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A New "Heritage" CD ROM Database Available

Hello to you all, this is my first foray into the realms of Sutherland Shire Historical Society Bulletin editorial responsibility. For the first time I have to find, cajole and demand articles and other editorial material for the quarterly Bulletin.

I have discovered how stressful such a simple act can become. I come from a place where the demand for public space and writing for publication was never ending. So to fill pages was a matter of weeding out the less interesting or least relevant material not, convincing someone to write, a very novel predicament for me! So I decided to write about a project of interest to Historical Society members, and encourage others to do the same with their projects.

Early this year (2000) I was invited to take up a position with the Sutherland Shire Heritage Committee. One of the many aspects of this committee is to invite certain home owners to become part of the "Heritage Listing" of houses in the Shire.

Heritage Listing is quite often simply the photographic recording of homes that have special or unique "qualities". Such a "quality" may be that the home is a "good representative item" say of a fibro cottage or weatherboard house, **or** it may be truly unique and in the realms of "*Heathcote Hall*" or such items.

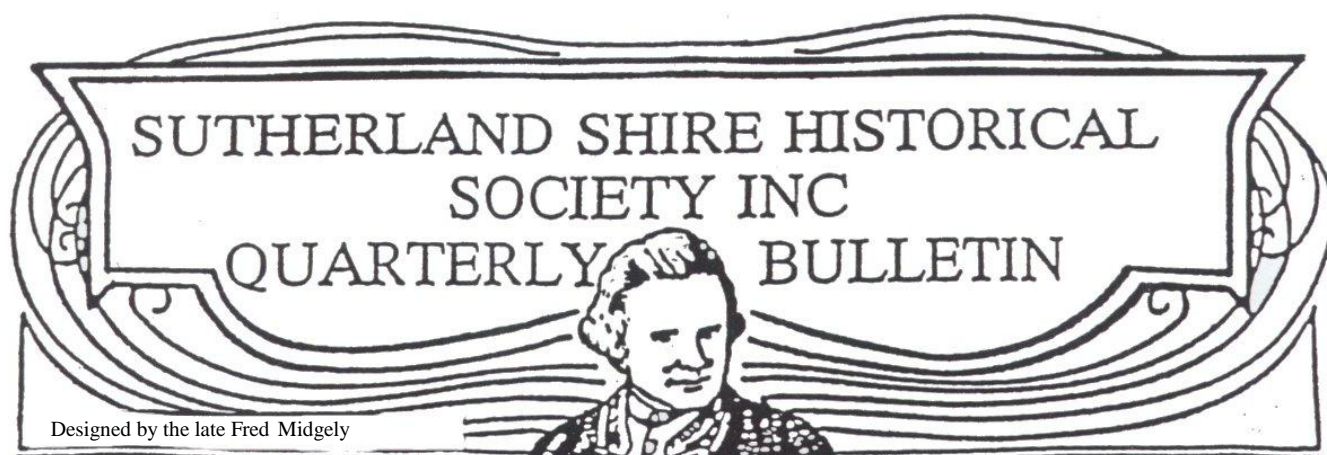
During the first Heritage Committee meeting for 2000 I became aware that such listings were held as file records with the Shire Council and in the care of Rod Logan, at the council. Rod informed me that there were many hundreds of



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"Heritage CD" continued from

records and photographs of heritage listed homes and buildings. Rod also informed me that there were several hundred records and photographs of "items of archaeological interest" and hundreds of records of waterfront and other "built" items. I suggested to the committee that these records could be converted into "digital" information that could then be made available for Library use and for other interested parties.

Well the good news is that all of the "heritage listed" data and photographs are now available on CD through either the Council or Library and very soon the "Archaeological" & "Other Built" items will also be available on the CD.

Les Bursill, Editor.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Bulletin copies are supplied to all branches of the Shire Library; to the Mayor, General Manager and all councillors; the Royal Australian Historical Society; National Trust (NSW); State Library, NSW; National Library, Canberra; University of Sydney and UNSW; State Rail Authority; Australia Post Archives; Sydney Water Board Historical Research Unit.

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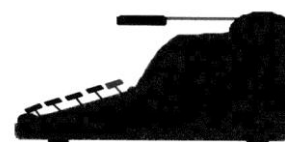
Meetings of the Society are held monthly on the third Friday at 7.45pm at the Multi Purpose Building, Flora Street, Sutherland. (Next to Council carpark)

VISITORS ARE WELCOME

All correspondence should be addressed to

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Taking up the role of editor of your "Bulletin" fills me with both pride and trepidation. I am proud to be able to serve the community through this publication but also fearful of the impression my editorship may leave for posterity.

Historical Societies like ours are the life blood of Historians and others doing research into past events and attitudes. I believe, though of course I will be guided by you the members, that it is my duty therefore to present *current events* in our quest for history and relevant reprints or republications.

I hope that some of our very able Shire historians and writers will become encouraged to contribute articles and stories on a regular basis, it is from that type of input that your "Bulletin" may become a production of some note.

I also believe that current matters should be reported when they are of later historical relevance. Such a matter may include the recent council initiative to bury a time capsule at "Hazelhurst"

The capsule, of stainless steel, will contain many articles from the present time and will include a mobile phone, samples of water, micro-film of documents and articles from local newspapers and much more. The capsule will be buried under a plaque at Hazelhurst and is to be reclaimed in 2030. It will be sealed and gas filled to protect the contents.

Time capsules often go astray therefore as many mentions as possible could be important for people seeking to recover the same in 2030. Please let the editor know of any such activities or future history events in any other organisations to which you may belong.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. W. Bursill'.

Les Bursill
Editor May 2000

EXCURSION REPORT

By the time this report is received by our members, the tour to Spectacle Island will have been held; we will make a report in the next issue. For the July outing the Executive Committee has approved that we accept the offer of Mr. Les Bursill to visit the Aboriginal sites in the Royal National Park -- Date: Saturday July 29th, 2000.

However, to see these places it is necessary to use a small coach and Mr. Bursill has booked the Community Transport twenty-seater coach; we realise this will restrict the number of members who will be able to travel on that day; Mr. Bursill has agreed that another similar trip can be arranged later in the year if the number wishing another warrant it.

Bookings will open at the May meeting and tickets will be sold on a "first come first served" basis. Cost for day will be \$6.50 each . On this occasion due to the small number of seats, the outing will be members only; if a second tour is arranged we may be able to invite friends too.

Please take your morning tea and luncheon as usual on our outings; there will be room for small Eskys if you wish to bring one with you. Leave Cronulla 9 a.m., Sutherland 9.30 a.m. Terry McCosker has offered to drive the coach, whilst Les Bursill will be the guide; both have offered their services for the day, because they are members of the Society and we thank them for this support.

After lengthy discussion at the Executive Council meeting, it was a unanimous decision that in view of the Olympic and Paralympic Games we will not have an outing in September. The number of members who may wish to attend either of the Games may find this most suitable. November 24, 25, 26 we will be travelling to Canberra for the week-end. We will give you full details of the motel address and 'phone number next Bulletin; week-end cost (including GST costs) will be \$205-00 members, \$210 visitors: leaving Cronulla 8a.m. Friday, Sutherland 8.30 a.m. Dinner, bed and breakfast each day/evening - - lunches Saturday and Sunday at a Club (at your expense) as we understand members prefer to make their own choice. Take morning tea and lunch on Friday.

Terry McCosker will be our guide for the week-end and we are sure this will prove most satisfactory for us all, as he is so experienced and knowledgeable on all the areas in the region. Bookings are open now and we ask that you pay a deposit of \$25.00 with your booking; if desired you may wish to make a payment each month to cover the balance -- but full payment must be made by the October meeting as final arrangements must be made With our suppliers by the end of October. All enquiries to Betty McGrath; 141 Loftus Ave Loftus, 9521-2227. Further enquiries and tour details to myself; 34 Richmond Street, Cronulla, 2250, 9523-5901.

CRONULLA ESPLANADE

A request has been made by Mr. Mulcair of "St. George Sutherland Leader" for information photographs - etc. regarding the Cronulla Esplanade. It is his wish to write a long article about this well known part of the Shire. If you have any information you would share with Mr. Mulcair, or perhaps a photograph or two of the lovely homes that were a feature of the walkway would you please contact him on 9598 3999 , Tues-Thurs.

Aileen M Griffiths

OAM

EXCURSION CONVENOR

Stone Retaining Walls, Sylvania

History and Significance

by
Edward Duyker

The stone retaining walls on Lot 71, DP 792778, 167-169 Princes Highway (a.k.a. 33 Murrallin Lane), Sylvania, were originally constructed for industrialist William Glenn Wade (1911-1983) on bushland he purchased in 1949 overlooking the Georges River in Sylvania.

William Glenn Wade engaged architect Frank Thorp (1903-1968) of the architectural firm of Peddle, Thorp and Walker to design his home 'Glenn Robin'. The retaining walls, terraces and paths in its immediate curtilage were also designed by Thorp and constructed between mid-1952 and early 1954.

In the post-war years when materials and skilled workmen were scarce, 'Glenn Robin' proved to be a remarkable combination of the stonemason's and joiner's arts. The original stonework was constructed with some of the last of the commercial quantities of Pyrmont sandstone by stonemason Randolph 'Ned' Knowles (c. 1886-1965) of Blakehurst. Of the total price of £2,793.12, the southern and eastern retaining walls amounted to £346.10 @ £11 per perch and 10/- per linear foot for the 12" x 3" coping (including the quarrying, lime mortar and cartage).

Serious damage to the north-facing wall took place during work for a sewage line in October 1995. Numerous saplings are now present on the terrace and their roots pose a threat to the integrity of the masonry.

'Glenn Robin', Lot 72, DP 792778, 35 Murrallin Lane, is listed as a heritage item on the Sutherland Shire Local Environment Plan (SSLEP 1993 - Amendment No. 39, G.G. 81, 5 July 1996, ref. B198). According to Council's own EHC report 194-96 of 6 November 1995 'Glenn Robin' has 'a number of significant social and historical associations and in the context of other Shire Heritage listed properties this social and historical significance is measured as above average and worthy of recognition'.

Aside from the readily discernible place of the stonework on Lot 71 in the original curtilage of 'Glenn Robin' (on Lot 72) and its historic associations with William Glenn Wade and architect Frank Thorp, the walls have inherent social, historical and aesthetic significance. The angular precision of the squared blocks, regularity of pitch in the facing and consistent pointing, together with the assembly of the broken courses, is aesthetically noteworthy and of an exceptional standard.

Constructed when stonemason Randolph 'Ned' Knowles was some 67 years old,

the walls and terrace are representative of his final period of work as an artisan. They also represent a direct connection with the nineteenth century (and earlier) stoneworking traditions of the sandstone country of Dewsbury, Yorkshire, whence Randolph's father and stonemason mentor, Sam Knowles (c. 1856-1915), originated. The construction of these walls is unusually well documented with drawings, photographs and correspondence. The physical results of the design and construction effort, so-well recorded, deserves special recognition and preservation for posterity. They also offer an opportunity for comparison and contrast with Knowles' other work, such as his own house 'Stonehaven' in Terry Street, Blakehurst.

In summary, the finely crafted sandstone retaining walls and raised rectangular terrace, which straddle the boundary between Lot 71 and 72, have already been recognized for their heritage elements in the LEP listing of Lot 72. The same inherent values, it should be argued, are present on Lot 71. Furthermore, any demolition of the western end of this retaining wall has the potential to seriously damage the historic fabric of the retaining wall and terracing on Lot 72.

Sources:

E. Duyker, 'William Glenn Wade (1911-1983): A Biographical Memoir', *Sutherland Shire Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin*, May 1995.

M. Grieve, 'The Knowles Family - A Trio of Stonemasons', *Kogarah Historical Society Newsletter*, May 1983, pp. 7-8.

Peddle, Thorp and Walker Archives.

Rookwood Cemetery Records (Anglican section).

Sydney Morning Herald, 6 December 1965, p. 18.

Wade Family Papers.

Woronora Cemetery Records.

Interview with Mrs Thelma Colbran, Blakehurst, 17 September 1999.

Interview with Mr David Fullerton, Engadine, 17 September 1999.

*A Beautiful
Colonial Home,
Como*



Reservation and Alienation of

Foreshore Land

By Pauline Curby

Walking along the Esplanade on a fine sunny day, looking out at the magic blue Pacific Ocean is a delightful experience, as many readers will know. Not many people realise, however, that if it had not been for the action of a group of early Cronulla landowners this walk would not exist.

In the 1890s when Department of Lands surveyors reported on one of the government reserves (consisting of all the land south of Surf Road to the end of the Cronulla peninsula) at Port Hacking they were not impressed by what they saw, especially on the ocean side of the peninsula. It should be remembered at this time that surfing was not a sport so they could not imagine that anyone would want access to, for example, Shark Island. To their eyes the eastern side of the peninsula was a wind-swept rocky area with 'stunted' vegetation and little good soil. Not surprisingly, the government surveyor who undertook the survey of the Cronulla peninsula in 1895, stated in his report that to reserve land on the ocean side would be 'superfluous'. The early landowners on the peninsula thought differently. They were concerned that access to the rocky shoreline should be ensured for the public and petitioned that a reservation be created round the ocean side. Their request was granted and a 100-foot reservation above high water mark was included in the plans by the time of the third auction of land on the peninsula in April 1900.

Ironically the surveyors recommended that the land on the Gunnamatta Bay side of the peninsula should be reserved. They could see the potential for residential development and felt that the sandy flats would be 'highly appreciated by the public especially in future years'. Unfortunately no waterfront reservation was made on the western side between Gunnamatta Park and Darook Park. Over the years it was an important sales pitch that blocks of land could be offered for sale with 'absolute water frontage to the high water mark of Gunnamatta Bay'. Now when residents and visitors enjoy their walk along the Esplanade they wonder why it is that unless it is low tide they cannot walk right around the Cronulla peninsula. On the western (Gunnamatta Bay) side of the peninsula, over the past 100 years, blocks of land have been sold right down to high water mark.

Frank Cridland who wrote *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and Sutherland Shire* in the early 1920s deplored this policy. In the first edition of his book he outlined how the building of a 'marine drive' round the Cronulla peninsula would open up the entire shoreline to the public. His argument that the resumptions required to do this would not be expensive, is supported by one of Milton Kent's aerial photographs included in his book. By the time the 1949 edition was printed he had abandoned this plan because of the increased cost of resumption.

In the intervening years the Cronulla peninsula had become a much more densely populated area. Sutherland Shire Council missed an opportunity in the early 1920s to have a reservation right round this peninsula. The opportunity was lost forever.

Reservations of land '100-feet above high water mark' were once considered essential for public access to waterways, and New South Wales land regulations issued in 1831 specified that all grants should have such reservations. This mandatory reserve clause was discontinued in 1842. Waterfront land grants made in what is now Sutherland Shire during the period 1831 to 1842 did include reservations. Unfortunately later legislation allowed these reservations to be rescinded. I was interested to note Maryanne Larkin's comment in her recent *Sutherland Shire, a history to 1939* that a Holt-Sutherland estate brochure from 1891 claimed that 'there is not a foot of [water] frontage reserved on the whole of the estate'. No wonder there is a dearth of waterfront in the Shire to which the public have access.

This is quite a contrast to other areas. It is interesting to compare our Esplanade walk which stops at the Fisheries with the beautiful Manly to the Spit walk around the foreshore of Sydney Harbour. Around these foreshores many of the land grants were made in the 1831 to 1842 period and so had reservations in place. There were attempts, however, to alienate this reserve land.

One example of this occurred in the 1880s when a director of the Port Jackson Steamship Company, John Woods, applied to buy the waterfront reserve in front of his mansion *Fairlight*. There was considerable consternation in Manly. The Council immediately, when news of his application was published, lodged a protest. A large public meeting voted to keep the land in the public domain and as a result, although John Woods was a rich and powerful man, he was not allowed to buy this foreshore reserve. It was dedicated for public recreation in 1884 thus forestalling any further applications to purchase it. The people of Manly and their visitors now have, thanks to this action, a magnificent walk that takes one from Manly to the Spit.

It is wonderful to be able to enjoy the Esplanade walk but how magnificent would it be to have a coastal walk from Kurnell right round Port Hacking to the Royal National Park? Unfortunately this would entail knocking down a lot of waterfront mansions and I don't think the owners would like that!

Pauline Curby

May 2000

Susan Hunt and Paul Carter, *Terre Napoléon: Australia Through French Eyes 1800-1804*, published by the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, \$85 Hardback ISBN 0949753815, \$45 Paperback ISBN 949753874.

Reviewed by Edward Duyker

In *Sutherland Shire Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin*, No. 67 (February 1989), I reviewed Jacqueline Bonnemain's, Elliott Forsyth's and Bernard Smith's wonderful book *Baudin in Australian Waters: The Artwork of the French Voyage of Discovery to the Southern Lands 1800-1804*, (Oxford, 1988). Although I had nothing but praise for this book, I was then pessimistic enough to declare that 'Baudin's . . . name seems destined to be known by only a handful of Australians for many years to come'. Thanks to the splendid 'Terre Napoléon' exhibition, held recently in Sydney and Canberra, I have been proven delightfully wrong! The beautiful catalogue of the exhibition owes a great deal to the work of Bonnemain, Forsyth and Smith, particularly with regard to biographical and descriptive notes. Although *Terre Napoléon: Australia Through French Eyes 1800-1804* is not as rich a scholarly resource as *Baudin in Australian Waters*, it is a fine example of book production and the illustrations are produced to the same high standards. It is certainly more affordable.

When Nicolas-Thomas Baudin's expedition was outfitted in Le Havre, Charles-Alexandre Lesueur (1778-1846) was attracted to the prospect of adventure in southern waters and enlisted as an assistant gunner, 4th class. But when the expedition's artists deserted at Ile de France (Mauritius), Lesueur took on the task of official artist. Together with Nicolas-Martin Petit (1777-1804), also co-opted from the lower deck, he accomplished his new role with remarkable virtuosity. Lesueur gave valuable assistance to the naturalist François Péron in gathering more than 180 000 specimens and helped him publish an account of the voyage. While Lesueur's natural history sketches remain a significant adjunct to Péron's zoological work during the expedition, Petit's sketches and watercolours of the indigenous inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land and New Holland provide a priceless ethnographic record (see for example, N. J. B. Plomley, *The Baudin Expedition and the Tasmanian Aborigines, 1802*, Blubber Head Press, Hobart, 1983).

Although Nicolas Baudin charted significant stretches of the continent's coast and ensured that his ships were brimming with botanical, zoological, geological and ethnographic treasures, his reward was ignominy. Because he died in Mauritius, in September 1803, before his expedition returned to France, he was unable to do battle with his detractors: Georges Bory de St Vincent and François Péron, whose distortions seeped into later biographies and studies. In 1987, however, Baudin received powerful vindication through the work of the Australian historian Frank Horner (see my review of *The French Reconnaissance: Baudin in Australia 1801-*

1803, in *Sutherland Shire Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin*, No. 63, May 1988). Susan Hunt and Paul Carter, who have written the introductory essays to the catalogue, have added their voices to the hymn of acclamation. If I have a criticism of Susan Hunt's essay, it is that in listing Baudin's precursors, she does not mention Marion Dufresne's expedition (1771-72), the very first French expedition to any part of Australia and that which shattered the 14 000 year isolation of the Tasmanian Aborigines (since Tasman did not meet the indigenous inhabitants). This, however, is a minor criticism and she deserves nothing but praise for her fine curatorial work.

Susan Hunt ends her essay with the sentence: 'It is through their [French] eyes that to a surprising degree we see where and who we are'. I tend to agree with her. Indeed this catalogue, or at least its introductory essays, could have been subtitled: 'The French through Australian Eyes'. In this respect, Dr Carter's essay, although a useful overview, is at times quite provocative. On page 27, for example, he declares: 'Sharing the First Consul's view that France should command ideas exclusively its own, Péron greeted the ocean as a new empire: marine biology, a knowledge of the world's seas, would enable the French to lay siege, at least intellectually, to the land bound sciences of the British Empire.' On what basis does Carter attribute such sentiments to Napoléon and for that matter Péron? Does he really expect us to believe that British science was landbound in the early nineteenth century, given the pioneering marine zoology of John Ellis (c. 1705-76), Daniel Solander (1733-1782), John Hill (1707-75), Patrick Browne (1720-90) and John Hunter (1728-93), the publication of books such as Martyn's *Universal Conchologist* (4 vols, 1784), Donovan's *The Natural History of British Shells* (5 vols, 1799-1803) and *The Natural History of British Fishes* (5 vols, 1804-08), followed by J.S. Miller's *Crinoida* (1821), Charles Darwin's *Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs* (1842) and Forbes and Hanley's *British Mollusca* (1848-53) - not to mention the achievements of ichthyologists such as Sir John Richardson (1787-1865), George Tridacna Lay (d. 1845) and Edward Turner Bennett (1797-1836)?

Dr Carter is now working on a book on Jacques Cousteau and it seems that he is preparing a (post-modern?) pond of French history and science in which to splash the unfortunate (deconstructed?) captain. His essay 'Looking for Baudin' appears to be a wet run for many of his ideas about France and the sea. Unfortunately, he founders several times for lack of adequate soundings. His discussion of Mauritius in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is a case in point. The island may be just a dot in the middle of the Indian Ocean, but, for the period in question, it has a substantial body of historical scholarship upon which to run aground (see for example the works of Henri Prentout, Huguette Ly-Tio-fane Pineo, Raymond d'Unienville, Auguste Toussaint and C. Northcote Parkinson). When Carter writes of Baudin and Flinders in Mauritius, he writes in apparent ignorance of the desperate predicament of the island colonists.

I have sympathy for Matthew Flinders: unaware of the collapse of the Peace of Amiens and in French hands, separated from his family and delayed in publishing

the results of his discoveries. Nevertheless, there was a war on. French prisoners-of-war, held on stinking hulks in the Thames estuary or even on parole in Litchfield or Salisbury, did not enjoy the kind of privileges Flinders enjoyed; yet, Carter calls the governor of the Mauritius, General Mathieu Decaen, 'unsporting'. The position of Mauritius was precarious, indeed ultimately hopeless. Decaen (who was only 34 years old in 1803) had a lot to lose in terms of his own prestige and career by allowing a security risk such as a skilled British cartographer to leave the island. Military intelligence may have been a low priority for Flinders, but his formal instructions betrayed him when they were read by the French. Paul Carter writes that Flinders was 'a victim of Decaen's rabid nationalism', but gives no proof for any such pathological patriotism. In August 1810 the French defeated the British at the Battle of Grand Port - the only naval victory commemorated by Napoleon on the Arc de Triomphe. However, when the British came again, in December 1810, they came with seventy ships and ten thousand men. Mauritius fell. The stakes were high and in my heart I can't honestly say I would have acted differently to General Decaen - including reviewing intelligence, such as that gathered by Péron, to destroy British bases like Port Jackson.

I was also surprised by Dr Carter's sweeping statement that 'anti-British pirateering was all they understood in a colony that prided itself on sinking East Indiamen' (page 29). In the midst of the Indian Ocean and protracted global war, food and able-bodied men were in short supply. Baudin was in competition for these same scarce resources. With his neologism 'pirateering', Dr Carter does a great injustice to those who bravely defended and sustained the island: not by 'sinking' East Indiamen, but by capturing them. Between 1793 and 1803, the local naval squadron and eighteen armed merchantmen took more than 176 prizes. Even Flinders acknowledged their courage and skills in his letters. Privateers were not pirates; they had commissions for a stipulated length of time which controlled their conduct according to the regulations of the navy, which also obliged them to fly the French ensign. Nevertheless, they had considerable freedom 'to harm the enemy' through all 'permissible acts of war, to take and bring prisoners with their ships, arms and other things'. If the locals only understood 'sinking East Indiamen', why did some of the most intellectually cultivated members of Baudin's expedition choose to stay in Mauritius? Perhaps Dr Carter should read Auguste Toussaint's *Early Printing in the Mascarene Islands, 1767-1810* for a hint of the cultural life of the colony then. He might also care to read Flinders' own journal.

And while I am on the subject of prisoners during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, it should be noted that D'Entrecasteaux's botanist did not endure 'three years in a Dutch jail in Java' (page 24) as Dr Carter asserts. Labillardière was arrested on 19 February 1794 and spent about a week in the prison of the 'Tomagon of Sourabaya'. He was then marched overland to Samarang, arriving on 11 March 1794. When he and his companions learnt that they were to be lodged in the local hospital, they made representations to Governor van Overstraaten and were allowed to take lodgings in the centre of the town. Labillardière remained in Samarang until he and the artist Piron were moved to

Batavia on 2 September. Yes, he was then held in Fort Anké, but in November 1794 the *Nathalie*, carrying Dutch prisoners-of-war for exchange, arrived under a flag of truce. Labillardière left Batavia on this vessel on 29 March 1795 and arrived in Mauritius on 18 May 1795. Thus, his actual time ‘in a Dutch jail in Java’ was at most a matter of months, if not weeks. It should also be stated that Labillardière’s natural history collections did not actually come into Sir Joseph Banks’ formal possession, rather Banks (who had brief custody of them) successfully lobbied the British government to return them to Labillardière after they had been captured on the Dutch East Indiaman *Hougly* by H.M.S. *Sceptre*.

Dr Edward Duyker is the Honorary Consul for the Republic of Mauritius in New South Wales. The Consulate of Mauritius is the only consulate located in the Sutherland Shire.



Como Hotel in better days.

Sutherland: Mapping A Literary Heritage

by
Edward Duyker

Sutherland Shire is proud of its associations with James Cook. Kurnell, where the *Endeavour* anchored in Botany Bay in 1770, forms part of the present shire's northern boundary. The bones of one of Cook's seaman, an Orkney islander named Forby Sutherland, lie buried on the foreshore and James Cook appears on the official shire seal. And it is with the *Endeavour* that the shire's association with the printed word began, for the ship's officers and men were laden with books for their three year circumnavigation. Joseph Banks (1743-1820), judging by the references in his journal, must have had between fifty and sixty-five titles amounting to some 100 to 130 volumes on board the *Endeavour* - mostly works of natural history and accounts of exploration. His 'draughtsman' Sydney Parkinson (c.1745-1771), is known to have carried anthologies of the great English poets such as Chaucer, Pope, Dryden and Spencer; works by the classical authors Homer, Ovid and Virgil; volumes of Shakespeare, Cervantes, Marmontel, La Fontaine, and Lesage; illustrated works by Hogarth; histories of England, Scotland and the ancient world; and gazetteers and guidebooks.

Modern editions of many of the works carried on the *Endeavour* can readily be found in Sutherland (together with descriptions of Botany Bay dating back to 1770), for the Shire's library service has a rich collection of some 428,000 items. With 91,601 patrons (of which 24,616 are children), Sutherland has one of the largest library memberships in Australia. In the 1998/99 financial year 1,683,614 items were loaned to users by all the branches combined. In the same period, the library handled 100,861 reference enquiries.

The beginnings were modest. In 1953 the first central library was housed in the former home of a local physician and held a mere 8,000 volumes. In 1955, branches were opened in Cronulla and Miranda. Five years later a branch was opened in the cramped understorey of Sylvania's 'Boomerang Hall'. Over the next three decades, branches were opened in Caringbah, Engadine, Bundeena, Bangor and, in July 1995, Menai. There were changes too. The Central Library moved into the lower ground floor of the Council's Administration Centre in August 1965 and the Miranda and Sylvania libraries were moved to more modern, spacious, locations in 1985. And there were set-backs. The Caringbah Branch Library was destroyed by fire in the same year the Miranda and Sylvania branches were relocated, but it was rebuilt in less than two years. At Christmas 1987 Sylvania suffered significant damage when vandals threaded a fire hose into the book return chute and left it gushing for a number of days without anyone realising. (In 1992 someone put a poisonous whip snake into the return chute at Miranda!)

Although political divisions among councillors have sometimes been bitter, there has long been strong bipartisan support for the Shire's library service. This has been reflected in the investment of \$5.4 million in a new Central Library building which was officially opened in March 1994. With 2,688 square metres of space (excluding underground car parking and store rooms), the building is almost twice the size of the old central library and has greatly improved access for the disabled. The new library has seminar and display facilities, a purpose-built local studies section, an expanded children's library, an enlarged reference department, a greatly improved audio-visual

storage area and generous reading and private study locations--with plenty of natural light.

After the broadcast of the television documentary series 'Sylvania Waters', Barry Humphries may have felt vindicated in his choice of a suburban home for Sir Les Patterson, 'Minister for the Yartz'. I must confess I have often wished the mangroves in that part of the Georges River had been left undisturbed: the fish and the waterbirds would have been a lot better off and we would have been spared a great deal of cringing. But there is a lot more to Sutherland than 'Sylvania Waters' and Sir Les would suggest. It should not be a surprise that a shire which supports an extensive library service should have an increasingly rich cultural life. Sutherland not only treasures books it has also produced them. The shire may not be a vast Newtown or Fitzroy harbouring clusters of struggling artists, novelists, poets and playwrights in cheap inner-city accommodation, but over the years some of its decidedly suburban residents have made important contributions to our printed heritage. With the splendid treasures of a Pacific coast, Botany Bay, the Georges and Woronora Rivers, Port Hacking and the Royal National Park (the second oldest in the world), Sutherland Shire has been home to several city-based writers who have drawn important inspiration from the bush and the coast. Short-story writer and balladist Henry Lawson (1867-1922), for example, owned a weekender at Cronulla. Neville Cayley (1886-1950) author of the Australian ornithological classic *What Bird is that?* (1931) lived in Cronulla from the age of seven and was a founding member of the Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club. Cayley's other books, as author and illustrator, were *Australian Parrots* (1938) and *The Fairy Wrens of Australia* (1949). In addition he illustrated G. A. Waterhouse's *What Butterfly is that?* (1932) and Ellis Troughton's *Furred Animals of Australia* (1941). (Cayley's father N. H. P. Cayley (1853-1903) was also an accomplished bird painter; the National Library possesses eighteen of his original watercolours.) In the late-1940s and early-1950s, Cronulla was also home to Gough Whitlam, the future Prime Minister and author of numerous political tracts and memoirs. He and his young family lived in Wangi Avenue.

Lester Basil Sinclair (1894-1974), better known as 'John Mystery', was born in Yorkshire and came to Australia as a teenager, via New Zealand (where he had joined a circus), and later served at Gallipoli. Sinclair built a turreted 'castle' on the tip of the Illawong Peninsula and produced many children's books from the 1930s onwards including the *Woolly Sisters* and the *Blinky Land* series, abridgements of numerous European classics and the well-known *Bumper Books* and *Cobbers Annuals*. He was also a composer of numerous patriotic songs. During the import restrictions of the Second World War, he was one of the most widely read children's authors in Australia. Unfortunately John Mystery's 'Adventure Castle' no longer stands, although one of its ramparts serves as a castellated retaining wall on Cranbrook Place, Illawong, and several bas-relief sculptures by the Russian sculptor Georg Ilya Chapoff (born Novorossiysk 1912) can still be seen in the gardens of nos. 15 and 17.

Como, in Sutherland Shire, was home to historian of science Ian Langham author of *The Building of British Social Anthropology* (1981), which Claude Levi-Strauss

described as 'a major contribution to the history of ideas'. Dr Langham was also the co-editor of *The Wider Domain of Evolutionary Thought* (1982) and before his tragic death in 1984, had undertaken a major re-evaluation of the Piltdown hoax. His thesis was eventually incorporated in Frank Spencer's *Piltdown: A Scientific Forgery* (1990). Another important scientific writer who lived in Sutherland Shire for many years (despite losing his home in the January 1994 Jannali fires and often undertaking field research in New Guinea or Indonesian Papua), is Dr Tim Flannery (born 1956). Now Director of the South Australian Museum, Flannery is the author of *Mammals of New Guinea* (1990), the thought provoking study *The Future Eaters: An Ecological History of the Australasian Lands and People* (1994), the memoir *Throwim way leg* (1998), and anthologies of extracts from explorers' journals.

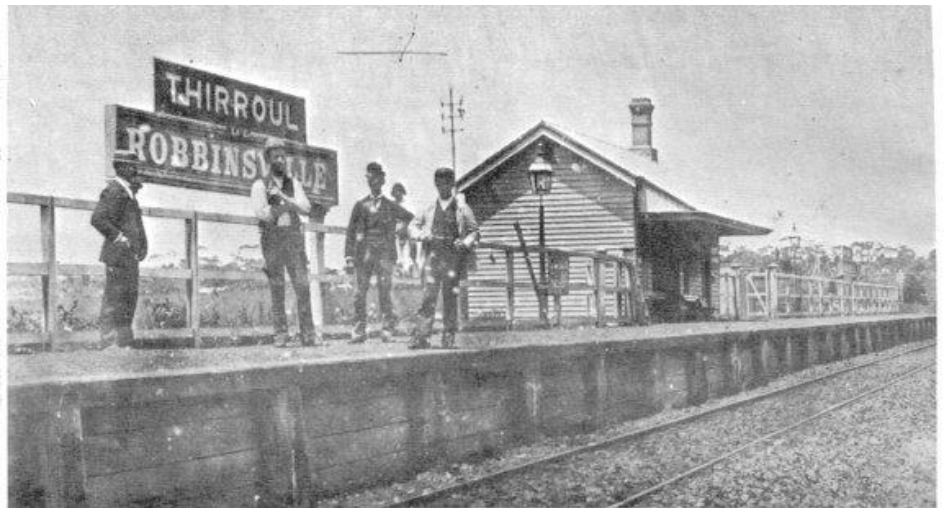
Sylvania Heights is often associated in the popular imagination with Gabrielle Carey's and Kathy Lette's novel *Puberty Blues* (1979) and the subsequent film. The suburb, overlooking the Georges River, is also home to well-known children's writer Mary Small. Plymouth-born Small, is the author of *A Bear in my Bedroom* (1976), *And Alice did the Walking* (1978), *The Night of the Muttonbirds* (1981), *Broome Dog* (1989), *Country Cousin* (1991) and some 20 other works of children's literature. And while I am on the subject of children's literature, I must mention the late Marilyn Cosgrove author of *The BMX Kid* (1985), *The Modern Ark* (1987), *Farmyard Nursery* (1989), *Who Woke the Bay?* (1991) and three other titles in her 'Kid' series. Marilyn lived in Oyster Bay before her creative career was cut short in early 1992 by a fatal reaction to medication after surgery. She was still in her 30s and is sadly missed. Other Sutherland writers worthy of mention are Mena Calthorpe (1904-1996), author of the novels *The Defector* (1969), *The Dyehouse* (1961) and *The Plain of Ala* (1989); Aboriginal activist, Burnum Burnum, aka Harry Penrith (1936-1998?), author of the richly-illustrated travel guide, *Aboriginal Australia* (1988) and himself the subject of a biography by Dr Marlene Norst (1999); Audrey Oldfield, author of *Daughter of Two Worlds* (1970), *Baroola and Us* (1973) *Woman Suffrage in Australia: A Gift or a Struggle?* (1992); sports writer Ray Mitchell (born 1919) of Gympie who has published some 13.5 million words including the boxing biography *Fighting Sands* (1965); poet and short story writer Nola Fisher (born 1926); Pauline Curby, author of a number of books on the history of Cronulla; and for many years (until he moved to the Blue Mountains), film critic and historian Bill Collins.

Aside from individual hard-working authors, Sutherland Shire has an active writers group and a strong local history society. The Shire Council also employs a full-time community arts manager and publishes a bi-monthly magazine, *Artbeat*.. With more than 50 primary schools, 20 secondary schools and two TAFE colleges, supported by an increasingly multicultural population, Sutherland can look forward to many new forms of literary expression among its budding young writers.

Dr Edward Duyker has lived and worked as a full-time historian and biographer in Sylvania since late-1983. His twelfth book, *Nature's Argonaut: Daniel Solander (1733-1782), Voyager and Naturalist with Cook and Banks*, (MUP, 1998) was short-listed for the NSW Premier's General History Prize in

1999. This article is a revised version of an article first published in *National Library of Australia News*, vol. VI, No. 6, March 1996, pp. 14-18.

Trains of Sydney



Heathcote Hall and Heathcote Hall Estate

In the 1840s, East Heathcote, or Bottle Forest as it was then called was divided into nine Land Grants. Two of these Grants, one to George Fleming of 24 acres, the other to William Fleming of 31 acres were destined in time to become Heathcote Hall Estate. In 1857 Abel Harber, married a Jane Upton, at Glebe, Sydney. They had eleven children. Six girls and five boys, one of his reasons for moving to Heathcote is said to have been his desire to take his daughters away from the undesirable elements in Marrickville. Jane was born the daughter of James and Elizabeth Upton. James is said to have been a convict in Tasmania. He is supposed to have been punished at one time whilst a convict for going to sleep in church. In those days the convicts were not always provided with seating and had to stand at the back of the church during the service. In the early 1880s, Abel, a brick manufacturer, of St. Peters, Sydney, purchased the grants of George Coulson and William Fleming. Between 1883 and 1887 Abel built Heathcote Hall for the said sum of 7000 pounds (\$14,000.00). The Hall was designed by architects, Thomas



Rowe and Partners. It is an outstanding example of the late nineteenth century Italianate mansion and is the only surviving major residence of that period in the Sutherland Shire. Thomas Rowe also designed the Imperial Arcade, in Sydney. As well as building Heathcote Hall, Abel was involved in the building of the Imperial Arcade, which is thought to have caused his financial downfall. By July 1889, Abel was forced to mortgage the property to an Edward Terry. On 19 January 1892, the property passed to the Colonial Finance, Mortgage Investment and Guarantee Corporation, Limited. This Corporation could not sell the property and so it was offered as first prize in a lottery, at a value of 7000 pounds, (\$14 000.) in 1896. The lottery was organised by Tattersall's, of Queensland. It was won by a Samuel Gillett, a Marrickville builder. At the time, Mr. Gillett was nearly eighty years of age. He is said to have received only two pleasurable sensations, in connection with the property. One at the time when he was notified that he had won the prize. The other when, after five years of ownership, he managed to sell the estate for very much less than its valuation. Samuel's family, strict Methodists, were said to have shunned Samuel for participating in a lottery. A mansion and estate at Heathcote, before the advent of the motor car, and a one train a day service was not an ideal home for a city contractor during the depressed times of the 1890s. In 1901 the estate was purchased by Edmund Lamb Brown and his wife Jessie Fotheringham Brown. Edmund was born in Haddington, Scotland, circa 1860, son of James Brown and Isabella Aitchinson. He died 10 November 1925, aged 65. At the time of his death he had been in Australia 50 years. Jessie was born in Leith, Scotland, circa

1846, daughter of William Young and Janet Fotheringham Pearce, she died 2 July 1932, aged 86. Edmund and Jessie were married at Glebe in 1884. Both are buried in Woronora Cemetery. When they bought the Hall Edmund hoped to spend his remaining time, there in peace and quiet, as he had been advised by a leading Sydney physician that he had but a few months to live. he is thought to have been suffering from consumption. However Edmund confounded his medical advisers by occupying Heathcote Hall, for 24 years until his death in 1925. During the Great World War of 1914-18 there was a rumour that the Browns were German spies who had changed their name from Braun to Brown. They were said to have been flashing messages from the tower to German ships. The rumour is said to have been investigated by the military. It was thought that the light flashes were the reflection on the tower glass from a lighthouse either at Watsons Bay or La Perouse. A Mrs I Drury who worked at the Hall from 1914 to 1917, in later years wrote that there were no spies at Heathcote Hall. After the war it was established that at no time during the war had there been German ships off this part of the coast of New South Wales. How did the rumour start ? Who knows ? The rumour probably caused the innocent Brown couple a great deal of unfounded distress. After the death of Edmund Brown, his wife Jessie together with James Hall, set up the Heathcote Hall Estate. On 21 April 1928 the estate was submitted for sale on the grounds. The estate which totalled approximately 55 acres comprised 168 allotments, 160 feet by 60 feet, also the Heathcote Hall on 5 acres of land. Between 1928 and 1933, deposits were paid on some of the blocks. The terms were 5 pounds deposit and the balance over 5 years at 3% interest. There was extensive advertising in the press, and a small office was located at the corner of Wilson Parade and Dillwynia Grove. Timber archways were erected at the entrances to the estate and Mr. H. W. Stork of Kennett Villa, 40 Dillwynia Grove was appointed Estate Manager. However with the advent of the Great Depression not all of the purchases were finalised. During the depression the Estate offered to waive the interest and even give a rebate on the price if buyers would complete the purchase. The Hall was not sold and was rented for a time by a Miss I Pocklington, who endeavoured to run a guest house and tea rooms. These proved unsuccessful and closed. At that time there was a tennis court and putting green. During the 1939-45 war a Mrs. Horen, rented the Hall and let rooms. On 5 December 1944 the Managing Director of the Estate wrote to a Mr. Smith, of Cronulla and informed him that the Reserve on the Hall and the 5 acres of land was 1500 pounds (\$3 000.00) but the buyer would have to make arrangements with the tenant, Mrs. Horen for vacant possession. In 1945 the Hall was purchased by Mrs. Minima Consuelo Farrelly. The Hall is still owned and occupied by the Farrelly family. Two other properties, The "Log Cabin", in 20 Dillwynia Grove, and "Nyalora" near the railway station, at `122 Wilson Parade were both built about 1928 and belonged to the Estate. The "Log Cabin" at this time, 1999, is still occupied by a member of the Farrelly family. Nyalora is thought to have been built as an 'exhibition' home. Abel Harber was born in Sussex, England in 1834. He died in Perth, Western Australia in 1904, aged 70 years.

Epilogue to Heathcote Hall.

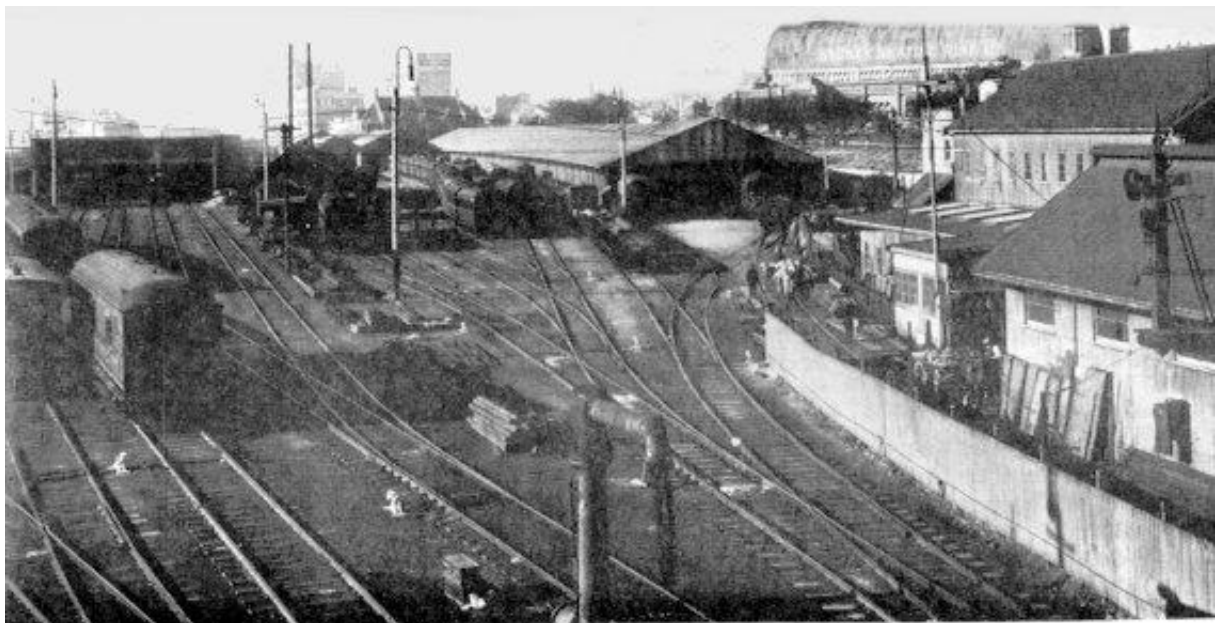
Heathcote Hall, so named by the original builder, Abel Harber, possibly could have been more aptly named, Harber's Folly. For to build, what he did, when he did,

where he did, could be regarded as a folly. Certainly in the 1800s there were mansions built, but in most cases they were either near the city, or on productive properties, that could maintain them. Heathcote Hall was neither near the city, nor on a productive property. It was destined to always be a financial drain on whoever owned it. That this is a very heavy burden, is evidenced by its sadly neglected appearance. However despite its appearance, it is a tribute to the original builder, Abel Harber that the building structurally appears to be still quite sound. Maybe, now is the time for some organisation, perhaps Sutherland Shire Council, to seek to purchase and restore the building to its original condition. Bearing in mind, that it is the only original type of building of its class and era left in the Shire. The Hall could be used for a number of purposes, an art gallery, Shire museum, craft rooms, memorabilia and tea rooms just to name a few. The grounds could be landscaped, similar to the camellia gardens at Miranda. It is hoped, that something is done to preserve this fine old mansion. It would be a shame, if it is left until it eventually falls victim to the wrecker's hammer.

Disclaimer.

This information was obtained, from a number of different sources. It is not guaranteed, that it is correct in every detail. Harold Warburton. Phone 9520 0722.

The train yards at ????... 1916



INTERESTING FACTS ON NED KELLY

*From Charles White "History of Bushranging" 2 Vols,
Hawthorn, Victoria, Lloyd O'Neil, 1970.*

Members of the Victorian Bar Association recently undertook the "retrial" of our most notorious son, Edward Kelly.

The premise for the retrial was that there was an apprehension that the Victorian Police of the day were out to kill Kelly without trial and that his subsequent murder of three police was purely self defence.

An expatriate of Sutherland Shire Ms E. Carmichael has written to the "Bulletin" with some timely "facts" about Ned.

Ned Kelly was 23 when he was hanged. His horse stealing lifestyle that led into bush ranging started when he was 17. His brother Dan, was only 14.

Ned's armour weighed 97 pounds. It was made of quarter inch thick iron and consisted of a long breast-plate, shoulder-plates, back-guard and helmet. The helmet resembled an oil-can without a crown, and with a long slit at the elevation of the eyes for the wearer to look through.

It was thought it had been made by two men, one at Greta and one near Oxley. It was probably made from plough-shares as they would have been plentiful in those days.

After it was taken off Ned, five bullet marks were found in the helmet, nine on the back-plate, and one on the shoulder-plate; but these marks may not have been made by the police, for it was explained during the trial that after the armour was made it was tested by firing ball at it from a distance of twenty yards.

Ned was caught by the police tactic of firing at his legs and loin areas, which were unprotected. The whole gang of Dan Kelly, Steve Hart, Joe Byrne with Ned, all had armour

This information is available in **Charles White's** 'History of Australian Bush ranging'. **Vols 1 & 2**

I found both volumes of the above books most interesting, starting with escaped convicts robbing homesteads etc. for new clothes and food and this is how bushranging started.

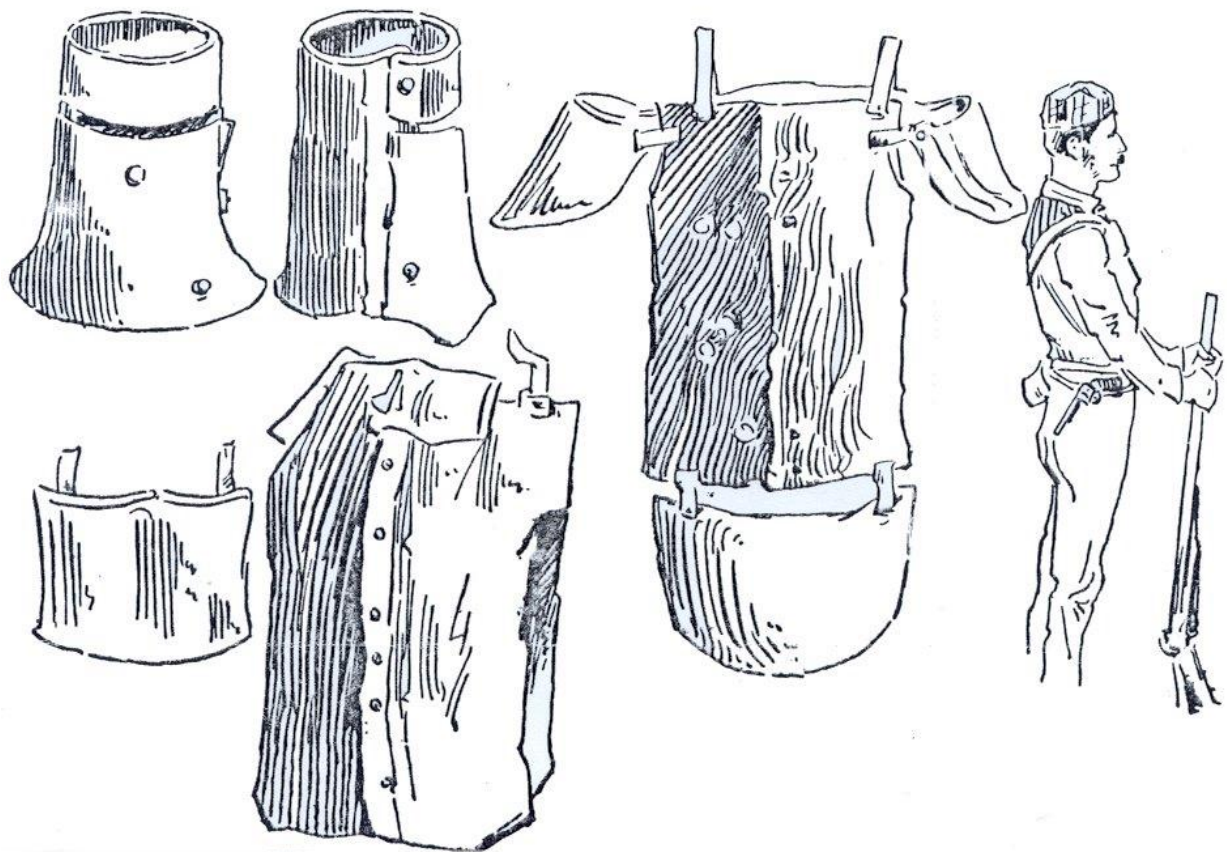
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I was rather perplexed with the words and phraseology used in these books until dates were mentioned and I then realized they had been written somewhere near 1890-1900, and recorded in White's book written in 1970.

Elva N Carmichael.
Cronulla girl living in Tuncurry

The Local News Representation of Ned's Armour



NOTE:

Unfortunately our contributor did not reference the above drawings of Ned's armour but I might guess that the drawings are from the books mentioned above. L.B. Editor.