

MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc TAREE

Issue 166 June 2023

THE FIG TREE



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ISSN 2208-3243

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Where did that half year go - just keeping busy tracking family we did not know about?

You can never start your family history too early, things can happen that you didn't count on happening.

Its our purpose to gain as much as possible to pass on as correct.

If you are stumped than talk to other members you feel have had more experience.

In recent times there has been many opportunities for online programmes to help you with your research.

Do not forget to share your family tree with the Society, as it will help others, also any stories about your family.

My best wishes to you

Ken

GENEALOGY VOLUNTEERS WANTED.

Being a volunteer with Manning Wallamba Family History Society Inc. is exciting.

No two days are alike. No two enquiries are alike. No one knows everything.

New members will be rostered on with a more experienced volunteer who will help to familiarise the new member with the library resources.

Working hands on with someone else is the best way to learn, although instruction sessions are held on a regular basis. Taking part in library duty is an exciting journey.

The challenges of helping researchers are great. The rewards are even greater

Disclaimer: MWFHS Inc does not hold itself responsible for statements made or opinions expressed by authors of articles published in The FigTree.

Every effort has been made to ensure that The FigTree is free from errors or omissions. Should these occur we apologise for any inconvenience caused.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022-2023

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The Early Days of Taree



Victoria Street 1916-1920

A much more orderly Victoria
Street about 1930



RESEARCH SERVICE

Research Forms can be downloaded from Society Website

<http://manningwallambafhs.com.au/>

Initial Research Enquiry

\$20.00 including up to 2 hours research and limited photocopying, to the value of \$5.00

Extra microfilm copying \$1.00 per page. Additional

Research \$10 per hour



HAVE YOU HIT A BRICKWALL?

The FigTree is issued 3 times a year, so please feel free to send in any query you may have and it will be included in the next issue.

Our Journal is not only distributed to you, our members, but to other Societies throughout Australia and Overseas.

We also receive exchange Journals from a very large number of Societies electronically, if you would like to receive any of these, please let our Secretary know and you will be added to the distribution list,



As helpful as the internet is, not everything is there—you might be surprised at what is available however, in our own extensive library.

Duty Volunteers are there to help between 10.00am—12.00 noon Mon-Friday and Saturday mornings.

Check out the Resources Index on the Society's Webpage.

<https://manningwallambafhs.com.au>

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

Price List for Burial Books available through our Society

Prices include postage & handling within Australia

MWFHS members receive 10% discount on all Burial Books

Oxley Island, Mitchells Island, Scotts Creek - 2007 edition Book or CD	\$15.00
Gilwarra, Taree Estate, Woola - 2008 edition Book or CD	\$15.00
Tinonee, Bo-Bo, Bight, Murray Hills, Easton, Dunvegan	\$15.00
Cooperook, Moorland, Harrington	\$15.00
Lansdowne	\$15.00
Wingham Anglican [Old Section]	\$15.00
Wingham - All other Denominations	\$15.00
Wingham Beams	\$10.00
Killabakh, Marlee, Woodside	\$15.00
Redbank 2008 edition Book or CD	\$15.00
Failford, Willow Point	\$15.00
Krambach	\$15.00
Dawson 1 - Methodist Section	\$15.00
Dawson 2 - Anglican A - L	\$15.00
Dawson 3 - Anglican M - Z	\$15.00
Dawson 4 - Roman Catholic Section	\$15.00
Dawson 5 - Presbyterian & other Sections	\$15.00
Dawson 6 - Columbarium, Rose Gardens & Burials from Undertakers Records & other sources. No Grave Numbers	\$15.00
Dawson 7 - Lawn Section A - L	\$15.00
Dawson 8 - Lawn Section M - Z	\$15.00
Columbariums in Church grounds, Graves on private property, Norwood	\$15.00
Index, includes Map showing locations of all Greater Taree Council Cemeteries and Name entries from all above books & their cemetery location	\$15.00
Forster & Bungwahl Cemetery Transcriptions	\$13.00
Tuncurry & Coolongolook Cemetery Transcriptions	\$15.00

No members' discounts on these books

Pre 1860 Pioneer Register - Book 1 \$32.50 + \$12.50 p&p

Pre 1860 Pioneer Register - Book 2 \$32.50 + \$12.50 p&p

Orders to Secretary PO BOX 48 Taree NSW 2430

Website <http://www.manningwallambafhs.com.au>

Email: secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE

Family Membership \$33.50

Single Membership \$25.00

The Membership Renewal Form is following or is available from our room at Taree Library during our normal operating times -

Monday-Saturday 10.00am to 12 noon or alternatively can be downloaded from the Society's web page

<http://manningwallambafhs.com.au/>

Members are entitled to

Use the Society's Resources during opening hours

Attend meetings and workshops, and vote at meetings

Three copies of the Fig Tree by mail or download

Free Research Enquiries in "Fig Tree"

18 free entries per year each membership/family in Society's Members' Interest Directory

2 hours free research per membership year, for out-of-area members, on receipt of a business sized, self-addressed envelope

MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

P.O. Box 48, Taree, NSW 2430

Email: secretary@manningwallambafhs.com.au

Web site: www.manningwallambafhs.com.au

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Single: \$25.00 Family \$33.00

Please print clearly

NAME: _____ Membership No: _____

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Direct Deposit Details:

Banks: Regional Bank of Australia—BSB 932000 - Account No. 500029297

(If paying by direct debit please forward receipt number & details to Secretary)

To make a cash payment please contact our Treasurer via the above email.

FOR OFFICE USE:

DATE _____ RECEIPT No: _____ CARD GIVEN.....Yes.....No..

HOW TO SEARCH THE COLONIAL SECRETARY'S INDEX

The Colonial Secretary was the pre-eminent figure in public life in much of the 19th century.

The papers from this office are some of the most valuable sources of information on all aspects of the history of NSW after 1788 - from convicts and immigration to applications for burials, lists of First Nations people in particular areas and admissions of children in and out of orphan schools and industrial and training schools. This unique index to the letters received by the Colonial Secretary between 1826 and 1896 was compiled by Joan Reese, Linda Bowman and Aileen Trinder.

The 37 minute webinar explores how to search the index, what you may find and how to access the records.

<https://mhnsw.au/webinars/colonial-secretary-letters-received-1826-1896/>

NSW State Archives is now called the Museum of History NSW. The Colonial Secretaries Papers are in 2 indexes : 1788 – 1825 and 1826 – 1896

As it says it contains every written letter between the public and the Government of that time. If you have an ancestor who lived in NSW during that time you can learn a surprising amount about them by searching for their communication with the Government. It maybe tedious to search but you never know.

Latin in Irish Roman Catholic Parish Registers

Here are some Latin words that you will often see in a Roman Catholic parish register.

afinitatus — related through a previous marriage of the two families

baptizatus - baptized

baptissadi nomen--christian name (give name)

cognomen--surname (family name)

conj./conjuncti—joined together in marriage

consanguinati en tertio grado—second cousins

coram—in the presence of (witnesses)

de—of

die--day

domicilium--abode (usually a townland within the parish but sometimes even smaller)

et—and

Filius—son of

Filia—daughter of

mense--month

natus--born

Patrini/Patrinorum or Sp. or Ss.—sponsors (godparents)

THE ANCESTORS OF HUBERT GARFIELD CATO

My Grandfather

12 May 1885—18 September 1918

Submitted by Joan Irvine

Hubert was the grandfather I never got to know, he was wounded at Jean-Court and taken Peronne Aid Station, which was subsequently blown up, in the latter stages of WW1, leaving behind a wife and three children. His second child was my mother, who, together with her mother, my Nan and her two siblings left Tasmania where she was born, when still a young child and to my knowledge had little or no contact with her father's extended family. It wasn't until I started researching her family history that I became aware of how closely the CATO family had been associated with the early history of Tasmania.

Members of the family were among the pioneers of the Tasmanian fruit industry, and were ever forward in the service of early Methodism in the State.¹

William Cato, my 3rd great grandfather's brother left the UK in 1829 to migrate to Australia. The family first landed in Western Australia, but not satisfied there, he came to Tasmania, arriving on 31st January 1831. He was appointed Deputy Governor of the Cascade Female Factory and his wife was matron. Later they lived at Richmond. William died at Richmond on 3 April 1843. Members of his family later migrated to Victoria.



LATE MR. JOSEPH CATO.



St, Olave Church

My direct ancestor was William's brother Joseph Cato who was born 1793 in Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, England, he married Frances Cox on 3rd May 1817 at St. Olave Church, London. Joseph and Frances together with their five sons and two daughters, arrived at Hobart Town on November 29, 1832, after a voyage of 134 days from London on board the barque "John Craig". Joseph Cato was first employed in the Commissariat Department as officer in charge of Government stores, and his son William was later employed in the same office. The family first resided in Elizabeth Street, near Warwick Street. Hobart.

However, Joseph was anxious to secure outdoor occupation and purchased some acres of land at New Town, which at that time was a small settlement and practically all bush. He built a brick home which he called Kemble, and the family moved in on January 6, 1834.

Note of Interest: It was at New Town that a bushranger, one of Brady's gang, was prevented from making an attempt on the life of Colonel Arthur.

He cleared the land and started a garden and orchard, which contained amongst other things a collection of shrubs and plants secured at Cape Town during the voyage to Tasmania.

Joseph Cato thus became one of the hard-working pioneers who, by ingenuity and hard work, turned the bush into orchard and helped lay the foundations of the Tasmanian Apple Industry.

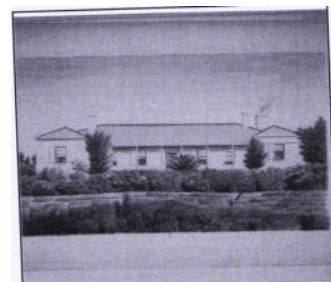
Continued../

HUBERT GARFIELD CATO Continued

William, Joseph's eldest son, succeeded his father in carrying on the Kemble orchard and nursery and for some years was Secretary of the Horticultural Society, formed in 1839. William produced the first pound of mustard grown in the colony, and it was pronounced to be of excellent quality.

Two other sons, Joseph and Cornelius, after a visit to the Victorian gold-fields, settled down to farming and purchased a property at Paradise Valley, West Hobart, known as Paraclete.

Cornelius died soon after taking over Paraclete with Joseph, but Joseph gave special attention to the propagation of new varieties of apples, and by hybridisation succeeded in producing new apple varieties, one of which was the Crofton, formerly called Cato's Seedling.



Paraclete The Home of Joseph Cato

Samuel Cato showed a preference for office work, and for many years was a bookkeeper. He became a clerk with the Tasmanian Steam Navigation Co. and its successor, The Union Steam Ship Co., holding his post until his death in 1891.

In an article written in 1934 on the 'Centenary of the Cato family in Tasmania', it was reported at that time the living descendants of Joseph Cato sen. Numbered 13 grandchildren, 69 great-grandchildren and 84 great-great grandchildren. The family was represented in the South African War and in the Great War when 12 great-grandsons enlisted. Three lost their lives—Alan Cato, Alfred Peacock and my grand-father Hubert Cato.

As you can well imagine Joseph Cato's descendants today are many and the family is still well represented in Tasmania and throughout the rest of Australia.

As I mentioned at the start of this article Hubert died in France on 18 September 1918, and although he has no official headstone, his remains were never found, his name appears on a town obelisk at Jean-Court and on the Memorial at Villiers Bretonneux.

Ref: ... ¹ Hobart Mercury 29 Nov 1932

Hubert's line of the Cato's died with him, when sadly his only son Flight Sergeant Reginald Hubert Cato lost his life in WW2. He was engaged at the time to Mary Avery and many years later Mary, who never married, wrote to the Ministry of Defence in London seeking details of how Reginald died. In response she received the following:



Hubert Garfield Cato

"During his last flight he was a wireless operator in Liberator EV378 of 32nd Squadron, Coastal Command, based at St Eval in Cornwall. During the early hours of 12 August Liberator EV878 of 224 Sqn was undertaking an anti-submarine patrol when at 04.10 hrs the pilot approached HMS Onslow in the English Channel. Tragically, due to faulty recognition the crew of HMS Onslow thought that the approaching Liberator was an enemy aircraft and opened fire. I can confirm that there were no bodies recovered".



Reginald Hubert Cato



LEST WE FORGET

A recent addition to the Society's already extensive library is a document of just over 70 pages titled

"The Newton Family History".

This publication takes you back to the 12th century and once I started reading it, I knew I just had to include it in The Figtree, at least the part of it that related to the Newtons that emigrated to Australia and in particular those that found their way to the Manning.

I would like to acknowledge that the Irish Newton information was provided by Martin and Mary (Quinn) Dalzell from Prestbury, Cheshire, England and the information on the Australian Newtons was provided by Jim Cross and Anne Calvert.

The common Newton ancestor of the family that came to Australia, as shown in early Protestant Baptism Records from Ferbane Parish, Kings County was Robert Newton, a farmer who married Margaret Aldrige. They were both born around 1770 and had at least three children—Henry, Robert and William. I should point out at this stage that all three brothers also named three of their sons Robert, Henry and William!!

Note: The Board of First Fruits Church, Ferbane was the Church of Ireland church where the Newton children were baptised. It cost £461 to build in 1804 and a belfry tower was added in 1819. Church Services were held there until the 1960's, however the church now sadly lies in ruins. The Church was established by Queen Anne in 1771. It authorised the First Fruits (the first year's revenue) to be used to build and repair churches. This was funded by taxes, which in turn were funded by tithes, which were very unpopular with the Roman Catholic communities.



The brother that came to Australia, William was born in 1793 he married Jane Patrick in Ireland around 1826. Jane Patrick was the daughter of Daniel Patrick and Margaret Crawford and was born in Lumchloon, Gallen, King's County around 1802. However, it was William's sister-in-law Joanne Patrick and her husband William Lee who were the first members of the extended family to emigrate from Ireland to Australia on 8 November 1841. They travelled on board the Sir Charles Napier ship from Liverpool to Sydney, arriving on 10th April 1842.

Robert Newton the eldest son of William and Jane was the first member of their branch of the Newton family to leave Ireland for Australia. Robert, aged 21, a farm labourer from Ferbane, arrived on 29th June 1850 on board the Lloyds. However, it wasn't until 1851 that William and Jane Newton and their family arrived in Australia as part of the Protestant Bounty Scheme.

Continued../

"The Newton Family History". Continued

The scheme encouraged the immigration of skilled Protestant workers to the colony. The shipping agent for their voyage received a bounty from the Government of the Colony of NSW on their arrival. The ship record indicates that the Immigration Board accepted the Newton family, who were paid £26 on arrival.

William and Jane gave their ages as 46 and 44 respectively on the ship record, however it is believed that these ages were understated to improve their chances of being accepted as Bounty Immigrants. It is thought that William was actually about 68 and Jane 49.

When they first arrived in NSW William, Jane and their family initially stayed with Jane's sister Joanna Patrick at Woodville, in the Hunter Valley of NSW.

In 1855 William Newton purchased farmland on Mamboo Island (Lots 16 and 20) and at Jones Island, Manning Valley, NSW. His son William Jr. purchased Plot 27 in 1856.

The following is an extract from the article on pages 16-18, which by co-incidence includes some information on "The Newtons"

"...There is a sixth mill at Coopernook, owned by the traditional family of the place, the Newtons. Their interests in the immediate district are represented by possession of a good half of the place. The mill is theirs, the biggest farms are theirs, a fifth of the Big Swamp is theirs. Evidently the proprietorship is a merciful one, because it is immensely popular. No doubt the reason is that the family estates are not locked up; they are worked either by the family or one let to tenants, and so ample use is being made of them. Forty years ago there was only one house in the district Coopernook House, where the Newton family live now. The late William Newton lived down the river. He had money, and having unbounded faith in the future of the district, acquired land wherever possible — swamp land, forest land, township land, alluvial land, and to-day it is for the most part doing well for the State."

William Newton died of old age and debility on Mamboo Island on 16 June 1873 aged 90. His death certificate indicated that he was born in County Kildare and names his parents as Robert Newton (farmer) and Margaret Aldrige. His wife Jane Patrick also died of old age on Mamboo Island on 10 July 1876 aged 74. Both William and Jane are buried at Scott's Creek Cemetery, Mitchell Island

Before emigrating from Ireland to Australia, William and Jane Newton's eldest daughter Margaret Newton was working as a domestic servant at Mearescourt House in Co. Westmeath. Whilst working at Mearescourt House, Margaret met William Small, who was a schoolteacher from nearby Aughnabohn (now Aghnaboy) and the tutor to the Lord of the Estate John Devenish Meares' children.

Margaret and William married in Moyvore Church in April 1849 and in March the following year their son Arthur was born. Later that year, William and Margaret Small (Newton) left Ireland for Australia where he took up a position as the first schoolteacher on the Manning River, at a school run by the Presbyterian Church. They lived at Redbank in the Pampoolah area, before moving further up the Manning near Wingham. In addition to Arthur who was born in Ireland, William and Margaret had a further 12 children all born in New South Wales. Some of their children stayed in the Manning, while others moved to Sydney, Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, Wagga Wagga in NSW and Winton in Queensland and their son Daniel moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

In 1888 William Small aged 75 died of bronchial asthma in Lower Dingo Creek, NSW. His wife Margaret Newton Small lived until 1911 when she died aged 83.

WESTWARD TO PORTERVILLE: THE STORY OF T.W. HOWELL AND A PIONEER

Submitted by Member— Nancy Dixon (Howell)

The following article appeared in the Porterville, Cal., Recorder on Friday November 9, 1979 and tells the story of my the great-grandfather Thomas Warren Howell's journey to California and back to Missouri in 1864.

"PORTERVILLE, December 17 1918—Having outlived mankind's allotted life of three score and ten years by more than six years, and still active and awake to the issues of the day and enjoying life in well earned retirement from business cares, T.W. Howell, who resides at 109 C Street this city, is one of the few remaining pioneer residents of this district.

Accordingly, his life history is one of more than ordinary interest, as is the life of all those brave men and women too, who endured the hardships and dangers of an overland trip to this fair state by wagon train in the early days-the vanguard of eastern civilization. Incidents connected with his first trip to California in 1864, his return east and return to California again in 1875 to make his home, at which time he located in this district, are as fresh in his mind as if they occurred but a few years ago, instead of a half more or century ago.

Mr Howell who passed the seventy-sixty milestone along life's roadway May 12th of this year, was the eldest of a family of seven children, four boys and three girls., At the time he started west, his parents lived at Warrenton, Mo., about 60 miles from St. Louis. The Civil War was then in progress and although young in years he belonged to the 59th Missouri Regiment, but had seen no service except in the home militia. Not being very strong, physically, he persuaded his parents to allow him to accompany his uncle and family, who were coming by wagon train to California.

They left Warrenton in the spring of 1864 and arrived in California, Red Bluff—being their destination, in just six months, lacking one week, from the time they started. Mr. Howell drove a four horse team attached to the wagon bearing his uncle's luggage, etc. According to Mr. Howell, there was much travel to California at that time. The road along Plattea River was literally alive with prairie schooners lumbering along at differing speed, depending on whether horses or oxen were furnishing the motive power, all having the "Golden State" as their ultimate goal.

A good deal of forethought and figuring had to be exercised in providing provisions by those planning an overland trip to California in those days, when it required as many months, as it now requires days to make the trip. Even then, it often occurred that the travellers ran out of provisions of one kind or another, which were sometimes almost impossible to secure at any price. Think of paying \$40 for a hundred pound sack of flour! That is what a sack of flour cost Mr. Howell's uncle at Salt Lake City. In Nevada 50 cents was paid for a large sized white onion, raised in California and brought there for sale.

Luckily for the members of this train, they did not have to buy many supplies along the road. Fresh vegetables were the greatest of luxuries, as few were to be had. Mr. Howell tells of one day finding a bag of fine fresh radishes, which some one had lost on the road. It was presumed they had belonged to some one who had raised them on a homestead garden spot located on some nearby stream and that they were being taken to the nearest settlement for sale. As there was no way of locating the owner, the radishes proved a great relish to members of the train.

Continued.../

WESTWARD TO PORTERVILLE: THE STORY OF T.W. HOWELL: Continued

Members of his uncle's party only stopped overnight in Salt Lake City. They attended a performance that night at Brigham Young's Theatre, the nature of which Mr. Howell does not recall, but he does recall with clearness their interest in seeing Brigham Young himself. Another thing that impressed them was the cleanliness of the city. Miniature streams of water flowing down each side of the paved streets made for cleanliness and gave a refreshing air to the whole city. The idea was something entirely new to the Missourians, who were quite taken with the idea when once it had been "shown" them.

No trouble with Indians was experienced by the train of which Mr. Howell was a member, but he tells of seeing a bit of the trouble which some people about a quarter of a mile ahead of them on the trail had with Indians, who stole part of their cattle. These people did not guard their cattle at night, so the Indians quietly swooped down and helped themselves, a skirmish occurring when the white people learned what had been done, but none of them were hurt.

Somewhere alongside the wagons trail leading to California is a lonely grave wherein was buried the remains of the only member of their party who succumbed on the trip. This was a young girl, aged 15 years, a cousin of Mr. Howell. She could not withstand the ravages of the "mountain fever", which malady claimed not a few of the westward bound travellers in those days. The train halted for a day while members of the party went to the nearest stage station for lumber, out of which a coffin was fashioned. A preacher in the train whose provisions were growing low, did not stop with the rest, but pushed on fearing the loss of even one day's time. Later Mr. Howell says they learned the preacher lost his wife and two children before he reached California.

Mr. Howell and his relatives reached Red Bluff in the early part of the fall of 1864. They found the cousin who had been living there had left the day before for his sheep ranch. Mr. Howell started out to find him, asking the man in the little general merchandise store there to be on the outlook for a job for him by the time he returned. When he did return to Red Bluff after resting up a bit from the long overland trip, the store manager informed him there were calls for three men down on the big Gerkey ranch 25 miles this side of the Red Bluff and now known as the famous Stanford ranch, having later been acquired by Mr. Stanford, the founder of Stanford University.

Before leaving for the ranch they were warned by the store manager, if it were be known they were of the tenderfoot variety, they might not get the job. On the way to the ranch they counselled together and agreed that Mr. Howell should be spokesman. About the first remark of the range foreman was the inquiry as to how long they had been in California.

Anxious to get the jobs and yet not wanting to lie outright in order to do so, Mr. Howell gave him a real camouflage answer something like this: "Well, sir, we've been here too long already, and ought to have left before this". It worked and they got the jobs.

They were put to cultivating and other kinds of work in the field. At the noon hour the second day the foreman said he would give \$5 to any one of his employees who would shoot his favourite riding horse, which was at the point of death and suffering greatly from a snag wound. None seem anxious for the job. Mr. Howell asked to see the horse, a fine animal valued at \$500 by his owner, and upon giving him

Continued..

WESTWARD TO PORTERVILLE: THE STORY OF T.W. HOWELL: Continued

An examination told the owner he thought he could cure the horse, which he immediately set out to do. The owner of the horse told him, if he did cure it, that the (Howell) could stay on the ranch as long as he liked and would not have to do another lick of work.

The horse was cured in a few weeks' time. Also several other horses sick from foundering were cured by Mr. Howell. True to his word, the foreman required no other work of Mr. Howell, a matter that aroused considerable jealousy on the part of the other ranch employees. He stayed on at the ranch acting as veterinary, until summer, when he went to the San Jose district, where he stayed until the fall.

In the meantime his parents had been writing and begging him to come home, so he decided to go, and make the trip by water.

He sailed from San Francisco on the steamer "America" which on that trip carried 2,400 passengers as well as a lot of beef cattle. The trip to New York required something over a month and was marked by several exciting experiences, which to one of a more superstitious nature than Mr. Howell, would have seemed the work of Fate, but to him only served to break the monotony of a long trip.

The first accident occurred on the third night at sea. It was an unusually dark night and before the captain knew it the ship was right in among a lot of rocks with a likelihood of being wrecked on them, at any minute. No little difficulty and considerable time was required in getting the ship off the rocks. Literally speaking it was moved by inches out of the danger zone, as the captain only let enough power be used to just barely keep it moving as it was steered out in the open course, so that in case it did hit a hidden rock the impact would not be sufficient to do very much damage in the way of crushing the hull.

Mr. Howell tells an amusing incident concerning an Englishman aboard the "America". This Englishman was very much of a snob and not wishing to have any association with the other passengers, particularly the second class and steerage passengers, who sometimes promenaded near where he was seated on the deck, he asked the captain to rope him off a little section on the deck for his own steamer chair. The captain humoured him in this bit of prudishness and accordingly he was soon enjoying (?) the aloofness which this made-believe social barrier in the form of a mere rope was providing him. But alas his period of exclusiveness was short-lived.

When the people on the steamer found out that little roped in section, it was good-bye rope and it came near being the last of the Englishman. "Why I thought they were going to literally pull that man to pieces" said Mr. Howell, "for some had hold of him they were determined to throw him overboard, while others a little more tender-hearted were pulling at his limbs trying to keep him from being thrown overboard." He, however, escaped with his life and never again on the trip did he dare manifest an air of superiority.

Continued../

WESTWARD TO PORTERVILLE: THE STORY OF T.W. HOWELL: Continued

The "America" docked at a Pacific port on the Isthmus of Panama, it was raining and the wet weather kept up during most of the trip across the Isthmus, so that his journey through the tropics was not so pleasant as it might have been. A series of mishaps marked it. An endeavour to partially miss a big mud hole nearly upset the bus.

Owing to the wet weather the travellers started out in large "buses, loaded to their upmost capacity. Before the bus in which Mr. Howell rode got very far along on its journey, the tongue of the bus was broken out when the driver in an endeavour to partially miss a big mud hole nearly upset the bus.



The trip was delayed until a new tongue could be sent for, so that the bus in which he rode, which was the first to start out, was the last to reach the station where passengers took a boat to complete the trip across the Isthmus.

The third accident of the trip occurred when the boat on which the last lap of the trip across the Isthmus was being made, foundered on a sand bar, where it lay overnight before it could be floated and the journey continued. Hence, the trip across the Isthmus occupied considerably more than the usual time allotted for it. At the Atlantic port the California travellers boarded the steamer "Erickson", a very large steamer, which bore them without further mishap to the port of New York. From there Mr. Howell continued his journey by rail to his former home in Missouri. A broken car wheel near Chicago was the last piece of ill luck encountered on his long trip home.



From Kew to Coopernook, Timber And Dairying Country.

Sourced from:

Manning River Times and Advocate for the Northern Coast Districts of New South Wales (Taree, NSW : 1898 - 1954),
Saturday 3 March 1906, page 8

by The Sydney Morning Herald's Special Reporter

Passing southward from the Camden Haven River to within hail of Coopernook, which is 19 miles away, the main road strikes a dividing line between poor country east to the ocean littoral, and from first to third class grazing and farming land on the west. On the road the first important water-course encountered is John's River, which, rising in the tract of country, empties itself into Watson Taylor Lake at Camden Haven. There is a settlement right along its course, and the road when near to it runs through a series of large and small farms. Orchards present themselves more frequently now, and some good results already achieved in fruit growing indicate the suitability of the country. Unfortunately, the fruit crops have failed this year, owing to the prevalence of the fly, but farmers do not seem to fear a recurrence of the pest. At any rate, it is not much trouble to them to clean the orchards and prune in expectation of better luck next year. Some few are taking the precaution to gather up the spoilt fruit and burn it, but the big proportion think that is quite superfluous. Their views on the subject suggest that the farmer is something of a fatalist. However, the fly and the former aside, the country from John's River and Coopernook is full of ideal sites for orchards, and wherever they have been tried, pears, peaches, apricots, nectarines, and many other varieties thrive amazingly. They do well on the alluvial, but incomparably better on the higher land; and ridge country, not so long ago condemned as useless, is proving itself tractable under the orchardist's hand. Moorland lies some halfway between the two points of this stage of the journey, and it is all that the name indicates. The moors have been put to good use, both for dairy farming and agriculture, the latter including small paddocks of arrowroot. The forest and ridge lands show improved quality after John's River is passed. A peek of one of the hills, called The Brothers, offered good panoramic view. The climb was over an award of luscious native grasses, though few would have dared to suspect that it could grow a blade. Certainly the man who leans up against the local tree stump and claims to know what every inch of land round about is good for, and who often influences others again at experimenting, would have doomed that ridge as starvation for a bandicoot. Down at the foot of the hill first class forest country begins again, and continues right on to Coopernook, so that the landscape is a succession of dairy farms. The Little town of Coopernook is the northern gate to the river. It hugs the bank of the pretty Lansdowne and stands guard over the approach to the first of the Manning Isles— Jones' Island.

Tennyson should have had the naming of those beautiful isles, and then they would have been sweet to hear called as well as to gaze upon. With such lost opportunity for nomenclature, it is no wonder that the most obtrusive feature of Coopernook is its mosquito cloud. They come, not singly nor in regiments, but in myriads. The local people say that the mosquitoes at Hexham, known as "Hexham Greys," are more powerful and numerous. The modesty of the local people is charming. They share that very genial complaint, the splitting of the township. It is the old, old story the Government town and the private town, but here there is a variation. Each was too strong to be beaten, and so they hang like the two knobs of a dumbbell— they can neither come together nor get further away. It is easy for an outsider to see which should be the real township— but it might not be safe to mention it.

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From Kew to Coopernook, Timber And Dairying Country. (Continued)

However, all Coopernook is very proud of its timber industry, of its Big Swamp drainage scheme, of its shipbuilding, and of its leading citizens, and certainly the general stamp is high. Its town buildings cannot be similarly described, but it is apparent that the spread of dairying and the better returns which that industry gives the farmers have conduced to improvement in the class of farmhouses. Sullivan's ship building yard on the Lansdowne gives quite a flavor of metropolitan commerce to the township. The Wauchope, the Pymont, and the Duroby were all built there, of staunch local timbers, but, curiously, there is no demand on these rivers, so admirably adapted for aquatics, for small craft. A skiff may be seen at rare intervals, but both youth and age much prefer straddling a horse or fingering the reins to gliding along under white wings. The timber industry gives employment to, perhaps, 250 men, and up the Lansdowne Langley Brothers have what is reputed to be the finest mill on the coast. They have in all five mills and own the river steamer Corb Lynn. There is a sixth mill at Coopernook, owned by the traditional family of the place, the Newtons. Their interests in the immediate district are represented by possession of a good half of the place. The mill is theirs, the biggest farms are theirs, a fifth of the Big Swamp is theirs. Evidently the proprietorship is a merciful one, because it is immensely popular. No doubt the reason is that the family estates are not locked up; they are worked either by the family or one let to tenants, and so ample use is being made of them. Forty years ago there was only one house in the district Coopernook House, where the Newton family live now. The late William Newton lived down the river. He had money, and having unbounded faith in the future of the district, acquired land wherever possible — swamp land, forest land, township land, alluvial land, and to-day it is for the most part doing well for the State. Perhaps his biggest purchase was Coopernook cattle station, owned by Michael Caffrey. Outside of this family property there are big areas of alluvial and forest country. Practically all of the former rises has been taken up, but much of the forest class is still available. The worst of the land does not rank lower than second class grazing, and there is very little of it that would not grow the finest fruit. The best lands are rich agricultural. Just as the growth of the place is inseparably associated with the Newton family, so the Big Swamp stands as a monument to its late head. Not so many years ago the swamp was a comparatively useless morass, 5000 acres in extent. In dry years a few adventurers settled on it, but they generally forfeited after getting under water for a few months. Some stuck to it, and among them William Newton, Charles Rose, and one or two others put down a few drains. They satisfied themselves that the swamp could be drained. The local rainfall could have been fought, but the Pipeclay Creek drained miles of country near and far, and politely emptied itself on to the swamp. There were many exciting scenes in those days, which were not long ago. Fencing had to be carried on horseback, piece by piece, because carts could not tread the bogs, and often men had difficulty in keeping their own heads above the level of the sludge. William Newton went resolutely on draining and improving his part of the swamp till he sank some £3000 or £4000 in it. Today the Big Swamp is a lovely level of dairy and agricultural farms — the fight has been won. A scheme was conceived to cut a canal from the mouth of Pipeclay Creek across four and a half miles of lowland to reach the Cattai Creek on its way to the Lansdowne and thus divert the Pipe Clay escape from the land to the river. It was a delicate task, because the fall was only one foot in the mile, but it was accepted by engineers as practicable. The canal is 50ft. wide at the bottom, with a batter giving an additional 12ft. at top and receding banks made of the excavated earth. The Government did the work under the Drainage Trusts Act. It cost £9000, and the money must be repaid at the rate of 6 per cent, for interest and sinking fund.

From Kew to Coopernook, Timber And Dairying Country. (Continued)

The work was finished in November last, and shortly afterwards there was a fall of 16in, of rain in 48 hours. The bank gave way in parts, but generally speaking, the scheme came through the test admirably, and the settlers are content. This drainage of low-lying lands is of immeasurable importance, not only on three rivers, but elsewhere in the State, and every instance of success is really good news. On the Macleay there are huge tracts of swamp land which, as has already been pointed out, are tractable; indeed much more so than this Big Swamp appeared to be. Before the drainage there were nine settlers growing maize, with their hearts in their mouths, and running cattle. To-day there are 40 holders, and the majority of them are dairying. There is room and more than a comfortable living on the swamp for about 120 holders, but so long as the land is made to yield its most, the State can afford to let men have more than a bare living area on any one class of land, while there is an abundance of the same close available. But if the land is not brought fully worked, and there are ready others who would help to work it fully, the State loses by the delay. In the instance, at the present rate of development, it will be about seven years before the swamp is in full grass, though the whole could actually be got ready in two years. Yet it has to be remembered that many of the holdings were taken up under o.p., before the drainage scheme, and the settlers took a risk for which they not unfairly claim, they deserve something more than the man who goes in on a certainty. The average dairyman on the Big Swamp milks from 8 to 15 cows, but some milk as many as 30. The Newtons, who have 1100 acres, ran 500 cattle, and milk 120 cows. Of course, the dry cows are paddocked elsewhere, but the figures give a pretty good indication of the quality of the land. It will be a sumptuous scene when paspalum flourishes generally, and extra fodders are cultivated in their due proportion. Nearby there is a smaller low-level area, known as Green's Swamp. With the example of the Big Swamp before them, people in the locality fairly "rushed" Green's Swamp.

