



ROCKDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

OFFICIAL BULLETIN.

VOL. 1. NO. 2(3)

JUNE, 1962

GRATIS

NEXT MEETING:-

PLACE:- Council Chamber, TOWN HALL, ROCKDALE.

DATE:- FRIDAY NEXT, 15th JUNE, 1962, at 8.0 P.M.

GUEST SPEAKER:- MR. L. H. WEBBER from the CAPTAIN COOK'S

LANDING PLACE TRUST will give an address on KURNELL.

All members and any interested friends are cordially invited to attend.

THE ROCKDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT:- Mr. J. I. Swann,
38 Ethel St., CARLTON.
LW 3398.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:-
Mr. C. W. Napper,
156 Frederick St.,
ROCKDALE, LX 4916

Mr. W. Foster,
13 Hillpine Avenue,
KOGARAH.

HON. SECRETARY:-
Ald. R. W. Rathbone.
53 Bruce St., BEXLEY.
LW 4813

HON. TREASURER:-
Ald. C.C.W. Nairn,
104 Staples St.,
KINGSGROVE. LY 6431

A WORD OF THANKS.

The Society is greatly indebted to Mrs. I. Ryan of Arncliffe for typing and duplicating copies of Mr. Coxhead's "History of Carss Park" which were distributed at the Arncliffe outing.

A few copies of this publication remain and may be obtained by contacting the Secretary.

APRIL MEETING.

A first class illustrated lecture was delivered at the April meeting of the Society by leading Sydney Architect, Mr. Morton Herman - an acknowledged authority on Victorian and Colonial Architecture and one of the three judges in the "Herald's" Historic Homes Competition.

Mr. Herman traced the development of Australian architecture from the days of the wattle and daub hut up to the end of the last century.

HE STRESSED THE FACT THAT A BUILDING DID NOT HAVE TO BE OF GRAND PROPORTIONS TO HAVE ARCHITECTURAL VALUE.

Mr. Herman stated that Australia was particularly rich in its Victorian and Colonial architecture which was to be found nowhere else in the world. Unfortunately, few Australians realised the value and unique qualities of these buildings which were being swept away with great gusto or being unsympathetically "modernised".

Miss J. Southan from the National Trust pleaded with members to do all they could to advertise the competition.

* * * *

FIRST HOMES ENTERED IN COMPETITION.

Following Mr. Herman's address, it was decided that a complete survey of all the old houses in the Rockdale Municipality should be undertaken with a view to entering them in the "Herald" Competition.

Already the Secretary in conjunction with Mr. G. Eardley has carried out a preliminary survey of Banksia, Arncliffe, Bexley and part of Rockdale.

Of 46 photographs of buildings so far, submitted to Mr. Herman, four have been declared outstanding.

These are:-

- 1). The SALVATION ARMY GIRLS' HOME, in Wollongong Road, Arncliffe, the iron-work of which is considered to be some of the finest in the metropolitan area.
- 2). The fine old sandstone mansion LYDHAM HALL, in Lydham Avenue, Rockdale, which was erected in 1855.
- 3). "ELYSIAN", the lovely old sandstone cottage on the hill next to Arncliffe School whose iron-work has to be seen to be believed.
- 4). The BEXLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, on the corner of Sackville Street and Forest Road. Built about 1887, Mr. Herman described it as a "gem".

The next section of the municipality to be surveyed will be the waterfront section from Kyeemagh to Sans Souci.

ROCKDALE'S FREE CHURCHES.

In our wanderings we have discovered that Rockdale, apart from its parish church of ST. JOHN'S, at one time or another boasted three "free" Anglican churches.

The Banksia Free Church which had recently been rebuilt has been a landmark for many years but did you know that in Pitt Lane, Rockdale still exists the derelict St. Stephen's Free Church and that in Prince's Highway between Rockdale and Kogarah - now used as an electric light fitting showroom is yet another.

We are anxious to know the origins of these churches and whether there is any connection between them and the Rev. Jimmy Clark, famous as the "defrocked" minister of St. Paul's Kogarah.

OUTING TO ARNCLIFFE.

Nearly 70 people turned up to our Arncliffe excursion last month when Mr. G. Eardley acted as our guide.

Commencing at historic "Tempe House" the 134 year old sandstone retreat of early Sydney merchant A. B. Spark, where the Mother Superior showed members the graciously furnished reception rooms and enclosed courtyard, we journeyed to "Bonnie Doon", formerly the home of the McRae family, to "Kirnbank" - the towering three-storey home of Justin McSweeney which abuts the Illawarra Railway line and the site of the recently demolished Primitive Methodist Church.

Afternoon tea was taken at the Arncliffe Senior Citizens' Centre by arrangement with the President, Mr. Nightingarl, and Mr. Eardley showed members a number of his very fine pencil sketches of old Arncliffe buildings.

VALE NORM. GUESS.

It is with very great regret that we record the passing of ex-Alderman Norman Guess - former Mayor of Rockdale and a member of the Committee of this Society.

He was a man with a deep seated sense of History and an outstanding love of the district he served so well for so long.

To his widow, Mrs. Dora Guess, we extend our sincere sympathy.

ROSEVALE VILLA TO BE SPARED.

After an unsuccessful attempt to save the historic Sandringham Hotel from demolition, the Society recently wrote to the Rockdale Council asking if it would be possible to save the beautiful sandstone cottage "Rosevale Villa", former home of the pioneer Iliffe family in Princes Highway which is threatened with demolition.

Although the council felt it could not purchase the building on its present site (U.C.V. £27,500) it was prepared to buy the building for re-erection on another site at a later date for refurnishing as an Historical Museum.

The Council has empowered the Mayor and Town Clerk to negotiate with the present owners for purchase of the building.

THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF WOLLI CREEK.

BY GIFFORD EARDLEY.

The Wolli Creek, one of the principal tributaries of Cook's River, junctions with the latter immediately adjacent to the railway bridge at Tempe. In former years its upper waters flowed complacently through a gently sloped forested area which merged into sandstone hill country in the vicinity of the present day Bexley North Railway Station. These sandstone hills were covered with indigenous flora of great beauty and even to-day small remnants of gum tree forest remain within the confines of Girralween Park at Earlwood. The rocky escarpment continues along the northern and then western banks of the stream to Nanny-goat Hill at Turrella. At the old Arncliffe Street ford (now Henderson Street) the lower waters become brackish and subject to tidal influence, although the banks are still a waving mass of reeds, the haunt of reed-warblers, grass-birds, ibis and coot.

East of the ford the stream follows a winding course through alluvial flats until salt water is reached in the vicinity of the eastern slope of Unwin's Hill which, at this point is contiguous with the northern bank. Here the stream widened and flowed through a dense forest of swamp oaks established on the flood lands just above normal high water mark. This location has completely lost its trees and its once pristine beauty has been despoiled by vast quantities of household rubbish dumped on the site by courtesy of the Canterbury Municipal Council. Curving to the north the stream avoids the low rocky knoll which became the site of Tempe House and near the Tempe Railway Station mingles its waters with Cook's River.

Wolli Creek has a length of approximately six miles and drains an area which lays midway between the watersheds of Georges River and Cook's River.

For the purposes of this narrative it is thought best to trace the development of settlement along the meanderings of Wolli Creek by conveniently commencing from Rocky Point Road at the intersection of old time Arncliffe Street. Incidentally the name "Wolli" is understood to have the aboriginal meaning of "Camping Place." It is proposed to give a description as far as my personal explorations of the area have permitted, of the various residences and farm houses which had been erected at different times prior to the beginning of the present century.

Before commencing our journey westwards we may give a backward glance across the samphire marsh land laying eastwards from Rocky Point Road to "Bonnie Doon", a palatial residence nestling in the lee of a grove of magnificent Moreton Bay figtrees, which, unfortunately, have recently been sadly butchered. The original builder of "Bonnie Doon" has still to be ascertained by the writer but a family named McCrae was in occupation around the eighteen-nineties. Latterly the grounds have been utilised for golfing purposes, the old home being placed in good repair and adapted as a club house.

Immediately beyond the northern approach to the Cook's River Bridge (or the earlier dam located on the site) could be seen the two kilns where Mr. Caincross burnt shells to make lime for the building of old Sydney town. It is understood the furnaces were located either on or near Holbeach Avenue at the head of the boat harbour.

Opposite the intersection of Arncliffe Street and Rocky Point Road were three wharves (the larger being known as the Main Wharf) against the Cooks River western bank where sleepers necessary for the construction of the suburban section of the Illawarra Railway were unloaded. These sleepers were cut in the forests of the Northern Rivers and brought to the entrance of Botany Bay by schooners and other sailing craft. The timber was unloaded into flat-bottomed and square-ended scows and taken by a small exuberant-voiced tug-boat to the aforementioned three wharves. Here the sleepers were unloaded by a crane and placed on small railway trucks for haulage by horses to the contractor's depot located midway between Sydenham (then Marrickville) and St. Peters Railway Stations. This little know tramway crossed Rocky Point Road on the level and skirted the southern bank of Cooks River between the road and the Illawarra Railway bridges. Approaching the vicinity of the latter the tramway curved northwards and, crossing the river by means of a temporary trestle, followed the route of the present line to the depot. It is of interest to note that the materials for the construction of the railway bridge at Como were taken over this tramway from the depot to the wharves and then by punt

and tugboat to Botany Bay, along the channel to Georges River and thence upstream to Como. It may be assumed that the tramway was removed about 1883 or 1884.

The building of the Western Suburbs Sewer Main, the fine viaducts of which can be seen in many places stretching across the Arncliffe flats, also brought traffic to the wharves at Tempe. Bricks in vast quantities were landed from punts and taken to the scene of operations by a more or less unending stream of horse-drawn tip carts.

After this digression we turn westwards and immediately on our left, with its frontage to Rocky Point Road, is the old Tempe Family Hotel. This two storeyed hostelry flanked by tall Norfolk Island Pines and having age old gum trees in the back yard, appears to have been opened by Mr. McInnes. The hotel eventually came into the possession of Mr. Jacobs and was subsequently renamed the "Gladstone". It was closed about 1911 under the provisions of the Local Option Act and remained in a more or less derelict condition until 195 when it was demolished and the site utilised as a garage. In its heyday, before the coming of the Illawarra Railway, mine host advertised in the South Coast newspapers that the hotel was most convenient for visitors travelling by road to the city. Their horses could be provided with ample agistment, the menu and liquor list all that could be desired and horse coaches left Tempe at specified times for Sydney. In the vicinity of the Gladstone Hotel, perhaps next door, was the general store of William Smithson who catered for the needs of the local village of Tempe (the name given to the hamlet clustered around the old "Tempe" homestead south of Cooks River) and also provided postal facilities for the district at large.

We now enter the eastern extremity of Arncliffe Street, a truly rural thoroughfare, with the Tempe Family Hotel agistment paddock and sundry down-at-heel stables and sheds on our left and a rock walled cutting, marking the southern boundary of Mr. Spark's "Tempe House" property, on our right. The shingled roofed stables, wash house, and out buildings of "Tempe House" are next met, perched on high ground above the level of Arncliffe Street; access to these structures was made by a private road which led through the property from Rocky Point Road, the access gate still being in use today.

"Tempe House" was built about 1828 by Alexander Brodie Spark a business man of Sydney, on the southern bank of Cooks River. It was a typical and elegant country residence of the period, which contained six large rooms in addition to the usual kitchen scullery and other appointments. The grounds were extensive and laid out in gardens and orchards. Many native trees were retained and mingled well with European tree planting.

Mr. Spark died in October, 1856 and the property was ultimately divided into a large number of small allotments ranged around the then newly constructed Bonar and Spark Streets in the western area. Amongst later owners of "Tempe House" was Mr. Richardson who subsequently moved to "Wickham" a fine house erected on the western side of Rocky Point Road immediately north of the Forest Road intersection.

The Sisters of the Good Samaritan, a Roman Catholic order, came into the possession of "Tempe House" early in eighteen eighties and opened their well known laundry, St. Magdalen's Retreat, in 1887. These good people have kept the home in excellent repair and the old atmosphere has been retained amidst sylvan surroundings.

The Illawarra Road, which found its way to Wollongong and places beyond, left Arncliffe Street at a point almost opposite and south of "Tempe House" stables. This once main thoroughfare has been by-passed with the coming of the Illawarra Railway and relegated to a secondary street serving the surrounding industrial area which has developed in recent years.

At the south-western corner of Illawarra Road and Arncliffe Street was located the stables and coach houses of the Circular Quay - Tempe line of horse omnibuses. Although plying from the northern side of Cooks River Bridge the busmen always carried passengers to and from the depot. In the depot yard was a large pond in daily use for watering and bathing the horses. All trace of this once busy scene was removed when the area was adapted for tramway store purposes.

THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF WOLLI CREEK (continued)

Continuing westwards along the course of Arncliffe Street, the former home attached to Grundy's Dairy is to be seen on the south side of the roadway. This building is four square in its design and built of brick. It served from about 1916 onwards as the administration office for the Wolli Creek Tram Depot, an establishment that has recently been abandoned and one devoted to the storage of materials relative to tramway trackage. A grove of casurina trees, survivals of the days of yore, were axed out of existence in 1961. There was also a Cabbage Tree Palm which flourished against and inside the railway fence until removed for the benefit of somebody's cabbage patch. It was the first of the species out from Sydney and one that authority should have retained for this very reason. Now it is no more and the cabbage patch has reverted to a weedy growth of no particular interest.

Opposite Grundy's dairy farm but on the northern side lay Mr. Mitchell's cottage with its frontage facing Spark Street, the site afterwards being marked by a solitary magnolia tree. The house was somewhat similar in appearance to the Grundy residence.

Spark Street led northwards, from the intersection with Arncliffe Street to Cooks River, where a short dead-end continuation, named Tempe Street led eastwards alongside the southern river bank. Immediately opposite Mr. Mitchell's Place and later devided from its Spark Street frontage by the railway, was Pine Farm. This cottage was demolished to make way for the quadruplication of the Illawarra Railway and was sited against the present Wolli Creek Junction Signal Box. Portion of the old garden still remains and the magnolia and other trees adjacent to the signal box formerly surrounded the little weatherboard building. The advent of the Illawarra Railway brought about the realignment of Spark Street and its western boundary was now formed by the post and rails of the railway fence. A short laneway, which may still be seen, was made to connect with Pine Farm, the track passing between the present Arncliffe Timber Company's premises and the railway fence on the western side of the line.

Leaving Spark Street the Arncliffe Street continued westwards and, about 1882-3, was ramped to cross the railway on the level. Gates across the roadway were installed and a four-square standard pattern gate-keeper's residence, with central chimney, was erected on the south-western side of the crossing. This building still stands and is occupied, so it is understood, by one of the railway gangers. For many years a large willow-tree shed its beauty and materially assisted in draining the gate-house yard of its excess moisture, but was removed for reasons unknown.

About 1914-15 the Government resumed, for tramway depot purposes, a short section of Arncliffe Street east of and including the railway level crossing. The resumption also included the full length of Spark Street, the Grundy farm and the bus depot on the southern side of that Street, together with the adjacent Mitchell property. A single line extension of the Cooks River Tramway was carried along Rocky Point Road and across the Cook's River Bridge. This line curved into Arncliffe Street and terminated in a number of sidings serving the various adjuncts of the new depot. The large elevated blue-metal bins that had previously been erected at Erskineville Railway Goods Sidings were dismantled and re-erected at the Wolli Creek Depot. A portion of this stucture, now derelict, remains in-situ although the tramway tracks have largely been removed. The area has been handed over to private industry in recent years and is now graced by the tanks and elevators of concrete mixing establishments.

With the resumption of Arncliffe Street, just mentioned, it was necessary to provide road traffic with an alternative crossing of the Illawarra Railway tracks. To this end a by-pass, known for years as Arncliffe Street and later as Guess Avenue, left Bonar Street and passing eastward through the old Fripp property it entered a subway beneath the lines. The by-pass then skirted the southern border of the former Mitchell property to the intersection of the Illawarra Road.

Next door and on the western side of Arncliffe Street Level Crossing gatekeeper's cottage is a small weatherboard building formerly in the possession of the Fripp family. A tiny detached kitchen with a wide brick chimney was at the rear of the premises and lay derelict and creeper enshrouded for some years prior to its demolition in 19 . The Fripp property extended southwards to

Thompson Street and westward to Bonar Street. Across the road from the Bonar Street frontage another member of the Fripp family lived in a small slab hut which had to be demolished to make way for the Western Suburbs Sewer.

About 1894 Mr. Justin McSweeney, a leading contractor specialising in civil engineering and railway works purchased the southernmost portion of the Fripp property, bounded by Thompson and Bonar Streets. As a residence suitable for a bachelor he erected a one-room wide two storeyed house flush with the Thompson Street, frontage. On the northern side of this building he placed verandahs to both ground and upper floor which permitted a fine view over the swamp lands surrounding Wolli Creek and Cook's River. Twitted by his confreres about this somewhat humble abode McSweeney built the mansion known as "Kirnbank" which adjoined and was connected with his first home. It is said that after the building was completed he married Miss Dawson (of Dawson's hotel near the Mortuary Station at Sydney). This lady found no favour with the locality and the McSweeneys moved to more congenial surroundings at Elizabeth Bay. "Kirnbank" was then occupied by McSweeney's sister and niece.

The grounds were pleasantly laid out and a terraced rose garden was a special feature, the bushes being supplied by the neighbouring Johnson's Nursery. The fine balustrading which still remains on the property was moulded in cement by Mr. Martin who resided nearby in Booth Street. Along the fence line of the railway was planted an avenue of Moreton Bay fig-trees and camphor-laurels, one the finest landmarks in the district. Unfortunately these have been largely destroyed by the inroads of a not particularly tidy industrial undertaking.

Mr. McSweeney owned the Federal Timber Mill at Rozelle and amongst a multitude of other contracts built the Harris Street Electric Tramway at Pyrmont, the Erskineville Tramway and the section of line between the Gap and Watsons Bay Terminus. One of his major works was the construction of the Western Suburbs Sewer which passed beneath "Kirnbank" on its way to the nauseous Arncliffe Sewerage Farm located at the southern shores of Cook's River near its entrance to Botany Bay. McSweeney was greatly interested in race horses and ran his own stable. Said horses broke down his fabulous rose garden thereby breaking the heart of Mr. Johnson, the nearby nurseryman who had planted and tended the once glorious show.

Nearly opposite the Fripp's cottage, on the northern side of Arncliffe Street, was a four roomed cottage of brick. This edifice was named "Ferngrove" and still retained its original shingled roof which, in later years was covered with corrugated iron. The building was occupied, prior to 1890, by the Anderson family who conducted a nursery business on the premises. Then came the Johnson family of Nurserymen who carried on well into the 1930's. Mr. Johnson also established a nursery on the western side of the Western Suburb's outfall Sewer main, the site nowadays being used by a carrying concern. "Ferngrove" eventually came into the possession of Mr. Lusty who had married a daughter of the former owner. His name is perpetuated in Lusty Street, a title given to the short section of the old Arncliffe Street between the Bonar Street intersection and the long abandoned level railway crossing.

A deviation of Arncliffe Street was made necessary with the construction of the abovementioned Western Suburbs Sewer Main. Pedestrians could pass through a single arched subway beneath the structure but road traffic had to be diverted into the up-graded Bonar Street until the underground portion of the main had been crossed. Here a by-pass road ran down hill on the western side of the main to rejoin Arncliffe Street. Skirting the northern boundary of Johnson's Nursery the intersection of Water Street is reached. This laneway passed northward through the salt marsh to give access to Wolli Creek. At Water Street corner the old Arncliffe Street turned south-westwards, skirting an extensive gardening property, cultivated at one time by Mr. Sun Lee, which lay between the roadway and Wolli Creek. The house occupied by the Chinese gardeners was formerly the West Botany Primitive Methodist Church which, presumably after the "Union" in 1901-2 when this sect linked forces with the Wesleyan religious group, came into the possession of the Chinamen. The old brick building now became cluttered with sundry cart and packing sheds of all heights and shapes. There is something whimsical and wholly delightful about Chinese architecture of the shanty variety. Squares, levels, and plumbs go by the board and sundry holes, both large and small, are covered by the best means and materials available. To the artist the effect is truly delightful

but to the regulation conscious Municipal Official the result is a nightmare of incongruity.

In 1961 the whole ensemble of abandoned Methodist Church and its oriental additions was torn down and the once beautifully laid out market garden levelled ready for the erection of yet another factory.

Almost opposite the site of the old Primitive Methodist Church is the intersection of Nelson Street, a short thoroughfare giving connection with Walker Street which skirts the base of the rocky escarpment known as Vinegar Hill (later as The Knoll) and runs aparallel with and on the southern side of Arncliffe Street. Located at the south-west corner of Nelson Street is the two-storeyed house formerly occupied by Mr. Walker. This gentleman built the aforementioned Primitive Methodist Church and was principal leader and preacher to its small congregation. His home is remarkably featureless in design and free from the usual embellishments which decorated other houses of its period. Unfortunately the premises, though still occupied, are falling into disrepair and, so it is mooted, will shortly be dismantled.

Almost immediately opposite the Walker residence in Walker Street is a small weatherboard cottage ensconced behind a huge camphor-laurel tree and perched on the steep slopes of the hillside well above street level. This old home has the distinction of being the second oldest building the immediate area, the Walker home being the first.

Continuing in its south-westerly direction Arncliffe Street skirted the border of the original grant made to William Packer which, until recently, was intensely cultivated as a market garden. The area is destined for industrial development and the once fertile ground has been covered with mullock filling in order to bring it to road level. Arncliffe Street turned sharply to the north-west to follow the western boundary of this former market garden. Cousin's Dairy-farm built on Chant's land lay against the roadway immediately north of the present Goddard Street. Their property was later subdivided into a number of housing blocks.

Before turning westwards to follow the northern boundary of the historic Hannam grant, Arncliffe Street passed by "Wolliville", (No.139) a two-storeyed residence belonging to the Brickwood family. This fine residence is peculiar in having the upper windows of two rear wings facing inward on to a central courtyard covered by an extension of the roof (a most unusual arrangement) and left open at its outer or eastern side.

We now reach the property formerly allocated to Reuben Hannam, a convict who eventually became overseer of the Government brickyards established on the southern slopes of Brickfield Hill in Sydney on what is now the site of Anthony Hordern & Sons. According to report Reuben Hannam was instrumental in making the first sandstock bricks, from a mixture composed of lime, ash, and sand. As a reward he was allocated a grant of 100 acres along the southern bank of Wolli Creek. It would appear that apart from constructing a small two roomed cottage on the estate little use was made of this land until it came into the possession of the Bucknell family. When this event took place the Hannam's moved across to the opposite side of Arncliffe Street and lived in a rambling weatherboard building which stands today as No. 112. It is said that the old well (reputed to never run dry) is covered by the cottage next door (No.). Reuben Hannam died in 1852 and his son David resided for many years at No. 112.

William Bucknell erected quite a commodious residence of stone which he named "Avondale". Considerable improvements were made to the land and it has been stated that sheep farming was one of the many pursuits carried on by this gentleman. The house evidently became damp and when first noted by the writer it had its outer walls encased in weatherboard; really a weatherboard veneer in modern parlance. There were dormer windows projecting along the line of the front roof, the latter being of the type known as "Snug Dutch" which was very popular in house design along the Hawkesbury River. The fence ranging along Arncliffe Street was bordered with pine trees which were removed when portion of the land was taken over for the East Hills Railway in the late nineteen-twenties. After William Bucknell's death

"Avondale" was maintained more as a residence than a farm and only a few cows and horses were to be seen in the various paddocks. One of the sons, 'Lionel' by name, took over a station property in the Inverell district and Reginald, who resided at Avondale, became the local stock inspector.

A grave was located at a short distance east of the frontage of Avondale and marked by a six feet high vertical pillar of rounded sandstone, the whole being enclosed by a low white-painted picket fence. Prior to the demolition of "Avondale" (about 1927 - 1928) this headstone was removed, although the white fence still remained in-situ.

The advent of the East Hills Railway made necessary the realignment of Arncliffe Street in the vicinity of the present Turrella Railway Station. The continuation westwards of the old road to the Wolli Creek water - splash has been named Henderson Street; the northern frontages of which are now occupied by a series of industrial undertakings which have eliminated all trace of the former "Avondale" homestead. The diversion of Arncliffe Street southwards alongside the Turrella Railway station was named Loftus Street and has since been re-named Turrella Street.

Reverting to the old time Arncliffe Street we find that almost immediately opposite "Avondale" and on the southern side of the Arncliffe Street alignment was the property and stone residence of the Chappelow family of whom there is a record in 1853. These people established a dairy and the home paddock was the somewhat rocky area bounded by Arncliffe, Henry, Cook and Hannam Streets. Incidentally the short dead-end street, aptly named Short Street, which invaded into the Chappelow property from Cook Street, served two houses (Nos. 2 and 3) and was extended through to Arncliffe Street, when the local street arrangements were modified about 1927 - 1928 in connection with the East Hills Railway. Short Street now became Reede Street and gave direct access from Turrella Railway Station to Cook Street and places beyond. The Chappelow homestead, located near the intersection of Henry and Arncliffe Streets, was enshrouded by a dense growth of trees which included a magnificent Moreton Bay Fig Tree. The dairy cattle were also placed on an adjacent paddock which ranged along the southern bank of Wolli Creek in the vicinity of Ferngrove Nursery. In later years the property was taken over by Streets Ice Cream Limited and all trace of the Chappelow homestead and its tree-girt surroundings have been removed.

Proceeding along Arncliffe Street and accompanied by the row of magnificent pine trees flanking the boundary fence of the Bucknell property we reach the Hannam Street intersection. On the western side of this intersection was located the Griggs' homestead, named "Valencia" which was distinguished by splendid cedar tree, hard by the front gate and also by several pepper-trees, which added their lustre at the rear of the premises. As the house stood in the projected path of the East Hills Railway it had to be demolished, the materials being utilised in the building of a new home which stands near the corner of Hannam and Turrella Streets. However, the cedar tree remained for many years before it fell before the wanton axe of one who did not like trees.

Westwards from Hannam Street the old and now abandoned route of Arncliffe Street fell sharply through a shallow cutting to the water-splash or ford laid through the waters of Wolli Creek. The stream was and is to this day, most picturesque, at this point. Weeping willows line both banks, broken here and there by sombre hued she-oaks and there is even a basket willow to be seen hard by the foot bridge which has supplanted the original forded crossing. The plaintive call of the grass-bird and the rich melody of the reed-warblers can be heard at the proper season whilst in winter the area is haunted by coveys of black duck and literally hundreds of Pied Cormorants. In and out amongst the reed beds are dab-chicks, dotterals, and water hens, whilst the constantly flicking white tail feathers of the purple gallinule can be discerned in the deep-shadows. Spur winged plover, egrets, herons, ibis, and other water-fowl are all acquainted with the pleasures associated with this proclaimed bird sanctuary.

Crossing the ford the old road continued westward and divided the grant given to Joshua Thorp into two sections. Both of these areas were fertile bottoms and were intensely cultivated as market gardens. They came eventually under Chinese ownership, but a series of unprecedented floods forced these industrious people out of business. Since then the land on the southern side has reverted to

a vast reed covered swamp, whilst that on the north has become a wilderness of rank growth.

Flax plants still survive along the route and at the western alignment of Joshua Thorp's property the ancient road way turned northwards to avoid the sloping ramparts of Nanny Goat Hill. At the road bend and above flood level stood the shanty which housed the Chinese gardeners cultivating the southern section of the original Thorp grant. This edifice was ingeniously fabricated from galvanised iron nailed higgledy-piggledy at all manner of angles. An ingenious arrangement of stay poles placed at strategic points kept the exterior walls from collapsing. Even certain of these all important stays had to be further stayed to keep them in a somewhat vertical position. To an artist the hutment was a sheer joy, particularly when the scarlet coral tree, which still remains, was in full bloom.

There was also a small weatherboard cottage of the "Hudson Ready-Built" type adjacent to the aforementioned gardener's residence which faced towards the northern section of Arncliffe Street. The site of this house is also marked today by its former setting of coral trees.

Breasting a gentle slope a second series of Chinese shanties and attendant sheds and stables was met, flanked by two majestic Norfolk Island pine trees and encircled by smallish robinia trees, the latter still being in evidence on the site. This group of Chinese cultivated the northern portion of the Joshua Thorp grant, which extended eastwards to Wolli Creek. The architecture of the buildings and particularly the outhouses was delightful in its execution. For instance, one shed had needed re-roofing and evidently a job lot of corrugated iron had been obtained, say in six foot and ten foot sheets. The six foot sheets covered the northern slope of the hip roof without trouble but the ten foot length proved too long for the southern side. Obviously in the absence of tin snips or other cutting tools and in the interest of economy they had to be used. The four foot overhang above the ridge was of no consequence to the Celestial mind and they thus unwittingly set an early example of the purely functional rat-baggery which characterises today's so-called modern architecture.

North of and adjacent to the last mentioned Chinese establishment was a tree-girt cottage, with its frontage facing east towards Wolli Creek, belonging in its later days to William Woods. This gentleman used his property as a pig farm, consequently its immediate surroundings were cluttered with sundry sheds and pot-boiling appurtenances calculated to give the animals the comforts which they richly deserved. However, swine fever smote the herd and their destruction put Mr. Woods out of business. His brother, James, who dealt in horses, now took over the premises and used them as a stud farm. The motor-age brought about the cessation of this activity and the old house was demolished about 19 . Scattered about the now unoccupied land are sundry foundations, draped with black berries, which tell the discerning eye something of the swine raising of yore.

Opposite the former entrance to the Woods' establishment the Arncliffe Street resumed its westerly course and hence forwards was dignified as Arncliffe Road. They way now led through a picturesque valley, tightly enclosed by sandstone hills; until by a devious up graded route it reached Homer Street which traversed the crest of Campbell's Hill, and gave eastward connection to Sydney, via Unwins Bridge Road and westward connection to the Bexley Road. According to report the old Arncliffe Road and Arncliffe Street were the means of access between the city and the various farms and settlements of West Botany, until such time as the construction of the Cook's River Dam was completed.

Nowadays the route is blocked by fences between the eastern or lower end of Arncliffe Road and the crossing at Wolli Creek near Turrella Railway Station. However, pedestrian traffic is catered for by footpath, and a footbridge spans Wolli Creek. The journey from Old Tempe to Homer Street via the old road is still very pleasant and surprisingly rural in some of its aspects. Much of the land has been taken up since 1900 by suburban housing and lately, unfortunately, by industrial concerns which do not add one wit to the beauty of the landscape.

The second section of this essay on Wolli Creek and its immediate surroundings will commence at the corner of Hannam and Arncliffe Streets and proceed upstream to the New Illawarra Road crossing at Bexley North.