

South Coast History Society Inc. RecollectionS

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...WHERE HISTORY IS THE HERO



In 1948 an expedition of American and Australian scientists ventured to Arnhem Land to investigate traditional Aboriginal life and the tropical environment. It was backed by National Geographic, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Australian government. It was billed as 'the biggest scientific expedition in history' (see story page 12) The cartoonist Eric Jolliffe visited the Expedition, humorously capturing the cultural distance between the party and the 'natives'. The caption to this cartoon reads 'Scratch off some more Trade Marks – looks like some more customers'.

SPORT

They're Racing at Gerringong!

It was Saturday 16th November 1929. Somehow, thousands of people had made their way to the northern end of Seven Mile Beach (between what are now the townships of Shoalhaven Heads and Gerroa) to watch a program of motor car races.

The beach at that spot was ideal for racing. At low tide the sand was firm and well-compacted. And the beach was wide enough for 'six cars abreast' to compete on a makeshift oval circuit marked out with flags. Speed trials and motor racing had been held there since at least 1924 and well before that, in the 1860s, horse races had been conducted at the same location.

On Saturday 16th November 1929 there was an added 'innovation... with the visit of a large number of (aero)

planes'. This prompted the local newspaper, the *South Coast Register* (22.11.1929) to write a piece praising the two local policemen: 'Never before had there been such a crowd, nor as many cars... The control of the crowd, management of the cars and direction of the 'planes to the parking areas fell on the shoulders of Constables Brogan and Hawker, and they handled the position so well that there was not a hitch in the programme, nor an accident to a spectator. The supervision of the 'planes landing and the care of the public were carried out very effectively, and these two officers are to be highly commended for their able work.'

(The day, though, ended with a tragedy. A 'Gipsy Moth, crashed and dived headlong into the sea just outside the

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raging surf when two men — the pilot, Jesse O'Connor, and Mr. W. Berg, photographer of the "Guardian" newspaper — met their deaths in full view of the horror-stricken thousands of people' (Nowra Leader, 22.11.1929). It was not reported whether a planned race between a car and an aeroplane was then able to proceed.)

This location, at the northern end of Seven Mile Beach and part of the Gerringong Council area, was used by a number of organisations among them being the Royal Automobile Club of Australia, the Royal Automobile Club of Sydney, the Bexley Motor Cycle Club, the Western Suburbs Motor Cycle Club, the Nowra Motor Cycle Club, the Sydney Bicycle & Motor Club, and the Corrimal Racing Club that had received sponsorship from Bennett and Wood (manufacturers of the very popular Speedwell bicycle) for at least one of their race meetings. It seems Gerringong Council normally tolerated use of the beach for these meetings as long as they were advised in advance that the meetings were to be held. And there were undoubted benefits to local towns: *'The race was viewed with a great deal of interest by the large number of visitors who were staying at the various guest houses and cottages' in the area. (South Coast Register, 14.1.1930)*

Newspapers encouraged their readers to attend the meetings: *'Any person desirous of thrills should not fail in their objective if they proceed to the Seven Mile Beach on a racing day, and watch a flying mile, more or less' (Nowra Leader, 19.12.1924). And they also regularly included detailed information about forthcoming race meetings that would have helped boost attendances.*

But not everyone was always happy. A complaint from the Gerringong Congregational Church in 1929 (*'On the occasion in question it was hardly safe for pedestrians to go to the Congregational Church as the cars and bicycles were coming along the road as thick as bees'*) led to Gerringong Council asking the police to take the names of those in attendance at the next meeting. (A Constable Wolters then gathered the names and addresses of riders from the Nowra Motor Cycle Club, *'stating that no offence had been committed so far as the Police were concerned', and a letter from the Local Government Association advised Council 'it was an offence for any person to do any act in any public reserve which was likely to injure, endanger, obstruct, inconvenience or annoy any person in the reserve.'* It suggested *'Council put up a notice drawing attention to the fact.'*) Council's response was to ban racing on the beach on Sundays (*'the beach should then not be disturbed by racing whirr. wurz. crack-n. racks on a Sabbath, so that the gentle roll and lapping of the waves on the sea shore will, in the future, continue in its quietude undisturbed'* is how the Nowra Leader, (26.7.1929), colourfully described the decision), with the Council

arguing *'these people mostly had the Saturday off each week, and they could race then.'*

Things became more farcical when Berry Council decided to become involved, having its solicitors send a letter to the Sydney Bicycle and Motor Cycle Club *'stating the beach was under the control of the Berry Council... (and) Council intends to take measures to enforce its powers' (South Coast Register, 15.4.1930). Berry Council controlled the southern end of the beach 'for 100 yards above the high water mark, which was no good whatever for motor racing', but argued 'Gerringong might give permission for racing on a certain day, and Berry Council might also give permission for some other sport on the same day, and then there would be a clash.'* (South Coast Register 3.6.1930)

Not every race meeting was successful. After a meeting when *'hardly a hundred braved the elements that afternoon. A mist from the sea, obscured the sight of the cars a short distance from starting point... and "The Flying Mile," for all comers was shortened by half in consequence of the pelting rain,' the observation was made*

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that 'the old Aborigine belief is that certain presiding spirits control regions by mountain and sea. Saddleback held a fiery deity - the Seven Mile, a beneficent one, that gathered together the birds on land, and the fish in the sea. The latter evidently liked peace and quietness and gloomily expresses disfavour, when the peace of his surroundings is broken by the roar of racing engines or the explosions of their exhaust. Certain it is for every fixture when the motors meet to try conclusions on that seven mile of glistening sand, the weather plays up or the sea turns cranky, and "watery" obstacles from the sky above or the shore beneath, spoils success and enjoyment.

Saturday gave one of the worst cases in point - wind and rain doing their worst to deprive the afternoon of interest and inflict discomfort. As the sun lightened up the splendour, the last of the motors left the beach... That old legendary deity, it would seem, chuckled long and deeply,



when left to his solitary splendours'. (Kiama Reporter & Illawarra Journal, 30.11.1927)

Some serious racing and time trials were undertaken at Seven Mile Beach.

On 7th October 1925, an automotive designer, driver and engineer by the name of Don Harkness became the first person in Australia to drive a car for a mile at over 100 miles per hour. He had built a new vehicle powered by a Hispano Suiza aircraft engine for the attempt and, cheered on by over 2,000 spectators, recorded a speed of 107.75mph. He received a trophy valued at £50.

It seems 'that old legendary deity' was in a non-too-accommodating mood when Norman 'Wizard' Smith, a well-known racing driver, attempted to set a 200mph record on Seven Mile Beach on Saturday 30th November 1929. Three thousand spectators turned up, but 'the beach had depressions and bumps that made it dangerous for the try-out contemplated, besides which it was strewn with trails of slippery seaweed. Nevertheless, in several runs a speed of 130 miles was achieved - a bumpy ridge taken in a leap by the car as it ate the distance up and gave a qualm to those who remembered the tragedy of the beach [the crash of the Gipsy Moth] so recently.'

'Wizard' Smith returned the next day (a Sunday!), the ever-obliging Constable Wolters of Gerringong 'marked out the course', but 'few people were about on Sunday as they did not know the record run had been made.' On this occasion Smith recorded a speed of 128.57mph. 'At the finish the car raised great fountains of sand and almost overturned... and the spray soon hid the car from sight of those at the Crooked River end.'



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'After his record-breaking run on Sunday, Mr Smith gave several people trips in his car and one man who had been whirled along at what is to Mr Smith the ordinary speed of 120mph, was so thrilled that he did not recover for about 24 hours, most of them spent in bed.'

The (few) spectators fared no better. 'There were all sorts and kinds of cars on the beach... some 12 of them got stuck in the outlet of the river and some stayed there until the waves of the incoming tide washed over them... one of the cars which had been bogged, a Hudson, could not be shifted until the floor was awash and a lady who had remained at her post until then, was carried out bodily by her husband. As a bystander remarked, the age of chivalry was not yet dead.' (Kiama Reporter & Illawarra Journal, 4.12.1929)

The same northern end of Seven Mile Beach was used by Charles Kingsford Smith on 11th January 1933 for his take-off on the first commercial flight from Australia to New Zealand. The beach had been chosen because it provided a long runway for a heavily-laden aircraft.

'Smithy' had piloted the Southern Cross down from Sydney the previous afternoon. 'He said that the presence and activities of souvenir hunters had always been a hampering feature of the flights and this had to be guarded against. Particularly he warned any persons from straying across the track of the Southern Cross when it commenced the run for take-off, pointing out that it was absolutely impossible for him to avoid a fatality at the speed at which he would then be travelling.

Inspector Keith, of Wollongong, has promised adequate police protection on the beach and ten constables were detailed to keep all cars and people off the actual beach, so as to avoid accidents. It was not known whether the public would have an opportunity of inspecting the famous plane, but in any case there would be a very thorough

last-minute search of the cabin, as the possibility of a stowaway has been reckoned with.' (Kiama Reporter & Illawarra Journal, 11.1.1933)

'At half past two [a.m.], Sir Charles left the shed accompanied by Constable Bogan and a press representative and went down to the plane, his quiet departure practically unnoticed.

When the A.N.A. men swung the propellers and the roar of the three big engines commenced, however, there was great enthusiasm. Kingsford Smith taxied the Southern Cross for about a mile, escorted by flares and followed by hundreds of people on foot who braved the biting sand which was shifted by the wheels and tail of the plane and driven in their faces by the wind... 'Smithy' leaned out of the cockpit, waved his hand and called out, 'Cheerio everybody', and then the engines revved up, and the Southern Cross was off, a fine sight with her huge silver and blue wings and tail... then she came back right over the surf shed again, with the searchlights on, and after circling, made straight out to sea... owners of cars were asked to focus their headlights on the sea for ten minutes to assist the flight, and soon the trek home commenced... the Southern Cross arrived at New Plymouth at 5pm (Sydney time) on Wednesday, accomplishing the flight in 14 hours 10 minutes... the Southern Cross beat her own previous record of 16 hours.' (Kiama Independent & Shoalhaven Advertiser, 14.1.1933)

Fifteen months later, on 12th April 1934, Kingsford Smith was again on Seven Mile Beach. 'Running into bad weather and being unable to reach Mascot before dark, Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, piloting the Percival Gull monoplane in which he left Melbourne at 1 p.m., landed late today on the Seven Mile Beach at Gerroa, 80 miles from Sydney. With him in the aeroplane were Lady Kingsford Smith and Mr. Eric Chaseling, managing director of the Victorian Flying School. Kingsford Smith hopes to leave tomorrow for Sydney.' (The Daily Telegraph, 13.4.1934)

THE SOUTH COAST CEDAR TRADE 1811-1830

by Leith Davis

From 1811, the Shoalhaven and Illawarra districts were the colony's major source of cedar supplies. With the demise of sealing and sandalwood markets in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the south coast cedar provided a staple cargo for the small ships of emancipist Sydney traders, the emerging merchant class of the nascent colonial economy.

Cedar was valuable to the rapidly growing colony, and contributed to the development of associated timber yard, joinery, shipyard and building projects.

Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft's cedar operations at their Shoalhaven *Coolangatta* land grant were an early example of colonial resource mining. They provided no economic benefit to New South Wales. The three million super feet sawn and exported by Berry and Wollstonecraft was either shipped out to England, with the proceeds applied in England to reduce the partners' debts, or were sent to Hobart to make an important contribution to economic development in Van Diemens Land.

The Early Cedar Trade

As colonists explored and settled the Hawkesbury area in the first years of the settlement came discovery of the Australian red cedar. Indeed, the first logs of red cedar were exported in 1795, only seven years after settlement of Sydney.

By 1802, word of an unofficial cedar trade by settlers on the Hawkesbury River had reached official ears. The Governor issued a General Order on April 2, 1802, forbidding any cedar being cut down "on, or about that river".

Cedar was discovered on the Hunter River in 1804 when the Newcastle convict settlement was founded, and the convicts were set to work cedar getting. In 1803, several cargoes of "very fine" cedar arrived in Sydney from the Hunter. From March 1805 to August 1806 a total of 182,471 super feet of cedar was shipped from Newcastle, 51,391 super feet from the convict settlement.

Australian Red Cedar

Australian red cedar's natural range extends from Benandarah on the south coast of New South Wales (just north of Batemans Bay) along the coast through to Gympie in Queensland, with scattered populations further north as far as the Atherton Tableland. It favours moist, humid conditions and fertile soil, and was found in the coastal brush, as the colonists termed the rainforests, which occurred around streams and gullies, and in the foothills of the coastal ranges.

Early Cedar getting in the Illawarra region

There were extensive cedar grounds on the south coast where cedar grew in the coastal rainforests – possibly over 23,000 hectares of the Illawarra.

James Meehan, the Assistant Surveyor General of the time, surveyed the Shoalhaven/Jervis Bay area in 1805, and made known the presence of cedar in the area. It also appears that occasional visitors in search of game birds had discovered cedar stands there. On 30 December 1811, the *Speedwell* brought the first reported cargo of cedar from Shoalhaven into Sydney:

On Monday last arrived the Speedwell colonial vessel from a place called Shoal Haven, which lies about midway between Jarvis's Bay and the Five Islands, whereat she

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procured a cargo of cedar, said to be of good quality.

Following the *Speedwell's* arrival in Sydney, it took some months for the officially observed cedar trade to get under way on the Shoalhaven. The next cargo of cedar whose arrival from Shoal Haven was notified in the *Sydney Gazette* was the *Geordy*, with 26 logs, on 12 October 1812. There is no way of knowing how many clandestine loads were brought by tiny boats in the meantime. By the end of 1812, a matter of a few weeks, 410 logs of cedar were shipped to Sydney from the Shoalhaven, in nine trips by five different vessels. In 1813 and 1814, 248 tons and 53,426 super feet of cedar were shipped in a total of twenty three trips. The average load of just over 2,300 super feet gives some indication of the tiny size of the boats employed on the run. On 2 March 1813, the *Mercury*, owned by Mrs Reibey, and the *Endeavour*, owned by Chase and Mr Kable jnr., were both wrecked at Shoalhaven with cargoes of cedar.

On 26 June 1813, the *Sydney Gazette* published a General Order, which levied a duty of 'One Shilling' for each solid foot of 'Cedar, or other Timber from Shoal Haven, or any other Part of the Coast or Harbours of New South Wales ... when not supplied by Government Labourers.' This 1813 order had the effect of slowing the cedar trade from the Shoalhaven, or at least that officially observed, but in July 1814 the brig *Trial*, owned by Simeon Lord an emancipist merchant, brought 26,000 feet of cedar from the Shoal Haven, "the finest cargo of that valuable article ever procured in this Colony". Governor Macquarie on 3 December 1814 issued a further order forbidding the cedar trade in the Shoalhaven, noting that *there being reason to believe that the Indulgence which has occasionally been granted to Masters and Owners of Vessels to resort to and bring Timber from Shoalhaven is subject to considerable abuse.*

The end of officially sanctioned exploitation of cedar in the Shoalhaven ended in late 1814, until the arrival of Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft in the region in 1822.

Alexander Berry at Shoalhaven

Berry and Wollstonecraft had considerable interests in the timber industry almost from the time of their first arrival in the colony. In 1824, the partnership described their timber operations:

For ourselves we shall merely say that we have expended nearly £1,000 in the formation of our Timber Speculation and Establishment. That we have exported to London per Shipley (twice), Royal George, [and two other ships], 400 tons of Plank etc altogether on our own account; and that we have now 400 tons prepared and ready for shipment to the same destination. That we have at present eleven pairs of sawyers constantly employed, together with 14 other persons as Fellers, Drivers etc, most of whom are our Government servants, and in addition to these, 4 Timber Carriages, 28 Working Bullocks and boat for water conveyance.

Surveyor General Oxley with James Meehan, Deputy Surveyor General, at Governor Macquarie's request, had explored the coast beyond the Illawarra as far as Jervis Bay in late 1819. With respect to the Shoalhaven, he reported that "*estimating the quantity of rich Alluvial Land on both sides of the River at its greatest extent, there may probably be ten thousand Acres of Useful Land, upon which a great quantity of good Cedar is found growing*".

In January 1822, within weeks of his arrival in Australia, Brisbane put the Government cutter *Snapper* under Berry's direction to explore the coast south of the settled part of the Colony.

In June 1822 Berry left Sydney to take up a land grant on the Shoalhaven River. With him he took the ten convicts that had been initially assigned to the partnership. As soon as they arrived at the Shoalhaven River, he set the convicts to digging a canal 200 yards long on a narrow isthmus between the Shoalhaven and Crookhaven Rivers; the Shoalhaven bar was dangerous and impassable most of the time. The canal was dug with some deviations, and Berry was concerned to have it straightened, as deviations could frustrate his intention to float timber from the Shoalhaven through the canal to waiting ships in the Crookhaven River. Most Australian hardwoods do not float owing to their density, but red cedar does float in water. His concern and care to have the canal straightened to enable timber to be floated provides further evidence that he took up the grant with the express intention of harvesting its cedar.

Cedar Getting at Shoalhaven

Berry and Wollstonecraft had been very anxious to establish timber exports to England because of their heavy debts; they still owed English creditors for goods obtained in 1806 and 1807. Berry had anticipated that the extensive cedar grounds at Shoalhaven would provide profitable cedar exports to enable their debts to be paid off in sterling. Exports of hardwood from the operations that the partnership had established at Crows Nest in Sydney and at Narara on the Central Coast had not proved profitable, and by late 1825 Berry and Wollstonecraft had shifted the focus of their timber getting enterprises from Narara to their Shoalhaven property. They transferred James Smith, supervisor of the Narara operations, and most of the north shore pairs of sawyers to Shoalhaven.

In July 1826, in response to a request from Berry and Wollstonecraft, James Smith (originally a supervisor at Narara) prepared an inventory of the cedar cut at Shoalhaven. He documented a significant volume of timber, equivalent to 1,507 cubic metres or sixty modern semi trailer loads. Smith noted in his report that they had not been able to "send timber down to the deep water as we should have," obviously referring to the large quantity of sawn cedar lying in the brushes, because the dray's wheels were broken. This indicates that bullock teams took the sawn timber from the sawpits to the edge

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of the creek to be formed into rafts and wait for a "fresh" to float down the creek to the river, through the canal cut through to the Crookhaven River, where it could be loaded onto small ships to be taken to Sydney.

In the colony's Statement of Export for 1827, the value of "Cedar, Blue Gum and other Timber" exported was £12,472.333. Berry's timber exports in that year represented two thirds of the colony's total timber exports.

By the early 1850s the Berry Estate holdings covered sixty thousand acres. The northern ten thousand acres was the focus of the cedar operations, the Numbaa land (east of present-day Nowra) was devoted to agriculture, and employed most of Berry's assigned convicts, and his Meroo property was used for cattle operations. Although Berry ceased exports to England when the last of his sterling debts were settled, he continued to send timber to the Sydney market, albeit on a much smaller scale. During the 1840s, the Shoalhaven estate sent regular shipments of cedar to Sydney, totalling 140,000 super feet.

The scale of the cedar exports from Berry's land north of the Shoalhaven in just twelve years between 1826



Hauling Cedar, 1906



'The Cedargetters'.

Date unknown, possibly the 1920s.

and 1838 was remarkable. If we assume that only very large trees were felled, and make an overly optimistic estimate of 50 per cent recovery, then at least 3,000 cedar trees were cut down to pay Berry and Wollstonecraft's London debts. There was very little economic benefit to the colony as the timber was shipped directly to London without any further processing after it was pit sawn, and Berry's 'truck system' (wages not paid in conventional currency) ensured that most of the sawyers' wages were appropriated by the partnership. Berry would write to his partner of charging the sawyers double or even four times what they paid for commodities, and in July 1829 Wollstonecraft exploited the truck system to settle a sawyer's account for 1,500 super feet of timber without paying any cash at all. Thus, the stands of rare cedar that had stood across most of the land between the Shoalhaven and Gerringong were destroyed to pay the English debts of a pair of colonial adventurers.

The Illawarra Cedar Grounds

The cedar getters who had been discouraged by the government prohibition of the cedar trade at the Shoalhaven in 1814, appear to have moved further north. An 1819 order by Governor Macquarie forbade the harvest of cedar or other timber in the Appin or Illawarra districts. The order referred to several persons illegally residing in those districts and "clandestinely transmitting from there large Quantities of Cedar and other Timber, the Property of the Crown".

"Clandestine" appears to be a description frequently applied to the cedar trade; it was described in 1826 as "an illicit traffic, which not only endangered, but frequently occasioned a loss of lives". Scattered newspaper reports refer to the loss of small boats loaded with cedar from

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the south coast, and frequently refer to their departure from Sydney late at night, and to their being loaded to the gunwales on the return trip. Governor Macquarie visited the Kiama cedar grounds in 1822 and described a camp of cedar getters there as “a gathering of pirates”.

In 1813, as previously mentioned, Governor Macquarie had imposed a duty of one shilling per one hundred feet on “timber, the growth of this colony”. This duty was repealed in March 1821. The order for repeal noted problems with the progress of building works “and consequently the enlargement and improvement of the Town of Sydney,” and repeal of the duty was aimed to “encourage the increase of good and comfortable buildings throughout the colony, instead of throwing difficulties in the way of their being undertaken and completed”.

The order however required that “no Person shall send Parties to Illawarra, or elsewhere, to procure such Timber, without having previously obtained a Licence for so doing”. Presumably this meant that the ban on cedar getting in Illawarra and Appin had been lifted.

Applications for licences were to include a list of the persons to be employed, the quantities required, and the place of harvesting. In August 1823, a further Government Order removed the requirement to obtain licences “for sending Parties to Illawarra, to procure cedar”. No mention is made of Port Stephens, from whence significant volumes of cedar were being shipped from 1816 onward.

The legal position with regard to cedar getting seems to have been hazy and confused at the very least, and generally irrelevant to the conduct of the industry. A case that came before the magistrates in April 1826 illustrates the general confusion very well. Mr Hunt, an undertaker, employed several pairs of sawyers at the Five Islands (the general name for the district that included Kiama). He charged his overseer with converting a quantity of cedar to his own profit, and one of his sawyers with embezzlement. The Bench found that Mr Hunt had no authority to cut and remove cedar from Government lands and that he had no more right to the cedar than his servants. The charge against the overseer was dismissed, and the sawyer was returned to barracks. At the time of these proceedings, the 1823 government order had removed the licence requirements for cedar; no authority was required, nor since the 1821 order were any duties payable.

Meanwhile, in 1825 the Gazette reported that Thomas

Hyndes’ *Charlotte*, built especially for the cedar trade, was wrecked leaving the Five Islands heads with a cargo of wood. By 1826 there were “nearly a hundred pairs of sawyers” working in the Five Islands brush and shipping cedar out from the beach at what is now Kiama.

Kiama

The name ‘Kiama’ did not come into use until the late 1820s. In 1817 Solomon Wiseman’s *Hawkesbury Packet*, 28 tons, was lost off “Gomorrarah,” presumably Minnamurra, on her way to load with cedar; this is the earliest print reference to the Kiama cedar grounds. Oxley’s report of December 1826 refers to “a tolerably good boat harbour called ‘Kiarmi’”; the cedar grounds were referred to as ‘Illawarra’ or ‘Five Islands’ in government orders and shipping reports before this time. In 1827 a newspaper reported that a ship had been wrecked “on the beach at the Five Islands, called Kyarmara”. The name “Kiama” or “Kiarma” first appears in 1829 in a list of the colony’s towns and stations; its situation is described as “Illawarra at the township”.

Kiama was the centre of the Illawarra brush, which covered 12,000 hectares. The other coastal brush, just north of Lake Illawarra, was only 1,600 hectares in area. Oxley noted in his report of December 1826 that nine tenths of the cedar shipped to Sydney was loaded at the Kiama boat harbour, and that the cedar from the Five Islands brush, shipped from “a small bay called Wollongong”, was “of trifling consequence”.

Alexander Harris (an early Australian writer and also a timber-getter) described the Kiama cedar grounds in 1825/1826: “*at the time of which I write, nearly a hundred pair of sawyers had gradually come down from Sydney and gathered into this mountain, and were (as they continued to be for years afterwards) slaughtering away in all directions, it will not be wondered at that the pride of the Five Island Cedar Brush is long since gone*”. He described how the sawn flitches were hauled to the beach by bullock drays on ‘cedar roads’; the traffic on these roads was such that on any given morning two or three drays could be expected to pass along one of the roads by 9am.

The brush provided a haven for runaway convicts, “bushrangers,” who found work with the sawyers as pit men, fallers and labourers. When Harris described the scenes of debauchery on the beach at Kiama, as the sawyers loaded the cedar planks on the boats and received in return kegs of spirits, he included mention of

the bushrangers mingling with the crowds and sharing in the celebration: "having mostly been prisoners themselves, it was a point of honour among the sawyers to help them as much as they could". This is Harris's wonderfully evocative description of the very effective warning signal that was developed in the brush: as soon as a soldier or constable was seen on the edge of the brush, "*Crack! Crack! Crack! goes a gun three times in succession, as quickly as it can be loaded and fired. Then as soon as that is heard the gang in all directions repeat the signal till the woods are ringing and the hills echoing for miles*". With that signal the runaways would melt away into the thick brush.

In mid-1826, the Governor recalled "all Permissions, granted to individuals, to cut Cedar on unlocated ground" and imposed a duty of a halfpenny a foot on cedar cut on unlocated ground. He called for new applications for allocation of cedar grounds so that the Cedar Grounds could be "duly apportioned," and gave notice that "*all ships bringing in cedar or other timber to Port Jackson, will not be allowed to discharge cargo until the Master has reported to Naval Officer and declared the quantity of cedar on board, place from where shipped, whether cut on located or unlocated ground, and if located ground, the name of the Proprietor*". The duty imposed, which amounted to 4/2d per 100 feet, was a significant impost on the cedar trade in relation to the other costs of production, which Oxley estimated at 12/- per 100 feet landed in Sydney. It was not levied on cedar from located ground, which conferred a considerable

commercial advantage on Berry and Wollstonecraft's cedar operations.

Governor Darling explained to his superiors in London that the halfpenny duty "was established as a measure of Policy at the solicitation of the neighbouring landholders". The cedar cutters were cutting down the landholders' timber, trespassing on their properties, and practising "vice of the most abominable kinds".

Berry and Wollstonecraft, and Thomas Hyndes at Toolijooah, were the only neighbours of the Kiama cedar grounds, and in April 1826 Berry and Wollstonecraft had written to the Governor to complain about the "unprotected and perilous state of our Establishment upon the Shoal Haven River". Amongst their tales of depredation, they referred to "a horde of unlicensed Cedar Cutters, consisting of Sawyers and nominal labourers [who] have taken possession of the whole space which intervenes between the 5 Islands and our Northern Boundary". They were concerned that this horde was composed of ticket of leave men and runaways, "the most lawless and depraved of our Colonial population," that there were women living with them, and that their own convicts were visiting them occasionally and taking advantage of their abundant supplies of spirits. Berry and Wollstonecraft asked for a police or military presence in their district, but at the time received short shrift from the Governor, who instead suggested that it would be a good idea if they were to ensure that one of the partners was always at the estate. The *Monitor* newspaper, which took a jaundiced view of the cedar duty and the role of



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Berry and Wollstonecraft in its inception, suggested that the partners were “aided, abetted, and comforted by Mr M’Leay [the Colonial Secretary] and family, who, in those days, were continually trotting up to “the crow’s nest” (Wollstonecraft’s home). That there may be some truth to this perception is suggested by Macleay’s annotation for the Governor on Berry and Wollstonecraft’s letter: “A long but well written Letter on an important subject”.

The Surveyor General was despatched to survey the Crown’s southern cedar grounds around Kiama to facilitate their apportionment among applicants for leases. Oxley duly surveyed the cedar grounds and reported to the Colonial Secretary in December 1826. Oxley reported that around forty pairs of sawyers were working in the brush. He found that the sawyers had an effective method of determining ownership of the cedar amongst themselves, without any disputes, and that apportionment between individuals would injure the interests of all parties to the cedar trade. He instead focussed on defining the boundaries between Crown and private lands to prevent disputes between the cedar cutters and neighbouring landholders. He also found that Berry and Wollstonecraft’s sawyers had “from three to four thousand feet cut and laying on the Crown lands”. Oxley reported that there was little or no cedar remaining on private lands in the area, the best having long since been removed.

In October 1826, four cedar boats were wrecked off the Five Islands, and in April 1827 another boat was wrecked on the beach ‘at the Five Islands, called Kyarmara’ so business was clearly continuing as usual at Kiama despite the Governor’s order. Oxley in his report to the Colonial Secretary commented that *‘The fertility of the soil and the advantages of water carriage render the lands on which the cedar grows peculiarly well adapted to cultivation by small settlers ... after the cedar is removed, the quantity of such land thus disposable is fully sufficient for 300 families, each receiving from 70 to 30 acres.’*

Within a decade of Oxley’s comments, the township of Kiama was subdivided, and the clearing and cultivating had begun.

The cedar traders were only interested in the large mature trees, so the cedar getters only took around one tree to the acre of rainforest, and quickly exhausted the cedar resource. This is demonstrated by Oxley’s report that there was little or no cedar remaining on private land around Kiama by the end of 1826. The cedar getters moved to the Manning River by 1828 and then quickly up the north coast. As settlers moved into the Kiama and Shoalhaven areas in the later nineteenth century and cleared the land for farming, small quantities of cedar continued to be shipped to Sydney up to the turn of the century.

Ulladulla

In 1827, the Reverend Thomas Kendall, who had recently returned from missionary work in New Zealand, obtained the promise of a grant from Governor Darling. He went to Kiama, but found, as Oxley had reported, that all the cedar had been cut on the private lands. In 1828 he sailed south along the coast in search of cedar, accompanied by two pairs of sawyers and an aboriginal guide who showed him Ulladulla harbour and the district’s cedar stands, at the southernmost extent of the red cedar’s natural range.

Kendall took up 1,280 acres close to present day Ulladulla, and began harvesting cedar. Between August 1831 and May 1832, he took five cargoes of cedar to Sydney in the *Brisbane*, his single masted cutter. On Kendall’s final voyage, later that year, the vessel was lost off Jervis Bay with all hands, including Thomas Kendall himself.

When George Dent arrived at Currambene Creek in 1861 the local blacks told him that the cedar laden vessel, overturned, probably out in the ocean, and drifted into the Bay and onto the beach about two miles north of Currambene Creek. Parts of the wreckage were visible for many years. The death at sea of the Reverend Thomas Kendall serves to underline the primitive and hazardous nature of the shipping technology available in the colony in the early nineteenth century.

Three more loads of cedar were sent from Ulladulla by coasters to Sydney in the eight months after Kendall’s death before the trade appears to have ceased, with the exception of a single cargo of cedar which left Ulladulla in 1843.

This brief instance of cedar getting at Ulladulla in the 1830s, at the southern limit of the species’ range, is significant in that it represents the only extension of the forest industry south of the Shoalhaven River before 1861.

Thereafter, the cedar trade followed the remaining cedar resource up the coast of New South Wales for the next forty or fifty years.

This is a significantly truncated extract from Leith Davis’ PhD thesis *Spotted Gum and Ironbark: An Environmental History of the South Coast New South Wales Forest Industry*. The full work can be accessed at https://researchers-admin.westernsydney.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/94895803/uws_59927.pdf We thank Dr Leith Davis for allowing us to include this article in *Recollections*.

CORRECTION

In the last issue of *Recollections* we indicated that John Robertson was perhaps the first farmer settling in the Wyndham area. That should have read John Robinson.

10 Questions



How well do you know your history of the NSW South Coast? Test your knowledge with this fun, 10 question quiz. The answers are on page 18.

- 1.** The main north-south road is the Princes Highway. What was it previously called?
- 2.** Captain John Nutting has a good reason, perhaps a unique personal reason, for disliking Bherwerre Beach (near Sussex Inlet). Why?
- 3.** Which famous World War II General spent a week, right in the middle of World War II, at Wonboyn (south of Eden) and why?
- 4.** What is the link that Mollymook had with Newcastle (and don't suggest roads!)?

- 5.** The Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company, that operated from 1858 to the early 1950s, was known locally as what?
- 6.** Why was Moruya granite selected for use during the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge?
- 7.** What South Coast water feature was the work of convicts, supervised by Hamilton Hume?
- 8.** What name did Captain Cook give to Barunguba (Montague Island)?
- 9.** A massive flood in 1925 lifted the steamer *Bermagui* from the Moruya River over the river bank and into the town's swimming hole. What happened to the Bermagui immediately after that?
- 10.** Where was this iconic Australian photograph, above, taken and when?



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BOOK REVIEWS

CLEVER MEN: How worlds collided on the scientific expedition to Arnhem Land of 1948

by Martin Thomas (Professor of History, ANU)

In 1948 an expedition of American and Australian scientists ventured to Arnhem Land to investigate traditional Aboriginal life and the tropical environment. It was backed by National Geographic, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Australian government. It was billed as 'the biggest scientific expedition in history'.

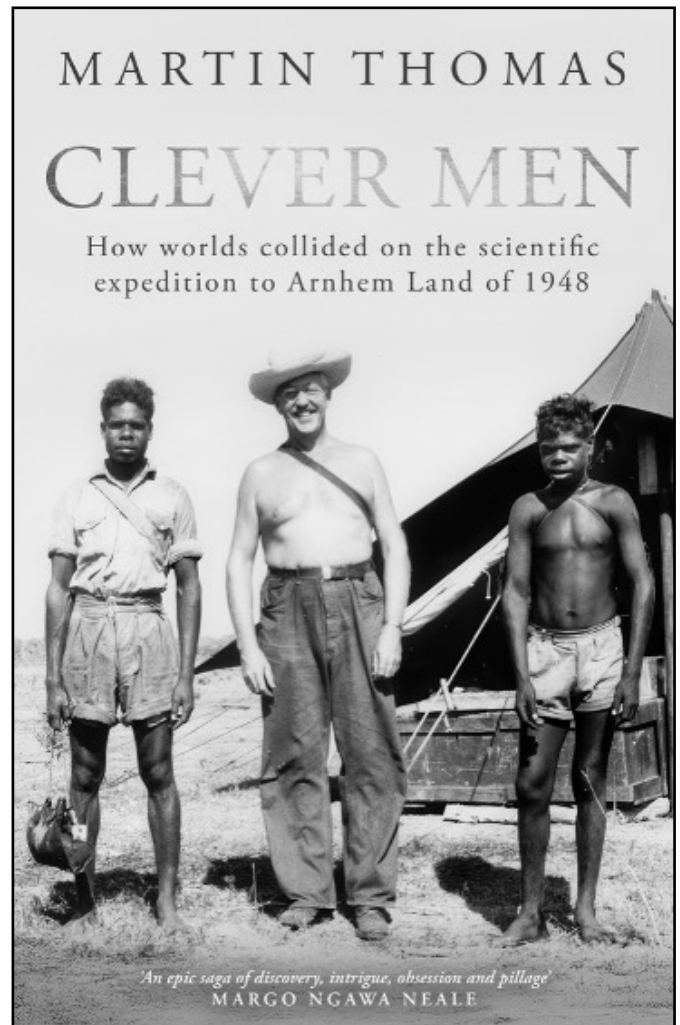
Clever Men is a meandering account of that expedition – an expedition that turned toxic.

The book is 406 pages long. The story of the expedition itself could probably have been condensed to 75 pages; and it takes to page 102 in the book for the party to actually start their expedition! It is, as I suggest, a meandering account – but an extremely interesting, very readable, meandering account.

To illustrate: very early in the venture the party watched some Aboriginals dancing near Darwin, whilst they were still on their way to their Arnhem Land destination. Five pages are devoted to analysing these dances, including: *In the corroborees, each performer wore a naga (loin cloth) and had clan designs painted on his torso in white ochre or clay. The dances 'are all of the stamping-leg type', wrote McCarthy, 'with body twisting & this is repeated by each man'. As a newcomer to this type of performance, he was impressed by the strenuousness of the dancing, 'which must have kept these men in wonderful condition'. He was also struck by the dancers' exuberance and jubilation: the spontaneity of the 'laughing, scolding, directing'. Dancing of this type is highly technical and extensively rehearsed. The quality of the performance is closely evaluated and, if necessary, criticised by other performers. There is an element of competition in these performances; it is a basic matter of pride to get it right. McCarthy noted how the most accomplished performers might end a sequence by challenging the others to match what they had just seen...*

In contrast to ballet and much modern dance, which is aerial in inspiration if not in actuality, there is no lifting and very little springing from the ground in northern Australian dancing. Far from attempting to defy gravity, the contact between the performer and the Earth is constantly stressed.

In Aboriginal dance, an ensemble of performers can emerge from the darkness. Ever so gradually, they approach their cross-legged audience like an incoming tide. The 'foot-stamping' that caught the attention of the 1948 observers emphasises the terrestrial connection. The feet do not just stamp the ground: they revolve vigorously, flicking up dirt or sand to form knee-high



clouds that travel with the troupes as if they were riding a spumy wave. The theme of the dance and the personages assumed by characters can vary enormously. Sometimes they depict characters from stories or ancestral figures; at other times animals. Sometimes the performers are simply being themselves. Understanding of the ecology is fundamental to this type of dancing since it is based on intimate observation and contact with the natural, especially the animal world.

The expedition followed on from a very successful lecture tour of the United States by Charles Mountford, a self-taught ethnologist (a person who studies the characteristics of different peoples and cultures) and filmmaker from South Australia. It was supposedly to provide a scientific examination of 'undiscovered' tribes in Arnhem Land, an area which he (incorrectly) described as 'uninhabited' by Europeans, and to 'save for posterity imperilled cultures little influenced by white civilisation' – but, in reality, the party only visited a couple of missions and a private 'station' where Aboriginal children were boarded so that the manager and his wife would receive the child endowment payments for those under their care. The Aboriginals they were to encounter were, therefore, anything but 'stone age savages'. A study of the area's flora and fauna was then added to the expedition's objectives.

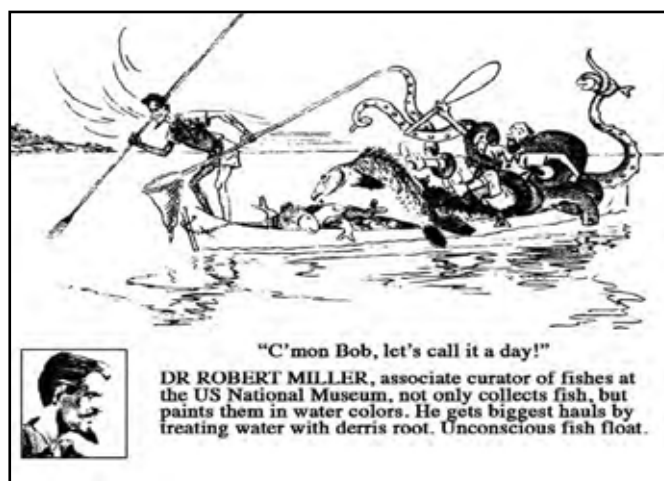
Leading scientists in a variety of disciplines from America and Australia were the main participants

(rivalry between the two nations that were represented became part of the problem with the expedition, especially when it came time to divide up the 'spoils' – the artworks and other samples gathered) and Mountford (a non-Academic, and therefore immediately looked down upon and mistrusted by the Academic participants) was appointed the expedition leader.

Mountford quickly became the catalyst for the expedition turning noxious. He was not a good organiser (the party arrived in Darwin with tons of equipment but Mountford had made no arrangements to ship it to the first of the three places to be visited; the equipment and three of the American expeditioners eventually arrived seven weeks later, more than half way through the party's stay in that area [meanwhile, most participants had been flown into the camp by the RAAF]...and, with initial food having been exhausted, the RAAF was called upon to urgently resupply the camp), he was anything but an inspiring leader (seemingly becoming totally focussed on amassing a collection of bark paintings which, it seems, he had intended to sell once he returned to Adelaide), and he was completely deaf to any criticisms that his fellow expeditioners had.

Discontent expressed by other expedition members led to the Administrator of the Northern Territory, the Director of the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and the American Consul to Adelaide travelling to the expedition camp where Mountford was relieved of his leadership of the group. However, his planned replacement – an American Academic – refused to accept the offered position of leader. One day later Mountford was again the expedition's 'leader'.

A number of outsiders joined the expedition for short periods. Some of these proved to be useful, significantly facilitating some of the research. Interestingly, one of these outsiders was Eric Jolliffe, the well-known Australian cartoonist, who produced a number of sketches (humorously) supposedly observing the expeditioners from an Aboriginal perspective (see page 1) and who drew caricatures of most of the expedition participants.



Jolliffe's cartoon of Dr Robert Miller, an American Ichthyologist from the Smithsonian Institution.

So, was the expedition a success?

Certainly research was undertaken and specimens/artefacts were collected: 13,500 plant specimens, 30,000 fish, 850 birds, 460 animals, several thousand Aboriginal implements and weapons, together with photographs and drawings of a large number of cave paintings...There was also a collection of several hundred Aboriginal bark paintings and two hundred string figures. In addition to the physical collections of natural history and ethnological specimens, each scientist had written extensive field notes as a basis for his scientific papers. There were also many hundreds of monochrome and coloured photographs as well as several miles of colour film on aboriginal life and natural history.

Numerous articles, books and films were produced as a result of the expedition...and it has since provided historians with a fertile topic for them to study!

The major downsides of the expedition, apart from the animosity among its participants, was that film taken of Aboriginal ceremonies on the understanding it was for private scientific study was incorporated into publicly released films, and bones were taken without consent from Aboriginal burial sites. Decades later these were repatriated from America and were appropriately buried on country. Needless to say, the Aboriginals who had cooperated with the expedition were greatly offended.

Postscript: I wondered how Mountford's leadership of this 1948 expedition has been viewed by other historians, so checked his entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Interestingly, its only reference to this 'biggest scientific expedition in history' reads: *He led a N.G.S.-funded field-trip to Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, in 1948. He published a detailed account of the region's art and produced three more films. Collections of bark-paintings gathered on this trip were distributed among the country's art galleries and museums, influencing future acquisition policies* – a quite different portrayal to that presented by Martin Thomas!

Review by Peter Lacey

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

South Coast History Society is always delighted (whenever possible) to provide a speaker to talk to South Coast community groups with 20 or more attendees. There is no charge. We're currently taking bookings for the late January to March 2026 period – perhaps focusing, for example, on What IS the history of the NSW South Coast?, or South Coast Shipwrecks, or Extraordinary South Coast Women. Enquiries: **0448 160 852**.

Townsend of the Ranges

by Peter Crowley

This is an amazing book.

First, it's the biography of an amazing man – a pioneering surveyor who worked from 1831 to 1854 and who, coincidentally, had important historic links with the South Coast.

And then, it includes some amazing – in many ways, quite unbelievable – detail about how government surveyors worked and the (generally unacknowledged) enormous impacts they had on the development of Australia.

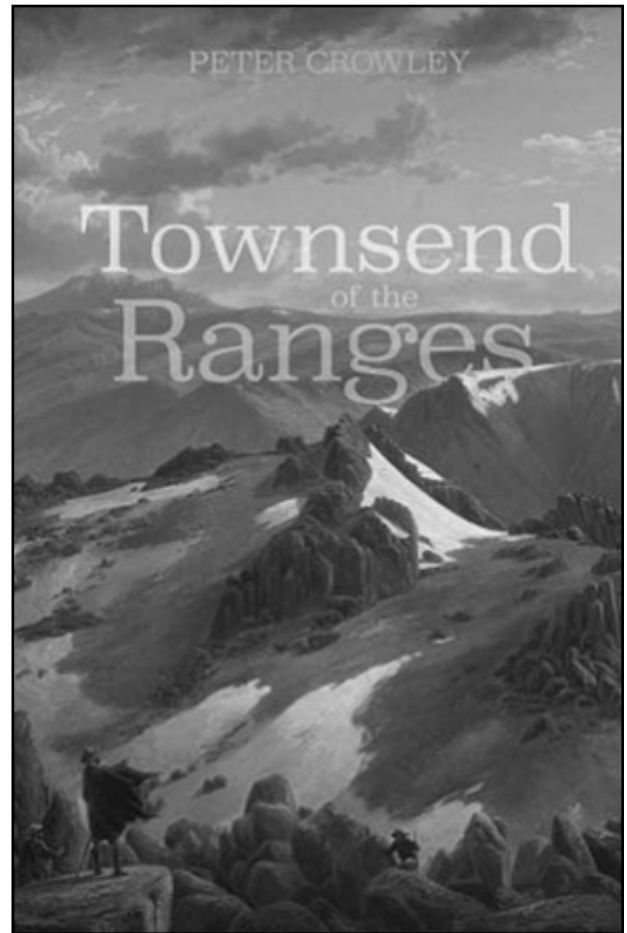
'Townsend' was Thomas Scott Townsend (1812 – 1869). This is how Peter Crowley describes him:

Townsend was a surveyor who spent much of his career in the bush mapping rivers and ranges...The Surveyor General of New South Wales, Thomas Mitchell, praised him (an unusual thing), Deputy Surveyor General Samuel Perry was in awe of him, and Governor Gipps regarded him as the best officer in the survey department. In official circles, it was a generally held view that the colony could not do without his services. However, he was so good at his job, carrying it out efficiently and without the kind of sensational misadventure that made its way into newspapers, that the public barely noticed him. Even in his lifetime, his name was unlikely to ring a bell for most colonists.

Today, little has changed. Few have heard of Townsend's achievements or know his importance as the greatest of all surveyors who mapped the wild ranges of south-eastern Australia. And yet, if you live in New South Wales or Victoria, there is a good chance that your town or district has been influenced by his work: he covered a huge extent of territory and worked furiously hard in a career that spanned two decades. At the time I write this, Townsend has no entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography (or Wikipedia). His digital footprint is very small indeed. While other notable surveyors and explorers have migrated successfully to the internet, where they enjoy an afterlife, Townsend has not. The reason is that he was scarcely noticed in the first place.

It is true that the colonial surveyors are a neglected group in our history in general, but the gap between Townsend's legacy and his recognition is particularly wide. There isn't a monument or plaque anywhere in the community to tell you who he was. It might be thought to have a mountain named after you was honour enough. [Australia's second highest mountain is Mount Townsend.] But what good is having your name given to a feature in the landscape if no-one has a clue who you were or what you did? Townsend wrote at the end of his career that his contribution had been overlooked. The passing of the years justified his pessimism.

At around the time that Thomas Townsend started working in NSW, squatters were beginning to move into lands beyond the 'limits of location' (a semi-circular



line drawn about 400km around the centre of Sydney by Governor Darling in 1829, outside which no one was permitted to graze their herds or stock). By 1835, what had started as a trickle turned into a flood of squatters who were then simply helping themselves to vast tracts of land. The Government's response from 1836 was to introduce 'squatter's rights' that allowed farmers to temporarily occupy land beyond the 'limits of location' for an annual payment of £10. (This system was soon changed, with squatters able to purchase the land they had occupied, and remaining land was then auctioned off to pastoralists and other settlers.) Each of these holdings, of course, needed to be officially recognised and documented (so the government could collect its fees!), so surveyors were sent to map each holding and to chart the surrounding area. This was a massive job because, at the time, there were few if any maps of the area outside the 'limits of location' to guide the surveyors – so they were, in practice, as much explorers as they were surveyors.

Colonial surveyors such as Townsend were sent to various areas tasked with mapping what was there – natural features such as rivers and mountain peaks (Townsend, for example, worked in the South Coast area in 1842-1843 and surveyed/mapped the entire Bega River from its source to its mouth at the sea), and were required to report on the area's suitability for grazing or agriculture, and whether there were any indications of the existence of precious metals. They then selected sites for towns or villages (which, in the cases of Eden

and Pambula, Townsend also laid out) and other areas that should be reserved for government use. And the boundaries of properties already occupied by squatters, or to be sold, were surveyed and mapped (the reason why Townsend was sent to the South Coast, and then surveyed Eden township, was because Benjamin Boyd was wanting to purchase land at Twofold Bay; Townsend himself subsequently purchased land in Eden township, as did Boyd – who did so with the intention of never developing it, thereby hoping to prevent Eden becoming a competitor to his own town, Boydtown!). These surveys then effectively determined where roads and river crossings would be sited.

Thomas Townsend spent some time mapping the Snowy Mountains (hence the title of the book). Among other things, he was looking for the source of the Murray River, which was important because the powers-that-be in London had decreed that the western end of what was to become the Black-Allan Line (the straight line section of the NSW-Victorian border) should be fixed at the most easterly source of the Murray River. He may also have become the first European to reach the top of Mt Kosciuszko (there is some doubt whether Strzelecki, who named Mt Kosciuszko, stood atop the mountain or whether he, in fact, actually climbed to the top of Mt Townsend).

It's apparent that Townsend was a workaholic... or, was abnormally driven. But he was exceptionally productive, regularly sending his high-quality maps and reports to Sydney – which is why he was so greatly admired by his superiors.

However, his every career advance, every promotion, only occurred as a result of Townsend reminding his bosses that he should be rewarded for his loyalty, industriousness and for frequently having to work in extremely unfavourable conditions, and that he should not be overlooked when promotions were being considered. Sadly, just as it seems he might become a successor to Sir Thomas Mitchell as Surveyor General of NSW he suffered a mental breakdown. This ultimately led to his death by suicide – a tragic end to a remarkable career – and to him being buried in an unmarked grave (which is yet another instance of his considerable lifetime achievements going largely unrecognised).

After reading the book, one can only hope that, before too long, Thomas Townsend receives some belated recognition with, at least, an entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. (All the information that will be needed for that to be written is included in *Townsend of the Ranges*.)

This book is most certainly worth reading. But it deserved to have been better produced by National Library of Australia Publishing, whose books are normally of exceptional quality. Specifically, the reproduction of Townsend's maps leave a lot to be desired (many are simply illegible), and the text would have benefitted greatly from the inclusion of a number of maps (even rough mud maps) that outlined the broad paths that Townsend trod on his many pioneering expeditions throughout south-east Australia.

Review by Peter Lacey



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What IS the history of the NSW South Coast?

What a good question!

In reality, it's a collection of many smaller histories – the histories of individual towns and villages, plus the stories of the area's pioneers (mostly males!) and of significant women, plus of exploration, of mining, of bushrangers, of shipping...and so forth.

But there are also some themes that are common to the whole South Coast, from Kiama to Kiah...and beyond. And understanding these immediately explains why the South Coast has developed into what it is today.

9 of those broad historical 'determinants' have been identified and included in a small 16-page booklet that has recently been produced by the South Coast History Society – *'A Concise History of the NSW South Coast'*.

It's free. It's now available from many libraries, visitor information centres and museums on the South Coast. And it can be downloaded from www.southcoasthistory.org.au

Anyone seeking a simple, very basic overview of the history of the NSW South Coast (such as visitors to the area, those who have recently moved to the area, school students, etc.) will find this *Concise History of the NSW South Coast* totally fits the bill. And, for those interested in more information about any particular aspect of the area's incredibly fascinating history, this *Concise History* also outlines exactly where it can be found.

We suggest it's definitely worth grabbing a copy!

REMARKABLE SOUTH COAST WOMEN

Mary Braidwood Mowle

Mary Braidwood Mowle (1827 – 1857) is probably best known for having kept diaries describing mid-nineteenth century life in rural NSW. Her first set of diaries, kept from 1850 to 1852, relate to her time living on properties around what is now Canberra. Then, from 1853 to 1855, she kept diaries whilst living in Eden where her husband was the sub-collector of customs.

Her Eden diaries have been described as 'providing the most intimate glimpse that has survived of life in the mid-nineteenth century in a small but important seaport [Eden]. She detailed ships' movements, the arrival and departure of south coast and Monaro families, and whaling operations at Twofold Bay, as well as the day-to-day work involved in raising and educating a young family, the hazards of childbirth and childhood illnesses, and the social interchanges in a small community.'

Mary was born in Durham, England. Her father was a naval surgeon who was working as a surgeon superintendent on ships that were transporting convicts to New South Wales. The family joined him on his ninth voyage to Australia, in 1836, emigrating to New South Wales.

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Soon after arriving in Australia, Mary's mother gave birth to a son, but he died in infancy. Five months later, Mary's mother also died. Mary was then just 10 years old.

Her father settled on land near Braidwood, was appointed a magistrate, and became a prominent land holder in the area. It seems that, at this time, Mary received a rudimentary education. However, the family lost their home in 1840 in a fire, apparently due to the 'supposed incaution of servant'. And then they were severely impacted by a prolonged drought. In November 1843, her father committed suicide.

Penniless, an orphan, and just aged 16, Mary moved to Tasmania to live with her uncle. There she met and, in 1845, married Stewart Marjoribanks Mowle.

Stewart Mowle worked for and was mentored by Sir Terrence Murray who had a property called Yarrowlumla (Yarralumla) near Lake George and another in the area called Woden. He was later was to become a successful NSW politician. During this time Mary compiled her first diaries.

In 1852, Stewart Mowle (perhaps with influence from Terrence Murray) was then given a government



Image: nla.obj-3419856378

job with a regular salary – as the sub collector of customs at Eden, so Stewart and Mary moved there, and Mary started writing her Eden diary (now held in the National Library of Australia in Canberra).

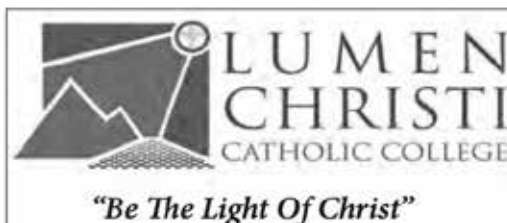
The Mowles left Eden in 1855 when Stewart was transferred to the Customs House in Sydney.

Mary had six children – a daughter born in 1846 in Queanbeyan, a son born in 1848 in Queanbeyan, a daughter born in 1849 in Queanbeyan, a daughter born in 1851 in Queanbeyan, a daughter born in Eden in 1854 (who died at age 2), and a son born in Balmain, Sydney in 1857.

Mary died sixteen days after that last birth from childbirth complications. She was then aged 30.

Her story and excerpts from her diaries are included in the book in 'A Colonial Woman: The Life and Times of Mary Braidwood Mowle' by Patricia Clarke, which was published in 1986. There are many references to visiting, or being visited by, 'neighbours' – including those in Merimbula, Pambula, Kameruka and those around Twofold Bay – who are now remembered for being the prominent pioneers from the area. And her notes record details of the arrivals to and departures from Twofold Bay of many ships and steamers – these, of course, being the family's only link with the outside world, which is reflected in Mary's frequent expressions of joy when mail arrives and of disappointment when it does not.

Occasional personal views about her visitors and neighbours remind us that her diaries were just that – personal diaries: 'Tuesday 29th. Started about eleven



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o'clock and reached Kamooruka (Kameruka) at four. We had a delightful drive the road being very good & the country through which we passed excessively pretty. We stopped about half way for an hour & had some lunch – liked Mrs Walker's appearance exceedingly – she is a pretty looking English woman, with bright sparkling eyes & has lady like unaffected manners...; 'Wednesday 27th. Very much annoyed in the afternoon by Stewart's having to pay £1 to a medical man belonging to the 'Tory' for extracting one of Florence's teeth - I never heard of such a shameful imposition.' (Eden did not have a doctor or dentist at that time, so residents relied on visiting ships' doctors providing medical assistance when required.); 'Sunday 9th. Mr Price having come down we all went to the Court House to attend Divine Service – found a great many people assembled & two gay wedding parties – arrived just in time to witness the ceremony & see poor Elsie Davidson's (from the famous Davidson whaling family of Kiah) fate in life settled by her marriage with (William) Prescott, a confirmed and hopeless drunkard – she has, I fear, laid up for herself a bitter portion & rendered her future lot miserable & dreary, but the old Mother has been I believe, the principal cause of the Match & is consequently much to blame...'

(Details about 34 other significant NSW South Coast women can be found at www.southcoasthistory.org.au)

10 Answers

The questions are on page 11. These are the answers:

1. The Princes Highway was previously called the 'Prince's Highway'. It was named in 1920 in honour of the-then Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) with a hope that he might travel along it from Melbourne to Sydney during a visit to Australia later that year. Its name was changed to Princes Highway in 1941.

2. Captain John Nutting was shipwrecked twice on Bherwerre Beach. The first time he was captaining the *Hive*, a 37-metre three-masted barquentine that was transporting 252 Irish male convicts to Sydney along with £10,000 of coins for the government, when it ran aground on 10th December 1835 in a strong wind and dense fog. Captain Nutting then joined a small government schooner, the *Blackbird*, that was sent to salvage stores from the *Hive*. On its first day in the area, a southerly gale blew up, the *Blackbird's* anchors were unable to hold her, and she was run onto the beach where she broke up.



The Hive

3. General Thomas Blamey, then the Commander of the Australian Army, spent a week at Wonboyn after the Japanese had effectively been driven from Papua (but not yet from New Guinea) in the battles at Gona, Buna and Sanananda, which are described by the Australian War Memorial as 'among Australia's toughest fights of the war'. He travelled to Wonboyn to fish, with fishing being Blamey's favourite recreational activity.



4. The connection is the mineral silica. In the late 1910s a mining industry was established on Mollymook's southern headland to extract silica for use in the manufacture of firebricks. Most of the silica mined at Mollymook was shipped to BHP in Newcastle to be used in bricks that lined its blast furnaces. Mollymook's silica had a purity of up to 98% and it was often claimed to be the purest deposit of silica in the world. It was also relatively easy to extract because most deposits were situated at a depths of between just 3'6" and 6'. Initially the silica was transported by horse and dray to Ulladulla harbour for shipment north. Later, a tramway was built along the Prince's Highway connecting Mollymook with Ulladulla Harbour. By 1924 it became uneconomic to mine the silica deposits at Mollymook, so operations moved northwards with a silica crushing facility and a jetty being erected on Bannister Headland. Another tramway was built across Narrawallee Inlet to transport the mineral from nearby Conjola. The industry declined during World War II and eventually disappeared.

5. The Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company was commonly known as the 'Pig and Whistle Line'.

*From Sydney down to Eden
and all the ports between
at every wharf and jetty
it is a lively scene.*

*Hear the whistle blow, it's time to go below
The hawser's free, we're out to sea
We're leaving here on time.
Hear the whistle blow, it's time to go below
We're off at last, lets raise a glass
To the Pig and Whistle Line.*

*The noise it is cacophonous
When livestock goes below;
There's pigs and cows and horses
As the gantry swings them low.*

*Hear the whistle blow...
But when you hear the whistle
You better be aboard -
Passengers will soon regret
If the whistle they've ignored.*

*Hear the whistle blow...
Merimbula waits for no man
When it's time to slip the lines.
The Merimbula is departing
On the Pig and Whistle Line.*

*Hear the whistle blow, it's time to go below
The hawser's free, we're out to sea
We're leaving here on time.
Hear the whistle blow, it's time to go below
We're off at last, lets raise a glass
To the Pig and Whistle Line.*

(from the Kiama Sea Shanty Club)

6. Moruya granite was of a high quality and there were ample available supplies of it. But the major reason it was selected for use on the Sydney Harbour Bridge was economic: it was taken from a quarry that the NSW Government already owned (it had been operating since 1878 when granite was quarried for the construction of the Moruya River's northern breakwater; the quarry was leased to Dorman, Long and Company, who were contracted to build the Sydney Harbour Bridge, for the duration of that project) and it could be most economically transported from quarry to the bridge. The government quarry was situated right on the bank of the Moruya River, and steamers were able to deposit the granite right at the northern and southern worksites for the emerging Sydney Harbour Bridge. Dorman, Long and Co had three steamers specially built to convey the stone from Moruya to Sydney.

7. Berry's Canal, linking the Shoalhaven River and the Crookhaven River. The Shoalhaven River has a sandbar at its mouth, preventing Alexander Berry (and others) from being able to ship goods to or from his emerging settlement at Broughton Creek (now Berry) so, in June 1822, he contracted Hamilton Hume to supervise three convicts to dig a 209-yard canal to connect the Shoalhaven River with the Crookhaven River that had free access to the sea. The task took them just 12 days. Berry's Canal was the first canal constructed in Australia and is the only one that was dug by hand.

8. On 21st April 1770, Captain James Cook sighted a 'pretty high mountain laying near the shore which on

account of its figure I named Mount Dromedary' and 'a point running out from under Mount Dromedary' which he named Cape Dromedary. He was mistaken and what he actually saw was an island – Montague Island (Barunguba). The error was corrected by the captain of the Second Fleet convict transport *Surprize* who named the island after George Montagu-Dunk, 2nd Earl of Halifax.

9. A flood of the Moruya River in 1925 broke all records. It overtopped the Moruya Bridge by two feet (0.7 metres), inundated the town and the flood plains north of the river, and swept the *Bermagui*, a 144-foot, 400-ton coastal steamer, over the granite retaining wall on the riverbank and into the town's swimming hole. The vessel had been anchored mid-stream in the river, but the force of the flood simply caused her to drag her anchors. It then became a race-against-time to get her out of the swimming hole because, once the river dropped to its normal level, the *Bermagui* would have been left sitting high and dry on mud or sand and then, as newspapers at the time reported, 'the chances of ever shifting her would have been very gloomy'. 25-foot of the granite retaining wall was removed and a channel was dug through the sand to the river to free the vessel. She was undamaged.

10. This quintessentially Australian photograph is 'Sunbaker' by Max Dupain. It was taken in early January 1938 while Max and his friends were camping at Culburra Beach. The man in the photograph was Harold Salvage, a British builder, who was one of the group.

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