



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

24 Duff Street ,
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.
March, 1976.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, March 19th, 1976, at 8 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Peter Sage presents: "Autumn Colours in Victoria - Bright, Beechworth and Buchan - along the Great Ocean Road, the South West Coast of Victoria - and Mount Gambier and the Blue Lake"

Supper Roster: Miss Dunsmore, Captain, & Miss Cheetham, Mrs. McMillan,
Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Gash.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. D. Sinclair,
President.

Phone 587.4555.

Mrs. E. Wright,
Treas. & Soc. Sec.

Phone 599.4884.

NOTE TO MEMBERS:

Please advise Secretary
(Phone 59.8078) of any change
of address - this will save
disappointment when your
Bulletin is posted to you.

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Mrs. B. Perkins,

Publicity Officer.

Phone 587.9164.

Mrs. E. Eardley,
Secretary.

Phone 59.8078.

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer.

Phone 587.1159.

"The Art of Medicine consists of amusing the patient while Nature cures the disease."

Voltaire.

A limited supply of the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford Eardley (reprinted by popular request) are now available, cost \$1.00 each, postage extra -

- Book 1. "The Early History of the Wolli Creek Valley"
Book 2. "The Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"
Book 3. "Thomas Saywell's Tramway, 1887 - 1914. Rockdale to Lady Robinsons Beach"
Book 4. "The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tramway"

Also available are: (By the same Author)

- Book 5. "Heritage in Stone" (Limited Stocks)
Book 6. "All Stations to Como" (Limited Stocks)
Book 7. "The Early History. Tempe & The Black Creek Valley"

Contact Secretary 'Phone 59.8078.

OR Miss Otton ' Phone 59.4259. (after 8 p.m.)

ALSO Smith's Florist Shop Tramway Arcade, Rockdale.

Society Badges are available - \$1.00 each.

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Miss Otton, Curator of "Lydham Hall", is in need of Ladies and/or Gentlemen to assist with the weekend roster. Visitors come from far and wide to see this lovely old Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate inspections. Ring Miss Otton, Phone 59.4259. (after 8 p.m.). Your call will be appreciated.

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Social News:

April 11th 1976.

St. Johns Church, Parramatta, The Lancer Service.

Those who have attended this Service in previous years know what an impressive Service it is.

Meeting Place:

Town Hall, Rockdale.

Time:

8.45 a.m.

Cost:

\$2.50 per person.

Pay at March Meeting.

If interested, will you contact our Social Secretary, Mrs. Wright, Phone 599.4884 for details and bookings. Lunch at Prospect Dam.

A "Mystery Tour", which you will be sure to enjoy, is being arranged for a Saturday afternoon early in May. Mrs. Wright will tell you about this.

PLEASE NOTE: Admission to Lydham Hall from 1st April, 1976, will be Adults 30¢, Children 10¢, Week day Group Visits 25¢.

Phone Calls to Lydham Hall after 8 p.m. - 59.4259

ITEMS DONATED TO LYDHAM HALL,

Miss C. Wilding, Bexley.	Period Frock 1870. Sudan War Medals 1881 - 1883, owned by John Wilding, Grandfather of Miss Wilding. Tobacco Tin, Christmas 1914.
Mrs. Jennings.	Pillow Shams, White, in Glory Box of Mrs. Austin, 1900 (Mrs. Jennings' mother). Blue and White cup, saucer & plate, last of dinner service, wedding present to Mrs. Austin 1900. 1 Wedding Invitation of Mrs. Jennings' Uncle. Unfinished handworked nightdress top belonging to Mrs. Austin. 1 bread crock.
Miss Wilding, Bexley.	Black crepe frock, with coloured beads on embroidered panels, 1920.
Mr. & Mrs. Chatto, Carlton.	1 Jardiniere, green and gold. 2 Earthenware jars. 1 green plate, basket weave design. 2 jelly moulds. 1 glass inkholder 1 clock, willow pattern design 1 set household metal scales 1 black boiler pot 1 wooden potato masher 1 metal " " 1 egg beater 1 china teapot & 4 cups & saucers. Hand painted. 6 wooden folding table mats. 1 willow pattern biscuit tin 1 old Hot Point Iron. 1 long handle kitchen spoon 1 pair knife rests Collection of newspapers & clippings Collection of books Portion of staircase, off "The Dunbar" 1898.
Mrs. Anysley, Arncliffe.	1 old ornament 2 blue and white kitchen jugs Set of skewers 1 green jardiniere 2 very old dress buckles 1 white marcella cot quilt
Misses Stacy, Bexley.	Dolls Cot complete with bedclothes. 1 old iron 9 white heavy cotton crocheted washstand mats. 1 white fine cotton camisole, handmade.
Mrs. Stacy, Lindfield.	Basin, jug and chamber - white & gold edge. 1 pair dumb-bells.
Miss Porter, Carlton.	Large jardiniere

- *R.W. Rathbone.*

The first elected Legislative Council was noted for its accrimony, hair-splitting and personalities but it was important, because, no longer did the Governor preside at its meetings. It elected its own Speaker, Alexander M'Leay and this in itself was a sign of the transfer of authority from the Governor to a Council representative of the people.

An attempt to supplement it with a form of Local Government was not successful for, except for one centre, Sydney, the population was too widely scattered.

The Governor still had powers much greater than those conferred on Parliament, retaining the sole right of initiating all measures dealing with public expenditure as well as the power to veto any measure passed by the Legislative Council of which he did not approve. These restrictions provided a continual grievance which united the elected members against the Government nominees.

As no Party system had yet developed and the high property qualification did much to ensure that all members had similar interests, the real split was between those who supported the Governor's administration and those who opposed it.

Having run its full five year term, it was dissolved in June, 1848 and during the following two months, new elections were held.

In the electorate of Cumberland there were three candidates for the two seats ... Cowper; Nelson Simmons Lawson, son of "Old Ironbark" who had retired to his farm and Henry Gilbert Smith, a merchant of some standing from the City. Whilst no heads were broken and no blood was spilt, the contest in Cumberland was not without incident.

Wentworth's "Australian" railed against Cowper describing him as "an exquisite specimen of intolerance and bigotry". Cowper retaliated by publishing details of some youthful prank of Lawson Junior's in which the latter had run foul of the law.

Lawson, however, was enthusiastically received particularly in the Cook's River section of the electorate where Michael Gannon, Thomas Flood, Reuben Hannam, Thomas Kelsey and James Oatley were prominently identified with his cause. On election day there was "Not one instance of outrage" as the voters went quietly to the polls. Cowper again scored a personal triumph heading Lawson by some eighty votes with Smith finishing a poor third.

Lawson, unfortunately, was not long to enjoy his newly won status for he fell seriously ill in January, 1849 and died the following month.

This led to a by-election. For some time previously it had been widely canvassed that the British Government again proposed sending

convicts to Australia. Wentworth supported the idea provided an equal number of free settlers was sent out at the Home Government's expense. Cowper was implacably opposed to the resumption of transportation under any conditions. The by-election was to provide a very timely test of public opinion on the issue. The Wentworth supporters sponsored Robert Fitzgerald who had narrowly lost his seat of Cumberland Boroughs at the General Election whilst Cowper prevailed upon Sydney barrister, Archibald Michie to carry the Anti-transportation banner. Michie received the enthusiastic backing of "The Sydney Morning Herald", Thomas Sutcliffe Mort and Robert Campbell and was able to condemn "the horrors and impurities of this degrading system" with such effect that on the day before polling, a very worried Fitzgerald issued a public statement disavowing his support for Transportation to the great annoyance of Wentworth. Fitzgerald won the seat by a substantial margin but the Anti-transportationists had scored a great moral victory.

In June the same year, the "Hashemy" entered Port Jackson carrying a shipload of convicts. Mass meetings addressed by Cowper and Dunmore Lane demanded an end to the system and the Australian Anti-Transportation League was formed with Cowper as its President. In March, 1850 he resigned as Member for Cumberland to carry on the fight and when two more convict ships appeared in the Harbour in September, the populace was in such a dangerous mood that the Legislative Council ordered their diversion to Port Phillip and no convict ever again set foot in N.S.W.

The resultant vacancy in Cumberland was contested by wealthy Parramatta storekeeper, James Byrnes and Dr. Henry Grattan Douglass, a highly controversial former magistrate and the first teaching doctor at Sydney Hospital, but the electors of Cumberland were heartily sick of being called to the polls every few months and barely twenty five percent of the 1,671 people entitled to vote bothered to cast their ballots. Byrnes defeated Douglass 356 votes to 94, the defeated doctor subsequently publishing a public notice "thanking those 94 electors who recorded their votes in (his) favour especially those who came forward from amongst the 273 who had signed the requisition asking (him) to stand".

But elections and transportation soon became of minor consequence for on February 12,th 1851, Lawrence Hargreaves discovered gold at Summer Hill Creek near Bathurst and the Gold Rush began. The same year, Victoria gained its long sought independence from N.S.W.

The Act which gave Victoria separation, also increased the powers of the N.S.W. Legislative Council although the main grievances still remained. In May 1851, Wentworth moved his famous "Declaration and Remonstrance" expressing deep disappointment and dissatisfaction with the new Constitution. The Home Government met this demand in a spirit of conciliation and suggested that the Legislative Council should draft a suitable constitution and transmit it to England for approval.

As a result of Victoria's separation, new elections were held in September 1851 and apart from the portion adjoining the City of Sydney which was carved off to form the new electorate of Sydney Hamlets, the Cumberland seat remained unaltered. Throughout the rest of N.S.W. "confusion, disorder, rows and riots which surpass the powers of description" took

place at nearly every election meeting , but in Cumberland the contest passed off quietly, the only incident of note occurring before the hustings at Parramatta where one very persistent interjector "was pushed off his chair and fell with violence upon the ground". In a very low poll caused by the exodus of so many voters to the goldfields, Fitzgerald was returned comfortably but Byrnes was replaced by the distinguished Queen's Counsel, John Bayley Darvall. Byrnes blamed his defeat on his outspoken opposition to Government grants to Catholic Schools - nearly thirty percent of the names on the Cumberland Roll being those of Catholic voters.

Fitzgerald's win was a tribute to his ability to obtain large scale Government concessions for road and bridge work throughout his electorate, pounds 255.3.6 of which had been spent on repairs and alterations to the sluices of Cook's River Dam, but he was a most irregular attender at sittings of the Council.

Cowper returned to the Council as Member for Durham and in November, 1851 was Chairman of the Select Committee on Parish Roads. At this enquiry four of the five members of the Cook's River Road Trust, Frederick Wright Unwin, James Oatley, Thomas Kelsey and Michael Gannon petitioned Parliament to have their activities extended to that section of the road between the Cook's and George's Rivers. They pointed out that between fifty and one hundred carts carrying timber and lime crossed the Cook's River Dam each day and in a few years their revenue from tolls had increased from pounds 250.0.0 to 825.0.0. Their application was strongly opposed by the fifth trustee, John Icke Kettle who stated in evidence - "the land beyond the river is rough country of no value and the road leads to no collection of houses. It is not as if the road was in a good state of repair so that people might travel that way from Sydney to Wollongong. The only persons who would benefit would be a few tenants scattered over this barren region who cut wood but bring nothing of consequence into Sydney and the proprietors, most of whom do not live in the country on the other side of the river." He then added rather pointedly - "Mr. Oatley and Mr. Gannon have properties there from which they make large profits by the sale of wood."

During 1852 a Special Committee with Wentworth as its chairman met to draw up the new Constitution and early in 1853, it came forward for approval. Wentworth proposed an hereditary Upper House modelled on the House of Lords with similar privileges which would include all members of the then Legislative Council together with a fully elective Legislative Assembly. The suggested hereditary Australian peerage was a strange conceit indeed for a man who was the illegitimate son of a convict mother and a rum racketeering father who had been tried at the Old Bailey for highway robbery and had only narrowly escaped the gallows on Tyburn Hill.

This provision created bitter opposition and widespread public hostility. In the Legislative Council both Cowper and Darvall scathingly condemned it and in December 1853, Wentworth agreed to abandon the idea. Wentworth then resigned from the Council and with the Colonial Secretary, Edward Deas Thompson, left for England to support the Bill in its passage through the House of Commons.

Early in 1854 the Crimean War broke out and because of an almost total pre-occupation with this, it was July 1855 before the necessary legislation was passed and November before it was proclaimed.

Almost all the old grievances were removed and N.S.W. now had the power to make and repeal its own laws and control its own levies and taxation. Thus in the space of less than seventy years, N.S.W. had developed from a convict military settlement into a free and almost completely self dependent member of the Empire.

No one would claim that during these years the area around Cook's River was the political hub of the Colony, but largely because of its vigorous political representation its name was often heard in the hallowed halls of the Council Chamber.

In September, 1852 Darvall demanded action to repair the dangerous state of the road on the south side of the Cook's River Dam. In August the next year he presented a petition signed by sixteen residents of the area protesting against the Upper House provisions of Wentworth's Constitution Bill. Twelve months later, Arthur Holroyd, Member for the Western Boroughs Electorate presented a petition from Thomas John Fisher and Piddocke Arthur Tompson requesting permission to erect a bridge between their properties across Cooks' River. In May, 1854 the drinking habits of the residents south of the river came under the close scrutiny of the Licensing Board which refused to renew the licence of the "Man of Kent" Inn at King's Grove because the licensee, Evan Evans, had been convicted of a brutal assault on a woman. On appeal, the Board reversed its decision when the Superintendent of Police assured the Chairman that "the woman was worthless and a bad character". But it was in September 1855, during the sittings of the Select Committee on Education, that the district really came under notice.

The school at Cook's River which was conducted under the auspices of the Church of England was described thus -

"The school is well situated. It is of good form and size but dirty and ill-ventilated. The closets are in a filthy state and not sufficiently separated for decency. The furniture of the room is insufficient for the number of children and there is but a scanty supply of apparatus. The children read and spell badly, understand nothing of what they read and write poorly. Little is known of arithmetic and nothing of grammar or geography. Their knowledge of the Catechism and Scripture is also lamentably deficient. Voleable regularity of attendance prevails but the children are very punctual. They are also dirty, noisy and disorderly."

It seemed quite unnecessary to add - "The master though intelligent, is not efficient".

A VISIT TO "LINDEN HOUSE". The Management Committee
Linden House War Memorial Museum.

- G.H.Eardley.

139 year old Linden House, the Regimental Museum of the 1st/15th Royal N.S.W. Lancers, is devoted mainly to the history of the Regiment and the cavalry and armoured forces. The Lancers have occupied these Barracks since 1891, and today the Regiment is an armoured unit in the C.M.F. The first parade of the Lancers was held on March 3rd, 1885, when they provided an escort for the Governor at the farewell to the Sudan Contingent. (The annual commemoration of this is held here the first Sunday in March, commencing at 9.30a.m. and is open to the public.) In the South African War of 1899-1900, the Regiment served as part of General French's cavalry, and one of its detachments were the first Dominion troops to arrive in South Africa. In World War I the Regiment was known as 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment; it fought as infantry on Gallipoli, and later in the Palestine campaign it was part of the vast British, Australian and New Zealand cavalry force known as the Desert Mounted Corps.

The Regiment was horsed until 1936, and in World War II it became an armoured regiment of the 2nd. A.I.F. It fought in New Guinea with the 9th Australian Division and other formations and pioneered the use of heavy tanks in the jungle; and as part of the seaborne assault by the 7th Division on Dutch Borneo at Balikpapan the Regiment made the heaviest Australian tank attack of the War. It was the only armoured regiment with a militia origin to go overseas in World War II, and the high regard in which it was held by the Army is shown by the fact that the Lancers were the only armoured regiment to be sent overseas twice. The voluntary weekend staff of this Museum includes several who served in those campaigns, and one from the South African War.

Linden House was not always part of these Barracks. It was completed by 1828 in Macquarie Street, Parramatta, as a private home and then became an officers' mess for the junior officers of the British regiments then garrisoning the Colony. It later became a girl's school - and in the Museum you can see the school's hand-bell and a photograph of the headmistress. Linden House then had various roles until the property was bought by the A.M.P Society. In 1962 the Society gave the building to a committee of the Regiment and the Regimental Association, and it was removed stone by stone to these grounds and

faithfully re-erected in its original form. It is administered by a Management Committee responsible to Trustees, both bodies being composed of serving members of the Regiment and of the Royal N.S.W. Lancers Association.

The stone exterior is the original stone of which Linden House was built; it has been re-dressed and allowed to "weather" before sealing. The interior brickwork is not the original, but is almost similar in appearance to the sandstock bricks, and the doors, fanlight, and windows are replicas. As funds become available the ceiling will be installed. Only the ground floor is in use at present as a Museum; a spiral staircase in period form will eventually be built to allow of the top floor being brought into use for showing the many exhibits which we have in storage. These include such things as the uniforms of the late Sir John Northcott, whose trophy Japanese swords, saddlery, and World War I kitbag are already on display.

The other two main buildings which you can see in these grounds were completed in 1820 and have been in continuous use as a military headquarters ever since. "Bobs Hall" was named for Field Marshall Lord Roberts, V.C., and is now Regimental Headquarters. A similar single storey building existed on the eastern side of the parade ground, but was demolished many years ago. These buildings are on Register "A" of Historic Buildings.

Near the main two-storey building there are three tanks of World War II, and you are welcome to inspect these. (Please discourage children from clambering on them, however). These are a Japanese medium tank of about 15 tons, a Covenanter bridge-laying tank, and a Matilda 3" Howitzer tank. The Covenanter carries a scissors-type bridge which could be laid over a gap without the two man crew leaving the vehicle; and it picked up its bridge in the same way. The 26 ton Matilda was the type of tank used by the Lancers in both New Guinea and Dutch Borneo.

In the Barracks grounds you will see the equipment with which the Regiment is armed today. The big tanks are 50 ton Centurians, each powered by a 600 h.p. Rolls Royce "Meteor" engine - the same as in the Spitfire aircraft of the Battle of Britain. The box-like vehicle is the command version of the M 113 armoured personnel carrier as used in Vietnam by the Australians. And the small wheeled armoured cars are Ferrets, fast light reconnaissance cars.

Please come back and see us again; we are continually changing the exhibits. We would appreciate also your telling your friends about our lovely old Museum. All admission charges go towards the restoration and maintenance of the exhibits - and donations towards the completion of the stairway and top floor will be very welcome and are tax-deductible.
