

**THE 1809 LAND GRANT OF ROWLAND EDWARDS
AND THE “GOLDFINDERS HOME INN”,
KURRAJONG, NEW SOUTH WALES
A SOCIAL AND CONSERVATION HISTORY**

EXTRACT

CHRISTOPHER HALLAM

2014

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The “Goldfinders Inn” at Kurrajong, New South Wales, is built on land granted to Rowland Edwards in 1809. Edwards arrived in the colony as a convict on the “Admiral Barrington” in 1791. By 1809 he was married with two children. On 14 December 1809 Colonel Patterson granted him 80 acres in an area subsequently called Kurrajong. It appears that he was living on this same land prior to the formal land grant. This grant was subsequently confirmed by the newly arrived Governor Macquarie, on 1st January 1810. The grant was one of eight grants made in the Kurrajong area in December 1809.

With the early date of the grant and the evidence that part of the existing timber building was in place by the time of the grant, the site is very important historically. The subsequent construction of the stone inn in 1851 adds to the social importance of the site, an importance increased by its additional functions as the local Post Office and general store.

The buildings on the site have no pretensions to architectural greatness, simply reflecting a primitive vernacular style, without showing the hand of great architects of the day such as John Verge. Perhaps the conservation work that has been undertaken and the minimalist extensions designed by Graham Edds & Associates provide the architectural testimony.

Set out in this book, in Chapter 2, is the known social history of the owners and occupants of this property, up to the current owners. This can be summarized:

| Owner | Date of purchase |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Rowland Edwards & family | circa 1806; land grant 14 December 1809 |
| John Rule | 27 th December 1842 |
| John Lamrock & family | 27 th January 1851 |
| Henry & Robert Pitt | 10 th January 1899 |
| James Pye | 13 th December 1921 |
| Lawrence & Marjorie Adolphus | 28 th January 1944 |
| William Wells | 20 th January 1953 |
| Terry Paul | 25 th November 1958 |
| Patrick McGuinness and others | 15 th February 1972 |
| Christopher & Deborah Hallam | 3 rd December 1975 |

In Chapter 3 photographs and measured drawings of the buildings on the property at the time of purchase by Christopher and Deborah Hallam in December 1975 are set out. The buildings on the property are referred to as the cottage, being the timber building with the original section dating from 1809, the inn, a two-storey sandstone building dating from 1851, and the barn, a slab timber outbuilding that has been substantially extended.

In 1979 significant restoration and conservation work was undertaken on the inn, to adapt it for use as the primary dwelling. The work undertaken is discussed in Chapter 4.

In 1987, followed a conservation study, the cottage was restored, with some later additions demolished. This is detailed in Chapter 5.

The most recent building works were undertaken in 2010, with a connection between the inn and cottage constructed, plus a front fence and extensions to the barn undertaken. These works are set out in Chapter 6. Photographs of the buildings as they currently appear – photographed in 2013 – are also provided.

The setting of any historic building can add or subtract from its presentation and appeal. The garden setting at “Goldfinders” adds to its appeal, with part of an historic garden and significant plantings remaining. The front courtyard contains camellias and magnolias planted in the 19th century, with one camellia reported to be the oldest in Australia. This is further discussed in Chapter 7.

2.0 HISTORY

2.1 Rowland Edwards

Rowland Edwards Background

On 14th December 1809, Rowland Edwards received a land grant of 80 acres at “Richmond Hill”, by Colonel Patterson. At that time, “Richmond Hill” was a locality to the north-west of the Hawkesbury River, extending from present day North Richmond to Kurrajong. Figure 1 reproduces the grant. This grant was confirmed by Governor Macquarie, upon taking up his duties as Governor, on 1st January 1810. This is shown on Figure 2. The land was to the west of what is now known as Little Wheeny Creek, with its most southern point at the current location of the Old Bells Line of Road bridge over this Creek. At the same time, Colonel Patterson made other land grants abutting and to the East of the Edwards grant. The southern end of the Edwards grant, where the original Bells Line of Road crossed Little Wheeny Creek, is where the cottage and “Goldfinders” inn are located. Figure 3 shows the location of the grant, in a map extract showing all grants made by the late 19th Century.

Rowland Edwards was borne circa 1763 in Shropshire. A descendent of Edwards has found (1): *“Rowland Edwards, age 26, was charged at Shrewsbury, Salop County, UK on 8 August 1789, with feloniously stealing a black gelding, the property of Morris Evans of Berthyneus in the Parish of Carno in the county of Montgomery between the 25th and 27th of May 1789. Upon the oath of Richard Owen of Carno, Wales, he was convicted and sentenced to seven years transportation beyond the seas. He was transported on the “Admiral Barrington” from Portsmouth, on 27th of March 1791 as part of the Third Fleet to New Holland, arriving in Port Jackson on 16 October 1791. The “Admiral Barrington, under Captain Robert Abbon Marsh, with Peter Gossam as ship’s surgeon, was a 1781 French-built ship of 527 tons. It carried 300 male prisoners, 36 of whom died during the voyage”. A newspaper article in the Shrewsbury Chronicle dated 6th October 1789 listing Prisoners in Goal, sentenced to be transported, including Rowland Edwards, aged 26, to be transported for 7 years.*

Rowland Edwards in the Hawkesbury

On the 10th April 1798 Edwards had occupation of land on the “lowlands”. This appears to be the same land granted to Henry Lamb in 1794, close to where Rickabys Creek joins the Hawkesbury River. In *Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed*, J Barkely-Jack (2) states:

“Hardy identifies Rowland Edwards as the sub-renter of part of Baker’s farm in 1802, but this seems unlikely as in 1800 Rowland was ensconced, by agreement to purchase, on Henry Lamb’s grant (identified because he is the only grantee from whom Edwards could possibly have bought a grant registered on 10 April 1798 as shown in the 1800 census). This is confirmed by a May 1803 registration of the transaction when Rowland paid Lamb the 150 pounds he owed for the 25 acres.”

The *Settlers’ Muster Book 1800* listing “land and stock held by free settlers, and emancipated or expired convicts in 1800” lists Edwards “date of settlement” as 10th April 1798, with one

pig, 16 acres of wheat planted and 5 acres of maize to be planted. Edwards is listed as being self-reliant, not on Government stores. The location of the land is given as “Mulgrave Place”, with this land acquired “by purchase”.

The *King's Lists 1801* (1801 Muster) lists Edward's “date of grant” as April 1798, with 25 acres held, of which 234 acres was under wheat/maize. He was listed as having 6 hogs, and with two persons off Government stores.

The *1802 Muster* lists Edwards as having received 25 acres by grant, at “Mulgrave Place”, with 10 acres in wheat, 9 acres in maize and 28 hogs. Under “store” there is one woman and two free servants listed as off Government stores.

Edwards married Jane Fletcher on 3rd August 1804. Marriages records (3) lists the marriage as taking place at St Johns, Church of England, Parramatta, with the marriage ceremony performed by the Rev. Samuel Marsden, in the presence of Martha Pearl and Henry Baldwin. Fletcher had arrived as a convict on the “Experiment” in 1804. Martha Pearl had also arrived on the “Experiment” with Fletcher, while Henry Baldwin arrived with Edwards on the “Admiral Barrington”. Rowland and Jane's first child, Mary, was borne circa 1805, based on the 1828 Census, in which Mary is listed as 23 years of age.

The *General Muster of New South Wales 1806* lists Edwards as “free by servitude”, with *how employed* given as “Settler. Purchase 80 ac Richmond Hill”. This *1806 Muster* lists Edwards as having a total of 80 acres, by *Purchase and Lease Richmond Hill*, with 50 acres under cultivation or pasture and 30 acres fallow, with the occupants of the land being the proprietor, a wife, a child and a convict. They were not on Government stores, so presumably were self sufficient on their 80 acres. As will be outlined later, their second child, Ann, was borne on 31 March 1808, so at the time of this 1806 Muster, with only one child listed, the Edwards family was living on their 80 acres at Richmond Hill.

While it was not until December 1809 that Edwards was formally granted the 80 acres at Richmond Hill, it would appear that he was already living on that land prior to that time, with sufficient land under cultivation to support a family of three plus a convict. Further indication of his occupation of this land at Richmond Hill can be found in a mention in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* of Sunday 3rd September 1809:

*“By VIRTUE of EXECUTION,
On Friday next, the 8th instant, at Ten o’Clock in the Forenoon, on the Premises
of.....*

SAME DAY

*On the Premises of Rowland Edwards, on the High Lands at Richmond Hill, at three
o’Clock in the afternoon,
The Provost Marshal shall proceed to SELL by PUBLIC AUCTION, one Horse, one
Cart, and a number of Pigs, the Property of the said Rowland Edwards (unless the
Execution thereupon be previously superseded).”*

The extract from the *Sydney Gazette* is reproduced in Figure 4. The circumstances as to why the Provost Marshal needed to auction off goods of Edwards are not certain, but were probably the result of an inability to settle debts. What is more relevant is that Edwards had

premises “on the High Lands at Richmond Hill” as at that date. As corroborated by the Muster entries, it is evident that Edwards and his family were living on their 80 acres at Richmond Hill, almost certainly the same 80 acres granted to him in December 1809. With Richmond Hill being a general term for land north-west of the Hawkesbury River, probably taking the name of the actual hill where “Belmont Park” is now located, and with the High Lands being a more specific reference to the area now known as Kurrajong, the Edwards family appeared to be living in “Kurrajong” prior to the 1809 grant.

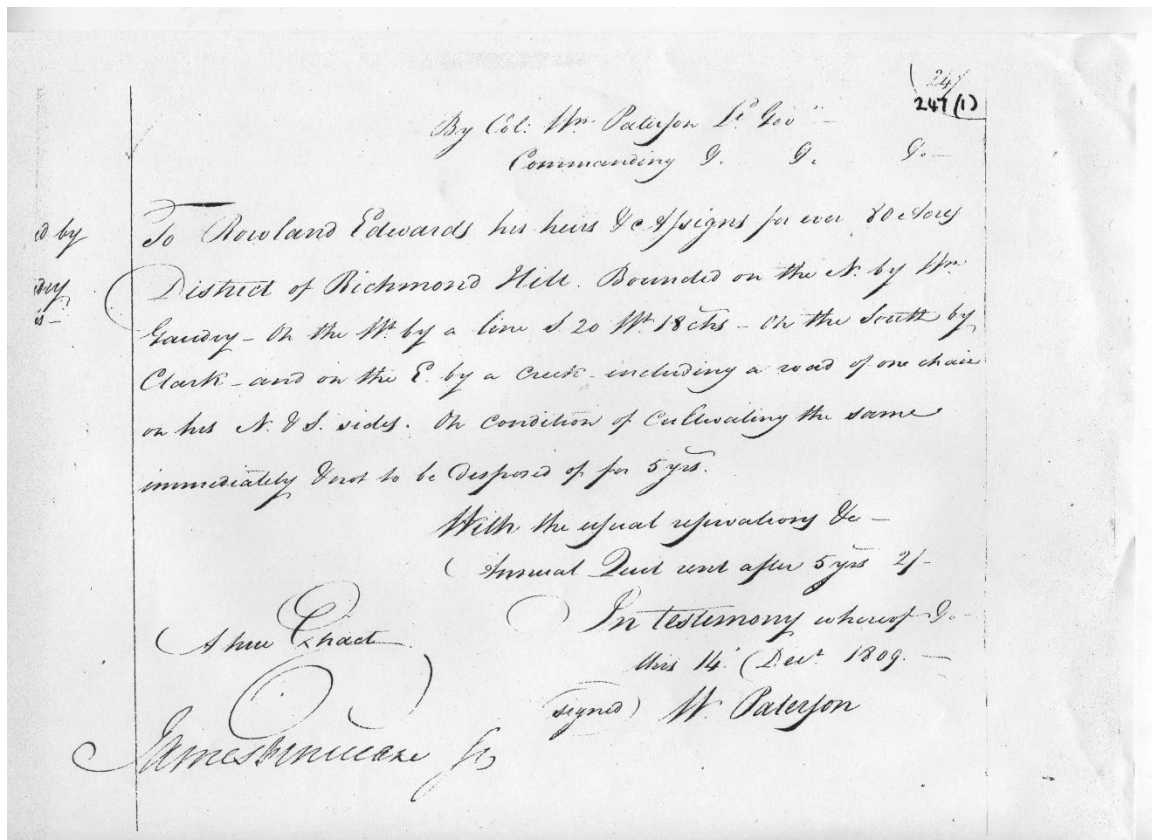


Figure 1 Grant to Rowland Edwards by Governor Paterson, 14th December 1809

With the arrival of Governor Lachlan Macquarie in January 1810, many grants made in 1809 by the administration were “surrendered into the Secretary’s Office”. Rowland Edward’s 80 acres was thus surrendered on 1st March 1810. Prior to this date, and in anticipation of the situation, on 29th January 1810 Edwards petitioned Governor Macquarie to reinstate his grant, in the following terms:

“To His Excellency Lachlan Macquarie Esq
 Governor Sir

Petition of Rowland Edwards most humbly Sheweth that Petitioner is in this Country sixteen years during which time he has used his utmost endeavours for an Honest Living but the last succeeding inundations has so completely swept away his property that it enticed him to apply for a farm, which was granted. Petitioner has a large family to support and being in danger of the fruits of his industry being lost at every flood time.

Petitioner Prays that your Excellency may ensure that he is a Poor Man who has been struggling against the vicissitudes of Fortune all his life time and by giving sanction to the grant he rec. from Colonel Paterson your Petitioner shall ensure it is a Duty incumbent on him.

A.Roy”

211 16908 (10)
 2977- 32115 P^r

_____ unto Rowland Edwards his Heirs and Assigns
 to have and to hold for ever Eighty acres of Land lying and situated
 in the District of Richmond Pitt. bounded on the North by William
 Country .. On the West by a line South twenty degrees West eighteen Chains
 On the South by Clark, and on the East by a Creek, including a tract
 of one Chain on his North and South sides. to be known by the Name
 of _____ Conditioned not to sell or
 alienate the same for the space of five years from the Date hereof
 And to Cultivate eighteen acres within the said Period, and reserving
 to Government the Right of making a Public Road through the same
 And also reserving for the use of the Crown such timber as may be
 deemed fit for Naval purposes. Quit Rent two Shillings.

In testimony, &c. this 1st Day of January 1810
 signed L. Macquarie (L.S.)

Witnessed by
 H.C. Ansell
 James Meekran

Registered in Secretary's Office
 Sydney Sept 2nd 1810

R. M. Campbell Esq.

SERIAL 6

Figure 2 Confirmation of Grant by Governor Macquarie, 1st January 1810

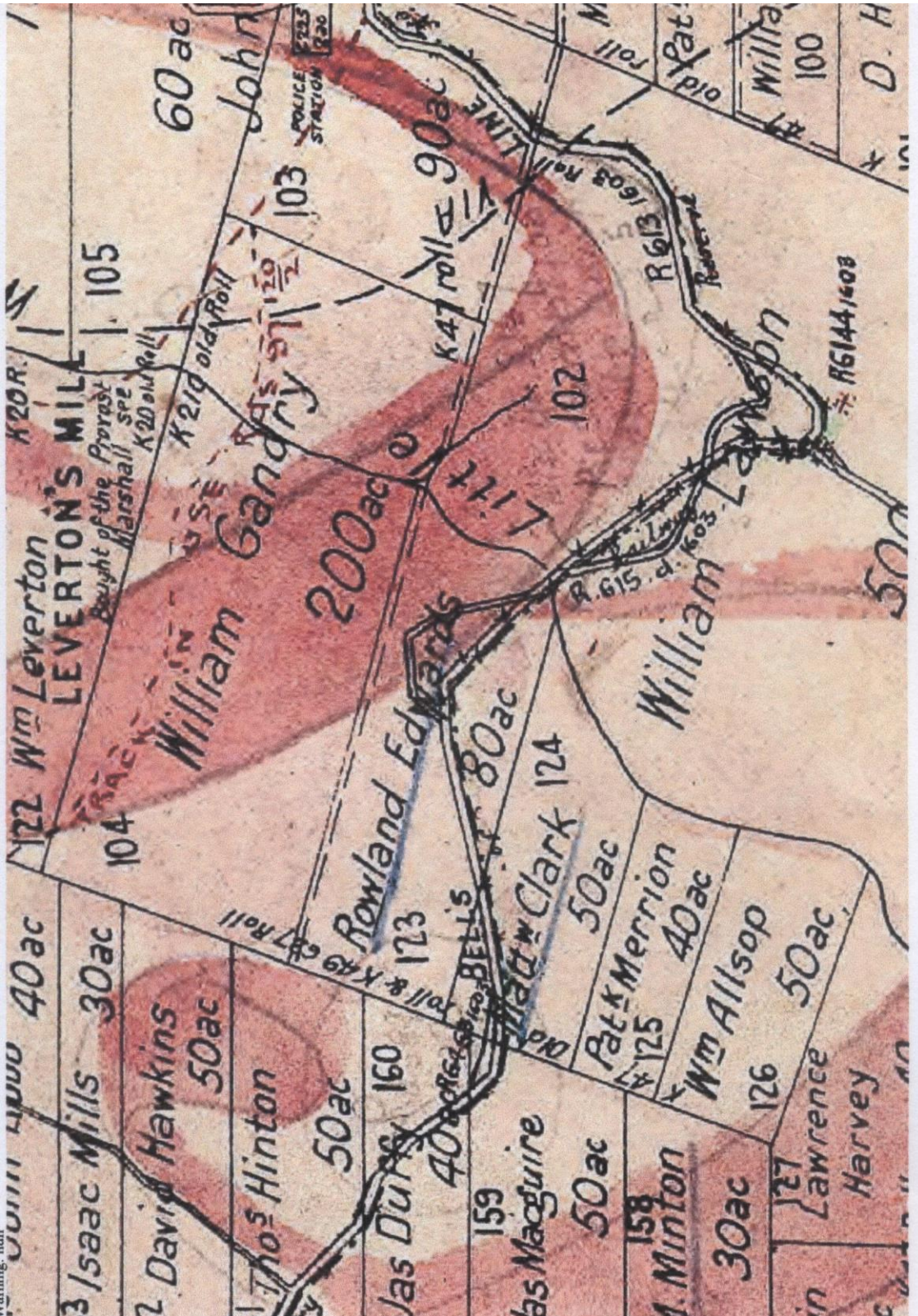


Figure 3 Location of Grant

THE Sydney Gazette, AND NEW SOUTH WALES ADVERTISER.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

Vol. VII.]

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1809.

[Number 196.]

It is hereby ordered, that all Proclamations, &c. which appear under the head of General Orders, and all Advertisements and Notices of any Officer of Government properly authorized to publish them in the SYDNEY GAZETTE and NEW SOUTH WALES ADVERTISER, are meant and shall be deemed to convey full and sufficient Notifications, in the same manner as if they were particularly specified to any one Individual, or others to whom such may have a Reference.

Sydney, January 9, 1809.

By Command of His Honor the **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,**
JAMES FINUCANE, Secretary.

General Orders.

In consequence of the destruction of Grain by the late inundations of the Hawkesbury, George's and Nepean Rivers, and to guard as far as possible against the Scarcity which must naturally be expected to follow, the **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR** deems it expedient to prohibit, until further Orders, the Exportation or Shipping of Bread, Flour, or Wheat, or of any other kind of Grain whatever from the Ports of this Settlement.

By Command of His Honor the Lieutenant Governor
JAMES FINUCANE, Secretary.
Head-Quarters, Sydney,
August 8, 1809.

The Settlers and Landholders who have given in certain Returns of the quantity of Wheat they have in the Ground (pursuant to the General Orders of the 16th ultimo), are informed that a Distribution of Cash Bounties will commence on Monday the 11th Instant, previous to which they will on any location at this Office receive Permits to enable them to receive their respective Proportions; which, from the Return already received, will be at the Rate of about one Gallon for every four Acres, and will be issued at Nine Shillings per Gallon, Duties included.

Such Settlers resident at the Hawkesbury and its Neighbourhood, as may be inclined to have their Spirits conveyed for them, without trouble or expense to the Green Hills, are informed that a Colonial Vessel for that purpose will be provided by Government; but it must be understood, that the Liquor must be paid for previous to its Removal from the Bonded Stores.

By Command of His Honor the Lieutenant Governor,
JAMES FINUCANE, Secretary.

The **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR** will inspect the 1025 Regiment, on the Old Cricket Ground, on Tuesday next the 5th inst. at 12 o'clock.

By Command of His Honor the Lieutenant Governor
JAMES FINUCANE, Secretary.
Head-Quarters, Sydney,
September 2, 1809.

By **VIRTUE** of EXECUTION,
On Friday next, the 8th Instant, at Ten o'Clock in the Forenoon, on the Premises of **PATRICK FARLIN**, at Hawkesbury,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, one Mare, a number of Pigs, and a Quantity of Wheat in Stack, the Property of the said Patrick Farlin (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

SAME DAY,
On the Premises of **JAMES PAGET**, at Richmond Hill, at Two o'Clock in the Afternoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, one Horse and one Cart, with Harness, the Property of the said James Paget (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

SAME DAY,
On the Premises of **ROWLAND EDWARDS**, on the High Lands at Richmond Hill, at Three o'Clock in the Afternoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, one Horse, one Cart, and a number of Pigs, the Property of the said Rowland Edwards (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

SAME DAY,
On the Premises of **DAVID BELL**, at Richmond Hill, at Four o'Clock in the Afternoon,
The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, an Estate consisting of Twenty-five Acres of Land, the Property of the said David Bell (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

On **SATURDAY** next, the 9th Instant,
On the Premises of **WILLIAM ADDY**, situate Down the River, at Hawkesbury, at Eleven o'Clock in the Forenoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, a Quantity of Maize, Wheat, Pigs, one Mare, &c. the Property of the said William Addy (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

SAME DAY,
On the Premises of **THOMAS CHASELAND**, at Portland Head, at One o'Clock in the Afternoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, a Quantity of Maize, and sundry Pigs, the Property of the said Thomas Chaseland (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

SAME DAY,
On the Premises of **WILLIAM KNIGHT**, Down the River, at Hawkesbury, at Four o'Clock in the Afternoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, a Capital Farm, the Property of the said William Knight (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

On **MONDAY** the 11th Instant,
On the Premises of **JAMES WINNISON**, at Richmond Hill, at Ten o'Clock in the Forenoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, a Number of Sheep, the Property of the said James Winnison (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

SAME DAY,
On the Premises of **JOHN MARTIN**, at the Green Hills, at Three o'Clock in the Afternoon,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, sundry Blacksmiths' Working Tools and Utensils, the Property of the said John Martin; including an Anvil, Bellows, Vices, and Three Hammers (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

On **TUESDAY** the 12th Instant,
At Twelve o'Clock at Noon, on the Premises of **JOHN BAILLISS**, at the Nepean,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, one Horse, Cart, and Harness, the Property of the said John Baillass (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

On **WEDNESDAY** the 13th Instant,
At Twelve o'Clock at Noon, on the Premises of **JOHN HILLUS**, at the Half-way Ponds, between Hawkesbury and Parramatta,

The **PROVOST MARSHAL** will proceed to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, certain Effects the Property of the said John Hillus, consisting of Geese and Pigs (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded).

(Signed) **NICHOLAS BAYLY,**
Acting Provost Marshal.

WANTED, Six good Carpenters on an Engagement in Mr. Underwood's Yard.
Workmen answering the description will find good treatment and liberal wages—Apply as above.

To be Sold by Private Contract, a Capital Weather-boarded and brick nogged Houle, with a good Garden and excellent Well, situate next door to Patrick Moor, Upper Pitt's Row, of whom further particulars may be had.

NOTICE.

I give Notice, that a Note of Hand, stating "I promise to pay to John Curtis or Bearer the sum of Six Pounds for value received, Joseph Small-falls;" or words to the foregoing effect, has been accidentally lost. I do therefore caution and forbid all persons against circulating or negotiating the same; but require its immediate surrender to me, if in any person's possession.

(Signed) Martin Briant.

NOTICE.

ALL Persons having Claims or Demands on John or Phoebe Waldron, are hereby requested to present the same for Payment; and those Persons who stand indebted to the said John or Phoebe Waldron are required to liquidate the Claims against them; or in default thereof legal measures of recovery will be resorted to without further notice.

CLAIMS & DEMANDS.

ALL Claims or Demands upon the following Persons are to be forthwith presented to themselves for Payment; they being about to depart the Colony.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| <i>In the Schooner Northumberland,</i> | |
| John Lawrence. | |
| <i>In the Antelope,</i> | |
| John O'Neal | Wm. Messel |
| Jesse Hodgskiss | Wm. Dobby |
| Patrick Fitzgerald | John Anthony |
| John Francisco | John Jose |
| John James | Uchian |
| Jose Gomez | John Rodriguez. |
| <i>In the Atalanta,</i> | |
| John Mailles | Thomas Britton |
| Robert Burrows | Patrick Danuley |
| James Hamilton | John Harrit |
| William Hartyman | Martin Briant. |
| <i>In the Endeavour,</i> | |
| Thomas Brown | Thomas Sawyers |
| Francis Pendergrafs | James Dunn |
| George Sengures | William Strong |
| John Thomas | Walter Duggan |
| Colin Hunter | John Feagan |
| | Alexander Webb. |

Subscription for Including the Burial Ground.

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Robert Jenkins, Esq. | £ s. d. |
| Mrs. J. Blackland | 1 1 0 |
| Mrs. Skinner | (2nd) 0 10 0 |
| Mr. Moss | (2nd) 0 10 0 |
| C. Beasley | 0 10 0 |
| Anonymous | 0 5 0 |
| Anonymous | 1 1 0 |
| Mr. Gibbons | (2nd) 1 0 0 |
| | £ 4 17 0 |

Amount of Balance on former Subscriptions 27 29 4

Total £ 31 19 4

Paid for 65 rods of ditching? } 31 15 0

at 10s. per rod. }

Balance in Hand £ 0 4 0

Figure 4 Edwards Public Auction Notice

As shown on Figure 2, Governor Macquarie confirmed the grant, with the grant backdated to 1st January 1810, which was the first day of Macquarie's governorship of the colony.

The reference to "inundations" which would have affected Edwards land on the Lowlands near the Hawkesbury River adjacent to Rickabys Creek (the Henry Lamb grant) is consistent with records of floods of the River. *Hawkesbury 1794-1994* (4) lists Flood Levels at Windsor, with the following recorded:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>River Height at Windsor</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 23 rd March 1799 | 15.24m |
| 22 nd March 1806 | 14.47m |
| 26 th August 1806 | 14.32m |
| 25 th May 1809 | 14.63m |
| 1 st August 1809 | 14.63m |

With these inundations, Edwards appears to have sought out higher land on which to farm, with the 80 acres at Kurrajong meeting his needs. With the 1806 Muster listing Edwards as having "purchased" 80 acres at Richmond Hill, the terminology could well cover a squatting situation, with the "High Lands of Richmond Hill" being a sufficient distance from the extant settlement to allow such an occupation.

Edwards appears to have sought a public profile. From *Manuscripts, Mitchell Library*, he is mentioned as:

- * Signed address of Hawkesbury settlers to Governor Bligh, August 1806
- * Signed address of Hawkesbury settlers to Rev. S. Marsden, 1st January 1807
- * Signed address of Hawkesbury settlers to Governor Bligh 25 February 1807 and 1st January 1808
- * Signed address of Hawkesbury settlers to Governor Macquarie, 8th December 1810 (front page of *Sydney Gazette*).

The *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* of Saturday 28 November 1812 has an entry that suggests Edwards was again in financial difficulties:

"On FRIDAY next, the 4th December, at Windsor, on the Premises of Rowland Edwards, at Twelve at Noon, THE PROVOST MARSHALL will Cause to be set up for Sale by Public Auction, Seven Acres of Growing Wheat, the Property of the said Rowland Edwards (unless the Execution thereon be previously superseded)".

The "Windsor" location suggests that Edwards was still farming his original 25 acres on the Lowlands near Rickabys Creek, in addition to his major land holding at Richmond Hill (Kurrajong).

2.4 Henry and Robert Pitt

Pitt Family History

Henry Pitt and Robert Essington Pitt became owners of the property on 10th January 1899, as “tenants in common”. The Indenture of Conveyance lists the vendors as James Lamrock (of Kogarah, Bachelor of Medicine) and Frederick Ashwell (of Glebe, medical practitioner), with the sale price being 1120 pounds. The land was described as one acre, two roods and 20 perches, from the original Rowland Edwards 80 acre grant, plus an additional 18 acres, two roods also from the Rowland Edwards grant, commencing *on Wheeny Creek at the south corner of the grant...* (Annexure, Book 636 No.86).

On the 11th January 1899 Henry and Robert mortgaged the property to Alexander Benson, of Richmond, for 1121 pounds. The mortgage document (42) contains two schedules of land, with the Second Schedule being the subject land purchased from the Lamrock Estate, with the First Schedule containing land at Billong, a locality name nearby, containing 60 acres, plus 23 acres three roods, plus five acres two roods, plus one acre 30 perches.

The Pitt family was a long established family in the colony. Mary Pitt, widow of Robert Pitt, arrived in the colony on the “Canada” on 14th December 1801, with her son Thomas Matcham Pitt and daughters Lucy (m. John Wood), Susannah (m. William Faithfull), Ester (m. James Wilshire) and Jemima (m. Austin Forrest (i), Robert Jenkins (ii)). Mother and son were given adjoining grants of 100 acres each in 1802 within two miles of the present town of Richmond. Mary Pitt was a cousin of George Matcham, who married Catherine, sister of Lord Nelson. On the strength of this relationship, land grants were made on 1st November 1808, to Jemima Pitt (500 acres at Strathfield), James Wilshire (570 acres at Strathfield) and William Faithfull (1,000 acres at Burwood), in consequence of “a strong recommendation from the late illustrious and lamented Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson to His Excellency Governor King, and of no grant having hitherto been made in compliance therewith”. These grants were confirmed by Governor Macquarie on 1st January 1810. Mary Pitt died on 7th November 1815, aged 67 years.

Further grants were made to two sons of Thomas Matcham Pitt, George Matcham Pitt and Robert Pitt, the former grant becoming the property “Bronte” at Agnes Banks and the latter grant being named “Trafalgar” at Kurrajong, in honour of Lord Nelson. George Matcham Pitt became well known as the head of Pitt, Son and Badgery, the stock and station firm. He had a son also called George Matcham Pitt, who established a property on the Hawkesbury River at North Richmond called “Sunnyside”, in 1860. Henry and Robert Essington Pitt, who purchased “Goldfinders” in 1899, were both descended from Robert Pitt from “Trafalgar”. Henry’s move may have been prompted by the deteriorating health of both his and Lizzie’s parents. Both died shortly after and Henry inherited part of this property.

After the purchase, Robert Pitt continued to live at “Trafalgar” as a farmer and drover, while Henry Pitt continued his duties as Post-Master and storekeeper.

Henry was born on 22nd September 1851 at “Trafalgar” and attended school locally. By 1877 Henry was droving, taking flocks of sheep from Cubby Station to market. He married Elizabeth Catherine Stewart (1849-1910) on 1st February 1881, at St Pauls, Redfern. The couple started their married life farming on a 640 acre selection at Mount Harris near

Nyngan. Henry also worked as a storekeeper in Nyngan. They had six children, prior to their move to Kurrajong: Ruby Lurline (1882-1903), Amy Stewart (1884-1953) and George Allan (1887-1962) were born near Nyngan. Ina Mabel (1888-1976), Harry Howard (1890-1975) and Russell Matcham Stewart (1893-1963) were registered in Parramatta after the family moved here. Figures 9-11 show George Allan, Harry Howard and Russell Matcham prior to 1914. Figure 12 shows George Allan with Gertrude Alice Douglass in 1913. George and Gertrude were married on 14th August 1915 at St David's, Kurrajong Heights. At the time, George was a grocery assistant at Kyogle, while Gertrude lived at Kurrajong with her parents. Her father, William Douglass, was an orchardist. George Allan and Gertrude Alice Pitt are the grandparents of one of the current (2014) owners, Deborah Hallam (nee Pitt). (43).

The core property containing the inn and cottage buildings (one acre two roods and twenty perches) was again mortgaged on 7th November 1908 to William Logan, for the sum of 700 pounds, at 6.5% interest, to be repaid by 7th May 1913. This mortgage was not discharged, with William Logan subsequently selling the property in 1921, to James Pye. The additional 18 acres and two roods was advertised for sale by Henry and Robert Pitt in September 1916 (51).

Activities at Wheeny Creek

The Wheeny Creek complex continued to function as the centre of the Kurrajong community. On 3rd April 1903 *“a public meeting, convened by the Kurrajong Progress association, was held at Mr H Pitt's store, Wheeny...in the open air.....The meeting had been called to discuss the advisability of agitating for a tramway to Kurrajong...”* (44). In May 1903 (45) a meeting of the Kurrajong Fruitgrowers and Orchardists was held to discuss the Cumberland Fruitgrowers Co-operative Jam and Refrigerating Coy. Ltd. Another reported meeting in November 1904 (46) *“was held at Mr H.Pitt's store, Wheeny Creek, on Monday night, to enter an emphatic protest against the Fruit Pests and Diseases Bill introduced into Parliament...”*

Wheeny Creek community activities were not restricted to the post office/general store. In August 1904 (47) a political meeting was held in support of a local candidate, a Mr Kelly:

“On Friday night Mr Kelly had one of the most enthusiastic meetings ever held at Wheeny (Kurrajong). Mr J. Pye's blacksmith shop had been transformed into a meeting room, and was gaily decorated with greenery and fruit. Mr R. Scott, of Comleroy, set his acytelene gas plant up and lighted the place...”

Blacksmith's Shop

The public meeting held at J.Pye's blacksmith's shop would appear to have been at the blacksmith's shop established by Lamrock. A Public Notice posted in May 1903 (45) stated:

“JAMES PYE desires to inform the public of Wheeny Creek (Kurrajong) and surrounding District that he has taken over the Business until recently carried out by Mr.W.PEARCE, and, By Good Workmanship and Civility, Hopes to secure a fair share of support.

JAMES PYE, Wheeny Creek”

James Pye thus took over the blacksmithing business that had previously been operated at Wheeny Creek by Mr W Pearce.

An advertisement on 17 March 1906 for a blacksmith's shop to let (28) indicates that a blacksmith's shop had been on the property for over 50 years:

“Mr. H. Pitt advertises in this issue an old established blacksmith's shop, with residence and small paddock, to let. It has been established as a smithy for over 50 years, and good business may be done by a competent tradesman. It is opposite the Wheeny Creek Post Office.”

“TO LET

AT WHEENY CREEK, Kurrajong, an old-established BLACKSMITH'S SHOP, with residence, small paddock, and permanent water. Easy terms. Apply H.PITT, Kurrajong”

The reason for this advertisement became clear in a comment made on 31 March 1906 (48):

“Mr James Pye, who has been blacksmithing at Wheeny Creek for some time, is erecting a smithy on his own property on the opposite side of the creek to that of the old one. Jim has done business with us for years past, and we are glad to see him settling down and likely to remain. We wish him every success.”

Further reference to the blacksmith business and ancillary residence on the land owned by Henry and Robert Pitt has not been found. As set out in the conveyance document of 1899, they owned more than just the site containing “Goldfinders”, with the additional 18 acres and two roods on the western side of the road under their ownership. One *To Let* advertisement (49) advertised “*Good Grass Paddock, with permanent water supply. Apply, H.Pitt, Wheeny Creek, Kurrajong*”. Henry apparently kept some cattle of his own. One report of the theft of a cow he owned was identified by its brand, HP (P reversed).(50)

Some of this land, and possibly the site of the blacksmith's shop and residence, was advertised for sale by auction in September 1916 (51). Robert Pitt, Esq, of Comleroy, instructed J.E.James to sell by public auction...

“...All that 18 ½ acres of Land situated at Wheeny Creek, off Wheeny Creek post office, and joining R.A.Pye's Property on the west and main Kurrajong Road, on the north, and Wheeny Creek on the south, together with a 4-roomed Cottage thereon. Freehold....”

This is the land on the opposite side of the current Old Bells Line of Road from “Goldfinders”, which at a later stage contained a guesthouse, “Rainbow Lodge”.

Life Moves On at Wheeny Creek

Henry's wife Elizabeth Pitt died in February 1910. The Obituary in the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* of 12 February 1910 stated:

“After suffering for about seven years with rheumatism, during the last four or five years of which she was an invalid, Mrs Elizabeth Catherine Pitt, wife of Mr Henry Pitt, of Wheeny Creek, Kurrajong, passed away on the 6th inst. Born at Baulkham Hills in 1849 as the third daughter of the late Thomas Stewart, the deceased lady was married in 1881 to Mr Henry Pitt, who, with a family of six children, survives her. The late Mrs Pitt lived most of her life in the Kurrajong. She was much beloved by all who knew her, and while she will be missed in the home circle, yet those near and dear to her have the comforting knowledge that her death was a happy issue out of her terrible suffering. The funeral, on the 7th instant, was one of the largest seen in the Kurrajong for many years. The remains were interred in St Stephen’s Church of England cemetery. Rev.H.Tate was the officiating minister, and Mr.A.Price, of Richmond, had charge of the funeral arrangements. Mr Tate delivered a touching and earnest address, extolling the virtues of the deceased lady. Miss Dickson presided at the organ, and the choir rendered the hymn “How bright these glorious spirit”. The sympathy of the district is with Mr Pitt and family in their irreparable loss.”

Henry had been sworn in as a magistrate in 1906 (52). After his wife’s death, he filled the space in his life with public works, becoming a man *“who never hesitated rebuke a wrong-doer or expose a public abuse”*. His premises continued to be made available for public meetings.

In 1914 Henry contested a seat in C-Riding of Colo Shire Council and was elected at the top of the poll for the Riding. He became recognized as *“an able and fearless councilor...He never pandered to any votes but formed his own ideas and held to them until convinced he was wrong”*. In 1917 Henry was re-elected to Council at the top of the poll while still running the Wheeny Creek Post Office and Stores (53). At the following meeting of Council Cr. Pitt *“expressed pleasure at being back in the council, and his gratitude to all who supported him. He would do his best for C riding and the council generally, and no man could do more. The great drawback was the shortness of money, and for that reason our ratepayers should not expect too much from their representatives”*.

Henry’s time on the council coincided with the First World War, a time when there would not have been a priority for improving local roads and infrastructure.

Henry Pitt died on 4th September 1918, at Kurrajong. His obituary in the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* of 13 September 1918 stated:

“The whole community received a painful shock on Wednesday of last week when it became known that Councilor Henry Pitt had expired suddenly at his home at Wheeny Creek, Kurrajong. A good and genuine man was the late Henry Pitt, a man of more than ordinary ability and intelligence and a scion of “grand stock”. He took more than a passing interest in the social and political problems of the day, and though a man of few words, when he expressed himself his sound sense, clear reasoning, and broadmindedness were apparent. The whole of the Hawkesbury district, and particularly the Kurrajong, is the poorer for the death of Henry Pitt. No man more genuinely desired and strived for the welfare and progress of the district he loved and lived in than he. His disinterestedness and self abnegation were proverbial and he gave his wise counsel, his help and his means to help along any local project without any thought or expectation of gain or aggrandizement. Henry Pitt was a

straight man upright and honourable in all his dealings, a trait of the grand old Pitt family and a man who never hesitated to rebuke a wrong doer or expose a public abuse. He was for upwards of five years one of the representatives of C Riding in Colo Shire Council, and died in harness. He first contested a seat in January 1914, and was elected at the top of the poll for the riding. At the election in 1917 the electors showed their continued confidence in him by again placing him at the head of the poll. He was much esteemed by his colleagues, who recognized in him an able and fearless councilor, and one who could not be swayed by every favoring breeze. He never pandered for votes, formed his own ideas, held to them until he was convinced he was wrong, and expressed them in brief terse terms. In short, he was one of the manly type of men whose friendship was a treasure and who enjoyed the absolute confidence of hosts of friends. His death came about with shocking suddenness. He died peacefully while reading his newspaper about noon on the 4th past. He had been apparently in his usual health during the morning and conversed cheerfully with friends. The late Henry Pitt was 67 years of age.

He was the second son of the late Robert and Sarah Pitt, the latter being the daughter of William John. He was one of a family of nine, all of whom, we believe, were born at the old homestead "Trafalgar" on Comleroy Road. The others are: William (who died in Queensland while overlanding stock), Thomas, Robert and George; the daughters are: Annie (Mrs Baldwin, who died recently), Sarah (Mrs Timmins), also dead, and the Misses Emma and Clara Pitt, who live with their brother, Robert, at "Trafalgar". The subject of this notice was educated in Richmond by the late Mr Long (subsequently Inspector Long), then by Mr Coleman, and for a time by the late Thomas Temperley, who relieved Mr Coleman for a term. Mr Temperley left teaching and became a prominent provincial pressman. He died quite recently. One of the late Henry Pitt's schoolmates and a life long friend was Mr William Douglas of "Frankfield", Kurrajong, one of whose daughters is married to a son of the late Mr Pitt – Mr Allan Pitt, of Byron Bay.

He [Henry] married Miss E Stewart, daughter of an old and revered Kurrajong family. The earlier part of his married life was spent at Bathurst and on the lower Macquarie at Mount Harris. Later he returned to the Kurrajong district and for over 20 years kept the Post Office at Wheeny. His wife died some eight years ago, and the family consists of six children – Ruby (Mrs Johnston of Huntleys Point), Allan (Byron Bay), Amy and Ina, who lived at home, Howard (in Queensland) and Russell, who is away fighting for his country. The eldest son, Mr Allan Pitt, will be remembered as an ardent and aggressive political student. He is a keen debater, with a broad knowledge of all the economic questions of the day. He did yeoman service for the old Liberal party and once contested a city constituency, going right into the camp of the enemy to espouse his cause. The mortal remains of the late Henry Pitt were laid to rest in St Stephens cemetery, Grose Vale, on the afternoon of the 5th instant. Despite heavy rain and very slippery roads, it was an immense funeral, a string of motor cars, vehicles, and horsemen nearly a mile long following the remains to their last resting place. All the representative men of the district were present, as well as people from Windsor and Richmond. Cr.J.E.McMahon (President of Colo Shire Council), and Crs. Bowd, Nicholls and Anderson, with the Shire Engineer Mr.M.E.Kirwan), and Shire Clerk (Mr.C.S.Icely) were also present. The remains were carried from the house to the hearse by Cr.McMahon, Messrs.W.Douglass,

H.A.Wood and V.Mason. The solemn burial service was conducted by Rev.J.Poole. Many fervent regrets were expressed for the passing of good Harry Pitt."

Following their father's death, Henry's daughters Amy and Ina Pitt continued to run the Post Office and Store. However by that stage, they probably had had enough of Wheeny Creek. Just before she died in 1976, soon after the current owners purchased the property in 1975, she remarked to Deborah Hallam, her grand niece, "*That's a cold hole of a place*", querying why anyone would want to buy it and live there. Subsequently, the property was put up for sale by public auction, in March 1920 (55):

"PROPERTY SALE BY AUCTION

GUEST & COX

Have received instructions from Miss Pitt, of Wheeny Creek, to sell by Public Auction on SATURDAY, MARCH 6th. at 3 pm, the following described property:

All that land containing an area of about one acre, being part of portion 12 of Parish of Kurrajong, County of Cook, part of grant to Rowland Edwards, on which is erected a W.B. house of 9 rooms, a two-storied stone building of 5 room used as a post office and store; also all necessary out buildings, including stables, sheds, etc.

This property will be offered at the sale advertised on behalf of Mr. Ross appearing in this issue.

Buyers in want of a good opening for a store should not miss this opportunity of securing a good sound proposition, seeing that the proposed railway terminus is within a couple of hundred yards of the property.

For fuller particulars apply to

GUEST & COX, Auctioneers, etc, Richmond"

Given the subsequent sale of the property to James Pye on 22nd January 1922, it appears the auction was not successful. The description of the property is of interest, with the weatherboard cottage described as having 9 rooms. This is very close to the configuration found in 1975. The stone building with 5 rooms would be consistent with a store plus another room downstairs plus three rooms (bedrooms) upstairs.

The Misses Pitt continued in their plan to leave Wheeny Creek, with a sale advertised on 27 July 1920 for the sale of their household furniture (56):

"J.E.JAMES has received instructions from the Misses Pitt to sell by public auction on the premises at Kurrajong Post Office (Wheeny Creek) all their Household Furniture and Effects including Sideboard, Dressing Chests, Double and Single Beds, Bookcase, Tables, Chairs, Coach, Linos., Matting Etc. Tuesday, July 27 at 1 o'clock sharp."

The final bow to the family of Henry and Elizabeth Pitt was in the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* of 13 August 1920:

"Misses Amy and Ina Pitt, who have resided practically all their lives at Kurrajong, have left the district for the metropolis. The popularity of these young ladies was shown at a farewell social function held in their honor at the Church Hall, Kurrajong, prior to their departure. Consequent upon their departure, Mr James Pye has been appointed to the charge of the Wheeny Creek Post Office."

2.5 James Pye

Figures 15 and 16 show the front of the inn when operating as J Pye's General Store, complete with "S" reversed. On this end wall there is also the remains of similar signage, including the reversed "S", which presumably was painted prior to the construction of the front extension. To access this extension, doorways had been cut in the stone end wall. Figure 16 shows that the store was at the very least a "Post & Telephone" agency. Figure 15 shows electrical insulators above the front window of the inn, which probably carried the telephone wires. Above this window the words "Post Office" can still be seen.



Figure 15 J Pye's General Store

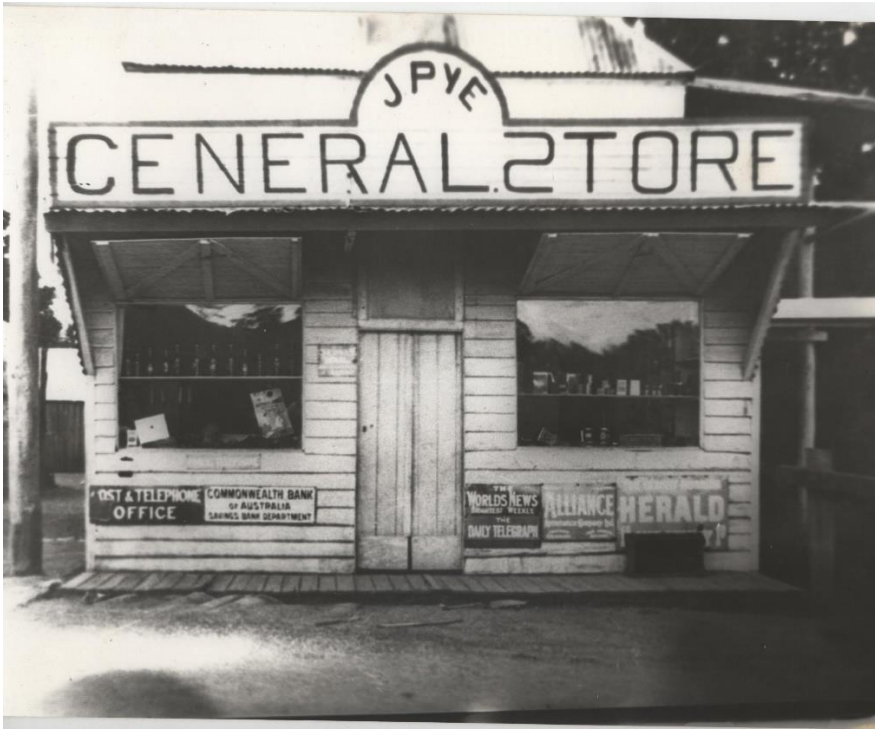


Figure 16 Front of J Pye's General Store

Figure 17 provides a further illustration of the General Store in this period, with a “guard” on the Wheeny Creek bridge protecting the locality in this time of the Second World War. The guard is reportedly Mr Austen Buckett with his son Jack. The sign tacked onto the front indicates “Car Hire Day & Night”.



Figure 17 Wheeny Creek Bridge with Home Guard

3.0 THE BUILDINGS IN 1975

3.1 The Inn

Figures 26-28 show the Inn in 1975.



Figure 26 Inn – Front Elevation



Figure 27 Inn – Inside Roof



Figure 28 Inn from East

3.2 Cottage

As with the inn, photographs were taken in 1975-1976.



Figure 35 Cottage – Front



Figure 36 Cottage – Rear

4.0 CONSERVATION OF INN, 1979

In 1978, Philip Cox and Partners Pty Ltd, Architects, were engaged to prepare concept plans for the conservation of the buildings on the site (71). The first concept was to link the two buildings by means of an extension of the cottage, as shown on Figure 46.

At this time, rather than constructing new building, the owners decided to concentrate their resources on the inn. Philip Cox and Partners were commissioned to prepare plans, elevations and sections of the conservation and adaptation of the inn, to become the primary residence. The cottage was Stage 2 of these works. These plans included two portal frames within the structure to stabilize and support the stone walls. The general layout of rooms is the same as built, but some details were varied during the works. (The portal frames were not needed.)

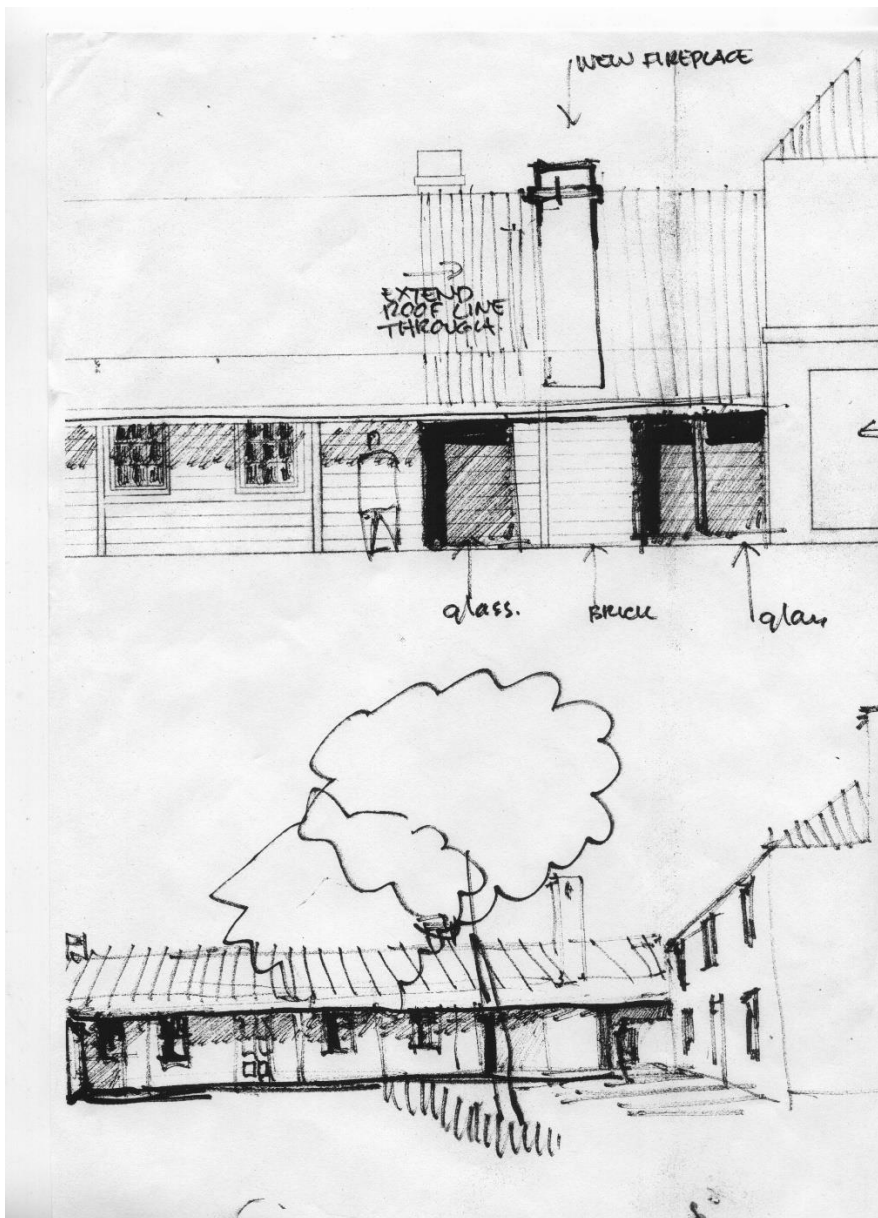


Figure 46 Option 1 by Philip Cox and Partners

Figures 48-50 show the construction works. A team of stonemasons marked every stone block, inside and outside, for the northern and part of the eastern wall, prior to their dismantling.



Figure 48 North Wall Dismantled; All blocks numbered



Figure 49 West Wall; Fireplace and wall temporarily supported by steel beams



Figure 50 View of north-west corner; South wall and roof structure left intact

5.0 CONSERVATION OF COTTAGE, 1987

In 1987 a Conservation Plan was prepared for the cottage by Graham Edds & Associates. Figure 58 reproduces a figure from this report, detailing the construction sequence in the cottage rooms. This Conservation Plan provided the basis for the works undertaken.

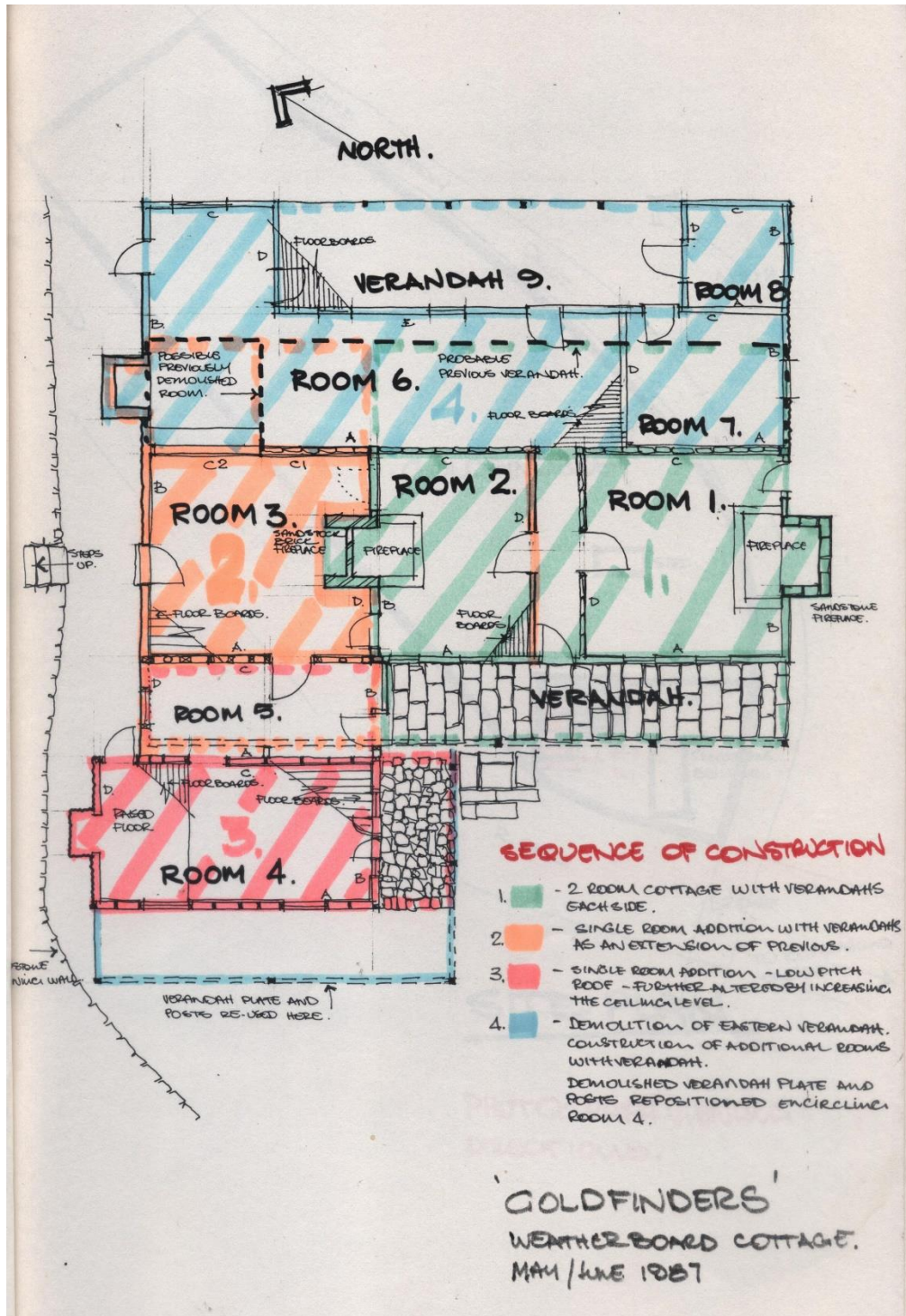


Figure 58 Sequence of Construction of Cottage



Figure 60 Roof over Rooms 1 & 2, after removal of iron sheeting

6.0 BUILDING EXTENSIONS 2010

In 2010 further conservation works were undertaken, with the main work being the construction of an infill room between the inn and the cottage. Additional works were a stone fence facing Old Bells Line of Road and an extension to the barn.



Figure 89 Front courtyard with infill stone wall