

# MANNING WALLAMBA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc TAREE

Issue 164 November 2022

## THE FIG TREE



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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Christmas is upon us and I would like to wish you all the very best and hope in the new year that it is a better year for you all.

Especially to those who have had major upsets.

Certainly we have returned to business as usual.

My special thanks to Barbara our Secretary who has kept you informed, whilst having issues that make it difficult to find the time

Other members of the Committee have had issues as well so our thoughts are with them.

It is with sadness that I have requested a leave of absence from day duties for at least 3 months , I will still attend our committee meetings.

Best wishes for a holy, happy and safe Christmas.

During our Christmas break keep working online or research other areas you haven't yet.

Ken B



### **PLEASE NOTE**

The last "duty" day for 2022 will be on Saturday 17th December and  
recommence on

Monday 30 January 2023

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

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



# MERRY CHRISTMAS









### COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022-2023

President	Ken Beeton	Research Officers	Wal Horsburgh
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Isolated & Unmarked Graves - Graeme & Pam Jarman

Newsletter Editor—Joan Irvine

Public Officer—Lyn Haynes

### *The Early Days of Taree*



■ 1930, and the Church of Christ is 'skidded' across Victoria Street to its new site.

### *Oh what a sight at night!*

TAREE Church of Christ was originally situated on the opposite side of Victoria Street. In the early 1930s it was moved physically across the street. Hector Haden of Hadens Engineering came up with the idea of placing greased logs under the church and skidding it across the street. Taree Council's wood-fired steamroller was borrowed, the church slowly pulled (skidded) across the street. It spent one night in the middle of the street, lit by lanterns for safety reasons.

## RESEARCH SERVICE

Research Forms can be downloaded from Society Website

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

Initial Research Enquiry

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

Extra microfilm copying \$1.00 per page. Additional

Research \$10 per hour



## **HAVE YOU HIT A BRICKWALL?**

The FigTree is issued 4 times a year, so please feel free to send in any query you may have and it will be included in the next issue.

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

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Family Membership    \$33.50

Single Membership \$25.00

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

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

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

### **Members are entitled to**

Use the Society's Resources during opening hours

Attend meetings and workshops, and vote at meetings

Four copies of the Fig Tree by mail or download

Free Research Enquiries in "Fig Tree"

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

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

The reason for this article is to show what can be achieved through National and State libraries -

## **“Ask a Librarian”.**

Submitted by Ken Beeton

In an earlier issue of The Figtree (Issue 155 August 2020) I told how, when I was a toddler, I was rescued from drowning in the Manning River by a nine year old boy named Ken Gibson and for his effort my father (Ernie Beeton) rewarded him with a badge that he had gained in WW2, whilst serving in civil construction for the Army in Darwin.

Fast forward seventy years and after a lot of researching I met Ken Gibson who returned the badge to me, saying “It belongs to you, it belonged to your dad” - I certainly was not expecting this to happen. I only wished I had found Mr. Gibson before my dad passed away.

I wanted to know more about the badge and I decided to contact the National Library of Australia  
“Ask a Librarian”

*“Hope you can help, attached is a photo of badge on back RD No. 263 9w. It was gained in WW2 in Darwin, it is a family memento, plus there is a story associated with my life.”*

I received the following reply

*“Our response to your request NLAref161039 is:*

*Dear Mr. Beeton,*

*Thank you for contacting the National Library of Australia*

*I have been able to find a little information about your badge and I have included a photo of what it may have looked like when it was made. It is 9ct gold and features the early form of the Australian Coat of Arms which was used until 1912. It was made by a Melbourne company Willis & Sons.”*

*Now that I knew the firm involved I searched TROVE*

The brothers Richard and Thomas Willis arrived in Melbourne in 1858, and soon established themselves as jewellery importers and wholesalers. Over the next decade they became manufacturing jewellers. In 1874, the partnership was dissolved and the firm T. Willis & Co. came into being in 1875, under the control of Thomas & V. J. Willis. During the rest of the century the firm prospered, becoming importers of clocks, silver and electro-plated wares, as well as being wholesale jewellers and silversmiths, with premises in Melbourne Sydney and Perth. In 1904 the company changed it's name to Willis & Sons Pty. Ltd. selling to retailers throughout Australia.



# George Christian Andreas Ochs

1825-1889

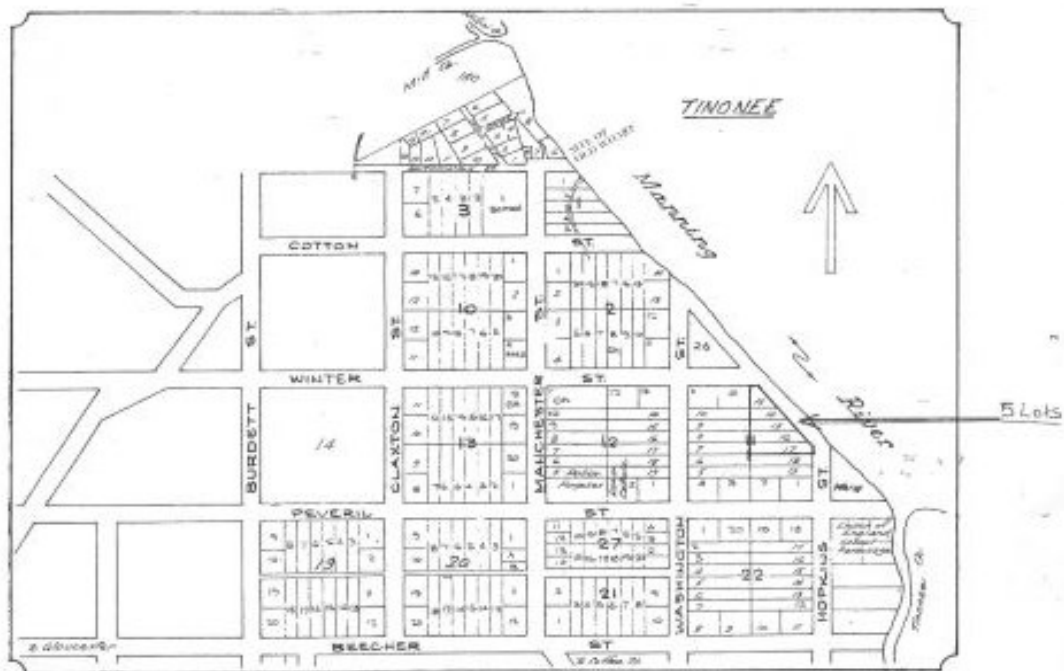
Submitted by Wal Horsburgh

George Ochs the third child of Johana Nikolaus Ochs and Susanna Maria Behaghel, was born in Frankfurt am Main, Hesse Germany, on the 25 January 1825, he migrated to Australia, landing in Port Jackson, NSW in 1855. Three years later on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 1858 in Cundletown, NSW, he was Naturalised and had made the Manning his home.

On the 10 January 1866 he married Sarah Fredricka Rosilia Carle, daughter of Carl Michael Carle and Caroline Christiane Berenfeld, in Cundletown, NSW.

George Ochs brought with him skills as a surveyor and general builder, skills which would have been in high demand in his new home town. In 1866 on Lot 13 facing Tinonee Terrace stood a dwelling built by George, and it was here that George and Sarah raised their family of three sons and a daughter.

The house he built had a floor of Port Macquarie beech, which at that time was plentiful in the area. The land the house was built on was opposite the Manning River and he lived there until his death on the 16 July 1889. His wife Sara, stayed in the house until the mid 1890's when she sold the property, which comprised of five lots (Lots 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17) to Captain Hector Gollan



George also built the Government Wharf in the late 1870s which was located at the river end of Pereril Street, on a bank of land reserved for a wharf site. George took great interest in the advancement of the village.

Continued..



### George Christian Andreas Ochs - Continued

On the 30 March 1872 at Tinonee, George Ochs, announces that he intends to publish a **Map of the Manning**, providing 100 subscribers are first obtained. The Map to be compiled from the surveys of John Hall and others. This map was completed and for years was hung on the walls of a hotel in Taree, a copy now adorns the wall of the Manning Wallamba Family History Section in the Mid Coast's Taree Library and is a much appreciated Resource. The original map, a Midcoast Council Resource, is held at the Manning Art Gallery.

Although an unsuccessful applicant in 1885 for the position of Town Clerk, Inspector of Nuisances and Bailiff, the position going to Horace Beeton, he was successful in 1886 when Mr. Beeton retired. However, at the 1885 meeting, together with Mr. R. Howell he was appointed Valuer, at an annual fee of three guineas.

As the area over which they would operate was small and most of the properties of considerable size, the assessments they would have to make would not fill many pages of the Valuation Book. Another advantage would be that, like most of their fellow citizens, they probably possessed a good knowledge of the values of town properties. As a result, their field, calculation and clerical duties would not make great demands on their time and labour.

George "wore many hats" as is obvious from the following newspaper articles.

#### Manning River News and Advocate. Saturday 21 July 1866.

*"THE TAREE FLAT – Mr. George Ochs, the surveyor and practical engineer, has recently made a careful examination of the flat which has heretofore been a barrier to the ascent of steam vessels to Tinonee; and the result is that this gentleman is willing to contract for the removal of all impediments, for the paltry sum of two hundred pounds. This accords with the opinion to which we gave expression a year ago, and it shows how very easily, and at how little cost, all the farmers at the back of Tinonee might be accommodated. A petition will, we presume, be at once drawn up and forwarded to the Government, that this miserable pittance may be placed upon the estimates; and we call the attention of "our member" to the subject, in the hope that Mr. Forster will press the matter. Steam navigation must ultimately be extended to Wingham, but we are willing to take these two hundred pounds as the first instalment of the debt the Government undoubtedly owes us"*

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Wingham Chronicle and Manning River Observer November 11, 1871.

*The "Government Gazette" publishes the names of Messrs Thomas H. Wynter, **George Ochs** and Patrick McCann as additional members of the Public School Board at Tinonee".*

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Manning River News October 18, 1873.

*"Mr. George Ochs, whose tender was accepted for building bridges on the Gloucester Road between Mr. Robert Easton's and the Gloucester Township, about five months' since, returned home on Friday, having completed his contract and receiving from the trustees a certificate that the work had been done in a most satisfactory manner.*

*Mr. Ochs will at once commence arrangements for the erection of the bridge over the Dingo."*

*Continued..*

## George Christian Andreas Ochs - Continued

The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertising. Tuesday 2 Jan 1877

*"TENDERS ACCEPTED – The following tenders were announced in the Gazette of Dec 29 as having been accepted by the Government: **Mr. George Ochs** construction of wharf and approach thereto at Wingham, Manning River".*

George was obviously held in high regard in the area, because, as noted in the Wingham Chronicle and Manning River Observer -

*".....on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1869 the inhabitants of Wingham gave Mr. Ochs a dinner. Invitations had been extended to a good many residents of the district and we learn that about forty were accepted. It is stated that the party was an exceedingly pleasant one and that Mr. Ochs delivered a nice speech, when the company had drank his health. After the dinner there was a ball – and this was honoured by the attendance of many respected ladies of the district. Dancing was kept up until morning".*

George died on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1889 in Tinonee, NSW and was buried in the Church of England Section of Tinonee Cemetery. He was survived by his wife Susanna and his four children. His three sons all went on to have their own successful careers and his only daughter married Leonard Shrapnel Biddulph, the son of General Sir Michael Biddulph, G.C.B. at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, in London.

Ref: Manning River News and Advocate  
Wingham Chronicle and Manning River Observer  
Maitland Mercury  
Manning River News



George Christian Ochs



## PICTON TO WENTWORTH FALLS

Via Nattai Valley, Burragorang Valley, Wollondilly River  
Cox's River and the Kings Tableland

Party: Cess, Carl and Self

Distance about 65 miles

### A Walking Tour

Submitted by Pam Jarman

The following is an extract from the diary of three men who walked from  
Picton to Wentworth Falls in 1912—the name of the author is unknown

#### Friday May 31<sup>st</sup> 1912

This was my first long walking tour and as I had Saturday morning off, Cess and I left town by the Cooma Mail at 8.10pm, arriving at Picton at 10.45pm. The township is situated some distance from the railway station, but a kind young lady (very nice too) put us on the right road. We put up at the Commercial Hotel, tariff 1/6 - 53 miles from Sydney, 553 ft above sea level.

#### Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>

At 6.15pm we shouldered our swags and left the hotel, with Burragorang our objective. As rain had fallen a few days previous, the grass looked beautiful in the early hours of the morning. The road is through hilly country and many carts, containing rabbits were passed on our way out. Three miles out we halted for breakfast. Beef tea was prepared, while the billy boiled and the steak cooked in the ashes. We sat down to a good meal, as the crisp morning air had put a keen edge on our appetites. The inner man being satisfied once more, we continued our journey at 8.55am. At the junction of the Oaks and Oakdale roads we met the first Bullock team on its way to Picton, 4½ miles distance.

About 2 or 3 miles from the Oaks Road we came to a track bearing away to the left. On a signboard were these words "To Nattai Junction". I might mention that the Nattai Junction referred to is where the Nattai and Wollondilly rivers meet at Burragorang (Fig Tree stores) and is a mile or so to the north of this spot. The route we had mapped out was via Oakdale and The Bluff and this new track came as a surprise, as we had never heard of it before. After studying the map, we decided to take the track mentioned on the board.

We walked about ½ a mile or so when we met Mr. Emmott in a sulky. "Where are yer going to lads?" "Wentworth Falls" was the reply and when we informed him we were walking for pleasure, he said why it's about 60 miles from here! And judging by the expression on his face he thought we were gone in the top story.

The track was a little more than a bridle track and passed through thickly wooded country. About 6 miles from the road we had lunch on the side of the creek. Menu: Pea soup, Frankfort sausages and rice. On referring to the map we found that we were about halfway between the Oakdale Road and Nattai. Suddenly, the track brought us into mountainous country and the giant blue gums. We took a photograph from the side of the Burragorang and then following the creek, we were soon on the flats, which led to the river, a beautiful spot.

Continued.....

## **PICTON TO WENTWORTH FALLS (A Walking Tour) continued**

The river was forded and we made enquiries at a farmhouse about the track, as it was only a bridle path at this point. However, it was easy to find as the left hand bank of the river is followed all the way, until the old road is picked up, about 6 miles from where we crossed the river. Mountains now surrounded us and the most beautiful river scenery I had ever seen opened up before us, but time was getting on and we could not afford time to take a photograph.

About 3 miles further on we met a rabbit trapper. "How is the rabbit market?" 10d a pair" we answered, but when we reached the stores we found that we went wide of the mark as they were only 6d a pair. Anyhow the poor old chap would get a shock if he took his bunnies into market. We arrived at the Wollondilly crossing about twilight and after a stiff climb up the old road, we reached the Fig Tree stores (Reilly's) at 5.45pm, where we stayed the night. Distance for the day about 22 or 23 miles.

We spent a very pleasant night with Mr. Reilly, who played the phonograph for us and chatted to us about the valley and its surroundings. Just as we were about to turn in for the night, another traveller arrived and shared our room, and piled us up with questions. "How is the Pig Market? Both married men I suppose? Got good jobs about a tenner a week?" These questions came out once, one after another and fairly took us off our balance. Anyhow he was soon in the land of nod. These remarks were too much to be asked of two respectable youths, who had just left the city on a holiday and very soon both were asleep.

### **Sunday June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

As Carl did not leave town until Saturday afternoon, it was impossible for him to reach Burragorang on Saturday night, but as he came out by the Camden-Oaks Road, he reached the latter place at about 8pm and continued his walk to Burragorang (where we were waiting for him) on Sunday morning.

As we woke fairly early, it was decided to walk up the mountain to meet Carl. It was not very long before we reached the Bluff, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile up the mountain. Here the road has been cut in the bold face of the cliff, which occupies a prominent position on the mountainside. From this point a grand view opened out before us. Below flows the Wollondilly and a little to the left the silver waters of the Nattai, who's course we followed the previous day, were plainly visible. It was a frosty morning and a light mist hung over the rivers, while away in the distance was mountain after mountain. Mt. Burragorang was on the extreme left and made an excellent background. While we were engaged looking on the beautiful picture, a bullock team carrying 7 tons of silver ore from the Peaks Silver Mines passed us on their way to Camden and very soon we were joined by our friend and the trio returned to the Fig Tree stores for breakfast.

At the stores the Wentworth Falls road turns off to the right and in a short time we were on the river flats, surrounded by high mountains. About 2 miles from Reilly's is a curious specimen of Aboriginal art, locally known as the "Red Hands". Passing through a gate and following the fence to the right, these Red Hands were soon noticed. The handprints were plainly visible as if some person had covered their hand with red paint or dye and slapped it against the rock. These markings have been in the same condition for over 70 years and were discovered by an old resident of the valley. Very permanent dyes must have been used as the rock is exposed to all weathers. We were told by old inhabitants that they are in the same condition now as when first discovered.

Continued...



### PICTON TO WENTWORTH FALLS (A Walking Tour) continued

A mile or so further on, the Wollondilly was crossed by bridge and some time afterwards the junction of the Cox, Wollondilly and Warragamba was reached. This is a very pretty spot, with a high pyramid shaped mountain in the background. Before the latter was reached we forded the Wollondilly River at Fitzpatrick Crossing, where we had lunch and also a dip. The month was June and the waters of the Wollondilly were icy cold and very soon three figures may have been seen sitting on a log enjoying the welcome rays of Old Sol.

Dinner over once more we put to the track again leaving the remainder of Mrs G....m's bread on a stick, with the following inscription written on a piece of paper, which we pinned on the loaf. "Too hard to eat we asked for break and received a stone". With all due respect to Mrs G.... m's as a cook, her bread was far too hard to eat and the only thing that could make any impression on it would be an axe.

During the next few miles the road crosses the Cox several times and this gets monotonous after a time or two. Eventually, we tried to find the flood track and were soon above the river. Here some fine river scenery lay before us. We had proceeded about 3 miles when we realized that we were off track and came to the edge of a precipice. After discussing the situation, it was decided that we would ford the river and endeavour to reach the road (which we knew was on the other side of the river) and follow it to McMahon's. To think of a thing and then put it into practice is quite two different things. This we discovered, for the mountainside was very steep and we found it difficult to find our footing, as it was now getting dark. After a few spills and jumping from ledge to ledge, protecting the precious camera, the bottom was reached in safety. We crossed the cobblestones and were soon on the bank of the river once more. This spot was not a crossing and we did not know its depth, but as we could all swim, should an emergency arise, we strapped our swags as high as possible and carrying the camera high, we waded in. At first the water was about 12 inches deep, but towards the opposite side it gradually got deeper and deeper, until it was well past our waists. We were all on the alert for a swim, but we managed to reach the bank in safety, not getting the camera or swags wet. We were very fortunate, for at this point the road was quite close to the river and this time we meant to keep to it.

The river was forded 3 more times before Mr. McMahon's was reached and as we were wet we did not hesitate but walked straight through with boots on. At 7.30pm, three wet and weary tourists made their way to the homestead. We at once changed into dry clothes and what a difference a wash, brush up and dry clothes make!

A good homely tea was laid before us of roast lamb, potatoes and pumpkin, which soon disappeared when we got to work. After tea, feeling much better, we retired to the fireplace, which is one of the old English style. A cheerful log fire throws out its generous warmth while we all sit around it. At first it seemed strange sitting in the fireplace itself, but we soon grew accustomed to it. While we were listening to the tales of Tom McMahon, the valley cop "Trooper Coleman" visited the house and sat opposite us. In the course of a conversation with Tom he mentioned that as he was passing Fitzpatrick's crossing, he noticed a piece of bread stuck up on a stick, with the words "Too hard to etc" written on it. He passed a suspicious glance at us and said we were the only travellers in the valley that day. Anyhow he told us his dogs had a feed and what is more, could tell us where the bread came from, as he had experienced the same fate as we ourselves. She was the noted bad cook in the valley and we had the bad luck to strike her. We found the beds nice, clean and well kept, which were soon occupied.

Continued...

## PICTON TO WENTWORTH FALLS (A Walking Tour) continued

### Monday June 3<sup>rd</sup>

The interval before breakfast was spent filling our pockets etc. with oranges and sampling them as we went along. Breakfast over we proceeded on our journey once more towards Wentworth Falls, 23 miles distant. Saying good bye to Mr. McMahon, he told us to have a few oranges and as our pockets and swags were already full, the old billy came to the rescue.

To avoid crossing the river twice we followed the bank of the river round a horseshoe bend. Although the track was rough the views obtained from the point were good with a beautiful reflection effect. About 2 miles from the house, the bottom of the mountain is reached and the climb is commenced. The grade is too steep for any heavy traffic, in fact, only horsemen travel by this route, but it has a good walking surface and the scenery attracts one's attention as the mountain is ascended. About halfway up we halted at a spring, having a nice cold flow of clear water. On starting again, the precious bread given to us by Mrs. McMahon was forgotten. The last half of the journey is the hardest and at one part for 300 yds. or so the grade is 1 in 4. Once this stretch was passed, it was not long before the tableland was reached.

Here one of the most extensive views lay before us. On our right was Mt. Solitary and the silver water of the Cox could be seen in the mid distance, winding its way through the mountain spurs. Out to the west could be seen mountain after mountain, like the waves of the sea, stretched as far as the eye could reach towards Jenolan Caves. On our extreme left was the sunken Burragorang Valley, through which we had passed the previous day. The point on which we stood is named "Sully's Mistake". When O'Sullivan, Minister for Works was in power, he sanctioned the construction of a new road into the valley. The work was commenced, but after £6,000 was spent, it was discovered that a road could not be cut out at this spot without much expenditure. Therefore, the work was left unfinished, thus the name Sully's Mistake, to this lookout where the road was started.

The track along the Kings tableland proved to be uninteresting, being sandy and through bush, keeping on a narrow ridge all the way. This part of the trip is bad for water. At 1.30pm we had 15 miles to go and the pace was hot until the Sanatorium, 4 miles from Wentworth Falls was reached. Here we had tea and changed by the roadside. The road to the station is good and after passing J.L. Hordern's summer residence, the main Bathurst Rd is reached about a mile from the station, arriving at the latter at 6.15pm. We had a long cold wait for the train and arrived home at 12.30am—all well.

#### **Note:**

This is a most interesting walk but the road in and out of the valley is quite unfit for cycle or motor traffic.

Saturday	Picton to Burragorang	23 miles
Sunday	Burragorang to McMahons	16 miles
Monday	McMahons to Wentworth Falls	<u>23 miles</u>
		<u>62 miles</u>



3 miles is added to the total as we walked to the Bluff to meet our friend,  
thus making the walking distance 65 miles



## The Manning for Tourists

Submitted by Wal Horsburgh

In the previous article "A Walking Tour" the final paragraph made reference to the summer residence of Mr. J. L. Hordern, and this in turn reminded me of an article in the Wingham Chronicle and Manning River Observer (NSW 1898-1954), Saturday 23 June 1906 that was sent to me by one of our members.

Totally unrelated, but something just "clicked". The article in question was in the Local and General News section under the heading "Manning for Tourists", it seems Mr. Hordern was a bit of a traveller and in this instance certainly had foresight.

*"Mr. John L. Hordern , of Hordern Bros, Pitt Street, Sydney, left by the Rosedale on Monday. Mr. Hordern, in a chat with our Taree representative said he was surprised the people here did not try and get tourists to visit the district, what he had seen of it he was charmed with. He suggested an itinerary similar to the one he had, which was as follows: -*

*Sydney to Newcastle by train, thence by S.S. Hawke to Port Stephens, a day there, a day on the 'Myall Lakes', Steamer to Bulahdelah, a day there, Coach to Bungwahl, and oil launch to Forster, day at Forster, up the Wallamba either by oil launch or drogher to Nahiack, coach to Taree, steamer or coach to Wingham, day on upper river, coach to Croki; catching a steamer for Sydney. He said the Intelligence Department have organised successful tourist's outings to other North Coast rivers and why not to the Wallamba and Manning"*

Why not indeed!! It seems Mr. Hordern thought so.



## THE HOWELL & CASTLIO FAMILIES

(Part 2)

Submitted by Nancy Dixon (Howell)

You may remember in the last edition of the Figtree there was a story introducing The Howell & Castlio families, submitted by our member Nancy Dixon (Howell). The following, is a follow up and gives an insight into part of their pioneering days in and around Howell's Prairie in Missouri, USA

The family is fortunate to have detailed accounts of the lives of their families, passed to them by their ancestors and put into print by Lilian Hayes Oliver, in part from stories told to her by her mother Serena Castlio Hayes and other family members.

In the previous article on this family, the story documented how Francis Howell Snr. and his wife Susannah Stone and their seven children settled at Howell Prairie, following a long and arduous trip from North Carolina by horse and coach.

The children of this marriage were—

John Howell m (1) Grace Baldrige; (2) Sally Keele; (3) Joanna B Reeder

Thomas Howell m Susannah Callaway, daughter of Jemima Boone Callaway

Sarah Howell m William Stewart

**Nancy Howell** m (1) James Callaway; (2) John Harrison Castlio (**see following article**)

Newton Howell m (1) Rachael Zumwait Long (**my family line**) (2) Adelia A Farris.

Col. Francis Howell Jnr m Mary Meeke Ramsey

Capt. Benjamin Howell m Mahala Castlio

Susannah L Howell m Larkin S Callaway

Lewis Howell m Serena Lamme

James Flagherty Howell m Isabel Morris

“....Following the death of her husband Captain James Callaway by Indians, Great-grandmother **Nancy Howell** and her three children continued to live at “Kraut Run”, the name of their property, for three more years, depending on her younger brothers Lewis and James for protection and help with the farm. Each year new settlers were coming to Howell's Prairie and soon Nancy had near neighbours. “



Nancy Howell 1787-1864



## THE HOWELL & CASTLIO FAMILIES Continued

One of her nearest was John Harrison Castlio, whose wife had died. Soon after her death John moved to Howell's Prairie and built Castlio Fort on Dardenne Creek, several miles from Howell's Fort. John made what soon became frequent trips to Nancy's home. It was only a matter of time before John and Nancy married.

After their marriage John Harrison Castlio moved his new wife and her three children to a beautiful farm of rolling hills and prairie, they also went on to have five more sons and a daughter.. The house was, over time, to belong to their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren until 1940.

Following his death Nancy continued to live on the farm with the children, though from then changes began to occur, making life different for all in the community. Not the least of which was the establishment of a Post Office in Mechanicsville, later known as Howell.

In 1881 Howell Institute was founded, having being endowed by Colonel Francis Howell, Jr. In 1915 this Institute became Francis Howell High School, from which many, many descendants of Francis Howell Snr. graduated. Automobiles and airplanes soon became too common to cause the residents of Howell to rush to doors and windows. Roads were gravelled and the main street in Howell was black-topped. Electric lights gleamed in the houses. As one walked along the streets in the village radios could be heard.



Howell Institute Circa 1899

The villagers were hardly aware of the gradual transition...until October 1940. It was then that they were stunned by the headlines appearing in the newspapers -

*"War Department Needs 18,000 acres for TNT Plant": "Village of Howell to be Wiped from Map for Huge War Plant:" : "Lives of 200 families upset in TNT Plant Area "TNT Site Landowners Petition Roosevelt for Pay Under Options Army Cancelled".*

And so, as the days and weeks passed, the headlines continued to tell the story. The land where Francis Howell had settled in 1800 and where his descendants had lived for almost a century and a half again became Government property. Once again on Howell's Prairie explosives were being produced – not gunpowder at a grist mill, as was the case in the 1800's, but trinitrotoluene at one of the world's largest ordnance plants.

*Continued...*

## THE HOWELL & CASTLIO FAMILIES Continued

Calvin Castlio, a great-grandson of John Castlio and of Francis Howell, was the last resident to leave the area. During the eighty-four years that he had lived in or near Howell, his roots had penetrated deep into the soil. Now he was forced to leave the house that had been his home for forty years. The house where he expected to spend the rest of his life. He was a typical Castlio—a man of few words. His children noted that during the summer of 1941 their father sat for hours on the front porch or in the shade in the front yard staring straight ahead, an unlighted pipe in his mouth.

*"One by one the neighbours moved away. Friendly lights no longer gleamed from windows. Each evening dusk enveloped the deserted houses in what had so recently been the tiny village of Howell.*

*Can you imagine the feeling of Calvin Castlio as he walked the last time out of the house that had been his father's and then his home for so many years? Heavy trucks rumbling by stirred up such clouds of dust that he could hardly see the farm lands once cultivated by the children, grandchildren, great-grand-children and great-great grand-children of Francis Howell. The descendants from Howell's Prairie passed through the main entrance of the Ordnance Plant and over the crest of a hill."*

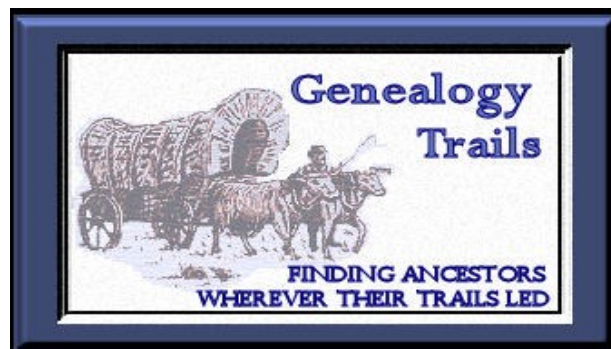
Then almost overnight nearly a century and a half after Francis Howell had brought his family into St. Charles County – the soft glow of starlight and moonlight was dimmed by the brilliant glare of tens of thousands of lights. Instead of curls of blue smoke rising from the chimneys of the scattered farmhouses of the countryside, there were great clouds of yellow evil-smelling fumes pouring forth from high drums. The songs of the birds were muted by this rumble of trucks, tractors, cranes, and the blasting - faint echoes of the thunder of guns and the roar of battle in Europe -----but this does not belong in the stories of the Howell & Castlio families.

### Footnote:

I also found online that a book was written about the obliteration of the village--

*'The Rape of Howell and Hamburg, Missouri:  
An American Tragedy'* by Donald K Muchany, a former resident.

My cousin Nancy Howell in Sacramento, California (our grandfathers were brothers/share great-grandfather) has done quite a lot of research and told me that the only home to survive the obliteration was that of Dr J. Newton Castlio, the original home and the last one occupied. It was moved onto the University of Missouri grounds in Columbia. Also the Francis Howell High School survived in 1940 as it was used by the Ordnance Plant.



## THE MANNING RIVER VALLEY

O mighty Manning River, meandering eventually to sea,  
You rise in rugged ranges where panoramic vistas be.  
Winding through verdant valley, by pastures cows and farms,  
by bankside homesteads, Moreton Bay Figs and palms.  
Through Gloucester, Wingham, Tinonee and capital, Taree,  
you flow down by the islands, the larger ones are three.  
It is here you are unique, with two entrances to the sea!  
The main at Harrington, the other at Old Bar to see.  
Once you were a thoroughfare, where boatmen plied their trade,  
but alas! That is over now and memories of it fade.  
The railway and the highway came, and your fickle bar,  
eventually made it unprofitable for ships sailing from afar.  
Now your glistening waters are for recreation, tours and sports,  
fishing, sailing, skiing, and boat racing of all sorts.  
When angered by Jupiter Pluvius, and clouds that burst  
your waters rush in torrents coastward, but first,  
your banks o'erflow and muddy waters rise  
over farmlands, roads and bridges, but the worldly wise  
know what to expect of you and take timely care,  
that little is lost and there is no despair.  
O mighty Manning River, meandering to sea,  
All my life you have meant so much to me.  
Wherever I may venture, wherever I may roam,  
I am forever proud to call the Manning Valley home!

