approach to begin strategic planning of future water supplies. Despite this Council Engineers persisted with future infrastructure planning. Having learnt great lessons in the past it was imperative that the residents of Port Macquarie were never in the same position as they were in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The strategic planning undertaken over the next fifteen years transformed the water supply to Port Macquarie into water management for the Hastings Region.

### **3.1.2 Joining The Port Macquarie Dam To The Camden Haven System – “The Missing Link”**

In 1982 construction commenced on the trunk main from Transit Hill reservoir to Laurieton. The first section of the main, 450mm diameter mild steel, to Bonny Hills was completed in April 1983 and the second section, 375mm diameter asbestos cement, was completed in 1984. New steel reservoirs were constructed at Laurieton (5ML) and Lakewood (2.5ML) in 1985. This would allow water to be transferred from the Port Macquarie Dam directly into the Camden Haven Water Supply System, and ensure secure water supplies during drought or dirty water at the Logan's Crossing source.

In 1986 work on the reconditioning of the Old Korie Island pumping station was completed including the installation of new electrical switchgear and construction of retaining walls to ensure the station was above flood level. The Transit Hill reservoir was roofed and structural repairs made to the reservoir ring beam and floor.

In 1996 Lake Road Booster and North Haven Booster Pump Stations were commissioned to service new development areas west of Port Macquarie and in the Camden Haven.

In 1987 reservoirs in the Camden Haven area including Kendall, Laurieton, Bonny Hills and Grants Head were roofed, to reduce the potential for algal growth (hence taste & odour in the water supply) and contamination of the water supply from bird dropping, leaves etc.

The Kew/Kendall back-feed booster station was also commissioned in 1987 and the Logan's Crossing pumping station was decommissioned. Being unable to operate automatically due to telemetry problems, the Logan's Crossing Pump Station often pumped particularly poor quality water into the Camden Haven Scheme. The disconnection of the Logan's Crossing pump station

was favourable with the Kew and Kendall communities as the new water supplied from the Port Dam was far superior in quality than any water extracted at Logan's Crossing.

Until Recently the Logan's Crossing Pump station was inspected and maintained as a disused facility. However, the extraction license for the site has always been maintained. In early 2003 during the drought, new motors were installed in the pump station and after fifteen years without use the pump station was successfully recommissioned as a potential emergency water supply.

Since disconnection in 1987, the water quality in the Camden Haven River at Logan's Crossing has improved, with the treatment of dairy runoff and a reduction in pig farming within the catchment. Although it was never used during the 2003 drought Logan's Crossing pump station will remain part of the water supply scheme with the potential for future use once treatment costs render the water source economically viable.

## 4.0 THE FUTURE

Due to the continued rapid growth of Port Macquarie by the mid 1980's planning was already underway on the next major augmentation of the Hastings District Water Supply. A number of significant projects impacted on the development of the scheme and unknowingly influence the direction of water management within the Hastings Region.

### 4.1 *The Wauchope "Leaky" Trunkmain – "Another Major Learning Experience For Council"*

One of the first projects of the current Augmentation Scheme was the construction of a 750mm diameter pipeline from Rosewood Road to King Creek. This pipeline had two purposes, firstly it would increase the transfer capacity to the existing Port Macquarie Dam by approximately 25%. Secondly it would allow the connection of the Cowarra Dam to the river extraction site at Korea Island when the remainder of the augmentation scheme was completed.

The project began in 1993 when the Public Works Department let the pipe supply contract to Humes Steel Pipes (in New Zealand) in an attempt to introduce competition into the Australian market. Under the original twelve-week contract period, pipe supply was to be completed in August 1993. The pipe supply was not completed until May 1994 (i.e. 52 weeks after the contract was let). Upon delivery to site it was found out that the pipes had been shipped as deck cargo. Due to damage they sustained in transport and manufacturing problems they suffered from following defects

- Damage to external corrosion protection wrapping
- Damage to pipe spigot & socket ends
- Insufficient grinding of welds

- Steps in the steel plates at weld seams
- Out of round pipes and damaged pipe ends
- Insufficient thickness of epoxy coating on pipe ends
- Poor quality of cement lining
- Cracking and spalling of the cement lining

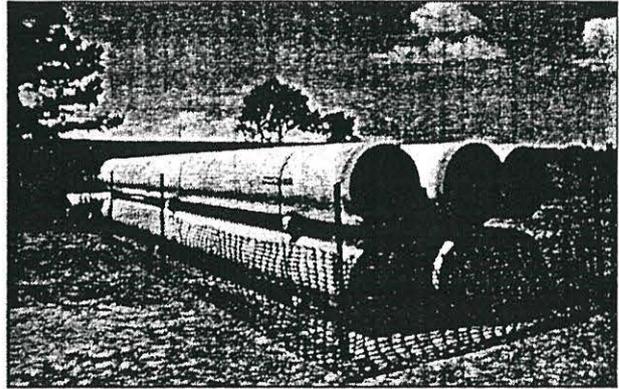


Figure 9 – Delivered Humes Steel Pipe

These defects were repaired onsite prior to final acceptance of the pipes. The contract for design & construction was awarded in May 1994 to a local civil contractor and during construction more than 80 of the total 950 spigot & socket rubber ring joints in the steel pipeline were welded. Hume Steel Pipes maintained that joints would seal under test pressure. However testing was delayed until late 1995 due to prolonged drought conditions. The final pipeline was unable to be filled with water let alone pressurised.

Humes Steel Pipes denied any liability and claimed that installation and construction practices were at fault. In September 1996 the Department of Public Works & Services served a "Notice of Claim" upon Humes Steel Pipes, claiming breach of contract

The dispute was settled out of court in 1998 with damages in the amount of \$2.8M against Humes Steel Pipes. Later in January 2001 settlement was reached on legal costs of \$1.3M, however only \$675,000 was recovered. The state government keen to escape the project for the least costs initially pursued a joint sealing technology to overcome the faults in the pipeline. Council reluctantly agreed on the conditions that the method was laboratory tested and a thorough risk assessment was undertaken. Testing of the seal method initially indicated that it would fail to adequately seal the pipe joints. Modifications to the sealing installation method proved successful however the costs of the manually intensive process were almost equal to the replacement costs of the pipeline.

In 2001 work commenced on the replacement of the pipeline as the seal method was determined to be excessively risky. By March 2002 the replacement pipeline was completed and commissioned some seven years behind schedule.

## 4.2 *The Cowarra Dam Experience – "Securing Our Water Supply Future"*

### 4.2.1 *A Long Time In The Planning – "Worth The Wait"*

Investigations for the Hastings District Water Supply Augmentation Scheme began in 1985. The aim of the augmentation scheme was to ensure a secure and environmentally sustainable water supply for the Hastings Region whilst catering for the current population and the projected future population of one of the fastest growing regional areas of New South Wales. In 1991 after thorough consideration of the possible scheme alternatives, developed by extensive public

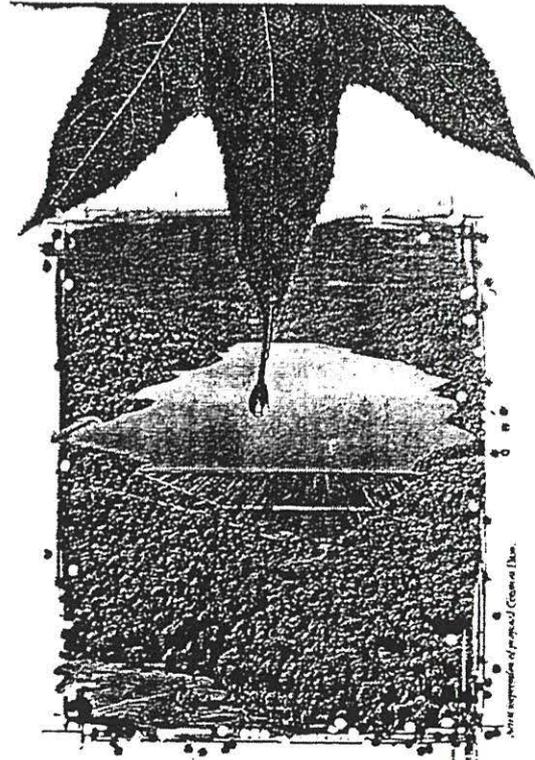
consultation, the option of an "Off Creek Storage" dam was selected, thus the *Cowarra Dam Experience* began.

From the initial investigations and right through to the completion of the dam construction, the main objectives of the augmentation scheme were:

- To provide water supplies for a future projected population of 120,000 people by the year 2040 including drought security to maintain water supply during a 1% exceedence probability drought sequence
- Ongoing consultation with the community and specific interest groups. Hastings Council was able to set goals and targets inline with community expectations. The successful completion of the identified goals built strong trust between the community and the Council and created a sense of community ownership and pride in the completion of the scheme objectives. This philosophy was emphasised with over 4000 people visiting the site during construction on free tours operated by Hastings Council.
- Flexibility allowing for various alternatives to accommodate changes in the timing or location of urban development, increased levels of service, changing technology and the success of Council's demand management programme.

Direct outcomes of the augmentation included;

- Improvements in the quality of the water supply by allowing selective extraction & storage of water from the Hastings River during periods of optimum water quality in the river. Thus avoiding the need to construct expensive treatment facilities. Part of the scheme included the installation of a real time river flow and water quality monitoring facility at the existing river extraction site (AquaLab water quality monitoring unit).
- Protection of Environmental River Flows in the Hastings River to minimise the impact of water extraction during low flow periods on the aquatic flora and fauna and mitigation of flora and fauna impacts from clearing of the dam site and future operation of the dam facilities. Despite the original minimum flow required in the river to permit extraction being set by the State Government regulatory authority at 60ML per day and then being subsequently revised to 100ML, Hastings Council's own investigations revealed that minimum river flows of between 250 & 650ML per day were required at different times of the year. These minimal flows allow sufficient passage for fish migration and overall protection of the river environment.



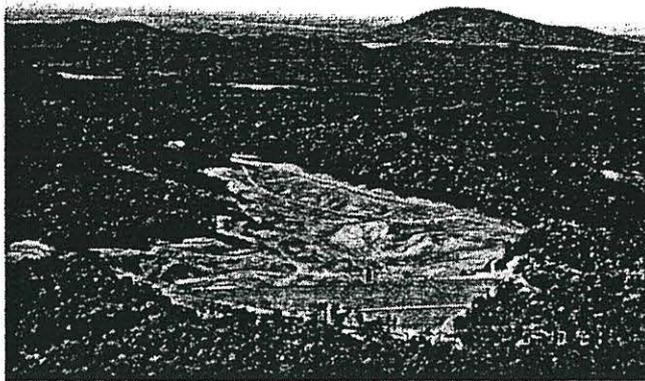
**Figure 10 – Artists Impression Of The Completed & Filled Dam**

Consequently Council adopted the higher flows for minimum licensing of the future river extraction and design of the water supply augmentation scheme.

- Approximately 80% of the timber resources of the site were recovered for reuse by selective logging, local mobile saw mill operators, fire wood collectors and donations to local LandCare & RiverCare Groups. The natural drainage gullies and over 50 identified habitat trees remained untouched until final construction commenced. Thus reducing soil erosion on-site, protecting local fauna and providing an escape route for this fauna to re-establish new homes in the adjoining timbered catchment area and State Forest.
- The co-operation between Hastings Council and the Bunyah Local Aboriginal Land Council allowed for native title on the site to be extinguished and participation by the Bunyah LALC in all phases of the scheme.

The Water Supply Concept Report was finalised and adopted by Council in 1991. An Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed scheme was completed in 1995, following the selection of a preferred off-creek storage dam site; Hastings Council then successfully acquired the site from the NSW State Forests.

Through the process of the acquisition from NSW State Forests, the site then became influenced by Native Title Legislation and further negotiation/coordination was required between Hastings Council and the Bunyah Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). The positive outcomes of this co-operation, throughout the entire augmentation scheme, include training and employment opportunities for members of the Bunyah LALC and the recovery of numerous aboriginal artefacts from the dam site.



**Figure 11 – Aerial View Of Dam Upon Completion In 2001**

The initial site works commenced in 1997 with selective logging by NSW State Forests and then site clearing. The earthworks commenced onsite in the middle of 1999 with practical completion being granted in October 2001. The successful completion of this project is a product of the inputs from a number of state government agencies, technical consultants, contractors and Hastings Council staff, and the partnering approach taken to delivery of this infrastructure was instrumental in the overwhelming success of the project.

#### 4.3 *The Koree Island # 3 Pump station – “The Last Major Component In The Augmentation”*

Construction of the Koree Island Pump Station commenced in July 2002. Whilst drought conditions were placing pressure on the town water supplies, the unusually low river levels and good weather allowed progress to surge ahead on completion of the station, high voltage transformer yard and electricity supply.

The last lift of the pump station has been completed and with an internal diameter around 11m and a height in excess of twenty metres it dwarfs the number 1 & 2 stations. The well houses three pumps with a total capacity of 120ML/day.

On track for completion in May, the pump station, when commissioned, allow for the filling of Cowarra Dam, securing our water supplies for many years to come.

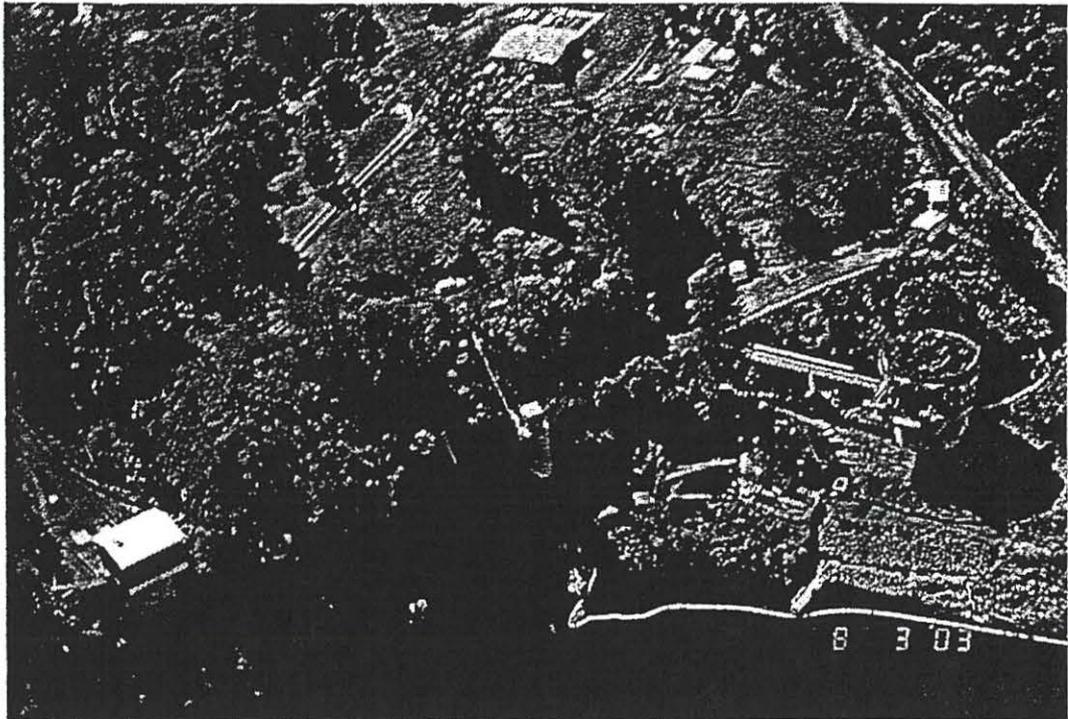


Figure 12 – Aerial View Of Council's Koree Island Extraction Site, Including Koree # 1 (middle) Koree # 2 (left), Koree # 3 (under construction on right) and the original 1944 Timber Pump Station Structure (bottom right)

#### **4.4 Works Yet To Be Completed In The Augmentation Scheme**

The completion of the augmentation scheme includes the construction of;

- The Southern Arm Trunkmain, from Cowarra Dam, directly into Bonny Hills, and then replacement of the existing trunkmain to North Haven. Thereby allowing water to be fed directly from the Cowarra Dam to the future growth areas of Bonny Hills and the Camden Haven.
- A cross-country pipeline from the Koree Island extraction site (Rosewood Road) directly to the Cowarra Dam to increase the transfer capacity to the dam.
- Water treatment plants and Wauchope, Telegraph Point, Long Flat & Comboyne, to reduce the impact of river turbidity and also improve the safety of these supplies.
- A water conditioning plant at Rosewood Road to control the softness of raw water extracted from the Hastings River.

#### **4.5 Future Options For Water Supply In The Hastings Region – “The Challenge Ahead”**

Throughout the concept development of the augmentation scheme, the Council has been mindful of the future supply requirements beyond 2040. From the start it was realised that simply building infrastructure wasn't the solution. Rather a combination of water efficiency, infrastructure, stormwater reuse and effluent recycling, would be required.

These measures can be simplified into structural & non-structural. A brief summary of the various initiatives currently under way or planned to be utilised is given below.

##### **4.5.1 Structural Measures**

**Raising Dam Walls** – During acquisition of the Cowarra dam site, sufficient extra land was acquired to allow for the future raising of the dam wall and an increase in the storage capacity from 10,000ML to approximately 15,000ML. A concept design plan is currently being completed into the raising of the Port Macquarie Dam wall to increase storage capacity from 2500ML to over 4000ML.

**Effluent Reclamation Schemes** – Hunter Water Australia are currently preparing a review of environmental factors and concept design plans for the construction & operation of an “*Effluent Reclamation Scheme*” for Port Macquarie. This involves additional treatment to the effluent from the Port Macquarie treatment works and separate reticulation using redundant water supply infrastructure (The old hospital, Morton Street reservoir & abandoned pipes) to supply water to commercial users, sporting facilities and public gardens throughout Port Macquarie. The success of this scheme could result in similar schemes at Wauchope, Laurieton & Bonny Hills, as well as a complete dual reticulation system and effluent reuse in development area 13. This has the potential to reduce annual consumption by 10-30%.

**Reactivation Of Logans Crossing Pump Station** – As noted earlier with the continual reduction in the capital cost of advanced treatment options there is a potential for the reactivation of the Logans Crossing pump station to supply Kendall, Kew and the Camden Haven. This would provide for a second supply point.

**Desalination** – Reductions in treatment costs and the limit on water availability may drive a push towards desalination plants to become popular along the entire coastline of Australia. However the costs incurred through operation of the plants will result in a marked increase in the user charges for any Council.

**Groundwater** – Recent alternative emergency water supply investigations identified a potential source of groundwater in the sand beds between Bonny Hills & North Haven. Test drilling was recently completed and the results will be recorded and kept on file for future consideration as possible supply source. It is not proposed to develop this source as part of the scheme in the immediate future, however the option is there for the future.

#### **4.5.2 Non-Structural Measures**

**The WaterWise Education Program** – Council's active education program involves static displays at shopping centres and major events. Special displays are also organised during National Water Week in October. The aim of the displays is to raise community awareness of the importance of water and what can be done to reduce the water consumption. It also provides a platform to demonstrate the measures already being implemented to minimise the impact on the environment and improve the efficiency/quality of water services to the public.

**Dam Tours, Presentations & School Activities**- Since construction of the Cowarra Dam commenced, Council has operated free-guided tours of the site to the public. In a similar way to most city kids not knowing where milk comes from, we have found that most people fail to comprehend the amount of work that goes into ensure water flows from their tap every time they turn it on. This activity provides an awakening to most people of where their water comes from, how it gets to their house and the work done by Council staff.

**Water Efficiency in Council Buildings/Facilities** – In order to promote water efficiency, Council has audited all of its public facilities, including buildings, toilets, and sporting facilities. Then these facilities were retrofitted with water efficient devices to minimise water consumption.

**Industry Based Water Efficiency Programs** – Each year, Council's WaterWise team target one particular industry type and perform a water use audit. To quantify water use in the various activities undertaken and highlight potential efficiency gains. The costs are also compared with the savings and assistance with retrofitting is provided to the organisation. During this years drought the tourism accommodation industry was targeted.

**WaterWise Development Control Plan** – Council recently adopted a WaterWise & Energy Efficiency Development Control Plan to guide future development. The most notable feature is that rainwater tanks are mandatory on all new houses.

**Water Usage Charges** – Council is currently reviewing its user charges with a view to implementing an inclining block usage charge. This involves the charging of two use rates, one for a basic allowance, and a considerably higher rate for usage above this allowance. The fixed water rate levied for availability will be reduced so that in effect residents can save more money through reducing their consumption than they can under the current charges. Thereby encouraging efficiency through economic savings.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

From inception, the development of water supplies within the Hastings region has been fraught with difficulty. The supplies to the settlement, prior to reticulation, were limited in quantity and poor in quality. This resulted in water related sickness and shortages.

The completion of reticulated supplies was delayed by poor planning, undermined by public concern and generally failed to secure adequate supplies in the short term. Combination of the Port Macquarie & Wauchope supply schemes as well as the amalgamation of the respective Council's overcame the parochial conflict that greatly hindered the early strategic planning of the scheme.

The first major augmentation of the scheme in 1978 went a long way to securing water supplies, but it also brought with it growth in proportions well above expectation. Learning from past mistakes saw extensive consultation and planning for the next major augmentation conducted decades before the work was necessary.

The realisation that simply building bigger better infrastructure would not solve the long-term supply requirements was a key milestone in the transformation of Councils attitude from a *water supplier* to a *water manager*. The **Cowarra Dam Experience** resulted in environmental benefits that far outweighed the costs and re-enforced the concept of water management.

Now and into the future Council is dedicated and committed to the provision of safe, secure water supplies in a manner that is economically feasible, environmentally sustainable and socially responsible – The Triple Bottom Line!

# Managing Our Most Precious Asset - WATER!

## 6.0 REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge the permission and support of Hastings Council in the preparation, production & presentation of this paper. The author thanks all those who have positively contributed, and in particular the assistance provided by:

- Port Macquarie Historical Society (Mrs. Pat Schubert, Mr Warren Scott and Mrs Gwen Griffin) for assistance with research
- Hastings Council's Heritage Planner – Mr. Mitch McKay
- Hastings Council Water Supply Staff, including Mr. Murray Thompson, Mr. Allan Barlin & Mr Chris Long for collecting, storing and collating significant information on the history of the Hastings Water Supply Scheme.

The information published in this paper is the best known available at the time of writing and is based on limited research. Should any further information become available to verify, contradict or extend on this information please advise Hastings Council so that amendments may be made accordingly.

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