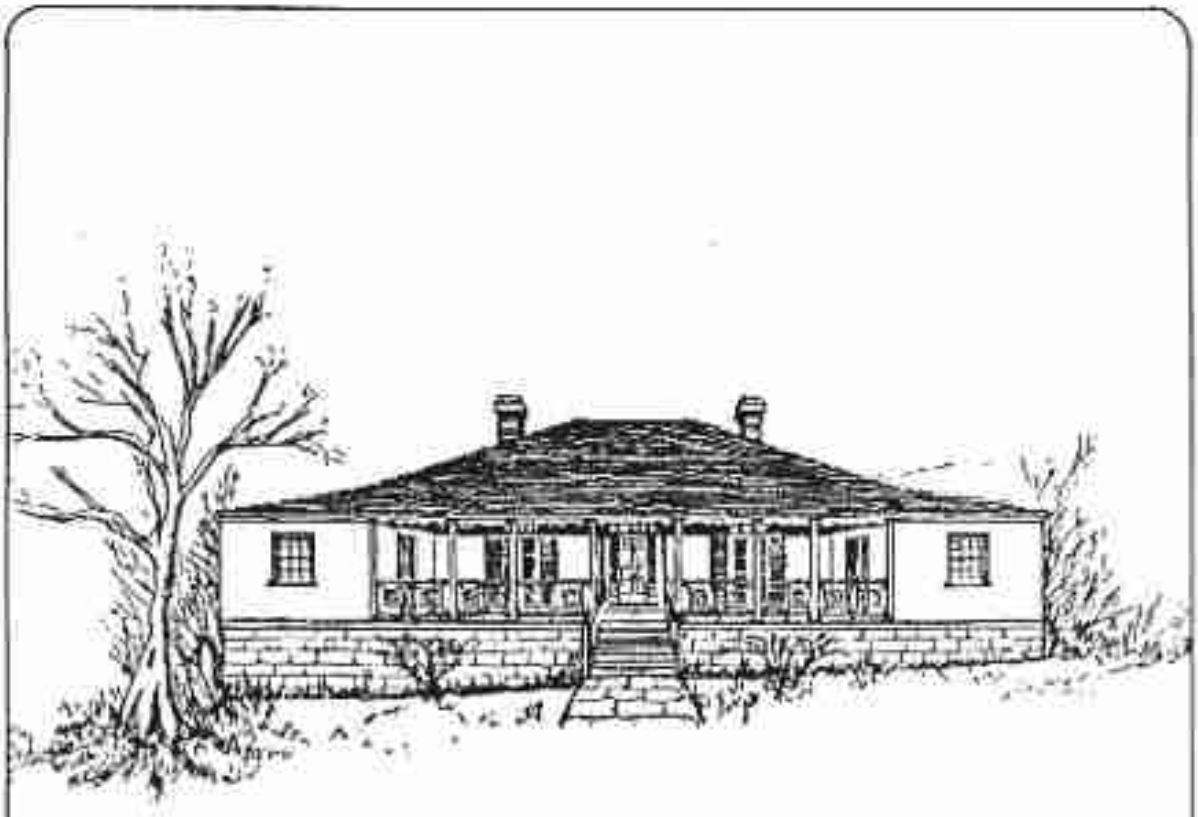
Leichhardt Historical Journal

No 10
1981

JOHN FRASER GRAY AND WATERVIEW HOUSE, BALMAIN
THE ANNANDALE POST OFFICE
BOOK REVIEWS



THE FIRST HOUSE IN BALMAIN
WATERVIEW HOUSE

Annandale Balmain Glebe Leichhardt Lilyfield Rozelle

Leichhardt Historical Journal

No 10 1981 *ISSN 0155-4840*

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Alan Roberts
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The Leichhardt Historical Journal is published jointly by the Annandale Association, the Balmain Association, the Glebe Society and the Leichhardt Association.

The Editors are not responsible for opinions expressed by contributors to the Journal.

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Acknowledgements

The Editors gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the Annandale Association and the Balmain Association from funds allocated to them by the Royal Australian Historical Society.

The Glebe Society also made a generous donation.

Jennifer Bates helped with layout and production.

Contents

John Fraser Gray and Waterview House, Balmain
by Peter Reynolds 3

Annandale Post Office
by Australia Post 20

Index Vol. 1971-1980 23

Reviews 24





Verandah Balmain Glebe Leichhardt Interior Rustic

Editorial

ACADEMICS AND ANTIQUARIANISM

The Leichhardt Historical Journal was founded in 1971 in the belief that it was desirable to disseminate the work being done on the history of this area. That work was lying in obscurity and needed to be made more accessible. There was also the hope that the existence of an attractive journal would encourage work to be done for it.

This has happened though, like many other editors, we have done our share of commissioning articles too.

Regularity of production has not been our strong point. But it is more remarkable that production has continued at all. After a decade, in which ten issues have been published, I feel that the *Journal* is still very much alive.

When we started, we were not sure what sort of material we would be publishing. We were, and are, fortunate to serve an area where many people have tertiary training, and where there is a significant level of scholarly interest in the local history.

This has come from social historians like Max Solling and Lesley Lynch, architectural historians like Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, and others like John Fletcher, a Germanic Studies scholar, whose erudite and witty survey of the almost non-subject of "Poets and Bookmen of Glebe" I shall long remember. I hope it will be published.

At the same time, our intention is to appeal to a wide audience. One of our best achievements was to encourage Margaret Upton to write a series of six articles based mainly on her own recollections.

But for the *Journal* this series would very likely never have been written.

I have feet in two camps. On the one hand I appreciate the intellectual purpose of academic history, and on the other, I appreciate the joy to be found in the work of non-academic local and family historians.

History has at least two functions; as a way of understanding the world, and as a source of pleasure. If I had to choose which is more important, I would say pleasure, most emphatically.

History is not worth pursuing if it does not give pleasure. Utilitarian justifications of history are largely cant.

Much as I deplore the resentment and incomprehension that amateur historians often feel towards the professionals, I abominate the contempt shown by academic historians for "antiquarians", by which they mean those who betray any interest in facts and things for their own sake.

In the unlikely event of my ever giving an inaugural lecture, it will be on two themes: the value of antiquarianism; and how, when we occasionally try to "learn" from History, we so often learn mistaken lessons.

Peter Reynolds paid me a handsome compliment in *Journal* No 7 when he wrote of my role in launching the *Leichhardt Historical Journal*. It is only fair to add that, since my enthusiasm flagged in the mid-70s (when I became involved in other things), he has revived the *Journal* and greatly improved it. For that I am grateful to him.

Alan Roberts

A Note On Contributors

Peter Reynolds lectures in Architecture at the University of New South Wales; Alan Roberts is the Field and Research Officer for the Royal Australian Historical Society; and Betty Mason is a past-President of the Annandale Association.

Cover

Waterview House, Balmain, c1905, from a photograph in J H Begg, MSS, Mitchell Library, drawn by Peter Reynolds.

OBITUARY

Mrs Rita Wise, a foundation member of the Balmain Association and long-term supporter of the *Leichhardt Historical Journal* died on 17 March 1982. Rita was a tireless worker in historical research. She was the main force in searching the land titles at the Registrar General's Department for use in determining Balmain subdivisions, street origins and dates of buildings.

This very demanding work was a task she taught herself to do. Her enthusiasm was for the knowledge of things rather than academic distinctions.

Rita passed away after a long illness, leaving her husband Hal and two sons, Anthony and Michael.

The Editors wish to express the deepest sympathy to Mr Hal Wise and members of the family.

John Fraser Gray (1815-1881): and Waterview House, Balmain

by Peter Reynolds



Elgin, a maritime burgh in the north of Scotland, is a name remembered for the British peer who saved the exquisite marble statuary from the Parthenon in Athens for posterity. Thomas Bruce, the seventh Earl of Elgin (1766-1841), paid out £50 000 to buy the so-called "Elgin Marbles" from the Turkish overlords of Athens between 1799 and 1802. The famous Greek temple was being used as a powder magazine and, faced with such an explosive situation, Lord Elgin transported the marbles to England where he sold them to the British Museum where they are today.[1]

Another Elgin man was Dr Alexander Gray (1751-1808) of the East India Company. Born the son of Deacon Gray, watchmaker and wheelwright, the young Alexander was helped in his medical training by his uncle, Dr Alexander Sutherland. Dr Sutherland was a pioneer in the field of inoculation and had become sufficiently eminent to have been chosen to inoculate the family of Frederick William of Prussia. After retiring from his flourishing practice in Bath, Dr Sutherland came to live with the Grays at Elgin and fostered Alexander's medical aspirations.[2]

After his apprenticeship to Dr Thomas Stephens in Elgin, Alexander Gray furthered his studies at Edinburgh and later entered the service of the "Honourable the East India Company" as a surgeon in Bengal. He evidently prospered in this venture because when he made his will in Bengal in 1805 he devised £20 000 to the town of Elgin and, in a fit of choler, inscribed in the will that his young wife was to be disinherited. Dr Gray died at Bengal and the will was duly proved leaving the townspeople of Elgin free to accept his gift. Gray's Hospital was opened in 1819 in the High Street of Elgin.[3]

Contiguous to Elgin is the village of Bishopmill and there John Gray was born on 17 July 1783. It is thought that John Gray was Dr Gray's nephew. John, a mason, married Margaret the daughter of farmer David Keith and Margaret Brenner at Elgin in 1813. Their marriage produced William (b 1814), John Fraser (b 1816), Margaret (b 1818), Ann (b 1820), Alexander (b 1823), Mary (b 1825), James Donaldson (b 1828), Jessie (b 1830) and Eliza (b 1835).[4]

When John Gray senior died at Bishopmill in 1842 there was one missing among the mourners at his funeral.[5] John Fraser Gray, his son, had followed Dr Gray's example by going out to the colonies to seek fame and fortune.

New South Wales was his chosen destination but the stumbling block of the cost of the journey had to be overcome. As the transportation of convicts was drawing to a close, philanthropists and hard-headed businessmen advocated the large-scale emigration of the rural poor from England and Scotland. The Bounty Immigrants scheme was set up to provide the colonies with free settlers and to reduce overcrowding in the home country. Crown land was sold in New South Wales and the proceeds used by the British government to pay willing but often rapacious shipowners to transport this human cargo.[6]

John Fraser Gray did not qualify for assistance because he had been educated as a clerk and therefore was required to pay his own way. His responsibilities were increased by his marriage to Mary Ann (b 1818), the daughter of Alexander Duncan, engineer, and Barbara Jaxon of Elgin. John and Mary Ann were married at Garmouth, in the Parish of Speymouth, on 24 December 1838.[7]

Records of the young couple's voyage have not survived but it is difficult to believe that John would have brought his new wife to Sydney by steerage passage. This meant a five-month ordeal in the hold of a small wooden ship with little more than the basic necessities of life.

It also would have denied them the dignity of seeing their names inscribed on the passenger list. In most cases only cabin passengers, serious illnesses and deaths were recorded.[8]

John and Mary Ann arrived in Sydney in the middle of 1839 and John entered the counting-house of one of Sydney's leading merchants, Alexander Brodie Spark (1792-1850). Spark was also an Elgin man who had left his austere homeland to make his fortune and it could well be that his success was the spur which drove Gray to come to Sydney.[9]

Spark also, perhaps, provides a clue to the Gray's arrival in Sydney Cove. His diary* entry for 27 July 1839 reads, "a vessel from England arrived full of Emigrants, which swept around the Fort and came to abreast of us".

After settling in, John wrote from Spark's office at 17 Clarence Street on 30 August

* The Respectable Sydney Merchant, A B Spark, p109.

1839 to his little sister Eliza, then no more than four years old:

> *Do you mind on your Bony* that used to give you a Sapsey to buy a Baggy and learn you to sing "Oh Cohy! was ye ane late peetrun my Tonny Liza Gray". I dare say your recollection of me will be turning very faint - but you must learn to write and contribute to my letters - I must send you in this a Sixpence to make some Pipes to your Father, for he wishe' farawa. I hope you are an obedient girl to Father & Mother & attending to their instructions. I will perhaps soon be able to send you some better pennour, in the meantime I am*
>
> *My Dear Eliza*
> *Your loving Brother*
> *John Gray*[10]

John Gray put his years with Spark to good use, learning the business of buying and selling land but making sure not to emulate Spark's rash judgement and reckless generosity to unworthy friends. He saw Spark's financial empire crumble in the depression of the early 1840s, a lesson which urged him to keep his dealings on a sound business footing.

Gray's first speculation in land was to buy two and a half acres of the Hatfield grant in Botany on Cooks River, just along from Spark's own mansion called Tempe. He bought the land for £60 in June 1840.[11]

THE GRAYS IN BALMAIN: His second purchase introduced him to Balmain and was to provide a home for him and Mary Ann and their first child, Hannah Wright Gray, who was born in 1839.[12] In October 1840 Gray paid £54 for lot 5 of the "admirable Grammore Estate" at the corner of Darling and Killeen Streets (now occupied by No 130 Darling Street).[13]

The second child, John William Gray, was born at Sydney on 7 November 1840 and twelve months later, Gray borrowed £200 which enabled him to build Elgin Cottage and so perpetuate the memory of his homeland.[14] Alexander Smith Gray (little "Ackie"), the third child, completed the family when he was born at Elgin Cottage in 1842.[15]

John Gray took his position in the newly-settled area seriously and with others called a meeting at the "New Hotel" to consider erecting a landing place "at the Ferry Stairs" and improving the "Ferry Road". This was the first move to provide what was later to become Darling Street Wharf. He seems to have been a little lax in more civil duties because he was fined forty shillings for neglecting jury duty at the Supreme Court in July 1843.[16]

At about this time John's younger brother, Alexander, and his cousin, Walter, arrived from Elgin - an occurrence to be repeated later by other members of the family. Little is known of Walter except that by 1848 he had married and moved to Ipswich, Queensland.[17]

Balmain in the early 1840s was a place of intensive land speculation and many fortunes were won and lost. Between 1840 and 1846, Gray bought at least 30 allotments in Balmain for prices ranging from £4.10.10 for lot 7 in Thames Street in 1842 to £143.7.0 for eleven lots of the Waterview Estate in 1843.[18]

GRAY BUYS WATERVIEW HOUSE: On 7 March 1846 Gray made the most important purchase of his early life in New South Wales when he bought the centrepiece of the Waterview Estate - Waterview House.[19] His family home in Bridge Street, Bishopmill, looked out over the River Lossie and it would have been perfectly reasonable for him to have named his new Balmain house, Waterview House, in memory of it. The Balmain Waterview House, however, had been in existence for at least ten years when Gray bought it.

The house, in fact, predates residential subdivision in Balmain.

THE FIRST HOUSE IN BALMAIN: The first reference to Waterview House can be found in the deed for the first sale of land in Balmain. James Curtis, a Sydney merchant, registered a deed in August 1836 whereby he became the owner of ten acres fronting a bay "in which is Waterview House".[20] Shortly

"OLD VIEW OF ELGIN", from an engraving said to be dated before 1879 in R Young's Annals of the Parish and Burgh of Elgin. The view is taken from Bishopmill looking across the River Lossie to the town. The Cathedral built in 1224 is on the left. On the outskirts on the right foreground is the site of John Fraser Gray's "Waterview".



after this the bay became known as Waterview Bay - the Bay was named after the House. This sale to Curtis was made three years before Gray came to Sydney and two months before the public auction on 24 October 1838 when the 22 lots at Balmain East were sold. This auction is usually taken as the beginning of residential development in Balmain.[21]

Apart from this reference to Waterview House there is no direct evidence to reveal when it was built and for whom. Because it was the first house in Balmain, a look at the sequential development of the land upon which it stood is worthwhile.

In 1833 the owner of the Balmain Estate, Professor John Borthwick Gilchrist, signed a power-of-attorney in London instructing his agent, Frederick Parbury, to "lease, manage or sell" the land. Gilchrist moved to France where he died in 1841 and Parbury sailed for Sydney in the *Sir John Rae Reid* and arrived in Port Jackson on 10 December 1833. Between that date and the time of the sale to Curtis, Parbury had the entire "half a thousand acres" of Balmain to himself. The first advertisement in Parbury's name appeared on 7 July when he offered to sell or lease the land in lots of from two to 100 acres.

During the two and a half years from the time of his arrival to the time of his advertisement, Parbury had ample opportunity to build himself a cottage, possibly Waterview House*, on the land. That he had a vested interest in the early sales is seen in the identities of two of the purchasers. The sale to Curtis, at whose wharf he conducted his business, and the sale of eleven acres to John Lamb, with whom he was a partner in the firm of Lamb and Parbury, imply that he was "among friends" in his early Balmain dealings. These "friends" bought their land cheaply from Parbury. Their sale price per acre was £27 while the public auction average was £60.[22]

Whoever built the house chose the site extremely well. Standing on a gentle slope down to to the Bay, Waterview House nestled below the ridge which sheltered it from the south-westerly winds. The slope ensured that the land would be well drained and, at the same time, provide "ample sweet water".

The view from the house took in the sparkling waters of the Bay and the tree-clad foreshores of the harbour. Looking at the house from the water the viewer obtained:

> *a view between Goat Island and the main(land) of one of the most charming valleys in the harbour; and all travellers who have visited the spot have not failed to describe its natural beauties in terms of the warmest enthusiasm...here the amateur of taste may add new features, as it were, to the powers, the bloom and exuberance of nature, and enable the mind to revel in all the charms of imagination.*[23]

* See E. Elliott Napier in "Balmain: The Man and the Suburb", JRAHS, Vol XIV part V 1928, pp345-381. Napier's article, based on S.H. Hogg's unpub manuscript (ML) "Balmain, Past and Present", calls the house BRYN-Y-MOR (p380) which is Welsh for "hill on the water". Napier states that Waterview House was built by Parbury in 1833. Though illuminating in its time Napier's writing is often inaccurate and based on hearsay.



GRAY'S HOSPITAL, ELGIN, 1819 (R.Gordon)

Dr Gray made a fortune from service in the East India Co and bequeathed £30 000 to build the hospital. The neo-Classical design is by James Gillespie Graham of Edinburgh. See C Aslet, "Charity in the Grecian Taste", Country Life, 7 September 1982, pp#810&811.

GEORGE COOPER: The first to take up Parbury's offer of leaseholds was George Cooper, the New South Wales Comptroller of Customs. Cooper arrived in Sydney from Dublin on 13 October 1836 with his wife and seven children and Waterview House was his first choice.[24] The lease was signed on New Year's Day 1837 at £40 per annum for five years and included Waterview House and garden with ten acres of land. Cooper later converted the lease to an outright purchase with an additional five acres on 7 January 1839.[25]

At the same time he bought 23 acres, adjoining his Waterview Estate, which extended across to present-day Mort Street.[26] Twelve days after his arrival in 1836, Cooper had bought seven acres stretching across from Waterview to Duke Place and these with the five acres of Ballast Point, which he bought in July 1840, gave him a total of 50 acres in Waterview Bay.[27]

Mrs Cooper presented him with his eighth child, a boy, on 10 January 1840 at Waterview House and with the prospect of two salaried positions, one as Comptroller of Customs at Melbourne and the same post in New Zealand open to him, George Cooper's future seemed assured.[28]

Two factors combined to cloud this bright outlook. After learning that he had been overlooked for the Melbourne position, he concentrated all his efforts on securing the post at New Zealand. He learned with some shock, however, that because he would be in control of the entire finances of that colony, he was required to put up a bond of £2 000. At the same time he was aware that he had over-reached himself in his land dealings and decided to recoup the £2 000 by mortgaging Waterview House and its fifteen acres.[29]

On hearing that he had been accepted for New Zealand on 14 January 1840, Cooper on the same day signed a mortgage with the Savings Bank of New South Wales for £700 at 10%.[30] By selling his 23 acres at about the same time for £1 550 he was able to place his bond and defray his travelling costs.[31]

The Waterview House mortgage, however, fell due on 11 July 1840 and Cooper, in New Zealand at the time, paid the principal and interest in full via his Sydney attorney.[32] Two days later he mortgaged Waterview House again - this time for a larger sum and, as money was very hard to come by, he was forced to pay a higher rate of interest.

MATTHEW HENRY MARSH: Matthew Henry Marsh (1810-1861), a Sydney financier who later became a rich landowner and British MP, advanced him £1800 at 12½% repayable in two years. Significantly, Marsh insisted on quarterly interest payments with the proviso that the Waterview Estate would become his should Cooper default.[33]

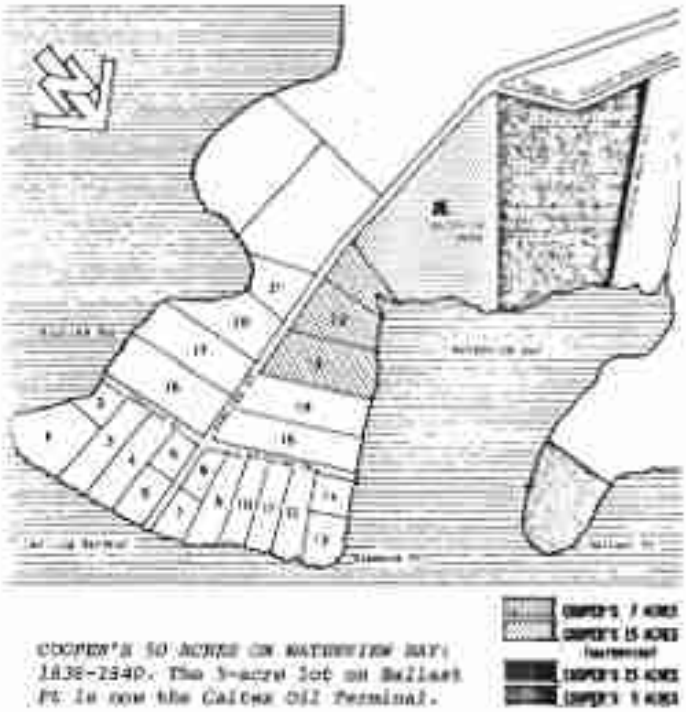
Cooper made this reckless speculation with the aim of selling the fifteen acres in small lots, thereby reaping a substantial profit. Returning to New Zealand again Cooper left his surveyor, A W Meikle, the task of carving up the Waterview Estate with Waterview House as the focal point. Meikle laid out Waterview, Broadstairs, St John, St Andrew and Cooper Streets running down to the Bay. The cross streets, Caroline and Duncan Streets, linked Waterview and Broadstairs Streets and surrounded an island in the middle of which stood Waterview House.[34]

Cooper had managed to pay the October 1840 quarterly instalment to Marsh but could not meet the January 1841 quarter.[35] With Marsh's concurrence, Cooper then took out a second mortgage with another Sydney financier James Tod Goodsir, for £700 on 3 February using some of it to pay Marsh.[36] From that date onwards all transactions were made in Marsh's name with Cooper as the secondary party. Goodsir in turn assured his interest in the property to two other moneylenders, Andrew Blowers Smith and Henry Smith for £500 on 10 August 1841 to be repaid on 10 February 1842.[37]

Cooper, as it turned out, could not redeem his first mortgage with Marsh and defaulted in the second with Goodsir. Goodsir, in turn, was unable to repay the Smiths and as a result of this, and the failure of his other investments, the tragic Goodsir lost his mind, being declared a lunatic in 1843.[38]

Marsh, in the midst of these unhappy transactions, became the outright owner of the fifteen acres and continued Cooper's plan to sell the land in subdivided lots. Mr Stubbs, the auctioneer, advertised the Cooper Street and Waterview Street land on 27 April 1841 as the "Flower of Balmain".[39] Surveyor Meikle had planned for both large and small purchasers' pockets. The Waterview Street land (lots 21 to 36) had broad frontages of 66 feet while the Cooper Street lots (1 to 20) were a narrow 33 feet.

Despite Meikle's careful planning and the blandishments of Mr Stubbs, the reticence of the Sydney land-buying public reflected the state of the Colony's finances. There was no money to buy land and those that wished to sell could only re-advertise. Mr Stubbs repeated his seductive offers of cultivated land, healthy surroundings and excellent views to no avail. No buyers could be found in quantity to make Marsh's power-of-sale sufficiently lucrative.

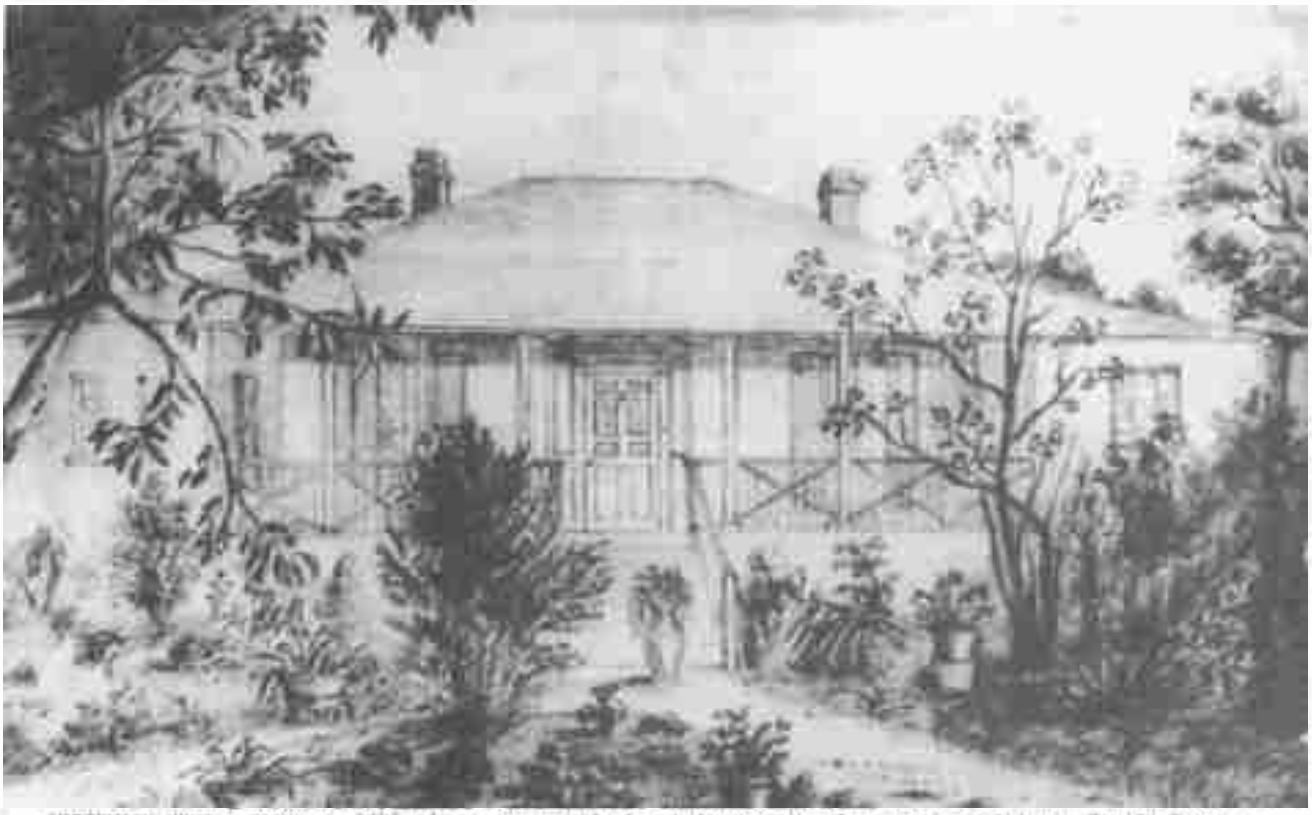


COOPER'S 50 ACRES ON WATERVIEW BAY: 1838-1840. The 5-acre lot on Ballast Pt is now the Caltex Oil Terminal.

At the end of 1841, Mr Stubbs put the remainder of the Estate under the hammer. Most of the small lots in St Andrew, St John, Broadstairs and Darling Streets (lots 1 to 67) together with the 20 lots, known as the "parterre or lawn of Waterview House" (lots 1 to 20), and Waterview House, with its own one acre of ground, were to be sold on 20 December 1841.[40] Again the sale was a disaster realising almost nothing. The depression was deepening and bankruptcies were imminent.

WATERVIEW HOUSE IN 1842: At the beginning of 1842, Waterview House was leased to the wife of Major McLeod. Its timber-walled and shingled-roofed profile was supremely well adapted to the steamy climate of Sydney.

As seen from the water its dominant feature was the archetypal shady verandah which swept across the face of the house for a distance of 42 feet. The verandah gave access to separate bedrooms on each of its ends. These solid masses lent great visual strength to the facade and emphasised the depth of the cool shade of the verandah. The main doorway, placed centrally, opened into a six-feet wide entrance hall. On either side of the hall were rooms of generous proportions 17' 6" square - one used as a dining room and the other as a drawing room. Beyond these two rooms, and opening from the hall were another two rooms, 17' 6" by 14 feet, for breakfast and sleeping. Beyond these again were rooms used as a kitchen and servants' bedroom. The dining room had "cabinet fixtures" each side of the fireplace and "good alcoves" were to be found in the other "sitting rooms". A stable and coach house "with Ken's Huts and outbuildings were detached at a proper distance from the house".[41]



WATERVIEW HOUSE, BALMAIN, 1873 (from the pencil sketch by Mary Stephen in the Wilkinson Family Papers, Vol IV, No 13 - per courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

THE MASONIC ARMS: Waterview House and the 20 lots in front were again auctioned by Marsh on 31 March 1843 under the heading "THE ONLY PORTION LEFT" - Mr Stubbs encumbrams again. This time the house was bought by John Beattie, a Licensed Victualler of Sydney. His eye had been drawn to Stubbs' description of "six moderized rooms, servants apartments and cellarage".[42] Waterview House was ideal for his purposes and he paid Marsh £460 for it and the one acre of ground. Beattie immediately converted it to the "Masonic Arms" and sought custom from the ships in Waterview Bay as well as those moored in the harbour.

The "Masonic Arms" was assessed for rating purposes in 1844 at an annual value of £40 and was listed as a "good weather-board cottage and outhouses". As an hotel it had to compete with William Terrass's "Saint Patrick's Inn" (later called the Elephant Hotel) opposite St Mary's Church (valued at £100 and stone-built) and the impressive "Captain Cook Inn" (sometimes called the New or Balmain Hotel) which Edward Robertson had opened in Captain Nicholson's mansion in Nicholson Street (valued at £150 and also of stone).[43]

* * * * *

BALMAIN IN 1844: Slowly recovering from the depressed land and building market of the early 1840s, Balmain was steadily increasing and in 1844 its total assessed value for the inhabited area, bounded by the waters of the harbour, a line marked by present day Eaton Street, around and into Curtis Road and down present-day Phillip Street, was £4 727.10.0.[44]

The population of Balmain in 1844 totalled 858 and was made up of 334 adult males, 233 adult females, 39 boys over ten, 134 boys under ten, 25 girls over ten and 191 girls under ten.[45] The occupations were mainly small tradesmen, several sea-captains, a sprinkling of comfortable businessmen and public servants, and a few gentlemen. In 1848 this number had grown to 1 337 which represented 19.0% of the suburban population.[46] It also shows that by 1846 the depression was over and buildings had become more marketable.

The Colony had entered the waiting period between the financial crisis of 1841-1843 and the eruption of gold fever in 1851.[47]

In mid-1840s Balmain, the pull of the other two hotels, better sited as they were, proved too strong for the "Masonic Arms" and Beattie was forced to sell it back to Marsh in September 1845.[48]

* * * * *

BROOMOO AND ASHGROVE: In the meantime John Fraser Gray had weathered the depression and had continued to increase his land holdings. By 1844 he had moved into his house in Clarence Street North and had built Broomoo House "of cut stone consisting of eleven apartments at the junction of Broadstairs and St John Streets."[49] Ashgrove, "a comfortable cottage of nine apartments" also stone-built and situated opposite the junction of Broadstairs and Darling Streets, was probably built in 1845.[50] Gray's Wharf, at the foot of Waterview Street (or lot 36), brought him an income from the sale of ballast and his many other pieces of prime real estate brought in good rents.[51]

GRAY IN WATERVIEW HOUSE: When he saw Waterview House on the market at the beginning of 1846, the canny Gray snapped it up for a mere £350 from Marsh and moved in.[52]

He lost no time in improving the grounds and the garden became well known for the care lavished upon it. An expert gardener, Gray had exhibited at the Sydney Flower Show in 1844 and attracted attention with his Pineapple Lily (*Eucomis nicolia*).[53] Now that he was settled in a comfortable house whose name reminded him of the family home in Bishopmill, John Gray wrote to little Eliza on 7 December 1846:

> *I scarcely know how to address you for although I know you must have grown up yet I can only think of you as the pretty simple little girl I saw you in 1839. I hope you have grown good with your years and that I shall have the pleasure of having a long chat with you when I return. I don't suppose you will recollect when you used to come meeting me saying "Johny, Johny Jay Happie" - dear little Eliza I shall soon see you. Why don't you write me? I remain*
>
> *Your affectionate brother*
>
> *John F Gray*[54]

John's letter to little Eliza foreshadowed a return trip to Elgin and, wishing to take Mary Ann and the children back to see home and family once more, he decided to raise money urgently. He had no qualms about leaving Waterview House because he knew it could command a good rent and with his brother Alexander here to look after his interests, he set about making preparations for the voyage.

Alexander convinced John that renting the houses would bring a better return than nothing a quick sale on the open market. His advice was to keep the houses in good order and sell occupied because, although real estate was increasing in value, rents would realise more in the long run than could be obtained by sale.[55]

By selling most of his land in Balmain and by selling Elgin Cottage to Alexander in December 1847, John was able to settle any outstanding debts.[56] To finance his voyage, he sold the contents of Waterview House on 28 December 1847. They consisted of:

> *A very fine toned cottage pianoforte*
> *Music stool and music stand*
> *handsome polished sideboard*
> *Tea, dining, pembroke, card and dressing tables*
> Sofas and couches
> *Rocking and easy chairs*
> *Chiffoniers and chests of drawers*
> Chairs, settees, couch, carpets and hearth rugs
> *Book-cases and cheffoniers*
> Brass-mounted and other bedsteads
> *Hair mattresses, palliasses, etc.*
> *Wash hand stand and furniture, toilet glasses*
> *Oil paintings and engravings in rich gilt frames*
> *Mahogany wardrobes, bedsteads etc*
> *Kitchen furniture and cooking utensils*
> *Crockery, glass and plated ware*
> *And a great variety of sundries.*[57]

RETURN TO BISHOPMILL: Such a complete break with a house that they had moved into only two years before suggests a return home of long duration but when it is considered that the round trip to Britain alone took twelve months to complete, it is not surprising that such drastic measures had to be taken.

To defray costs further, Gray mortgaged Waterview House for £500 on 8 January 1848 while the barque *Agincourt* "laid on for London" was loading at Campbell's Wharf. On 11 January Captain Neatby took the 669 ton ship out through the heads bound for London. She carried "300 tuns tallow, 200 casks beef, 1490 bales wool, 300 hogsheds maize, 20 bales of leather, 3 000 bundles rattans, 120 tons copper ore", assorted passengers and John and Mary Ann Gray with Hannah, John William and little "Jackie".[58]

John and Mary remembered full well the rigours of their steerage ship out and for their homeward journey paid their way as cabin passengers. The voyage, however, turned out to be just as great a risk to their well-being. They had five dreary months at sea and not even the presence on board of such "eminent personages" as His Honour, Mr Justice Therry and Mrs Therry made the trip live up to the agent's promises.

They were "reduced to skeletons" by being allowed only one meal per day and received nothing but contemptuous treatment from the "smooth-faced fellows" of the *Agincourt* until they arrived in London in early 1848. The "Botany Bay rangers" then completed the arduous journey to "home, home, sweet home" and joined the family at Bishopmill where Grandma Margaret Gray's buttermilk and oatcake soon made the children as "plump and pretty as ever".[59]

The old home was at the corner where Bridge Street meets High Street and while there Gray could not resist making an investment in a nearby site. His new purchase had a frontage of 83 feet six inches to High Street and descended down to the Lossie for a distance of 270 feet along Cross Street.[60]

Remembering the house that he had left in Balmain, Gray called the attaching Waterview.

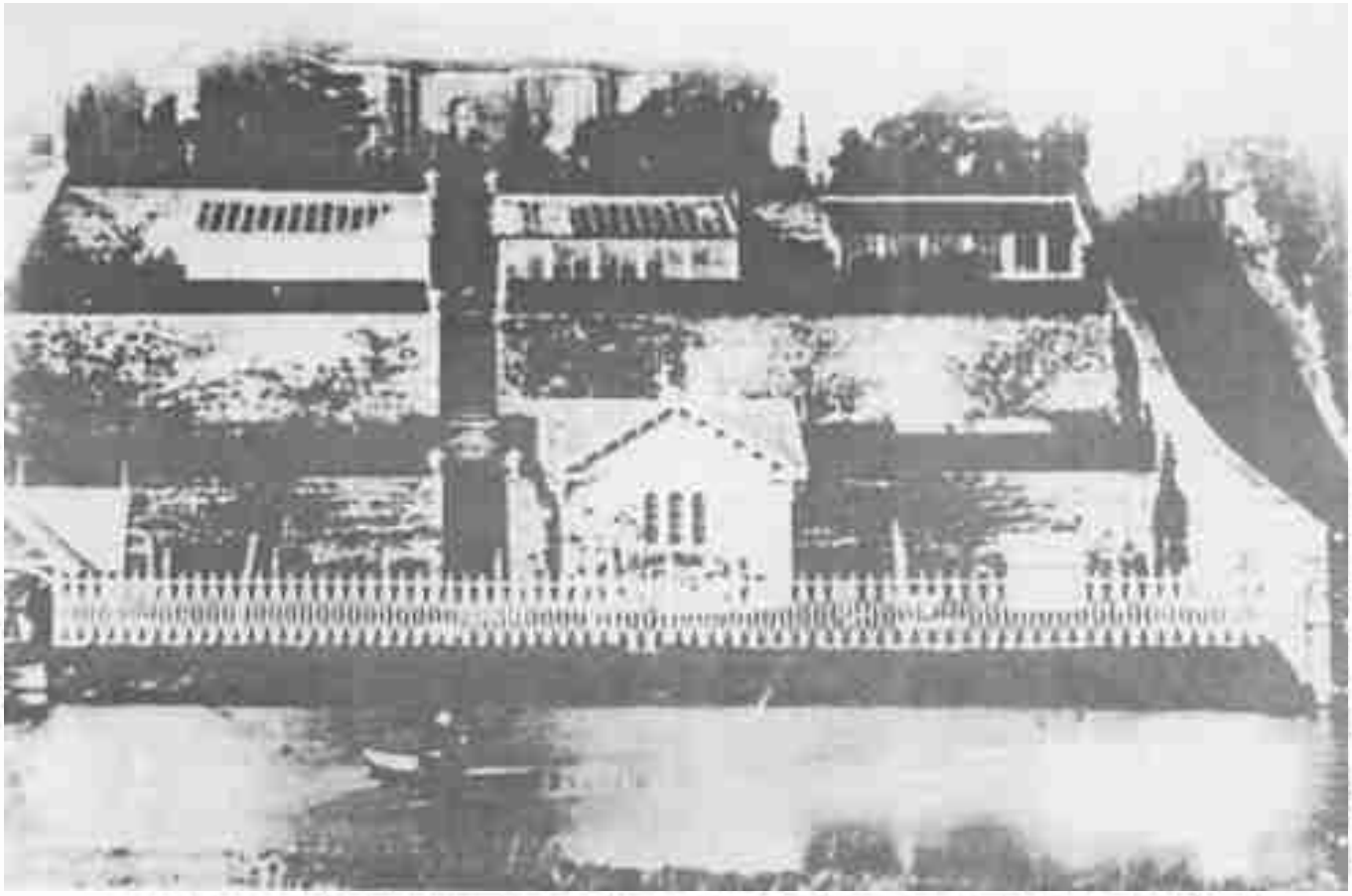
The property had been a "tack" (lease) for 99 years from Whitsun 1799 to one J Smith. Gray bought the "tack" in 1848 for reasons that are now obscure. It is possible that he wished to re-house his mother and sisters on this choice block. It is also possible that he intended to live there himself as an example of the result of "colonial" prosperity.

Whatever the reasons behind his purchase, he did not hold the land for any length of time preferring to sell it to Hugh McLean of Westfield* in 1851.[61]

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* McLean (1804-1885) had recently returned from India where, 22 years earlier, he entered the medical service of the East India Co. He then joined the Bengal army. He was present at most of the engagements of the Sikh War including the battle of Sobraon. On the death of his uncle, Lt-Gen Sir John McLean, he received a considerable fortune and retired to Elgin where he built his Italianate villa, Dythehill, overlooking the Lossie "the grounds of which are laid out so tastefully as often to excite admiration". *Moray & Nairn Express*, 11 April 1885.

After McLean's death in 1885, Dythehill passed through his family to various owners until 1994 when it was converted into a youth hostel. This venture was never very successful however and closed in 1973. It was then converted into flats. Dythehill is, however, being restored by the present owners who bought it in 1976.



Riverhill, Woodstock in the 1840s. The River Lovely and the church are in the foreground. Gothic Hill was built on John Gray's "Waterview" by Hugh McLean in 1855. The architect is unknown. (M Hardie)

BACK TO SYDNEY: The pull of Sydney Town and Balmain was too much for Gray. The family was in a transition stage. The father, stonemason John Gray, had died in 1842 and the eldest son, William, who had done well in Pernambuco and Bahia in South America, died in 1848.[62] The third daughter, Mary, married James McDonald, a young Inverness architect in 1849.

All these changes tended to unsettle the family. When John Fraser Gray decided to return to Sydney, his younger brother, James Donaldson Gray elected to go too.

James was a printer and had learned his craft working a 15-hour day on the *Elgin Courant*. He was a hardy Scot who, during his apprenticeship, went on a walking tour throughout Scotland "visiting every place of importance and gaining an intimate knowledge of the country".[63] This vigour overcame the daunting prospect of a steerage passage and he arrived in Sydney in March 1850.

John and Mary and the children journeyed to London to board the *Julinder* bound for Sydney. With John and his family among the cabin passengers, the barque of 539 tons sailed out of the Thames on 27 December 1849 with the Grays on board. She called at Plymouth on 6 January 1850 almost two years to the day since they left Sydney Town. After a long but apparently uneventful voyage the *Julinder* made Adelaide at the end of April. Leaving Adelaide on 3 May she called at Melbourne from where she left for Sydney on 7 June arriving in Sydney on 15 June.[64] The Grays were back in Sydney again.

They set up residence in Duke Cottage in Darling Street and later in John's own Broomme House because Waterview House was rented by Captain McKellar, also an Elgin man.[65]

(M Hardie)

Riverhill in 1978. The present owners intend to restore the river frontage from the 1850s picture above



Back in Bishopmill there had been a new arrival. James McDonald and Mary had a daughter, Margaret, who was born at St Nicholas, Aberdeen in June 1850. In the Census of 30 March 1851 the members of the Gray family living in Bridge Street were noted: Margaret, her daughters Margaret (unmarried), Jeanie (unmarried), Eliza (unmarried), James McDonald her son-in-law, her daughter Mary McDonald and her grand-daughter Margaret (aged ten months). All the Gray girls were listed as dressmakers by trade.[66]

In 1851, under McDonald's leadership, the whole family left Bishopmill forever and arrived in Sydney in the same year.

After a settling-in period, McDonald chose to resist the attractions of the goldfields and came to live in Balmain. By the time of his death in 1902 he had earned for himself the title "Architect of Balmain".*

Little is known of the first days of the other members of his family but it is almost certain that they found shelter with James Donaldson Gray in his Thames Street house. James had found a job with the *Sydney Morning Herald* and was doing well.[67]

His mother, Margaret Gray later died there on 4 June 1868. James married Mary McNeil in 1870 and moved to Grafton in 1875 to become a journalist on the *Grafton Argus* which he later owned. He died there in 1901 aged 74.[68]

Aged only about sixteen when she arrived, Eliza married William Looke when she turned twenty. They lived on the estate of her father-in-law, the well-known boatbuilder, Joseph Looke, in Looke's Avenue, Balmain East.[69]



James McDonald

* Lee J Flower, "James McDonald (1814-1902): Architect of Balmain" in *Leichhardt Hist J* No 8 1979.

While these members of the Gray family were happily ensconced in Balmain, Alexander Gray, John's brother and business adviser, died suddenly of apoplexy at the early age of forty-one on 3 March 1865.[70] He had never married.

* * * * *

TO BYALLA: On his return to Sydney, John Fraser Gray re-assessed his future and decided that it lay not with property development but with land-holdings in the interior of the Colony.

To make his purchase, John crossed the Blue Mountains in 1850 by coach and after arriving in Cunning found his future property at Byalla nearby.[71] Between 1852 and 1866 he sold off Waterview House and his many Balmain holdings which gained him £3 555.[72] He put this money towards establishing himself as a grazier at Byalla. John, Mary Ann and the children were settled there by 1853.

The degree of their contentment is reflected in John's publishing of the "*Byalla Herald and Narrows Telegraph*" solely for the Christmas amusement of the family circle.[73] Only the one issue appeared and is dated 1 January 1873. The "*Herald*" boldly announced that John and his two sons, John William and "Ackie", had founded the "Gold and Copper Mining Company Ltd at Gray's Freehold Quartz Reefs six miles out of Cunning". The announcement offered 250 shares in the Company at £1 000 each. J F Gray was listed as the Chief Promoter, John W Gray of West Wyalong as Chief Adviser and Alex G Gray, Alton-Alla, the Photographer. The Company also included George Harris, Hannah Gray's husband, and the whole enterprise was supported by the "Bank of Grubbengullum".

"Ackie" featured prominently in the "*Herald*" advertising his services as a photographer. John William announced that he would publish "Life at Wyalong" later that year. Most interesting of all was the notice that "a full and complete history of the Gray family" would also be published that year. John's 1850 trek to Byalla and all their subsequent days were recorded in his journal but the publishing of the history did not take place and the manuscript unfortunately has not survived.[74]

Mary Ann was to the fore in domestic affairs. She had hosted a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" at Byalla homestead and with John contemplated "spending the next winter in Balmain" where they had spent "so many happy days".

Mary Ann's wish to visit Balmain was not to be fulfilled, however, for she died on 27 March 1874 aged 58 after a brief illness. She was buried on Byalla where John reserved a one-acre plot which still has its own Torrens Title even today.[75]

John Fraser Gray remained at Byalla until his illness in 1881 forced a move to more comfortable quarters at Goulburn where he died at Hannah's home on 18 December.[76] The success of his years at Byalla can be seen in the terms of his will. He left the 2 560-acre Byalla property to his son John William, "Ackie" received the 640-acre Alton run and Hannah received £1 000. John Gray was buried beside Mary Ann in the little burying ground at Byalla.[77]

WATERVIEW HOUSE IN 1852: In recouping his Balmain investments, Gray advertised Waterview House for sale on 1 January 1852:

together with the whole of the ground and premises attached, comprising about one acre one rood and 18 perches, beautifully laid out with the choicest shrubs and plants, and surrounded by streets on each side, forming a square within Waterview, Duncan, Broadstairs, and Caroline Streets, and overlooking Waterview Bay and the Ports there. The house is commodiously built, and of the best materials, comprising dining-room, drawingroom, with Italian marble mantlepiece, four superior bedrooms, kitchen, storeroom, *servants'* bedroom, *three excellent cellars, besides out-houses, and abundance of pure water—altogether forming a complete residence for a respectable family.*[78]

Captain Joseph Wilson bought the house for £555 on 15 March 1852 for his wife Mary as an insurance against the hazards of his profession.[79] Mrs Wilson let the house to John G Cohen, a Sydney auctioneer, but Mrs Cohen died there on 8 November 1855.[80] The next occupants were to be the last significant owners of Waterview House.

LAWYER STENHOUSE: Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse, Sydney's "first and probably only nineteenth century literary patron" became the tenant of Waterview House.[81]

Stenhouse, like Gray, was a Scot and also like Gray came to Sydney as a steerage passenger aboard the *Georgiana*, via Cape Town and Adelaide, arriving in Sydney on 28 October 1839.[82] A brilliant student, Stenhouse received his MA in Classics at Edinburgh University in 1835 at the age of nineteen.[83] He then embarked upon a course in Divinity but entered law studies in 1838 and in 1851 he was qualified to practise.

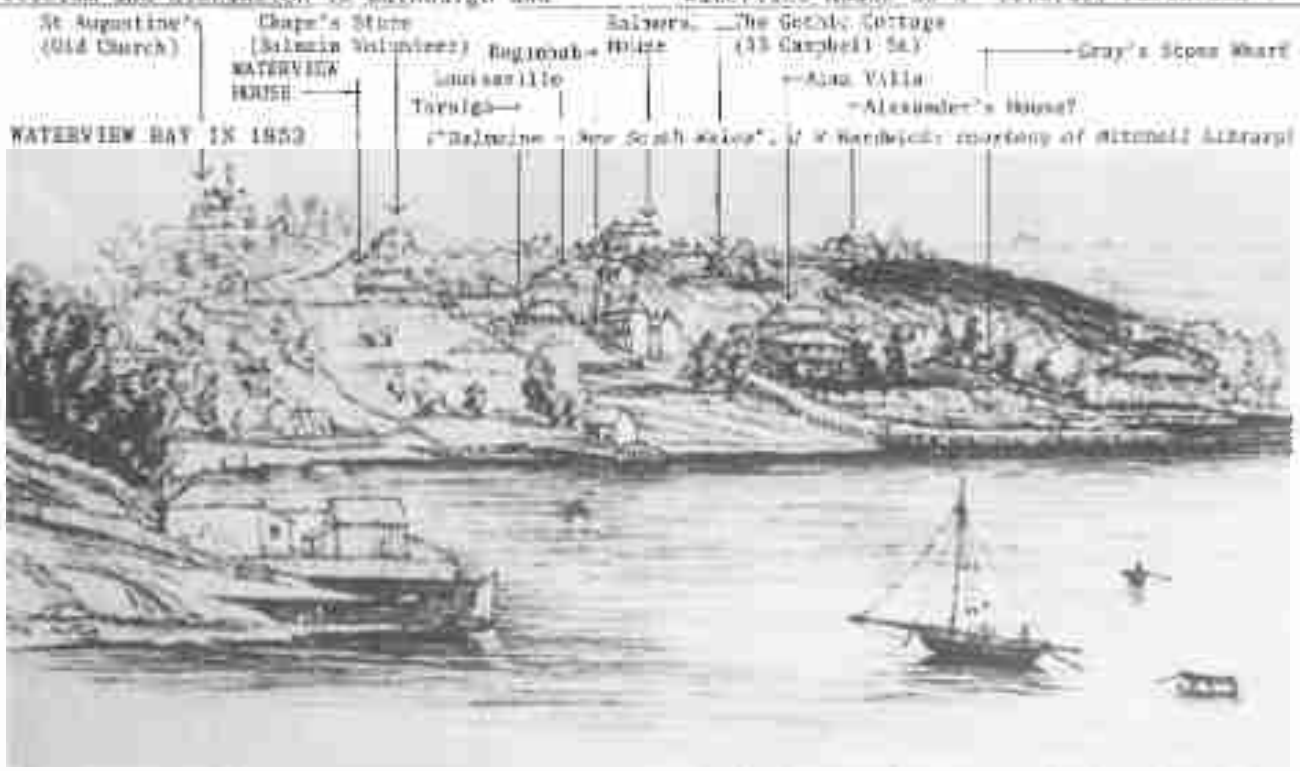
There was a strong interest in literary criticism and discussion in Edinburgh and Stenhouse absorbed much and contributed greatly to the variety of his life. After becoming disenchanted with his lot and after thinking first to emigrate to Canada, he decided to pay his way to New South Wales. Stenhouse brought with him his fine collection of books which was the nucleus of what was to become a major colonial library.

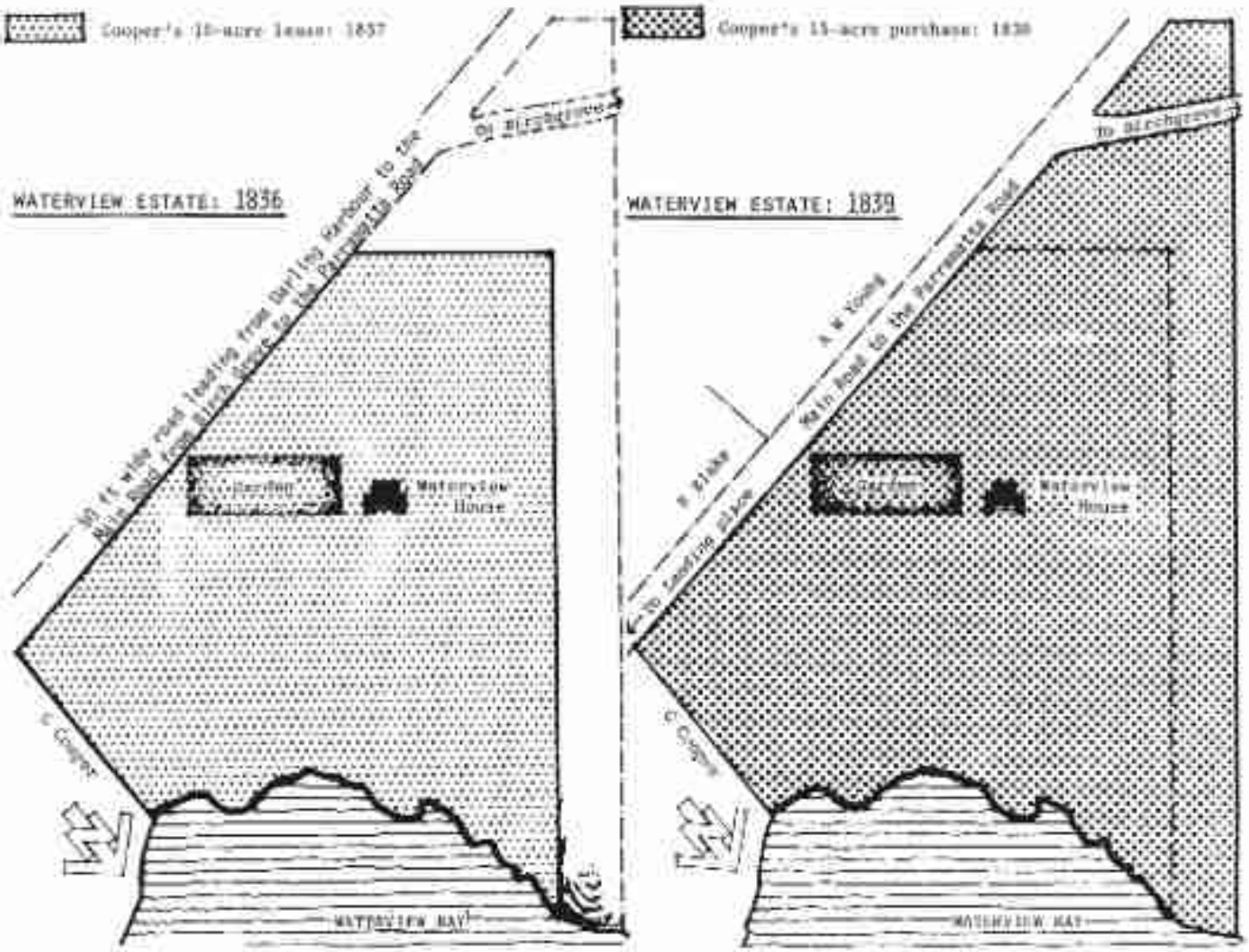
In 1840 Stenhouse was admitted to the Supreme Court as a solicitor and began to build his large practice by entering partnership with William Hardy, a partnership which lasted almost for the rest of his life. On 23 January 1840 he married Margaretta Underwood at Pyrmont Presbyterian Church - "a union which brought them contentment and twelve children".[84]

On first setting up practice, Stenhouse lived above his office until his marriage when the couple moved to Surry Hills. In 1851, he rented Hillside in Johnston Street, Balmain East, and "it was in that suburb that he discovered the house where he would happily spend the rest of his life".[85]

Stenhouse's lease of Waterview House probably was signed at the beginning of 1856 for, by March of that year, Margaretta advertised for a nurse to be "fully competent to take the entire charge of three children and to see for them".[86]

At Waterview House, Stenhouse was able to draw about him a circle of companions who sailed away the hours wreathed in the smoke of aromatic cigars and discussed the finer points of literature and learning. One of the first members of the circle was Richard Rowe who with Frank Fowler and with Stenhouse's encouragement founded the *Month*, a magazine dealing with literary matters. Rowe was later to refer to Stenhouse's library in Waterview House as a "literary Parthenon".





Because of the regular ferry service to Waterview Bay, Stenhouse was able to be in his office in the city in fifteen minutes and it was the income derived from his professional diligence that enabled him to support his young and often impoverished intellectual friends. We are indebted to Ann-Mari Jordens whose *The Stenhouse Circle: Literary Life in Mid-Nineteenth Century Sydney* gives a fine evocation of the lawyer's times in Balmain. Consider her account of his room at Waterview House in 1850 which by then was the acknowledged centre of literary Sydney. In Stenhouse's words:

> *My library has been made beautiful, fitted up with new shelves, mirror, morocco chairs and it now contains all my books, which fill every available space from the ceiling to the floor.*

As well as Rowe and Fowler, Stenhouse's circle included Daniel Deniehy, Charles Harpur and Henry Kendall. He was instrumental in keeping the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts on an even keel; in establishing the Free Public Library; the Sydney College and the University of Sydney. He also chaired meetings of the Balmain Literary Institute and was an alderman of Balmain Council for many years and its Chairman in 1862. He was a devout Presbyterian and an Elder of the Balmain congregation.

In 1861 the owner of Waterview House, Mrs Wilson, decided to subdivide the land in two parcels. The portion alongside Broadsalve Street (now Colgate Avenue) was bought by Stenhouse in Margaretta's name for £700 in June 1861.[87] The remaining half alongside Waterview Street was later sold to John Booth in 1871. Booth cut his property into fourteen allotments, thirteen of which were sold between 1874 and 1876.[88]

DEATH OF STENHOUSE: Stenhouse's purchase enabled him to live out the remainder of his years at Waterview House in comfort - although much of the garden was lost in the subdivision. During 1872 Stenhouse's health faltered and Margaretta began to write down his childhood reminiscences in an ordinary exercise book. His health worsened however, and only a few pages were written. Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse died of chronic nephritis on 18 February 1843 aged 67.

Almost immediately, Margaretta offered to





sell the library to the Public Library and to the University of Sydney. The collection was subsequently bought by Thomas Walker, a Sydney financier and benefactor, for £700 and presented to the University. Jordens records that it took fourteen horse-drawn drays to carry the crates of books away up the steep narrow Balmain streets in 1878. The University had no library building and Thomas Fisher, a humble but thrifty bootmaker, bequeathed the University £33 000 on his death in 1884. The money was used to acquire further books instead of a building however and the first Fisher Library was not completed until 1900 by the State Government.

Of the vast collection of books in the Fisher Library, 3 680 are catalogued in Stenhouse's name. Always a generous lender of books, some for up to five years and some never returned, his total collection was well above the catalogued number.

THE BREAK-UP: Margaretta and her daughter continued to live on at Waterview House until 1885 when the house was leased by Mrs E S Doane. At that time Margaretta and her family moved to Gosford, New South Wales.[89]

After various mortgages Waterview House was finally sold by the Stenhouse family to William James Wright a Balmain grocer, for £550 in February 1894.[90] After Wright's death, the house and land was left in equal shares to his children who sold, in 1913, to Bridget Phillips, wife of Joseph Phillips, an engineer of Balmain.[91] Mrs Phillips in turn sold the property to Alfred Henry Begle, a long-established Balmain estate agent in September 1921.[92]

Begle subdivided the land into eight allotments and the houses (Now 2-6 Duncan Street, 6-16 Colgate Avenue and 2-4 Caroline Street) were built at about that time. There is no record of the demolition of Waterview House but it was still standing in 1966.

The British Museum still has the Elgin Marbles, Elgin still has Gray's Hospital and Parthenon still looks out over the Lossie. No one came forward to preserve Balmain's Waterview House - it was old and run down and had to make way for the 20th century.

OTHER BALMAIN HOUSES IN LATER YEARS

ELGIN COTTAGE: Built by John Gray between October 1840 and May 1842 and named after his native Elgin.92 Alexander Gray sold the cottage to John Mills, a Parramatta schoolmaster, on 7 July 1852 for £200. 94 Mills let the house until August 1862 when he sold it to Owen Hughes, a shipwright of Balmain, for £362.10- it was still called Elgin Cottage up to that time. 95

It seems likely that Hughes demolished the cottage and used the stone for the lower storey of what is now No 136 Darling Street, Balmain. The turn-of-the century style house that stands there bears no resemblance to an 1840s cottage.

In support of this theory is the 1886 survey which shows the cottage to have been set much further back from Darling Street. 96

BROOMOO HOUSE: Built by Gray between March 1842 and December 1844 on land at the sharp junction of Broadstairs Street (now Colgate Avenue) and St John Street. Gray bought lots 37 to 39 from Marsh for £49.10. on 31 March 1842 and very likely set about building the house straightaway. 97 It was built close up to Broadstairs Street and looked out over the Bay.

He advertised it to let on 5 December 1844 by name and described it as containing nine rooms with out-houses and a "large garden attached, well stocked with fruit trees, flowers and vegetables". 98

A later occupant was Edward Spofforth who, according to Alexander Gray's letter to John in 1848, was the "best tenant you have got - he keeps the place in good order, gives no trouble and pays the rent when due". 99 While John was away, Alexander approved structural alterations to Broomoo House and stressed to John that Spofforth would provide the materials and that any other expenses would be trifling. Also he justified the outlay because of the increase in value and, therefore, in future rents.

Spofforth's labours certainly added value to the house because when Gray put it up for sale in January 1852, it was described as:

> *Lately the residence of E. Spofforth, Esq. and now occupied by Mr. Gray. This is a very commodious house, of cut stone, consisting of 11 Apartments, besides out-houses, &c., with a large space of ground attached, beautifully laid out. The fruit trees and shrubs being in full perfection. The entrance gate is on the Great Ferry Road and the ground has frontages to St. John's-street of 257 feet 3 inches, and to Broadstairs-street of 218 feet, by a depth of 150 feet. There is a fine well of water at the kitchen door, and it has never failed in the driest seasons.* 100

John Williams, the owner of Petty's Hotel in the city, bought the property for £675 on 21 June 1852 with lots 40 to 45. 101 Lot 43 was important here because it had a seven-foot frontage to Darling Street and so was the main entrance to Broomoo House. Gray had purchased these lots from Marsh in May 1841 with lots 23 and 24 and lots 62 to 65 in Waterview St. 102

Williams sold to a Sydney land developer, William Fanning, in June 1853 and in the next year Fanning sold to Bernhard Frerichs, a Sydney merchant. 103 He paid Fanning £1100 for Broomoo House in June 1854 and after his death the property passed to his wife, Irving Wilhelmina Henriette Frerichs. 104 Mrs Frerichs sold to Mary Ann Chater, a spinster of Balmain, in July 1879 for £500. 105

At this time the house was called Bayview Villa. 106 Miss Chater sold the house to William Charles Bowing, a Balmain laundryman, in 1910, and it has remained in that family ever since. 107

When Broadstairs Street was re-aligned Broomoo House was found to be three feet over the building line. 108 It is thought that when the street was widened and the encroaching end wall pulled down, the Bowing family took the opportunity to build a new wall in brick and add the present upper storey. The Bowings also built the laundry premises at the rear.

The original Broomoo House can still be seen at the corner of Colgate Avenue and St John Street but it is the lower storey of the existing building only.

ASHGROVE: Included in the Broomoo House land bought by Gray in May 1841 were lots 62 to 65 of "A W Wilkie's second plan" of the Waterview Estate. Abutting these lots and facing Broadstairs Street were lots 52 to 54 which Gray bought from Marsh in May 1845 for £29.14. 109

Alexander Gray makes no direct reference to Ashgrove House which John built on these lots but it was there by October 1846 when he advertised it to let. 110

Gray later offered the house for sale together with Waterview House and Broomoo House on 1 January 1852. Auctioneer Thomas Mort's advertisement read:

> *The present residence of Samuel Barker, Esq., and adjoining the suburban residence of W.H. Nichols, Esq., M.L.C., together with the whole of the grounds, fronting Eight of the original allotments abutting on the Great Ferry Road, having frontages to Broadstairs-street of 131 feet, and to Gecoya or Waterview Street of 252 feet, by a depth of 244 feet, more or less, thus affording ample room for another good building equally well contained, and with abundance of the purest water. There is a very comfortable Cottage, of 5 Apartments, without Kitchen, &c., excellent Kitchen garden, fruit, shrubbery, &c.; in fact the whole of the ground is capable of growing anything, being formed of the richest soil. The house is cut stone, with a large verandah in front, commanding a view of the Flagstaff, the Harbour etc.* 111

Edward Hunt of Hampton Villa, Balmain, bought the house in March 1852 for £500 and rented it to various tenants until his death on 20 December 1866 when it passed to his daughter, Emily Blackwood Fitzgerald. When she died on 18 July 1876 her husband, Robert David Fitzgerald, a civil engineer of Hunter's Hill, received the problem. 112

Ashgrove continued to be rented with the boundaries unchanged until Fitzgerald sold portion of the land to Henry John Bourne (occupation unknown) of Rozelle in September 1920 and the remainder to estate agent Alfred Bogle of Balmain in August 1922. 113

Ashgrove no longer stands and the site at No 2 Colgate Avenue is being developed for town houses.

ELMS VILLA, 48 Waterview Street (By Tony McCain)



GRAY'S STONE WHARF: Gray bought lot 36 in Waterview Street from Marsh on 20 January 1844 for £17. 113 The lot had a 200-foot frontage to the deep water of the Bay and was ideal for quarrying for ballast. To make this profitable, Gray built his stone wharf there for the ballast barges to load. The wharf was also a popular bathing place for the inhabitants of Balmain.

On 1 January 1852 Gray advertised that:

The wharf is of cut stone, and built at a great expense. There is ample room and a beautiful site on the elevated part of the ground for a marine residence - the ground being little short of an acre, and the very finest building stone on the ground. 114

The property was bought by Alfred Mitchell, a Sydney merchant, in July 1853 but he sold it to a fellow merchant, John Alexander, in December of that year. 115 Alexander also bought Robert Campbell's original lots 17, 18 and 19 from Miss Rose Adcock in September 1855. 116 He left these four amalgamated lots to his sons, James and John, of Great Winchester Street, London, in 1873. 117

They re-subdivided them into lots 1 to 13 in 1878, thereby creating Alexander Street.

Henry Perdriau bought lots 9 to 23 in October 1878 for £650. 118 Long before this, Henry Perdriau began operating regular ferry services to Balmain in 1844, operating from the foot of Darcbett Street and then at the bottom of Pearson Street. 120

After acquiring the land at the corner of Alexander and Waterview Streets, Perdriau moved his Balmain Steam Ferry Company there. In June 1882, he sold his fleet, stores and buildings to his sons, Henry junior and Harold, for £7,000. 121

The Balmain ferries have operated from the site of Gray's old stone wharf ever since.

Little is known of the house that was built (probably by Perdriau) on the cliff above the ferry wharf but it was a handsome weatherboard with a sheltering verandah on three of its sides. 122 The house was demolished to make way for the carpark of the ferry company.

ALMA VILLA: Lot 40 of "the first plan of Water views" was bought by Joseph Barratt, a Sydney clerk, from Marsh on 1st April 1847 for £30.17. 0. 123 In 1848 Barratt had already built a weatherboard cottage on the site and a stone cottage was under construction. 124 It is assumed that the stone cottage became Post Cottage which Barratt rented to Captain Vignolle and in August 1848, Barratt sold it to George Smyth, Balmain, and John Louis Spencer, a Sydney solicitor, for £250. 125

INGLEFIELD HOUSE (LOUISEVILLE): c1833, Wells and Waterview Streets. *(By Tony Moleta)*



The high rate paid suggests that the cottage was of some significance and the other weatherboard building might have been used as an outhouse.

Smyth and Spencer sold to Alexander Campbell from in May 1849 for £35 and he in turn sold to Leonard Etienne Bordier, a Clarence River grazier, for £220 in October 1850. Bordier sold to Alexander Stuart, Sydney, only three years later and the price had soared to £300. Stuart held the land and house until 1872 when he sold it to John Godfrey Cohen, a Sydney mining agent, for £350. 126

The Cohen family had lived at the house since 1867 and continued there until 1879. During the time the house was called Alma Villa - the name first appearing in 1875 although an entry in 1871 shows the name Alma Lodge. From 1880 to 1884 the house was rented to Mrs F M Knight. 127 The Cohen family disposed of the property in 1881 to Elizabeth Greplnet, wife of Eugene Paul Greplnet, Engineer of Balmain who paid £400. The Greplnets sold to George McCall, a Balmain shipwright, in 1911 for £750 and he in turn sold to Captain Dominic Vincent Plante, master mariner, in 1920 for £750. 128

Alma Villa, now 48 Waterview Street, passed out of the hands of the Plante family in 1964. One of the various successive tenants was Laszlo Toth who is notorious for having taken a sledge-hammer to Michael Angelo's "Pieta" in the Vatican. 129

Alma Villa is now in excellent condition, lovingly cared for by its owner.

OCKBROOK: The Melbourne investors, Joseph Herring and Lesley Alexander Moody, bought lots 33 and 34 in Waterview Street from Marsh on 1 February 1842 for £42.10. 0. 130 They erected a weatherboard cottage which they called Fern on the land. In 1844 Fern plus lots 30 to 32 (the site of the future Louisville) which they bought in 1843, were valued annually at £40. 131

Moody and Herring sold Fern and lots 33 and 34 to Henry Dayer Cotton of Balmain (occupation unknown) in September 1847 for £200. Cotton lived there until he sold the property to Captain Thomas Fitzsimmons, Balmain, in July 1877 for £600. 132 When Fitzsimmons died there in 1883 the big rambling verandahed house passed to his daughter Elizabeth Charlotte Cormack. The house was called Ockbrook at this time.

Elizabeth lived at Ockbrook with her husband John Hunter Cormack until the early 1920s when they leased the house and land, described as 48 Waterview Street and 17 Wells street, to a dyeing firm headed by Louis Broadby and Harold Peterson. 133

The Cormack family finally sold the premises to Robert Pearson, a master coppersmith and engineer of Northbridge, in May 1955. 134 Ockbrook was very likely demolished at this time to make way for Pearson's engineering factory.

The factory was in turn demolished in 1981 to make way for town houses.

LOUISAVILLE: Joseph Herring and Lesley Alexander Moody, both Melbourne merchants, bought lots 30 to 34 in Waterview Street from Marsh in March 1843 for £80. 135 The low price is consistent with the depressed land values of the time.

William Cates of Sydney (occupation unknown) bought lots 30 to 32 in October 1848 for £300. Despite the improved economic conditions of the late 1840s such an increase in sale-price points to significant building additions on the land. 136

Cates sold to Zachary Ingold (occupation unknown) in March 1855 and the conveyance included a house called Inglefield House for £1200. 137 The great price increase is a further indication of extensive building activity. It is likely therefore that the present



BALMORAL HOUSE: *c1860s, from an unsigned crayon sketch. The Georgian sandstone building, with its single storey portico and Juliet balcony, is as seen in the view of Waterview Bay on page 11. The two conifers in the right mid-ground are the large trees seen in the illustration on the next page.* (Balmain Association)

stone house was built during Carss' ownership between 1849 and 1855.

Ingold sold to James Yeend, a Sydney innkeeper in April 1857 for £1300. [138] During the early 1860s, Yeend sold a 20 feet strip of this land to allow for the construction of Wells Street. [139]

James Yeend became a prominent Balmain citizen and was an alderman on the Balmain Municipal Council. Yeend Street, Yeend's Wharf and Yeend's Terrace in Wells Street are named after him.

Yeend retained the name Inglefield House and after his death in 1864 his widow stayed on until 1880. In that year William Harris Ariell bought the three lots for £400. [140]

Ariell named the house Louisville after his wife Louisa. He died in 1887 but the house was enlarged between 1887 and 1890. A neo-Gothic entrance porch, the western additions and the detached weatherboard structure on the N.W. boundary were added during this time. Mrs. Louisa Ariell lived on there until her death in 1931 when her daughter, Louisa, inherited the property. [141] She sold it in 1948 to Charlotte and William Holloway for £4000. [142] The present owners of Louisville, on the corner of Wells and Waterview Streets, are related to that couple.

BALMORAL HOUSE: Marsh sold lot 29 Waterview Street to Frederick Morris, a Sydney shopkeeper, on 21 April 1842 for £31. [143] Morris built a weatherboard cottage there but sold it to William Arnett Falconer Townend of Balmain on 1 February 1864 for £70. [144] Townend left the house and land when his effects were auctioned on 21 August 1867 and Henry Ferris, a Sydney merchant, and George Wilkie, an innkeeper of George Street Sydney, bought the property for £47.

They in turn sold to Captain William Henry Sawyer, Balmain, in June 1868 for £85. Sawyer then sold to Frederick Harpur, Balmain's first doctor, for £150 in August 1871. [145] Harpur bought the adjoining lots 27 and 28 in Waterview Street and lots 10 and 11 fronting Campbell Street.

With such a large tract of land in his possession, it is reasonable to assume that Harpur built Balmoral House at some time before January 1880 when he sold the property to Captain Thomas Coutts. The high sale price of £2500 indicates that a significant residence was included in the transaction. [146]

Coutts and his family lived there and their occupancy is recorded by his eldest son's scratching "T. Coutts Jnr - Jany 16 - 1885" on one of the ground floor front windows where it can still be seen today. [147]



BALMORAL HOUSE: c1890s. The conifers are now mature trees. The cellet balcony has been enclosed for the full height of the upper storey. Downward curving flat sheets roof the verandah and are almost certainly original and were the forerunner of curved corrugated iron sheeting.

Occupants shown are probably members of the Beattie family who lived there from 1870 to the 1930s.

Balmoral House is a fine Georgian residence in danger of demolition for urban consolidation by re-development.

Norrice Alexander Black was a brief but important tenant of Balmoral House. Black arrived in Sydney in 1868 and became the actuary of the Australian Mutual Provident Society. He took up residence in Balmoral House in 1870. After 1871, he lived at Trixton Villa at Coogee and then moved to Tivoli at Rose Bay. He had Tivoli rebuilt at considerable expense by architect J. Horbury Hunt in 1881. Black died there in 1880. 148

After Coutts' death on 14 January 1868, the property passed through his will to John Paul (occupation unknown) of Sydney who paid the estate £1560 for it in 1875. Lot 9 in Campbell Street had been added to the land by this time. Paul sold the entire premises to Henry Beattie on 3 October 1876 for £2500. 149

Beattie, a shipbuilder was born at Spandills, Burnt Island, Scotland, on 6 January 1814. After arriving in Sydney with his wife, he joined the Australian Steam Navigation Company and laid down their first ship at Darling Island. He left the Company after two years' service and went into partnership with T. Ferguson and is reputed to have built the first iron ships in Australia. Among the steamers that he turned out were the Leichhardt and the Tinonee which were engaged in the coastal trade.

His next enterprise was to conduct a ship repair yard at Darling Harbour near the old Pyrmont Bridge until he moved his business to Balmain in 1902. Beattie set up his yard at Peacock Point where, assisted by his sons, he built ships of all classes. Beattie's shipyard was famous for building the three-masted schooners, Sydney Belle and Lord of the Isles. 150

A staunch Presbyterian, Beattie and his wife lived at Balmoral House where they raised eleven children. Henry Beattie died there in 1911 and Mrs Beattie in 1930. 151

After Beattie's death the family remained at Balmoral House. In 1915 the land was subdivided into 10 lots - the two-storey stone house remaining on lot 10.

Balmoral House, now 46 Waterview Street, was sold to William Cecil Gorman, builder, on 19 October 1949. The upstairs verandah, which envelops the fine stone portico, was added by Gorman. 152

CHAPE'S QUEEN'S PLACE POST OFFICE: Alexander Chape bought lots 21 and 22 in Waterview Street and Queen's Place from Marsh on 25 May 1842 for £149. 1, 4. 153 In 1844 the land had an unoccupied weatherboard cottage on it valued at £15 per annum. 154

Between 1844 and 1857, Chape built his grocer's shop on the corner of Waterview Street and Queen's Place. In 1857, he was made the Balmain postmaster when the agency was taken away from another shopkeeper, Noah Collier. Previous postmasters, in reverse chronological order, were George Chidgey, Augustus Hellesome and S. Elliott. 155

Chape was a reliable postmaster and the Postal Department permitted the introduction of Money Orders at his shop in 1866. After he died in 1870 the business was carried on by his widow, Catherine. In 1871 Mrs Chape opened an agency for the Government Savings Bank in her post office. A telegraph transmitter was installed in 1873 and Mrs Chape continued to be postmistress until she retired in 1880. 156 The new Balmain Post Office was opened in 1887.

For many years the Queen's Place building was used by the Golden Gift Company as a store but in the early 1970s the building was adapted for use as the Balmain Volunteers wine bar.

BELLEMBAH: Marsh offered twenty lots for sale on 31 March 1843 and described them as:

> *Sloping gradually down to the waters of the Bay, and comprising all that ground so remarkable for its superior gardening qualities - all the lots have access to Waterview Bay by Broadstairs and Waterview Streets ... they contain about 32 feet frontage each, by depth to 125 to 130 feet ... nothing can be more obvious than that two of these lots are sufficient for a "VILLA RESIDENCE" with plenty of ground over for both pleasure and profitable gardening, gradually rising up from the water's edge the site commands a magnificent prospect overlooking the whole Bay which is of immense extent and is perpetually the scene of water parties and boats engaged in fishing and other occupations.*
> *The opening on the Parramatta River presents an uninterrupted view of all the steamers, constantly passing by, so convenient for residents who choose to avail themselves of their accommodation.*
> *PS. Everybody knows that the Great Ferry Road (Darling Street) is just at the top of the property - that the walk is nothing to the Ferry and for adpence you are in the business part of the city in about ten minutes.* 157

BELLEMBAH, 49 Waterview Street (by Tony McLain)



Mr Stubbs, puffing the virtues of this site with as much gusto as one of the steamers in the bay, was able to sell lots 14 and 15 to Francis Armstrong, a Balmain labourer for £35, 2. 0, on 8 May 1844. Armstrong began building a stone cottage on lots 14 and 15a and a separate cottage on lot 15b. 158 He sold the land and cottages to Catherine Morgan, a spinster and local landowner, for £65.10. 0 on 1 May 1848. Miss Morgan had bought lots 1 to 13 and 16 and 17 from Marsh on 1 October 1844 for £180. 5. 0. She repeatedly mortgaged these lots to acquire other property in Balmain for many years. Herring and Moody bought lot 8 and lots 18 to 20 from Marsh on 25 July 1845 for £65.12. 0. 159

On 15 February 1855 Catherine Morgan sold the lots to William Henry Sawyer, a mariner of Balmain, for £1,000 and it seems likely that the present house was built at about that time. 160 The present appearance of the house and its detailing reveal it to be much later than a simple 1840s cottage.

Sawyer died there on 24 February 1877 and left the property to Alice Gertrude Sawyer. She was the daughter of Sawyer and Catherine Beckman Morgan and was born in 1851. Other children born to the couple were Kate Pauline (who married Edward Cawcliffe, a Melbourne surveyor), Robert (who became a surveyor's assistant), Edith Mary (the wife of William Norburn of Adelaide) and Joyce. 161

Sawyer's will entitled Alice to live in the house for the rest of her natural life but she decided to sell in 1896. She died at 107 Balmain Street, Leichhardt on 8 July 1898. 162

Jessie Forrest Seaman, the wife of Robert Seaman a soap manufacturer of Balmain, bought the house and lots 14, 15 and part of 15 from Alice Sawyer in 1905. The house was called Reginbah at this time. The Seaman family held the property until 1942 when they sold it to Charles John Lawson, a Balmain motor engineer. 163

Reginbah, 49 Waterview Street, passed through various hands until it reached the present owner who has renovated it in keeping with its original character.

TARALGA: Catherine Morgan built a brick-nogged * weatherboard house on lots 11, 12 and 13 at some time between purchasing the land from Marsh in October 1844 and selling it to Sawyer in February 1855 (see in Reginbah above). 164

To finance his waterfront development, Sawyer sold the house and its three lots to Maria O'Dell in December 1872 for £700. Maria was the wife of Thomas O'Dell, a land agent of Morpeth, New South Wales. She died intestate in 1878 and Thomas received the property by letters of Administration issued by the Supreme Court. Thomas also died intestate in 1883 and further Letters of Administration allowed the property to pass to their daughter, Millicent Aghraula Josephine Keating 165 She was the wife of Elijah Keating of "Her Majesty's Customs". 166

The house was called Taralga at this time. 167

Mrs Keating defaulted in a mortgage in July 1899 and the land and house passed to A B Bogle, the Balmain estate agent. Bogle sold it to the National Meat Preserving Company in 1914 for £850. The Company resold to Bogle in 1920 but on his death it passed to Cecil Edward Knibb, a shipping clerk of Eastwood, and George Henry Knibb, a Balmain warehouseman. 168

When Dare Investments acquired Taralga in July 1972 it was a burnt-out derelict. 169 The company demolished Taralga and built the present block of flats at No 1 Caroline Street.

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* The space between the timber up-rights in a weatherboard cottage was sometimes infilled with rough brickwork. This was termed brick-nogging and gave the wall insulation and greater stability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is indebted to Gray family members, Nancy Hardie and John L Gray, for family papers and photographs. John L Gray is particularly thanked for his meticulous searching of titles of land bought and sold by JP Gray.

The late Rita Wise did a great deal of research on Waterview House and helped the author in countless different ways.

Robert Irving was the first scholar (in recent times) to study the history of Waterview House and his drawing of it in *Balmain in Time* has been a source of inspiration ever since.

Tony McLain is thanked for his fine ink drawings of the "other" Waterview houses.

Ann-Mari Jordens' *The Stenhouse Circle: Literary Life in mid-Nineteenth Century Sydney* was a valued and appreciated source. This book is required reading for those concerned with Balmain's history.

Mr Seton of the Moray District Council Library at Elgin was very helpful with cuttings from local newspapers and records.

Finally, the author gratefully acknowledges the Mitchell Library's permission to reproduce the original drawings of Waterview House (page 7) and Waterview Bay (page 11).



ALEXANDER GRAY'S POST OFFICE AND GROCERY STORE, Queen's Place and Waterview Street: c1857

(by Tony McLain)

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Annandale Post Office: 1855-1920

by Historical Officer, Australia Post
edited by Betty Mason

The Annandale Post Office building on the corner of Johnston and Booth Streets, Annandale, was completed in March 1890. In the 40 years preceding the erection of the building, the operations of the Annandale office and its hours and facilities were the subject of petitions and delegations from the citizens of the area. Similarly its name, in the beginning "Petersham", was the cause of understandable inconvenience and complaint.

These documented irritations make interesting reading now but no doubt were highly annoying for early Annandalians.

In 1828 the first seven country post offices were opened in New South Wales. Early in 1855 a petition, signed by thirty-six residents of Petersham and Austenham, asked for a daily postal service to Sydney. Supporting their request they submitted that about 300 people lived in the district and that within the last six months five new houses had been built and that several more were under construction. Also early in 1855 the first post office serving Annandale was opened under the name of "Petersham". The person in charge was Fredrick Codner and his salary was £10 per annum. The exact location is not given nor is the origin of the name, "Austenham", revealed. However, there was an "Austenham House" in Balmain Road, Leichhardt, listed in a Post Office Directory of 1867.

In 1857 Codner resigned and in December of the same year was replaced by Miss Marianne Williams. In January 1858, Miss Williams was given permission to move the location of the office but again no address is given. In 1860 Miss Williams resigned to be replaced by her mother, Mrs Hannah Williams, at a salary of £12 per annum.

The records of the Department do not show what happened between 1860 and 1872. In 1872 a complaint was made at the inconvenience caused by the confusion in the names of the post offices at Petersham Railway Station and Parramatta Road. The office at Petersham was called "Norwood" and the office called "Petersham" was nearly a mile distant on the Parramatta Road. Letters addressed to residents living near Petersham Railway Station, of whom "there were a large number", were delivered to the Petersham office.





ANNANDALE POST OFFICE IN 1888
(Australian Town and Country Journal, 18 May 1889,p33)

The Postmaster-General ordered a report when it was suggested that the Petersham office should be moved within the boundaries of the then Leichhardt Municipality and/or the name of the office changed. Mrs Williams opposed the alteration of the name and a petition, signed by 30 residents opposed removal to other premises. Amongst the signatories to the petition was C B Johnston of Annandale. Five other residents, including H Wiseman of "Anaam Grove", Annandale, signed a testimonial against its removal.

A solution was reached by re-naming the Norwood office "Petersham" and the Petersham office "Annandale" in July 1872.

Six days a week at 9 am the mail went to Sydney by horse-drawn coach. The contractor, W H Ireland of Enfield, was paid £50 annually from 1873 and covered a run from Bankstown to the General Post Office. Three years later his pay had risen to £75. Fitzwilliam H Lyre of Bankstown took over in 1879 for the same run with an additional pick-up at "Druitt Town". In 1883 the run was worth £100 but in the following year the contract was abolished.

In 1875 Captain Robert Johnston, RN, of Annandale, complained of delays to his mail. Johnston expressed that his estate had been well-known as "Annandale" but as the post office in the village of Petersham had also been called "Annandale", "his correspondence has been frequently subject to inconvenient detention". He suggested that sending his mail to the Camperdown office would obviate this delay.

Captain Johnston also suggested changing the name of the Annandale office to "Elswick". He complained that he did not enjoy the same service as nearby residents and wished to observe that "if the letter carrier were instructed to go up to 'Annandale' House, it would occasion only a detour of five minutes". He pointed out that the Annandale office was not on his estate but about threequarters of a mile from it and that of the 100 letters posted at the Annandale office, he claimed at least half were addressed to the "Annandale" estate.

A contrary opinion was that letters delivered to Captain Johnston would take the letter carrier twenty minutes each way.

The Department seems to have gone to considerable lengths to remedy this complaint. The possibility of altering the name of the Annandale office was canvassed with the Mayors of Petersham and Leichhardt. The former considered the present name should be retained as the office was situated in "a Ward of the Borough of the same name". The latter on the other hand, was "not in the least interested in any name given to the office in question".

Eventually an arrangement was reached whereby the letter carrier who took letters to Camperdown office should see the GPO sorting clerk, who made up the Annandale bag at 9 am and 2 pm daily, to collect all mail for Captain Johnston. The carrier delivered the mail to the Camperdown office, presumably for Johnston's collection.

In 1884 the Postmistress, Mrs Williams, received a salary of £35 per annum and the annual revenue of the office was approximately £297. In 1885 Mrs Williams died and was replaced by another daughter, Martha. In August of the same year. However, Miss Williams resigned in October. The Department then decided that the Annandale office was not required as there was a letter receiver in front of the premises and a licensed stamp vendor nearby. It was also expected that the Leichhardt office would be re-located in a more central position, possibly closer to Annandale. So on 31 October 1885, the Annandale office was closed.

The exact location of this early office was not shown on departmental documents but a list of pillar receivers of 1885 shows two in Parramatta Road, Petersham, one near Canterbury Road and the other near Crystal Street.

In 1887 agitation for a new Annandale post office began. In December Alderman Davidson and Mr J F Broad of Annandale asked for a post and telegraph office to be established. They stated that the population was over 2,000 and those wishing to send a telegram had to travel to Camperdown. A petition with 200 signatures was presented in January 1888 and Mr W Chapman, MP, made representations for a post office in the same month.

A postal inspector gave a discouraging report at this time against an Annandale office partly because most residents were within a half mile of other offices. He wrote "the population is not a class that use a post and telegraph office to any extent being for the most part working men, or those in humble circumstance". He did concede that telegrams could be delayed in delivery and recommended that the Department provide for a mounted messenger from Camperdown.

At this time Annandale residents received two letter deliveries daily, brought by letter carriers from the Petersham and Leichhardt offices.

In 1888 the Hon F Abigail, MP, took up the cause for a post office in Annandale. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 15 March 1888, it was reported that a deputation to the Postmaster General, "consisting of Messrs W Pritchard S G Davidson and other leading residents of

Annandale" had suggested the corner of Collins and Johnston Streets as a good site for an office.

In 1890 the Postmaster General promised to call for a report on the position and to do what he could to remedy the petitioners' "disabilities". This promise was preceded by a report by Postal Inspector G P Unwin which recommended the establishment of an office. In his opinion no suitable buildings existed at that time and it would be necessary to either buy land and build, or call tenders for a building. Mr Unwin calculated the financial aspects of the office as follows :- "rent £60; PM's salary £100, messenger's salary £25 - Total £216. Balance in favour of Department £234 per annum". Mr Unwin does not reveal where the balance in favour of the Department was obtained.

Tenders were advertised for premises for a post and telegraph office for a term of three or more years. The following offers were received, none of which was considered suitable.

Stanislaus Cotz: 219 & 221 Trafalgar Street, 2 semi-detached houses each of 4 rooms; £22.10.0 pa for two or £45.12.0 for one. Lessee to pay rates.

P Shannon: Parramatta Road, near Johnston Street, shop, five rooms, kit, etc; £40 and rates and taxes.

W B Butler: 3 Johnston Street, office (30' sq /1) 8 rooms, kit, etc; £140 pa.

W Cridland & Son: "Nursara" No 11 Collins Street, adjoining Johnston Street, house of 9 rooms, etc; £150 pa.

F W Mason: 107 South Street, brick cottage; hall, 4 rooms, whir; will sell for £470.

Mrs J J Riley: Junction of South and Coleman Streets, new house, 7 rooms, kit, large veg' ground, stables; £156 pa.

Also considered unsuitable was an offer by J Newland of 68 View Street who offered shop and dwelling at that address for £1 per week.

William Pritchard offered land for sale at the corner of Johnston and Collins Streets with a frontage of 132 feet to Johnston Street and a depth of 100 feet to Collins Street. The area was considered too large and the price, £2,244, too high. It was decided to negotiate for a 40 feet piece of this block and to offer £15 per foot but these negotiations presumably fell through.

In November 1890, the Department completed the purchase for land in South Street, between Johnston and Annandale Streets described as "lot 18 and part of Lot 19, Sec 30 of the North Annandale Estate". The vendor was Messrs Richardson and Wrench for a Mr Shannon who sold for £8 per foot. The depth was 132 feet and the width 60 feet. (In October 1898 this site was sold to Annandale Council in turn for £305.)

It was decided to rent premises while the new office was being built. It seems that some doubts were felt about the suitability of the newly acquired land. Messrs W Pritchard & Son, Auctioneer, Valuer and Estate Agents, Sydney, offered the residence, "Tylden", number 13 Collins Street, for a yearly rental of £105. This was too high for the Department.

In January 1891, a petition was received from "residents and property owners" requesting temporary accommodation for a post office and recommending the house, "Tylden", as being suitable until a permanent building could be erected.

In February 1891, Pritchard dropped his rent for "Tylden" to £120 "subject to alterations" to the building. These alterations were necessary to accommodate the new use and included enclosing the verandah for public space and installing "letter fronts" - ie. letter boxes.

On 6 April 1891 the official post office for Annandale was opened at "Tylden". The Postmistress was Mrs Kate Margaret Black who received £150 per annum. She was a widow with six children and was described as "a lady of considerable ability". Provided in the office were telegraphic instruments, a money order office and a branch of the Government Savings Bank. Mail clearances were made at 5 am, 10 am and 3.30 pm. The Telegraph office closed at 6 pm and the revenue from it was about 35/- per week. A re-organization of mail pick-up and deliveries was necessary.

In 1891 the Government Architect quoted £2,500 for the erection of a permanent post and telegraph office at Annandale. Because of the financial problems of the time and uncertainty regarding the site, construction was delayed.

In December 1891, Mr Houghton, MP, recommended the purchase of land at Johnston and Booth Streets for a post office. The Postmaster General concurred and entered into negotiation with the owner, William Clark who offered it for sale at £13 per foot. The Postmaster General replied with a counter offer of £11 per foot but threatened to resume the land if Clark did not accept. Eventually an agreement was reached in May 1892, when the Department purchased the land for £12 per foot at a total cost of £792. The site was described as having a frontage of 66 feet to Johnston Street and 132 feet to South Street. "Being Lot 20, Section 30 of the North Annandale Estate".

Although sketch plans were approved and tenders called, the Minister for Works in December 1892 decided that this project should "stand over for the present". Lack of immediate funds probably postponed building once more.

In 1895 a vote of £2,600 was made for the new building based on current estimates and a plan of the building prepared. The following accommodation was shown on the sketch plan.

Ground Floor: Colonnade; Public Lobby; Office PM's Office; Mail Store; Sorting Room; Kitchen and Pantry.

First Floor: Balcony; Drawing Room; 4 Bedrooms; Passage; Store and Bathroom.

Before work began another two bedrooms were added at an additional cost of £150.

Brown and Tapson succeeded in tendering for the work at £1,470. The project was scheduled to be completed in twenty-six weeks from 11 April 1895. In November 1895, approval was given for an expenditure of £75 for furniture and fittings.

The new Annandale Post Office was completed in March 1896, at a cost of £1,605. The dates of the change over from "Tylden" and the opening of the new building are not known. In 1898 the following people were employed at the new office:

Postmistress Mrs E M Black; Operator Miss M W Mulligan (Mrs Black's sister); Letter Carriers P A Hourie, Thomas Hickey and R Lawrence; Messenger J W McKinnon.

In 1898 the revenue was "over £1,000 a year". Each day about 10 telegramm were sent and the same number received.

A request to keep the telegraph office open to 8 pm was refused in 1898 on the grounds that a second operator, who would have to have been employed as Mrs Black could not operate the telegraph equipment, would entail another £65 a year. However, a delegation to the Postmaster General in December 1899, led by Mr Mahoney MP, and the Mayor of Annandale, Alan Taylor, apparently had the desired result. This deputation also asked that there should be a re-arrangement of letter carriers' beats to allow for earlier delivery of mail as some residents were not receiving their letters until 11 am.

Mrs Black was to remain as postmistress until her retirement in January 1915. In April of that year her long-term assistant, Mary Mulligan, also retired.

Postmaster Robert L Studdert followed Mrs Black and in 1915 his staff numbered eight and were:

Clerical Assistant W Laughton; Postal Assistant E J Simpers; Letter Carriers J F Green, James J Hannan, W H Goodwin and W J Gamble; Telegraph Messengers K L C Darrell and F W Jones.

Postmaster Studdert remained at Annandale until 1920 when he was succeeded by Alfred W Plumley.

In May 1974, the National Trust of Australia (NSW) placed the Annandale Post Office in its Register with a RECORDED Listing.

Annandale Post Office is an example of the style of public building which followed the depression of the early 1890s. In place of the monumental building type of the previous "boom decade", the Government Architect blended economy measures with an architecture more in keeping with the domestic scale of the suburb's environment.

By separating the Post Master's residential quarters from the business areas, and by allowing this separation to be seen in the finished building, the domestic quality of the Post Office is architecturally expressed.

This domestic quality is also expressed in the choice of materials. Dark red face bricks and Marseilles tiled roofs reflect the detached bungalows of the time as do the unlined roof overhang and an almost complete absence of decoration.

During 1978 and 1979 repairs and restoration were carried out in keeping with the character of the building, after consultation with the National Trust.

Annandale's Post Office building is part of the suburb's history and it is pleasing to know that it is being maintained as historic buildings should be maintained. Australia Post is setting an example which some public bodies and home owners could well follow.

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EE NOTE: This article was compiled by the Historical Officer, Australia Post, Sydney and edited by Betty Mason, Annandale Association.

Index: LHJ Nos 1-9

LHJ No 1 1973

Page

Editorial: The Foundation of this Journal, A Roberts 1
Memoirs of Nottingham House, E Irving 3
William and Hanna Miller, J Annerton 8
Robert James Stuart-Robertson, R Stuart-Robertson 9
Responses of the Balmain People to the Depression, M Wheatley 7
Bishopsgate House, M Dulling 11
Let Us Sharing In Balmain, J Digia, P Reynolds and D Wise 12
ARTICLES
A Roberts, Balmain in Time, a record of an economic upheaval and some of the buildings by D Reynolds and E Irving 14
A Roberts, peering Into a Chapel, a year abroad: remembrance on the environs of the University of Sydney, by A Jenkins 18
MISCELLANY (Historical Society activities) 19
NEWS AND QUERIES 21
History of Glebe, P Simpson
Other Relics of Nottingham House, E Irving
Balmain Miscellany, P Reynolds
A View from Annandale, E Mason
Annandale Miscellany, A Roberts

LHJ No 2 1973

Editorial: Local Historical Studies, M Dulling 2
Lyndhurst 1: Its History, P MacDonnell 3
Lyndhurst 2: Its Architecture, C Lucas 7
Lyndhurst 3: Its Furniture, K Fido 8
Annandale's Industrial Era, A Roberts 11
NOTES AND QUERIES 21
Ashes in Bristol, M Greene
Litchfield, M C Hartley

LHJ No 3 1973

The Balmain Cemetery, M Dulling 2
Callan Park Hospital for the Insane, D J McDonald 4
The Balmain Watch House, M Pearson and P Reynolds 8
Edward Hunt, Schoolmaster, K Tidy 17
Harold Park Race Track, M Quinn 19
Restored Hamilton House, Esq, M Wilson & M Myrtle 24
ARTICLES
M Dulling, Boatbuilding and John Young, by A Roberts

LHJ No 4 1973

Remains of the Second Balmain Presbyterian Church, P Reynolds 2
John Lamb Lane and Francis Street Glebe, M C Johnson 3
Mr Cruden, the Admiral, M Quinn 8
The Architecture of the Glebe Presbyterian Church, J Jackson 9
The History of the Glebe Presbyterian Church, M Dulling 12
Relics of John Young, A Roberts 16
ARTICLES
E Irving, Colonial Heritage - Australian Buildings of New South Wales, by Phil Lewis

LHJ No 5 1973

A Theatre of Suburbs, M Dulling 1
The Blomfontaine Widow or Middle Bay, M Quinn 6
Recovering the Second Balmain Presbyterian Church, J Wade 10
Annandale's Cinemas, M Quinn 12
The Glebe Congregational Church, M Dulling 16
ARTICLES
P Reynolds, St Andrew's Congregational Church, by E B Little
A Roberts, Protestant Calvinist Tribe, by J Harrold

LHJ No 6 1973

The Residents' Petition of Annandale, J Young 3
Robertson's Warehouses, Balmain, M Baldwin et al 5
The Duke of Glebe, M Dulling 9
Annandale Children's Games (1915) M Quinn 14
ARTICLES
A Roberts, Who Murdered Dr Archdall of Petersham? An Historical Tragedy, T Perkin
A Roberts, The Architecture/Character of Glebe, Sydney, by RAH Irwin

LHJ No 7 1974

Editorial: Local History and Publishing Trends, P Reynolds 2
John Cavill, a Cornish Stonemason, P Reynolds 3
The Annandale Gates Re-erected, A Roberts 9
St John's Church, Forest Lodge, J Fletcher 11
Leichhardt Post Office, Australia Post 16
On the Track: The Balmain Football Club's First Seventy Years, P Reynolds 18
MISCELLANEOUS NEWS ITEMS 21
Area Planning, 1972-1974 23
Index LHJ: 1-6 24-27
NOTES AND QUERIES 27
Salisbury Road Tunnel, Annandale, E Mason
The Balmain Waterfront Strike and the Balmain Street Name Index, J Bates & P Reynolds
The Making of Queening Traditions in Glebe, M Dulling

LHJ No 8 1974

A Biographical Index of Glebe, Balmain, Leichhardt & Annandale Identities, M Dulling
ARTICLES
M Dulling, Pioneer Builder - a History of the Cruden/Jordan Church in Annandale, A Roberts & E Wallis
E Mason, The Glebe: portraits and places, P Macdonnell
L Lynch, Annandale Public School (1878-1978), a centenary celebration, P Reynolds

LHJ No 9 1975

Editorial: Local History Resources, The School Era, P Reynolds 2
Robert Johnston: Naval Officer, Explorer and Landowner, N J Cable 3
James McDonald Aviatrix of Balmain, J Flower 6
Reminiscences of North Annandale Public School, M Dulling 10
John Ward 'Blue Mist Hunter of Balmain, P Reynolds 12
Lay/Adams: the Origin of the Name, J Bates 15
Robert Blake Seldon, Sheriff and Town Builder, P Reynolds 19
Bayside Public School 1878-1901, P Reynolds 24
Football in Sydney 1870-1920, M Dulling 28
PUBLICATION NEW ISSUE 31
Index LHJ: 1971-1975 31
ARTICLES 31 32
L Lynch, Balmain 1800-1841, the Birth of a settlement, a basic source study, P Reynolds
R Irving, A provincial Society of Gentlefolk, Petersham from 1788, by Jean

Reviews

A NOTE ON REVIEWERS

Alan Roberts is now the Field and Research Officer of the Royal Australian Historical Society. His task is to assist Affiliated Societies with the problems of research, writing and publishing of local history.

Howard Tanner is an architectural historian and is a partner in the Tanner Pty Ltd which practices in architectural research and restoration.

M Dupain (introduction by J M Freeland), *Old Colonial Buildings in Australia*, Methuen, Sydney 1980, pp 176, rrp $24.95.

While this book is primarily a vehicle for Max Dupain's excellent photographs of colonial architecture, its appearance comes at a time when public appreciation of our heritage is high and yet another phase of development is about to alter the fabric of New South Wales.

At present a "preserve everything" mentality pervades certain sections of the community and a more enlightened and mature attitude fully appreciative of context and relative quality is sorely needed to ensure the survival of important buildings and precincts.

The buildings shown are usually the well-known examples, now thought to be sufficiently protected (in New South Wales) by law. However, the role of the permanent Conservation Orders and the overriding powers of the relevant Minister are respectively relatively untried and occasionally untoward.

Dupain's photographs convey the extraordinary quality of craftsmanship achieved by many of our early architects and builders, whether in the austere classical tradition (witness the Hyde Park Barracks or Parramatta) or the new-fangled varieties of Victorian taste, such as Blacket's University of Sydney, beautifully captured in a timeless composition.

Between these two architectural extremes lie diverse traditional examples. Especially curious are the buildings which appear to follow a pattern book basis giving maximum effect in plan and elevation to a small building. These include Macquarie Grove; Glanlee, with its encased colonnade and marbled stair; and St Mark's Church, Pontville, Tasmania, in an economical yet fancy Romanesque style.

Max Freeland's introduction is relatively unrelated to the photographs, which is a pity since so many nuances of architectural ancestry deserve explanation and could enliven the otherwise predictable tale.

One old photograph of "Fernhill" at Mulgoa shows the ungainly eastern porch which survived until the 1960s. Like its Greek Revival sister at Elizabeth Bay, Fernhill was intended to be much grander, probably with a stone staircase linking an upper floor and an encircling colonnade. In the boom and bust economy that is characteristically Australian, funds run out and both houses were never fully completed.

The photographs are striking in themselves, however the printing is somewhat soft in hue, removing much of the abstract vigour of light and shade typical of Dupain's work. Their arrangement in the book is aesthetically pleasing, but pays little heed to the development of architectural style or the chronology of construction.

While *Old Colonial Buildings of Australia* provides no new ground for the initiated, it is a delightful volume to present to the interested observer.

Howard Tanner

Ann-Mari Jordens, *The Stenhouse Circle: Literary Life in mid-Nineteenth Century Sydney*, Melbourne University Press, 1979, pp xi + 180, rrp $17.50.

The subject of this book is the literary circle (with many comings and goings) which centred on Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse in Sydney. He was a solicitor and a man of some means. More importantly, he was highly cultivated, was well-informed on world literature, and was a man of generous heart. He had one of the finest private libraries in the Colony and was generous to a fault in giving friends and protegés access to it.

He was remarkable as a literary patron, nurturing the intellectual development of young Australian writers, encouraging them and often giving financial help when needed. He also played a prominent part in the cultural life of this colonial entrepot, not least in lecturing to the Mechanics' School of Arts.

Ann-Mari Jordens has written a stylish account of an elusive subject. Her focus is on Stenhouse's intellectual development and his interactions with the young writers of his day. There is adequate evidence of Stenhouse's contemporary standing, for example the obituary written by Professor Badham, but how to explore it in any detail?

I would have agreed with Daniel Deniehy, one of Stenhouse's most brilliant protegés, that "I fear few ever will know the greatness of your heart as I do...". In proving Deniehy wrong, Jordens has performed no mean feat.

Correspondence is her principal source, aided by the fact that his library - such an invaluable resource to Stenhouse's purpose - can be identified amid the great Fisher Library today.

Jordens has attained a good mastery of her sources, which only flag occasionally when giving blow-by-blow accounts of newspaper reports and exchanges. She is also very successful in conveying the "texture" of colonial literary and intellectual life of the time - its mad characters, feuds, conversations, the grinding struggle to earn a living, personal hope and tragedy.

Tragedy seems gradually to overtake the story, in fact, as one by one his friends die, and then Stenhouse himself dies in 1873.

The story is also set gently into the context of a young but fast growing city, which changed vastly between his arrival in 1839 and his death. He lived at Waterview House in Balmain, a large timber Colonial Georgian house, overlooking the Harbour, where he and his friends enjoyed the library and literary conversations.

The book throws occasional tantalising sidelights on his suburban setting. Stenhouse took an active part in local as well as metropolitan affairs, being an elder of his church, an alderman, magistrate and occasional chairman of the Balmain Literary Institute.

Jordens even manages to convey the feeling of sitting in his library, with the sea breeze billowing the curtains, and surrounded by gently glowing walls of books.

This book opens a window on a fascinating human story. I am not altogether sure that the subject's importance warrants a published book, but Jordens's skill in presenting it certainly makes it seem so.

Alan Roberts