

THE FIRST LAND GRANTS IN GROSE VALE AND GROSE WOLD, NEW SOUTH WALES

When discussing our little piece of paradise, there is much to be said about the first land grants and settlers in the area around the Mills and Little Wheeny Creek near the current Kurrajong village. A chance conversation with a resident looking for ancestors around Grose Wold sent me on a search and I was somewhat surprised by what I discovered.

On 14th December, 1809 Colonel Patterson granted Henry Lamb 80 acres on what is now Cabbage Tree Road, to be known as Lamb's Farm. Other grants in the area by Patterson were made to James, Joseph and Benjamin Singleton, Daniel Phillips, William Blady, George Lodar (Lodars Farm), Joseph Hobson and Jane Buckham.

It is unclear how many of these grants were re-issued by Governor Macquarie however when J Burr and G Balliset produced a map in 1814 the occupants listed were Daniel Phillips, William Blady Joseph Dransfield west of Cabbage Tree Road. East of Cabbage Tree Road and encompassing the present Grose Wold Road were Joseph Singleton, George Lodar and Henry Lamb. Towards the river were Jane Buckman and her husband Joseph Hobson and Henry McLeod.

Grants to the North near Kurrajong were John Westcraft, James Connelly and James Neale in the area of what is now Patterson Lane. Interestingly these grants were quite discrete from the Kurrajong grants of the same time and separated from North Richmond. With the exception of the Singletons, these are not names we connect with Kurrajong and surrounds. So, who were these people and what became of them?

Henry Lamb had arrived in NSW as a member of the NSW Corps aboard the 3rd Fleet ship "Albermarle" at age 33. Unfortunately, Henry's life in the new colony did not prove to be easy. His first land grant, 1798, was at Rickaby's Creek. Finding himself regularly inundated by flood waters, Henry decided to lease the land and seek a new grant. Having secured a grant at Portland Head in 1803 his luck did not improve when the property was burnt out in 1805. Initial reports were that the property was attacked by a previously friendly group of natives. "A number of fire-brands were showered about the house and a group of sheds". The accuracy of this report is questionable as on 7 July a 13 year old aboriginal girl who had been brought up by the Lamb's was caught setting fire to the house of Thomas Chaseling. It was discovered she had also set fire to the Lamb Farm as well as to that of the Yeowler with whom the Lamb's sort shelter following the fire.

In 1809, having sold Rickaby's Creek, Henry was granted 80 acres at Richmond Hill to be known as "Lamb's Farm". Although the grant was verified by Macquarie, Henry took up employment with Rev. Cartwright and continued to farm at Portland Head where he had rebuilt his home, this time in stone. Although Henry retained ownership of Lamb's Farm there is no indication of any use at this stage.

The Singleton family on the other hand had quite a charmed arrival. William Singleton was transported to Australia on the Pitt in 1792. His wife Hannah and two younger sons, Benjamin and Joseph accompanied him as free settlers. Third son, James arrived in 1808. The three brothers were granted land by Patterson in 1809 however it appears that only Joseph took up the land. By 1817 James and Benjamin were operating mills at North Kurrajong. Joseph was still farming his land in 1823 when he was assigned a "convict mechanic". In 1824 Joseph was listed as a miller of Richmond.

Loder's grant was originally listed by Paterson to John Lodar in 1809. This grant was re-issued by Macquarie to George Loder (Lodar's Farm). Although a little unclear, it would appear that the grant was to George Loder who arrived as a private on the "Admiral Barrington" (3rd Fleet) having enlisted in India. On arrival George was sent to Norfolk Island, returning in 1893 as Corporal Loder in charge of Windsor gaol and pound and leasing 130 acres in Cattai from Arndell. In 1809 Loder was granted the 100 acres of land at Richmond Hill where he ran "Three several Head of Horned Cattle and one Horse, with other Stock". Again George was another absentee landholder with convict assignees farming the property. The Loder name is of course well known in Windsor. (Note Loder and Lodar have been used as in the relevant references).

Now we go east and to Parcel 82 and the delightfully names Alice Fidoe who is far more interesting than her partner H. McLeod, actually Neal, Neil or Nicholas and also McCloud or McCloud who arrived on the "Admiral Barrington" (3rd fleet) 1791. As is usual there is no mention of Alice on the grant as there is little said of Mrs Lamb, Elizabeth Chambers who adopted an orphaned aboriginal child and who being outside the burning home "entered it and fiercely permitted her with safety to herself to rescue (her) child from the flames". Equally Hannah Singleton taking voyage on a convict ship with two toddlers leaving behind her other son.

Alice Fidoe arrived on "The Floating Brothel" the "Lady Juliana" on the 2nd Fleet with a 14 year sentence for receiving stolen goods. Sent to Norfolk Island on the "Surprize" she formed a relationship with George Egglestone and later in Sydney with James Partridge before finally settling with Neil McCloud (Admiral Barrington, 7 years) in about 1806 presumably in the Hawkesbury where Neil was leasing part of his land to 3rd Fleeter Isaac Cornwell.

In 1809 the couple was supplying produce to the Government Stores from the Hawkesbury when having joined the 73rd Regiment as Private, Neal McCloud was posted to Newcastle and later returned to Sydney being approved for a land grant at Airs in 1811. The grant was formalised in 1816. The 1814 census has Mcleod, landholder with wife Alice Fidoe and 2 convict servants apparently one on each property. It appears the couple were living at Airs as Neal McCloud was buried at St Luke's Liverpool on 4th October, 1817. Alice moved to Sydney where she died in 1819.

Adjoining Mcleod's land were the grants of Joseph Hobson and Jane Buckham. Joseph Hobson had arrived on the "Glatton" in 1803 having been sentenced to life for returning from transportation. Joseph, a hatter of Chesterfield, UK had stolen a box belonging to John Eyre in 1797 for which he was sentenced to transportation. It is unclear how he had escaped. Jane Buckham arrived as a free settler on the "Young William" store ship in July 1807. The couple were granted adjoining 30 acre grants by Patterson in 1809 and verified by Macquarie. The couple married in 1810 by which stage they were farming the property.

North of the Hobsons was John Westcraft or Westgrath, convict per "William and Ann" (3rd Fleet), At his trial at Newcastle upon Tyne in January, 1789 he was also referred to as John Wishart. At the 1806 muster John Winsgarth, per "William and Anne" was employed by William Eaton. Eaton's land was at the confluence of the Grose and Hawkesbury Rivers. Westgarth's grant was described with the interesting spelling of "Corrigan Brush". John Westgarth died in 1811 and was buried on 12th June, 1811 at St Matthews, Windsor.

James Connelly was on lot 75 with 90 acres directly north of the Singleton grants, to be known as "Cole Farm". James, age 22, had arrived on the "Marquis Cornwallis" in 1796. In 1800 he married Sarah Maloney, convict per "Minerva", 1800, in Sydney. In 1806 Connelly was renting 14 acres from Raynor at Cornwallis and listed in the 1828 census as of Wilberforce.

Also on the “Marquis Cornwallis” was James Neale who received the adjoining grant. James, however, died in 1811 and his wife Mary Fitzgerald, convict per Atlas 1802, remarried in 1813 at Windsor. James’ death is registered at St Phillips. There is also a 4 week old Mary Anne Neale buried at Parramatta on 5th February, 1811. It appears that James Neale never occupied his grant. Her new husband was John Hill, per “Anne”. John is recorded as Landholder in Richmond in 1816 while the family were mustered in 1814 at Windsor and recorded at Windsor in 1822.

Daniel Phillips is an interesting subject. Convicted on 26th March, 1789 at Safford Assizes he was transported for seven years on “Matilda” (3rd Fleet). In 1806 Phillips was listed as living with “Mr Singleton” along with his wife Jane Edwards (2nd fleet), this was Jane's second marriage in the colony although the death of her 1st husband is not recorded. In 1814 Daniel was recorded as farming at Grose Vale and also on Lawson's grant at Kurrajong. In 1819 Phillips accompanied John Howe on his expeditions to the Hunter Valley. In 1825 he was employed by Singleton in the Hunter whereafter he returned to the Hawkesbury, dying in Wilberforce where he was buried in 1833.

Ann Blady was born Ann Green in about 1759. Sometime prior to her conviction for theft, married the father of her first child, William Cowley, born 1786. William accompanied his mother, sentenced to seven years as Ann Green on the “Lady Penhryn”, William died on the ship on 8th February following arrival in New South Wales. Ann stated at her trial that her husband had died three months before the birth of the child. During the voyage Ann formed a relationship with the Ship's Captain, William Cropton Server and their daughter was born prior to November 1788. The “Lady Penhryn” headed out on 5th May, 1788 leaving Ann to transfer her affections to Denis Considen, Assistant Surgeon on the “Scarborough”. Two children followed, Constance, 1790, and Constantine William, born 1st May, 1793 before Dennis returned to England in 1794 taking both the children with him. Interestingly a very pregnant Ann had married William Blady on 31st March, 1793 at St Phillips. William and Anne Blady settled at South Creek on Ann's 50 acre land grant. William was trustee to the Common and in 1814 Ann was housekeeper at Government House, Windsor. The land grant at Grose Vale does not appear to have been occupied and after Ann's death in 1822 William moved to Kurrajong to live on his farm at Blady Grass Hill until his return to and death in Windsor.

Joseph Dransfield was transported on “Ganges” in 1797. He is recorded as Joseph Dronfield, Derby Assizes, 14 years. In 1806 he is reported as living with Sarah Willis, probably per Speedy, 1799. Although Joseph is indicated as farming that Grose Wold there is no evident land grant document. In March 1811 Joseph was living in Phillip Street, Sydney where a fellow occupant of the house was murdered. The 1814 muster refers to Joseph as Landholder of Windsor. It is unclear where this landholding stands. There is the grant to Joseph Dernsfield in Minto, 1881?. Joseph was appointed Constable in the Illawarra in 1822.

As is evident from this, although the grants at Grose Wold seem to form a small community, most of these grants were not occupied by the grantee and in some cases never developed as per the conditions of the grants. It leaves us to another time to explore how this small part of paradise developed.

LIST OF GRANT NUMBERS AND NAMES.

Parcel 73 30 acres James Neale
Parcel 74 30 acres John Westcraft
Parcel 75 90 acres James Connelly
Parcel 76 30 acres Jane Buckham (Hobson)
Parcel 77 30 acres Joseph Hobson
Parcel 78 40? acres Singleton grant.
Parcel 79 50? acres Singleton grant.
Parcel 80 50 acres James Singleton
Parcel 81 50 acres Daniel Phillips
Parcel 82 60 acres Neal McLeod
Parcel 83 100 acres George Loder
Parcel 84 70 acres William Blady
Parcel 85 80 acres Henry Lamb
Parcel 86 30 acres Joseph Dransfield

