

The Pioneer



AUSTRALASIAN PIONEERS' CLUB

December 2013



THE EXPLORER'S TREE. THIS BLOCK OF WOOD FROM THE TREE MARKED BY THE EXPLORERS, BLAKLAND, LAWSON AND WENTWORTH, AT KATOOMBA IN 1883 WAS GIVEN TO THE CLUB IN 1926 BY HANBURY DAVIS.

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EDITORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Sir Hugh Gore (Chairman)

John Lanser RFD

Chris White (President, ex officio)

EDITORIAL

This is the third and last *Pioneer* for 2013. At the beginning of the year the Publications Sub-Committee set out to address the production side of the process of getting *The Pioneer* out to you regularly and frequently. This seems to have been accomplished and three issues a year seems to be the most practical frequency.

The next task for the committee is to establish a much more reliable way of sourcing material for publication. This issue was shaping up to be very much thinner than the earlier two this year. That is simply because we have been publishing articles faster than we have been receiving them and like Mother Hubbard's cupboard our stock of things to publish was bare. Another piece materialised and that is why this issue has come out a bit later than planned. But the cupboard remains bare.

While we are pursuing ways to correct that, can anyone help with an article, or picture (old photos are always interesting) with a brief background, or an extract from a book (with the author's permission)? All it needs is to be interesting and on a historical or colonial subject.

We are very grateful to all those who have contributed in the past and are pleased to introduce in this issue an occasional feature, initiated by Christopher Arnott, of sketches or pictures of Club members, some well known and some perhaps not so well known (and of course all of whom will have agreed to it).

The Sub-Committee is always looking for new ideas and contributions. Please let us have yours.

OBITUARY

DR PROSPER DAVID LARK



David Lark, who was the twenty-fourth President of the Club and co-author of the Club's official history, died on 20 October 2013 after a long illness.

He was the son of a former member, Prosper Frederick Lark, who served on the Western Front in the Great War and was introduced to the Club in 1923 by his great-uncle and fifth President, R.J. Black. David was therefore able to claim a family relationship with one of his presidential predecessors.

Raised in the Eastern Suburbs, David was educated at Sydney High School, his name being next to that of David Horne in the Leaving Certificate honours list. He enrolled initially in the Faculty of Economics at the University of Sydney because it was the only degree offered by evening lectures. He subsequently graduated in Science from that University and from the University of Technology, (later the University of New South Wales) where he went on to teach. Although his specialty was Physical Chemistry, (he published *The Handling of Chemical Data*) he took an interest in Greek and Roman classics as well as general literature and he liked opera. He had a great knowledge of history and an extensive private library which included such works as *The History of Civilisation* and *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*). Indeed, his knowledge on a range of subjects was prodigious, so he was happily at home as Honorary Librarian in the Club from 1983 to 2003, when illness prevented him from continuing.

He was first elected to the Board in 1985 and again in 1996 and was Vice-President for part of each of these terms. He was President from 1989 to 1991 at the time of his election having recently retired from the lecturing staff of the University of NSW, and it was during the time of David's presidency that a complete revision of the Memorandum and Articles of Association was undertaken.

But the thing that he was most proud of was his establishment of the Australasian Pioneers' Club Scholarship to encourage the study of Australasian history at the University of Sydney. This award is still given annually to the honours undergraduate whose thesis for the year was judged to be the best and who is proceeding to postgraduate study of Australasian history at that university

Illness prevented David from coming to the Club in recent years, but did not prevent him from collaborating with Dick McKenzie in drafting a second part to the Club history which is in the process of publication.

BLUE MOUNTAINS EXPLORATION 1788–1813

PUTTING BLAXLAND, LAWSON AND WENTWORTH IN CONTEXT

*Proclamation Day address, given on 5 February 2013 by John Low, Former
Local Studies Librarian, Blue Mountains Municipal Library.*

When the expedition led by Gregory Blaxland set out on 11 May 1813 in quest of a passage over the Blue Mountains its departure was not noted until a quiet paragraph on page 2 of the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* several days later. On its return a similarly low-key notice appeared, tucked away on page 3.

Though the legend of the “dauntless three” was slow to take root, by the time of the 1813 crossing’s centenary in 1913 the “grand narrative” was well established. Not only were their four ‘assistants’ slipping into the background but so also was the considerable number of Blue Mountains explorers who preceded them. Yet, all this earlier exploration forms the context in which the achievement of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth must be seen and understood. They were not the initiators of land

exploration in Australia but rather another, albeit significant, part of an already developing tradition. The exploits of each expedition added to a growing store of knowledge and experience (both recorded and oral) that shaped subsequent exploration.

THE ISSUE OF ‘FAILURE’

Blue Mountains exploration prior to 1813 is a rich mosaic of human drama and endeavour that offers much to excite interest and investigation. Unfortunately, the historical conversation has generally been diverted from this through its obsession with failure, the ‘failure’ of these early expeditions to find a way across the mountains. But what did it mean ‘to cross the mountains’ and does this ignore the existence and success of other motivations? The concentration on failure misses much that is interesting and important.

BACKGROUNDS AND MOTIVES

Early exploration was undertaken by men who were an extraordinary mix of backgrounds and interests and whose exploits were driven by a complex of motives. Indeed, the stories of most of these pioneers deserve the attention of novelist and film maker as much as historian, and their experiences tell us much about early 'European' responses to our land.

Some were tentatively extending geographic knowledge.

Watkin Tench discovered the Nepean in June 1789, while in December that year astronomer and fellow marines officer William Dawes, accompanied by another marine, George Johnston (later of the NSW Corps and great grandfather of the founder of the Australasian Pioneers' Club) and Surgeon's Mate Lowes (of *HMS Sirius*), crossed it near what is now Penrith. They travelled about 15 miles to a point north-west of Linden where "a succession of deep ravines" barred their path. Two years later Tench and Dawes climbed Knight Hill (now Kurrajong) and found the outlook westward to be just the same.

Others were naturalists curious to understand the new flora and fauna.

William Paterson (later Lieutenant Governor) was another soldier-explorer and correspondent of Sir Joseph Banks, who was consultant to the Colonial Office on New South Wales affairs and patron of several amateur botanists. In September 1793 Paterson, accompanied, again, by George Johnston, travelled up the Hawkesbury, discovered and named the Grose River and probed it westward until barred by the base of a precipitous rock face near Wentworth Creek (north of present day Faulconbridge). Though he did not succeed in crossing the mountains he discovered several new plants which he subsequently sent to Banks.

George Caley, who arrived in 1800 with Governor King, was a botanical collector for Sir Joseph Banks. In November 1804, with three "strong men," he crossed the Hawkesbury and followed the ridge north of the Grose River before venturing into the valley beyond Kurrajong Heights until they reached Mount Banks at the end of 12 days. At this point paucity of provisions turned the team homewards, but the expedition had been, at least, a botanical success, discovering 30 new plants to report to Banks.

There were adventurers, enjoying the freedom of the bush, determined to master the landscape and to go further than anyone else.

Henry Hacking arrived as quartermaster on the *Sirius* and in August 1794 he set off to seek a passage over the mountains. Precisely where he went is uncertain but he returned about a week later claiming to have traversed 18 or 19 ridges of high rocks to penetrate 20 miles further than any European.

Matthew Everingham arrived on the First Fleet as a 19-year-old convict with two years of a seven-year sentence still to be served. Upon release he was granted land at Parramatta and in October 1795, in company with local farmers William Reid and John Ramsay, set off via Agnes Banks through Grose Vale to Kurrajong Heights, then westward to either Mount Tomah or Mount Wilson, further than any of their predecessors. At this point shortness of provisions caused them to turn for home in November. That same month Hacking accompanied Governor Hunter to investigate the fate of cattle which had strayed from the settled areas seven years earlier. At a place Hunter named the Cowpastures (now Camden) they discovered a fine herd, descendants of the bovine escapees which were beginning to straggle into the Burragorang and possibly working their way up the Nattai, Wollondilly and Cox's River valleys, discovering the natural stock routes through the region. (It is possible the first 'European' over the Mountains was a cow!)

George Bass is better known for his sea-going exploits, with or without Matthew Flinders, but he accompanied Governor Hunter and Hacking to the Cowpastures and in June 1796 put together a party of three, equipped with scaling irons and ropes, to tackle the precipitous cliffs which had barred previous explorations. From the Burragorang Valley they crossed the Wollondilly River and after 15 days, which included climbing "horrible perpendicular mountains," possibly got to a point east of the Kanangra Plateau before their provisions were exhausted.

Some did exploration under government orders

John Wilson was another First Fleet convict serving seven years. Upon release he went bush, later claiming to have been upwards of 160km in every direction around Sydney. In 1798 he was employed by Governor Hunter to lead an expedition south west across the Nepean. Wilson's purpose was both to seek a crossing and to quash speculation among Irish convicts that a lost white Utopia lay beyond the Mountains. With two companions, John Price and Roe, he got as far as the junction of the Wingecarribee and Wollondilly Rivers west of Mittagong before turning back, hungry and exhausted. Soon afterwards, Hunter sent Wilson and two other men into the same country and this time they reached Mount Towrang,

near present Goulburn, discovering the rich southern tablelands of New South Wales.

Francis Barrallier was an Ensign engineer in the New South Wales Corps. He arrived in 1800 with Governor King and in 1802 made a preliminary foray south west, discovering the Nattai River. In November that year he set off along and across the Wollondilly, then west to the Kowmung River and beyond to within 15-20 miles of Jenolan Caves, where provisions and enthusiasm seemingly ran out. Nonetheless, he had gone at least as far inland as would the three explorers 11 years later when finally finding a passage across.

Others were just trying to get away from government orders

John Place was the only survivor of an ill-fated attempt by four convicts to cross the Mountains in search of China and freedom. When they left Cornwallis place (near Windsor) in May 1803 they took only a week's rations, which had been consumed after five days. Thereafter they subsisted on wild berries and sweet tea leaves until, after a total of 17 days' travel with the sun always "on their right shoulder," they turned back. Only John Place recrossed the river (the others having perished) to be found by natives and returned to the authorities. Place escaped and was

caught a second time, then joined the Castle Hill rebellion and was hanged in March 1804.

Lastly were those who sought economic benefit

Gregory Blaxland, William Lawson and William Charles Wentworth (1813)

Most of the early explorers were really an amalgam of more than one of these motivations.

WHO WENT FURTHEST? WHO WAS FIRST TO CROSS?

Some recent debates, especially among the bushwalker historians, about the often uncertain routes and end points of many of these expeditions have asked, for example:

- where and how far did Barrallier actually go in 1802?
- did he or John Wilson (1798) before him actually cross the Mountains or at least get further than Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth?

Interesting as these questions are, it does not detract from the achievement of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth, whose journals make it clear that, unlike many of their predecessors, they were not primarily interested in "going

farther than any person has yet been.” Rather, their principal objective was to find a practical route across the Mountains along which both men and livestock could travel. This they did, and the route they discovered was directly accessible to the commercial and political heart of the colony.

CONVICTS, FREE SETTLERS AND UNRECORDED EXPEDITIONS

Convicts, ex-convicts and ordinary free men made up the complement of many of the early expeditions.

- Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth took three convict assistants and kangaroo shooter James Byrnes, an ex-convict.
- John Wilson had convicts on both his 1798 journeys, along with John Price, aged 19, who had come to Australia as Governor Hunter's servant and who kept a journal of the expedition, which Hunter forwarded to Sir Joseph Banks.
- Matthew Everingham's two companions were an ex-convict farmer and a seaman turned farmer, both having arrived on the First Fleet.

However, the documented expeditions are really only part of the story. Left out are all the unrecorded ventures into the Mountains by ordinary settlers, kangaroo hunters and convict absconders that certainly occurred. Though unrecorded, many would have entered the community's oral store of knowledge. For example:

- In the early 1800s King, in correspondence with Lord Camden, described the activities of certain ‘bushrangers’ who claimed to have journeyed into the mountains west of the Hawkesbury.
- With the arrival of large numbers of Irish prisoners from 1792 onwards (and especially after the Rebellion in Ireland in 1798) came the ‘rumour’ that China or some other Arcadian paradise existed beyond the mountains and offered freedom from labour and oppression or even a ship home. Absconding ‘China walkers’ became a chronic problem for the authorities and involved not just the Irish. John Wilson claimed that Aborigines had shown him up to 50 skeletal remains of whites who had tried and failed in this quest.
- It is possible that some white men, absconders or free men gone bush, did manage to find a pas-

sage through the mountains with Aboriginal help. The historian Chris Cunningham, in his *Blue Mountains Rediscovered* (1996), acknowledges John Wilson's familiarity with the Burratorang Valley and thinks he may have followed the course of Cox's River into the Hartley area.

- In the southern Blue Mountains in 1802 Barrallier met with Gundungurra Aborigines who claimed to know of a white settlement west of the mountains.

Even though most of these 'unofficial' journeys went unrecorded or unnoticed they would, in most cases, have entered the unwritten store of community knowledge that circulated by word of mouth.

THE RIDGE THEORY

Blaxland's preliminary excursion into the Mountains in 1810 strengthened his conviction "that it was practicable to find a passage over the mountains ... by the ridge which appeared to run westward, between the Warragomby and the River Grose." This latter expedition was undertaken in the company of "three European servants and two natives, with a horse to carry provisions and other necessities."

Others had certainly followed ridges in the past, but Blaxland's was a very particular choice. Caley, who got bogged down in the 'Devil's Wilderness' beyond Kurrajong Heights and failed to re-find the ridge that would have seen him into the Hartley Valley, makes an interesting comment in his journal regarding the central ridge, later taken by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth. From the top of Mount Banks he observed that "to the eastward very high land is seen" and opined that such high land might offer easier travelling. Though there is no specific evidence, is it possible that Caley met with Gregory Blaxland and discussed Blue Mountains exploration prior to his departure for England in May 1810? Sir Joseph Banks was, after all, a mutual friend. Did Caley, as some have also suggested, meet with William Lawson in London? After all, they both travelled to England in 1810 on the same ship.

THE QUESTION OF ACCESSING ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE

There is no doubt that there were traditional Aboriginal paths across the Blue Mountains; the two principal Aboriginal routes were the Bilpin Ridge from Richmond, and Cox's River valley from the Burratorang Valley. Yet for whatever reason (suspicion, or perhaps

ignorance), Aborigines seemed to play little overt part in early Blue Mountains exploration. Nonetheless,

- Wilson (1798) had clearly learnt much Aboriginal knowledge (living off the land etc) and may even have crossed via an Aboriginal path;
- Aboriginal stories fuelled the 'China' myth;
- Barrallier actively sought Aboriginal information and his 'failure' may have been due in large part to the tensions between his guide Gogy and the mountain Gundungurra people;

It has been said that Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth followed an Aboriginal path but if this were so they do not appear to have been aware of it. Blaxland took two Aborigines with him on his 1810 preliminary excursion but, mistakenly perhaps, this experience discouraged him from using them again on his 1813 expedition. He felt their geographical knowledge was too limited.

Interestingly, in the period between the frustration faced by Caley and the fortune which smiled on Blaxland's party there was another recorded foray, one in which Aboriginal guides were employed. I wonder if Blaxland knew of

it and if its 'failure' reinforced his view on engaging Aboriginal assistance.

David Dickinson Mann was an emancipist who found himself in conflict with Governor Bligh. Whether his expedition was an attempt to ingratiate himself with the difficult governor is unknown, as is the particular route he followed, but in 1807 he took "an European and three natives" on "an excursion" to the Mountains. After just four days of encounter with "four or five stupendous acclivities, whose perpendicular sides scarcely permitted me to gain ascent," and faced with the usual attrition of provisions, he thought it "most prudent to retrace my way to the habitable part of the settlement." He recorded that "some of these ridges presented to the eye a brilliant verdure of the most imposing nature" but concluded that "their appearance (although so amazingly grand) is sufficiently terrific to deter any man of common perseverance from proceeding in his design."

It would be another six years before three gentlemen farmers of uncommon perseverance would follow Mann's ridges of "brilliant verdure" as far as Mount York (and then on to Mount Blaxland), and so become custodians of the "Crossing" legend and the "the dauntless three" of Henry Kendall's version.

FROM THE PIONEERS' COLLECTION

EXPLORERS' TREE FRAGMENT— A PIECE OF THE TRUE CROSS?



A sectioned piece of what has become known as the Explorers' Marked Tree was presented to the Club in 1920 by Hanbury Davis. He was not a member and nothing is known about the circumstance of the donation.

There is no reason to doubt the provenance of the piece as part of the venerated eucalypt, the sad remains of which are still beside the Great Western Highway three kilometres from Katoomba a Pulpit Hill, but the genealogy of the tree itself is another matter, and has been for more than a century.

We know from their journals that Blaxland's party passed through the area of Pulpit Hill on or about 25 May 1813.

None of the three mentions marking a tree and no such landmark was noted by George Evans (the surveyor sent by



Governor Macquarie in November 1813 to confirm the explorers' route) nor by William Cox (who subsequently built a road along it). Travellers through the region in the 1820s and 1830s do not speak of a marked tree and it does not appear in surveys done in 1860 for the planned railway line.

Its first recognition comes in a letter to *The Sydney Morning Herald* [SMH] of 26 August 1867 which refers to "the blackbutt on which the late Mr W Lawson cut his initials with a tomahawk in 1813 ... still standing on the Bathurst Road at the summit of Pulpit Hill." Nine years passed before it was mentioned again, this time in the *Sydney Mail*¹ which significantly remarked that "thousands of travellers have passed

by without noticing it [despite] the letters WL [being] plainly observable within the blaze." It was next recorded in the field book of W M Cooper, who surveyed a horse track from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves in 1884,² after which it periodically popped up in print, figuring in the *Picturesque Atlas of Australia*³ and in a complaint to the *SMH* two years later that vandals had rendered it rather less picturesque.⁴ After 1884, when the Minister for Lands sponsored construction of a masonry wall with commemorative tablet at the tree, it was for years the subject of some correspondence about the wording of the inscription on the tablet, said by one critic to read "like a glorification not of the explorers but of the Minister ..." (nothing's changed).⁵

Claim and counter claim about the tree's authenticity persisted in the 20th century. A railway contractor from the mid 1860s had "serious doubts" about the tree; he felt it must have been marked after his time in the area, but another correspondent said he remembered the tree, marked with the letters W, B and L, from the 1860s.⁶ With no resolution, the tree held its iconic status during the 1913 centenary and 1963 sesquicentenary Crossing celebrations, but nomination for the Register of the National Estate did not go forward at the time because connection of the tree

with the explorers was believed by some to be “tenuous.” Then in 1983 a local headline stoked the controversy again. “We’re barking up the wrong tree” one local newspaper declaimed⁷ but the debate in following weeks focussed less on whether the tree’s markings were “a deliberate attempt to manufacture tourist attractions during the late nineteenth century” than on whether the current outbreak of iconoclasm was a late twentieth century attempt to do much the same thing. Eventual listing of the tree on the Register of the National Estate in 1987 sidestepped the argument, the citation acknowledging only that

“the tree may be one marked by the explorers ...[but] ... regardless of its historical authenticity it has been viewed since the 1870s as a memorial to the early explorers [and] its National Estate value rests in this social significance, whereas its historical significance may never be proved.”⁸

The *Sydney Mail* article of 1876⁹ felt, even then, that “the old tree has pretty much completed its number of years” but the inevitability of its demise was hastened by the ‘protective’ masonry wall built in 1884; it killed the tree, which was dead by 1903. The unsafe upper portion was sawn off and taken by retailer Mark Foy to his hotel at Medlow Bath¹⁰ where it was subjected to the indignity of being a pin cushion for guests’ business cards.¹¹ It is reasonable to infer



that the piece in the Club’s possession was saved from this segment of the tree before a bushfire finally consumed it in 1922.

Back at Pulpit Hill the truncated stump continued to decay as renovation efforts were periodically undertaken over the next 40 years. By 1930 the hollow centre had been capped and plugged with concrete, to which the remaining bark was held by steel bands. In 1981 a protective roof was added but that did not deter termite activity in the bark and by 1986 it was declared to be beyond conventional timber preservation techniques. Saturating the remains with polyester resin or epoxy was suggested as a last gasp way of “retaining the

actual fibres or piece of wood that was marked by the explorers”¹² while in the background the spectre of road widening, which would necessarily see the stump removed or relocated, continued to loom. As if to reinforce that prospect,

in early 2012 a vehicle left the road and collided with it. At the time of writing the remains stand, shrouded in black plastic and estranged from the Crossing Bi-centenary Celebrations.

Notes compiled by John Lanser

SOURCES

This article draws heavily on Dr Siobhan Lavelle’s *A tree and a legend: the making of past and place in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales*, in *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, volume 89 part 1, June 2003 [Lavelle], reprinted as chapter 4 of her 1813, *A Tale that Grew in the Telling*, WriteLight, 2013

1. 22 July 1876

2. Subsequent articles that year in *Town and Country Journal* also referred to it.

3. 1886

4. Letter from F B Boyce, 14 August 1888

5. Cassell’s *Picturesque Atlas of Australia*, 1886; J S Farnell had been the Minister

6. Letters to the *SMH*, both on 30 August 1905

7. *Blue Mountains Echo*, 22 June 1983

8. Cited in *Lavelle* at page 14

9. *Supra*, note 1

10. *The Belgravia*, renamed about the same time as the *Hydro Majestic*

11. *Old Leura and Katoomba*, Rotary Club of Katoomba, 1980, page 12

12. Forestry Commission of NSW, report to Blue Mountains City Council, 20 October 1986, cited in *Lavelle* at page 13.

JOHN WARBY—MY EXCELLENT GUIDE

AN ACCOUNT OF A TOUR BY GOVERNOR MACQUARIE WITH GUIDE JOHN WARBY IN NOVEMBER 1810.

JOHN WARBY

The story of John Warby commences in the village of Cottered in Hertfordshire with his birth around around 1767. The first definite sight of John Warby is in the Calendar of Hertford Gaol, Epiphany (January) Sessions 1791. William Deards and John Warby were committed 4 November 1790 to trial by the Reverend Mr Baker, a Justice of the Peace, charged with stealing two asses the property of James Climance and William Hurst.

At the Lent Assizes opening Thursday 3 March 1791 at Herford before Sir Henry Gould, Knight, a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and Sir Beaumont Hotham, Knight, a Baron of the Court of Exchequer, William Deards and John Warby were found guilty. They were sentenced to be “transported beyond the seas for the term of seven years to such place as His Majesty with the

advice of His Privy Council shall think fit.”

On 30th May, 1791 William Deards, John Warby and four others were conveyed to the convict transport ship the *Pitt* at Graves End.

The *Pitt* sailed from Yarmouth Roads on 17 July 1791 and arrived at Port Jackson on 14 February 1792. The voyage had been an eventful one with much sickness from fever—over 50 crew, passengers and convicts died and 120 were landed as sick.

Governor Phillip sailed from Sydney on 12 December 1792. Before his departure, he settled John Warby on fifty acres, five miles from Parramatta, close to Prospect Creek at the foot of Prospect Hill (see Map 1). From the highest point of Prospect Hill the Blue Mountains could be seen wrapped in a mysterious blue haze. Another 21 years were to pass before explorers found

a way across this barrier to extensive grazing land on the western plains.

John married sixteen-year-old Sarah Bentley on 12 September 1796. She had been transported for stealing clothes and fabrics.

By 1800 John was beginning to see a reward for years of grinding work at Prospect. He owned five pigs and had five acres of wheat and four acres planted with maize. The wheat crop was used for making bread whilst maize was grown as a fodder for animals. A year later he had ten pigs, eight acres under wheat, thirteen acres under maize and 25 bushels of maize in stock. Two men, one free and a government servant, were in his employ.

The First Fleet landed seven black cattle brought from the Cape of Good Hope. By the following May one heifer was dying and four cows and two bulls escaped into the bush leaving no trace of their whereabouts. Seven years later their progeny were found grazing on pasture land along the Nepean River in a district which was to be named Cowpastures. In 1802 Ensign Francis Barrallier of the New South Wales Corps reported seeing 600 cattle in several herds in the area of Douglas Park. Barrallier made several exploratory expeditions into the Southern Highlands and took John Warby on at least one

of these journeys. In 1803, following a number of attempts to capture and kill the wild cattle, Governor King issued a proclamation forbidding anyone, except those who had first obtained his permission, to cross the Nepean or disturb the cattle. This proclamation made the Nepean River the south-western boundary of the colony.

George Caley was a colonial naturalist in New South Wales between 1800 and 1810. He was a botanical collector and minor explorer. Caley made numerous expeditions exploring the Cowpastures and nearly crossed the Blue Mountains in 1804. He was defeated by steep, narrow ravines at the bottom of gentle sloping valleys in the region of Mount Banks when he was only six miles, in a direct line, from Mount Victoria.

In July 1802 Governor King commissioned Caley to retrace Barrallier's route along the Nattai and Kowmung Rivers and Christy's Creek as he doubted the accuracy of Barrallier's report. Caley took three companions including John Warby and a native guide.

Whilst they were away on their 28-day journey William Bligh arrived in Sydney to take up his posting as governor. King and his wife moved to Government House, Parramatta. On 22 August 1806, King wrote to Bligh:

, “Caley is just returned and ... is much fatigued and in want of rest ... He is certain that the wild cattle cannot pass their present enclosed stations, which was a great point I wanted to be certain of. He has confirmed the existence of a large tract of forest land beyond Nattai which is a very satisfactory circumstance. I have not seen the settler who accompanied Caley, but will send for him tomorrow (if he is to come, as I am told he is quite knocked up) and talk to him *on the subject of killing the bulls, but I think it is more than possible, were he inclined to undertake it, that time would show 50 would be mutilated for one shot...*”

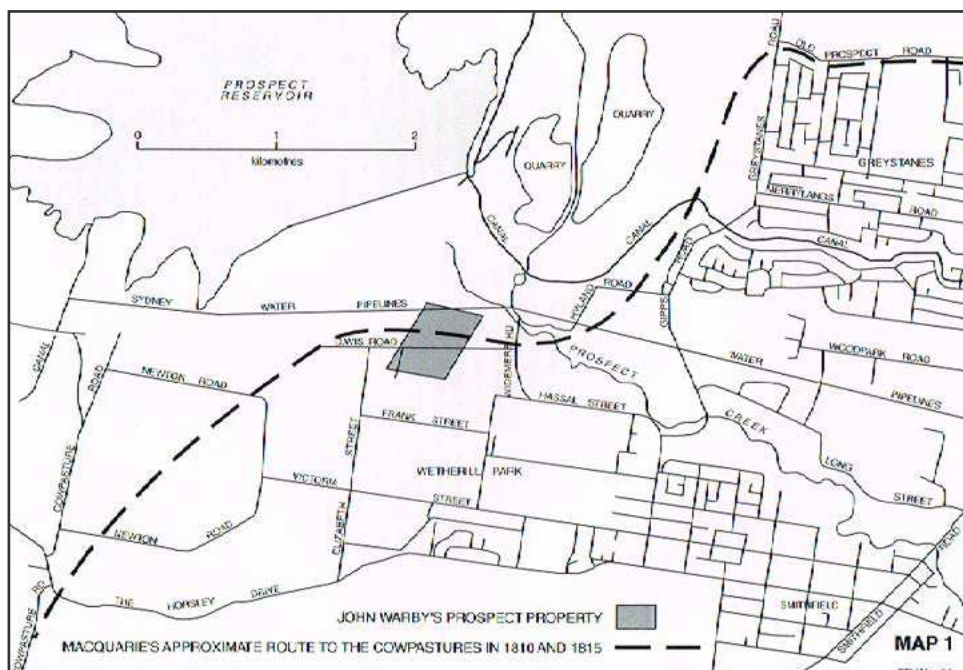
On 24 August Josepha Gidley-King wrote to Bligh on behalf of her husband who was temporarily incapacitated by gout in his right elbow and hand.

“John Warby a very good character and Settler at Prospect Hill who will deliver you this, was with Caley on his last expedition and accompanied Mr Barrallier also—and from his having a very thorough knowledge of the country where the wild cattle are—he waits on you in case you may wish to question him on that subject—as he has gone down with the others to get his proportion of spirits—if you will sign his orders—sent last week.”

On 12 September 1806 Governor Bligh confirmed his predecessor’s proclamation forbidding any person passing the Nepean excepting officers, people

employed by Messrs. Macarthur and Davidson when attending their flocks of sheep, and a limited number of people appointed by himself to assist John Warby in taking care of bulls. Such persons were to be provided with tickets signed by Bligh and countersigned by the magistrate at Parramatta. Thomas Harper and John Warby, constables of Camden County were provided with a military guard and a hut at Cawdor. This hut was the first building erected by white men in Camden district. The exact date of its construction is unknown but Caley described it as, “No more than a small hut built of boards thatched with grass and a wooden chimney.”

In a memorial to Governor Macquarie dated 3 January 1810 asking for confirmation of the grant by Peterson, John Warby gave as references the fact that King had brought him to the notice of Bligh who had appointed him Superintendent of the wild cattle of the Crown. In writing this memorial to Macquarie, John brought himself to the attention of the governor who later employed him as a guide in the Cowpastures. In fact, the Old Cowpasture Road ran south from near the Warby farm to the Nepean River (see maps 1 and 2).



Map 1: The route to Cowpastures

THE TOUR WITH GOVERNOR MACQUARIE

On 16 November 1810, Governor Macquarie and his wife, Elizabeth, set out from Parramatta in their carriage to visit the Cowpastures. They were accompanied by many servants and a great deal of paraphernalia to make the journey comfortable. Macquarie employed John Warby as a guide who joined the party on the road near his farm below Prospect Hill (see map 2).

Another member of the party was Captain John Antill, Macquarie's aid-de-camp and an ancestor of our Club President, Chris White.

After passing along the Cowpasture Road through open forest with tolerably good soil, they arrived at the Government Hut on the Nepean at 9.30am. Two carts had preceded them and were waiting on the opposite side of the river. Servants had pitched a small tent in which the party ate breakfast. Later they passed through Mr Macarthur's farm Benkennie to Bundie,

a beautiful lagoon of fresh water where more tents were pitched. Mount Taurus, later known as Spaniards Hill, was about three miles (4.8 km) to the south and Mount Hunter about four miles (6.5 km) to the north. Dinner was served at 5pm and Macquarie appeared relaxed and happy. Being tired they went to bed early after placing fires around the camp and a watch to guard them from the wild cattle.

On Saturday 17 Novemeber 1810 Macquarie's party rose early. During the night they had heard the eerie bellowing of wild cattle in the woods. Early in the morning Mr Blaxland and John Warby went out and shot a wild bull which was brought to camp for the use of the servants.

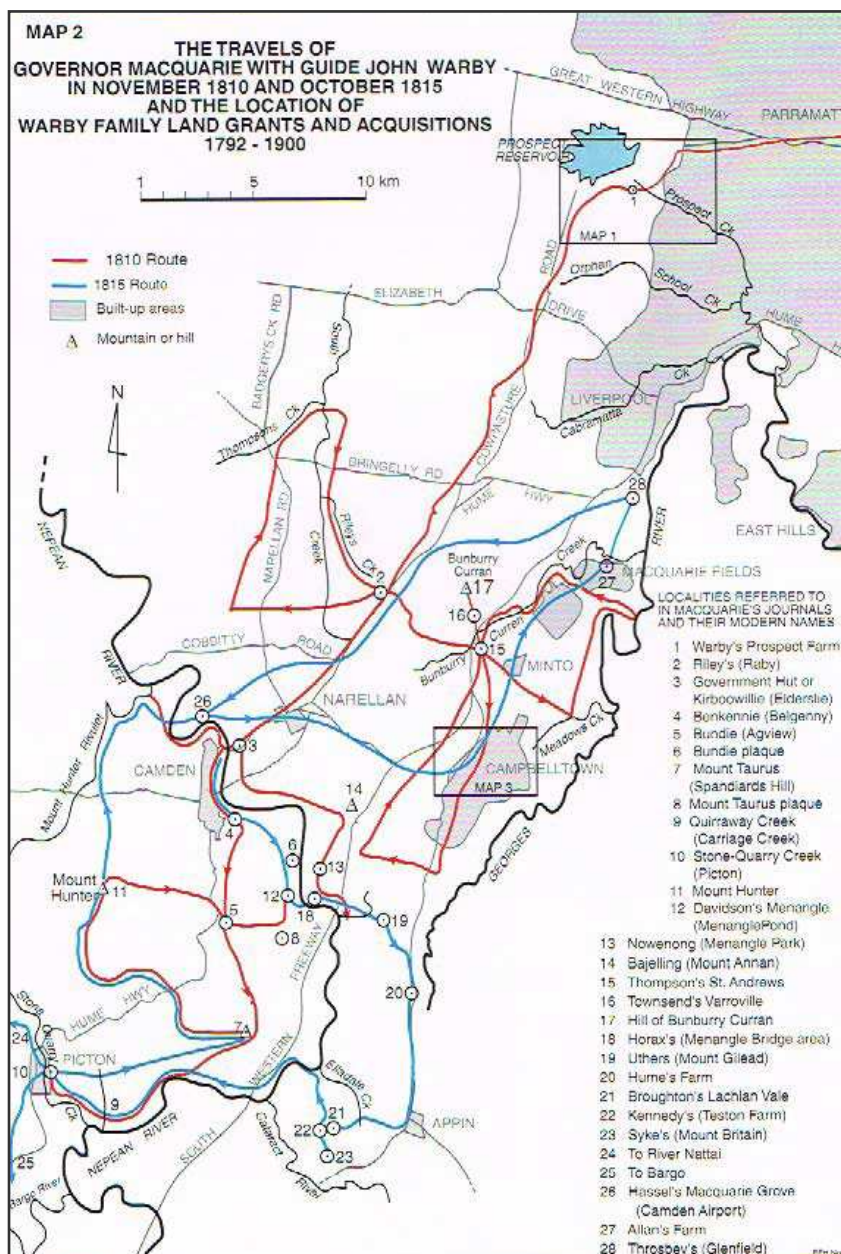
At about 10.30am they set out on horseback to explore the country to the south and west as far as Stone Quarry Creek, Picton which was about ten miles (16 km) from their camp (see map 2). During the day they passed through rich, hilly country which was covered by open forest. They approached several herds of wild cattle which were unused to and unafraid of men. The party managed to hunt down five calves, three of which being males were sent home to be reserved for veal for Macquarie's table. He gave the remaining two which were female as presents to his guide, John

Warby and William Cosgrove who was a servant to Mr Blaxland. A cow was valuable, not only for its milk supply for the growing number of Warby children, but animal manure was much needed to fertilise soil used for crops.

At 5pm the party returned from Stone Quarry Creek to Bundie by the way of Quiraway (Carriage) Creek. Macquarie seemed very pleased with their excursion and commented on their keen appetites at dinner.

Next day, being somewhat tired after the previous day's excursion, they slept in and did not have breakfast until 9am. Mrs Macarthur paid them a visit while they were eating breakfast. She had come the evening before to the Cowpastures to look after her farms with their flocks of sheep. Macquarie asked Mrs Macarthur to dine with them and she expressed a desire to ride about the country with them during the day.

At 11am they set out from Bundie on horseback to visit Mount Taurus and Mount Hunter (see map 2) where they came across two or three herds of wild cattle which allowed the group to come very close to them. However, one herd charged directly at the onlookers but were scared away by the noise and shouting of John Warby and other attendants. Macquarie enjoyed the view from Mount Hunter, but was



Map 2: The tour in 1810

disappointed at the height of both it and Mount Taurus which would only be classed as hills anywhere else. They returned to camp by a different route at about 2pm.

After eating and resting they set out for Menangle to visit the 2000 acre farm on the banks of the Nepean belonging to Mr Walter Davidson (see map 2). After viewing the farm they returned to camp at 5pm. Macquarie was pleased with the fine rich country they had passed through. Mrs Macarthur returned to her own farm, Benkenie, after dinner.

In the evening Koggie, the Chief of the Cowpasture Tribe, his wife and half a dozen other natives were fired up with a glass of spirits before dancing a corroboree much to the entertainment of the watchers.

On Monday 19 November they broke camp and set out at 9:30am allowing the servants to bring the baggage and leisurely pace to the ford on the Nepean at Kirboowallie. They called on Mrs Macarthur at Benkennie with whom they sat for a little while in a small miserable hut (see map 2). Crossing the Nepean at the ford, they continued on for about four miles (6.5 km) to Hunters Creek. They passed through tolerably good land although not generally as good as that in the south. They did not see any wild cattle but traces of dung

indicated that a herd had been grazing lately in this area.

They returned to the ford at 1pm and found that the servants and baggage were just arriving. After marking out ground on the east side of the river for their camp for that night, Macquarie set out at 2pm, accompanied by Captain Antill and John Warby, to explore the country to the south on the right bank of the Nepean River (see map 2). They rode at a smart rate for an hour and a half passed Bajelling (Mt. Annan) to Nowenong (Menangle Park) immediately opposite Mr Davidson's farm, Menangle where they had been the day before.

They continued for about a mile along the Nepean until further progress was interrupted by a deep valley or creek later named Monangle Creek. Macquarie did not think it necessary to continue any further. The return journey was by a shorter route to avoid bends in the river and lagoons and swamps which had to be ridden around on the outward journey.

The tents had been pitched when they arrived back at the ford at 4.30pm. After dinner Macquarie took his wife for a walk along the road leading from the river where they enjoyed the cool of the evening and the tranquil scene of the forest around them.

During the night there was heavy rain but their tents were watertight and they slept very comfortably. Rain in the morning prevented the party from moving as early as they intended. While they ate breakfast they received a visit from Mrs Macarthur who had just crossed the river from the Cowpastures on her way back to Parramatta.

The rain ceased and they broke camp at 11.30am. Macquarie planned to spend a couple of days at St. Andrew's, the home of the late Andrew Thompson on Bunburry Curran Creek and, from there, explore the country lying towards the Georges River (see map 2).

After leaving his wife at Mr Riley's farm, Macquarie rode with Captains Antill and Cleaveland, Ensign Maclain, Dr Redfern, John Warby and two dragoons to explore the country for some miles on either side of South Creek. They spent the afternoon exploring the Minto and Cooks Districts and then on through Bringelly until their progress was stopped by a deep creek (Thompsons Creek) that ran east west and joined South Creek.

They crossed South Creek and rode through the Cabramatta District, collecting Mrs Macquarie at Mr Riley's farm at 4pm after a ride of about fifteen miles. From there Macquarie

accompanied his wife back to St. Andrew's in the carriage. Macquarie was very pleased with the organization of St. Andrew's and found the farm house very clean and neat. An excellent dinner was served, no doubt provisioned from mutton, fowls, butter, milk, eggs and vegetables produced by the farm.

On the morning of the 21 November Macquarie set out with his attendants to explore the country south and westwards of St. Andrew's returning in a north east direction at 3pm (see map 2). He met Mrs Macquarie, accompanied by Mr Meehan and a dragoon, returning from a visit to Dr Townsond's farm. Mrs Macquarie enthused about the view from the top of Bunburry Curran Hill which was near by. The governor immediately rode to the top on horseback and was highly gratified by the extensive view of the surrounding countryside.

Rising early the next day, the governor and his men set out at 5.30am. After passing through fine rich country they reached a very deep stony creek, later called Peter Meadows Creek. From there they continued north east by north until they came to rocky land. John Warby was of the opinion that they were very near the Georges River (see map 2). On his advice the party altered course and after about half a mile they

suddenly arrived on the banks of the Georges River.

Leaving their horses in charge of a dragoon, they scrambled down the steep, rocky banks to a stream of clear, well tasting running water. They rode back to St. Andrew's having travelled fourteen or fifteen miles before breakfast through some of the finest country Macquarie had ever seen in the colony. He planned to assign allotments in this area to small settlers and named the area Airs in honour of his wife's family estate.

After breakfast Macquarie and his wife set off from St. Andrew's in the carriage for Parramatta. Macquarie reported that his "excellent guide, Warby" parted with them near his farm at Prospect.

After resting for a couple of days in Parramatta, the vice regal entourage set out for the Evan District. When returning on Monday 10 December, Macquarie visited the farms at Prospect where he found good soil which produced alternate crops of wheat and maize. The houses of the settlers at Prospect were better and they appeared to live more comfortably and were more decently clothed than those of Seven Hills and Toongabbie.

While the governor was making his inspection, Mrs Macquarie rode in

the carriage to the house of Warby his trusted guide. It is not hard to imagine John and Sarah being overcome by this honour. Not many of their descendants have entertained a vice regal party in their home. At 2pm Macquarie joined his wife at the Warby household where John introduced his wife and "numerous family of children" to the governor.

Macquarie promised John an additional grant of land.

Governor Macquarie's party had travelled to the boundaries of civilization without ever being more than about fifty miles from Sydney Cove.

JOHN WARBY'S LATER LIFE

John Warby's story continues for many years. Sarah and John have a family of 14 children and over 95 grandchildren. He grows in wealth, firstly in Prospect and then when the family moved in 1816 to the new settlement of Airs (later Campbelltown) to be reunited with his old friend William Deards who owns land there. He also guides Macquarie on another visit in October 1815 to the Cowpastures, Appin and Picton but that is another story.

During his many journeys in the south and west of Sydney, one could speculate that he travelled deep into or around the

Blue Mountains—perhaps in search of the cattle he was responsible for.

John dies on 12 June 1851 aged 84 years and Sarah on 19 October 1869 aged 89 years.

The Campbelltown community recognised their achievements and honoured

their memory by naming a street after them with the family name. But far more remarkable was their naming a primary school after him—The John Warby Public School. Great recognition for a man who could not sign his own name!

This story is substantially reproduced from the book Warby: My Excellent Guide by Michelle Vale published in 1992.

John Warby is the great, great, great, great grandfather of our Treasurer, John Anschau.



SEEN DINING AT THE CLUB

Those who were members of the Australasian Pioneers' Club when it was at 61 York Street will, I am sure, remember the caricature in the billiards room of our former Honorary Secretary, John Wilkinson, titled "The Intelligent Fluker".

Opposite is my effort in a similar vein, of our President, Chris White.

With my apologies to Chris.

Christopher Arnott

GORE OF GORE HILL AND ARTARMON

The author of this article is not known and the person from whom it came is now dead. I do not know what sources were referenced when it was prepared. No credits were given in the manuscript. But all the facts appear in readily available public sources.

“One day in 1856, a Sydney land speculator, looking over a 22-acre tract of virgin bushland he had bought on the north shore, came across three old wooden coffins resting on trestles in the scrub.

They contained the bleached bones of a man, a woman and a girl.

Old records soon solved the mystery and thousands flocked to view the bones and pay respects to William Gore—Gore of Gore Hill, Gore Bay and Artarmon.”.

From a Historical Feature article in the Daily Mirror in 1972.

William Gore (1765–1845) came to New South Wales from Ireland where he owned property. In 1798, as loyalists, Gore and his wife were imprisoned by the Irish rebels; they were apparently humanely treated, and they were soon released.

The Earl of Harrington (a member of the Stanhope family) recommended Gore for a colonial appointment and on 1 August 1805, he was officially

designated Provost-Marshall of New South Wales. He accompanied Governor Bligh to Australia, arriving in Sydney and entering into his duties in August 1806. He replaced Garnhan Blaxcell, “a picturesque scallywag”, whom Governor King had appointed to the position in an acting capacity and never confirmed, and who was an associate of McArthur. In addition to his salary of £91/5/- p.a. he was entitled to certain fees and emoluments attending to his office. His duties were comparable to those of a Country Sheriff in England.

Bligh held Gore in high regard, but he incurred the enmity of the anti-Bligh factionists, including McArthur, and was referred to in such insulting terms as “the odious Gore” and “the wretched Gore” etc.

In October 1807, when Gore was charged with having uttered a forged note to the value of 15/-, and have stolen an ornament of “trifling value” Bligh expressed the opinion that the charges

had been trumped up to discredit him. He was acquitted on both counts.

Inevitably, in his official capacity, Gore was involved in the arrest of John McArthur in 1808. When the NSW Corps released McArthur and deposed Governor Bligh, Gore was arrested and charged (21 March 1808) with perjury for having sworn that McArthur had been out of custody after 4pm on 25 January, the date on which Gore had acted as an intermediary between the Governor and the Court of Officers assembled to hear the charges against McArthur. At Bligh's behest, Gore had sworn the McArthur had been "illegally at large" on 25th January from the time the court had adjourned.

After his own arrest, Gore refused to accept the authority of the "rebel court"; he would not give bail and he refused to plead. Consequently he was kept in gaol without trial (quite illegally as subsequent events were to prove) for more than two months. On 30 May the unfortunate man was brought before the rebel court, but this time he was sentenced to seven years transportation and was sent to Coal River (Newcastle), where he performed hard labour in company with hardened criminals. He was then 43 years of age. For the next two years his wife and four children were wholly dependent on the charity of friends.

Macquarie, who succeeded Bligh, took office in January 1810. All trials held by the revolutionary Government were declared invalid, land grants allotted were cancelled, and so on. Gore was reinstated as Provost-Marshal, and in May, 1810 he sailed to England to appear as Crown witness at the trial of Lieutenant Colonel Johnson for his involvement in the Rum Rebellion. He returned to Sydney and resumed his duties in October 1812.

In 1817, when Governor Macquarie brought to fruition his "favourite measure", the founding of the Bank of New South Wales, Gore on the nomination of Dr D'Arcy Wentworth (father of William Charles) was elected a director on the Board. However he did not retain the position for long as he was, by that time, in grave financial difficulties.

From the time of Bligh's deposition until the time of Gore's return from England after Johnson's trial, Gore had been for long periods without a salary and for virtually the whole of the time without the fees and emoluments of his office. His troubles were accentuated by the quarrels of the Judge Advocate, Ellis Bent, and his troublesome brother, Jeffery Hart Bent, Judge of the Supreme Court, whose enmity to Governor Macquarie resulted in the suspension of the Supreme Court for over two

years. Gore received his small salary, but no fees in that time, and as his family had increased to seven, he had become acutely embarrassed. In 1818 he was actually imprisoned for debt. He escaped from prison and fled to Van Diemen's Land, but was soon arrested and returned to Sydney.

In March 1819, Macquarie suspended him from office, reporting to the Secretary of State for the Colonies that not only was Gore in debt but that for some time there had been continuous complaints of "the tardy, oppressive, inefficient and dishonest manner" in which he had conducted his official business. His suspension was confirmed by the Colonial Office and he retired to live on land previously granted to him on the northern side of Sydney Harbour. This property, Artarmon, gave its name to the district, and Gore Hill, Gore Creek etc. commemorate the name of the original owner of the land.

Misfortune continued to dog William Gore. In January 1824 he was tried before the Criminal Court for having wilfully shot and wounded Andrew Beattie, a soldier of the 49th Regiment while trespassing at Artarmon; Gore had warned him off the property on several previous occasions. Gore, who was defended by Frederick Garling assisted by Solicitor Rowe was found

guilty, but escaped the death sentence, being sentenced to life banishment to Newcastle. Earl Bathurst and Lord Palmerston, to both of whom Gore was known previously, made representations to Governor Brisbane on Gore's behalf and the Governor consequently granted him a pardon in June, 1885.

Gore again returned to Artarmon but by now was a broken man, still struggling against hopeless debt and in markedly poor health. Whilst in prison awaiting trial, he had attempted suicide by cutting his wrists and had very nearly succeeded.

John Thomas Campbell (Macquarie's erstwhile Secretary and the implacable foe of Samuel Marsden) had been appointed Provost-Marshall in Gore's place. Campbell's first act was to allot the salary pertaining to the office to Mrs Gore for the support of herself and her virtually destitute children.

Artarmon, Gore's only remaining asset, was heavily mortgaged, and in April 1843, he was declared insolvent. However he managed to remain at Artarmon up to the time of his death, which occurred in August 1845 at the age of 80.

For reasons never satisfactorily explained, Gore's body, together with those of his wife and one daughter

remained unburied. Their coffins remained for years unburied. Their coffins remained for years near one of the boundary fences of Artarmon, covered by palings.

There are two additional pieces of information that I can add.

Firstly:

Sir Paul Gore, 1st Baronet of Magherabegg (d. 1629), amongst others in his family had two sons, Arthur who was ancestor to the Earls of Arran, and Sir Francis of Artarman (*sic*) who was an ancestor of Sir Robert Gore-Booth and subsequently, it is believed, the Provost-Marshall. I do not know at what stage the spelling of Artarmon changed.

Secondly, to quote again from the article in the Daily Mirror, something which might be the explanation of his non-burial:

“Even in death, he [Gore] suffered humiliation, for his body and that of his wife and daughter had been left unburied because of a land covenant at the time which required that an owner must be buried on his own property. And someone, possibly a creditor, had disputed Gore’s ownership of his land.”

Hugh Gore

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Hugh Gore



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