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PART I.

[NOTE.—This paper is intended to cover the history of Illawarra from 1788 to 1888. The latter year is a significant one in the record of what has been aptly named "The Garden of New South Wales." In 1888 communication by rail with Sydney was completed, and this brought about a radical change in the history of the district. Earlier, practically all traffic to and from Illawarra went by sea; with the introduction of the "iron horse" the produce of the district ceased to be transported by water, and thus a very interesting chapter in the district's history was closed. To-day the harbours of Wollongong, Kiama and Gerringong are little more than names; prior to 1888 they were busy places, about which much of the life of the community centred. After 1888 a new chapter was opened, and so it is deemed wise to close my account with that year.—J. J.]

DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION.

While the Endeavour was on her way up the coast on April 28, 1770, an attempt was made to land near the present town of Port Kembla. The landing party consisted of Captain Cook, Mr Joseph Banks, Dr Solander, Tupia, an Otahitian native, and four seamen. A yawl was hoisted out at 2 p.m. and the party rowed towards the shore. Meanwhile the Endeavour stood on and off-shore under easy sail. The yawl approached the coastline near a low patch of red earth (Red Point),* but heavy surf prevented a landing. Two people were seen to come

down to the beach, but they soon afterwards retired to
the woods; the shore appeared pleasant, with tall trees,
and a little or no undergrowth. "They saw," continues
the account, "some trees like cabbage trees, a hut and two
small boats ill made." Failing to land, the boat returned
to the ship, and at 6 p.m. the Endeavour made sail out to
sea and next day reached Botany Bay.

There is no record of any attempt to reach Illawarra
by land until 1794, when a party left Sydney with the
intention of examining the country south of Sydney.
They believed they had reached the neighbourhood of Red
Point, but this is more than doubtful. Collins gives the
following account of this little expedition:

"Two people of sufficient judgment and discretion for the purpose
being found among the military, they set off from the south shores
of Botany Bay on 14th May, 1794. J. J. well armed and furnished

with provisions for a week. They were accompanied by a young
man, a native as a guide, who professed a knowledge of the country
and named the place where the fresh water would be found to run.
Great expectations were formed of this excursion, from the confidence
with which the native repeatedly asserted the existence of a fresh
water river; on the 30th, however, the party returned, with an
account, that the native had been killed beyond his knowledge of
the country, and trusted to them to bring him safe back. That having
penetrated about twenty miles to the southward of Botany Bay, they
came to a large inlet of the sea, which formed a small harbour, the
head of this they rounded without discovering any river of fresh
water near it. The country they described as high and rocky in
the neighbourhood of the harbour, which, on afterwards looking into
the chart was supposed to be somewhere about Red Point."

The account is far too indefinite to enable us to decide
what point the expedition reached. It is unlikely that
the party touched Illawarra.

BASS AND FLINDERS.

Bass and Flinders left Port Jackson early in the
morning of March 25, 1796, in the Torrance, to explore
a large river said to enter the sea some miles to the south
of Botany Bay. They stood to sea to be ready for the
sea breeze, and, on coming in with the land in the evening,
found that instead of being near Cape Solander they were
under the cliffs near Hat Hill. Not being able to land,
next morning they steered for two small islets six or seven
miles further on in order to get shelter, but being in want
of water and seeing a place where they thought it could
be obtained, Bass swam ashore with a cask. A wave drove
the boat ashore and drenched everything in it. The boat
was emptied and launched immediately, but it was late
in the evening before everything was rafted off, and they
then proceeded to the islets that they had observed. It
was impossible to land on them, and it was decided to go
on to two larger islets near Red Point. These islands also
proved to be inaccessible, and the second night was spent
in the boat.

Two natives, who came from Botany Bay, and whom
they met on the following day, informed Bass and Flinders
that no water would be found at Red Point. The natives
offered to pilot them to a river which, they said, lay a few
miles to the south, and where wild ducks as well as fresh
water would be obtained. The river proved to be a small
stream which descended from a lagoon under Hat Hill. It was entered with difficulty. The two natives then quit the boat and walked along the sandy shore in the company of eight or ten strange natives.

The stream became shallower as they rowed up, and the explorers feared they might be attacked by natives, who had the reputation of being very ferocious, if not cannibals. As the muskets were not freed of sand and rust, and it was necessary to procure fresh water before proceeding northwards, it was decided to go ashore. Flinders employed some of the natives in preparing an oven on the ground which had been broken, while Flinders spread the wet powder out to dry. They then proceeded to clean the muskets, but had to desist as the natives became alarmed.

A cask holding eight or nine gallons of water was filled from a waterhole close to the boat.

At this stage the number of natives had increased to twenty, and it was necessary to get out of their reach as soon as possible. The explorers had clipped the hair and beards of the Botany Bay natives at Red Point, and they showed themselves to the other natives, persuading them to follow their example. While the powder was drying, Flinders began to trim the hair and beards of four or five of the older natives. As he says, the shearing was not required to be of a great nicety, it did not take long to deal with a dozen. Flinders' account continues:

Some of the more timid were alarmed at a formidable instrument coming so near to their noses, and would scarcely be persuaded to allow the operation to be finished. But when their chins were held up a second time, their fear of the instrument—the wild stare of their eyes—and the smile which they forced, formed a compound upon the rough savage countenance, not unworthy of the pencil of a Hogarth. I was almost tempted to try what effect a little snip would produce, but our situation was too critical to admit of such experiments.

The natives were anxious that the explorers should proceed further up the lagoon, but they managed to go downstream, where the depth of water placed them out of the reach of the aborigines.

Flinders states that their examination of the country was confined, by circumstances, to a general view. "It was called Abowrie, by the natives." The lagoon appeared to be several miles in circumference. The land was probably fertile, and back hills had the same appearance.

Soon after dark the breeze fell and at 10 o'clock the explorers rowed out of the rivulet, repassed Red Point, and came to anchor close to the north-west of the two first rocky islands. On the afternoon of March 28 the party got ashore under the high land north of Hat Hill, and were able to cook some food. The sandy beach served as a bed, and, after three cramped nights in the Tomb Thumb, it was, says Flinders, "to us a bed of down."

Flinders fixes the latitude of Red Point as 34° 29' 5". From Red Point there was a low curving, sandy beach which ran five miles south-west to the entrance of what Flinders calls "Tomb Thumb's Lagoon," the position of which he gives as 34° 33' 6". His map sketches in roughly part of the shore line of the lagoon, and a dotted line is marked towards the sea as a "reported communication." What Flinders calls "Tomb Thumb's Lagoon" is Lake Illawarra, and the Tomb Thumb's Lagoon of modern maps was not seen by the explorers. Doubtless the natives had tried to explain that there was a stream further north which is to-day called Allan's Creek.

On the return journey the Tomb Thumb ran into Watta Molla, named by the explorers Providential Cove.

SURVIVORS OF THE SYDNEY COVE.

On the morning of May 17, 1797, a boat which had been fishing to the southward of Botany Bay brought to Sydney three persons from the ship Sydney Cove, which had been wrecked on an island near Bass Strait. They were the survivors of a portion of the crew, seventeen of which had set off northwards in an open boat which also was wrecked on the coast near Point Hicks. Here they landed and began the long and wearisome march towards civilization along the south coast districts. One by one they fell by the way until the party was reduced to five. Between the vicinity of Wollongong and Coal Cliff the first mate and ship's carpenter were left, as they were too tired to proceed further. Fortunately the other three, the
supercargo, Clarke, and a sailor were observed by a fishing party at Wattamolla and saved.

A whaleboat was despatched on May 18 to search for the two men who had remained behind. They proceeded to the spot pointed out by Clarke, but only found some bloodstained clothing. George Bass later found the skeletons of the mate and the carpenter while examining the country about Coal Cliff.

[Image of Providence Cove, Wattamulla.]

Clarke reported that two days before he had met the boat which rescued him he had found a great quantity of coal, with which he and his companions had made a large fire and had slept by it all night. This was, of course, a discovery of first-rate importance. Coal had been discovered in the previous year to the north of Sydney. Collins says that a fishery boat returned from a bay near Port Stephens about June, 1796, and brought several large pieces of coal.*

*Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, p. 279.

On hearing Clarke’s report, the Governor despatched George Bass in a whaleboat to discover where the coal lay. He proceeded over twenty miles to the southward of Botany Bay, where he found, in the face of a steep cliff, washed by the sea, a stratum of coal about six feet thick. This point was at Coal Cliff, where the coal seam outcrops near sea level. On the summit of high land nearby Bass found coal on the surface, which was doubtless where Clarke had first seen the mineral.

Collins was not impressed by the discovery, and wrote thus:—

From the specimens of the coal which were brought in by Mr. Bass the quality appeared to be good, but, from its almost inexorable situation, no great advantage could ever be expected from it, and indeed, were it even less difficult to be procured, unless some small harbour should be near it, it could not be of much utility to the settlement.

David Collins was a bad prophet. In later years a mine was opened at the very spot where Bass located coal, and the mineral was shipped at a pier which ran into the sea from Coal Cliff.

Bass made a careful examination of the country near Coal Cliff, and describes his discoveries in a letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson:—

25th August, 1797.

This vein of coal, or at least the northernmost end of it that we could see, commences about twenty miles to the southward of Botany Bay. The land there is nearly twice the height of the north head of Port Jackson, not a steep cliff like it, but has here and there small slopes and ledges upon which trees and shrubs grow. The sea washes up close to the foot of it that is so more than barely passable without some danger in blowing weather. About twenty feet above the surface of the sea, and within reach of your hand as you pass along is a vein of coal, about six or seven feet in thickness; the rock below it is shaly, but above it is the common rockstone of the country. The vein does not lay perfectly horizontal, but goes on declining as it advances to the southward, until at the end of about two miles it becomes level with the surface of the sea, and the lowest rock you can see when the surf retires is all coal. Here the bold land gradually retreats back and leaves in its front a sloping land, which, keeping the line of the coast, meets the sea with sandy beaches and small bluff heads.

†Ibid., p. 355.
‡Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III., p. 289.
Ilawarra: A Century of History.

DISCOVERY OF THE BLOWHOLE AT KIAMA.

In December, 1797, George Bass set out once again on an expedition to the southward in a whaleboat. On the afternoon of December 6 the wind freshened up into a breeze and made progress difficult, and Bass ran the boat into a bright on the coast which is to-day the harbour of Kiama. It was noted that the shore and the country about it bore "evident marks of volcanic fire." Bass's account runs as follows:—

Several of the little heads and points are of a basaltic nature; some irregular others columnar basaltica. Upon landing I perceived near the extremity of one of the heads, the rocks lying scattered about in a very irregular manner, and upon examination it appeared that a volcanic eruption had formerly taken place. . . . *

Apparently Bass examined the land to the north of the present harbour towards Bonobo, where columnar basalt occurs. Bass describes that striking scenic feature known as the "Blowhole":—

Towards the centre was a deep rugged hole of about 25 or 39 feet in diameter, and on one side of it the sea washed in through a subterraneous passage with a most tremendous noise. . . .

DISCOVERY OF THE SHOALHAVEN.

On the following morning the whaleboat's bow was turned south again. At five in the evening the party saw an opening in the bottom of a bay, and, on running down to it, found it was a shallow lagoon. An hour later the explorers found a small river, into which the boat was run. Bass describes the place thus:—

This little place, which deserves no better a name than Shoalhaven, for it is not properly a river, is very narrow at the entrance, the south side of which is formed by the rocky point, and the north by a breaking spit of sand that runs out from a sandy point. . . .

The river was examined for some miles. Bass reported that there were many thousands of acres of open ground which could never be overflowed, the soil of which was a

deep vegetable mould. He considered that the difficulty of shipping produce must ever be a bar to its colonization. A "Nursery of cattle" might be carried on with advantage, he reported.

**EXPLORATION OF THE SHOAHLHAVEN.**

There is no evidence of any examination of the Illawarra district between 1797 and 1805. In February, 1805, Surveyor James Meehan visited the Shoalhaven River and surveyed it for a distance of about fifteen miles. On his plan he notes that the banks consisted of very good ground which was liable to be flooded. There is a reference also to cedar on the river to the south of what is now Pig Island.

In 1806 five men from the wreck of the George at Twofold Bay travelled overland from Jervis Bay along the coast.*

Bird collectors evidently visited Illawarra. They were reported to have brought two new birds with them from the Five Islands.†

G. W. Evans visited the Shoalhaven from Jervis Bay in 1812.

Cedar-getters began operations on the Shoalhaven in 1812, when the Speedwell returned to Sydney early in January. It was said by occasional travellers in search of pheasants and other birds that the river was found to produce good cedar. The people of the Speedwell stated that they had discovered a river, or very considerable inlet, not before known, up which they proceeded fifteen or twenty miles. Natives were seen, and they appeared numerous and athletic. The report continues:

The place appears to have been very properly named Shoalhaven, as the above small vessel—only 15 tons—grounded several times.

In 1812, 1813 and 1814 a number of vessels visited Shoalhaven to procure cedar. In December, 1814, it was decided to prohibit traffic in cedar at the river.

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*Sydney Gazette, May 18, 1806.
†Sydney Gazette, July 19, 1807.

The schooner Mercury, the property of Mrs Reiby, and the Endeavour, belonging to H. Kable, were wrecked at the Shoalhaven on March 2, 1813, but no lives were lost. A vessel was sent down to rescue the crew, but some members had set out overland. A native guide went with them, and they lived for fourteen days on cabbage-tree and fish given them by the natives. They killed and ate a native dog, and at times lived on grass. The men were eventually picked up at Batany Bay.

In 1815, a party of cedar-getters was murdered at Shoalhaven, when the news reached Sydney two parties set out to confirm the news, one by water and the other by land. This party is said to have "persevered in one of the most toilsome pursuits that could possibly have been embarked in" until they arrived at the spot where the men had been murdered. They then returned by land.‡

There is no evidence of any approach to Illawarra from the west until 1815. According to a statement of Charles Throsby Smith, a nephew of Dr Charles Throsby, the district was first reached from the west in 1815.

C. T. Smith stated that some aboriginals at Liverpool told his uncle that there was plenty of grass and water at the Five Islands. Dr Throsby determined to see whether the natives' story was correct, and, accompanied by a couple of white men and two natives, he started on his journey. The party reached Appin the same night, and on the following morning arrived at the top of the mountain range, making a track as they went. They halted for the night, and next day commenced cutting a track down the mountain near the locality known now as Bulli. The explorers found abundance of grass and water. No time was lost in returning to Liverpool. A mob of cattle was collected and driven down to Illawarra, where a stockyard was erected. Dr Throsby built a hut near the corner of what is now Smith Street, Wollongong.

James Backhouse, the Quaker, who visited New South Wales in 1836, said he was accompanied on his journey from near Bong Bong by an aged man named Wild, who discovered the district of Illawarra.

‡Sydney Gazette, February 25, 1815.
In 1819 Oxley and Meehan carried out an exploratory survey of Illawarra. Oxley by sea and Meehan by land. Oxley proceeded by sea to the Shoalhaven, while Meehan travelled overland from the Minnamurra River. Oxley's Field Book (No. 156) records that he left in a little craft called the Eumasthine on October 8, 1819. His notes describe the coastline: South of Point Bass towards Black Head the coast is described as—

... a succession of bold sandy points connected by short sandy beaches, the country westwardly, rugged and broken, the ridges of the hills rocky, their sides covered with timber and thick brush. ... Black Head is a clear Grassy Point gradually sloping upwards a mile from a thick Brush.

Meehan also left overland on October 8, and reached the Shoalhaven on the following day. The notes in Meehan's Field Book (No. 142) show that Oxley was unable to enter the Shoalhaven. On Sunday, October 10, 1819, Meehan notes that:

At about 2 p.m. Mr. Oxley and two of his men came to our encampment having only turned into Creek Haven and left his two men and the small boat in order to put us across in the morning.

This appears to be the earliest reference to Crookhaven.

Surveyor-General Oxley described the country in a report to Governor Macquarie dated January 10, 1820. This stated:

The District of Illawarra is naturally bounded on the South by a high range of Rocky Hills, in which the Waters, falling southerly into Shoal Haven River have their source, these Rocky Hills terminate on the Coast, a small Salt Water Creek called by the natives Memee Mora, dividing them at that point from the granted Lands in the Illawarra District.

From Memee Mora, the Coast is high and bold with two or three small sandy Beaches, the route pursued by Mr. Meehan was extremely difficult and broken to travel over. In the thick Brushwood which sometimes ended immediately on the Coast, the Soil was good, the open part of the Country, Stony but trifling in extent the rocky range before mentioned never exceeding a mile or 1½ mile from the coast, the projecting points on the Coast being merely lower terminations of the main range.

The line of Coast from Memee Mora to Point Bass, affords neither landing places or shelter even for a Boat.

By 1819 cedar-getters had penetrated all the cedar-bearing areas in Illawarra, and doubtless added much to

the knowledge concerning the district. This matter is discussed in the writer’s paper written some years ago.

SETTLEMENT REMAINS.

Early in 1815 some interest in the Illawarra was manifested in the Press. The following news item appeared in the Sydney Gazette of March 18, 1815:

A considerable extent of fine grazing ground is described by late travellers to lie about the Five Islands to which however, it would be thoroughly impracticable to convey cattle by land.

Whether this item was due to Charles Throsby’s visit is not clear. It was misleading, as cattle were driven across country down the range to Illawarra without much difficulty.

It is evident that Governor Macquarie had made up his mind about this period to allow lands on the coast to be occupied. There is a memorandum in the Governor’s handwriting dealing with the matter. An abstract of lands promised to various persons in the settled districts had been prepared, and it was found that there was a difference of nearly 5000 acres in the quantity promised and that available. A note in Macquarie’s writing runs thus:

N.B.—Lands must be located at the Five Islands to make up the deficiency.

Charles Throsby appears to have sent stock down after the discovery of an approach from the west side, and it is likely that others followed him, although there is no written evidence of any authorized occupation. In November, 1816, those who had obtained the Governor’s promise of grants were informed that the Surveyor-General and his deputy had received instructions to proceed to the “New District of Illawarra” to make a regular survey and to locate the promised grants. Persons interested were to meet at Throsby’s stockman’s hut.


†Sydney Gazette, November 11, 1816.
There was an earlier reference to the "new Stock Settlement at the Five Islands" which mentioned that the natives were amicably disposed towards the white men. Several gentlemen were reported to have removed their cattle thither, as the neighbourhood afforded good pasture.

Instructions issued to Surveyor-General Oxley ran thus:

The Governor having been informed by several persons who have lately visited that New Region or Tract of Country commonly called the Five Islands but by the Natives in their own Language, Illawarra, near the Sea Coast where the Five Islands are seen, that a very considerable quantity of Good Land for Pasturage and Cultivation is to be found there and that this Tract of Country, named Illawarra is connected with a Tract of Country extending as far Southward as Shoalhaven, and His Excellency being desirous of rendering this New Country subservient to the general purposes of the Colony desires that you proceed thither and in the course of the next Week, or as soon as you shall have completed your present Survey, accompanied by the Deputy Surveyor and commence a general Survey of the whole of that Region of Country between the Southerly extremity of Appin and Shoalhaven, and between the Sea on the East and the great range of Mountains to the Westward, in order to the connecting of this New Country in a Geographical way with the already known and surveyed parts of the Colony. In the course of this Survey it is the Governor's desire that you note down most accurately all the Harbours, Havens, Creeks, Lagoons and Rivers which you may fall in with and that you distinguish particularly all Lakes, Ponds or Lagoons of Fresh Water from those of Salt Water.

In this survey and the location of Lands which is to follow it, you are carefully to reserve for the use of the Crown exclusively all Lands situated at or near the entrance of all Harbours, Creeks, Bays or Rivers, and also all Lands which may appear well situated for Townships or Fortifications.

These Gentlemen and other Free Settlers who have lately obtained premises of Land from the Governor may now get them located to them in the New District of Illawarra, and with this view a Notice has been issued under the present Day in the Sydney Gazette, that such of them as wish to get their Lands in this District are to repair thither on Monday, the 2nd of the ensuing Month of December and to meet you on that day at the Hut of Mr. Throsby's Stockman, and that you will locate to them their respective allotments accordingly, agreeably to the lists with which you have already been furnished.

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*Illawarra: A Century of History*.

In marking these Locations you are to be strictly governed by the King's Instructions and Regulations namely, that each Grantee shall have a proportionable quantity of good and bad Land; that the breadth of each Location shall be only one third of its Length, and that on no occasion the Length shall extend along the Banks of any Bay, Creek, Lagoon or River, but into the Main Land, the object of which is that each Grantee may have a convenient proportionable share of the advantage arising from such Bays, Creeks, Harbours, or Rivers and that the Navigation of the same shall not be obstructed by any Individual whatever.

The Governor has no objection to Mr. Dept. Cy. Genl. Allen, receiving an equivalent for Illawarra for those Lands he now possesses in Upper Minto, or Airda (2000 acres), or to his getting them located to him in the situation he is desirous of obtaining them, provided it does not interfere with the rights or conveniences of other persons wishing to have their Lands in the same neighbourhood, and that it does not militate with the King's Instructions and Regulations on that Head.

On similar terms and under the like restrictions the Governor has no objection to the Lands promised to George Johnston Esqr. Sears, being located for him at or near to the Macquarie River on its Western side in the said District of Illawarra.

The Surveyor-General, accompanied by his faithful assistant, James Meehan, set out for Illawarra late in November, 1816. They appear to have commenced their survey on November 28, 1816, by marking an oak tree at Allovra Lagoon (Lake Illawarra). From this point they moved southwards, and references to Mullet Creek and Macquarie River occur in the Field Book used. The survey continued until December 10.

Meehan had already paid a visit to the district in June, 1816, and in September, 1819, he returned there. He mentions that the descent from the high land above Illawarra was extremely difficult. The soil was poor and sandy, and covered with black-buttock gums, while in the immediate vicinity of the mountain, cedars, sassafras and cabbage palms were found. The Field Book contains a reference to the Coal Cliff, and Meehan spells the name of the district Illawherra. Charles Throsby had a hut near the seashore. Tom Thumb's Lagoon is mentioned, and this seems to be the earliest reference to the name. During the visit in September, 1819, Meehan went as far south as the Minnamurra River, which he spells Minemurra.

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*Sydney Gazette, September 28, 1816.*

1Field Book No. 119, Mitchell Library, Sydney.
Governor Macquarie reported the discovery of good land to the Home Government in a despatch dated December 12, 1817:—

I have the Pleasure to report to your Lordship that an extensive Tract of Country, set for the purposes of Pasturage and Agriculture, has some time since been discovered, distant about 45 Miles to the Southward of this, on a part of the Coast known generally by the name of the "Five Islands," but called by the Natives "Illawarra." The persons who have visited it speak very favourably of this New Country as possessing Many Advantages and Capabilities for the Grazier and Agriculturist, and I have consequently already given Several Grants of Land there to some respectable New Settlers. It has been reported to me both by Natives and a few Europeans who employ themselves on Hunting Expeditions, that between Illawarra and Port Jarvis there is another very extensive Tract of fertile Land. I therefore intend very soon to send Mr. Meenan, the Deputy Surveyor General at the Head of a Small Expedition to Explore the whole of the Country lying near the Sea Coast from Illawarra to Port Jarvis in order to ascertain its Extent and Capabilities.

Governor Macquarie visited Illawarra in January, 1822, and left on record an account of his tour. He mentions the vast quantities of cabbage palm and fern trees growing on the face of the mountain which he descended. This point he named Regent Mountain, as it was first descended by Mr. Throsby in the year 1815, when the then King was Regent of the United Kingdom. His Excellency had been early on the move, and halted at a creek near the foot of the mountain to have breakfast. The stream was named Throsby's Creek. After breakfast the party travelled along the seashore towards Mr. Allan's farm at Red Point. They crossed the entrance of Tom Thumb's Lagoon and soon reached the farm, where a party of about one hundred natives awaited them to welcome the Governor to Illawarra. Some of them had come all the way from Jervis Bay. Most of them pronounced Macquarie's name distinctly, and were very civil. The farms of Messrs. Jenkins, Brooks and Brown were visited, and at the last mentioned property the night was spent. On the following day, January 16, the Governor and his party set out to explore the country to the southward, and travelled as far as the Macquarie River. Johnston's farm was visited, and the tourists then went on towards O'Brien's new road up the mountain on the way to Appin. This mountain was named Mount Brisbane. All the names given by Macquarie have been forgotten. The Governor noted that at least 20,000 acres of land remained unlocated in Illawarra.

Giving evidence before Commissioner Bigge in 1822, Surveyor-General Oxley stated that not more than 10,000 acres of land had been granted at the Five Islands. There was abundance of good timber. None of the owners of grants had settled there; the only persons living there were stockkeepers. No grain had been raised except a small quantity grown by Oxley, and the crops were poor. Oxley, it might be noted, occupied land at Illawarra, but had no grant.

Charles Throsby also gave evidence. He described the land as a rich loam. Cattle bred well there, but did not fatten. The pastures had been overfaced, and had suffered much from caterpillars.

ILLAWARRA, THE GARDEN OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

This phrase, which is familiar to everyone in New South Wales, is said to have been coined by Governor Bourke. A Press item in 1847 said:—

Sir Richard Bourke, it is well known, called Illawarra the garden of the colony, at a time when her present fertile meadows were useless wilds, because her soil is of such a nature as is required for gardens.

VISITORS' IMPRESSIONS.

Many travellers have visited this beautiful district and have left on record their impressions. Barron Field, who visited Illawarra in 1823, said it was a fine grazing district containing some excellent arable land, although it was distant from Sydney and difficult to reach by land. He rode to the Shoalhaven, and mentions that for five or six miles the route lay through a mass of vegetation so dense that it required pioneers to penetrate it. It reminded him of Humboldt's descriptions of South American...
vegetation. He saw some fine specimens of *Seafordthia elegans*, a palm equal in size to the cabbage palm, from whose broad, membranous stalks the natives made their water buckets, simply by tying up each end; in the same manner the dairy farmers made their milk pails and cream pans, and of the leaves they made their hats and roof thatch.

Peter Cunningham describes the luxuriant growth of every vegetable product in the 'twenties, and refers to the bird life, in particular the red-breasted cockatoo and the large crested black pigeon peculiar to the district. These things made the visitor imagine himself transported to some far distant tropical region. The extent of cultivable land was small and was closely timbered.

Breton gives the following description of Illawarra:

"Its aspect is that of a tropical region, especially near the range, and it is incomparably superior in point of scenery to any part of the colony I have visited. The palms from fifty to eighty feet high...the fern trees, and the parasitical plants and climbers were beautiful, and in some places so luxuriant was the vegetation, and so completely were the climbers, many of them nearly as large as a man's body, interwoven amongst the trees, that they rendered the forest, off the path, utterly impassable."

Angus describes the view from Mount Keira as "grand and enchanting beyond description." He continues:

"The vegetation that clothed the steep side of the mountain was of a totally different character from anything we had hitherto witnessed; it seemed, on descending and entering Illawarra, that we had suddenly become transported into a glen of tropical vegetation; and the scene all round was totally new in character and aspect. We had entered upon another climate; the dry arid soil of the stringy bark forest with its stunted vegetation, was exchanged as if by magic, for a damp humid region, sheltered from the wind by colossal barriers of rock, and presenting a prodigious luxuriance and wealth of vegetation almost incomprehensible."

**SURVEYS AND SURVEYORS.**

James Meehan, who had been engaged on survey work in 1816, was also at work in Illawarra in 1819, when he laid out grants for S. Terry, Thomas Hobby and David Johnston.

No surveyor appears to have visited the district between 1819 and 1824. In August, 1824, Surveyor James McBrien was instructed to commence a survey at Black Head and then to proceed to the Shoalhaven River, which, with its branches, was to be traced. A reserve was to be made on each side of the entrance into the Shoalhaven River, so that communication along the coast would be kept open to the public. It was intended that the country should be divided into sections for settlers who had orders for land. McBrien reported having completed the preliminary survey of the Shoalhaven and Crookhaven Rivers.

In March, 1825, McBrien received instructions to carry out further survey work in the district. He was supplied with a list of names of persons who had applied for land, and he was required to mark the grants in order of priority. The situation of all stockyards and homesteads was to be shown on his plan. It is clear, then, that the lands to be marked were occupied. The list included the following: Mr Ralph, 1000 acres on Minnamurra River; Dr Bland, 1000 acres at Black Head; Henry Brooks, 600 acres at Lake Illawarra; J. T. Hughes, 1200 acres at Black Head; R. H. Brown, 640 acres at Shoalhaven; George Tate, 500 acres near the cattle run formerly occupied by Henry O'Brien; Cornelius O'Brien, 300 acres at Bulli; Charles Throsby Smith, 300 acres at Mr Throsby's old station on the coast; John Wylie, 1000 acres; and M. J. Gibbons, 1000 acres.

McBrien was instructed to continue his survey of the coastline as far north as Port Hacking. He began his work from the Lake Illawarra entrance towards Black Head on April 31, 1825. On April 23 and 24 McBrien was engaged on a trace of the Minnamurra River, and on May 3 commenced a survey of Lake Illawarra, apparently in continuation of work done there in the previous year. Surveys were carried out later along Mullet Creek and the Macquarie Rivulet. Much survey work was done by..."
McBrien at this time, and many grants were marked out.

Surveyor Thomas Florance was at work in 1826, and
his plan shows coastal features and grants. Surveyor
Knapp was despatched to Illawarra in 1829 to locate land
for veterans who were to be settled there, and he was also
instructed to make a plan of the natural features of the
lands reserved for township purposes at Wollongong and
Kiama.

In 1830 Surveyor Robert Hoddle went to Illawarra,
and was asked to report on land available for small settlers.
He reported that there were many spots available where
the soil was excellent. There was vacant land, interspersed with much brush, between the Macquarie and
Minnamurra Rivers. Many fifty to sixty-acre farms
could be laid out under the mountains where Blaxland
had commenced to clear his grant, although the brush was
thick and the timber large.

In 1831 the average price of land in the Illawarra
was four shillings per acre, and a 1320-acre grant could
be purchased from the Crown for £384.¹

Surveyor Jacques carried out some topographical
surveys in 1831, particularly in the Kiama district.
While engaged on survey work near Black Head, he
reported that the back line of grants to Dr Bland, J.
McBrien and Thomas Hyndes in that locality had never
been set out, probably with a view to excluding others
from obtaining cedar. The brush there was said to be
impenetrable and the country broken by deep gullies.

Between 1832 and 1837 Surveyor Elliott carried out
many surveys in Illawarra. In June, 1837, he was
ordered to lay out the whole of the great reserve there in
farms not exceeding 100 acres. This land had been
reserved for small farms.

**SETTLEMENT IN THE PARISHES OF WOLLONGONG, KEMBLA, WONONA AND SOUTHEAST.**

These parishes lie at the northern end of the Illawarra
district between Lake Illawarra, Mullet Creek and Stan-
well Park. At Stanwell Park the coastal strip is very
narrow, and at Coal Cliff the tableland reaches the sea;

¹Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XVI, p. 166.

south of this point the plateau, misnamed the Illawarra
Range, recedes from the coastline, and the coastal plain
gradually widens. The destructive hand of man has not
completely obliterated its beauty, and the panorama from
Sublime Point or Bulli Lookout is world-famous.

Organized settlement in the vicinity of Wollongong
began in 1816, and the earliest grants bear date 1817.
The growth of settlement was very slow. Twelve grants
totaling an area of 16,050 acres were issued between 1817
and 1831 in the whole of the Illawarra district. The
earliest grants in the Parish of Wollongong were Robert
Jenkins’ 1000 acres, No. 52 on the parish map, dated
January 24, 1817, and David Allan’s 2000 acres, No. 53,
issued on the same date. Although John Oxley and
Charles Throsby used land near Wollongong for grazing
purposes, no grants were issued to them.

Portion of the town of Wollongong stands on Charles
Throsby Smith’s Bustle Farm grant of 300 acres. The
order for this land was issued in 1821, but the deed did
not issue until December 20, 1835. Charles Throsby
Smith was a nephew of Dr Charles Throsby, of Glenfield.
His first wife was Miss Broughton. C. T. Smith lived
to see the Illawarra a thickly settled district and Wollongong
a prosperous town. He died on September 25, 1876, aged
78 years.

Edward Bourke had an order dated 1821, and his
40-acre grant, No. 12 on the parish map, was issued on
January 8, 1840. The town of Wollongong stands partly
on Bourke’s grant. Other settlers, whose promises date
from 1821, were Thomas Martin, Malachy Ryan and T.
Moran. Only one of these men actually received a grant;
Malachy Ryan, and the deed issued for a 30-acre farm,
No. 20 of the parish, on May 1, 1833. Thomas Martin
had two promises, one for 60 acres and another for a like
quantity. Andrew Lysaght received the grant for one
of these, No. 33, on March 31, 1835; and the other passed
into the hands of John Plummett, whose grant, No. 17,
dates from July 19, 1838.

In 1825 John S. Spearing was promised 1000 acres,
and took up his land near Wollongong. The grant did
not issue until May 10, 1841, and stands in the name of
Robert Campbell and Charles Campbell. It appears as No. 7 on the map. Spearing's grant became known as Paul's Grove, and was later called Mount Keira estate. Spearing lived at Mount Keira house. J. T. Spearing also had a promise for 1000 acres, No. 8 of the parish, dated 1825, and this deed also was issued to Robert and Charles Campbell. The Campbells acted as trustees of Spearing's estate. J. H. Spearing arrived in New South Wales on the ship Horne in 1825.

Gregory Blaxland had a promise covering 1250 acres, dated 1820. The deed for this land was issued to John H. Plunkett on April 12, 1837. The grant was known as Keelogoys', or Gundarum. Wilco, who visited Illawarra, states that Plunkett, who was spending some time at his farm near Wollongong, gave the party a hospitable reception.* He mentions that Plunkett sold his farm for £14,000 which he had purchased two years earlier for £700.

Buxton, who visited Wollongong in 1830 says:

Even in this interesting district there are not many respectable residents, nor has much land been cleared, so that some time will elapse before its various resources are developed.

Mrs Jamima Jenkins was granted 2000 acres on September 24, 1834. This was No. 6 on the parish map, and the order was dated 1825. Mrs Jenkins was the wife of Robert Jenkins. The estate was known as Berkley. Mrs Jenkins had large holdings elsewhere, and did not reside at Illawarra. She died at her residence, Eagle Vale, Campbelltown, in April, 1842.† Referring to her death, the newspaper report says: "The poor were her clients, and Heaven's smile is now her reward."

By 1840 practically all the land around Wollongong had been alienated.

Parish of Kembla.

Settlement in this parish, which lies west and southwest of Wollongong, began in 1817, when George Malle obtained a grant of 300 acres on September 11. In the following year, W. F. Weston received a

*Wilks's Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition.
†Sydney Morning Herald, April 9, 1843.

promise of 500 acres. William Frederick Weston was a Lieutenant in the Army. His land was called West Horsley, and he died there on April 25, 1826, aged 33. The land was granted to Augusta Brooks and Elizabeth Weston on January 13, 1842. Richard Brooks, son of Captain R. Brooks, died at West Horsley on July 10, 1855. Both the grants referred to were on the northern side of Mullet Creek.

Settlement in this area appears to have remained at a standstill until 1825, when a number of persons took up land. Surveyor Knapp records a survey of ten lots on Dapto Creek in 1829 for veterans, for whom huts were also built. Knapp was instructed on April 10, 1829, to select a dry situation for the huts, and to point out the position of each site to Lieutenant Butler at Wollongong, who was to direct the operations of the building parties. The veterans settled there were John McKeith, Dan. McCauly, John Robin, Charles Clayton, Thomas O'Brien, William Millan or Mallon, James Mitchell, Benjamin Bundelt, Christopher Ecklin and J. Burnett. The veterans' grants were Nos. 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 9, 10, 37 and 38, Parish of Kembla. The original owners in many cases did not obtain the deeds of the grants; four only appear to have remained on the land, while the widow of a fifth received a title to a grant.

In 1825 John Stack was promised a grant of 300 acres, and a grant for this land was issued to Edward R. Stack on May 20, 1837. This grant is No. 55 on the parish map.

Portions 75 to 79 of the parish were granted to Jemima Jenkins in 1836. These lands were promised in 1821 to Isaac Cornwell, John Harris, J. Williams, Thomas Sims and W. Landon. Portion 59, granted to George W. Paul on May 1, 1833, had been promised in 1824; and Portion 61, a grant to Michael Stack in 1833, was promised in 1821.

A large area in this parish had been set aside to provide land for small settlers. It was referred to as the "Great Reserve." On June 16, 1836, instructions were issued to Surveyor Elliott to survey the whole of the Great Reserve. Apparently Elliott did not act on his instructions, for a letter dated June 30, 1837, informs him...
that the Governor had ordered the Reserve to be laid out in farms not exceeding 100 acres.


A large area of 2000 acres, originally promised to J. D. Wylie in 1829, was granted to Andrew Lang and Gerard Gerard on March 3, 1840. This property became known as Kembla Grunge, and Dr. Gerard Gerard lived there. Later it was the home of the Howarth family. Andrew Lang subdivided his portion of the grant in May, 1840, into thirty-four farms varying from ten to seventy acres. The land was sold on May 26, 1840, and realized £6576/4/6, the price per acre varying from £5 to £14/10/-.

Dr. Gerard subscribed £100 at this period to improve the road through what was called Wylie’s Flat. The name of the original owner, J. D. Wylie, had not been forgotten in 1840.

Between 1837 and 1849 about twenty-three portions were alienated in that section of the Parish of Kembla below the range, and over ninety portions were granted between 1850 and 1861. Demand for land in Illawarra increased greatly after 1850, probably owing to the influx of immigrants at that period.

American Creek.

On March 23, 1843, four grants were obtained by Henry Gordon, and they were described as having frontages to “American Creek.” Shortly afterwards a grant of twenty-four acres was issued to Patrick Lehaye. It, too, was on American Creek. A little settlement developed in this locality, and in March, 1859, a National School was completed. John McCredie, who was appointed in February of that year, was the first teacher. McCredie was a native of Ayrshire, Scotland. An Anglican church was erected at American Creek in 1860. The discovery of oil-bearing shale at American Creek is referred to elsewhere in this paper.

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1Field Book No. 253, Mitchell Library, Sydney.
2The Australian, May 23, 1840.
3Illawarra Mercury, March 27, 1840.
4Sydney Morning Herald, April 12, 1842.
and a portion of it was laid out as a village near Bellambi Point. The village was said to have been laid out with great care. A reserve for a public wharf or landing place was made in a bay on the coast, and a street named Leeby Crescent connected it with the village. An allotment had been sold for the purpose of erecting a store near the landing place. The streets had been laid out in such a way as to make it convenient to obtain water. The lots varied in area from half an acre to two and a half acres. A good coal seam had been discovered on the north side of Bellambi Creek, and its value was stressed. Several craft as well as a steamer had already taken in cargo there. The trustees of the estate had subscribed £100 to lay down moorings.

Little development occurred until the opening of the coal mine mentioned elsewhere in this account, when the shipping of the coal brought about an increase in population.

In April, 1861, an inn licensee was granted to Alfred Lorking. It was reported in 1862 that a contract had been let with the landed proprietors for ironbark and other trees for six shillings each, which were to be loaded at Bellambi. This appears to mark the beginnings of the trade in coastal hardwoods at this point.

A visitor to the Illawarra in 1862 says:

Bellambi is a busy little place, where all the coals are shipped from the mine of that name, being brought down by the tramway and shot right into the ship’s hold.

Development was very slow, and the population figures recorded in the Census of 1891 were 204. The township was, in fact, one of the smallest in the Illawarra district in 1891.

**Balgownie.**

The town of Balgownie is built on John Buckland’s 1920 acres.* The estate was subdivided in 1839 into 132 lots varying from ten to eighty acres. Coal was reported to have been found on the property. As an inducement to buy, it was stated that the “Great South Road passes through the estate and a part of the intended line of road along the Coast by Port Aiken, George’s River and Cook’s River to Sydney.”

Further references to the land at Balgownie were reported in 1840, when “four excellent farms” on the “celebrated Balgownie” estate at Fairy Meadow were advertised for sale; and in 1841, when Lots 19 and 22 of the village reserve at Balgownie were offered.

One Henderson, who visited New South Wales, and who went to Wollongong, refers to a “beautiful property in the immediate vicinity called Balgownie,” where he saw some splendid specimens of the cabbage palm.

In 1846 the sale of a forty-acre farm for £1000 is recorded, which indicates a considerable appreciation of land values.

John Buckland lived at Hoare Town, later called Douglas Park, when he received his grant. The birth of a son to his wife is recorded in 1831. It is doubtful whether he ever resided at Balgownie.

**Fairy Meadow.**

The country north of Wollongong in the vicinity of Balgownie was known for many years as Fairy Meadow. It was a picturesque and beautiful stretch of country. Colonel Mundy, who visited Wollongong in the late forties, writes:

The pretty village of “Fairy Meadow” is close to it, separated by a ridge of highland from the sea-board, barded by the moun-
tain range, with a meandering stream of fresh water running through the flat; settler’s houses perched on the hills, bark huts overgrown with passion flowers, vines, ivy or gourds; fields of growing wheat or maize with its tall green flails and yellow plumes; rude barns at the corners of the emlosures, where the cheerful sound of the flax reaches the traveller’s ear.

Some specimens of the cabbage palm still grew in the valley, but many of them had been destroyed for the sake of their edible shoots, or because the leaves were required by the makers of cabbage-tree hats.

One Harris, who visited Illawarra in the twenties, refers to Fairy Meadow:

"Our Antipodes."
The town of Bulli stands on grants to Cornelius O'Brien, William Bowman and George Tate. Cornelius O'Brien was an early settler who lived for nearly twenty years at Illawarra. He was a native of Wexford, Ireland, and arrived here at the close of the year 1815. At the invitation of his brother, Henry O'Brien, of Douro, Yass, he settled in that district about 1835. For some time he resided in a house later occupied by Hamilton Hume, to whom O'Brien sold the property. He then took up residence at Hardwicke, and finally removed to Bendimine, Yass, where he died on July 4, 1869, aged 73 years.* He married, at Appin, Miss Bronghton, sister of William Broughton, of Broughtonworth.

In 1828 there were only three or four houses in the Bulli district. Cornelius O'Brien's was the only one in 1825, and the others in 1828 were Peggy McGawley's and the Gerrity brothers.

William Bowman was related to the Bowmans of Richmond.

George Tate arrived in New South Wales on the Minerva in 1819 with his wife, Mary. For some time he was manager for Surveyor-General Oxley at Kirkham. Later he became a publican at Campbelltown. Henry O'Brien, a brother of Cornelius O'Brien, had a ticket of occupation at the Nive Islands at a place referred to as Tilboli, which was apparently a corruption of Bulli. The ticket was withdrawn on January 20, 1825. In March, 1825, Surveyor McBean had instructions to measure land for George Tate near the cattle run formerly occupied by Henry O'Brien. The land granted to George Tate was promised to Thomas Warton in 1825.

In 1825 there were wild cattle in the brushes at Bulli; these probably being the descendants of the cattle from the Cow Pastures. It was stated that at that period Cornelius O'Brien paid periodical visits to stations on the Murrumbidgee.

Sales of land occurred about Bulli from the forties.
In 1841 the estate of Bulli, consisting of 900 acres, was offered for sale privately. Some paddocks were laid down in English grasses; 200 acres were cleared, and about thirty acres were cut down, but not burnt off. There was a house on the property, and 30,000 bricks. Later the estate appears to have been subdivided, and twenty-two lots from 25 to 165 acres were advertised for sale.

A cottage residence at Bulli which had been occupied by Captain Westmacott was advertised as to let in September, 1844.

Cattle stealing was said to have been carried on to some extent at Bulli in 1844. A stockyard was discovered in thick scrub where the cattle were killed. Woodlands Estate, the property of Captain Westmacott, was sold in 1847 for £800. It was said that Captain Westmacott was about to visit England.

A steam mill was erected at Bulli in 1858 by Robert Somerville. It was reported to have been the first in the locality.

In 1861 a Sunday School was in operation at Bulli; it was taught by Messrs Somerville and Salter in the house of Mr and Mrs Salter.

A School of Arts called Bellambi and Bulli School of Arts was organized in 1861.

A new store owned by Cockerton & Company was opened in 1861.

Wesleyan services were held from about 1857 by George Somerville. The congregation increased, and a building intended originally for a barn was selected and altered for church purposes.

In July, 1862, a meeting was held to discuss the erection of a National School at Bulli. John Somerville offered a site for a school and residence. The sum of £500/10/- was collected for the work. In 1868 an appli-

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†The Australian, March 19, 1841.
‡Sydney Morning Herald, November 25, 1844.
§Ibid, January 27, 1847.
¶Illawarra Mercury, July 12, 1868.
††Ibid, January 21, 1862.

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stable.* There was also a Primitive Methodist chapel in the form of a Jewish tabernacle. It was used as a court-house on week days. A new court-house and public-house were in course of construction in 1889.

In July, 1880, Archbishop Polding proceeded to Bulli to bless a new school-church then being erected. It was dedicated to St Joseph.† The school had been established in lieu of a denominational school. The premises formerly used as a presbytery were handed over to the Sisters of St Joseph.

![Bulli Township, 1879.](image)

The ceremony of opening and blessing a new church was performed by Monsignor Lynch on September 11, 1881.‡ The school was opened early in 1882.

In 1871 the population of Bulli did not number 100 persons; in 1881 there were 1187 residents in the district. From the census figures of 1891 it is learnt that the population of Bulli and Woonona was 2578.

**Stanwell Park.**

The first settler here was Matthew John Gibbons. On August 13, 1824, Gibbons obtained a permit to occupy 600 acres of land described as at “a place called Watermolly,” distant seven miles from Port Hacking and three from

*Little Bullie.” It was to be used as a grazing run for the use of his herd, and the cattle were to be placed in charge of John Paid. It is not clear whether the land was at Wattamolla; it is probable that it was wrongly described. When the land was granted it was stated that the promise dated from 1824. The grant of 1000 acres was issued on August 8, 1833, although Gibbons had been in occupation long before. In April, 1826, Gibbons offered a reward for a mare lost from “Little Bullie near the Five Islands.”§ The grant was advertised for private sale in 1832, and was described thus:—

To be sold by private contract **Stanwell Park** with nearly three miles frontage, only thirty miles from Sydney Heads, as advertised in the Sydney Gazette of 15th October 1831 as Southend, and also known by the Aboriginal name of Little Bullie, and is to be sold under circumstances of a peculiar character, namely to cover among other debts incurred by an officer high in office in the Colony and his relative, one of whom has left the Colony, and left the Proprietor of the Estate liable for debts which he never received any value whatever for.

1000 acres of rich land with three miles of sea frontage, 40 rods of fencing would enclose it, the rest being surrounded by the coal cliff and mountains. There is a stockyard on the farm, and also a small herd of cattle, which would be sold with the Estate.

It would comprise a complete dairy farm.

Application to be made to Mr. Matthew John Gibbons, the Proprietor, 26 King Street, Sydney.

The land was not easy of access, a track from the road from Appin to Illawarra leading to it. Surveyor Govett reported on May 31, 1830, that he was stationed south of Stanwell Park, to which point he had with some difficulty brought his dray.

William Bucknell advertised in the Sydney Monitor of August 22, 1838, that he had purchased the farm situated at “Bole,” and known as Stanwell Park, and that he owned the stock on it.

Stanwell Park grant was owned at one period by Sir Thomas Mitchell, and it passed into the hands of his son, Mr Justice Hargrave purchased it later and built a country home on it. A visitor in 1870 describes the place. The

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*Sydney Gazette, April 8, 1826.
†Sydney Gazette, August 1, 1826.
‡Sydney Gazette, September 17, 1881.
first impression of the stranger was that no wingless creature could get down from the high land above without the aid of a balloon. Stanwell Park was a place of singular beauty. A considerable area of undulating land hemmed in by lofty mountains, and having a frontage to the ocean, had been partly cleared and cultivated. The fishing was said to be excellent, especially at a "place called the coal cliff."

Clifton.

The township of Clifton came into being in 1877, when the Coal Cliff Colliery was developed. From a Press report in 1877 it is learnt that a number of well-built weatherboard cottages with galvanized iron roofs had been erected about half a mile from the mine, and the spot was known as "the Village of Clifton."

A visitor in the following year stated that the owners of the property had preserved as far as possible the beauty of the vegetation, and palms and tree ferns threw their shadows on the "yet unformed streets of the rising township whilst the tangled mass of vines which stretched from tree to tree at the base of the cliffs had not been touched by the hand of man." The village itself consisted of a number of well-built comfortable cottages for the miners, placed in crescent form, with a good substantial structure in the centre intended for a village school. The manager, Mr Hale, had a villa residence almost on the edge of the cliffs.

A school was established in June, 1878, in a building lent by the mining company, the first teacher being W. McLean. Tenders for a school-house were called in January, 1879.

A telegraph office was in existence early in 1879, and steps were being taken to establish a post office. The office was opened later in the year. A news item mentioned that the village was small, but growing. A new general store had been opened, and another butchery and bakery were about to commence business.

Anglican service was held in the school-room every Sunday morning, and a Wesleyan service in the afternoon. A Roman Catholic church was in course of construction in January, 1885. Father Hayes held a service monthly in the School of Arts at this time.

The population had increased owing to the presence of navvies who were engaged on the railway then being built. It was complained that the cost of living at Clifton was as high as at Bourke. Goods were carried by sea to Wollongong and then carted to the township. Clifton had a population of about 300 to 400.

Unanderra.

Unanderra was originally known as the village of Charcoal or Charcoal Creek. It is built on Jemima Jenkins' grant.

In 1840 a Presbyterian school was established in the locality, and the first teacher was M. McPhail. A Roman Catholic school was also established in the same year in charge of J. Stapleton. The former school remained in existence for many years, and in 1859 the master was Richard Hawkins, who was appointed in April, 1859. Peter Treman was in charge of the latter school in 1845, and remained there for many years.

An inn, known as the "Farmer's Inn," was opened in July, 1856, when a ball and supper was held. A post office was established in 1860, Mr Russell being the first postmaster. John Richards' tannery was established about 1860, and for many years was one of the most important industries of the district. In 1880 it employed about twenty-eight men, and used from 150 to 200 hides weekly. The turnover was about £15,000 a year.

Woonona.

A Post Office was established at Woonona in 1859. A Presbyterian church was built and opened on September 29, 1871. The site was given by Rolf and Hale, and the building cost £250.
In August, 1871, Woonona was described as a small postal village which had a Wesleyan and Presbyterian church, a post office, a public house, a School of Arts, and a denominational school with fifty-six pupils. Close by was a Roman Catholic school.

A correspondent in 1879 referred to a small township called Woonona. The coal mine in the neighbourhood, which formerly employed a good many hands, was not working, and the population had drifted to Bulli.

WOLLONGONG—SURVEY OF THE TOWN.

When Surveyor-General Oxley was sent to Illawarra in 1816 to commence survey work there, he had instructions to reserve land suitable for township purposes. It is not clear whether any reserve was made at Wollongong at that time, but in 1826 Oxley reported that land for a township had been set aside. Surveyor McBriar was instructed to survey 300 acres for C. T. Smith at Throsby's old station on the coast. He was to inform Smith that the right to land on the bay, with a strip of land 100 feet wide, would be reserved to the public.

A statement appeared in the Press in 1826 to the effect that 500 acres of glebe land had been appropriated at the Five Islands for the purpose of a burial ground at Caymerne Point. One interment had already been made in the ground. Caymerne Point does not appear on any map, but probably it was the point at the southern side of the boat harbour at Wollongong. When the town was marked out in 1834 a small area was set aside at the eastern end of Crown Street near the beach as a Catholic cemetery. Doubtless it was at this point that burials had already taken place. This cemetery, much neglected and unfenced, is still in existence.

In 1827 Lieutenant Fitzgerald, of the 39th Regiment, who was then Commandant at Wollongong, complained that Mr Smith refused to allow persons landing at the boat harbour to obtain water from a pond which he claimed was on his land. The Surveyor-General, in his reply, pointed out that when he was at Illawarra (evidently in 1826) a road had been surveyed through Smith's farm to the beach, and that a road was reserved from the beach along Smith's east line to the pond for the very purpose of enabling the public to obtain water. The Government Reserve and the roads were marked out in Smith's presence and at his desire to prevent needless trespass on his property. A large part of the lagoon was included in the Crown and Church and School land east and south of Smith's boundary. The lagoon referred to is in the beach reserve west of the present surf sheds on Wollongong beach. It served as the town's water supply for many years.

In 1839 instructions were issued to make a plan of the natural features of the ground intended for a township at Wollongong. Surveyor Govett, reporting on this land in March, 1839, said that the reserve at Wollongong was nothing but a mass of poor sandy marsh land quite unsuitable for cultivation. In the previous year it had been pointed out by the Surveyor-General that four acres had been reserved at the boat harbour.

The Colonial Secretary, writing to the Surveyor-General on October 5, 1839, stated that applications had been received for land at Wollongong and that a plan of the town should be prepared as early as convenient, and in the following month instructions were issued to expedite the preparation of this.

Surveyor Elliott was directed by the Surveyor-General on January 24, 1832, to make the necessary survey on a scale of eight chains to the inch. He was informed that the ground consisted of a reserve of four acres and the land extending from Smith's property to Tom Thumb's lagoon. The survey was to show surface features, waterways, fencing and buildings. Elliott was to report on the best sites for the erection of public buildings such as church, gaol, court-house, market, hospital, etc. An earlier survey had been made by Surveyor Florance, to which Elliott was referred. Elliott's plan was transmitted to the Surveyor-General on May 2, 1833.

On November 11, 1834, the Colonial Secretary informed the Surveyor-General that the plan of the "Town of Wollongong" which had been submitted had been...
approved by the Governor. He was instructed to mark sites for a court-house, lockup, etc., and was informed that the Board on Police and Convict Buildings would supply a ground plan showing the layout required. The Governor also approved of the issue of a deed for C. T. Smith’s land, upon which a large section of the township had been marked. The purchase of a site of two acres for a church from Smith was also approved.

Draughtsman H. F. White was given the task of laying out the town in accordance with the plan. He reported on December 6, 1834, that he had marked out the streets in the presence of Smith. Two acres had been selected as a site for a Roman Catholic church. A sketch of the Protestant burial ground was also enclosed.

A plan of the town was forwarded to Smith, who was asked to point out the line of Crown and Keira Streets to the contractor who had undertaken to clear them.

The following notice appeared in the Government Gazette on November 26, 1834:

**TOWN OF WOLLONGONG.**

Notice is hereby given that a site has now been fixed upon for the Town of Wollongong, District of Illawarra, and that a Copy of the Approved Plan may be seen at the Office of the Surveyor General in Sydney, or of the Police Magistrate on the spot, agreeable to which the ground will forthwith be laid out.

The establishment of the new town was, of course, noticed in the Press of the time:

*The surveys of this township at Illawarra having been completed under the personal supervision of the Surveyor General, before long we may expect to see this fertile district assuming a degree of agricultural importance, which from the facility of conveying farm produce to market, cannot fail of making this part of the colony of the first consideration. A church, court house, and watch house will be commenced forthwith, of which, of course, will only be the forerunner of other buildings of equal importance.*

The Surveyor-General informed Surveyor Elliott in January, 1835, that he had been induced to divide the south-western sections of the town into allotments for sale, as he was desirous of affording the poorer people an oppor-

*Sydney Gazette, December 11, 1834.*

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tended to erect eight huts, each 20 feet by 12 feet. The Governor, however, did not approve of the plans for the officers’ quarters, as they were considered unnecessarily large. Instructions were given to prepare fresh plans, and the building decided upon was completed in 1830. The military did not use the barracks for very long; they were withdrawn in 1832, and doubtless the mounted police who replaced them occupied the barracks.

In 1832 it was reported that the mail arrived every Saturday at an indefinite hour, and the letters were distributed by the district constable at his house. It is not clear where this stood, but probably it was on the reserve.

A contract for the erection of a Court House was let to George Brown in 1834. The military barracks had hitherto served as a court-room. It was said in 1832 that the justice hall was a room nine feet by eight feet, and the entrance was by a back door.

Backhouse, the Quaker, who visited Wollongong in 1836, said that the buildings then erected were a police office, two stores, two public houses, a Roman Catholic chapel, and a few dwelling houses. A barn was fitted up as an Episcopal place of worship.

One of the earliest storekeepers in Wollongong was Mrs Fuller, grandmother of the late Sir George Fuller, who had a shop in Corrimal Street.

When the town was laid out, a market square was provided on the plan. In the thirties and forties auction sales of stock were held there. In addition, stocks were erected in the square to lock round the legs of drunks and other offenders. The law-breakers were provided with a plank to sit on in the centre of the square, and two planks were locked round their legs between the knees and ankles.

In 1838 the Post Office was removed from the courthouse to E. Palmer’s store. Palmer was appointed postmaster, and conducted the post office in conjunction with his business.

A weekly market was established in 1839, and a subscription list opened to build a market building. A brewery also was established by a Mr Mackie, and Wollongong was said to be “improving very fast.”

Commander Wilkes, who visited the town in 1839, said it was a small, thriving place, and would be the principal one of the district. Until 1840 a water-mill and windmill ground wheat near Wollongong. In July, 1840, a steam-mill owned by a man named Palmer commenced operations, and was said to be a great convenience. Land was sold in 1840 in Crown, Church, Crown and Burrelli Streets for from £1 to £4 5/- per foot. Shortly afterwards lots in Crown Street brought £5 10/- per foot.

A news item in 1841 said that Wollongong possessed two splendid inns, the Governor and the Wollongong. The item continued:—

This picturesque district will, it is hoped, become the resort of our Sydney fashionable, and well deserves the appellation of the Brighton of New South Wales.

At a sale of town lots in 1841 land to the value of £826 was sold—twelve lots in all—at prices ranging from £1 to £4 15/- per foot. New “elegantly finished brick houses” were offered for sale during the same year. It was pointed out in 1842 that a roadway to the beach from the pier head to permit of the carriage of goods for shipment was desirable. Later in the same year a news item said that C. T. Smith was having a “team road” laid down from his stores to the beach.

The great depression of the forties seriously affected Wollongong. In 1842 it was reported that the population had considerably decreased and that sixty-four houses were vacant. The item continued:—

A facetious friend of mine says, if a twenty-four pugular were placed at the head of any street, and discharged, that the leader messenger would seek in vain for a moving thing of human shape to strike against.

ILAWARRA AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

A Library and Reading Room was opened in 1844 in a cottage lent by C. T. Smith. It contained 200 volumes.
A move towards the formation of an Agricultural Society was made early in 1844, and the prospectus of the "Illawarra Agricultural and Horticultural Society" was published on March 5, 1844. The subscription was fixed at one shilling per month. Money was still scarce in 1844, and it was thought this would be the easiest method of collecting the subscriptions. A meeting was held on April 12 to elect officers; Edmund Wood, of Goulburn, was elected president, and Captain Westmacott secretary.

One of the town's difficulties for many years was the water supply. A newspaper correspondent in 1847 said that Wollongong was anything but a well-watered township, and, in order to procure good water, "the good people must go a distance of two or three good miles." The writer continues:

On one occasion observing a tradesman indulging in a libation resembling soap, I inquired whether it was his usual practice to quench his thirst with soap, when he replied to my astonishment, that it was not soap he was drinking but Wollongong water.

It was said in 1849 that the town of Wollongong was "looking more lively and well to do." The number of empty houses seemed much diminished, and those occupied were tolerably clean and well ordered.

Colonel Mundy, who visited Wollongong in 1849, made some interesting remarks about it:

There is a painful appearance of by-gone better days about Wollongong and its neighbourhood. The fictitious value of land, at that period of the history of the colony when its follies and misfortunes formed its leading features, was one of the causes of the decline of this town. Mechanics came in crowds to what they imagined a good market for their labour and skill, houses were run up, but disappointed in their expectations, they went off to Port Phillip and elsewhere.

Colonel Mundy stated that the town contained about 120 houses and 500 or 600 inhabitants. One-fifth of the buildings were tumbling down and tenantless, two-fifths were publie houses (but this is a gross exaggeration.—J. J.),

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and the rest belonged to settlers, shopkeepers and professional men. A Roman Catholic chapel of stone, nearly finished, was intended to replace a "modest wooden edifice."

Captain Henderson, who visited Wollongong in the forties, said it was a pretty little township or village. It was then a thriving place, but the depression had seriously affected it. About two-thirds of the houses were uninhabited.

A newspaper correspondent, writing in 1855, said Wollongong was a very agreeable retreat from the bustle of the metropolis. The people seemed rather given to lying in bed late, but that was a fault they shared with the country people of Australia as a class. The town could be reached in six hours' steaming from Sydney for a cost of as many shillings.

Writing a few weeks later, the correspondent said that the arrival or departure of a steamer was an event, and there was a strong muster on the pier in such cases. There were two regular hackney coaches in the town, and both would be found, unless otherwise engaged, on the pier. Like most country towns, Wollongong consisted of one main street, pretty well filled with buildings, and a number of parallel and cross streets which each boasted of but few houses. Each principal religious denomination had a good church. The most striking building in the town was the National School, a neat structure of brick with private apartment and offices in the centre. Two wings were used for school purposes. The Post Office was in the main street opposite Elliott's Hotel. The town was well supplied with stores and shops, and prices were nearly as cheap as at Sydney. The townspeople were said to be "very good sort of folks, rather fierce at election time and a little given to squabbling over petty matters. . . . They must have some sort of entertainment, and a little borough politics afford very excellent amusement in their way."

[To be continued.]

*Experiences and Adventures in New South Wales.
*Sydney Morning Herald, August 30, 1855.