

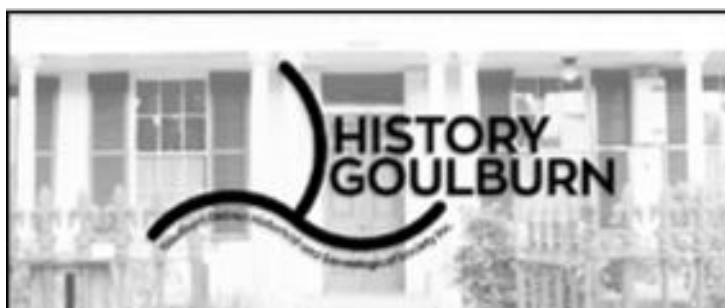
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Goulburn District Historical and Genealogical Society Inc.

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Meetings

General meetings will be held on the 4th Thursday of February, April, June, August (AGM) and October at the Goulburn Workers Club, McKell Place at 10.30am. All are welcome. December Christmas function location to be decided.

Access to Archives

Public access to our archives is available at the temporary research centre situated at 324 Sloane Street between 10am and 4pm every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, or by appointment by ringing (02) 4821 1156. Research material is also available at the Regional History area of the Goulburn Mulwaree Library.

Research

Research enquiries welcome.

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Membership Fees:

Junior (under 18 years)	free
Single	\$20.00
Family (2 adults)	\$25.00
Corporate	\$150.00

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President's Report

Another year in the life of History Goulburn is ending with our AGM happening at 10.30am Thursday 24 August at the Goulburn Workers Club. I hope as many members as possible can be there and catch up with everyone.

As always, the AGM will elect a new committee – and anyone at all interested is encouraged to nominate by 19 August. Please email historygoulburn2580@gmail.com if you need a nomination form and/or would like more information. The committee meets once a month at a time suitable to all members. Please think about coming on to the committee..

Our last members meeting in June was at St Clair, enabling everyone to see the ongoing progress of the major conservation work there. Although the house is not spic and span, it is now healthy and safe, and just biding its time until its second and, hopefully, final stage of conservation – and its next 180 years of life, now assured because of Council's conservation work.

The Coach House, behind St Clair, has been converted into a bright and roomy Research Centre over its two floors.

We were hoping to have a 'soft' opening of St Clair in October, but with the hopefully impending stage 2 work, we are now planning just a weekend public opening of St Clair in mid November and use that to generate local interest and encourage volunteer museum guides. Thus, we will be easily able to vacate the building when Stage 2 begins – and move in permanently when it ends a few months later.

Although this brief opening is not ideal, we feel that, after six years of St Clair being closed, we need to allow our local community a peek in, so to speak, and to hopefully whet people's appetite for enjoying the future of St Clair Museum of Goulburn.

I look forward to seeing members at the AGM, Thursday 24 August.

Jennifer Lamb



St. Clair Cottage - Research Centre



Still some work still to be done



Members Inspecting St. Clair Cottage, June 2023

Identities

Link With the Past

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 27 March 1926

Old Goulburn Days Recalled

The death of Mrs Southey, wife of Mr E. H. Southey of Bowral, severs another of the fast disappearing links with the early days of Goulburn. Mrs. Southey was the daughter of the late N. C. Phillips, one of the pioneers of this city, who in 1840 came to Goulburn and assumed the position of manager of "Lansdowne," Mr William Bradley's station. He resided at Lansdowne until his death in 1863.

Mrs. Phillips was also a very old resident of Goulburn. In 1845 she arrived by coach and was engaged as a governess to the family of Mr. Bradley. She married Mr. Phillips and after that gentleman's death their eldest son, Mr. C. C. Phillips became manager of Lansdowne until Mr. Bradley's when the family moved to Lansdowne Terrace (long since demolished to make room for the railway) and thence to Irriwilbin, Rosemonte. Mrs. Phillips died in London on May 21, 1885.

There are now only three of the Phillips family alive, Mrs. Simpson, Mr.

Spence Phillips, and Miss E. A. Phillips, recently returned from missionary service in the East.

Glance at 56 Years' Work Here before the Railway

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 1 July 1927.

In view of the fact that with today's issue the Goulburn Evening Penny Post enters upon a new epoch having amalgamated with its contemporary, The Southern Morning Herald, a brief review of its genesis and career may be expected.

Practically, the Post was established in 1870 by the late Mr. Thomas Daniel and the late Mr. George Gray. Mr. Daniel was born in Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, and was apprenticed to the printing in Sunderland. He was engaged to come to NSW to work for Stevens and Stokes, the predecessors of the Sydney Morning Herald holding the position of overseer of the jobbing office. After working there for some years he opened a jobbing-office in York Street, and subsequently in Market-street, Sydney. He was the master of the trade in all its branches, and was also a practical bookbinder.

Mr. Daniel relinquished his Sydney office to engage in mining on the Adelong field. Being unsuccessful, he was returning to Sydney, but while he was stopping at Goulburn his services were secured by the late Mr. W. R. Riley for the Goulburn Herald. The position of overseer becoming vacant soon after, Mr. Daniel was appointed to it. He remained with Mr. Riley for ten years. Then he and Mr. Gray, the latter being a fellow employee purchased by tender the plant needed for the Goulburn Evening Penny Post. This paper had been started by Mr. J. L. Harris, who had obtained the use of a plant formerly used for printing a local Church of England paper called the "Southern Observer." Mr. Harris was unsuccessful, becoming involved in legal costs, though, it is thought, an article written by Mr. J. Henniker Heaton, and the tenders were invited for the purchase of the type and machinery. (Mr. Henniker Heaton went to England, was elected a member of the British Parliament, was knighted and became known far and wide for his advocacy of penny postage).

The late Mr. George Gray, Mr. Daniel's partner, was, besides being a practical printer, a capable shorthand reporter. He was an apprentice of Sir Jacob Pitman, the inventor of the system of stenography bearing his name. After the lapse of some years Mr. Daniel bought Mr. Gray's interest in the Post, and Mr. Gray took over the Yass Tribune, which he conducted for some years. With two such experienced men in charge of the mechanical department of the Post, it was always well turned out, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find a local versitier declaring – Well printed as any, Our paper today, And sold for a penny By Daniel and Gray.

The Post was popular from the start, and as the years went by its circulation grew rapidly both in town and country. When Mr. Thomas Daniel died his interests passed to his surviving sons, Mr. Walter Daniel and Mr. Alfred Daniel. Later Mr. Walter Daniel's sons, Messrs. Tom and Jack Daniel, became associated with their father.

There, were many changes in the literary department of the Post until the late Mr. T. J. Hebblewhite and Mr. H. Pinn became associated. It is not too much to say that under them the Post attained a very high standard, and wielded a powerful influence. Mr. Pinn was editor for about 40 years until his retirement, three and a half years ago, and he and Mr. Hebblewhite worked together for some 35 years. They were responsible for the leading columns of the paper and took prominent part in the politics of the day.

While they did not believe in a journal being colourless they recognised as, of course every journal should that the opposition should be treated with absolute fairness and be allowed to air its views in the columns of the paper. The Post early identified itself with the policy of free trade and the

taxation of land values, the latter to be accompanied by the remission of other forms of taxation. It played no small part in bringing about the amendment of the Local Government Act.

The, proprietor's aim is that under the amalgamation the city and district shall be supplied with a paper which shall be worthy of a district of the importance of Goulburn.

Council Notes

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 21 October 1927

Mr. J. Freeman moved that the council be asked to install a drinking fountain at the corner of Faithfull and Addison streets near the culvert outlet. It was a necessary facility he contended as the town was a good step from the western end and would be a boon in the summer. Mr. W. Cambridge suggested that a trough for horses be also placed at the same spot and it was decided to add this to the motion which Mr. S. Yates seconded and it was carried.

Roberts' Park

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 15 November 1932.

Last summer "The Evening Penny Post" directed attention to the need for dressing facilities at Roberts' Park bathing resort. The Council gave assurance that the sheds would be erected, but several Sundays have seen large crowds there this summer and still there are no sheds. There is also need for some supervision of the park on Sundays in order that reasonable decorum can be preserved. The throwing of broken bottles into the pool and the pelting of mud by lads must be stopped. In Roberts' Park Goulburn has an ideal picnic ground, and if it can be made, like Belmore Park, a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

Roberts Park Bathers

Scantily dressed bathers at Roberts' Park, North Goulburn, will in future run the risk of a prosecution. Following representations by the Mayor, Ald. Goodhew, the police have decided to take the matters up, and will make periodical visits to the swimming resort, with a view to seeing that the laws of common decency are observed.

An announcement to this effect was made by the Mayor at last night's council meeting, referring to a recent report in the "Post", relative to the conduct of certain swimmers. Ald. Turnbull suggested that the council insist on regulation costumes – possibly neck to knee.

The Mayor mentioned that a meeting was to be held in Goulburn in the near future for the purpose of forming a branch of the Royal Life Saving Society. It was probably that a number of young men would then be selected to patrol the area, and see that proper order was maintained. The council was hopeful of having the dressing sheds, promised some time ago, erected early next month.

Goulburn People

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 19 May 1926

To be Found Everywhere

During a discussion at the meeting of the Goulburn Chamber of Commerce on Monday night, references were made to the ubiquity of Goulburn people, who it was said, were to be found everywhere. One member related an experience which he had had a little while ago while on a holiday tour in Tasmania.

During the trip which he had made through the Huon Valley in company with 15 other tourists, he discovered by chance that 13 out of the 15 people came from Goulburn, although some of them had not been here for many years.

Kenmore School

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 23 November 1927.

Mr. J. M Tully who made representation to have the Kenmore School reopened, has been informed by the Under Secretary for Education that the Inspector's report of the proceedings discloses that a very decided majority of the parents are in favour of the retention of the existing arrangements whereby the children attend North Goulburn school, the Department paying conveyance subsidy thereto at schedule rates to all eligible applicants. In view of this attitude of a majority of the parents, the Department is of opinion that no further action should be taken

Model of Sedan Car

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 4 February 1927

A very fine model of a sedan car, the work of Master Rowlands, the 16 years old son of Mr. and Mrs. A Rowlands, of Currawang, is being displayed in one of the show windows of Goulburn Motors Ltd. it has been made, almost entirely from benzene tin. The wheels are of wood, and have detachable rims made from the tin. There are two gears, forward and reverse, hand and foot brakes, and steering gear. The youthful mechanic has paid great attention to detail. The glass windows in the doors, all of which are fitted with miniature locks, are moveable. In constructing the model young Rowlands has displayed great ingenuity. A model of a dodge car which he made a couple of years ago was forwarded to standardised Motors Ltd., the Sydney agents, who showed their appreciation by giving him a cheque of £5.5.0 for it

Mr. Arthur Roger,

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 11 February 1926.

For some years held the position of manager of the grocery department at Messrs. A. M. Hunt & Co, died at the district hospital at 10.30 on Wednesday night after a brief illness. He complained of sickness on Monday afternoon and was forced to take to bed. Becoming worse on the Wednesday afternoon he was conveyed to the district hospital and a operation was performed but he rapidly sank and passed quietly away. He was 37 years of age.

He leaves a widow (nee Pearl Warrington). The young couple had only been married about a year and the deepest sympathy is felt for the widow, who has many friends in the city. The Late Mr. Roger was well known and highly esteemed. He was born in Dundee, Scotland where his parents reside. He served with credit in Egypt and Palestine during the war, and was a member of the Goulburn RSL. The funeral took place this afternoon at the Presbyterian portion of the general cemetery

Faithfull Dog

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 20 February 1926

Diggers Friend Remembers

A touching incident occurred on Tuesday the connection with the recent death of Mr. Arthur Roger. When Mrs. Roger left her home on Wednesday morning last she was under the impression that her husband's dog, a kelpie, had been taken in charge by friends. A day or so later she visited the home of the latter and was grieved to learn that the Digger's dog had never been seen since its master's death

The young widow assisted by several friends searched the city for some time with no avail and at last called at the Goulburn District Hospital to see the sister who had nursed her husband. To her amazement and joy "Trimmer", the missing kelpie leapt into her arms. He had gone straight to the hospital on the day of the funeral and had refused to be turned away. When it is remembered Mr. Roger had been carried to the hospital in an ambulance and that the dog had never been before to that institution, the occurrence assumes a remarkable appearance. Neither had his mistress walked from her home to the hospital, her visits to her husband being by car.

"Trimmer" still mourns his master, but those who loved the latter are fostering his pet for the sake of the bereaved widow.

Landmark Disappears

Goulburn Evening Penny Post 6 September 1927.

With the re-building of the shop until recently occupied by Pratt's jewellers, and old Goulburn Landmark has disappeared. The premises situated opposite the Town Hall have been occupied by various firms of jewellers and watchmakers for the best part of half a century. Over 10 years ago Messrs. Daniels & Day set up a business on the site, the partnership being later dissolved and the business carried on by Mr. Day. Mr. Day sold out to John Jerger & Son, but again acquired the business sometime afterwards. He ultimately disposed of the business to Mr. Simons, who was succeeded some years ago by Mr. C. S. Boyd. In the last few years the business had been carried on under the name of "Pratt's". now the building will be remodelled and a modern front installed.

District Snippets.

- Death of Miss Rachel Craig, 1900 at her residence "Lossie", upper Clifford Street aged 60 years. Eldest daughter of Robert Craig, she came to Goulburn as an infant. She raised the three children of her late sister.
- Catherine Bourke (23) died Pomeroy. Born Merrill. Appeared to have suffered severe burns, after falling into the fire after a fit.
- Eva Heaton (9) died at her parent's residence from a lingering illness. Interred Roman Catholic Cemetery, Gurrunda.
- E. C. Manfred won third prize of 30 guineas for a design of Grafton Jail in 1891.
- Henry Schnoor, second hand dealer of Clifford Street, Goulburn found murdered from a pick axe to the head.
- James Chisholm of Kippilaw was thrown from his buggy after hitting a stump a short distance from Goulburn. Bruised, but otherwise uninjured.
- Joseph Nicholls dropped down dead, while walking near the Jewish burial ground. An inquest returned a verdict of death by visitation of God.
- On the site of the Rural Bank of NSW, stood the Bridge Hotel named from the bridge over the stream that crossed Auburn street.
- Part of the original building of the Tattersalls Hotel on the corner of Auburn and Clinton Streets was built by William Bradley for his "Town" house and later became a bank before a Hotel.
- The Baptist Church in Bourke Street was the "South" Goulburn Presbyterian Church built in 1887 named Trinity Church. It was sold to the Baptist Church in 1901.
- A peculiar feature in Goulburn 1853 was the way in which cottages were built generally on the cross streets. Right up to the alignment without verandahs or shutters, you stepped off the street into your best room. In the best part of Auburn Street were many wooden cottages built this way.
- On Saturday night for the first time the streets of Goulburn were lit up by the public corporation lamps. This is a great improvement, and must tend to impress visitors with a much better opinion of the town than they otherwise would entertain. On Monday night however the westerly winds prevented two or three of the lamps from being lit. There at present 14 lamps, placed at corners of the streets. Goulburn Herald 1869
- I hereby caution the public against giving credit to my wife Jessie McIntosh, as I will not be answerable for any debts she may contract after this date. George A Douglas. Goulburn Herald 1851.

In awe, I watched the waxing moon ride across the zenith of the heavens like an ambered chariot towards the ebony void of infinite space wherein the tethered belts of Jupiter and Mars hang, for ever festooned in their orbital majesty. And as I looked at all this I thought... I must put a roof on this toilet.

Les Dawson

Traveller's Travails – Early Journeys to Goulburn

© Roger Bayley 2023

These days you can jump into a car and waft down the M5 to Sydney in a couple of hours, but it wasn't always so.

Early travel was hindered by rough tracks, unbridged rivers, and lack of horses. Here are some tales told by early travellers to Goulburn by foot and by bullock wagon.

The first is the journal of John Wilson and his companions, who were sent by Governor Hunter in 1798 to dispel the rumour that China lay a short march to the southwest of Sydney. Convicts had been escaping in search of paradise, only to perish in the bush. Wilson was the best bushman in the colony, so the Governor recruited him to guide a party of convicts to see for themselves what lay "over the hill." The convicts soon turned back, but Wilson and two companions carried on and made some useful discoveries.

A lad named John Price kept a journal. Near modern Buxton, he was the first European to describe the wombat - *"... which Wilson called a Whom-Batt, which is an animal about twenty inches high, with short legs and a thick body forwards with a large head, round ears and very small eyes, is very fat, & has much the appearance of a badger ..."*, the koala - *"... which the natives call a cullawine, which much resembles the sloths in America..."* and an unlucky lyre-bird - *"...here I shot a bird about the size of a pheasant, but the tail of it very much resembles a peacock with two large long feathers which are white orange and lead colour, and black at the ends, its body betwixt a brown and green, brown under his neck and black upon his head, black legs and very long claws."*

The next day he described the Argyle Apple tree, and felt pangs of hunger that eventually drove them back - *"... here we saw another sort of timber; the leaves are lighter than a powder blue, the tree is low much like an apple tree, the bark much like a mahogany, ... we had nothing to eat for two days but one rat about the size of a small kitten. I myself was very sick, and wished myself at home again, the other man was sick like me, for he had hurt his leg and was not able to walk. Wilson was well and hearty."*

The adventure ended when they reached the Wollondilly River in the Burratorang Valley - *"... our shoes was gone & our feet were very much bruised with the rocks, so that we asked Wilson to return."*

The expedition was judged such a great success that it led to another, which terminated only ten kilometres east of modern Goulburn.

The writer was effusive in his description of the Southern Highlands - *"...we fell in with a fine run of water. (The Wingecarribee River). Here we saw a great many ducks, but did not like to waste our powder and shot about them. Wilson saw a large green, yellow and black snake; he directly run and caught it by the head, which made us an excellent dinner ... We walked about a mile when we came into a most beautiful country, being nothing but fine large meadows with ponds of water in them, fine green hills, but very thin of timber. We got to the top of this hill (Mount Gingenbullen), where we had a most delightful prospect of the country, and in my opinion one of the finest in the known world."*

On the 23rd of March 1798 they ascended Mount Towrang for a view of the Goulburn Plains – “... Came to the top of a high hill on purpose to see how the country looked towards the S.W., and found it to be a stoney barren country. Saw some mountains about 11 miles from us. We came to them and got up one of them, to satisfy ourselves with a view to get further into the country, if a good one. We found to the S. W. that it was a scrubby, hilly country, and nothing to be got, so we concluded to return back, for fear that we should not have biscuits enough to bring us back, for if we could have got anything to eat we should not have returned towards home yet awhile, having had no signs of a kangaroo for three days, and we really believe that there never was a native in this part of the country. We saw from the mountain a river that seemed to run away to the W'd; ... We found it to be about the size of the Nepean River; with a great run of water... To the southward it runs to an open country at a great distance. The tops of the hills looks to be very thin of timber.”

Then they turned back for Sydney.

Another generation would pass before Governor Macquarie ordered a cart road to be built from the Sydney across the Cookbundoon Range to Tarlo, to expand the grazing potential of the colony.

Macquarie set out to inspect the road in 1820, with his Vice Regal entourage – a heavy carriage and two baggage carts. It was a wet year, and they were the first vehicles to leave wheel tracks on the Goulburn Plains.

After crossing the river at Kenmore they followed the south bank past the site of “Riversdale”. In his “Journal of a Tour of Inspection to the Western and Southern Countries” the Governor wrote:

“From thence we travelled through a closer forest country, along the bank of the river till it takes a sudden bend to the westward, where a small rivulet (Mulwaree River) from the south east joins it; forming at this point of junction a most beautiful reach or bason. The country here opens again, into very extensive plains or downs to the westward, forming with the river a very rich landscape, plains, and occasional pretty little hills interspersed in them, extending for 7 or 8 miles to the westward. The native name of these plains is Mulwaree – but which I have named “Breadalbane Plains.” From the junction of the two Rivers we continue our journey in a south easterly direction – till we reach the north west boundary of “Goulburn Plains” – so named by Mr. Meehan the first discoverer; but which in fact is a continuation of the Great Mulwary Plains.”



Junction of Wollondilly and Mulwaree rivers, in flood. February 2020.
Photo Darcy Kennedy

They camped in the vicinity of Lansdowne Bridge or Junction Creek – “Here we halted at ¼ before 4 p.m. and pitched our camp in a noble extensive rich meadow near a large pond of fresh water – the cattle being up to their bellies in as fine long sweet grass as I ever saw anywhere ... the grandeur, beauty and richness, independent

of the usefulness of the country we are now in, sufficiently compensates for all the labour and toils of this day's journey."

As soon as the Governor opened the territory, speculators set off for the "New Country" with sheep and cattle. Only the rich had horses, so most people walked.

Of the 1,141 people recorded in this district in the 1828 census, only 109 were "free". The rest were mostly convicts, emancipists, or Ticket of Leave holders. Many of them hobbled here on bare feet.

Convicts were issued with two pairs of boots per year, but they quickly disintegrated. The records of the Goulburn Police Court contain many complaints from convict shepherds that they were expected to tend the sheep barefoot in the frost.

I could find no convict accounts of the trudge to Goulburn, but the author of "The Adventures of Ralph Rashleigh" tells of the difficulty he faced walking from Hyde Park Barracks to Emu Plains, near Penrith -

(The anonymous author wrote in the third person) - *"He was compelled to take the long tramp ... in a light pair of shoes, which were in tatters before he reached Parramatta, the end of his first day's stage. The next day he was obliged to walk the remaining twenty miles barefoot over the roughest roads, so that his feet were cut and bleeding before he reached his destination."*

By that time he was - *"in too extreme a condition of physical wretchedness to be conscious of anything but fatigue and pain, scarcely raising his head to look whither his lacerated feet were carrying him."*

"Ralph" might have suffered from the lack of shoes, but he wrote that emancipists and ticket-of-leave holders often went without shoes altogether. He admired the Australian-born daughter of a nearby Irish settler - *"... her deeply tanned features were handsome, and her body strong and lissom."* But - *"... one serious defect all the girls possessed ... was the unnaturally large size to which their feet grew, shoes being luxuries which were only worn on special occasions."*

Perhaps they were better suited to a long tramp than a blackmailing clerk from London.



History Goulburn members resting on a stone bench beside a rock shelter on the Old Argyle Road.
Photo Annette Murphy 2007

A township was established at Goulburn Plains in 1829. Wayside inns sprouted up to provide food and accommodation, but cash was scarce, so poor people sought shelter from the rain in hollow trees or rock shelters, which can still be found near Hanging Rock and the old Argyle Road. Large trees grew in the primeval forest and there are accounts of people taking shelter in hollow logs, often sharing them snakes and other wildlife.

There is a great story of three young adventurers who walked to Goulburn in search of a job.¹

The anonymous writer had just completed his apprenticeship as a printer in Sydney when the banks crashed in the 1840's, sending thousands out of work. Forced to sleep rough, he would – *"... go to the Domain, kick up a cow to get a dry place, sleep the sleep of the weary till daylight, and then go down to the Centipede Rock, have a swim, dry myself, and into town for breakfast ... a penny roll, a cup of coffee and a saveloy ..."*

He and his two chums (Bob McGowan and John Regan) set off with some tea, sugar, and a billycan. Bob carried a flute, which proved to be their salvation.

Arriving footsore at Campbelltown they came up with a marvelous scheme – *"...there was an inn near, and in front of it were a great many bullock-teams ... we determined that Bob should bring us into notice by means of his flute, which he did by walking in amongst the bullock-drivers in the bar of the pub, and striking up a lively tune. This had the effect of turning all eyes upon us. At the request of the company we drank, and Bob played, dances were danced, songs were sung – one real genuine specimen of the colonially-cured declaring in song that -*

*"He'd a hole in his heart you could roll a bunch of cabbage in,
And all for the love of charming Molly Bralligin."*

By this means they hitched a series of rollicking rides to Marulan – *"a most God-forsaken-looking place."*

"Next day we reached the Wollondilly, close to Goulburn; there we had a good bathe in the river, overhauled our wardrobe, togged ourselves out as best we could, and pushed into the town."

Jack obtained work as a butcher and fell in love with a lass named Sibby Alderson. Bob got a job with his relatives, and the writer found a position at the "Goulburn Herald," and left this priceless description of Jones, the proprietor of our first newspaper – *"...a surly, greedy old curmudgeon."*

The Creak of the Wheels -

Two-wheeled bullock drays were the only vehicles that could negotiate steep-sided gullies and creek crossings. Pioneers who set out with all their worldly goods packed on a waggon would amble beside the plodding bullocks. A sailcloth strung beneath the cart provided a hammock at night and a rocking crib for the babies by day. Slow travel made them prey for gangs of escaped convicts, and the thick scrubs of the Bargo Brush and the Wombat Brush (Penrose) were infested by cut-throats, necessitating the advice that travellers should travel in large groups for mutual protection against robbery.

The pioneers of Bungonia - Styles, De Kerrilleau and Reid – followed Hamilton Hume's line of blazed trees to Inverary with their wives and families this way, driving their flocks and herds. Legend has it that J.R. Styles was the first to tackle the journey, his cattle trampling down the undergrowth to break a path that would later be called the Argyle Road. He said that it took 8 days to travel from Sydney by cart. Later travellers would have envied him.

As traffic increased the tracks deteriorated, iron tyres carving deep ruts and the hooves churning up mud. By the 1830's travel times had blown out to three weeks, and up to three months when drays were bogged in wet weather. In 1838, it cost more to send a ton of goods from Sydney to Goulburn than it did to send it to England.



"Bullock Teams on the Razorback" circa 1857

Settlers sent a bullock-team to Sydney twice a year to purchase stores. Others bought goods straight off the back of the cart in Market Square. Oxen were set loose to graze on Mulwaree Flats, but some teamsters who couldn't wait to sluice the dust from their throats in the Grafton Street grog-shops would leave the patient animals parked outside, where they would munch at anything within reach. This left the street so bare that pepper trees were planted to provide summer shade that would not be eaten by stock.

A trip by bullock wagon from Goulburn to Laggan took four days in good weather, camping at Kingsdale, Mt. Wayo and Woodhouselee². Inns were provided for those who could afford it, and most of them still stand.

Charles Prell recalled that flour was delivered in a large square iron tank, (some of which can still be seen around the district), and explains how it was hermetically sealed –

*"We would take about a bucketful out of the top, light a candle and put it in, screw on the top and whitelead (solder) it. We generally had two or three of these tanks and the flour kept all right for the six months or so until the next lot of supplies came along."*³

F. Cooper of Willeroo drove the first commercially operated four-wheeled wagons on the Great South Road in 1854 -

*"At this time there were only two four-wheeled wagons on the road leading out of Sydney, and two such "ships of the desert" they were that it might have taken a team of elephants all their time to shift them out of a bog."*⁴

Police Senior Superintendent Brennan recalled the heavy traffic in 1859 - ⁵

"Bullock and horse teams were then the bush railways ... in the wool season miles of the Great Southern Road would be taken up with bullock and horse teams heavily laden with bales of wool en-route to Sydney, and during six months of the year the traffic was enormous. The usual number of bullocks attached to a wool dray ranged from 20 to 30. The drivers were expert in their profession, and it was marvellous to notice how each dumb animal was trained to recognise his name, and to respond to the emphatic call of his driver or the loud crack of his stockwhip. When camped for the night, and before the bullocks were unyoked, certain of the animals on whom reliance could be placed had large bells suspended from their necks, and when those multi-sonorous instruments were in full play, the opossums, bears, and kangaroos of the forest sought refuge in flight."

Passenger coaches began operation on the Great South Road in 1837, when it took 8 days to travel from Sydney to Goulburn, at a cost comparable to today's international airfares. Charles Macalister recalls a journey in 1838 - *"I well remember that first rib-racking journey, amid the scenes and surroundings of the penal days - here and there over bits of road newly formed (and well formed, packed, and rolled) by those ill-used prisoners of the Crown - the transported road gangs (or chain gangs) - and, anon, over rough, rude tracks 'mid the gum-girt hills, cut by Australia's original surveyors and best path-finders - the brave and cheery teamsters and the pioneering bullock-punchers of the table-lands."*⁶

By the 1850's the lumbering English-style coaches had been overtaken by the lightweight Cobb & Co coaches, always immaculately turned out with teams of matched horses that were regularly replaced with fresh ones. The drivers would urge them to a gallop when entering town, blowing a bugle to announce their arrival in a clatter of hooves and a cloud of dust as they lay back in the box seat to haul on the reins and stand on the brakes.

Annie Belcher recalled boarding a coach at midnight for an exciting night-ride - *"The horses in the glow of the lamps would be champing and tossing their heads with one brother holding them in, whilst the other saw all was ship-shape. Then he would shout "all aboard" and hop up beside his brother. At the crack of the whip the horses would hit their collars and before we reached the bridge*

the coach would be going at a gallop, but over the hill the horses would settle down to a steady trot. I think they enjoyed it as much as we did."

Jim Conroy drove out of Goulburn for Cobb & Co at the height of the bushranging era -

Bushrangers? Well, I was stuck up twice, the first time at Towrang, between Goulburn and Marulan. I carried twelve passengers inside that trip, and one on the box. It was ten at night. We had arrived at an angle in the road formed by two mountains, when a man rushed up the gully. 'Stop!' he shouted, and immediately fired. Well, the report of the gun startled the horses, I gave them the whip and a free rein, and they went all they knew, until at last I pulled them up at Plumb's Hotel, Shelley's Flats.

'That was the most ungentlemanly bushranger,' I remarked to the passenger. 'If he'd asked me properly I'd have stopped!' 'You take it mighty cool,' says he, staring hard. But, bless you, I could afford to joke, we were out of danger. The inside passengers were badly scared, and one lady's dress burnt by the smouldering wad from the bushranger's gun.

About six weeks after this I had my next experience with the knights of the road. It was a very dark night, and we had just passed Sidwell's Hotel, at the foot of Governor's Hill, when we suddenly came on four horsemen blocking up the road. Well, I pulled up short to avoid any shouting, and 'All passengers get out!' was the order given by the leader. "Haven't any inside passengers," said I, whereupon they ordered Mr. Richardson, my only passenger, to get down off the box; after they had been through him they told me to get down. 'No fear,' said I, 'the horses would bolt if I did.' The men insisted, but the captain growled out, 'Shut up; leave him alone.' They then got the mail bags and cut them open.

'You fellows are fools,' I said, 'to run all this risk for so little.'

'How's that?' said one of them.

'Why,' said I, 'I'll bet there's not a fiver in the bags altogether.'

'Well, I'm hanged if I'd have to wait up this cold night if I'd thought that was all I was going to get.'

'Oh, you'll get something, never fear!'" I replied, and they sure enough did – five years each.

In 1869 the railway connected Goulburn to Sydney, reducing the trip to a little over six hours. The pioneering days were over.

¹ <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-184529667>

² "Cuttiangullanlong, otherwise known as Laggan", Monica Croke, Crookwell & District Historical Society 2006" p.21.

³ Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 29/7/1932, page 2.

⁴ Charles McAlister's reminiscences, 1901.

⁵ Freeman's Journal, 26/8/1909, p. 35.

⁶ Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 9/9/1905.