

FROM THE TABLELANDS TO THE SEA



27/4/18

A Contextual History

Former Pristine Waters Council Area (Ulmarra & Nymboida Shires):
Clarence Valley Council LGA



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Former Ulmarra and Nymboida Shires

Community based heritage study

Volume 2 Thematic History

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COVER IMAGE: RAMORNIE STATION ON THE CLARENCE RIVER (C.1880); PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH STILLWELL, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW, NO. ML SV/17

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The following is a contextual history of the former Pristine Waters Council area on the North Coast of NSW. The locality is now part of the Clarence Valley Council (CVC) LGA, but historically it resulted from the year 2000 amalgamation of two expansive Council areas, below and bordering, the City of Grafton. Namely, the Shires of Ulmarra and Nymboida. This report accompanies the Community based heritage study Clarence Valley Council project funded by the Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Heritage Division.

1.1 Framework

This history of the former Shires of Ulmarra and Nymboida is presented chronologically in this report with subdivisions based on key localities, events, groups, and individuals. This approach is somewhat counter to the thematic histories that prevail in many heritage reports but was deemed appropriate in order to allow for a flowing and engaging narrative. While the history is presented chronologically, a number of broad national and state historical themes are acknowledged and addressed throughout the body of this report. This report is not designed to be a definitive history of this vast study area. It accompanies the Community based heritage study, which is Volume 1. This report is Volume 2 of the study.

1.2 Themes

The ensuing table summarises current national and state research themes. The heritage items and conservation areas proposed as part of the Community based heritage study demonstrate these themes in their assessed heritage values.

New South Wales Historical Themes	
National Theme	State Theme
Tracing the natural evolution of Australia	Environment (natural)
Peopling Australia	Aboriginal cultures & interactions with other cultures; convicts; migration; ethnic influences
Developing local, regional & national economies	Exploration & events; Pastoralism, agriculture, fishing & forestry; industry & mining; commerce, health & transport; communications; science & technology; events; environment (cultural)
Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs & villages; land tenure & accommodation; utilities; labour & education
Working	Labour
Educating	Education
Governing	Government and administration; defence; law & order; welfare
Developing Australia's cultural life	Domestic life; creative endeavour; leisure; religion & institutions; sport
Marking the phases of life	Birth & death; persons
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/heritagebranch/heritage/themes2006.pdf	

1.3 Resources

Major references and archival resources included:

- State Archives & Records NSW
- State Library of NSW (Mitchell Library)
- Clarence Valley Council Central Library & Branches
- Historical Societies & Museums (various)
- NSW North Coast regional & thematic histories.

1.4 Acknowledgements

Major direct and indirect contributors to this report included:

- Clarence Valley Council
- Deborah Wray (CVC Heritage Advisor)
- Gina Scheer (Cosmos Archaeology)

Information was also kindly provided by the following:

- Roy Bowling (Tucabia)
- Leone Roberts (Eatonsville)
- Bessie Webb (Glenreagh)
- Ross Austen & Gaine Cartmill (Nymboida)
- Clarence Valley Historical Society (especially Nita Child & Hazel Lawson).

1.5 Limitations

Project limitations included:

- Enormity & geographical range of the study area
- Limited time frame & budgetary constraints
- Paucity of readily available information for some localities.

1.6 Authorship

This report was prepared by Cosmos Archaeology (heritage consultants). Most notably, Dan Tuck (heritage sub-consultant) with Gina Scheer (Cosmos Archaeology project manager).

2.0 MUNICIPAL MATTERS

The following section provides summary detail of the somewhat convoluted municipal history of the study area.

2.1 Ulmarra

The Municipal District of Ulmarra was located in the north coast region of New South Wales, on the south bank of the Clarence River, in the parishes of Ulmarra and Lavadia, County of Clarence. It included the villages of Ulmarra, Coldstream (in the east) and Cowper and Brushgrove (to the north). It was incorporated as two wards (North and South) under the *Municipalities Act 1867* (31 Vic. No.12) on 16 November 1871.

Under the *Municipalities Act 1867* the Governor could approve the creation of a borough or municipal district if a petition asking for it was signed by at least 50 persons who were willing to pay municipal taxes. If no counter petition was signed by a greater number of persons within three months, the Governor could proclaim the area a municipality and define its boundaries. A petition asking for the establishment of the Municipal District of Ulmarra was published on 23 June 1871, requesting incorporation of an area of about 45 square miles with a population exceeding 1,000.

On 29 November 1871, the returning officer was appointed and the nomination day for the election of the first six aldermen and two auditors set. The election was held on 10 February 1872. The first mayoral election was held on 16 February 1872 and by 15 May 1872 a town clerk was appointed. By 1876 the population had grown to the point where the municipality was entitled to nine aldermen and an additional ward designation (East) consequent of adjustment.

The Municipal District of Ulmarra became the Municipality of Ulmarra on 31 December 1906. Under the *Local Government Extension Act 1906*. Thereafter the terms 'municipal district' and 'borough' ceased to be used.

Boundary exchanges between the Municipality of Ulmarra and the Shire of Orara took place on 24 July 1912. This generated subsequent changes to the boundaries of all three Ulmarra in May 1913. Six years later, the municipal ward divisions were abolished (10 October 1919).

The *Valuation of Land Act 1916* was applied to the Municipality of Ulmarra on 20 October 1952, under which the Valuer-General took over the valuing of land within the municipality from Council. A valuation list was issued to the Council by 3 December 1952 and thereafter the Council ceased to create valuation books.

A review of local government areas in the Clarence Region was conducted by staff of the Department of Local Government in early 1956. This led to a proposal to merge the ten existing Clarence LGAs into five: one municipality and four shires, which would include new shires centered on Maclean, Coffs Harbour and Bellingen. Due to local opposition, a Commissioner was appointed to inquire and report on the matter. The Commissioner recommended the establishment of six local government areas: one municipality and five shires. The Municipality of Ulmarra was reconstituted as the Shire of Ulmarra on 1 January 1957 with the addition of land from the defunct Shires of Dorrigo and Orara. The Shire of Ulmarra was divided into three ridings (A, B, and C) on 17 January 1958. The first election was held on 9 August 1958.

Boundary exchanges occurred between Ulmarra and the Shire of Coffs Harbour on 1 May 1961, and with the City of Grafton on 27 February 1976 and again on 1 January 1981. The riding divisions of Ulmarra were consequently altered in March 1961, February 1976, and January 1981. The division of the Shire of Ulmarra into ridings was abolished 15 July 1983.

Under s.221(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* the corporate name of all councils was changed by deleting any reference to 'municipality' or 'shire'. However, this was opposed by some local government areas. The *Local Government Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1994* enabled local government areas to retain the words 'municipality' or 'shire' as part of their corporate name if they resolved to do so before 31 December 1994. Ulmarra Shire Council did so.

In November 1999 Ulmarra Shire Council and Nymboida Shire Council sought the permission of the Minister of Local Government for a voluntary amalgamation. The Local Government Boundaries Commission's inquiry began on 18 January 2000. The Boundaries Commission reported to the Minister on 31 March 2000 recommending that the merger should proceed. Ulmarra Shire Council and Nymboida Shire Council became the Pristine Waters Council on 1 July 2000.¹

2.2 Nymboida

The Shire of Nymboida was constituted on 6 August 1913 under the *Local Government Act 1906*, when the Shire of Dorrigo was divided into two local government areas. The western portion (previously A Riding, B Riding and part of C Riding of the Shire of Dorrigo) became the Shire of Nymboida. The Shire of Nymboida was located in north-eastern NSW and included the localities of Buccarumbi, Dalmorton, Dundurrabin and Nymboida. The eastern portion, which had previously been part of C Riding of Dorrigo, became the Shire of Dorrigo. As part of the conditions of the split, all account books and record books of the Shire of Dorrigo were retained by Nymboida - except for the valuation and rate books for C Riding which were retained by the Shire of Dorrigo.

The Shire of Nymboida was divided into 3 ridings on 6 August 1913: A, B and C, each represented by two councilors. The Governor appointed a provisional council of six councilors to each of the reconstituted areas on 6 August 1913, to hold office until the next ordinary triennial election due in January 1914. The provisional council of Nymboida Shire held its first meeting on 15 August at which the first president was elected. The first meeting of the permanent council was held on 5 February 1914.

Boundary alterations with the Shire of Guyra took place on 9 November 1917 and with the Shire of Severn on 25 December 1917. These changes also resulted in changes to the three Ridings.

The *Valuation of Land Act 1916* was applied to the Shire of Nymboida on 20 December 1957. Under this legislation the Valuer-General took over the valuing of land within the shire from Council. Council ceased to create valuation books from 8 January 1958.

As described previously, a review of local government areas in the Clarence Region was conducted by staff of the Department of Local Government in early 1956. The Shire of Nymboida was reconstituted on 1 January 1957 with the addition of some land from the defunct Shire of Dorrigo. The reconstituted Shire of Nymboida was divided into three ridings (A, B and C) on 1 November 1957. The first election was held on 9 August 1959.

In 1994, when the corporate name of all councils was changed by deleting any reference to 'municipality' or 'shire', Nymboida Shire Council retained the word Shire in its name as had Ulmarra. Nymboida Shire Council

¹ This information is a summation of data from State Archives and Records NSW pertaining to Ulmarra (notably NSW Government Gazette notices & Ulmarra Shire Council Minutes c.1871-2000).

and Ulmarra Shire Council amalgamated and became the Pristine Waters Council which began operations on 1 July 2000.²

2.3 Pristine Waters

Pristine Waters Council was a local government body in the north of the Eastern Division of New South Wales. It formed 1 July 2000 by the amalgamation of the former shires of Nymboida and Ulmarra. Pristine Waters replaced Nymboida and Ulmarra as part of the Clarence River County District and the Lower Clarence County Districts.³ The amalgamation was a result of a voluntary proposal from the two shires in November 1999, which followed on from the failure of broader merger discussions with neighbouring areas.

The Pristine Waters local government area bordered the areas of Bellingen and Coffs Harbour to the south; Severn and Guyra to the west; and Copmanhurst, Maclean and the City of Grafton to the north.

In 2004 Pristine Waters was amalgamated with the areas of Copmanhurst and Maclean to form the Clarence Valley Council. As part of the restructure, 152 square kilometres of Pristine Waters was added to neighbouring the Coffs Harbour LGA to the south.⁴

2.4 Ownership

The study area comprises private land interspersed with significant places, parcels, easements and corridors that are held under the jurisdiction of (or managed by) various local, state and federal government entities including:

Federal Government

- AMIA (add others)
- NSW State Government
- NSW Roads & Maritime Services
- NSW Department of Industry (Lands)
- NSW Planning & Environment (Energy & Resources)
- Transport NSW
- Forestry Corporation of NSW
- NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service

The holdings of the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service in particular are notable features of the region and include parts of:

- Gibraltar Ranges National Park
- Washpool National Park
- Yuraygir National Park.

Refer **figures 1 - 4**.

² This is a summation of information from State Archives and Records NSW holdings pertaining to Nymboida (notably NSW Government Gazette notices & Nymboida Shire Council Minutes c.1912-2000)

³ Department of Local Government annual report 1999/2000, p.60

⁴ NSW Government Gazette No.46, 25 February 2004, pp.809-22



FIGURE 1: CLARENCE VALLEY COUCIL MAP (GENERAL)

CVC 2018

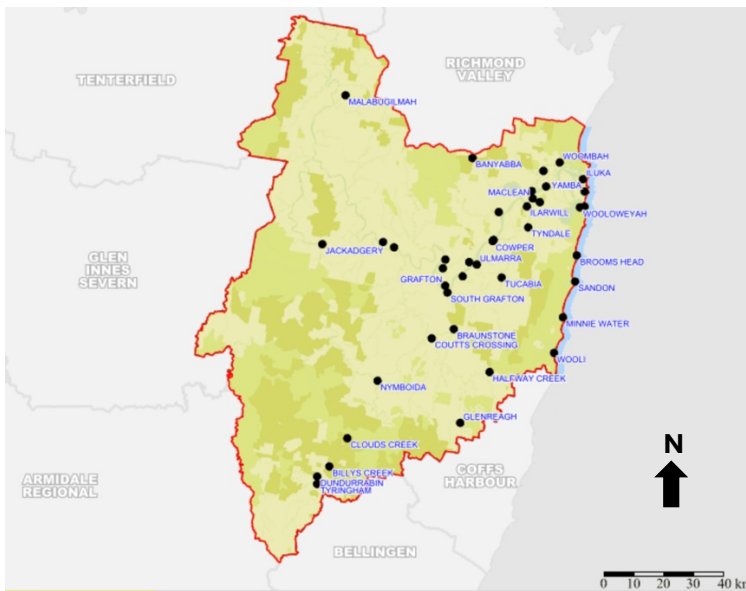


FIGURE 2: CLARENCE VALLEY COUCIL MAP (SETTING)

CVC 2018



FIGURE 3: CLARENCE VALLEY COUNCIL MAP (STUDY AREAS: FORMER NYMBOIDA-ULMARRA LGAS)

CVC 2017

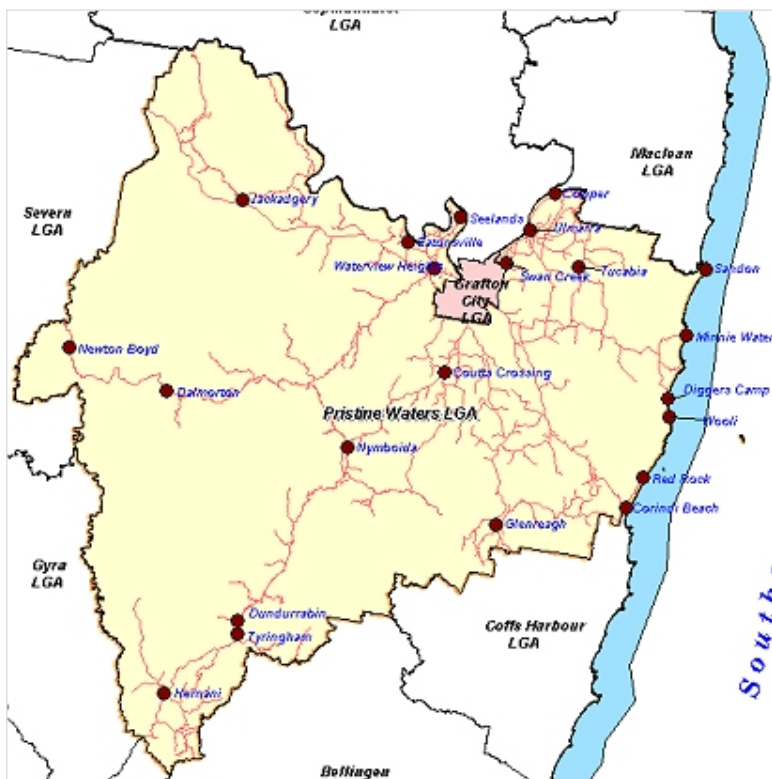


FIGURE 4: REDUNDANT COUNCIL MAP SHOWING (STUDY AREA: FORMER PRISTINE WATERS LGA)

Pandora archived files at www.pristinewaters.nsw.gov.au

3.0 ENVIRONMENT

The following section provides a contextual history of the study area. As this history is inextricably linked with that of the City of Grafton, the broader history of this locality – though detailed extensively elsewhere – is also included where relevant.

The study area extends east-west across an area of some 115 kilometres and north-south over 160 kilometres. Spanning the Great Dividing Range (Gibraltar Ranges) it takes in the temperate New England Plateau to the west and the river plains, coastal hinterland, headlands and beaches of the Mid to Far North Coast. The area features parts of the largest of the North Coast's notable big rivers (the Clarence) and includes a vast range of landscapes and landforms. The northernmost notable settlement is Cowper; the southernmost Hernani. The westernmost locality is the ranges-tablelands former township of Newton Boyd; the easternmost the sleepy, river-coast settlement of Sandon.

3.1 Coast

The study area fronts the Pacific Ocean between the coastal settlements of Sandon and Corindi and the coastal portion of the study area is effectively the area between these coastal settlements and the Pacific Highway. The immediate coastal strip is defined by salt and freshwater lakes; headlands connected by long curved beaches and associated dune systems; and intermittent heathlands and swamps. A low-altitude, coastal range forms a forested backdrop to the landscapes of the immediate coast and supports a vast array of vegetation communities including:

- remnant littoral rainforest
- wet, dry & swamp sclerophyll shrublands, woodlands & forests
- mangrove forests & mallee scrubland.

Most of the forests are remnant and were selectively logged throughout the twentieth century.⁵

3.2 Ranges

Moving westward from the coastal fringe, the landscape of the study area typically rises up from the coastal lowlands to the eastern uplands. The latter are part of the Great Dividing Range (or Eastern Highlands): a unique mountain range that extends broadly north-south, then west, over 3500 kilometres from Northern Queensland to Southwestern Victoria. Historically the range has presented a significant barrier to exploration and settlement beyond, and geographically has been a major influence on predominantly wet climates east of the range and dry climates beyond.

Typically, different regions of this range have different names, with the most notable portion within the study area being the Gibraltar Range. This range extends off the Great Dividing Range at Bald Nob (approximately 25 kilometres east-northeast of Glen Innes) and trends generally east-northeast and north-northeast for around 100 kilometres to the junction of the Timbarra and Clarence rivers. The range is notable for its high ridges, steep valleys and intersecting plateaus: a product of Palaeozoic Era geological activity.

⁵ Kijas 2009: 3

Remnant patches of significant Gondwana rainforest are an important feature of the vegetative regime of the well-watered rangelands.⁶

3.3 Tablelands

Further west beyond the rangelands, the study area comprises the extreme eastern part of the New England Tableland Bioregion: a stepped plateau of hills and plains with elevations between 600 and 1500 metres. The geology of this bioregion is based on Permian sedimentary rocks, intrusive granites and extensive Tertiary basalts.⁷ The most notable New England settlement areas – which sit beyond the study area but have a significant historical connection to it – are Glenn Innes and Armidale.

3.4 Rivers

The Clarence River is one of a series of important rivers in North East NSW, which include the Hastings, Macleay, Nambucca, Bellinger, Richmond and Tweed Rivers. It runs from high country in the Border Ranges, through rugged gorge country around Copmanhurst, and down to the sea via Grafton, Ulmarra, Maclean and Yamba-Iluka. Featuring a catchment of over two million hectares, the Clarence drains a number of significant tributaries including the Orara, Mann and Nymboida Rivers, as well as Coldstream Creek. Grafton is the navigable head of this unique river, which features over 100 islands interspersed along its length.

Other notable (predominantly coastal) watercourses within the study area include:

- Halfway Creek
- Sandon Creek
- Wooli River
- Saltwater Creek
- Station Creek.

⁶ NPWS 2005

⁷ <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/bioregions/NewEnglandTableland-Landform.htm>

4.0 FIRST PEOPLE

This document is concerned primarily with the European (non-indigenous) history of the study area. However, it would not be complete without acknowledgement of the long and continuous Aboriginal occupation and use of the area, which significantly pre-dates the annexation of Australia by the British. This history has been imprinted on the land, remembered by the people, recorded in the observations and studies of early European settlers, diarists and proto-anthropologists, and memorialised in the place names of some localities.

4.1 Language Groups

The study area spans the traditional domain of people from a range of North Coast Aboriginal nations:

Yaegl

Broadly, Yaegl territory encompasses the northern side of the Lower Clarence River and the coast, possibly reaching as far north as Black Rocks/Jerusalem Creek (south of Evans Head), with an area of overlap with the neighbouring *Gumbaingirr* between Wooli and Red Rock/Corindi Beach in the south.⁸

Gumbaingirr

There is general agreement that the Aboriginal people who occupied and/or made use of the area on the southern side of the Clarence River were the *Gumbaingirr*.⁹ At the time of first European settlement, the *Gumbaingirr* domain appears to have extended from South Grafton to North Nambucca Heads, and from the coast in the east, to the eastern fall of the Great Dividing Range in the west.¹⁰ Within this major language group, there were at least four dialectic divisions and a range of sub-groups including extended family clans. Several of these sub-groups were referred to as *tribes* by early European settlers and were named after the areas where they most commonly resided. Historical records attest to a number of *Gumbaingirr* sub-groups including the *Bellingen*, *Nimboy* and *Woolgoolga*.¹¹

Bandjalang

The Clarence River appears to have functioned as something of a language group area boundary. While South Grafton appears to have been part of the domain of the *Gumbaingirr*, neighbouring group the *Bandjalang* had traditional rights to the northern bank of the Clarence River at Grafton. From Grafton, *Bandjalang* land extended to the Richmond River at Ballina, and inland as far as Tabulum and Baryugil.¹² Clarence River district tribes which were recorded by early white settlers and may have had *Bandjalang* affiliation included the *Southgate* and *Carrs Creek* tribes.¹³

4.2 Lifestyle

Prior to European settlement, the varied landscapes of the North Coast (which included forests, open grasslands, swamps, rainforests, estuaries, headlands and open beaches) combined with a mild climate to provide an ideal living environment for the *Gumbaingirr* and *Bandjalang* Aborigines. The oceans and the

⁸ <http://muurrbay.org.au/languages/yaygirr/>; <http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/>

⁹ Aboriginal name for the Clarence River was 'Brimbo' or 'Berin'. Ryan, 1964; McBride, 1978; Tindale, 1974. Other spellings include *Kumbainari*, *Kumbaingiri*, *Koombangbary*, *Coombangree* and *Coombagoree*

¹⁰ Tindale, 1974; Yeates, 1993a: 8; English, 2002

¹¹ Tindale, 1974

¹² Tindale, 1974. Other spellings include *Bandjalang*, *Bunjellung*, *Budulung*, *Buggul*, *Bandjalong*.

¹³ Letter from L. Cheveally to R. C. Law cited in CRHS, 2002: 17-18

Clarence River and its tributaries and feeder creeks provided a range of maritime, estuarine and freshwater resources including birds, cetaceans, crustaceans, fish and shellfish. The adjacent hinterland, plains and woodlands (and the ranges and tablelands further afield) were also rich in terrestrial food reserves including marsupials, such as kangaroos and wallabies; birds such as ducks, bush turkeys and emus; and reptiles such as snakes and lizards.

Timbered areas were not only a food larder but a source of numerous usable products. Ethno-historical records indicate that the Aborigines of the North Coast made use of a variety of tree species for the production of canoes and shelters; the manufacture of tools, weapons and other implements; and the preparation of traditional medicaments. The following is a mere snapshot:

- The spears of Clarence and Richmond areas, generally single, un-barbed, wooden shafts, were fashioned from a variety of woods. These differed considerably to the multi-pronged spears prevalent in the Macleay valley to the south.¹⁴
- Leaf sheaths of the Bangalow Palm were fastened at each end and utilized as water and honey carriers: known as *pitchie-ban*.¹⁵
- Bark fibres from the Hibiscus trees that grew along creek lines were woven to produce fishing nets. These were often used to cast over shoaling mullet in shallow estuaries and creeks.¹⁶
- Soft tea-tree bark provided wrappings for babies who were slung in woven fibre bags.

While the lands and waters of the North Coast were bountiful, the people of the North Coast were not anchored to any locality and moved around in complex patterns dictated by tribal boundaries, cultural taboos, ceremonial gatherings, seasonality and resource availability. Not surprisingly, they adopted a range of living places and accommodations depending on location, season and length of stay in any given area. There are a number of descriptions of the different types of North Coast Aboriginal camps from the nineteenth century.

Temporary Aboriginal camps appear to have been fairly rough and ready affairs as North Coast resident and *Daily Examiner* contributor MacFarlane noted:

*The darkies were a gregarious race, and we found them in tribal groups, camped usually in dense or sheltered scrub clumps, their camps merely low lean-to or an arched projection of bark supported on slender brushwood rods or twigs, just sufficient to accommodate a few occupants from the rigours of the weather. The roofing was generally the light outer bark of the small leafed tea-tree, quite rain proof and texture akin to delicate paper. It also served for the camp flooring and was immune from damp.*¹⁷

In contrast to the above, in some areas there were relatively significant, semi-permanent settlements, such as the 'villages' on the Clarence River, which featured clustered semi-circular bark huts and lean-tos.¹⁸ Captain Perry, who anchored off the North Beach at the mouth of the Clarence River in May 1839, recorded people huddled in a village at the head of the estuary where they had '... considerable command of fishing'.¹⁹

4.3 Contact

¹⁴ NSW Dept of Planning, 1989: 5

¹⁵ Mrs Bundock c1896 quoted in Ryan, 1964: 183

¹⁶ Yeates, 1993a: 10

¹⁷ MacFarlane in Ryan, 1964: 154

¹⁸ Ryan, 1964

¹⁹ Clarence River Historical Records, Volume 1: 209

The arrival of cedar getters, pastoralists and settlers in the Clarence Valley in the early nineteenth century changed the lives of Aborigines of the district forever. Generally, white incursion proved as disastrous for the people of this region, as it did for Aborigines elsewhere.

Contact with Europeans brought exposure to European diseases such as smallpox, influenza, tuberculosis and venereal disease. These spread rapidly from the sites of first contact, such as Sydney and Parramatta, and saw a rapid decline in Aboriginal population numbers across the country. Furthermore, as settlers cleared land, fenced holdings and commenced grazing activities, they effectively reduced the land available to the traditional owners for resource procurement and free movement. The resulting competition for land and resources inevitably resulted in violence. Perhaps not surprisingly, the history of the early period of European settlement on the Grafton district frontiers is dotted with notable episodes of conflict.

4.4 Conflict & Coexistence

In the early years of North Coast settlement, Aborigines assisted some settlers in the clearing of land receiving tobacco and 'a nominal pay in silver', as Macfarlane noted:

*The Aborigines undertook the burning off portion of the clearing of the native heath and both sexes proved capable workers in administering the firestick.*²⁰

Not all relations were quite so peaceable. Thomas Coutts, was one of the first European to 'pioneer' the area south of Grafton, and was involved in considerable conflict with local aborigines whose traditional hunting grounds were being diminished by the establishment of large sheep stations. Coutts established Kangaroo Creek Station, on the banks of the Orara River in 1840. Early in the same year, numerous sheep, and three of Coutts's employees, were killed by Aborigines: likely as a result of ill treatment towards them.²¹ After protracted disquiet over eight years, Coutts gave (or left out to be stolen), arsenic-laced flour that killed at least seven Aborigines.²² Though Coutts was arrested and sent to Sydney he was never tried for his crimes.²³

In 1841, a similar tragedy occurred when Commissioner for New England G. McDonald lead Border Police troops through the Clarence Valley in search of Aborigines responsible for theft at Ramornie cattle station. McDonald's troops came upon a large group of aborigines near Grafton, where they surrounded the group and rushed them, firing arms and killing an unknown number of men, women and children.²⁴

Other incidents that grew out of cyclical conflicts between Aboriginal people and the squatters who had taken their land included:

- massacres at Newton Boyd and Ermington (mid-1840s)
- massacres at Wire Fence (Minnie Water)²⁵
- Massacres at Red Rock-Corindi (c.1840s)

²⁰ D. Macfarlane in the *Daily Examiner*, 28 December 1932

²¹ Letter from Commissioner Fry to Colonial Secretary, 22 June 1847, Col. Sec. Cor, SRNSW 4/2779/1

²² *Grafton Argus*, 31 August 1886; Tindal in Dawson, 1934: 86; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1848 (supplement).

²³ Mackay, 2001: 201; Edwards 1993; Messner 2005

²⁴ Bawden, 1987: 48; CRHS 2009

²⁵ Kijas 2007

The latter was particularly notorious. In the early 1840s, Aboriginal people had attempted to rob a hut at Glenugie Station. This precipitated the rise of a revenge party led by Major Oakes, whose men overtook the alleged offenders 'somewhere about Corindi' where they were 'severely punished for their deeds'.²⁶

Violence was a feature of frontier life in the 1840s and 1850s, but by the 1860s, it is understood that frontier conflict had virtually ceased in the region.²⁷

4.5 Marginalization & Movement

Despite the harsh conditions endured by district Aborigines, the breakdown of traditional lifestyles and the dislocation of traditional groups, Aboriginal family groups and individuals remained on the Northern Rivers throughout the nineteenth century. However, nearly half a century of conflict and introduced disease had resulted in population decline and the breakdown and displacement of traditional Aboriginal groups. Many Aborigines who had survived white invasion formed new social groups. These were often mixed groups, sometimes from disparate areas, that were less based on traditional affiliations to more on the need for mutual support and protection.

Some of these groups moved away from the region to areas less impacted by settlement, while others established fringe camps and pocket camps on the margins of regional centers such as Grafton, or on the lands of more benevolent landholders. Many gravitated towards Grafton, particularly around May 24 when each person received an annual dole of one blanket at the Grafton Courthouse.²⁸ Those that sought refuge on private land sometimes became a valuable workforce. This was particularly true from the mid-1850s when the various local and extra-local gold rushes saw white pastoral employees leave their employer's properties in droves. This created a labour force vacuum across the country that was alleviated in part by significant contributions by Aboriginal workers.²⁹

It is known that the local gold rushes in the Dalmorton-Cungiebung region in the late 1870s provided work for district Aborigines, though details are scant. Newspaper articles from the 1870s note that some local Aboriginal families continued to camp in the Cunglebung area into the 1870s as well as detailing problems with the distribution of blankets to the *Cunglebung Blacks* (who at the time included an 'old warrior' thought to be over 100 years old).³⁰ Elsewhere, in the 1880s, Gumbaingirr Aborigines are known to have supplied miners in the Upper Bucca and Orara goldfields (to the distant southeast of the study area) with wild bee honey sourced from the surrounding forests.³¹

By the turn of the century however, many Aborigines on the Northern Rivers had been encouraged to settle on the numerous missions and reserves established by the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) from the 1880s. These were generally located outside towns and settlement areas and included Ulugundahi Island Mission, where Aboriginal people from the Clarence Valley were sent in the early 1900s. Other missions and reserves established after 1880 included:

- Bellbrook Reserve (c1883)

²⁶ Bawden T 1997, p. 47; Cane S 1988 for the first documentation of the Red Rock massacre and Yarrawarra place stories; University of New England for Garby Elder Tony Perkins's story.

²⁷ DEC 2005

²⁸ *Grafton Daily Examiner* 20 November 1924

²⁹ Jill Sheppard & Associates 2003: 14

³⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 11 July 1872; *Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser* Tuesday 19 August 1873: 6

³¹ Dallas & Tuck 2003

- Burnt Bridge (c1898)
- Nymboida (c1910).³²

In spite of the best efforts of the APB, not all people moved to, or stayed on, the official Aboriginal settlements. German researcher Rudolf Pöch who visited the Clarence River in the early twentieth century to study Aboriginal skulls, recorded numerous ‘unsupervised’ aboriginal camps in the vicinity of Grafton including:

- one on the hill above Copmanhurst
- one north of Grafton (near the Junction Hotel)
- one on the road from Copmanhurst to Grafton
- one ‘south of Grafton’.³³

He also visited ‘the aboriginal settlement’ near Grafton, where there were around 65 people living and growing field vegetables.³⁴ This settlement may have been the Aboriginal school and home run by the ‘firebrand parson’, Reverend C. Currey, which was recorded as being sited near Grafton Common in the late nineteenth century.³⁵

Aboriginal traditional life was severely curtailed by European settlement activity and post-contact lifestyle changes, though it was never completely extinguished. Ceremonial activity in the Northern Rivers continued well into the twentieth century, with organised combat between Clarence River and Richmond River Aborigines occurring at Lower Southgate in 1891/92, and fish increase ceremonies occurring on the Richmond River into the 1920s.³⁶

Aboriginal association with the study area continued into the twentieth century. In Nymboida for example, Gumbaingirr elder and South Grafton resident Betty Cameron recalled a number of Aboriginal families (and families with Aboriginal heritage) living and working in the Buccarumbi area in the 1940s and 1950s. These families included the Briggs, Littles, Maskeys and Cobleys.³⁷ There is also documentary evidence of ‘quarter-caste’ Aboriginal station hands at nearby Marengo station in the 1910s. Probably the most well-known twentieth century Aboriginal identities who lived in the greater Dalmorton area were the Aboriginal trackers stationed in Dalmorton village from at least the 1930s. Especially Kevin Randall, who was a popular and widely respected town tracker until 1961.³⁸

Refer **figures 5 – 10**.

³² NSW Department of Planning, 1989a: 22

³³ Pöch, 1915: 267

³⁴ Pöch, 1915: 269

³⁵ CRHS, 2002: 20

³⁶ Notes of W. L. Morgan cited in CRHS, 2002: 43; NSW Dept of Planning, 1989: 5

³⁷ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 15

³⁸ Tuck 2007

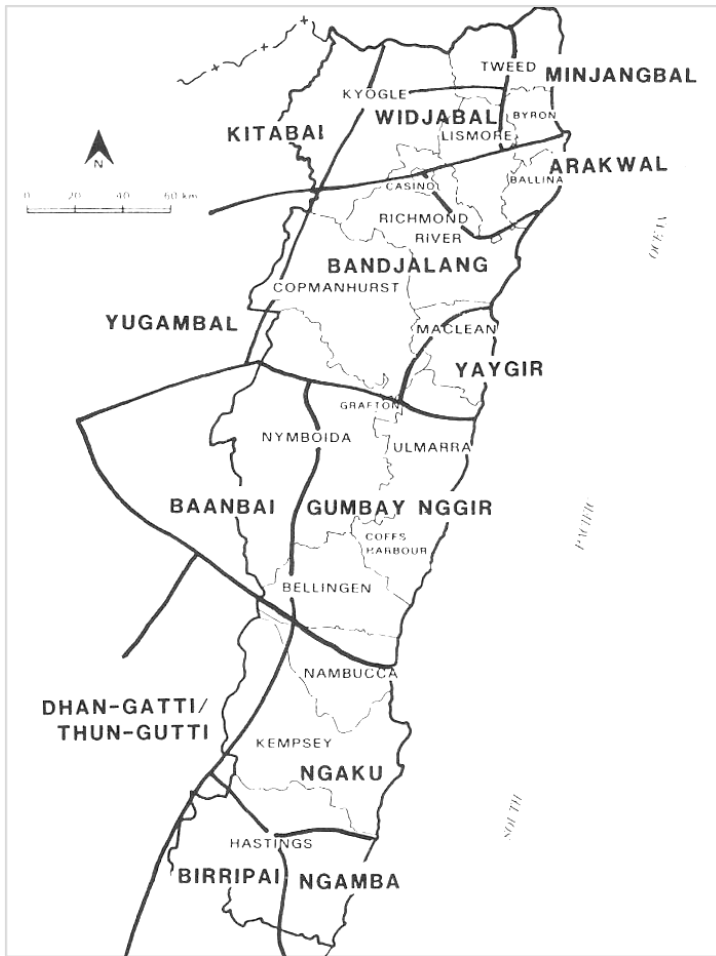


FIGURE 5: ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE GROUP AREAS
NSW Department of Planning 1989b



FIGURE 6: 'BLACKS NEAR NEWTON BOYD' (1848)
National Library of Australia - Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK671 /16



FIGURE 7: CAMP OF AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINALS – GRAFTON DISTRICT (1895)
State Library of Victoria Image H18599-4



FIGURE 8: ABORIGINAL WORKERS SPLITTING TIMBER @ GRAFTON (1890)
National Library of Australia - PIC/16016/1



FIGURE 9: 'AN ABORIGINAL UNCLE TOM'S CABIN' GRAFTON DISTRICT (PRE-1893)
Photograph by G W Wilson @ State Library of Victoria H30480



FIGURE 10: 'GRAFTON ABORIGINALS' (C.1900)
State Library of New South Wales ML MPG 221

5.0 DISCOVERY

European discovery of the Clarence and the broader study area commenced in the 1830s.

5.1 Voyagers

The first European sighting of the Clarence River was by Captain James Cook who noted the existence of the river and other landmarks nearby but did not examine the area closely. News of the second encounter with the Clarence River came from Captain Butcher of the *Abercrombie*, who gave an account of his voyage up the *Big River* in 1838. An official voyage of discovery up the river was undertaken in May 1839 by Deputy Surveyor-General Perry aboard the *King William*. On the 4th of December 1839, the following notification was made:

*His Excellency the Governor has directed it to be notified for general information and in order to avoid confusion that the river entering at Shoal Bay in latitude 29° 26' 28" south and commonly known as the Big River will for the future be called the Clarence.*³⁹

Aside from the river voyage recordings of the Clarence mentioned above, there is a legend that the river was first reached on foot by convict-at-large Moreton Bay Richard Craig in 1834-5. Craig is said to have befriended and lived with Aboriginal tribesmen and ultimately led timber merchants to the region's rich cedar reserves.⁴⁰

5.2 Cedar

From the time of first European settlement the timber reserves about Sydney were recognized as being a valuable and exploitable resource. Governor John Hunter was one of the first to recognize the value of Australian hardwoods, testing several varieties and finding them similar to 'Indian Teak' and suitable for use in a variety of purposes including ships timbers, gun carriages and general building.⁴¹ By the early 1800s, timber getters had already made inroads into the greater Sydney District to extract timber from the dense eucalypt forests along the Georges River.⁴² Heavily targeted forest timbers included Cedar (*Toona ciliata*), Ironbark (*eucalyptus cebra*), Scribbly Gum (*eucalyptus pilularis*) and Turpentine (*eucalyptus haemastome*).

Timber reserves in the vicinity of Sydney became heavily exploited by the early 1800s, and timber getters began to look elsewhere for supplies. At first, they exploited the river systems associated with new settlements such as Port Macquarie, Brisbane & Newcastle. Large river systems provided penetration into forest reserves away from the coast and also facilitated the transport of timber back to Sydney.

By 1820 the Hastings River had been reached, by 1828 the Manning, and by the early 1830's the Macleay. Soon after this the Clarence was reconnoitered, and by 1838, cedar camps had been established on the river banks and the forests were being felled to supply the voracious Colonial timber market.

Merchants & Getters

The cedar trade saw the union of respectable 'timber merchants' who were private entrepreneurs, and the somewhat less respectable 'timber getters', many of whom were escaped or ex-convicts. The merchant

³⁹ McFarlane, c1910: 2

⁴⁰ DUAP, 1996: 64; Kass, 1989; Jervis, 1939: 238-240

⁴¹ Davies, 1979: 44

⁴² Kennedy, 2001: 15

pioneers have been described as 'men of a fine stamp', while the getters enjoyed a reputation as '... hard livers, hard workers, hard drinkers and hard swearers'.⁴³ A writer in the 1860's summed up the cedar getters as follows:

*They are the roughest of the rough fellows, muscular as a working bullock, hairy as a chimpanzee, obstinate as a mule, simple as a child, generous as the slave of Aladdin's lamp. A fondness for rum and a capacity for absorbing vast quantities of that liquid are among their prominent characteristics. They are also in the habit of "bruising" each other upon the smallest provocation, and it is a noticeable fact that one of the surest modes of securing the friendship of a cedar getter is to knock him down. He will probably return the compliment with interest, and reduce your features into an unrecognisable condition, but he will ever afterwards be your firm friend. There is a good deal of rude honour about these fellows. Thus, if one chance to light upon a Yall of cedar, none of the others will attempt to cut even a tree out of the group.*⁴⁴

The first settlements on the Northern Rivers were cedar camps and cedar ports with Grafton, originally referred to simply as 'The Settlement'. This was the earliest principal cedar port on the Clarence on account of its location at the river's navigable head.⁴⁵

Among the first to engage in the Clarence cedar trade were the Small family. Thomas Small was a respected Sydney merchant who had ventured up the Clarence with Henry Gillett, apparently having heard about the cedar lands from the aforementioned Richard Craig.⁴⁶ The 1838 return to Sydney of Small's first boatload of cedar from the Clarence was reported in the *Sydney Monitor* newspaper as follows:

*The Schooner Susan, lately built by Mr. Small of Kissing Point, returned from a trip to the Big River on Monday last with a cargo of Cedar.*⁴⁷

The *Susan* was commanded by Captain Harry Thorne who plied the Clarence River as far as the site of latter Grafton, where he named the prominent Island there after the vessel under his command.⁴⁸ Small established the first cedar camp on Woodford Island in addition to taking an upriver run and raising cattle.⁴⁹

Another Sydney businessman to engage in the Clarence River cedar trade in 1838 was a Mr A. Phillips, who went to the Big River, accompanied by shipwrights and sawyers, to build a 250-ton bark in December 1838.⁵⁰ Phillips is believed to have established a shipyard and store at South Grafton (managed by 'Phillips & Cole') by 1839. The reliance of the cedar merchants on river transport inevitably led to the creation of other ship building yards and wharf facilities along the navigable reaches of the Northern Rivers.

Not long after the initial establishment of the Northern Rivers cedar camps came the squatter-pastoralists. They took up large tracts of land and further contributed to the development of the cedar towns and the establishment of new towns to service the pastoral industry and its workers.

Refer **figure 11**.

⁴³ McFarlane, c.1910: 2; Jervis, 1939: 154-155; Kass, 1989: 5

⁴⁴ Quoted in Jervis, 1939: 156

⁴⁵ DUAP 1996: 60; The Daily Examiner, 1959: 27

⁴⁶ DUAP, 1996: 64; Kass, 1989: 11

⁴⁷ *Sydney Monitor*, 4 July 1838

⁴⁸ Jervis, 1939: 245

⁴⁹ DUAP, 1996: 64; Kass, 1989: 11; Jervis, 1939: 147

⁵⁰ *Sydney Monitor*, 10 December 1838

State Library of NSW ML Z/M2 813.14/1840/1

5.3 Squatters & Pastoralists

Increasing wool prices and droughts in southern and central NSW in the late 1830's saw men of wealth looking north to the Clarence and Richmond River valleys to expand their activities and holdings.⁵¹ The winding down of the Port Macquarie penal settlement and the opening up of surrounding lands in 1833, led to northward expansion and there were pastoral settlers on the Macleay by 1836 and along the Clarence by 1839.⁵² By 1839, bullock teams carrying wool & other produce regularly gathered on high ground at South Grafton (Wilsons Hill).⁵³ Wool was such an important commodity in the Grafton district that the settlement itself was referred to as *Woolport* for a short time in the 1840s (1842-1847).⁵⁴ In 1842 the Clarence and (neighbouring Richmond River valley) were officially separated from the Port Macquarie District and designated the Clarence Pastoral District.

While sheep were the squatter's stock of choice initially, the sub-tropical climate meant that these animals were subject to diseases such as liver fluke and were largely replaced by cattle by the 1850's. By the mid-nineteenth century, there were 65 cattle stations in the Clarence district, covering some 2887 square kilometres.

5.3.1 Around Grafton

In the late 1830s, a number of pastoral runs were taken up above and below the settlement of Grafton. These included Francis Girard's Waterview Station (adjacent to South Grafton) and the Mylne brother's Eatonsville (within the study area to the north of Grafton).

Eatonswill & Eatonsville

The Mylne brothers (John, James and Thomas) took up Eatonswill station in 1839. They established a pastoral run and constructed a notable homestead, which was built in 1842 of locally pit-sawn timber by the Austen Brothers.⁵⁵ The homestead featured silky oak flooring and a 75-foot long front verandah.⁵⁶ The Mylne family was however ultimately beset by misfortune. John and Thomas went down in the shipwreck of the *Dunbar* in Sydney in 1857 (along with two sisters), and James died later off Malta en-route to England. The pastoral station was broken up into smaller holdings from the mid-1870s. The homestead itself was deconstructed in 1914 and another home was built thereon using the recycled timber. This house was destroyed by fire in June 1980.

Opposite the station, on the other side of the Clarence River, was the village of Eastonsville (initially referred to as First Falls). Early residents in this locality included Faithful Crabbe (1840s innkeeper and boatman) and Thomas Higham and family (from the late 1850s onwards).⁵⁷ By the 1880s, the settlement featured a ferry-punt (1880); school and telegraph office (1881); and post office (1887). A telephone exchange was established in 1929 and a Church of England was built in 1931 (operating until 1967).⁵⁸

⁵¹ Blackmore and Associates, 1993: 9

⁵² DUAP, 1996: 60

⁵³ Kass, 1989: 10

⁵⁴ Apex Club, 1947: 11

⁵⁵ CVHS 2009

⁵⁶ CVHS 2009: 20

⁵⁷ McLennon 2016

⁵⁸ McLennon 2016

5.3.2 Coastal Grazing

The central and northern parts of the study area (located west of the Pacific Highway) were surveyed early in the settler history of the region. William Wilson and his brother Christopher were contracted at the end of 1839 to survey the natural features from the south side of the Clarence to the coast, carrying out surveys in 1841 and 1842. W C B Wilson surveyed Coldstream, Tyndale, Gulmaradd, Taloumbi, Conoulán and Wolibbarri. He also provided an early appraisal of the area between Brooms Head and the Coastal Ranges:

The whole of the land for two and three miles from the Coast is very clear of trees and slopes gently to the sea. The timber chiefly consists of Gums, Blood, Tea Tree, Myall, Black Butt, Stringy Bark, Apple, Turpentine, Honeysuckle, Oaks...

Wilson named many of the places in the area after Greek place names (including Clarenza, Lavadia, Lanitza and Tucabia). According to Thomas Bawden, this was because Wilson had served in the Greek War of Independence as a lieutenant in the British Army.

On the coast and hinterland, pastoral activity appears to have begun at around the same time as on the Clarence River. The first of the pastoral runs taken up near Yuraygir National Park was Glenugie Station. Skirting the southern part of the Park, it was taken up in 1840 with an outstation established near Corindi. The latter was renamed Red Bank Station (as it ran south from the mouth of the Red Bank River/Red Rock River) when it was taken up in 1848 by John Pike. On the north side of the river, there were two runs on the eastern side of the Coast Range extending to the coast: Bookram and Barungary stations respectively.

Further to the north below Angourie, Rosemary Waugh-Allcock believes that Taloumbi Station was first taken up by the surveyor Wilson in the 1840s. It was then on-sold to Edward Ryan, George Powell and the Smalls who sold it to the Waugh brothers. Taloumbi Station was bought by W N R (Reeve) Waugh and his brother John Waugh in 1888. The country regarded as the station proper was on the western side of the Coast Range, but the 'bush blocks' or 'the run' once took in all of the Yuraygir National Park's coastal belt from Angourie to the Wooli Lakes. Somervale Run in Shark Creek Valley (on the western side of the Coast Range parallel to the central section of Yuraygir National Park) was taken up in 1843. While these stations were established early in the history of settler incursion into the Clarence region, they were very isolated compared with the rest of the region.

5.3.3 Further Inland

Ramornie Station was reputedly the first cattle station established on the Clarence and was taken up by Dr Dobie in 1839. It was on the banks of the Orara River (near its junction with the Upper Clarence River). The north side of the Orara and Upper Clarence rivers was staked out by cattle rearing pastoralists soon thereafter.

Fluctuating meat prices, the prevalence of free firewood, and the number of suitable ports, encouraged Northern River's squatters to venture into the tallow and canning industries in the 1840's and 1850's. In 1846, 89 tons of tallow was shipped from the Clarence to Sydney. Joseph Sharp had established a boiling down works on the banks of Alumny Creek at Grafton by 1849. By the 1860s the first meat preserving factory on the Clarence had been established at Ramornie.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Kass, 1989: 9; DUAP, 1996: 61; Mackay, 2001: 58

Ramornie

When Dr Dobie acquired Ramornie Station in 1839, he sent three men there to erect huts and establish the run. Thereafter, the property was supplied with cattle by emancipist Richard Craig, who had been largely responsible for opening up the Clarence as a convict escapee in the early 1830s. Dobie held the property until the mid-1840s. The station was acquired by Charles Grant Tindal in 1852. Tindal had previously leased Koreelah Station (near the headwaters of the Clarence) and had been located on the Northern Rivers since the late 1830s (see Yulgilbar below).

Early in 1855, Tindal sailed for England and after a range of ventures that included marrying, sight-seeing and various business trips in Europe and England, he returned to New South Wales in January 1857. Work then started on a stone homestead at Ramornie, which was to be the centre of his regional operations. The homestead featured shell mortar that had been excavated from Aboriginal shell mounds at Yamba and shipped upriver. The homestead of Ramornie was completed and occupied by December 1858.⁶⁰

Spending time in both England and Australia, Tindal launched the Australian Meat Company in London. This was in 1865, with capital of £100,000. Early in 1866, plant and tin-plate were shipped from England to Ramornie and a then state-of-the-art meat processing and canning works was established.⁶¹

Meat extract production (based on Justus von Liebig's process) and canning commenced in September 1886. Within a few years Ramornie-branded canned meats had become well established on the English market (where it had a range of procurers including the British Army and Navy). 35,000 cattle were slaughtered annually at the works, with the cannery ensuring a regular market for both Tindal's own cattle as well as the local cattlemen of the district. In addition to canned meat products, preserved meat, tallow, artificial manure, hides and pelts were also produced on-site. The operation was expansive. In addition to the homestead and works buildings, the station featured huts for employees, described as a village, as well as a hotel and other 'social' buildings such as a billiards hall.

In 1879, Tindal bought out the other meat company shareholders, but in the ensuing year, the first consignment of frozen meat from Australia was sent to London. This marked the beginning of the company's gradual decline and that of Ramornie Station more broadly.⁶² In 1917 the company was sold to the Kensington Preserving Company, who kept it running until c.1924. During 1924-1925 many of the buildings were relocated and all the removable items at the works were sold at auction.⁶³

Refer **figures 12 – 19**.

Yulgilbar

Edward David Stewart Ogilvie (pastoralist) was born 25 July 1814 at Tottenham, Middlesex, England. He was the son of William Ogilvie (naval officer) and his wife Mary. With free passage, William and his family sailed to Sydney aboard the convict ship Grenada (arriving on 23 January 1825). He settled at Merton: a 2000-acre grant on the Upper Hunter.⁶⁴ Edward was soon working on his father's stations and later managing the sheep.

⁶⁰ CRHS 2009

⁶¹ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/tindal-charles-grant-1238>

⁶² <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/tindal-charles-grant-1238>

⁶³ Allerton, 1993: 10

⁶⁴ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ogilvie-edward-david-777>

In 1840, after Richard Craig had refused to let Ogilvie join Dr John Dobie's party, which he was guiding to Ramornie, Edward pushed on with his brother Frederick and an Aboriginal guide and reached the Clarence at Tabulum ahead of Craig's party. Downstream, Edward took up fifty-six miles (90 km) on both sides of the river for a pastoral run and later named it collectively, as Yulgilbar.

The two brothers and a 'new chum', Charles Tindal, settled at Yulgilbar, with Tindal managing the property between 1843 and 1849. By 1850 Yulgilbar covered about 300 sq. miles and included Fairfield, a 100,000- cattle station in the mountains. When Ogilvie lost his European hands to the district gold rushes, in the early 1870s, he is known to have employed Aborigines and Chinese workers.

After time overseas, where he was married, Ogilvie designed and constructed an elaborate, castle-like mansion at Yulgilbar, which was completed in 1866 for a cost of £8000. It was built from local serpentine and sandstone with a crenellated roof and two towers and set about a courtyard. It took four years to build the homestead, with masons and builders brought over from Germany, and construction involving the use of over 110,000 handmade bricks. During the 1860s, Ogilvie found the country too wet for sheep and successfully switched exclusively to cattle.⁶⁵

A complex and combative individual, Ogilvie was unpopular and shunned in Grafton. To avoid the centre and meet his own business needs, he developed the new riverside town of Lawrence, where he built his own wharf to allow the shipping of his cattle to Sydney. In addition to his pastoral enterprises, he was also a director of the Clarence and Richmond Rivers Steam Navigation Company and was a founding member of the Linnean Society of New South Wales (1875). He died at Bowral in 1896 and was buried at Yulgilbar.

Sam Hordern purchased the property in 1949 and became one of the Australian pioneers of the Santa Gertrudis cattle breed from Texas. For the last 60 years, the property has operated as a cattle and horse stud, now under the ownership of Hordern's daughter Sara and her husband Baillieu Myer, the son of Myer retail store founder Sidney Myer. Today the property encompasses 35,000 acres and runs 4,500 commercial cattle.⁶⁶

Refer **figures 20 & 21**.

⁶⁵ R. L. Dawson, 'Pioneering days in the Clarence River district', *JRAHS*, 20 (1934)

⁶⁶ <http://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2014/09/22/4092111.htm>



FIGURE 12: RAMORNIE STATION ON THE CLARENCE RIVER (C.1880)
Photograph by Elizabeth Stillwell State Library of NSW ML SV/17



FIGURE 13: MEAT WORKS, RAMORNIE, ORARA RIVER (C1900-1910)
State Library of NSW PXE 711/438



FIGURE 14: RAMORNIE MEAT WORKS, ORARA RIVER (C.1860-1890)
State Library of NSW ML a7191060h



FIGURE 15: RAMORNIE MEAT WORKS, ORARA RIVER (C.1860-1890)
State Library of NSW ML a7191061h



FIGURE 16: RAMORNIE MEAT WORKS (C.1870) ABOVE ORARA RIVER.
Photograph courtesy Clarence Valley Historical Society Inc. 1993: 109



FIGURE 17: ORARA RIVER @ RAMORNIE STATION (C.1860-1890)
State Library of NSW ML a7191064h



FIGURE 18: RAMORNIE HOTEL, ORARA RIVER (C.1860-1890)
State Library of NSW ML a7191065h



FIGURE 19: 1920S ADVERTISING FOR RAMORNIE CORNED BEEF.
Photograph courtesy Clarence River Historical Society Inc. 1993 publication



FIGURE 20: YULGILBAR, CLARENCE RIVER (C.1880)

Watercolour by Edward Boulton @ State Library of NSW ML V1B/Cla.R.D./1



FIGURE 21: YULGILBAR CASTLE (1900-1910)

Photograph by W Stephenson State Library of NSW ML PXA 410

2.3.4 Nymboida

By the 1840s, squatters had established extensive runs on almost all prime arable valley lands on the North Coast - including those in the Nymboida area south and west of Grafton. Early pastoral stations into the ranges and tablelands beyond included Nymboida. Gregory Blaxland (son of the explorer) had established a large run there in the 1840s. The 40,000-acre Cunglebung Station, which was set between the Boyd and Mann Rivers was another early run and the pastoral stations that followed included selected runs at Chandler's Creek, Marengo, Winterville (west of Pine Creek) and Broadmeadows.⁶⁷

Even with the selection of Cunglebung and the above-mentioned runs, the district remained relatively remote and was scarcely settled for much of the nineteenth century. Despite this, the Boyd (Little) River Valley was something of a conduit or communication route between the more established regional townships of Grafton and Glen Innes.⁶⁸ The Robertson Land Act (1861) attempted to open up land to free selection and broke down some of the vast pastoral holdings in an attempt to loosen the strangle hold of the squatters. However populations in the district remained low until the discovery of gold in the 1870s.

Cunglebung

Cunglebung station was established in the 1860s by squatters Norman Cowen and Norman McLean. Between the establishment of the run in the 1860s and the local gold rushes of the early 1870s, Cunglebung Homestead was constructed on the flat above Cunglebung Creek and its junction with Wellington Creek. The exact date of construction is uncertain, though by 1872 - a month before the accidental death of Norman Cowen in a riding accident - the *Sydney Morning Herald* described Cunglebung as having a 'comfortable homestead'. It appears that the small dwelling formed the core of a residential-pastoral operation that included stores, stockyards and associated facilities. It grew to service the nearby 'Cunglebung diggings', which were a mixed mining enterprise that operated at several locations in the general area until the 1890s. The extended Cowen and Maclean families successfully operated the run until well into the 1890s with some family members living periodically onsite at the homestead. By the mid-1890s the run had expanded to account for some 100 000 acres and stretched from the Nymboida River in the east; the Mann River in the north and west; and the Boyd River in the south.⁶⁹

Tragedy struck the station owners in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. John Cowen's 20-year old son Fred (who resided at Cunglebung for at least six years) died of an 'infection of the brain' in 1894 and after the death of Norman McLean in 1896 (and John Cowen in 1897), the run was sold to JTB McDougall. It was thereafter on-sold to the Turnbull family in 1916. While they had an interest in the property, and Errol and Margaret Turnbull lived onsite for some time (1946-1947), the Turnbull's appear to have been largely absentee landlords who managed the station via a station manager.⁷⁰

After WWII there was considerable change to the rural landscape as soldier settlers established farms, rural industry boomed and populations exploded. During the 1950s, after the rationalization and partial breakup of Cunglebung station, the lease was sold to a Mr Frank MacLauchlan. He in turn passed the lease on to the Watters family in 1956. The Watters association with the property lasted around 50 years but they appear to have made only occasional use of the homestead. They rescinded the lease in 2001.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 18

⁶⁸ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 18

⁶⁹ Urbis 2010; Tuck 2011

⁷⁰ Urbis 2010; Tuck 2011

⁷¹ Tuck 2011

Refer figures 22 – 26.



FIGURE 22: MAP OF THE COUNTY OF GRESHAM (1873)

Presented in Curby 1993: 9



FIGURE 23: CUNGLEBUNG STATION (C.1884)

Map presented in Curby 1993: 9



FIGURE 24: CUNGLEBUNG HOMESTEAD (1946)
Turnball family images presented in Messner 2005: 11



FIGURE 25: CUNGLEBUNG HOMESTEAD (1950)
Turnball family images presented in Messner 2005: 11



FIGURE 26: CUNGLEBUNG HOMESTEAD (2011)
Dan Tuck 2011

6.0 SETTLEMENT

Settlement beyond the rural within and about the study area - was largely centred on the Grafton (at the navigable head of the Clarence); Glen Innes (beyond the ranges on the New England Tablelands); and at other strategic locations (such as Ulmarra).

6.1 Grafton

The township of Grafton, which started out as a cedar port and grew as a sheep and cattle station centre, was supporting two stores by 1840, a courthouse with police magistrate by 1846, a School by 1852, and the first Anglican Church in 1854. The first land sales took place in the 1850s, and township was officially laid out and proclaimed a municipality in 1859.⁷² Among the first storehouse/wharf facilities established to service the fledgling community at Grafton were the William Phillips wharf, yard and store at the mouth of Cowans Creek at South Grafton. There was also Thomas Hewitt's Inn, wharf and store at the mouth of Alamy Creek on the outskirts of Grafton.⁷³ Generally, the houses of the first settlers were simple affairs as early Grafton settler George Gray described in his journal:

*... first, they would cut a small space in the scrub, sufficient to build a small humpy just large enough to protect them from the weather. It was hard to get material to build with, the roof was the most difficult, some used tea-tree or stringy bark, some shingles. Our floors were only earth as it was almost impossible to get boards – our furniture consisted of a few blocks for seats or a wooden stool, our beds were composed of a couple of bags filled with tea-tree bark ...*⁷⁴

An indicative sketch plan prepared by Rose Elizabeth Selwyn between 1853 and 1867 gives some indication of the layout of riverside Grafton in the mid-nineteenth century.⁷⁵ Establishments located in Grafton at that time included a parsonage; shoemakers, blacksmith and butcher; a court house and lock-up; an inn, boiling down works (Alamy Creek), dairy farm, store, house and wharf. The latter were all owned by the Sharp family (noted as 'Germans'). At South Grafton there was a Chief Constable's office; store; chemist (medicine store); post office; and public house.

Numerous wharves were established from the 1850s as Grafton benefited from its location on the major road to the north and the establishment of gold fields in the Orara Valley and Upper Clarence. By the 1860s, Grafton, with its significant wharfage and prime location, had begun to develop into an important Northern Rivers centre with professional, legal and administrative functions. Reflecting this growth, was the establishment of a number of significant commercial enterprises including the local horse racing track and the *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* (newspaper established in Grafton in 1859). The town's first solicitor, J. Michael, had established a practice there by the early 1860s.

Refer **figures 27 - 28**.

⁷² DUAP, 1996: 65

⁷³ APEX, 19475; Mackay, 2001: 59-62

⁷⁴ Journal of George Gray cited in CRHS, 2002: 35

⁷⁵ Rose Elizabeth Selwyn was the 6th daughter of Reverend George Rusden of East Maitland. Rose came to Grafton with her husband in 1853 and was an accomplished artist.

6.2 Glen Innes

On the other side of the Great Dividing Range, on the elevated New England tablelands, Glen Innes was established as an inland regional centre in the 1850s and has been closely linked to Grafton ever since.

In c.1838, Archibald Boyd acquired the first pastoral run in the Glen Innes district. Two hirsute stockmen known as 'the Beardies' introduced Boyd and others to the best runs in the district. The area became known as the 'Land of the Beardies' or 'Beardie Plains'.⁷⁶

The name Glen Innes is believed to have been bestowed in honour of Scotsman and early landholder Archibald Clunes Innes, who for a time owned Furracabad Station. Glen Innes was gazetted as a town in 1852, with the first lots sold in 1854. The post office was established in August 1854 and the court in 1858. In 1866 the population was about 350, with a telegraph station, lands office, police barracks, courthouse, post office and two hotels. A winding road to Grafton, via Dalmorton and Nymboida was constructed in the 1870s.

Glen Innes became the centre of a notable mining boom during the late nineteenth century, and tin was first discovered at Emmaville in 1872. In 1875, the population had swelled to about 1,500 and the town had a two-teacher school, three churches, five hotels, two weekly newspapers, seven stores and a variety of societies and associations. On 19 August 1884 the new Main North railway from Sydney opened. The arrival of the rail service, and the expansion of mining operations (including arsenic and opals) contributed to the late nineteenth century prosperity in the town, which is reflected in town's remarkable civil and civic architecture.

Refer **figures 29 & 30**.

6.3 Ulmarra

The settlement of Ulmarra was established when Thomas Small bought 76-acres of land along the river in 1857 for the sum of 81 pounds; 14 shillings. Small had been a timber cutter, but by the 1850s he had turned to general farming. He first grew maize and then in around 1865, sugar cane. By 1871 Ulmarra had a population of nearly 1000 people. Sugar cane was not successful however, and dairy farming dominated the fertile plains beside the river. By the 1880s the town had developed as an important river port.

The town's port served as one of two embarking points for excursionists going up and down the river (the other being the port at Lawrence) and for agricultural 'dealers' or traders, who went door to door along the Ulmarra riverbanks buying eggs and poultry and supplying news and gossip.⁷⁷ River travel was initially by way of sailing boats which were gradually replaced by steamers from the 1850's.⁷⁸

Ulmarra in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

It is perhaps advantageous at this stage to consider what life in the Clarence River Valley and specifically Ulmarra was like in the mid-nineteenth century. Though primary sources of data are few and far between, the anecdotal evidence of Clarence River personality and later Sydney MP John McFarlane (1854-1915) provides a valuable insight.

The location of the mid-19th century town of Ulmarra, as opposed to the town centre that constitutes the modern village of Ulmarra (an Urban Conservation Area), is open to some debate. Old or Lower Ulmarra

⁷⁶ Summerlad 1972

⁷⁷ McFarlane, c.1910: 53

⁷⁸ McFarlane, c.1910: 27

has been variously described as being between 500 and 4000 metres north of the current town.⁷⁹ McFarlane states in relation to Lower Ulmarra that ‘... not a vestige of this once prosperous township remains’, with the modern village featuring little built heritage dating its mid-nineteenth century roots.⁸⁰

While the exact location and nature of much of the old township is something of a mystery certain details of Old Ulmarra and its population have been recorded. In the 1860's, Lower Ulmarra had a population of around 800 in the town and surrounding farmsteads and could boast three stores, two hotels and a post and telegraph office as well as two churches and two schools.⁸¹ One of the Schools mentioned may have been located to the west of Small Park and may be the old school mentioned in a series of Department of Instruction letters dating to the 1860's at NSW State Records.⁸² Schools in this region in the early days were described as ‘makeshift’ with children having to travel up 3 to 4 miles to attend.⁸³

By the late nineteenth century, the refocusing of central Ulmarra to its present location had commenced. In 1890 the town was hit by three floods in a single year. However development continued and by 1900 Ulmarra had four blacksmiths, a bacon works, an abattoir, a hospital, two schools and three policemen. A fire raged through the town and destroyed a number of the predominantly timber buildings in 1906. The Commercial Hotel, setback with a garden on the Clarence River, was destroyed by the fire and re-constructed post-fire (now the Ulmarra Hotel). James Retallick's two storey general store on the main street was also destroyed in the 1906 fire and rebuilt.

Refer **figures 31 - 37**.

⁷⁹ DUAP, 1998: 60; McFarlane, c.1910: 51

⁸⁰ McFarlane, c.1910: 51

⁸¹ McFarlane, c.1910: 51; JRC Planning Services, 1995

⁸² NSW State Records, School File-Ulmarra: 5/17930

⁸³ McFarlane, c. 1910: 7



FIGURE 27: SETTLER'S HUT IN THE CLARENCE RIVER DISTRICT (C.1860-1890)
State Library of NSW ML a7191491h



FIGURE 28: FERRY ON THE CLARENCE RIVER AT GRAFTON (C.1860-1890)
State Library of NSW ML a7191038h



FIGURE 29: BILLIARD PARLOUR, GROCER SHOP, TOWN HALL & TEA ROOM – GLEN INNES (ND)
State Library of NSW bcp_02491h

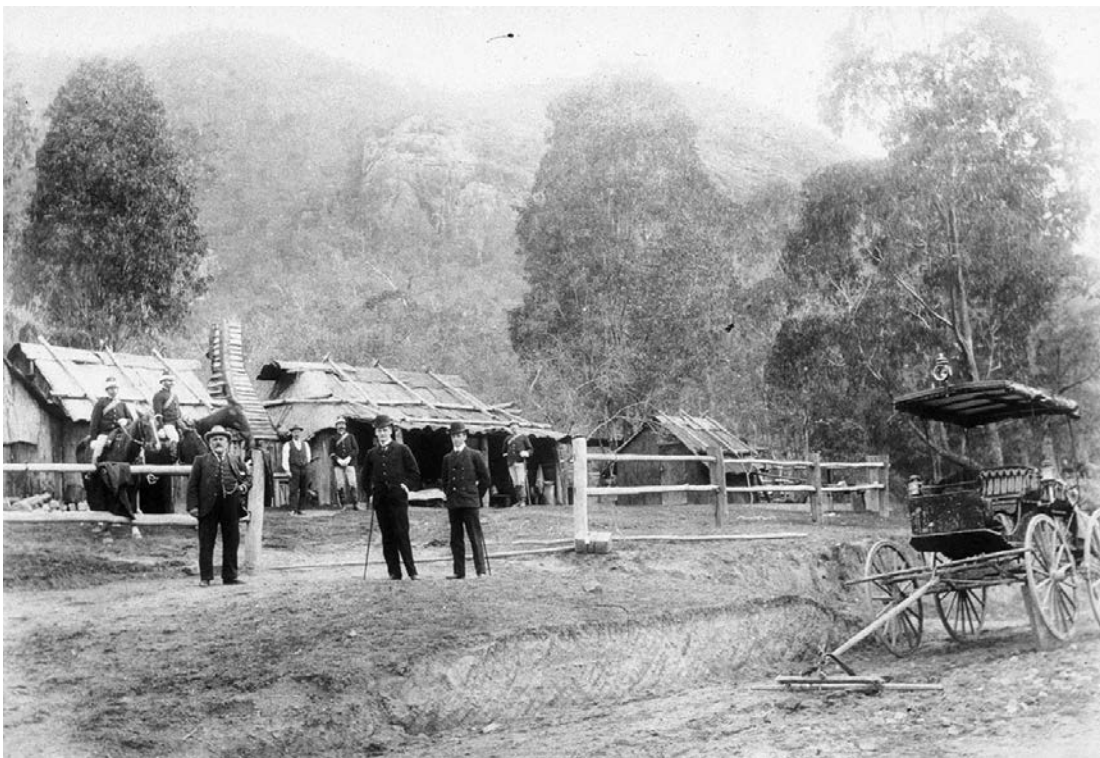


FIGURE 30: VISIT OF GOVERNOR SIR HARRY RAWSON ON THE OLD GRAFTON ROAD - PROBABLY GLEN INNES (C1900)
State Library of NSW bcp_02496h

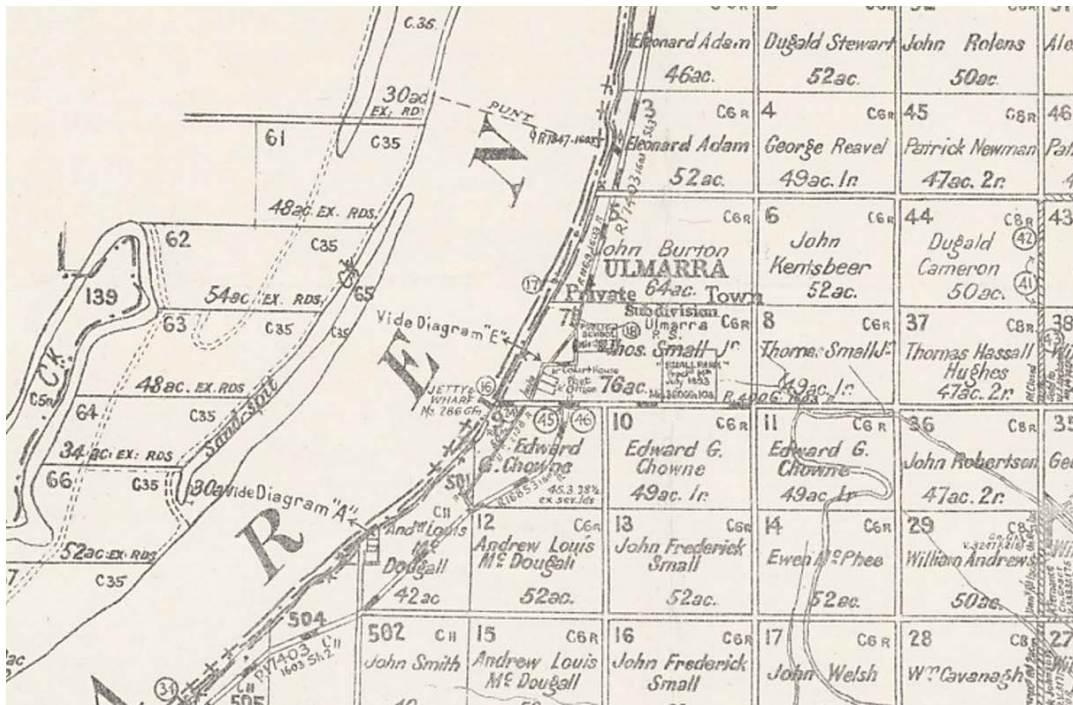


FIGURE 32: PARISH OF ULMARRA; COUNTY OF CLARENCE (1936)

National Library of Australia <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-556920867>

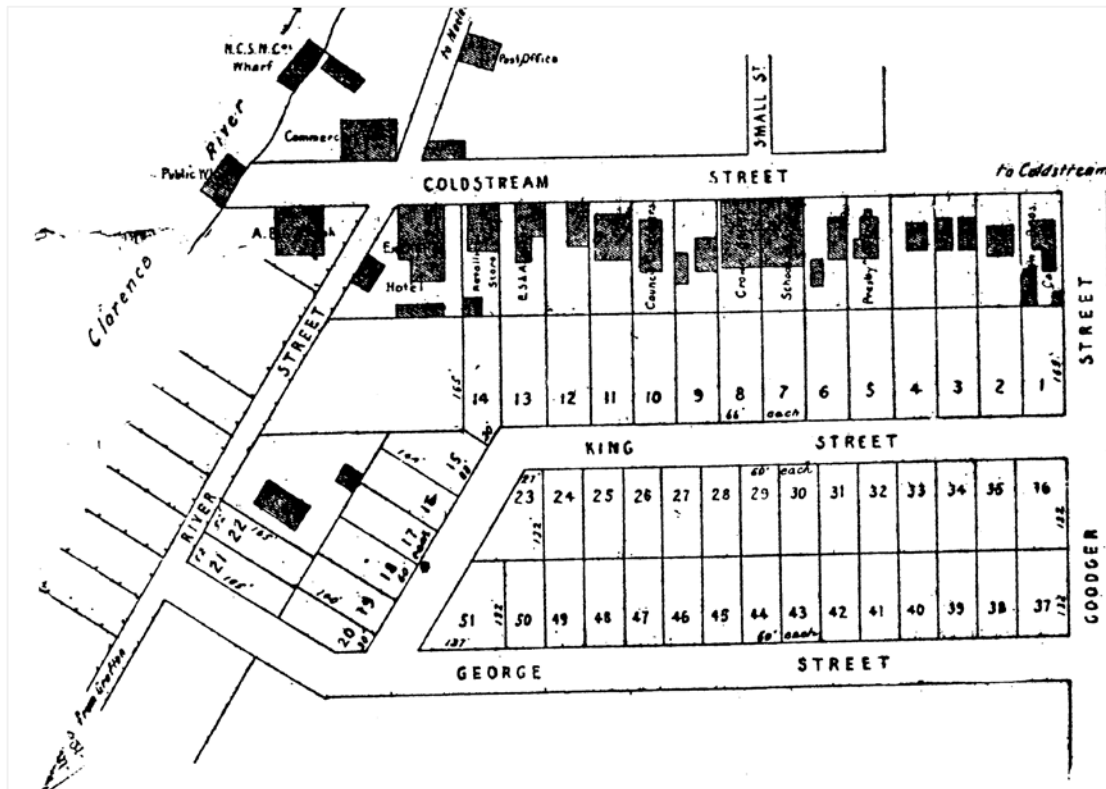


FIGURE 33: AUCTION PLAN, ULMARRA (1924)

Presented in Avery 1991



FIGURE 34: RIVER STREET ULMARRA (C.1900) OUTSIDE COURTHOUSE, POST OFFICE AT MID LEFT, VIEW TO EXCHANGE HOTEL
Presented in Avery 1991



FIGURE 35: JAMES RETALLIC'S RESIDENCE NEXT TO HIS STORE ON COLDSTREAM STREET BEFORE THE FIRE.
Photograph from Ulmarra Hotel Gina Scheer March 2018



FIGURE 36: ULMARRA FROM WEST END OF MAIN STREET LOOKING EAST (1936)
State Library of NSW Government Printing Office 1 – 21334



FIGURE 37: THE COMMERCIAL HOTEL, ULMARRA (1946) – NOW THE ULMARRA HOTEL
Tooth & Co Hotel Card

6.4 Nymboida

Nymboida was settled in the hills above the Nymboida River. The first official sale of town lots for Nymboida took place in September 1870, however European settlement had begun in the 1840s with the large pastoral stations. In 1870 there were 25 allotments offered for sale in Grafton. William Sutton, who already operated Suttons Inn in Nymboida purchased 5 allotments at that time.⁸⁴ By 1879 Nymboida had a school and by the early 20th century the village also had a mill, coaching station (1904), hotel, hall and police station. In the 1920s the Nymboida Hydro-electric Power Station Complex was completed and this brought more workers and their families to the village.

During the later 20th century, c.1980s, Nymboida became a location for ‘tree changers’ and particularly those interested in living a more environmentally aware life than city life could provide. The pioneers of this second wave of habitation included many who built their own houses and farms and lived self-sufficiently within the areas around Nymboida. These settlers arrived after the final closure of the Nymboida Coal Mine (1979) and helped keep the village and its post office and school open.

Refer **figures 38 - 40**



FIGURE 38: NYMBOIDA POST OFFICE AND CHURCH AT TOP RIGHT (1911-1920)

Provided by Clarence Valley Council (Deborah Wray) February 2018

⁸⁴ Suters, 1979, 4



FIGURE 39: PUBLIC SCHOOL NYMBOICA C.1886

Courtesy of Clarence Valley Historical Society



FIGURE 40: ABORIGINES MISSION CLARENCE RIVER SCHOOL (ND)

Courtesy of Clarence Valley Historical Society

7.0 INDUSTRY

In addition to the cedar getters, squatters and early merchants, small farmers also played a significant role in shaping the history of the Northern Rivers and the study area.

Prior to 1861 there had been limited settlement along the Clarence and indeed along the other Northern River Valleys. In 1847, government regulations divided land into "settled", "intermediate" and "unsettled" areas and made land in the settled areas (as well as land within 3 miles of the coast and 2 miles of the Clarence and Richmond Rivers) available for purchase. The saleable land had been surveyed as early as 1841.⁸⁵ Sales of subdivided rural land were slow at first but by 1856, 200,000 acres of land had been sold along the Clarence and by 1857 major government auctions saw further significant land sales in the parishes along River.

In 1861, the *Land Alienation* or *Robertson Act* (1861) opened up Crown land across NSW to free selection at a low fixed price. The Act and subsequent land rush proved to be the most significant reason for population increases in the towns along the Northern Rivers. As a result, large numbers of farmers purchased small holdings and there was a swelling population within established towns, as well as revitalisation of the cedar ports and establishment of new towns and agricultural centres.⁸⁶ The rich riverside lands of the Clarence in particular were rapidly populated by many small homesteads linked by a complex road system.⁸⁷

7.1 Agriculture

Small farming at Grafton and along the Clarence River valley from the 1860's was characterised by experimentation and crop diversity. The first crop to be successfully grown and marketed was Maize. This was rapidly followed by cotton, tropical fruit and cane:

Maize

Initial cropping in the Clarence involved the growing of wheat, which unfortunately failed due to rust problems in the early 1860's.⁸⁸ Subsequent planting of maize was more successful and this crop became a Northern Rivers agricultural mainstay until oversupply led to market problems.

Cotton

Fluctuations in the maize crop price led farmers in the Ulmarra district to early experimentation with cotton, particularly during the American Civil War period when world cotton prices were high.⁸⁹ Cotton grew well on the Clarence and with the 1863/64 Ulmarra season bringing government supplied seed and a two-pence per pound bonus it is not surprising that many local farmers chose to produce this crop.⁹⁰ The end of the American Civil War resulted in market price fluctuations, and eventually, a decline in world cotton prices. The result was a collapse of the local Northern Rivers cotton industry. Most of the cotton picked after 1864 was never marketed and ended up being used for bed stuffing and a range of domestic purposes. Some Clarence growers persevered into the late 1860's but by 1868 production had all but ceased.⁹¹

⁸⁵ Kass, 1989: 12

⁸⁶ Kass, 1989: 13

⁸⁷ DUAP, 1996: 65

⁸⁸ DUAP, 1996: 65

⁸⁹ Rowley, 1939: 159

⁹⁰ McFarlane, c.1910: 28-29

⁹¹ Rowley, 1939: 161-162; Jervis, McFarlane, c.1910: 28-29

Tropical Fruit

Local Ulmarra farming identity, 'Banana' Brown was also responsible for the first successful cultivation of bananas for domestic consumption, signaling the start of another of the early agricultural industries in the Clarence region.⁹² The report of the Inter-Colonial Exhibition of 1870 mentioned that 8965 bunches of bananas were sent from the Clarence in 1869.⁹³ It would appear however that banana growing, though successful, continued in only a limited way in the Clarence River Valley perhaps due to the overwhelming success of sugar cane production in the 1870's.

Sugar Cane

Sugar Cane became the agricultural mainstay of the Clarence River communities in the 1870's after successful experimentation in the mid-1860's determined that a number of varieties grew well in the Northern Rivers area. A series of lectures on cane growing by authorities Thomas Scott and Melmoth Hall in 1869, and successful cane cultivation experiments in Grafton at around the same time, led many Clarence River farmers to take up cane farming. Sugar farming succeeded for two reasons; it fitted the intensive farming pattern of the northern rivers, and could be sold direct to a local market in an unrefined state.

The primary production of sugar on small farming allotments and its direct sale to market was soon aided by the establishment of production mills along the Clarence, one of the earliest and largest being the Co-Operative sugar mill, the Belmore Mill, located at Ulmarra and opened in 1869 by the NSW Governor, the Earl of Belmore.⁹⁴ Although that mill was short-lived, soon after other mills which operated with varying degrees of success "sprang up like mushrooms" along the river banks.⁹⁵ The establishment of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR) and the construction of a number of very large central mills at strategic Northern Rivers sites brought about the stabilisation of the sugar industry and the rise of 'company towns' in the Northern Rivers. The Southgate Mill, opposite Ulmarra, was the first CSR mill to be built on the Clarence River in 1871.⁹⁶

The producers of sugar, like the producers of other crops in the Clarence River valley faced a number of hurdles in the latter decades of the 1800's. Overall production was affected by frosts (on farms located too far up river), flooding in the mid-1870's, the rise of beet sugar internationally, and finally gumming disease and government threats to remove protective tariffs in the 1890's.⁹⁷ While CSR overcame many of the problems associated with production through sheer domination of the industry, independent farmers looked for another source of income. The alternative that many chose was dairying.

7.2 Dairying

Described with great enthusiasm by one gentleman in the 1880's as '*...one of the greatest, if not absolutely the greatest of the leading industries ...*' dairying came to be established in the Northern Rivers in the late 1880's and carried on as a key industry until well into the 1930's.⁹⁸

⁹² Kass, 1989: 19

⁹³ McFarlane, c.1910: note 37

⁹⁴ Kass, 1989: 15, DUAP, 1996: 62, Clarence Valley Historical Society Inc., Ulmarra Public School Centenary, 24

⁹⁵ Kass, 1989: 15

⁹⁶ Kass, 1989:15

⁹⁷ McFarlane, c.1910: 30-31; DUAP, 1996: 62

⁹⁸ Na. 1910: 107; Kass, 1989: 28

Prior to the 1880's, southern notions persisted that dairying was a temperate climate activity not suited to tropical conditions. This attitude, coupled with the apparent lack of suitable grazing grasses, prevented the move of serious dairy farmers into the Northern River lands. The discovery of *Paspalum diliturn* (a suitable native feed grass) and the success of Illawarra farmers in non-temperate conditions, served to dispel earlier doubts and dairying began in earnest in the Northern Rivers in the 1890's.⁹⁹ Though the Richmond River valley was the dominant dairying area until the early 1900's, the Clarence River also enjoyed the successful spread of dairying and the rise of the allied industries associated with it.

Co-operatives

The first Clarence River cheese factory was established at Ulmarra by an Illawarra businessman in 1886, and was followed by a host of co-operative creameries throughout the Clarence. The first of the Cooperative creameries, the *Clarence River Pioneer Dairy Company*, was also situated in Ulmarra and commenced operation in 1892. A similar operation, *Norco*, was established at the Government Port of Byron Bay in 1895, and the *NSW Fresh Food & Ice Cream Company* opened its doors to Clarence River farmers in 1896 when it established a factory at South Grafton.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, every dairy farmer with riverfront land built a jetty:

Every few miles along the banks - and often at shorter intervals - the droghers and river steamers have to stop at tiny jetties to pick up the cans of cream from surrounding farmers, while at the larger wharves each steamer is always sure to find two or three consignments awaiting transport to the butter factories.¹⁰¹

The Clarence River Co-operative Pioneer Dairy Co. butter factory at Ulmarra was rebuilt in 1923. Thereafter, it amalgamated with Grafton in 1970; was sold to Norco in 1990; and was closed in 1999.¹⁰²

Transport

Transportation of cream and milk was initially by horse and dray to creameries, and to river transport as many small cream boats plied the river, picking up cream at the many small wharves. About the 1930's, after roads had improved in the area, trucks took over the transport with a few small cream boats remaining.¹⁰³

Production

Northern River's dairy production peaked in the 1930's/1940s with the Ulmarra butter factory producing 4,432,291 pounds of butter in 1931 and Northern Rivers region accounting for 60% of all the butter produced in NSW in 1934-35.¹⁰⁴

In the 1940's there were over 500 dairy farms stocked with about 25,000 cows in the Shires of Ulmarra and Harwood, producing over six million gallons of milk.

After the 1930's however, the industry started to decline, responding to shrinking overseas markets; failing export prices; and the invention of vegetable oil-based, butter alternatives such as margarine.

Refer **figures 38 – 43.**

⁹⁹ DUAP, 1996: 62-63

¹⁰⁰ Kass, 1986: 19

¹⁰¹ North Coast Steam Navigation Company Ltd, 1909: 105

¹⁰² Stubbs

¹⁰³ Stubbs

¹⁰⁴ Kass 1989: 28



FIGURE 41: THE (FIRST) ULMARRA BUTTER FACTORY (1905)
State Library of NSW Government Printing Office 1 – 09723

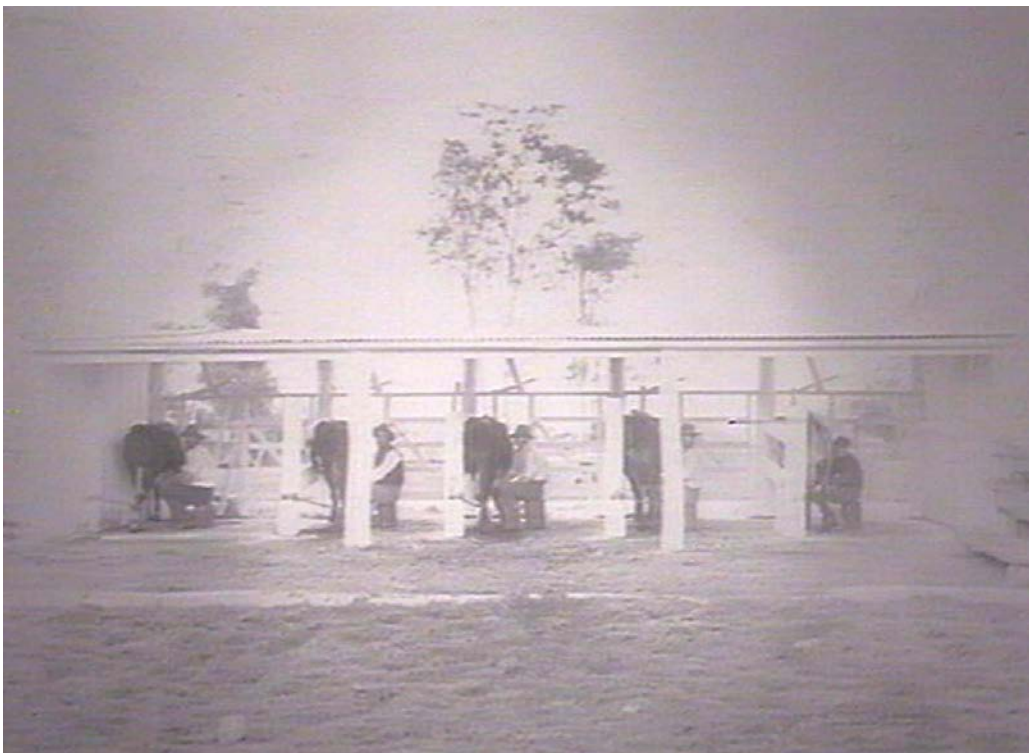


FIGURE 42: MILKING STANDS @ MCLEOD'S DAIRY FARM, ULMARRA (1905)
Government Printing Office 1 - 09725



FIGURE 43: MCLEOD'S FARM ON THE ORARA RIVER (C.1905)
North Coast District Album State Library of NSW M X981.8/ 5A1



FIGURE 44: COCHRANE'S FARM ON THE ORARA RIVER (C.1905)
North Coast District Album State Library of NSW M X981.8/ 5A1



FIGURE 45: SUGARCANE HARVESTING AT ULMARRA (1905)
State Library of NSW Government Printing Office 1-09722

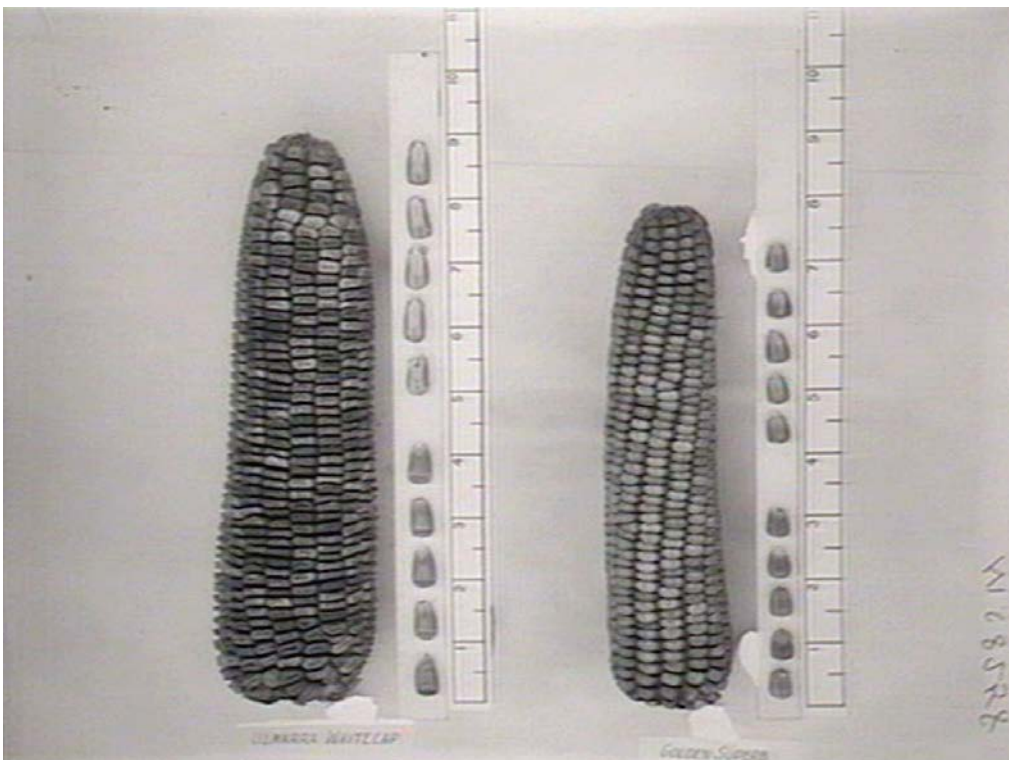


FIGURE 46: ULMARRA CORN TYPES: ULMARRA WHITECAP & GOLDEN SUPERB (ND)
State Library of NSW Government Printing Office 1-40302

7.3 Gold!

The discovery of gold was responsible for major changes in both the locations in which it was discovered and the localities from which gold mining towns harvested their labour. It changed the face of towns and landscapes and took labour from the farmlands and forests and inserted it en masse into the mines. This was as true in Northern NSW as it was elsewhere – no more so than at Dalmorton on the Boyd River (Little) River.

7.3.1 Dalmorton

It is believed that gold was discovered in the greater Dalmorton area in the 1860s by a Cunglebung Station leaseholder. Thereafter, gold was worked sporadically on the tributaries of the Mann and Boyd Rivers until the main 'rush' - precipitated by the discovery of a gold bearing quartz reef (Union Reef) at Quart Pot Creek located south of Dalmorton in early 1871. This piqued the interest of prospectors and led to the rapid discovery of over 50 workable reefs in the greater Dalmorton area. By March of the same year the rush to the Boyd River and Dalmorton had begun.¹⁰⁵

By 1872 'splendid stone' was being excavated from the Dalmorton area reefs and the Boyd or Little River Goldfield diggings were becoming well established. There were 500 people at the Boyd River diggings, and two quartz crushing plants had been established.¹⁰⁶ The need for a town to service the diggings became paramount and proto-Dalmorton was established.

Newton Boyd (1871), Buccarumbi (1871) and Dalmorton (1873) were the three Boyd River towns surveyed in the early 1870s on '*favourable land ... nearest the centres of mining activity*'.¹⁰⁷ Sited on the Boyd River at a crossing point, amidst the goldfields and halfway between Grafton and Glenn Innes, Dalmorton was well situated to service the 'rush' and became a mining hub.

One of the first buildings was a post office, established in 1872. The township, originally mooted as 'El Dorado' but mercifully changed to Dalmorton, appears to have grown up around this structure. The town served as the centre of a broader temporary settlement area marked by the workings and tents of the miners. By 1874 the town had been officially proclaimed and featured the aforementioned post office, several hotels and stores and an indeterminable number of residences generally of bark and slab construction. Population estimates suggest the town and surrounds supported a population in the order of 3000 at the peak of the rush.¹⁰⁸

Despite the intentions of the town planners, the settlement was restricted to the northern side of the river. At around this time the Grafton to Glenn Innes Road (Newton Boyd Road) was upgraded to facilitate higher volume use. In 1875 the construction of the Buccarumbi bridge (Nymboida River) and Bawden bridge (Orara River) allowed for transportation of the heavy machinery needed to improve the diggings.¹⁰⁹

By 1881 the township featured a police station and a butcher's shop. It was around this time also that development in the town and surrounding goldfields stalled, as the diggings within the officially proclaimed goldfields failed to live up to their initial promise.¹¹⁰ By 1887 the township population had fallen to 180.¹¹¹ Refer **figures 47 - 59**.

¹⁰⁵ Tuck 2014

¹⁰⁶ Town & Country Journal 8 June 1872.

¹⁰⁷ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 26

¹⁰⁸ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 58

¹⁰⁹ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 21-24

¹¹⁰ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 25

¹¹¹ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 72



FIGURE 47: VILLAGE OF DALMORTON (1883)
NSW Land Registry Services Historical Lands Record Viewer



FIGURE 48: VILLAGE OF DALMORTON (1894)
NSW Land Registry Services Historical Lands Record Viewer

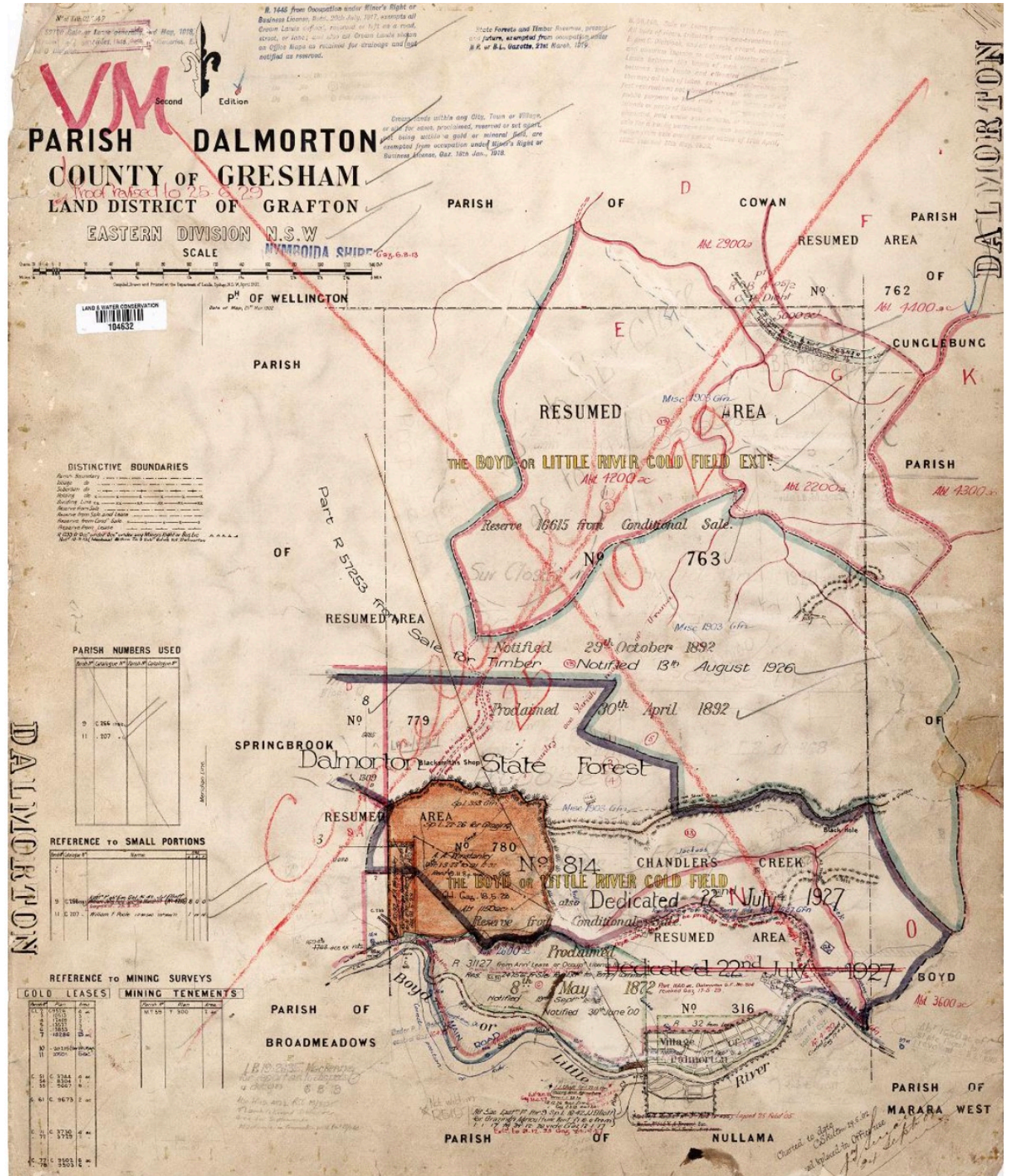




FIGURE 50: THE BUTCHER'S SHOP DALMORTON (1897)

NSW Through the Eye of the Camera (36 Views), Eyre & Spotswoode, Melbourne

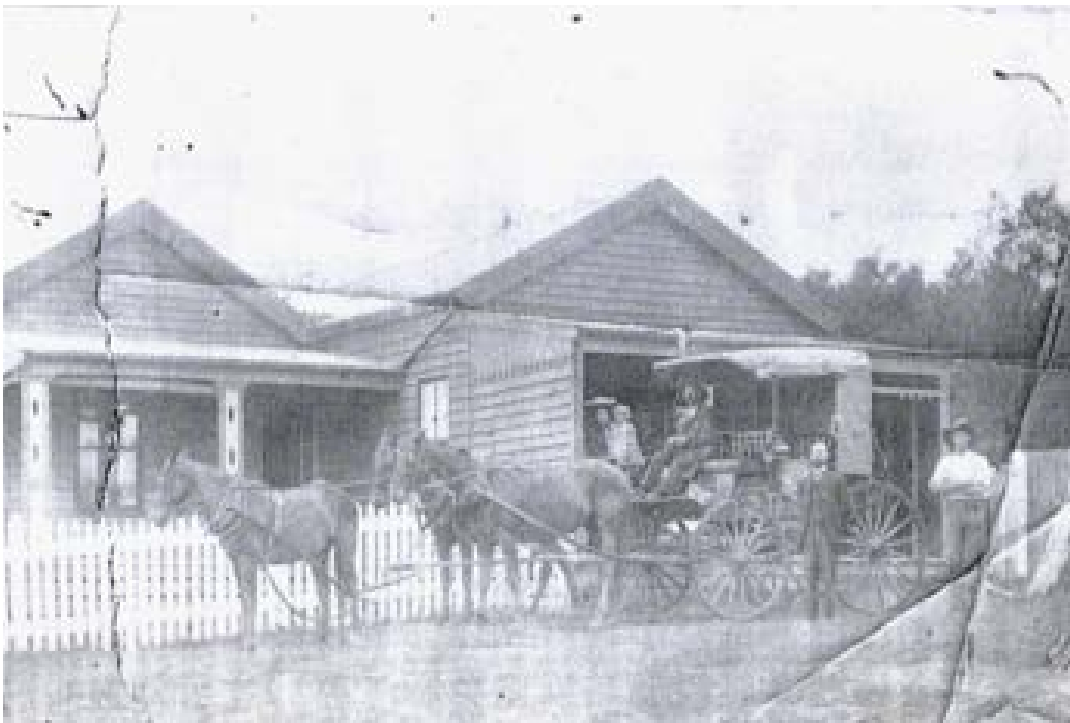


FIGURE 51: DALMORTON COACH HOUSE (ND)

Clarence River Historical Society Image presented in Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003



FIGURE 52: DALMORTON SCHOOL (ND) 'THE SMALLEST SCHOOL IN CREATION'
Clarence River Historical Society Image presented in Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003



FIGURE 53: DALMORTON POLICE PRECINCT – COURTHOUSE (ND) – VIEW FROM STREET WITH LOCK-UP AT FAR LEFT.
Image presented in Tuck 2007

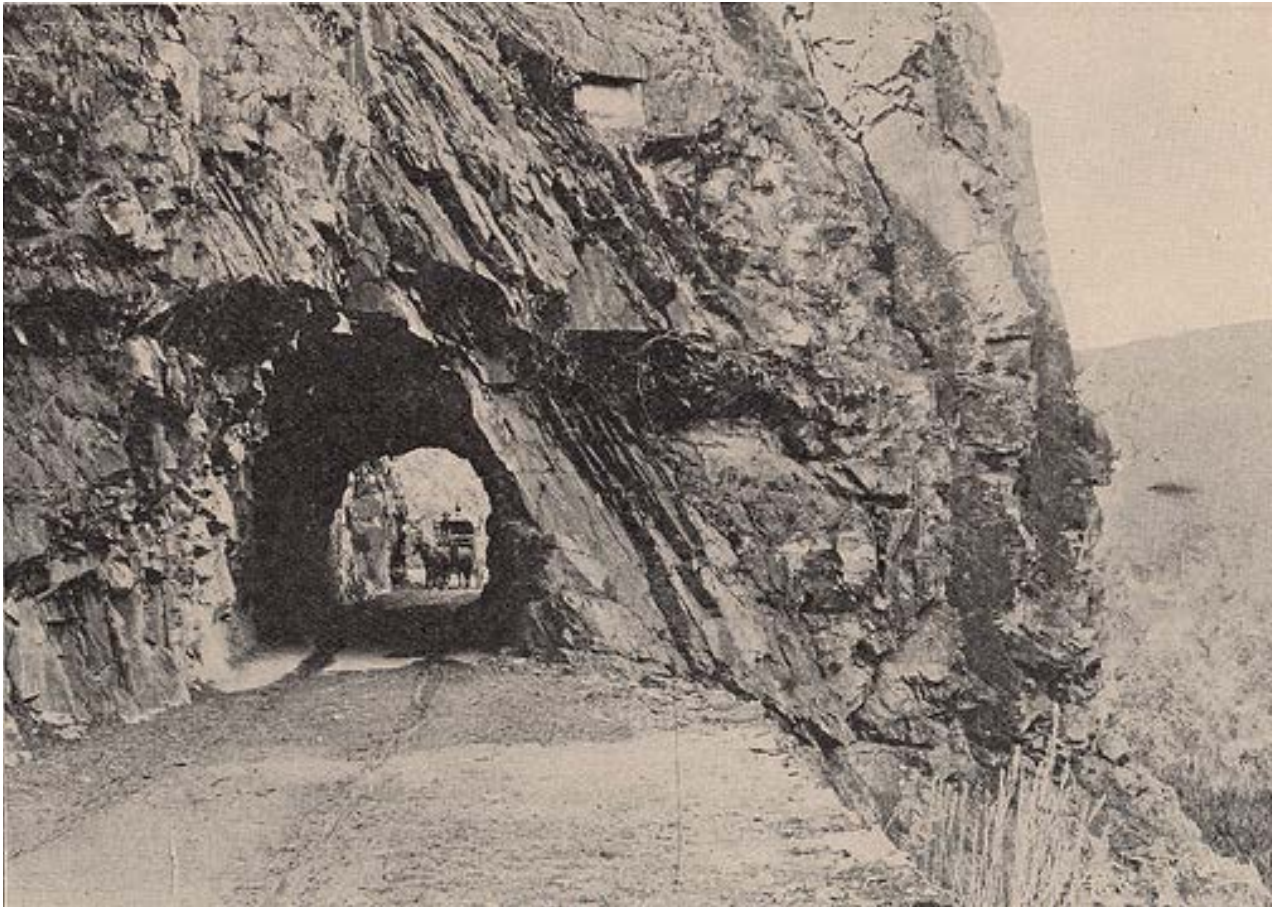


FIGURE 54: TUNNEL ROCK (COLLOQUIALLY KNOWN AS THE CONVICT TUNNEL) DALMORTON (1897)
NSW Through the Eye of the Camera (36 Views), Eyre & Spotswoode, Melbourne



FIGURE 55: DALMORTON SILVER MINE (C.1920S)
Clarence River Historical Society Images presented in Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 25



FIGURE 56: DALMORTON (1921/1922) – ONE OF THE FIVE HOTELS
National Library of Australia PIC/8847/3/16



FIGURE 57: NYMBOIDA RIVER (1929)
State Library of New South Wales ML



FIGURE 58: NYMBOIDA RIVER JUNCTION (C.1900)
State Library of New South Wales ML



FIGURE 59: MILL ON THE NYMBOIDA RIVER (1939)
State Library of New South Wales ML

Minor Rush

After the initial rush and almost two decades of sporadic mining, Dalmorton was the subject of a minor secondary rush in 1891.¹¹² This rush coincided with extensions to the proclaimed Little (Boyd) River Goldfield and saw a host of new mines established at Springbrook and Pine Creek. These included Abercrombie, Black Jack, Carbine, Excelsior and Black Slate Creek.¹¹³ Technical and engineering advances allowed for deeper, more complex excavations than had been available to miners during the earlier rushes of the 1870s.

Although the mines met with varying success, Dalmorton remained an active service centre with a population fluctuating between 300 and 1100 for much of the 1880s and 1890s. Features of the township at the time included a progress association (established 1892) and five operational hotels: the Golden Fleece, Dalmorton, Perseverance, Royal and Post Office. Social events were a feature of the township in the 1890s and in 1896 the NSW Governor was a dinner host.¹¹⁴

Though the town was going well in the 1890s, few people had taken up the allotments set out on the original 1870s town surveys. Those that had taken up allotments often held a number of blocks. Plans from the 1890s reflect the contrast between the grand plans of the 1870s and the reality twenty years later. Significant landholders and citizens in the town at the time included Henry A. Brown, David Pinkerton, Charles Tennant, Martha Elliot and Frank Norrie.¹¹⁵

Mining declined in the Dalmorton area throughout the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Although it continued sporadically with peaks related to new finds and mine reworking (a consequence of advances in technology) - the golden era of mining in the Boyd River Valley was over. The last mining operation in the area (Mount Remarkable) ceased operation in 1942.¹¹⁶

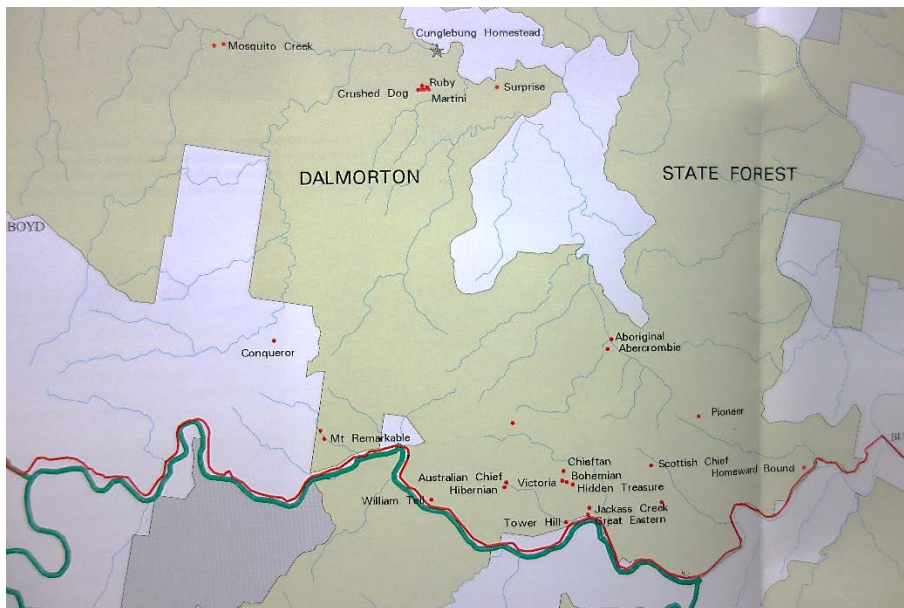


FIGURE 60: LOCATION OF MINES DALMORTON STATE FOREST

State Forests of NSW, 1994 Environmental Impact Statement Figure 6.2 Grafton Management Area

¹¹² The 'peak year' of production in the Little River Gold Field was 1892 which produced 2024 ounces of vein gold and 342 ounces of alluvial gold.

¹¹³ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 26; 30

¹¹⁴ Tuck 2011

¹¹⁵ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003

¹¹⁶ Greg Kater & Associates Pty Ltd 1981b; Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 53

Timber

Timbergetting was the earliest major industry in Northern NSW and Grafton was well established as a timber port by the 1840s. Dalmorton was not immune to the enterprises of timber getters, although its remote location and siting on a minor river stalled the broad-scale exploitation of its forest resources.

By the 1870s timber was being felled in earnest in the Dalmorton area. This was a consequence of both the exhaustion of more accessible timber supplies on the Clarence and demand for structural timber from the mines that had sprung up after 1871. The early picture of timber exploitation in the region is not well documented but a 1907 Royal Commission into Forestry noted heavy exploitation at Nymboida in the 1880s and the demise of the cedar stands there by 1890.¹¹⁷

The Commission precipitated a range of changes in forest management and saw the creation of a number of new State Forests (S.F.) and Forest Reserves (F.R.) in the district. The Dalmorton State Forest to the north of the Dalmorton township was dedicated in 1927 (later extended).¹¹⁸

While there appears to have been heavy exploitation at select locations, the forests were vast and during the 1920s and 1930s, Dalmorton was the centre of timbergetting enterprises in the Boyd Valley with co-operatives including Pine Creek, Buccarumbi and Newton Boyd. Numerous mills peppered the valley at the time including those at Dalmorton, Newton Boyd and Sheep Station Creek.¹¹⁹

Mill workers huts and bullockies were part of the Dalmorton landscape in the early twentieth century. The bullockies provided the only real transport option for the mills at that time. They remained a force until the late 1950s when technology superseded them, and the motor lorry became the dominant mode of transport.

Decline

The timber industry kept Dalmorton afloat for the opening decades of the twentieth century. Other forces were at work that saw the township commence an irreversible decline.

This was reflected in population decline in the township as well as the poor state of disrepair of the Grafton to Glenn Innes Road. WWI saw the departure of young men to the battlefields, many of whom were never to return. After this war many in the region turned to fossicking and rabbiting to ward off the effects of the economic depression. Meanwhile, the Department of Main Roads (DMR) investigated ways of improving the Grafton to Glenn Innes Road and in 1939, using relief labourers, set about bypassing the Little (Boyd) River section of the road.

WWII

Dalmorton received a brief reprieve during WWII when the road bypass was put on hold and the town continued to service travelers and landholders in the local area. Though all of the hotels had now gone, the town retained a functional heart which included a butcher's shop, post office, mill, police station and store.¹²⁰

After the war, the provisions of the Closer Settlement Act (1938) encouraged people to obtain small blocks of land in the country.¹²¹ Much of the Dalmorton region was rugged country and so few people took up the

¹¹⁷ *Royal Commission into Forestry in NSW* 1908: 559

¹¹⁸ Curby 1993

¹¹⁹ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 42

¹²⁰ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 50

¹²¹ Among the blocks for selection were a number of 40 acre blocks sited along the Grafton - Glenn Innes Road

offer. The Dalmorton region further declined to such an extent that by the close of the 1940s the only non-residential buildings in the town were a mixed business store and the police station.¹²²

Bypass

The Little River Valley bypass commenced in 1939 and was completed in 1962. This effectively closed the town of Dalmorton off from the lifeblood of through traffic traveling between Glen Innes and Grafton.¹²³ The opening of the bypass took place as the last public complex in the town, the Police Station, was closed and leased. The Police Department ultimately disposed of the property in 1965.¹²⁴

The 1960s and 1970s saw regional State Forest logging operations contrast with the creation of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (1967) and the subsequent establishment of national parks such as Guy Fawkes River National Park (1972). Negotiation and conflict over land use was common during the period leading up to the establishment of these parks.

Parks such as Guy Fawkes River heralded the commencement of official environmental and cultural tourism in NSW. Concurrently, the bypassed ghost town of Dalmorton was also becoming part of the cultural tourism trend, with visitors drawn to its isolation and standing remnants of a once busy gold mining township whose time had long past.

In the 1970s much of the former township of Dalmorton was put up for lease. Grafton solicitor Ray Burridge took up the lease and converted the majority of it to freehold title. There was some grazing in the area undertaken at the time by Bob Scott's Dalmorton Investments pastoral lease company.¹²⁵

Gold Revisited

In 1980 Dalmorton was re-birthed as the headquarters of the Little River Goldfields (LRG) Company who took up a number of exploration licenses in the Dalmorton region. Managers Phil and Christina Wales lived at the former Dalmorton Police Station and endeavored to explore the potential of the region for mining using advanced technologies.¹²⁶

Despite ten years of exploration and investigation, the company ultimately proved unsuccessful and abandoned the town.¹²⁷ Pastoralist Matt Stahlen brought the land around the remaining buildings in Dalmorton in 1991. In that same year the former Police Station and Courthouse complex burnt to the ground.

Guy Fawkes State Conservation Area

In September 1996, the nearby Pine Creek Catchment of Chaelundi State Forest was proposed for addition to the Guy Fawkes River National Park. This was subsequently gazetted in 1997.

The Chaelundi area of forest was part of a landmark campaign by the environmental campaigners, North East Forest Alliance (1990 - 1996), to protect old growth forest. The campaign spearheaded by John Corkhill resulted in numerous court cases and arrests and became one of the most significant events in NSW conservation history. The campaign led to the establishment of the first endangered species legislation, the

¹²² Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 49

¹²³ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 46

¹²⁴ NSW Police Archives PS 62/3724/1253; Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 50

¹²⁵ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 53

¹²⁶ Greg Kater & Associates Pty Ltd. 1981a & 1981b; Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 55

¹²⁷ The final reports for the LRG exploration licenses were forwarded in 1993 (refer Elliot 1993)

Endangered Fauna (Interim Protection) Act 1991, and also resulted in the creation of several new national parks and wilderness areas.¹²⁸

This addition to NSW NPWS reserve system which linked Guy Fakes National Park and Reserve with a declared wilderness area was not the last addition to the greater Guy Fawkes National Park. In 2003 Dalmorton's history and inherent cultural heritage values were officially recognized when the Guy Fawkes River State Conservation Area, incorporating the former town site of Dalmorton, was gazetted.¹²⁹ Dalmorton is now located within an area managed by NSW NPWS.

History of Policing in Dalmorton

Calls for a locally stationed police officer at Dalmorton coincided with the Little (Boyd) River goldrush and the establishment of the township in the early 1870s. The need for law enforcement (police, mining commissioner and JP) related to the both the rapid growth of the township and the need for the adequate and timely resolution of claims disputes and other grievances typical of a burgeoning gold town.¹³⁰

It remains uncertain as to exactly when the first police officer was stationed at Dalmorton - a police reserve was set aside on the 1873 town plan and by 1875 a station had been established.¹³¹ Whether the first station was within the later allotment is uncertain, however, there was certainly an occupied station house fronting Boyd Street on site by 1881.¹³²

By 1892 the police precinct was fenced and featured a station house and several outbuildings (possibly including a Lock-Up).¹³³ In the same year, the Dalmorton Court of Petty Sessions was created.¹³⁴ In 1895 the reserve was extended to include land to the immediate west at the corner of Boyd and Martin Streets.¹³⁵ The courthouse and officer's quarters were constructed in c.1899. This structure possibly incorporated (or replaced) the earlier police building.¹³⁶

During the closing decades of the nineteenth century, Dalmorton was served by officers of the Mounted Police who depended on their horses in the difficult and variable terrain of the Little (Boyd) Valley. Not to be confused with the earlier and more infamous Colonial Mounted Police, the Mounted Police had considerable longevity in the region due to their appropriateness for the environment they policed. Early officers at Dalmorton included:

- Constable Swan: c.1890 - late 1890s
- Constable McSpedden: late 1890s - 1916

Most of the business of the station and courthouse related to the operation of the goldfields and the usual town affairs, however there was the occasional notable event. In 1918 for instance, an outlaw of German origin known as the 'Red Bushranger' was stealing from properties in the district and was holed up in the range behind Dalmorton. Armidale and Dalmorton Police utilised the services of Aborigines from Marengo

¹²⁸ DEC 2006: 30 - 31

¹²⁹ DEC 2006: 10. Dalmorton was purchased by the Service in 2001 as part of 4000 acres to be included in the Guy Fawkes River SCA

¹³⁰ *Town & Country Journal* 21 September 1872

¹³¹ SRNSW - Dalmorton Police Station (Agency 365).

¹³² *Clarence & Richmond Examiner* 22 October 1881

¹³³ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 36

¹³⁴ NSW Government Gazette 8 April 1892

¹³⁵ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 36

¹³⁶ *Clarence & Richmond Examiner* 19 December 1899

Station in an attempt to track him but he appears to have evaded capture by moving north out of the district.¹³⁷

When gold mining ceased and the population declined, particularly after WWI, the role of the station changed somewhat. It was still the centre of policing, but it also served as the heart of district business activity as other business and government facilities in the town shut up shop.¹³⁸

By 1961 the town population had diminished significantly, the town was in the process of being bypassed, and the local police force - comprising the station officer and associated tracker - was made redundant. The station was officially closed on 13 November 1961.¹³⁹

After the Police Station closed it was let to a Mr Bruce Winn in 1962 for £2.0.6 - on the condition that he vacate the premises when required to do so.¹⁴⁰ The reserve was ultimately revoked in November 1965 and the Police Department disposed of the property in the same year.¹⁴¹ In 1991, after pastoralist Matt Stahlen brought the land around the remaining buildings in Dalmorton the former Police Station and Courthouse complex burnt to the ground.

Aboriginal Trackers

Aboriginal people formed part of the Colonial police force from the mid-nineteenth century. This is when units of 'native police' were established in various parts of the colony. There has been much written about the Native Police and the role they played in the enforced oppression of their own people, particularly along the Murray-Darling River system.

Aboriginal people were also informally engaged as 'trackers' to aid in the retrieval of escaped stock and convicts from the earliest years of settlement. Their landscape knowledge, bush craft and natural horse riding ability ideally suited them to such a task which provided occasional, ad hoc employment. From the 1880s however, an official policy of employing trackers was adopted in NSW and Victoria. This occurred at the same time as the Native Police forces were being disbanded.

There were professional trackers in the Guy Fawkes area by the late 1800s. These included James Boney (Snr & Jnr); Freddie Briggs; and Charlie Layton. Aboriginal trackers were officially employed and stationed at Dalmorton in the early 1900s - the exact date is uncertain though it probably postdates 1918 when Aboriginal farm workers were called on to track 'Red Bushranger'.¹⁴²

¹³⁷ Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003: 40

¹³⁸ Tuck 2007

¹³⁹ Tuck 2007

¹⁴⁰ NSW Police Record & Information Process Services - Dalmorton Police Station Property File.

¹⁴¹ NSW Police Record & Information Process Services - Dalmorton Police Station Property File. Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003

¹⁴² Tuck 2007

Kevin Randall

Kevin Randall is the best known and most recent of the Dalmorton trackers. Originally from Cabbage Island in the Maclean (or McLeay) district, Randall lived and worked at Dalmorton in the 1950s and early 1960s. He is known to have replaced an earlier tracker known only as Robertson - who had moved to Grafton by the time of Randall's arrival. Randall lived with his family (wife and two children) in a wooden cottage opposite the Police Station - now the site of a small, hard top tennis court.

Kevin Randall is perhaps best remembered for his clothing and horse (which were kept immaculately) and for his football prowess. He was an excellent district footballer (winger) and played for the Glen Innes Magpies in the 1950s, overnighing most weekends during the football season at the Club Hotel in the township with his family.

Kevin left Dalmorton when the station was wound up in 1961. He was one of the last trackers in NSW to serve with the Mounted Police.

Refer: Bob O'Bryan pers. comm. 10 May 2007; Presland 1998; Jill Sheppard heritage Consultants 2003: 37-38; 51; 73; www.prov.vic.gov.au/nativepolice

7.4 Forestry

Forestry has been a significant industry shire-wide, since the earliest days of settlement. From the felling of early indigenous hardwood species (such as red cedar) along the Clarence in the 1830s, to the plantation hard and softwood coops of today, the industry has shaped the landscapes and settlement within it. Timber getting and processing has occurred across much of the study area: from the exploitation of the Gondwana forests of the now-Gibraltar Ranges-Washpool National Parks to the NSW Forests plantations of low-altitude pine forests in the Yuraygir National Park area and surrounds. It is beyond the scope of this project to detail the full history of logging and forestry within the subject area, however the locality of Glenreagh serves as a convenient analogue for an in-shire, NSW timber town.

7.4.1 Glenreagh

Glenreagh was first settled in 1858 and is reputed to be the oldest village in the Orara valley. John Campbell Shannon was a notable early resident. He built 'Glen-Righ' homestead on his sheep and cattle run, a Crown Grant of 164-acres, which he had acquired in 1859. It was later sold to the Pearson brothers, who owned it until 1874. It was then sold to Sydney identity and a member of parliament for the Clarence and Richmond, John Connell Laycock.¹⁴³

Gold was discovered on upper Tallawudjah Creek in 1881, but the rush was short-lived and was over by the turn of the century. A stamper battery is known to have existed near the junction of Avery and Tallawudjah Creeks, which was used for the processing of ore (albeit intermittently) until the 1930s. A few of the miners saw potential in the area and settled. They cut logs and cleared the land and assisted others in building the fledgling community. With the advent of railways, 'sleeper cutters' either also settled or became transient workers who travelled and worked in timber areas.

Glenreagh has ultimately become known as a timber town. As railways were spreading out over the state there was a heavy demand for timber sleepers and girders. Typically, heavily loaded bullock wagons travelled to South Grafton from Glenreagh with the timber that was then sent by boat to Sydney. Alternately, rafts of timber were floated down the Orara River to Grafton in times of high river flows.¹⁴⁴

Glenreagh is on the North Coast Railway line, and was connected to it in 1915. A picturesque branch line - from Glenreagh to nearby the nearby timber town of Dorrigo - was opened in 1924. Picturesque though it may have been, it was difficult to maintain due to the steep terrain and high rainfall and it was closed in 1972 after a wash-a-way.

Refer **figures 51 – 64**.

¹⁴³ Webb 1998

¹⁴⁴ Webb 1998



FIGURE 61: GLENREAGH HALL (C.1916)
Coffs Harbour Regional Museum accession no. 07-5215

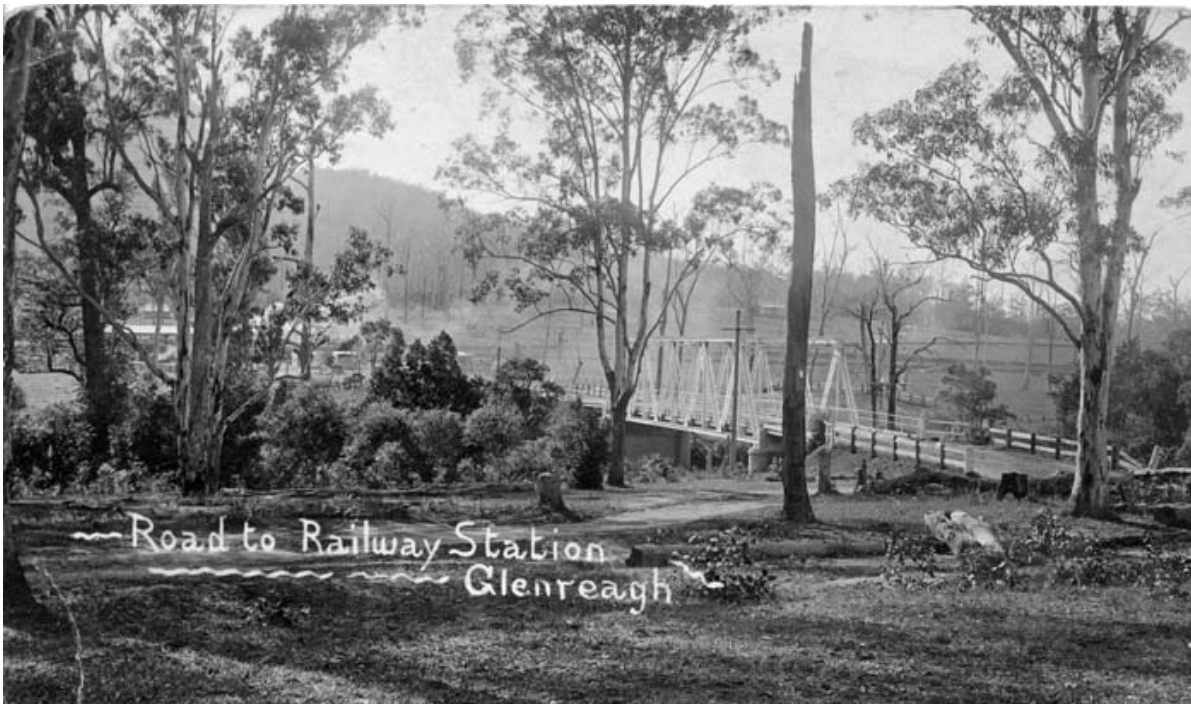


FIGURE 62: ROAD TO THE RAILWAY STATION OVER THE ORARA RIVER AT GLENREAGH (1921)
Coffs Harbour Regional Museum accession no. 07-5272



FIGURE 63: CORAMBA STREET, GLENREAGH TOWNSHIP (1921) – HALL AT LEFT AND THE EARLY GLENREAGH HOTEL AT RIGHT.
Coffs Harbour Regional Museum accession no. 07-5273



FIGURE 64: FIRST TRAIN OVER THE BEILSDOWN BRIDGE, CORAMBA ROAD, GLENREAGH (1924)
Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, Accession No. 07-2818

7.5 Public Works

7.5.1 Shannon Creek Dam

The undulating, rocky, and densely wooded valleys of Shannon Creek to the southwest of Grafton were first subject to selection in the 1840s. The selection containing the later Shannon Creek dam was Geergarow. This was an expansive lease of some 8800 acres taken up by William Forster in c.1840. Extending from the Orara River in the north to the boundaries of adjoining Kangaroo Creek and Nymboida Runs in the south, the run appears to have been little utilised by Forster and the lease was on-sold to John Campbell Shannon in the late 1840s. The southern part of the run was thereafter acquired and renamed Levenstrath by Dr Alexander Skinner (Shannon's brother-in-law) with the Shannon family (after whom the area is known) retaining the remainder.¹⁴⁵

The Shannon family lived on the run located on the Orara River until 1865 when they moved to another property (Glenreagh Station). Through the mid-nineteenth century, Geergarow was leased and grazed. It was acquired by Thomas Jardine and managed by his brother James William in the 1880s. The breakup of the run and subsequent free selection commenced in the late nineteenth century. Arable open land with good water access was taken up first. The less accessible and more difficult terrain of the middle and upper Shannon Creek catchment subject to later selection.¹⁴⁶

Rockview

The Rockview Estate was established by the Austen family in the late 1880s. Portion 31 in the County Fitzroy of Parish of Blaxland, on which Rockview Homestead was later built, was selected by Joseph Austen. His family owned lands surrounding it, including his brother Frank's holdings to the immediate north. Rockview Estate was initially relatively small but grew over time as neighboring lands were acquired and added to the family's collective holdings. Joseph Austen's first residence was a slab hut, which was replaced by a more substantial dwelling (the core of the extant homestead) in 1906. Over the years, the homestead (with its kitchen annex and tennis court) served as a social and recreational hub of the Austen's estate. The estate focused initially on dairy production, pigs and poultry, after 1919 it focused on cattle breeding, beef production and later mixed farming.

The homestead and surrounding land was acquired by Council in 2002 as part of the managed Shannon Creek catchment area. Rockview Station itself is leased for cattle grazing. The homestead has been largely vacant since that time, although it has until recently been subject to seasonal use by scientific researchers working within the catchment.¹⁴⁷

Dam

Shannon Creek remained a relatively quiet locale until 2001, when properties in the Shannon Creek catchment (including Rockview Station) were bought by North Coast Water for the construction of the Shannon Creek Dam. At the time there were five landowners in the area, with the Austin family owning much of the site of the dam, as well as Rockview Station. Works on the dam completed on 3 December 2008, with the official opening on Monday 20 July 2009. The dam catchment is now managed for water supply and as a nature reserve. Refer **figures 65 - 66**.

¹⁴⁵ Tuck 2014

¹⁴⁶ Tuck 2014

¹⁴⁷ Tuck 2014



FIGURE 65: ROCKVIEW C.2001

Source Ross Austen, Grafton, March 2018

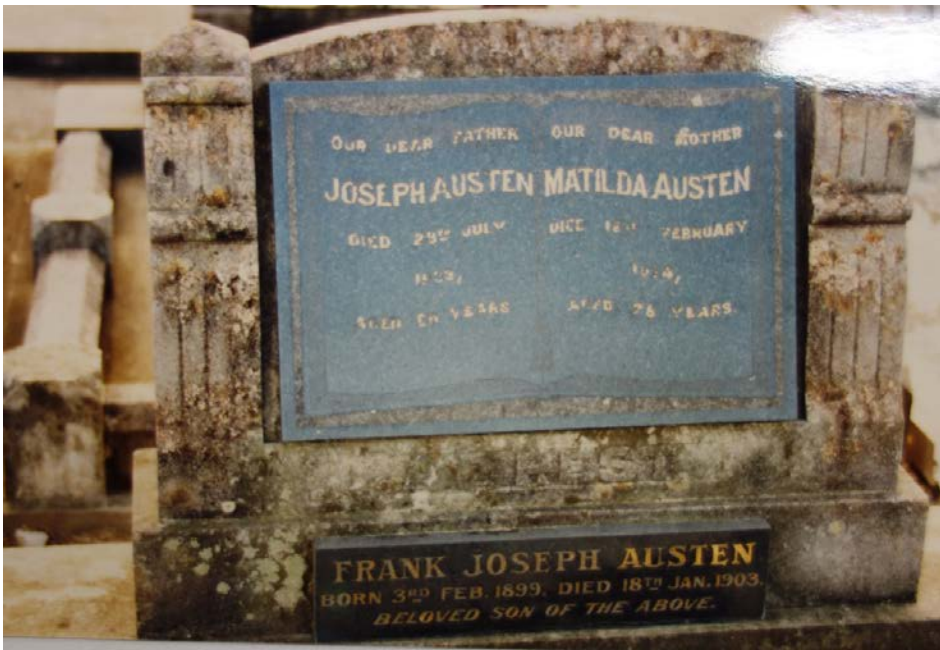


FIGURE 66: GRAVES IN CEMETERY – OTHER GRAVES ON ROCKVIEW PROPERTY

Source Ross Austen, Grafton, March 2018

8.0 TRANSPORT

8.1 On the Water

The Clarence River is a significant maritime transport corridor and perhaps not surprisingly, Grafton and Ulmarra became significant ports. Ulmarra was home to a cross-river ferry service and steamers, punts and droughers that carted people and produce. Grafton became a centre for the ocean steamers trading to and from Sydney, as well as a considerable amount of inter-colonial trade in timber to Victoria and New Zealand.

The shipping trade was initially carried out by sailing ships engaged in the cedar-cutting business. In 1844, *William the Fourth* became the first steamer to trade regularly with the Clarence, making fortnightly trips for several years, chiefly carrying wool, and greatly assisting to open the trade of the river.¹⁴⁸

In 1850 a shipping company with some local proprietors was formed, and had the paddle steamer *Clarence* built for the Clarence River service. Upon arrival of *Clarence* in 1852 the Sydney proprietors decided to sell her instead, the recent discovery of gold had created such a demand for steamships that she could be sold immediately at a considerable profit. Later the same year, a group consisting only of Grafton businessmen formed the Grafton Steam Navigation Company and in 1855 placed the paddle steamer *Grafton* in service between Sydney and the river. The company was formally registered in 1857.¹⁴⁹

In 1860, the Grafton Steam Navigation Company was re-formed as the Clarence and Richmond Rivers Steam Navigation Company, the new name indicating the intention to begin serving the Richmond River. The company traded under this name until it absorbed its Macleay River opposition in 1889, when it became the Clarence, Richmond and Macleay Rivers Steam Navigation Company. When it merged with another rival shipping line John See and Company in 1891, it acquired the new name of the North Coast Steam Navigation Company.¹⁵⁰

The most significant early opposition to the Clarence and Richmond Rivers Steam Navigation Company was the Clarence and New England Steam Navigation Company, begun early in 1865. The company introduced screw steamers into the Clarence River service. These were faster and more comfortable than paddle steamers and competed successfully for the New England wool trade. Despite the new technology, the company collapsed in 1879.¹⁵¹

The sea wise trade of the Clarence River in 1874 comprised a total of 206 voyages, 41 by sailing ships and 265 by steamships. More than five thousand passengers were carried (2,747 inwards and 2,485 outwards). Among the main imports were general merchandise, clothing, tools and machinery and coal. Exports included grain, sugar and molasses; bananas and potatoes; meat; livestock (horses, pigs, cattle, fowl); bones, horns, hides, and tallow; oysters; gold; and timber (hardwood and cedar). This broad range reflects the broad range of local products. In addition, there were more than two thousand bales of New England wool, and tens of thousands of bags of tin ore, also from New England. A substantial amount of the general merchandise received at Grafton was on-forwarded by horse and bullock teams to New England.

In 1900, the shipping service conducted by the North Coast Steam Navigation Company remained by far the main means of communication between Grafton and Sydney. Two of the company's vessels - *Kallatina* and

¹⁴⁸ Stubbs 2007

¹⁴⁹ Stubbs 2007

¹⁵⁰ Stubbs 2007

¹⁵¹ Stubbs 2007

City of Grafton - ran regularly, twice a week. In addition, occasional trips were made by *Oakland* and *Australian*. These four steamers conveyed 8,264 passengers from the Clarence to Sydney in the previous year, and in addition shipped the whole of the produce exported from the district. The dominance of the shipping service was unchallenged until the opening of the first railway to Grafton in 1905.



FIGURE 67: STEAMERS ON THE CLARENCE RIVER AT THE COLONIAL SUGAR MILL (ND)

State Library of NSW ML a116625h

8.2 North Coast Rail

The North Coast Rail line was effectively a lengthy branch line connecting Sydney to the Queensland border. It was constructed in disjointed sections over a period of about forty years. This line linked West Maitland to South Brisbane - over a distance of 493 miles. The first section of standard-gauge line on the North Coast line connected Lismore to Murwillumbah and Condong, and was opened in 1894. Over the ensuing 21 years, various sections of track were laid between Grafton and the Murwillumbah terminus, with the 66-mile Grafton to Casino section (and the station at Grafton) opened 6 November 1905.¹⁵² The 27 mile, 18 chain section between South Grafton and Glenreagh on the Orara River was completed in October 1915, but it was not until December 1923 when the Raleigh to Urunga section was completed, that through travel between Sydney and South Grafton was facilitated.¹⁵³

8.3 Roads & Bridges

Roads Across the Ranges: Grafton to Glen Innes

Access to the New England Region from the Pacific Coast has always been a difficult enterprise. In the 1830s for example, Grafton had already been established as a cedar getting port and was the main port servicing the grazing lands of the interior. In the 1840s, New England Pastoralists desired a route to the coast for their wool to be sent to market. Initial tracks or 'roads' often followed Aboriginal pathways. One of the early routes followed Cunglebung Creek to the north of Dalmorton; another followed the ridge-line above the Little

¹⁵² Love, 2004: 5

¹⁵³ Love, 2004: 6

River. The Little River Valley was a much better gradient but it did require significant construction work. As Laws, a historian of the Clarence region recalled in the 1930s:

Before the cutting was made on the Glen Innes road up the Little River, the road went from Buccarumbi by way of the Blacksmith's Shop along the top of the range.

This route returned to the river at Newton Boyd via Barney's Hill. The initial construction of the route along the river from Buccarumbi to Newtown Boyd is unclear. After several alternatives were mooted the Commissioner and Engineer for Roads in New South Wales visited the district and decided in favour of the Little River route. It was upgraded to the status of a government road in 1865 and reported as open and '... used by a large proportion of the traffic' in 1870. An earlier route north of the Little River Valley through Copmanhurst was in use by 1851. In 1866 the tender for construction of the road over the 'Big Hill' was granted to H P Wiseman with David Houison the Chief Engineer.

The *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* reported favourably on its construction and the difficulties of working the numerous cuttings and a tunnel of '... 66 yards long through the mountain'. This tunnel has since been widely known in the district as the Convict Tunnel: more from its primitive construction than any historical evidence.¹⁵⁴ Contractors blasted and hand-hew this tunnel in 1866-67, but the road between Glen Innes and Grafton did not fully open until 1873.



FIGURE 68: ON THE GRAFTON-DALMORTON ROAD (1884-1917)

Charles Kerry Image from glass negative 85/1284-433 @ the Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences

This road had been known by several names, such as the Inverell, the Newton Boyd and the Little River roads. In an 1872 article praising the merits of the area to potential mining investors, the road between Grafton and Dalmorton was described as so well graded and bridged that '... a better one does not exist in the colony'.¹⁵⁵ This roadway has changed considerably over the years and is now the Old Glen Innes Road. The Little Rivers section was bypassed during depression-era road improvement works in the 1930s. Refer **figures 69 - 70**.

¹⁵⁴ The Tunnel was constructed in 1866, well past the period of convict road gangs. The *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* mentioned the road superintendent Mr Houison and that he and 'his assistants' were due praise – suggesting they were not prison labour either.

¹⁵⁵ C&RE 16 July 1872

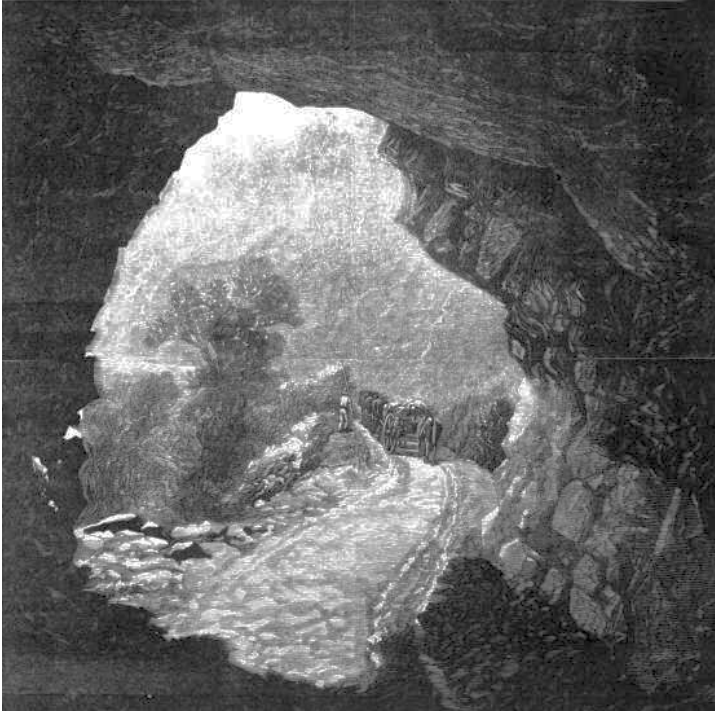


FIGURE 69: TUNNEL CUTTING (1876)

Image presented in Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants 2003



**FIGURE 70: SO-CALLED CONVICT TUNNEL ON A SECTION OF THE OLD GRAFTON-GLEN INNES ROAD
SOUTHWEST OF DALMORTON, VIEW TO NORTH**

Photographs by Gina Scheer 2018

Pacific Highway

The main north coast road, which passes through South Grafton, was proclaimed a State Highway in 1928. It was at first named the North Coast Highway, but was renamed Pacific Highway in 1931. This was after Queensland had given that name to its section of the Brisbane to Sydney coastal route. It is the main road passing through the Grafton district and therefore through the northern section of the Study area.¹⁵⁶

Buccarumbi Bridge

The Old Glen Innes Road was the main access road from Grafton to the New England tablelands and the gold fields of Dalmorton until the Gwydir Highway was completed in 1960.

A stage coach service ran between Grafton and Glen Innes, taking three days with stopovers at Buccarumbi and Newton Boyd. In the early 1900's bullock teams hauled timber through to the wharves at south Grafton. By the turn of the century there were two hostels at the Buccarumbi location, one on either side of the River to cater for travelers when the Nymboida River could not be crossed.

A high-level bridge was completed at this site in 1875 which took seven years to build. The bridge with its huge cylinders was 754 feet (230m) long and 45 feet (13.7m) high. The bridge collapsed under the strain of a flood in 26 March 1946, when the Nymboida River rose to a record height of 52 feet (16m). Remains of the old bridge pillars can still be seen today rusting away in the river waters and on the southern bank.

Refer **figures 71 – 73**.

Bawden Bridge

Bawden Bridge (named after Thomas Bawden the local Parliamentary Member) over the Orara River on the Old Grafton-Glen Innes Road, was built in 1874.¹⁵⁷ It is one of the oldest lattice truss design bridges in NSW, and has a two-span continuous lattice truss (77 metres long) with timber beam approaches. Crossing a deep gorge, it is supported by three tall piers made from pairs of tubes fabricated from curved and shaped wrought iron plates riveted together, and with cross ties shaped to form a vertical set of elliptical holes.

The design was prepared by the Commissioner for Roads William Bennett and was said to be the 'heaviest work' in the colony with a build cost of 12,000 pounds. The wrought iron shapes and bars were imported from Butterley & Co, Derbyshire, England (well-known suppliers in the colonial period).¹⁵⁸

For a time, there was a hotel (The Urara Hotel) sited adjacent to the bridge crossing and operated by a Mr Thomas Aish.¹⁵⁹ Refer **figure 74**.

¹⁵⁶ Stubbs 2007

¹⁵⁷ *Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser* Tuesday 7 April 1874

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=4300640>

¹⁵⁹ *Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser* Saturday 2 October 1880



FIGURE 71: BUCCARUMBI BRIDGE, GRAFTON GLEN INNES ROAD (1900-1910)
State Library of NSW ML PXE 711 / 618



FIGURE 72: BUCCARUMBI BRIDGE OVER THE NYMBOIDA RIVER - POST-FLOOD (1946)
State Library of NSW ML Government Printing Office 1 – 41725



FIGURE 73: PYLON REMAINS OF THE BUCCARUMBI BRIDGE
Photograph Gina Scheer April 2018



FIGURE 74: BAWDEN BRIDGE OVER ORARA RIVER
Photograph Gina Scheer April 2018

8.4 Hydropower

8.4.1 Nymboida

Gregory Blaxland took up land that ultimately became the locality of Nymboida in c.1846. Originally the site of grazing; limited mining (Dalmorton) and timber exploitation, Nymboida became something of a district hub and featured a school, mill, coaching station, hotel, hall and police station by the opening decades of the twentieth century.¹⁶⁰

Coal Mining

One of the notable industries of the district was coal mining, with the first mine opening in 1909 and mining occurring until the 1970s. The two tunnel mine was sited on the hillside at Coal Mine Road near where it meets the Armidale Road. Its boom years were in the 1950s, when the Koolkham Power Station commenced sourcing coal from the mine. Its relative success in the early to mid-nineteenth century, and its importance as an employer in the district, was reflected by its neighbor directly opposite, the Old Cartmill Hotel.¹⁶¹

8.4.2 Power Station

It was not coal but hydro that came to define the locality. The Nymboida Hydro-Electric Power House, set within natural bushland in a valley off Armidale Road, is a significant feature of the locality. It was constructed in the 1920s, and involved erection of a weir across the Nymboida River (just downriver from the Nymboida township) and the creation of a large mass-concrete powerhouse featuring seven turbines. Enabled by the Hydro-Electric Act (191) and commissioned in 1924, the station produced for Grafton, South Grafton and Ulmarra, which was transported via a 31 mile long transmission line.¹⁶² It is said to be the first

A modern substation has been built immediately east of the original power house. To the southeast the tailrace discharges the water that previously powered the turbines. From this location, the tailrace water flows into Gulang Creek (a now-popular white-water canoeing location) and thence into Blaxland Creek, the Orara River and ultimately the Clarence.

Refer **figures 75 - 76**.

¹⁶⁰ TAFE 1997

¹⁶¹ TAFE 1997

¹⁶² TAFE 1997



FIGURE 75: NYMBOIDA POWER STATION (PRE-1950S)
Clarence Valley Historical Society

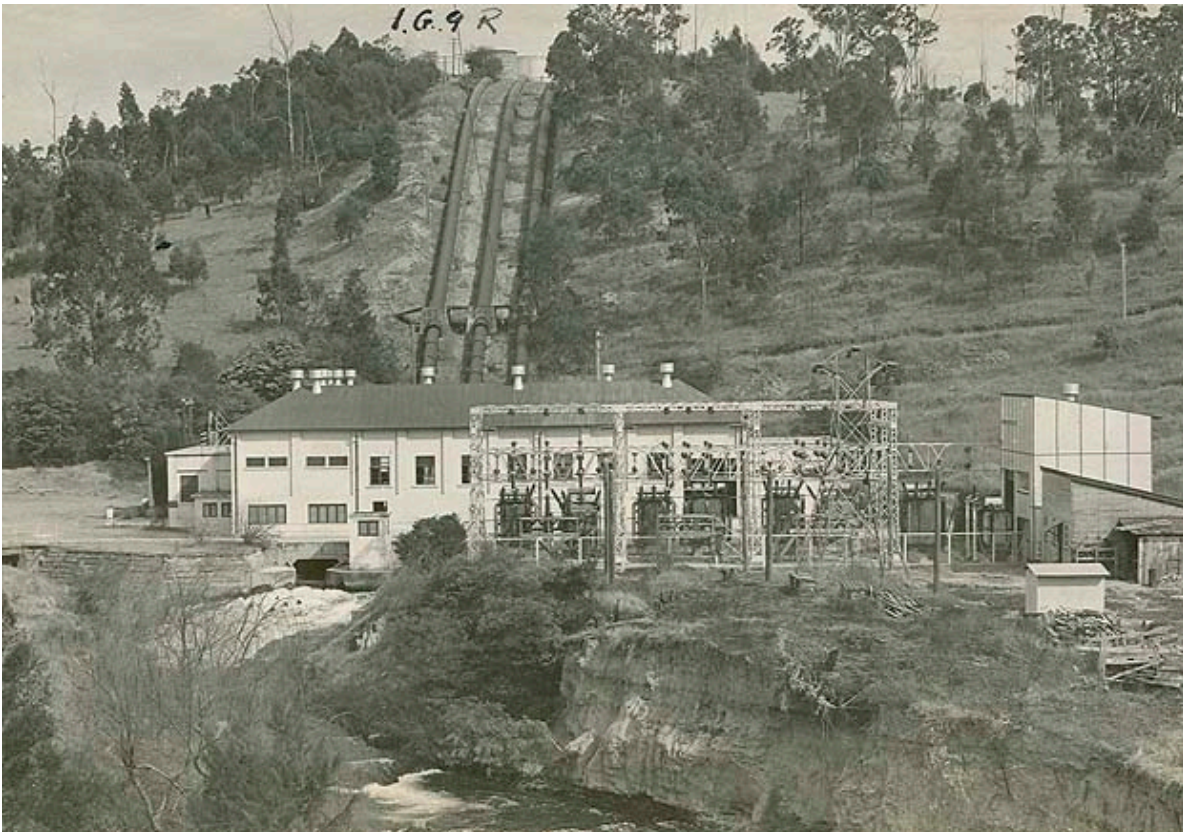


FIGURE 76: NYMBOIDA POWER STATION (PRE-1950S)
Clarence Valley Historical Society

9.0 TWENTIETH CENTURY

9.1 War & Peace

During WWII, there was a mustard gas effectiveness trial at a locality between Wooli and Minnie Waters. The so-called Grafton Range was leased by the Australian military for a single series of live artillery firings conducted between 10 and 17 April 1943. This was the last of a series of East Coast chemical trials, designed to assess the level of incapacitation of troops in or near an area which had been bombed with chemical shells filled with sulphur mustard (mustard gas) and the tearing agent bromobenzyl cyanide (BBC).¹⁶³ The military record summarised the process as follows:

*'After the first shoot, six volunteers were posted on the downwind edge of the area for 30 minutes. No casualties resulted. After the second shoot, eight observers marched across the area and then marched back to camp, with no casualties resulting from this traversing party. A further fourteen other volunteers remained on the downwind edge of the area for at least two hours following the shoot. In the case of this occupying party, three certain and one possible casualties resulted...'*¹⁶⁴

The total number of casualties was 15. All had minor injuries including blisters, burns and skin lesions. Ultimately, the trials proved mustard gas to be ineffective for military purposes, as the product which had been manufactured in Britain did not stand up to the warmer Australian climate.¹⁶⁵

9.2 Industry

9.2.1 Sandmining

The mining of mineral sands took place along the Yuraygir coastline in the late twentieth century (generally between 1930 & 1980). It is uncertain when all of the mining took place, or the totality of the methods used, however the target minerals are likely to have included Zircon, Rutile, Ilmenite, Tin, Platinum, Monazite and Garnet which were generally extracted for processing as a mixed concentrate.¹⁶⁶

The first area that appears to have been mined was Angourie, where the Titanium Alloy Manufacturing Company (TAMCO) incorporating local producers Derrick, Anderson & Porter, commenced black sand mining operations in 1935. Here they extracted the mineral zircon that was shipped in concentrate form to TAMCO in the USA. In 1939 the Angourie operation had been exhausted and the company commenced mining at Minnie Water and Woolgoolga, obtaining a rich mixed concentrate. In 1940 the company moved its operations to Cudgen in the Tweed Shire on the far North Coast.¹⁶⁷ Another operator within the Park area was Dillingham Mining Company of Australia Ltd, which mined a number of statewide leases including at Wooli and a dredging plant at Brooms Head (c1974-1978). The Brooms Head operation was sold to local producers McGeary Brothers of Woodburn who operated this site from 1979 (treating the concentrate at Woodburn). The Wooli area was also mined by sandmining giant Cudgen R-Z (Rutile & Zircon), though the exact dates of operation are unknown. Cudgen R-Z is also known to have operated in the Sandon area.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ Kijas 2007

¹⁶⁴ Cited in Kijas 2007: 47

¹⁶⁵ Kijas 2007

¹⁶⁶ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007

¹⁶⁷ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007

¹⁶⁸ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007

Operations

Mineral sand mining typically involved onsite mining and concentration plants where sand was extracted, then fed into a concentrator. Techniques used varied from site to site and included line dredging and dry milling. After concentration, mined sand was subject to mineral extraction and the tailings replaced. Generally, sand mining removed only a small portion (1-3%) of the total sand mass at any given site, however it greatly affected geomorphology and soil structure at the mined site. Typical changes, which occurred when mineral sand was mined from a coastal area, included:

- Broadening and lowering of the frontal dune
- Seaward or landward displacement of the frontal dune
- Decreasing the stability of the frontal dune by removing any existing indurated sand beds
- The removal of dune vegetation and wildlife habitat
- Dieback of tertiary vegetation adjacent to mined areas.¹⁶⁹

9.2.2 Commercial Fishing on the Coast

Fishing has been a major industry in the study region since the late nineteenth century. Despite the problems of transport on the terrible roads which severely impeded the commercial fishing industry in the park, there were a few commercial fishers and oyster farmers at each coastal village of Wooli, Diggers Camp, Minnie Water, Sandon and Brooms Head. Lake Wooloweyah was commercially fished from the late nineteenth century.¹⁷⁰

The Clarence River fishing industry was one of the largest providers to the Sydney market from the early twentieth century, once refrigerated steamers enabled successful transportation to the city. Not only fish but oysters, and later lobsters and prawns, were sold, and Clarence River oysters were prized in Sydney from as early as 1868. Commercial oyster leases were first granted at Wooli in 1885 to the Park brothers from Italy, who established an oyster salon in Grafton (and a vineyard about four miles from the coast). By 1909, commercial oyster leases were operating on Sandon River.

Like most industries in the vicinity, the fishing industry was generally small-scale, made up of small family businesses with marginal earnings. The most substantial fishing industry on the Yuraygir coastline was at Wooli, where a small co-op was established. Wooli supplied snapper to the Sydney markets from the 1920s; lobsters and leather jackets from the 1940s; and later, prawns. The fish hauls were sometimes significant, all done by handline off the fishing vessels which sheltered on the Wooli River. In one period of four days at sea, one schnapper haul weighed in at over two tons. The 1940s lobster hauls and annual sea mullet catch off the beach were often also quite large.¹⁷¹ The Wooli Co-op closed in November 2002 after the declaration of the Solitary Island Marine Park and the subsequent professional fishing license buy-back scheme. This scheme halted most commercial fishing along the Yuraygir estuaries and headlands.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Tuck 2009

¹⁷⁰ Kijas 2007

¹⁷¹ Davidson cited in Kijas 2007: 42

¹⁷² Kijas 2007

9.3 Recreation & Tourism

9.3.1 Coastal Recreation

Camping

Camping along the Yuraygir coastline and in the lower reaches of the waterways that dissect the Park has been a popular activity since the early twentieth century. Generally, evidence of use of the area for historic camping purposes is limited because the main camping spots remain in use today and have been constantly renewed. Formalization of the camping areas by the National Parks & Wildlife Service have involved re-vegetation programs that limit visibility beyond the established camping areas.

Separate to the informal camping areas are the Sandon huts: leased, permanent dwellings that exist within Yuraygir National Park. This residential-holiday area has developed in an ad-hoc manner since the early twentieth century and functions in a similar manner to the other Yuraygir settlement areas, such as Diggers Camp.¹⁷³

Sandon Huts

Farmers from Tyndale, Shark Creek and Woodford Island (as well as professionals from Grafton and Sydney) began travelling to Sandon River from the late nineteenth century. Residents of Maclean and farmers from the Lower Clarence Valley camped at Brooms Head from the 1880s. One landscape feature of this central area is the low heath, noted as a 'treeless plain', which lies between the villages. Beside the salt water lagoon at the entrance to Brooms Head (Lake Cakora), a line of freshwater springs, which used to be full of freshwater mullet, spread along the coast towards Sandon River.¹⁷⁴

Before nineteenth century settlement of the Sandon River area, archaeological and oral evidence shows that the estuary, headland and beach were favourite meeting and camping places for Yaegl people. The area's fishing fame carried over into settler history. While the first bark hut to be built in the area was on the southern headland in 1901, the first house was built by Jack Gallagher on the north side in 1914 for fishing holidays. He took out a mining lease which allowed him a title to build.¹⁷⁵

The first family to live permanently on the Sandon River were Ann and Henry Burchell and their two sons. Henry worked Percy Judd's oyster leases, with the family living on the north side of the river from 1926–1931. The Judds eventually sold their land to the Franklins in the late 1960s. Also, on the north side, from 1932 to the 1960s, cabins were built under Permissive Occupancy (PO) in two areas: a line of eight along the road and another five at the river entrance. POs were part of the State Planning Authority's early attempts to ensure some measure of planning control over unapproved coastal developments.¹⁷⁶

In November 1983, the land on the north side of Sandon River was included in the Yuraygir National Park, taking in the cabins and also the camping reserve which had been run by the former Maclean Shire Council since the late 1950s with a permanent caretaker. The POs were terminated by the NPWS in December 1983 though some remain occupied by the families of original residents.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007

¹⁷⁴ Kijas 2007

¹⁷⁵ Kijas 2007

¹⁷⁶ Kijas 2007

¹⁷⁷ Kijas 2007

Houses were also built on the southern side of Sandon River. Ownership of these changed through the 1950s and 1960s as local fishing families gave way to professionals from Grafton and Sydney. On the south side, the Sandon Village residents were able to take out freehold title through the 1960s. The two PO huts on the south side were brought into Yuraygir National Park at gazettal in the 1980s.¹⁷⁸

Wooli, Minnie Waters and Diggers Camp

Wooli was declared a camping reserve as early as 24 December 1861. Surveyed in 1910, Wooli grew as a popular camping area under the control of Orara Shire and it was declared a village in 1923. The area from Sandon River to Dirty Creek was first dedicated as a Forest Reserve in 1908 and renamed several times (including as Wooli Wooli Forest Reserve), ultimately culminating in what is now Yuraygir National Park.

Early constructions at Wooli included small timber and fibro houses and ancillary structures, as well as boat and vehicle sheds.¹⁷⁹ They retain the holiday shack approach, being small and simple structures, often of only a few rooms. Schooling took place only via correspondence until 1942, when the Wooli Public School opened in the local hall. This was followed by the opening of a new school building in 1946.¹⁸⁰

In the early days, Wooli was connected to the outlying communities and towns via sulky tracks. As for Sandon, Wooli was a holiday destination for families in the Clarence valley with locals recalling the journey from Grafton. In 1950, land ballots were introduced, and blocks were cleared and fenced. December 1962 saw the connection of electricity to the village, while the water supply commenced in 1966.¹⁸¹

The first oyster leases in Wooli were established in 1885, costing one pound per annum. Fishing, lobster trapping, boat building and oyster farming were significant activities during the 1900s, with large hauls of mullet and lobster not uncommon during the 1940s to 1960s. With some 20 commercial fishing boats working Wooli, port works commenced in the 1960s. These works resulted in the river entrance being trained by rock walls and a permanent sealed road constructed along the terrace to the river entrance.¹⁸²

Today, Wooli caters to the growing North Coast tourist trade including those seeking to enjoy the diving, fishing and sightseeing in the Solitary Islands Marine Park, the flora and fauna of the Yuraygir National Park and fishing options available in Wooli Wooli River.¹⁸³

Minnie Waters was established later in the 20th century, with locals recording houses there in 1939. Sand mining in 1941 introduced workers to the area and by 1956 the number of residents had grown and a community hall was constructed. Minnie Waters is a well-known fishing settlement owing to good anchorage in lee of the prominent southern reef and the presence of permanent water which drains across the beach, hence its name. The beach is 1.5 km long and consists of two parts. The northern half receives the full force of the waves. The southern half lies in lee of the reef and is used to launch fishing boats. It has a wide flat beach used as a road access to the launching area.

Diggers Camp earned its name from the gold miners who camped there in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Orara gold seam runs down to Diggers Camp. Local families who came to Diggers Camp after the 1930s for holidays were told Chinese miners had lived and worked at the north end of the spring and German

¹⁷⁸ Kijas 2007

¹⁷⁹ Kijas 2007

¹⁸⁰ Kijas 2007

¹⁸¹ Kijas 2007

¹⁸² Kijas 2007

¹⁸³ Kijas 2007

miners had dug large holes in the sand hills. In the 1930s, on inquiring about purchasing a land title or acquiring a block of land at Diggers Camp, miner's rights were issued instead. These were converted to Permissive Occupancies in 1935.¹⁸⁴ After this and during the late 1930s, numbers of local families from the Clarence Valley such as the Gillets, the Foxovers, the Chapmans and Don Collins, a Grafton monumental mason, built or relocated small, generally two bedroom timber and galvanised iron cottages to Diggers Camp. These cottages operated as shared family holiday houses but some became permanent homes. The Tremouths, a German couple, lived in a bark hut for many years.¹⁸⁵ It was also a popular fishing spot with locals such as Roy Bowling, driving from Tucabia with friends and family to fish for bream, blackfish and jewfish. Refer **figures 77 – 79**.

Recreational fishing

Recreational fishing has been a favoured pastime of visitors to the Yuraygir area for many decades. Many of the beaches and rocky headlands are well known fishing locales with resident fish populations such as mullet (jewfish), groper, bream, tarwhine, whiting and flathead, as well as seasonal pelagic surface feeders such as tailor, kingfish and cobia.

Popular locations include the Shelley Headland coffee rocks, Brooms Head, Freshwater, and One Man Headland. The lower reaches of the major rivers here, particularly the Wooli and Sandon, are well-known for flathead, bream and whiting (as well as prawns and mud crabs).

With the exception of a handful of boat ramps, there is little obvious evidence of this popular recreational activity. Although the numerous cleared riverside areas at the end of bush tracks and fire trails do bear witness to past camping and fishing activity.¹⁸⁶

Off-roading

Since the 1950s, old cars (and later 4WDs) have utilized the tracks through the Park (created by pastoralists and sand miners) to both access camping locations and to 'bush bash'. These vehicles have also created tracks of their own – mostly located between camping locations and along the beach margins.

Most of the evidence related to 'bush bashing' is in the form of increasingly elaborate attempts by the NPWS Service to thwart 4WD activity. These have included a variety of bollard arrangements, other obstacles and steel gates. The most significant of these anti-access measures was 'Friedrich's Line': an innovative system of concrete pipe end bollards at either end of the former Arragan to Angourie track.¹⁸⁷

Surfing

Surfing has been a popular recreational activity within the Yuraygir National Park area since the late 1960s. Despite the popularity of the sport, the low impact nature of this activity has resulted in a paucity of physical evidence of surfing within the Park. By far the most well-known location in the general district is Angourie Point at the extreme north end of Yuraygir National Park, but notable breaks also exist at Minnie Waters and elsewhere.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Foxover 2014

¹⁸⁵ Foxover 2014

¹⁸⁶ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007

¹⁸⁷ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007

¹⁸⁸ Tuck 2009; Kijas 2007



FIGURE 77: ABORIGINAL STONE QUARRY SIGN AT SANDON NORTH

Photograph Gina Scheer January 2018



FIGURE 78: WOOLLI RIVER BOAT BUILDING ENTERPRISE (ND)

Photograph Gina Scheer January 2018

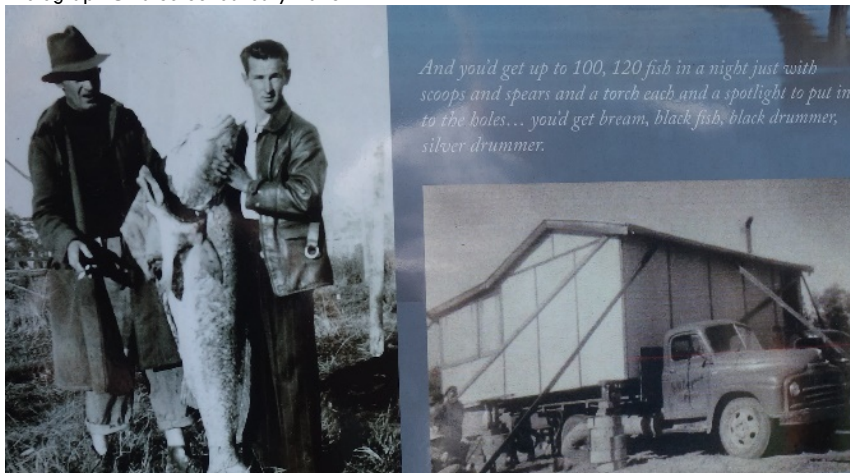


FIGURE 79: DIGGERS CAMP FISHING C.1940S LEFT AND CHAPMANS HOUSE ON THE MOVE, 1962

Photograph Gina Scheer January 2018

9.4 The Modern Era

9.4.1 Sea & Tree Changers

The shire areas have certainly changed. The early townships and settlements were established due to farming, mining and access to the rivers which were the main mode of transport even up until the 1930s. This earlier historical period is reflected in the historic villages and pastoral properties generally in the western sections of the former shires and around the main rivers. However, settlements such as Tucabia in the former Ulmarra shire were also based around dairy farming. The rich natural resources of this vast area for Clarence Valley Council included coal and gold mining, as well as an environment supportive still today of sugar cane and dairy farming.

The ingress of roads opened the former shire areas to more recent travelers who have also moved to the area as 'sea or tree changers'. A colloquial story told by Nymboida locals is that hippies on the way to Nimbin after the 1970s 'age of Aquarius' had their VW kombi vans break down at the hills below Nymboida – and stayed there. However, the first of the alternative lifestyle' settlers for Nymboida was during the early 1980s.

Since that time within the shire areas, there is less emphasis on farming and agriculture and more emphasis on small business and environmental leisure or sporting pursuits such as fishing. An increase in coastal activities, such as surfing and fishing has very much been a late 20th century change for the area and this affects particularly the former Ulmarra shire.

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