

**Early hotels on the Mirrool Creek  
(west of Quandary), the  
establishment of Ardlethan, and the  
history of its two hotels.**



**The old Warri homestead buildings in 2014**



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# Acknowledgements.

I am indebted to Jim Slater of Ardlethan who helped me to understand the local geography, who personally identified the location of various historical structures and who also provided access to a variety of photos and other information. This book would not have been possible without his help.

I acknowledge the enthusiasm of Robert Nowak who was a catalyst for starting this project. I would also like to thank John Hudson, Shirley Crittenden and the other various citizens of Ardlethan who contributed additional information.

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My thanks to the National Library and the NSW State Library for their support and development of the Australian Newspaper Digitisation Project. Trove continues to be the most fantastic resource.

My thanks also to Land and Property Information, or the old Lands Department. Their digitisation of crown plans and other land records constitutes another invaluable resource.

# Introduction.

This book originally started with the intent to record the history of the Palace Hotel at Ardlethan. It quickly expanded to include the London Hotel, and then the other local hotels that preceded these two. Further expansion included early settlement around the Mirrool Creek and the early beginnings of the town of Ardlethan.

The books primary objective was to record as much factual evidence as was accessible at the time.

For the hotels the desire was to record the following criteria:

1. Location
2. Structures
3. Licensees
4. Freehold owners

For the beginnings of the town it was hoped to detail the location of the majority of the earliest businesses, but the events of fires and the rapid growth of the town, as a consequence of the mining boom, along with the lack of primary source descriptions, has made it difficult to provide an accurate record for all town sites. Local knowledge, as demonstrated in *Poppet Heads and Wheatfields*, has helped but it has not been possible to provide a definitive list of all early businesses and their exact locations. Hopefully others will contribute additional information, in the future.

Details of licensees is in chronological order and the information is not always in correctly formed sentences.

I am grateful to those who provided photos and maps, which hopefully make this a more interesting and informative publication.

I take responsibility for the books shortcomings, but trust that these are outweighed by its benefits.

Geoff Burch

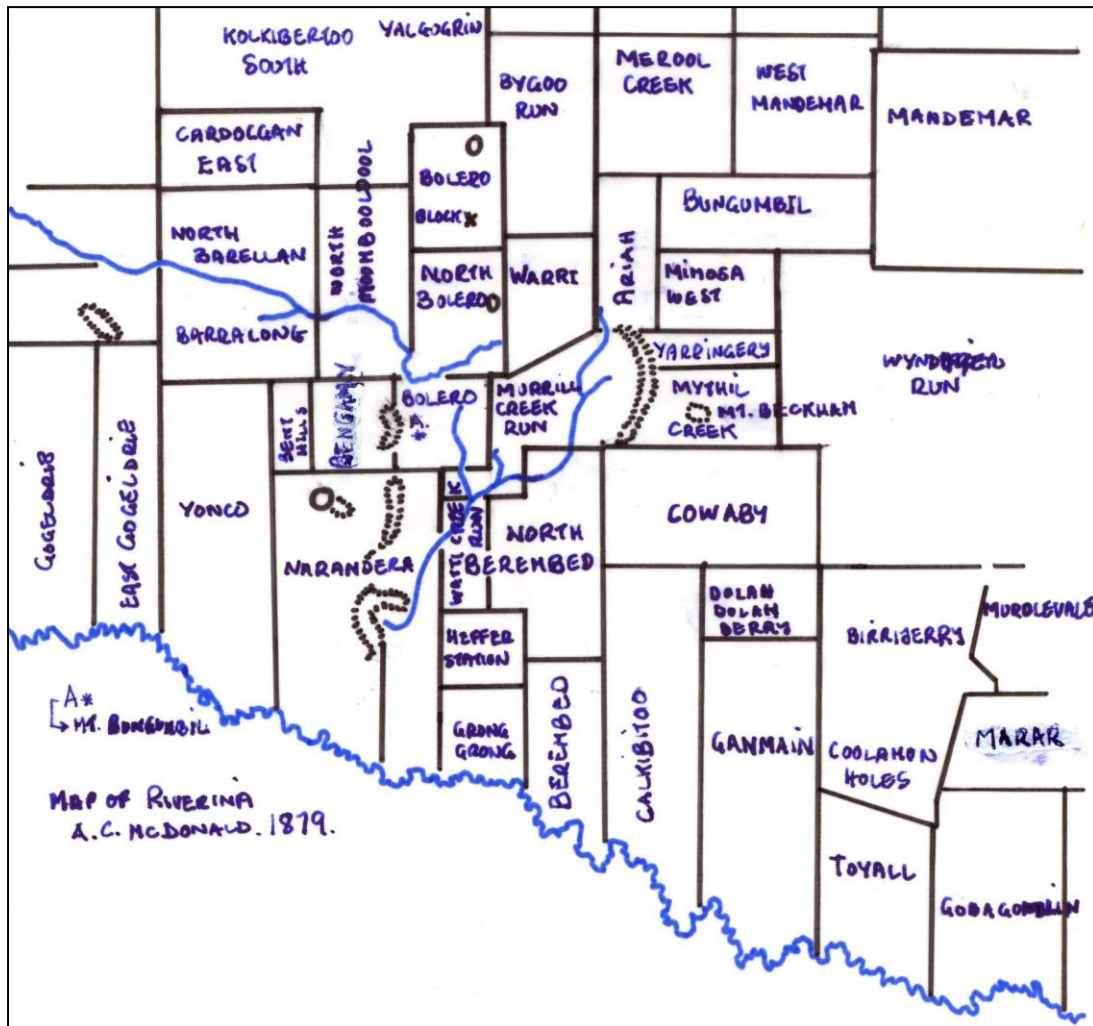
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## Early Settlement on the Mirrool – West of Quandary.

The earliest settlement in the Riverina occurred along the Murrumbidgee River from the early 1830's. The success of these ventures was primarily dependent on the seasons – more specifically the availability of water. There were no freehold titles to these early runs. Initially those that settled were illegal squatters, and later, licensed occupiers. These were tough times where fortunes fluctuated wildly with the seasons and the economy. In the drought years some chose not to pay the license fee and simply walked away. The *back blocks* – runs further back from the river – were not settled until a decade or more later, and these were initially along the major creeks feeding into the Murrumbidgee.



**Above:** Early squatting runs around what is now the township of Ardlethan, c.1879.

**Source:** Map of Riverina and the Northern and North Western Pastoral Districts of New South Wales. Compiled & Published by A. C. McDonald, Melbourne. December 1879. Held by CSU Regional Archives.

Warri, and surrounding runs, are part of the region known as the *Merool*, which Webster<sup>1</sup> described as being that country between Temora and Barellan, lying between the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee rivers, with the Mirrool Creek being the most prominent water course. The creek is generally dry and it is only in the wettest periods that it eventually spills into the Lachlan River. Its course is ambiguous, disappearing altogether in places and spreading out to form swamps at other places.

According to Webster, Mirrool is the name given to the creek by the local Aborigines, and it relates to the “coloured pipe-clay” obtained from the banks of the creek (notably around the old Quandary station) and used by them to mark their bodies for corroborees.<sup>2</sup>

There have been numerous spellings of Merool and Mirrool, including Mirool, Morool, Murrill, Murril. *Mirrool* is the contemporary name and spelling for the creek, whilst the region is known as the *Merool*.

## Exploration:

John Oxley and his troupe were the first white men to explore the land between the Lachlan & Murrumbidgee Rivers, in 1817, when they travelled as far as Mount Brogden, to the NNE of Griffith. Some thirty years later others explored the country along the Mirrool Creek, looking for suitable land to stock cattle & sheep, with at least one such event well recorded, as follows:

On the 18th January 1847 a party of four left Morangarell run to explore the country between the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee rivers with the intent of finding suitable land for grazing stock. The four people were (1) Mr. John Stewart, the nephew of Major-General Stewart of Mount Pleasant at Bathurst, (2) James Graham, manager of Crowther Station (3) William Gardiner, manager of Major-General Stewart's The Gap Station and (4) a young aboriginal boy.<sup>3</sup>

The progress of the group was summarised as follows<sup>4</sup>:

Day 1 (18<sup>th</sup>) - They stopped the first night at Buck's Creek, some twenty five miles from Morangarell, it being the furthest out-station in that direction.

Day 2 - They then travelled west, another thirty miles, where "*they came upon a sandy creek, which was quite dry on the surface, but upon scraping with their hands to some depth they found water.*"

Day 3 – The next morning they continued on to the west. "*After travelling some hours, they found themselves in a very desert scrubby country, where the heat was intense, and no water could be found.*" They eventually reached an area featuring three hills, "*of considerable height*". These were climbed in an effort to find water, but all they saw was a "*barren and hopeless waste*" stretching out to the west. There was no water, nor was there any feed for the horses. The group camped at the base of one of the hills overnight, and made the decision to return to Morangarell on the next morning. The distance travelled that day was 60 miles.

Day 4 – The group headed back to Morangarell. They proceeded at a very slow pace until noon when the horses dropped, one at a time. The group now despaired of reaching their nearest source of water, the dry creek bed, it still being some thirty miles off.

The group made the decision to bleed the horses and drink the blood, of which they drank some four to five quarts each. This made them nauseas initially, but eventually they were able to hold the fluid in their stomachs. They were now forced to travel on foot, leaving all of their effects behind, with the exception of a gun and a quart pot, which the young aboriginal, being more accustomed to the conditions, was able to carry. They travelled slowly into the evening, "*battered, torn, and bleeding from the prickly shrubs of the desert,*" regularly falling down in a state of exhaustion and only able to continue with assistance from each other. Mr. Stewart was the weakest of the group and he expired around midnight. Graham and Gardiner had all but conceded that they too would suffer the same fate as Stewart and it was only due to the efforts of the aboriginal boy who pulled them by the hair and held forth the prospect of soon reaching water that they were able to go on. It was the aboriginal boy who led them directly to their original tracks and to the water supply in the dry creek, which they reached around 10am on the next morning. The trio reached Mr. Graham's station at 2pm on the following day. There can be no doubt that Graham and Gardiner would not have made it back without the help of the young aboriginal boy. The report noted the difficulty in returning to find Stewart's body stating that it was, "*..impossible for anyone to remain any length of time in such a barren, scrubby country, more especially at this season of the year, where it is supposed the thermometer must stand considerably above one hundred in the shade.*"<sup>5</sup>

## The First Squatter.

John Richard Hardy was the first person to select a run in the area surrounding what we now know as Ardlethan, in 1849. Ardlethan did not exist at that time – this was the name to be given to the town based around the railway station, which was opened in 1908 and which was originally called Rosebank.

Hardy had a license for a run in 1843 – in the Lachlan district<sup>6</sup> - but the name and precise location are not known. This run was probably near Yass where Hardy resided from the late 1830's and into the late 1840's.<sup>7</sup>

In 1849 John Richard Hardy left the Bland country, with his brother and a Lachlan Aboriginal, for the purpose of discovering new runs. They travelled through unoccupied country for some three weeks before they reached the Murrumbidgee River. Having determined which land would be suitable, he submitted a tender for same and received a letter, in 1850, from Colonel Barney, the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands, authorizing him to occupy the run. This run was called Bungumbil. Hardy did not visit the run again until 1854.<sup>8</sup>

The severe drought from the late 1840's up to 1852 would have discouraged Hardy from returning, as there was no grass or water for stock during these years. 1852 and 1853 were years of extensive flooding, which would have filled the creeks and water holes, and restored the vegetation. Other events in Hardy's life, during this



period, were also influencing his actions as we shall see further on.

There were other settlers to the east around this period. Webster notes that by 1850 Horatio Beckham “*had erected huts for an outstation on the creek at Quandary, at a place where there was good water, later the site of the Quandary Inn.*”<sup>9</sup> It was at this point, to the east of what is now Aria Park, that several other smaller creeks joined the Mirrool, forming “*a well-defined watercourse.*”<sup>10</sup> The surveyor, James Larmer, confirmed the settlement at Quandary, noting *huts* there in 1850.<sup>11</sup>

## The Early Runs.

In 1851 John Richard Hardy held the lease for three runs in the Lachlan District<sup>12</sup>:

1. Aria Park – 23,00 acres
2. Bungumbil – 25,600 acres
3. Warry – 25,600 acres

These runs can be seen in McDonald’s 1879 map.

**Aria Park** was described as,

“*Commencing at Aria Park Mountain, about 55 miles north of Yonyo, on the Morumbidgee river, along a line of hills about 9 miles south south-east to Mirralong, with a width of about 4 miles along the above line.*”

**Warry** was described as,

“*Commencing at Warry Mountain, about 55 miles north from Goorinny Goorinny, on the Morumbidgee River along a line of hills running north-west about 10 miles, with a width of 4 miles.*”

**Bungumbil** was described as,

“*Commencing at Bungumbil Mountain, about 40 miles north of Narrandary, on the Morumbidgee River, to Buzzoo, a hill about 10 miles south south-east from Bungumbil, with a width of about 4 miles between these points.*”

[There were two mountains named Bungumbil – one was known as this by the Murrumbidgee natives, and called such by white Europeans, it being located some twenty miles north of Narandera, the other was called Bungumbil by the Lachlan natives and it was some forty miles north of Narandera<sup>13</sup>].

All three of Hardy’s runs occupied land on both sides of the Merool Creek,<sup>14</sup> and Aria Park was his head station where he constructed his homestead.<sup>15</sup>

The three stations followed the Mirrool Creek, each along a length of some five to ten miles with a width of some four miles. The runs were all “*beyond the settled districts.*”

In the year 1854 Hardy had sheep on the run, but only for some four to five miles distant from Bungumbil Mountain.<sup>16</sup> This area would be what later became known as the North Bolero homestead site.<sup>17</sup>

Edward McArthur Bowman testified that he was in charge of Hardy’s sheep from November 1854 and that he was at Bungumbil at the beginning of April 1855 – with the sheep. He had driven the sheep from Yass to Lupton’s runs on the Murrumbidgee [Berembled & Heifer Stations] and then on to the Merool.<sup>18</sup>

Hardy claimed to have started construction of a dam at this location [North Bolero] in 1850, but there is no mention of this by Surveyor Larmer who traversed the country at the end of 1850 and again in May/June 1851. Larmer’s drawings from the end of 1850 included various hills he had named – these were Bygoo, Cowabee, Yalgogrin, Aria Park, Bun-gan-bil, and Bolero [the last two being of the same range].<sup>19</sup>

By September 1854 huts were erected for the men, along with stockyards – at Bygoo [what Hardy called Bygoo]. These were burnt down in 1855 [by persons unknown].<sup>20</sup>

Hardy took George Foster Wise & John Milbourne Marsh to court in 1855 alleging that they had trespassed on his Bungumbil run. The court ruled in favour of the defendants, finding that what Hardy claimed as part of Bungumbil was actually North Bolero, at the head of the Merool Creek, and that this was *waste land* at the time Hardy’s accusations were made. It was an unusual verdict with the jury, “*expressing a desire to add to their verdict that they considered the plaintiff [Hardy] entitled to the run on account of his priority of occupation.*”

In 1851 Bolero [Bolero] was licensed to Alexander Murphy. This run was immediately to the south of what would become North Bolero and was listed as being some 23,000 acres.<sup>21</sup> Thomas O’Kell, a superintendent for Murphy, stated that he took a flock of sheep onto the disputed land in September 1854 and that it was unoccupied. Marsh described the disputed area as being to the north of his Bolero run. Marsh subsequently tendered for the disputed run – North Bolero - and was granted a license for same in 1855.<sup>22</sup>

Charles Alfred Wilson testified he accompanied Marsh in January 1855 when they drove a flock of sheep to “a waterhole called North Bolero, Mr. Hardy’s, Bungumbil; they were afterwards removed ten miles further up the Merool Creek, to an old station of Mr. Hardy’s, called Bygoo; there were two small sheep yards and a bark gnyah at Bygoo; whilst I was there the sheep yards were destroyed by fire.” Wilson was unable to say how the fire started.<sup>23</sup> Wilson confirmed that Bungumbil was 23 miles from “Narandary,” and that Bygoo was a further ten miles on.

Edgar Beckham, Commissioner for Crown Lands for the Lachlan District stated that he believed that what Hardy claimed as Bungumbil was in fact North Bolero.<sup>24</sup> This assertion was confirmed in a later court case when the Attorney General sought to evict Hardy from what the former declared to be North Bolero, but which Hardy deemed to be Bungumbil. The jury found against Hardy stating that the dam Hardy had constructed was not within the Bungumbil run described by Hardy in 1849 – and as a consequence that the dam he had constructed was, at the time, on Crown Land for which he did not have a license.<sup>25</sup>

Hardy testified that the Bungumbil he claimed adjoined Murphy’s run. Further that he occupied the land between Bungumbil and Bygoo, and that he had men on Bygoo by May/June of 1854 who erected yards and huts thereon.<sup>26</sup>

Bygoo, as we know it, from 1879, was not on the Merool Creek, which contradicts several witnesses who testified that Bygoo was ten miles further up the creek than Bungumbil. This infers that the Bygoo these witnesses were referring to had to be either Warri or Ariaah, and probably the former.

On the evidence of Crown Lands Commissioner, Edgar Beckham, the descriptions of Hardy’s three runs on his license applications (1850-1851) were different to what Hardy claimed in 1854. The evidence was clear that Hardy started to build a dam near the more southerly Bungumbil Mountain in 1850, and that he had sheep within three to four miles of the mountain in 1854. Although the court found that Hardy had built the dam on unclaimed land, and had run sheep on the same land, it is a mystery as to why Hardy would expend such effort on land he had not described in his original 1849 claim, unless, as the evidence suggests, he had incorrectly described the location of Bungumbil in 1849, or alternatively he had changed his mind as to the best land to select since 1849, and in either case he thought that he could subsequently change the description of his runs to suit. Hardy stated that he had not visited his runs between 1849 and 1854, so it is also possible that his representatives had settled on land other than that described by Hardy in his original application in 1849?

Hardy’s statement that his Bungumbil run joined Murphy’s Bolero run supports the notion that the Bungumbil he selected started at the Bungumbil Mountain some twenty miles north of Narandera, but his own description of the run in 1849 placed Bungumbil Mountain at a distance of forty miles from Narandera. It is clear that Hardy’s descriptions in 1849 differ from what he claimed in September 1855 when he met with Beckham, Marsh and Jenkins [a surveyor who accompanied Beckham]<sup>27</sup>. Hardy claimed in 1856 that his runs extended from Mount Bungumbil to a distance of thirty miles up the “Merool Creek” and that this was, according to Hardy, confirmed by Beckham. Beckham had indicated to Hardy that he could not take more than thirty miles, as this was all his license allowed, and the area past this point was a forfeited run.<sup>28</sup>

Evidence shows that the three runs claimed by Hardy in 1855 were what appear as North Bolero, Warri, and Ariaah in McDonald’s 1879 map. It is clear that Hardy is claiming North Bolero as Bungumbil, and that he, and others, refer to either Warri or Ariaah as Bygoo. Whether his 1849 claim was for these same blocks cannot be verified. What he ended up with, in 1855, was Warri, Ariaah and Bungumbil, as they appear in McDonald’s 1879 map.

Hardy passed away in 1858<sup>29</sup> but his widow continued on until 1863 when the three runs – Ariaah, Warri & Bungumbil – were all transferred to Thomas Laidlow.<sup>30</sup> Laidlow, like Hardy, had lived in Yass for many years where he developed considerable commercial interests to the extent that he was described as “*practically the banker of the Southern districts.*”<sup>31</sup> It is plausible that Laidlow had financed Hardy and that the transfers constituted some sort of settlement.<sup>32</sup>

## **Ownership Changes.**

### **Ariaah & Bungumbil.**

Laidlow sold Ariaah & Bungumbil to John Cameron Welman in 1865.<sup>33</sup> John Welman later passed away and in 1875 his heirs sold the two stations to Edwin Lowe of Geelong.<sup>34</sup>

Following the Land Act of 1884, which allowed for the creation of pastoral holdings, Ariaah & Bungumbil were combined into one run [Ariaah]. By 1885 the combined property was owned by the Bank of NSW.<sup>35</sup>

In 1908 Ariaah station was purchased by the Hon. G. H. Greene, M.L.C, of Iandra Station, he being the largest

wheat grower in Australia. The following report appeared in the *Narandera Argus*:

*“Ariah Station is excellent wheat-growing land, timber being grey box, oak and pine, and has been rung and kept in excellent order for the past 40 years. The purchaser’s intention is to clear the whole area, and put same on the share farming system. This property has many advantages, having a railway station just completed on the centre of the holding, Ardlethan Siding, one mile from western boundary, and Merool Siding, one mile from eastern boundary. The property is abundantly watered, and has a 19in. rainfall.”*<sup>36</sup>

The homestead block was subsequently purchased by James Griffin.<sup>37</sup>

### **Warri.**

The third property, Warri, was transferred from Laidlow to Clara Remmington & G. C. Allman in 1867.<sup>38</sup> They then immediately transferred the run to R. P. Johnston & James Ramsay. These latter two still held the license in 1870 when they were granted a ten year extension on their lease,<sup>39</sup> but by 1876 James Ramsay was the sole owner listed when he transferred the run to David Ramsay.<sup>40</sup> In 1878-1879 it was under the name of Ed Lord, but subsequently transferred to Andrew McMillan in February 1882, for the sum of £10,000 – with stock.<sup>41</sup> The run was managed by McMillan’s two sons, John & Alex. They were the ones who purchased the hotel at the Rocky Water Holes from Mrs Hilton in 1888 and incorporated it into the old Warri homestead complex.<sup>42</sup> The Warri Pastoral Holding was formed after 1884<sup>43</sup> and still retained by Andrew McMillan until 1889,<sup>44</sup> when it was sold to Charles Cairns Murray and William Sanderson, trading as John Sanderson & Co. They subsequently appointed George Gow as their manager.<sup>45</sup> Gow stated that he took over in 1894.<sup>46</sup> According to Webster, Sanderson & Murray sold out to Rowston, Boyd and Egan of Ganmain, in 1907, who shortly thereafter sold it to Arthur Robinson.<sup>47</sup> Two years later Robinson sold to Sam & Ben Lancaster, who subdivided the property, retaining the homestead portion for themselves.<sup>48</sup>

A 1910 report stated that Mr Lancaster, of the Goulburn Valley, was in possession of Warri and that he had three farmers from Kyabram share farming that year and was looking to increase this number in the following year.<sup>49</sup> In 1956 the homestead block was held by the O’Brien Bros.<sup>50</sup>

According to Webster<sup>51</sup>, *“Ramsay & Johnston are said to have built the first Warri homestead on the left bank of the Mirrool Creek about three quarters of a mile south-east of where the town of Ardlethan now stands.....The original homestead was built of slab walls with bark roof. This hut was destroyed by fire and in 1859 two more huts were built with slab walls and shingle roof on the present site of the old Warri homestead.”* As has already been stated Warri was still held by the wife of John Hardy in 1859 and there is no primary source evidence that Ramsay & Johnston built either the original homestead or the two huts in 1859. It is plausible that they erected premises at a later date but again there is no known record of such.

## **Some Adjoining Runs:**

### **Bolero.**

Bolero [sic] - (23,040 acres) was originally licensed to Alexander Murphy in 1851.<sup>52</sup> Said to be commonly known as Murphy’s in early times, and much later also known as South Bolero. By 1859 it was leased to Moses Baird, who had not paid his current license fee, but had sixty days to pay, with penalty.<sup>53</sup> In 1860 it was reported that Baird had forfeited the run because he had not paid his annual license fee,<sup>54</sup> but he must have paid soon after as his lease was confirmed in that same year.<sup>55</sup> Baird transferred the run to William Flood in 1864,<sup>56</sup> who later transferred the run to James Joseph Flood, in 1868.<sup>57</sup> The latter’s lease was extended by ten years in 1870,<sup>58</sup> and in the following year (1871) the run was transferred to the Australian Joint Stock Bank.<sup>59</sup>

### **North Bolero.**

This was the run Hardy tried to claim, unsuccessfully, as Bungumbil. It was taken up by John M. Marsh & George F. Wise in 1856. Marsh stated that he applied for the run in 1854<sup>60</sup> [late in 1854]. In 1858 the run was transferred to George F. Wise,<sup>61</sup> who then sold to J. McPillamy in 1859.<sup>62</sup> This must not have worked out as McPillamy transferred the run back to G. F. Wise in the same year.<sup>63</sup> It is also possible that McPillamy held a mortgage on the run, which could explain his listing as the holder of the run.

A year later (1860) Wise sold the property to Messrs. J. J. Flood & Charles Clark,<sup>64</sup> for the sum of £1,000.<sup>65</sup> Flood was Clark’s brother in law.<sup>66</sup> In 1864 Charles Clark was listed as the sole owner.<sup>67</sup>

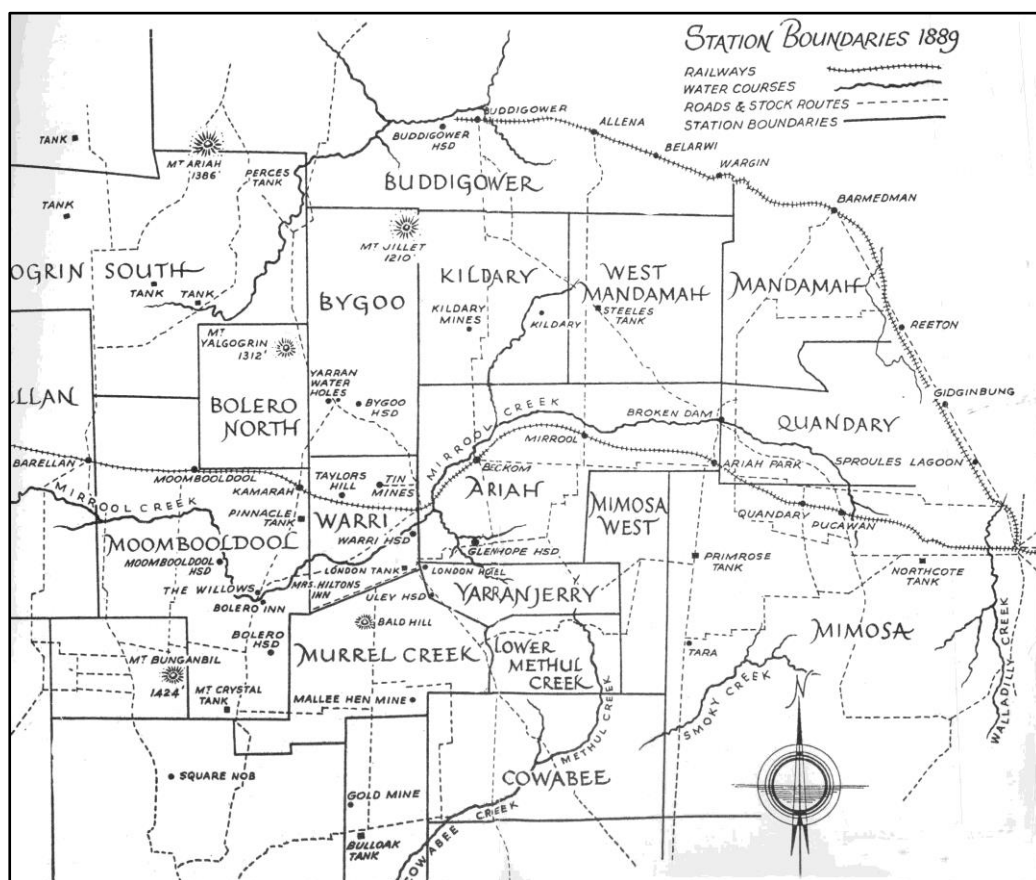
Charles Clark & William Flood [of South Bolero], were partners, as general storekeepers of Narandera, who were declared insolvent in 1870.<sup>68</sup>

The Australian Joint Stock Bank was listed as the owner in 1872<sup>69</sup>, but in that same year North & South Bolero were both sold by J. J. Flood to Messrs Peppin & Sons.<sup>70</sup> Another quick transfer occurred in 1873 when the latter sold both properties to John Holloway of Toyeo.<sup>71</sup> Bolero and North Bolero would then become part of the large Moombooldool Pastoral Holding.<sup>72</sup>

## Bygoo.

Bygoo was settled some years after the other nearby runs – no doubt due to its lack of a reasonable water supply. The earliest record found is for a lease to William O'Brien in 1864.<sup>73</sup>

O'Brien sold the property to Messrs Hollaways in 1874,<sup>74</sup> who then sold to John Stewart of Windermere a year later in 1875.<sup>75</sup>



**Above:** An 1889 map of station boundaries – taken from Webster's *Bygoo and Beyond*.

The map shows that South & North Bolero have been incorporated into Moombooldool. The North Bolero shown in this map was previously identified as North Bolero Block A. Hardy's Bungumbil has been incorporated into Ariaiah.

Note:

1. Please note that the dates quoted from the NSW Government Gazettes for various transfers and leases of properties are the dates on which the transactions were gazetted. The actual transfers, tender acceptances, leases, etc., could have occurred some months, or even some years, earlier.

## Some Additional Information on the Early Settlers:

### John Richard Hardy:

The Australian Dictionary of Biography gives the following account of Hardy:

*“John Richard Hardy (1807-1858), gold commissioner and pastoralist, was born on 18 May 1807, the third son of Robert Hardy, vicar of Walberton, Sussex, England, and his wife Sophia-Adair, née Hale. He was educated at Charterhouse and at Trinity Hall and Peterhouse, Cambridge (B.A., 1831). A cricketer, he played for Cambridge in 1829. In 1832 he migrated to Sydney where he edited the Australian for two years and reputedly introduced round-arm bowling into Australian cricket. On 18 May 1837 he married Clara, fourth daughter of John Stephen and sister of Alfred Stephen.*

*In 1837-43 Hardy was an able police magistrate at Yass where he acquired property and reduced the bushranging threat. In bitter quarrels with local settlers he was supported by Cornelius O'Brien but in 1843 after accusations of irregular magisterial procedures Hardy was suspended.*

*In 1849-51 he was police magistrate at Parramatta. On 15 June 1850 his estate was sequestered and the order*

was finally discharged in 1888. Soon after the discovery of gold was announced in 1851, Hardy was appointed chief gold commissioner of crown lands for the New South Wales goldfields at a salary of £600. His instructions were to implement the government's newly-devised goldfields regulations, preserve the peace and 'put down outrage'. Much of his time was spent in riding over the goldfields issuing licences, settling disputes, allotting claims and buying and dispatching gold. Colonel Godfrey Mundy and Captain John Erskine praised his administrative qualities and testified to his fairness, rectitude, adaptability and humanity. In September 1852 in evidence to a Legislative Council select committee inquiring into goldfield management, Hardy opposed any alteration of the charge for licence fees and advocated that gold found on private land be accessible to licensed applicants. He hotly defended himself against imputations of improper preference to his brother William. Erroneous information implied that Hardy had not satisfactorily accounted for some moneys collected, and he considered himself the victim of 'an atrocious slander'. In December 1852 the committee reported that Hardy's professed views and opinions were 'of a character wholly incompatible' with his office, and recommended the abolition of his commissionership with compensation and the offer of a suitable vacancy in the public service. However, Hardy retired to his property, Hardwicke, at Yass. In 1855 he published a pamphlet, *Squatters and Gold-Diggers, Their Claims and Rights*. As a founder of the Yass Mechanics' Institute in 1857, he gave its opening address. He died without issue on 21 April 1858 and was buried according to Anglican rites in the garden at Hardwicke. He left a large estate to his wife and brother Charles, who were charged to make adequate provision for his brother William."<sup>76</sup>

The following details were also determined from alternative sources:

1837 - John Richard Hardy appointed as Magistrate of the Territory and Police Magistrate for Yass.<sup>77</sup>

1841 – John Richard Hardy, Police Magistrate, appointed to be Commissioner of the Court of Requests – at Yass.<sup>78</sup>

1841 – Listed as trustee for Church of England Land grant at Yass – for school. Hamilton Hume also a trustee.<sup>79</sup>

1842 – Appointed as Commissioner for taking Affidavits & Bail – at Yass.<sup>80</sup>

1843 – Appointed Returning Officer for electoral districts of Murray, King, and Georgiana.<sup>81</sup>

1844 – John Richard Hardy calls a meeting of creditors, “with a view to obtaining a letter of license under the provisions of the Act of Council 7 Victoria Regina, entitled An Act to prevent the property of Debtors under process of Law.”<sup>82</sup>

1844 – John Richard Hardy transfers all of his estate and effects to James Middleton, trustee, for the benefit of his creditors.<sup>83</sup>

1846 – Hardy listed as Commissioner for Taking Affidavits, but designated as Esquire, not Police Magistrate.<sup>84</sup>

1847 – Hardy & Hamilton Hume appointed as Councilors to the Yass District Council.<sup>85</sup>

1849 - John Richard Hardy appointed as Magistrate of the Territory.<sup>86</sup>

1849 – Hardy appointed as Police Magistrate, and Visiting Justice of the Gaol at Parramatta.<sup>87</sup>

1850 – Hardy, of Parramatta, has conveyed his assets to John Jobbins, of Nanamah near Yass, for the benefit of his creditors.<sup>88</sup> [Jobbins owned a 635 acre property, near Yass, in partnership with Hardy]

1850 – Estate of Hardy sequestrated by order of Mr Justice Therry of the Supreme Court – sequestration sought by David Jones, merchants, of Sydney.<sup>89</sup>

1851 (May) – Hardy appointed to be a Commissioner of Crown Lands with authority “to issue licenses to dig and search for gold”.<sup>90</sup> [David Forbes was appointed to position of Police Magistrate etc at Parramatta at same time].

1851 (June) – Hardy gives notice to miners in his role as Commissioner of Crown Lands, for the gold district of Bathurst.<sup>91</sup>

1851 (November) – Notice in government gazette lists Commissioner & Assistant Commissioners of Crown Lands for the various gold districts. Hardy is the only Commissioner and he is stationed in Sydney. There are eight Assistant Commissioners.<sup>92</sup> Hardy claimed he was Gold Commissioner from May 1852 to December 1853.<sup>93</sup>

1856 (April) – Hardy stood for parliament in seat of Lachlan & Lower Darling against Mr James Garland and Mr William MacLeay. A show of hands on nomination day showed these latter two to be well clear of the other nominees, but Hardy demanded a poll<sup>94</sup>, which eventuated on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 1856 and confirmed the result from the show of hands. Hardy finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, well behind Garland & MacLeay.<sup>95</sup>

1858 – Clara Hardy & George Cimitiere seek probate as executors of estate of John Richard Hardy.<sup>96</sup> John Richard Hardy died in 1858.<sup>97</sup>

### **George Foster Wise:**

The Australian Dictionary of Biography gives the following account of Wise:

*“George Foster Wise (1814-1897), immigration agent, was baptized on 18 August 1814 at Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight, England, eldest son of Edward Wise, brewer, and his wife Amelia, née Wilson. He was well educated, but failing family fortunes probably caused him to migrate and he reached Sydney in the Alfred on 15 January*

1839. On the voyage he became friendly with Sir Francis and Lady Forbes and their niece Frances Lucy Mary Ann Marsh, whom he married at Scone on 21 June 1842; they had no children. Wise was secretary of the General Steam Navigation Co. until 1842 and then engaged in land dealing in Camden, Kiama and Moreton Bay where he set up as a land agent; he returned to Sydney in 1844 and became a magistrate in 1846. With his brother-in-law J. Milbourne Marsh, he invested briefly and unprofitably in pastoral runs in the Lachlan District of New South Wales - Demondrille followed by Moombooldool, North Bolero and Binga. He apparently possessed in full measure 'the family propensity for not making money'. One of the 'original founders and old members' of the Australian Club, Wise was appointed agent for immigration and a member of the Immigration Board on 1 November 1862. He implemented government policy of sponsored, assisted immigration, supervised standards and conditions in migrant vessels, received newly arrived migrants, and reported to parliament. His long tenure of office met little serious criticism except in times of unemployment; his annual reports showed little innovation or reforming tendencies in his work. In 1886 he had to dissuade Lady Carrington, wife of the governor, from witnessing the hiring of female migrants at the Immigration Depot which had become rather unseemly and chaotic. He was acting sheriff and acting inspector of prisons in 1869-70 and compiler of census in 1870-73. Sincere and conscientious, he was not a notable administrator but he exerted himself to find work for migrants. A devout Anglican, Wise was a member of Sydney Diocesan synods in 1870-91. He shared his brother Edward's deep interest in social humanitarian work, and was a committee-man and office-bearer of the Home Visiting and Relief Society (1862-87), the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children (1865-91), the New South Wales Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind (1866-91) and a director of the Sydney Infirmary and Dispensary (1871-81). His wife Fanny (d.1889) earned great respect and affection for her activity in the Sydney Foundling Hospital, the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children and the Sydney Female Refuge Society, as well as her work as a lady visitor in the homes of destitute and handicapped children. In the 1870s Wise was a director of the Illawarra Steam Navigation Co. but resigned after a question in parliament in 1879. Wise retired on a pension of £272 14s. on 31 December 1891. He returned to the Isle of Wight, where he died of syncope on 14 August 1897 at Bembridge House, George Street, Ryde.”<sup>98</sup>

### **John Augustus Milbourne Marsh** [Also known as James (?) or Milbourne]

From the Biographies of Interesting People we have the following information:

“Born at sea down near Herd Island, probably around 1820 and died 15 March 1891. The son of John Milbourne Marsh (1787-1826) and Frances Elizabeth Grant. He was the brother of Francis Lucy Wise (nee Marsh, 1819?-1889) who married George Foster Wise. John Augustus married Grace Elizabeth Pinnock, daughter of Philip Pinnock of Jamaica. at St Marylebone in January 1848. They had a son, George Augustus Milbourne Marsh (1848-1932) who married Amy Gertrude North (1875-1915).



John Augustus and his sister Francis Marsh were orphaned at an early age and went to live with their maternal Aunt, Lady Meek in England. John Marsh, having been raised and educated by Lady Meek, went to Australia in 1840, and bought a property on the Darling Downs, near Warwick, which he named Clifton. It is now the "Land of the Leslies" and he then took up large holdings at Demondril in New South Wales. In 1847 he returned to England and married his first cousin Grace Pinnock. On their way back to Australia in 1848, their only child was born on board the ship "Walmar Castle" just north of Herd Island. This was George Augustus Milbourne Marsh (known as Millie). John Marsh and his wife settled in Demondril. His wife was an accomplished artist. Later they left the land and he became a Magistrate at Wellington, Bathurst and Sydney. Later on James Milbourne Marsh is noted as Police Magistrate for Bathurst, New South Wales, Australia, 1869-74, after which he took a post in Sydney.”<sup>99</sup>

**Above:** John Augustus Milbourne Marsh. Courtesy Biographies of Interesting People.

# Warri Homestead.

GPS co-ordinates [H55 East: 0490305 / North: 6197047]

Gow & Gow state that first Warri homestead was built in 1851 and that it burnt down before 1859. Hardy held the lease for Bungumbil, Warri and Ariaah at the time with Ariaah eventually becoming his head station. Hardy testified that it was 1854 before he even had men and stock on his runs and it is almost certain that the dates given by Gow & Gow for this construction are incorrect. Although it may be true, as asserted by some, that neither Hardy nor his wife ever lived at Ariaah, no primary source reference that places Ramsay & Johnstone at Warri in the 1850's has come to light.

Whatever the date for the first house, it is likely that any structures on Warri were very primitive and hardly deserving of the title "*homestead*". The same source states that Ramsay & Johnstone built a second homestead at Warri in 1859 (slab walls & a shingled roof) but there is no known original source to confirm this. Given that the property was still in the name of Mrs. Hardy, there is some doubt that Ramsay & Johnstone erected the newer buildings, which were described elsewhere as, "*two huts*", at the time claimed. They may well have erected such edifices in the 1860's in which period they took possession of the run.

Gow & Gow state that in 1888 or 1889 Mrs. Hilton's old Rocky Waterholes hotel building was relocated, being placed alongside "*Ramsay's 1859 homestead*." They also state that the old hotel building was destroyed by fire in 1923 but that the 1859 structure survived.<sup>100</sup>

When George Gow arrived in March 1894 he described the homestead as follows:

*"It consisted of two small buildings and one somewhat larger building, all built with slab walls, round rafters and shingle roofs. The two smaller huts were put up by Ramsay and Johnstone in 1859, while the larger one had originally been a bush hotel at the Rocky Waterhole near the Mumbledool boundary."*<sup>101</sup>

As stated elsewhere the claim that it was Ramsay and Johnstone who constructed the huts in 1859 is questionable. Gow also claimed that Mrs Hilton sold the old hotel building to Alexander McMillan and that the latter moved the building in 1888, which is also questionable. It is more likely that the building was moved at an earlier date – even as early as 1879?



**Left:** The old Warri homestead with the Mirrool Creek in the background (2014).

In 2014 there were still several old buildings on the Warri homestead site.

The main building consists of two distinct parts – one at the front and the other forming the back of the house. The front section is constructed of slabs and would certainly be older than the back portion. It is possible that the front section (slab) is part of the old 1859 structures.

There is an outbuilding behind the old homestead which may have been a dairy or other.

The main structures, as described above, can be seen in the photo above.



**Left:** Fireplace inside the old Warri homestead building – in 2014.



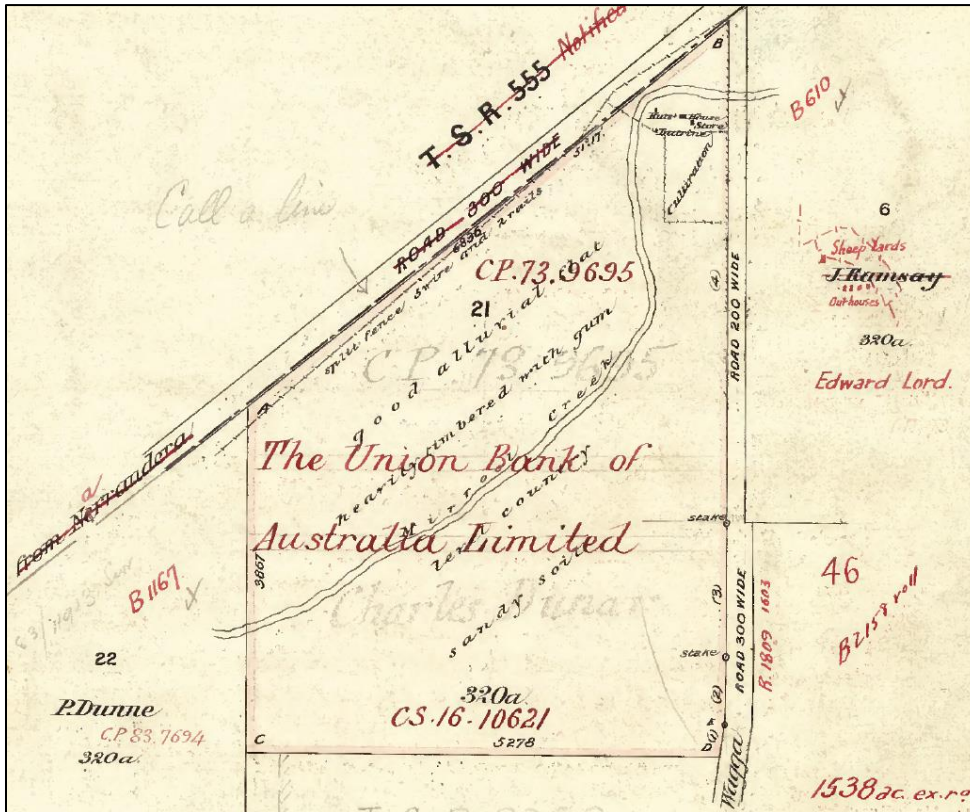
**Left:** Front entry showing slabs, overhead beam and support post – in 2014.



**Left:** An old building to the rear of the main building in 2014.



**1883 Survey of Warri homestead block.**



**Above:** Extract of a November 1883 survey of portion 21, parish of Warri, showing the Warri homestead buildings in the top right hand corner of this portion. Sheep yards and outhouses can also be seen across the road in portion 6. The map shows the roads from Narandera and Wagga Wagga merging above the homestead, with the road from Wagga Wagga crossing the creek in front, and to the north, of the house and store.  
**Courtesy:** NSW Land & Property Information [Crown Plan B1168/1806].



**Left:** A closer zoom of the homestead buildings showing "Huts", "House", "Store", and "Latrine", along with a "Cultivation" paddock

The surveyor, B. Clayton Garland, valued the structures as follows:

- House - £120
- Store - £80
- Huts - £25
- Garden - £10
- Clearing - £50
- Fencing - £80
- Latrine - £5

**1893 parish map showing location of portion 21.**



**Above:** 1893 parish map showing the location of portion 21 claimed, as a conditional purchase, by Charles Dunar (CP73.9695). The Warri homestead buildings were erected on this portion, in the top right hand corner of the block. **Courtesy:** NSW Lands & Property Information.



**Above:** The front building of the old Warri homestead complex in 2014, it being the oldest section of the two part edifice.

# The Early Hotels.

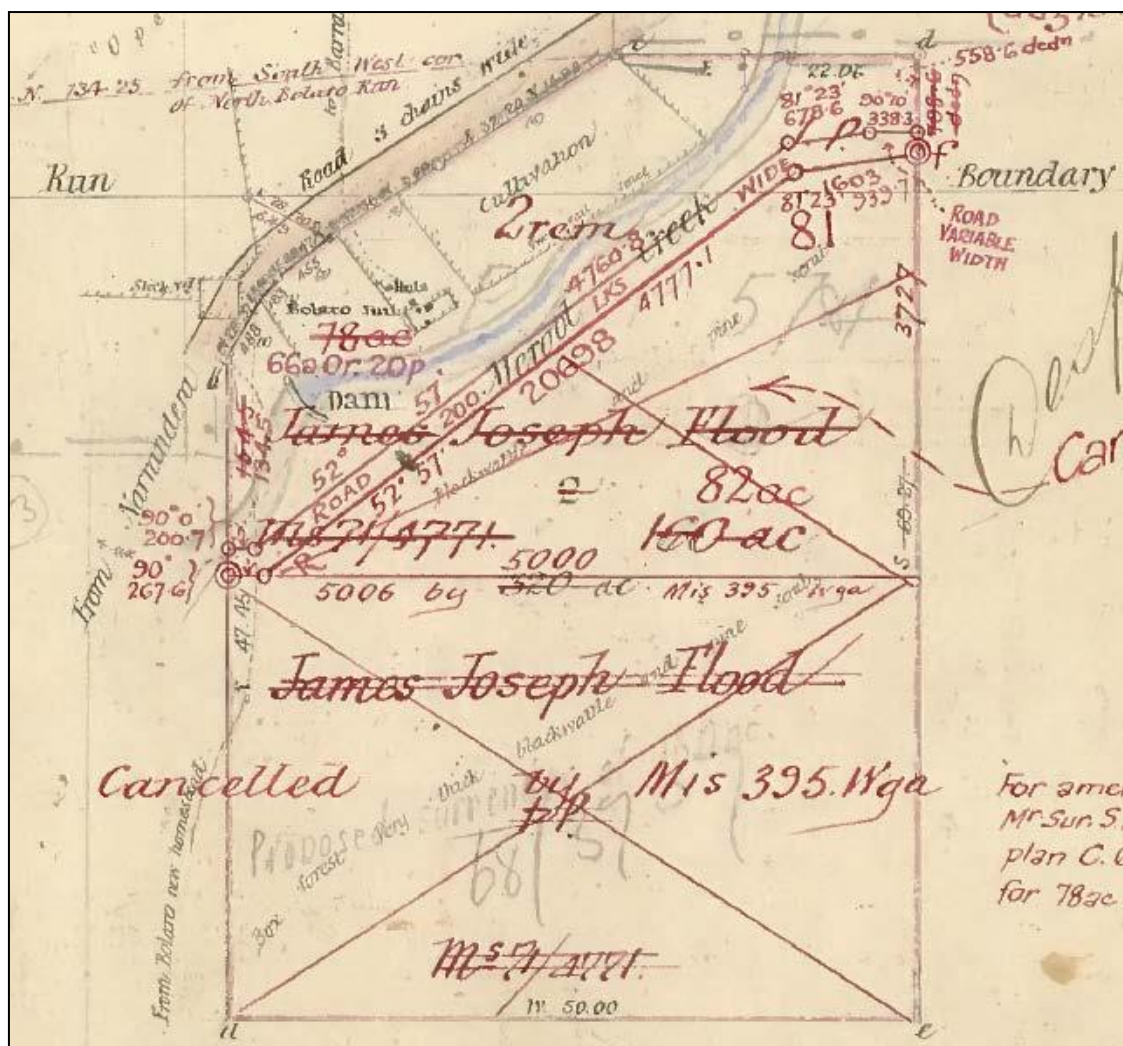
## Bolero Inn.

GPS co-ordinates [H55 East: 0474439 / North: 6191285]

The first licensed hotel on the Mirrool to the west of Quandary was the Bolero Inn, in 1868.

It should be noted that another license was applied for, in the latter part of 1868, by one Robert Sanderson, for a house on the Merool Creek, situated on *Bungumbel* station. When the licensing bench met in December of that year, at Wagga Wagga, the Sanderson's legal representative explained that he had experienced problems "communicating" with his client and sought a postponement of the application. The bench ruled that the matter had already been before them on two or three occasions and they declined any further extensions.<sup>102</sup> Sanderson was subsequently issued a license for the Merool hotel in September 1869.<sup>103</sup> This hotel was to the north of where the town of Aria Park now stands and is not considered in this book.

Alfred and Jane Dale [nee Patterson<sup>104</sup>] had moved to Narandera, around 1864, and had taken over the license of the Riverina Hotel. Alfred and Jane married in 1850 at Gippsland, Victoria, and Alfred managed Burrabogie before they took over the hotel. Alfred passed away in 1868 and Jane became the licensee. In that same year she transferred her publican's license from the Riverine Hotel, Narandera, to the Bolero Inn, on the North Bolero run.<sup>105</sup> This was at the location known as the Willows. The new inn had been the original homestead on North Bolero, but when the latter was merged with Bolero (South), James Joseph Flood, who then held the license for the merged run, chose to lease the building to Mrs. Dale.



**Above:** Extract from May 1869 survey of portion 2, parish of Bolero, by surveyor George Commins. The survey was in response to application to purchase by James Joseph Flood.

This map shows the hotel situated between the main road from Narandera and the Mirrool Creek.

**Courtesy:** NSW Lands & Property Information. [Crown Plan C60.1804]



**Above:** Closer zoom extract from May 1869 survey showing the Bolero Inn, huts, cultivation paddock, two rail fence, and dam. **Courtesy:** NSW Lands & Property Information. [Crown Plan C60.1804]

Jane remarried in 1872, to Charles Hilton<sup>106</sup>, and the license was transferred to Joseph Hilton in that same year.<sup>107</sup> This Joseph was possibly the father of Charles. The license was not renewed in 1873.

This hotel was located in the vicinity of what we now know as Kamarah, but which was then part of the Bolero station. Old newspaper reports refer to the hotel as the Willows hotel<sup>108</sup>, but it was never officially licensed as such. John Dale, the son of Jane & Alfred, stated that he planted willow cuttings from Midgeon Station at the hotel, which explains the name.<sup>109</sup>



The term the Willows extended to that general area – the public school for instance was referred to as being situated at The Willows, Kamarah.<sup>110</sup> The hotel was situated adjacent to the Merool Creek.<sup>111</sup>

When John Holloway purchased the station [1873] he objected to the presence of the hotel eventually causing it to close. Webster states that John Holloway purchased the building in the early eighties in order that it could be closed,<sup>112</sup> but given that the hotel was not licensed after 1872 it is more likely that if Holloway did purchase the building then he did so in either 1872 or 1873.

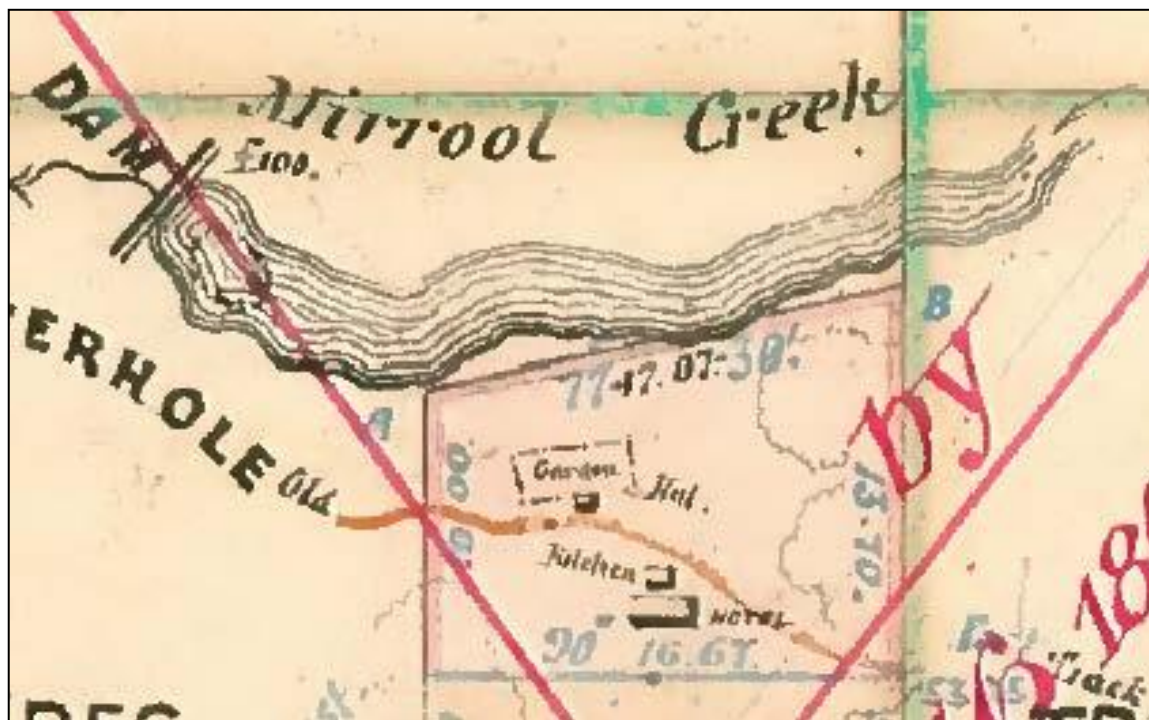
**Above:** Plaque marking the location of the old Bolero Inn. Photo taken in 2014.

## Warrie or Waree Hotel:

GPS co-ordinates [H55 East: 0483364 / North: 6192931]

There are no records of Jane or Charles Hilton holding a publican's license in either 1873 or 1874, but on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1875 Charles Hilton was granted a license for the Warrie Hotel<sup>113</sup> at the Rocky Waterholes (formed by a dam over the Mirrool Creek constructed by Ramsay & Johnston around 1869).<sup>114</sup>

Hilton had selected a site some eight miles distant from the Bolero Inn (to the east) to re-erect the new hotel, which was constructed in 1875.<sup>115</sup> The site was on the Warri run at a location known as the Rocky Waterholes. Charles Hilton was the licensee of the Waree, or Warrie hotel from 1875 till 1876.<sup>116</sup>

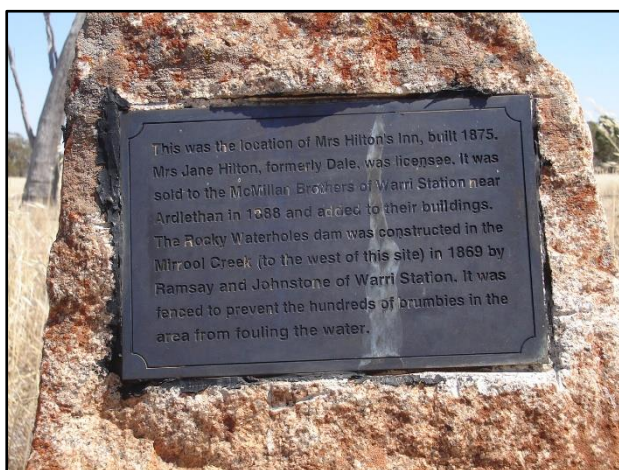


**Above:** Zoomed extract from 1875 plan of portion 12, parish of Warri, showing location of the Warrie Hotel buildings and other improvements. **Courtesy:** NSW Lands & Property Information. [Crown Plan B355.1806]

The hotel was not licensed after 1876 and it is assumed that it ceased to trade sometime before the license renewal fell due in 1877, presumably due to a lack of trade, and probably attributable to competition from the London Hotel.

Hilton's business interests extended beyond the hotel and in 1875 he was successful in obtaining the contract for the conveyance of mail to "Narandara and Rankin's Springs, via Medium, Mumbledool, Barellan, North Gogeldrie, Binya, Ballandra, and Conapaira, once a week, £120."<sup>117</sup>

According to Webster, the hotel building was purchased by Alexander McMillan in 1888 and shifted to Warri to become part of the Warri station homestead,<sup>118</sup> but



by 1881 Charles had relocated to Narandara with his wife and son, Charles Jnr, and was the licensee of the Drover's Arms hotel at that place. This hotel was situated on the Hay road, about 1½ miles from Narandara and was erected by the Hiltons in 1881.<sup>119</sup> Jane also operated a private hospital at Narandara.<sup>120</sup> I suspect that the Warrie hotel building may have been sold to McMillan much earlier than 1888, perhaps as early as 1879 when McMillan first took over the Warri run. Charles (Snr) lived in Narandara until his death in 1922.<sup>121</sup> His wife Jane passed away in 1927 at the age of 94 years and 10 months.

**Above:** Close up of the plaque marking the location of the old hotel at the Rocky Waterholes



**Left:** Plaque marking the location of the old Warrie Hotel. Photo taken in 2014.

### **Jane Hilton.**

Jane Hilton (nee Patterson) was a native of Ayr, Ayrshire, Scotland who came to Australia aboard the *Osprey*, landing at Melbourne, along with her parents, in 1847. She married Alfred Dale, the manager of Clydebank station, in 1850. They subsequently moved to Burrabogie in the Hay district, in 1861, where Alfred was the manager. They stayed for two years before moving to Gogeldrie to start a dairy.

Disaster struck in 1866 when pleuro decimated the stock, causing the Dales to cease operations.

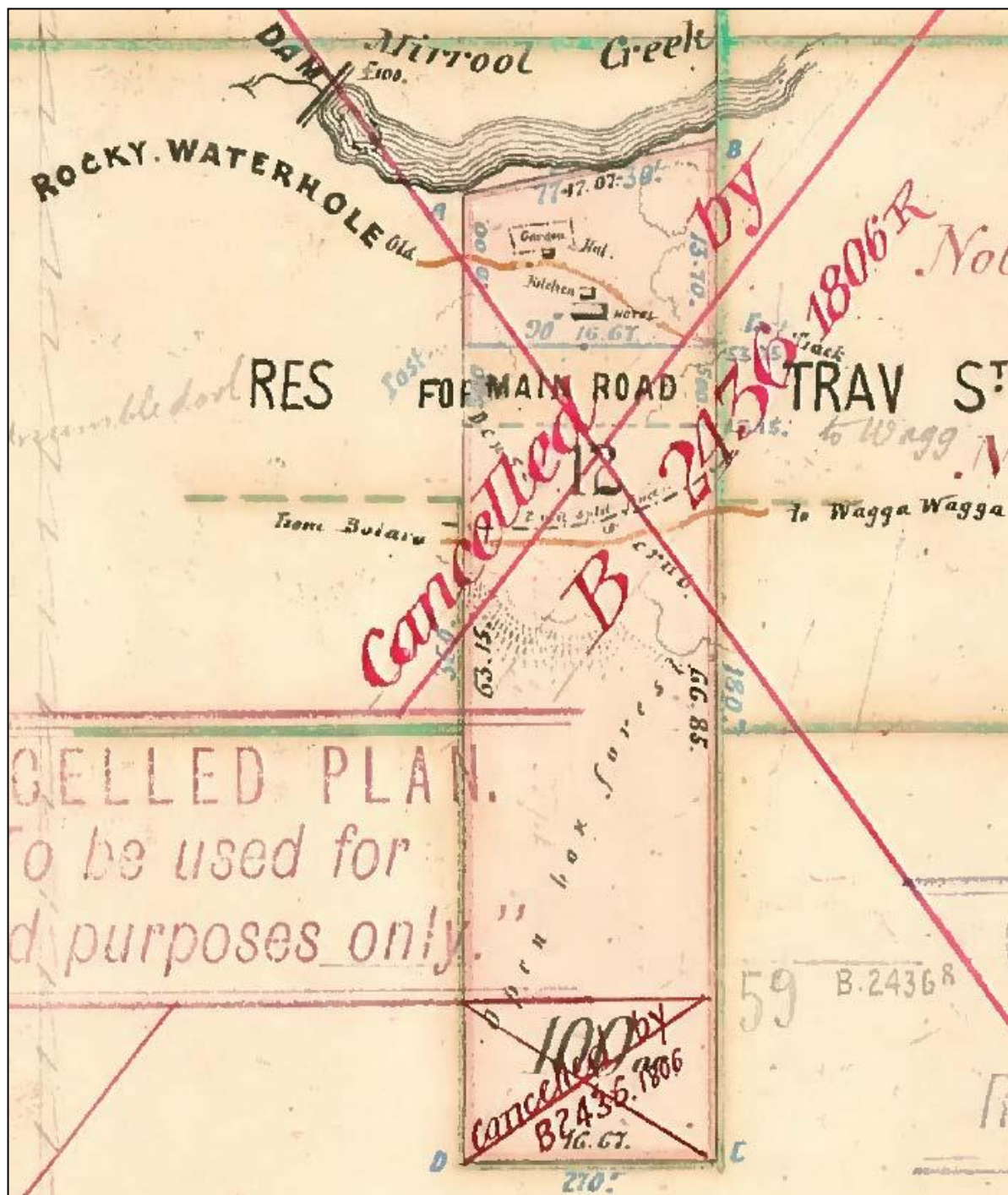
They moved to Narandera in 1867 and took over the Riverina hotel in Larmer street. Alfred died of heart disease in 1868 and Jane took over the license of the Riverina hotel and shortly afterwards transferred the license to the Bolero Inn.<sup>122</sup>



In 1884 Jane & Charles moved to Audley street in Narandera. In 1887 they built a cottage in Twynam street, which they named *Cedar*, where Jane operated a nursing home, and where she lived for the next 36 years. She retired from nursing after the death of Charles in 1922.<sup>123</sup>

**Left:** Picture of Jane Patterson. **Courtesy:** Robb Family Tree (Ancestry.com).

Warrie Hotel location, portion 12, parish of Warri.



**Above:** Extract from plan of portion 12, parish of Warri, as applied for by Charles Hilton. The site was within Reserve # 705. The plan shows the locations of the hotel, the kitchen, a hut, a garden, and the dam across the creek. The survey was carried out in October 1875. **Courtesy:** NSW Lands & Property Information. [Crown Plan B355.1806]

The various improvements were rated as follows:

Hotel - £200 / Kitchen - £30 / Hut etc. - £20 / Fence - £5 / Total - £255

At £200 the hotel must have been a reasonably substantial building. Hilton may have used the proceeds from the sale of the Bolero Inn building to Holloway to fund the construction of the Warrie Inn.

**Map showing location of Bolero Inn, Warrie Hotel, original London Hotel, and other structures. Courtesy: Google Earth (22<sup>nd</sup> February 2014).**





## The London Hotel (Original).

GPS co-ordinates [H55 East: 0489632 / North: 6192778]

The third of the early hotels was the London Hotel some three miles south of modern Ardlethan. It would survive until 1910 when the license was transferred to a new London Hotel in the village of Ardlethan.

William Walter Davis was granted a license for the “*London Hotel, Merool Creek*” on the 10th November 1875.<sup>124</sup> It was described as being at Warri, on the road from Wagga Wagga to Merool.<sup>125</sup>

Davis had earlier applied for a conditional purchase of portion 2, parish of Warri, and a survey was subsequently carried out on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 1875.

### Portion 2, parish Warri – Location of the original London Hotel.



Above: Extract from the October 1875 survey of portion 2, parish of Warri.

Courtesy: NSW Lands & Property Information

As can be seen the plan does not show a hotel building and it is assumed that the hotel was built at a later date. The store may have served as the hotel to start with and given that the store was not listed in some later descriptions, it may have been incorporated into the hotel building. The southern boundary for Warri can be seen to run through the selection, and in addition to a store, barn, kitchen, hut, and yards, the tank can be seen to the north of these structures, close to the boundary with the proposed road, or portion 1.

The improvements were valued, by the surveyor, as follows: Store £30 / Barn - £30 / Tank - £15 / Hut - £13 / Fencing £7 / Yards £3 / Kitchen £2 / Total £100

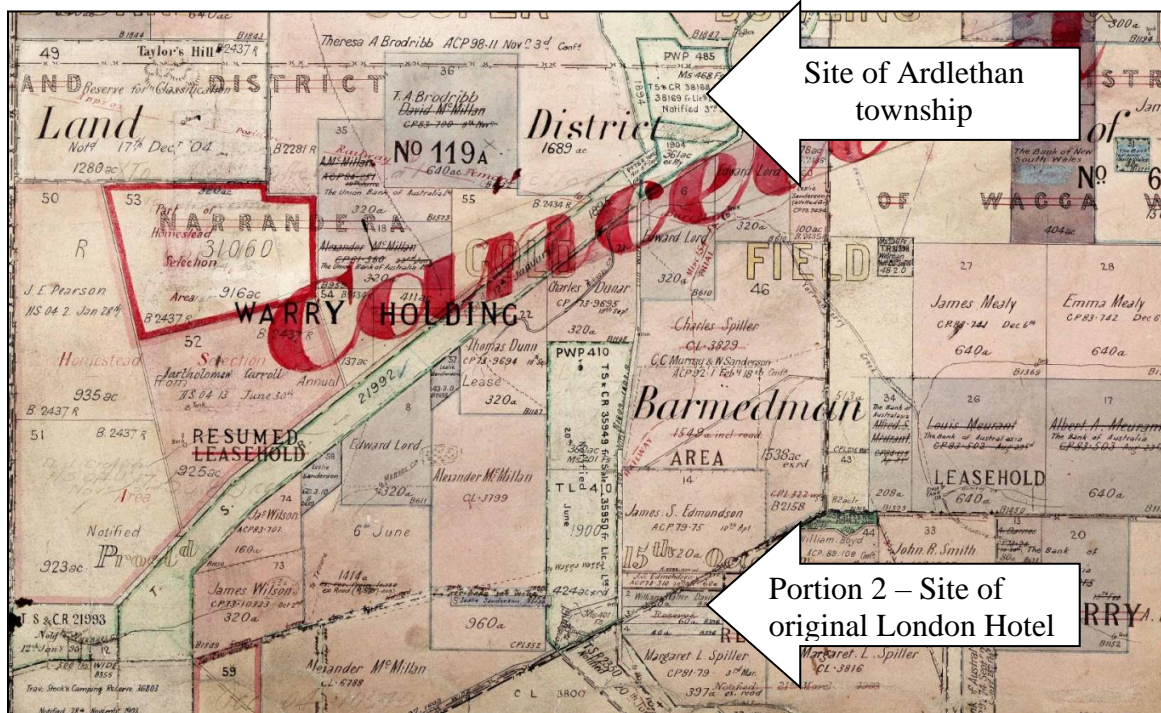
It can be assumed that the kitchen was a very elementary structure. Presumably the store building, valued at £30, would have compared poorly with Hilton's £200 Warrie Hotel.

George Gow described the building as it was when he first arrived in March 1849, stating that it was, “*a bush hotel of the old type....with low slab walls and shingle roof, the few windows being mostly shutters instead of glass.*”<sup>126</sup>

When Davis applied to renew his license in 1876 the police objected initially, but subsequently withdrew their objection, allowing the bench to approve his renewal.<sup>127</sup> Davis may not have held the police in high regard at that point in time, but his wife certainly sought their assistance in 1877 when the Police Gazette listed the following note:

“*Information is requested respecting a boy named William Davis, who left his home “London Hotel,” Warri, Merool Creek, about six weeks ago, and was last seen in company with a man named Smith, on route to Redbank. Description: About 4 feet 2 inches high, slight build, fair complexion, slightly freckled; dressed in blue tweed suit, black hat, and elastic-side boots. Information to the Inspector General of Police, or Mrs Davis at above address.*”<sup>128</sup>

## Location of portion 2, parish of Warri.



**Above:** Extract from 1893 map showing the location of portion 2, parish of Warri, as applied for by William Walter Davis. (CP75.22). The original London Hotel was located on this site.

**Courtesy:** NSW Lands & Property Information.

Davis held the license of the hotel up until 1879 when it was transferred to Charles Spiller. Davis, like many of his time, appears to have been an interesting character. There were several incidents that support this claim, although there is an assumption that they all refer to the same person. In 1859 a William Walter Davis placed a paid notice in the Wagga Wagga Express voicing his concern that certain persons had labelled a horse he had lined up for a sale as “*unsound, in fact fairly broken down.*” The item was headed “*mind Your Own Business.*” A copy of the article is detailed hereunder:

“*MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.*”

*SOME one, it is said, - and the fellow must have had less wit than money- offered reward or an annual income to the person who would mind his own business. Tradition does not say that the fool ever found a pensioner. There was much more sense in that regal epicure of antiquity who proffered a reward for the invention of a new pleasure. It must not, however, be supposed from this preamble that I am about to commit the egregious error of the individual first alluded to. I am not in a position, and if I were, I trust, I have too much good sense, to repeat such an absurdity: but having recently suffered from this interference of some busybodies in Wagga Wagga, I cannot refrain from thus publicly expressing, my detestation of this middling disposition, which not only affects the happiness, but what is of infinitely more importance, the pecuniary interests of others. Bargaining is strictly a private matter with which no third party has a right to interfere, and he who does so deserves not only snubbing for his pains, but kicking for his impertinence. I proceed now to detail the circumstances that have prompted me to this step - premising, that my principal object in doing so, is not to mend my own case, for that I fear is beyond remedy, - but to denounce a habit so prejudicial to the interests of those gentlemen who, like myself, deal in horses, and who form so large and respectable a portion of this community.*

*Some time ago I purchased a fine looking prad, at a public sale in this town; and shortly afterwards offered the animal at a fairly remunerative, price to a gentleman better acquainted perhaps with the anatomical detail of the horse, than his likelihood for service. The gentleman admired the animal and would beyond doubt have purchased him at the figure named; but mark the issue; when I next saw him on the subject, he quietly said that he had been given to understand from enquiries of one or two of his friends that the horse was unsound, in fact fairly broken down ! Now as anyone will perceive I have been doubly injured by this abominable disposition that some people have of meddling in matters with which they have no concern. I have not only lost a present market for my horse, but the chances are, from this false character given of him, that I shall in all probability be compelled to dispose of him at par, or perhaps a dead loss. I appeal to the public if such conduct is not in the highest degree, not only reprehensible, but absolutely worthy of punishment.*

*WILLIAM WALTER DAVIS, Wagga Wagga, August 5.*<sup>129</sup>

Davis apparently worked for Kennedy, who was a squatter on the Billabong.<sup>130</sup> Davis traded in horses and cattle, also acting as an agent to collect stray cattle for various squatters.<sup>131</sup>

On the 13<sup>th</sup> August a William Walter Davis was before the local Wagga Wagga Police Magistrate to face a charge that he did “*become unlawfully possessed of certain monies,*” the property of one Edward Kennedy – to wit, four £5 notes and two £1 notes. The evidence was inconclusive and Davis was discharged.<sup>132</sup>

A week later, on the 20<sup>th</sup> August, Davis appeared in court again to face the same charge as on the previous Wednesday. This case was remanded for a week in order that further evidence might be secured. Davis was then subjected to a second string of charges relating to “*cattle stealing*” but these too were remanded.<sup>133</sup>

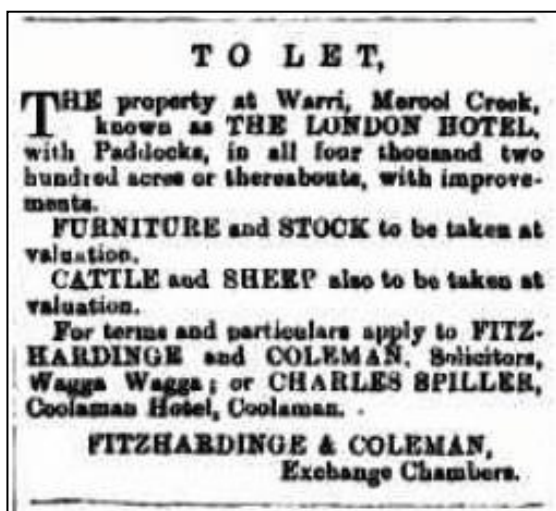
A further week later, on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>, Davis was acquitted on the charge of stealing from Kennedy “*for want of sufficient evidence.*” The cattle stealing charges were remanded for a further week,<sup>134</sup> but it was still unresolved at that time being remanded for yet another week.<sup>135</sup> The case was finally dismissed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September.<sup>136</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> September Davis appeared yet again on a new charge of “*wilfully and maliciously breaking a valuable mahogany telescope dining table*”, the property of James Blyth Caldwell of the Squatters’ Hotel. The judge suggested the matter be settled out of court, but the two parties could not agree, and so they returned to court where the case was dismissed.<sup>137</sup>

22<sup>nd</sup> January 1878 – Davis was charged by his wife, Mary Ann, with assault and desertion. As neither party appeared the cases were struck out.<sup>138</sup>

Charles Spiller, who followed Davis as licensee, had previously held the license of the Kindra Hotel (on the road from Wagga Wagga to Cowabee) from 1876-1877.<sup>139</sup>

In February 1879 Spiller advertised races at the hotel, in a local Wagga Wagga paper.<sup>140</sup> Races were probably held at the hotel during Davis’s time but there are no known sources to confirm this belief.



In October 1881 it was reported that Charles Spiller had shot Herbert Archie at Warri on the 6<sup>th</sup> of that month. A doctor was able to remove the bullet from Archie’s bicep.<sup>141</sup>

By 1883 Spiller had resolved to relocate to Coolamon. He employed the Wagga Wagga based architect, George Sheppard, who sought, “*tenders for the erection of a weatherboard public house at Coolamon.*” At the same time he gave notice of his intention to apply for a license for same at the next meeting of the licensing bench. Spiller subsequently opened the Coolamon Hotel in 1883. Spiller placed the London Hotel, along with 4,200 acres of land and stock up for sale, in June 1883,<sup>142</sup> but it would be several years before he could affect a sale.

Above: Advertisement - Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 14<sup>th</sup> June 1883, p3.

In the meantime Spiller leased the hotel out to several licensees. The first was Thomas William Robinson - from 1883 to 1884 - followed by George Carnes (Kearns according to Webster?) from 1885-1886.

In March of 1886 it was confirmed that Mr. Charles Spiller had sold his Warri property consisting of about 1,100 acres of C.P. land, and 3,000 acres of conditional leased land to a Mr. Clarke, from Yarrowonga, Victoria. It was Clarke’s intention to open a blacksmith’s & wheelwright’s shop in connection with the hotel. The price paid was £2,000 cash.<sup>143</sup> Clark assumed the license in 1887 and held it up until 1890.<sup>144</sup>

In April 1890 the press reported that Mr. & Mrs. Clarke of the London Hotel had hosted a farewell party, and that Clarke had decided to move to Narandera and pursue his vocation as a blacksmith & wheelwright.<sup>145</sup>

Peter O’Malley followed Clarke as licensee, holding the license from 1891-1894. Webster described O’Malley as “*a well known shearer and bushman.*”<sup>146</sup>

The licensee in 1895 was Edward Douglas, Peter Kelly in 1896, Douglas again in 1897, and then back to Kelly later in 1897, who then retained the license up until 1909.<sup>147</sup>

**AUCTION SALE.**

**THE LONDON HOTEL,  
WARRI.**

**SATURDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER.**

**R**EGINALD WEAVER & CO., Narandera, have received instructions from the Mortgagees to sell by public auction, at their Offices, East-street, Narandera, on Saturday, November 16th, at noon,

**THE LONDON HOTEL, WARRI,**  
and the **BLOCK OF LAND** on which it is situated, containing 120 Acres good Wheat Land. Situated on the main road from Narandera to Wyalong, within easy distance of the surveyed Railway Line from Temora to Barallan, the bill for which has passed its second reading in the Legislative Assembly.

There is a large Government contract going on in the vicinity at present.

The buildings are all brick and wood, and comprise all that is necessary for the successful working of the property, Bares, Stables, etc.

The present tenant has been in occupation for the last five years.

Easy Terms can be arranged.

Further particulars from the Auctioneers,  
**REGINALD WEAVER & CO.,**  
Narandera.

Above: Advertisement - Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1901, p5

Indications are that by 1904 Peter Kelly was the legal owner, as it was Kelly who gave instructions to sell the hotel, land, and farming equipment by public auction. The advertisement included the following description:

*"The hotel has nine rooms, Storeroom, Kitchen, Pantry, and Wash-house; good Stables, and all necessary outhouses, Yards, Barn, etc. With the hotel is 120 Acres of Land, subdivided into three paddocks."*<sup>150</sup>

Above Right: Advertisement - Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 25<sup>th</sup> February 1904, p3.

According to a press report the hotel subsequently sold, on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March 1904, to Mr Angus McPherson of Grong Grong whose hotel at the latter place had burnt down the previous evening.<sup>151</sup> [This sale must have fallen through though because when up for sale in 1906 it was stated that the hotel had been in hands of present occupier for ten years – this reference would have been to Kelly]

.In November 1901 the property was again up for sale, by order of the mortgagee. The buildings were described as "all brick and wood," and the notice highlighted the fact that the railway bill had passed the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading in the Legislative assembly.<sup>148</sup> The mortgagees in 1901 were probably the Australian Joint Stock Bank as it was they who sought tenders in May 1902 for "renovating, roofing, (&) general repairs to the London hotel at Warri."<sup>149</sup>

**CLEARANCE SALE,**

AT THE

**LONDON HOTEL, WARRI.**

**MIDWAY BETWEEN NARANDERA  
AND TEMORA.**

**SATURDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1904,**  
At 2 o'clock sharp.

**S**TINSON & STINSON, Auctioneers have been favored with instruction, from Mr. Peter Kelly, to offer by public auction, on Saturday, 26th March, at 2 o'clock sharp, at the **LONDON HOTEL, WARRI,**

**The LONDON HOTEL,**  
as a going concern.

The Hotel has nine rooms, Storeroom, Kitchen, Pantry, and Wash-house; good Stables, and all necessary outhouses, Yards, Barn, etc. With the Hotel is 120 Acres of Land, subdivided into three paddocks; 80 acres of Cultivation Land, all securely fenced, and well watered. Government Tank close to the Hotel.

**6 Draught Horses, 10 Sets of Harness, 3 Baggies, 1 8-ton Waggon, large Farm Dray, small Yard Dray, 1 Robinson Stripper and Winnower, 1 Massey-Harris Reaper and Sifter, 1 Set Harrows, Double-Furrow Plough, 1 Chaffcutter and Horseworks, Blacksmith's Bellows, Anvil, host of Tools, and Sundries too numerous to particularise.**

**FURTHER ENTRIES INVITED.**

**LUNCHEON PROVIDED.**

**STINSON & STINSON,**  
Auctioneers.

**H**OLLOWAY & ARMSTRONG, Narandera, have received instructions from the Mortgagees to offer by Public Auction, at Russell's Royal Mail Hotel, Narandera, at 12 o'clock noon, the under-mentioned property, viz. :—

**120 Acres Freehold Land, being portions 1 and 2, County of Bourke, Parish of Warri, on which stands the**

## **LONDON HOTEL,**

**A Weather-board Building of 10 Rooms, a Detached Building of 2 Rooms, Detached Kitchen, Stable, Blacksmith's Shop, and other buildings.**

The property is situated within 3 miles of the Second Section of the Temora to Barellan Railway Line, now in course of construction, and within ½-mile of the Warri Government Tank: is all level country, and every acre is suitable for wheat growing. The Hotel has been occupied by the present tenant for about 10 years, and with the advent of railway communication the district is bound to become more closely settled, and enhance the trade of the locality.

**TERMS EASY.**

Further particulars on application to the Auctioneers,

**HOLLOWAY & ARMSTRONG,  
Narandera,**

Above: Advertisement – Narandera Argus. 28<sup>th</sup> September 1906, p5.

It is clear from this notice that the hotel is predominately a timber building. The advertisement also confirms that the land associated with the hotel consists of portions 1 & 2, parish of Warri.<sup>152</sup>

The hotel, along with the 120 acres of land, was subsequently sold to Mr. James Boyd.<sup>153</sup>

Right: Advertisement – Albury Banner. 25<sup>th</sup> February 1910, p24.

Peter Kelly continued on as the licensee of the London Hotel up until 1910, at which time he advertised a clearing sale.<sup>154</sup>

It was rumored that before hiring a jackeroo Kelly would inquire as to whether he could swim. When asked what hat had to do with jackerooing, Kelly replied, "If you can't swim your no good to me. I keep my beer in the middle of the London Hotel tank."<sup>155</sup>

Peter's wife, Catherine, died in August 1938 at the age of eighty two. She was survived by her two sons, Fred (Ardlethan) & Norman (Queensland), and two daughters, Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. O'Grady – both of Sydney.<sup>156</sup>

Peter's son, Fred Kelly, was a partner with Mr. John Kennedy of Grong Grong, as stock and station agents (trading as Kelly and Kennedy) from 1907, and would have been prominent in the early development of the town [Ardlethan]. This partnership was dissolved in 1914. Fred later married Mary Kennedy and they subsequently took over the Grong Grong hotel, which they conducted for some thirty years.<sup>157</sup>

## **Extensive Unreserved Clearing Sale.**

At the  
**OLD LONDON HOTEL,**  
3 miles from Ardlethan.

On  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 5th, 1910,**  
At 11 a.m.

**K**ELLY & KENNEDY have been instructed by Peter Kelly, Esq., to Sell by Public Auction, as above, the whole of his Household Furniture, Stock, and Plant, Etc., as follows:—

### **STOCK.**

- 1 Heavy Draught Mare.
- 3 Draught Geldings.
- 3 Light Harness Horses.
- 1 Light Harness Mare, with foal at foot.
- 5 Milch Cows, in full milk.
- 6 Poddies.

### **IMPLEMENTS, ETC.**

- 1 M.H. Reaper and Binder (nearly new).
- 2 D.F. Ploughs.
- 1 M.H. Cultivator.
- 1 Hick's Water Cart with Pump and Hose.
- 6 Sets Plough Chains.
- 3 Wagonettes, in good order.
- 1 Cab, to carry 10 passengers.
- 1 Strong Double-seated Buggy.
- 1 Light Buggy, in good order.
- 1 Double-seated Buggy, with hood.
- 4 Sets Buggy Harness.
- 2 Side Saddles.
- 1 Stock Saddle.
- 2 400-gallon Iron Tanks
- 1 600-gallon Do.
- 15 Tons Prime Oaten and Wheaten Chaff

### **FURNITURE, Etc.**

- 1 Upright Piano (Victor), Music Stand,
- 1 Drawing Table, 8 Drawing-room Chairs, 1 Lounge, 1 Gipsy Table, 1 Cheffoner, 3 Fenders, 1 Duchess Chest, 7 Double Beds (with wire mattresses and bedding), 6 Single Do., 4 Stretchers, 7 Washstands and Ware, 2 Chests Drawers, 4 Dressing Tables, 5 Small Tables, 1 Large Dining Table, 12 Dining-room Chairs, Writing Desk, 6 Kitchen Chairs, 1 Metters' Stove, 1 Cream Separator (new), 1 Cooling Safe, 4 Kitchen Safes, 4 Kitchen Tables, 1 Washing Machine and Wringer, 1 Mangle, 6 Wash Tubs, and Large Quantity Kitchen Utensils, 2 Sewing Machines, 2 Clocks, Quantity Pictures, and Photo Frames, etc., Large Quantity Linoleum, 1 Eckersley Aerated Water Machine, with Chest, Essences, 250 dozen Bottles, 2 D.B.B.L. Guns, 4 Rifles, and a very large quantity sundries.

The Auctioneers beg to draw attention to this important sale, consisting of the whole of the contents of the late London Hotel, as well as Mr. Kelly's Farming Plant and Stock. Everything will be sold, absolutely without reserve.

**Luncheon Provided.**

**TERMS AT SALE.**  
**KELLY & KENEDY,**  
Auctioneers.

**WERRAHO STORAGE**

The old London hotel was the epicenter for community activity and public meetings. Auction sales were held there<sup>158</sup>, and it was the regular place for meetings by community groups such as those wanting to promote the railway line to, and through, Warri.<sup>159</sup> It was the designated venue for a variety of sporting clubs,<sup>160</sup> and football was also played at the hotel.<sup>161</sup> In 1905 new tennis courts were constructed near the hotel for the Warri Tennis Club. The quality of the courts might not have been the best judging by comments in the local paper, which reported that, *“The new courts were in good order at the commencement of the day, but were much the worse for wear before evening.”*<sup>162</sup>

Community groups who met regularly at the hotel included:

- The Warri Progress Association
- School of Arts
- Bush Fire Brigade
- Warri Railway League
- Temora to Gunbar/Hillston Railway League
- Warri Farmers & Settlers Association

In addition to its importance as a community centre Warri also hosted several important infrastructure developments. These included a steam mill and the Warri Tank.

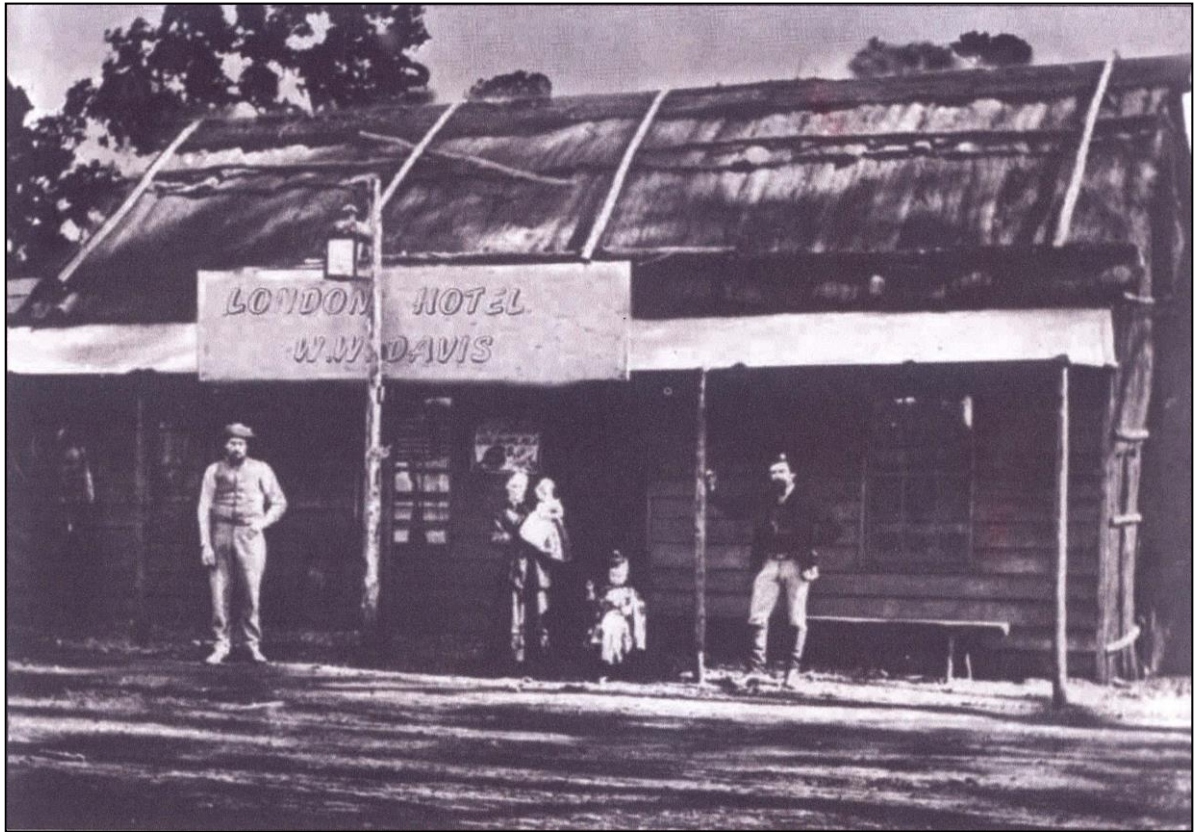
In 1891 Mr. A. G. Humley [Humby] advertised that he had removed his Albion Steam Saw mills to Warri. He advised that the mill had been considerably enlarged and was now in thorough working order.<sup>163</sup> The new venture was not an easy one, with Humby constantly advertising for men to work the mill and cart the timber. It must have been difficult to attract men that far out. The area was also experiencing a severe drought as noted by Humby in March 1892, when his comments were printed in the local press, as follows:

*“You will be glad to hear that the drought in this part of the country has broken. This afternoon we had a heavy thunderstorm, and three inches of rain or over must have fallen in about a couple of hours. Our large dam, which had been dry for a couple of months past, filled in a couple of hours. We had been carting water for weeks at an expense of £10 to £12 per week. The squatters and settlers in the district were pretty well dried out, and some had been obliged to scoop out holes in the bed of the Merool Creek to water their stock. The ground has now been well saturated, so that the grass may be expected to spring up immediately. What with the numerous fires and the long drought, the district was about perished.”*<sup>164</sup>

In 1892 James Gormly advised that the government had allocated £900 to the draft estimates for the purpose of erecting a bridge over the Merool Creek at Warri,<sup>165</sup> whilst in 1901 work commenced on the Warri Tank in October of that year. It was to be some 20,000 yards of excavation. It was located about 30 chains west of the London Hotel and was to employ some sixty men on the day labour system.<sup>166</sup> Peter Kelly was the licensee at this time and no doubt prospered from all of these projects. Kelly’s sister, Miss Grant, was the *governess* at the hotel at this time.<sup>167</sup>



**Left:** Close up of the plaque marking the location of the old London hotel site.



**Above:** The old London Hotel. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater



**Above:** A plaque erected to mark the location of the original London hotel. The hotel would have been to the left of the tree inside the fence. The area is marked by a show of rocks.



**Above:** Close up of the old London hotel plaque. Note the incorrect date on the plaque – the hotel was first licensed in 1875 – not 1860, and closed in 1910 – not 1908.

## The New London Hotel.

James Boyd transferred the license to new premises at Ardlethan in 1910.<sup>168</sup> Work had started on the new hotel in March 1908, when it was reported that “*bricks are being carted on to the ground for the new hotel.*” It was being constructed on a block recently sold by Rowston & Boyd, situated in the private township. The bricks were made locally by a Mr. Bowditch, on his farm, said to be “*close to Warri.*”<sup>169</sup>



Boyd had been a commission agent at Coolamon prior to purchasing the old London hotel building at Warri. He moved the old building to his new site at Ardlethan and complimented it with large additions, the latter being a brick structure with an iron roof. The new building contained fourteen rooms.<sup>170</sup>

**Left:** Boyd advertised his new venture on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1910.<sup>171</sup>

James Boyd retained ownership of the hotel up until his death in May 1931 when his wife, Maude Boyd, became the legal owner of the property.<sup>172</sup> The hotel was located at what is now the corner of Mirrool & Mullins Streets, Ardlethan.

Boyd held the license from 1910-1911 after which Henry Mellor became the licensee, in 1912. Boyd made some additions to the hotel in 1911 but we don't know the details.<sup>173</sup>

Mellor was licensee up until 1914 when it was transferred to Donald McArthur.<sup>174</sup> McArthur had moved from the Coolamon Hotel to take over the London Hotel, Ardlethan, in August 1914.<sup>175</sup>





**Above:** Boyd's new London Hotel in 1910. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater



**Above:** London Hotel in flood (1920). **Courtesy:** Jim Slater.

The 1920's period, and onwards, saw the domination of NSW hotels by Tooth & Co. Part of the company's strategy was to take over the many smaller breweries that existed around NSW and to create *ties* with as many hotels as possible. In Ardlethan, Lincoln & Co. were such a target and by 1924 Tooth & Co. had an agreement with the former to take over the hotels under Lincoln & Co.'s control. The London hotel was such a hotel.<sup>176</sup> Control did not necessarily mean ownership of the freehold. It could include this, but could also include *tied houses* - this latter term referring to any hotel that could only purchase beer from a specific brewer, as part of an agreement whereby that brewer extended a loan or other benefit to the licensee. Such arrangements were certainly beneficial to Tooth & Co. It is not clear whether they were detrimental or beneficial to the licensee. It was probably beneficial to those licensees who proved themselves to be good publicans and sound financial managers, and who knew how to play the game with such a large company, whilst it was probably less beneficial for those who did not meet these criteria. To be fair to Tooth & Co. there is no doubt that for many licensees this was their only available source of finance at reasonable rates. It has also to be conceded that many licensees had a very poor appreciation of how to run a hotel or any other business for that matter.

Archibald J. McKenzie took over the license in 1916 and renewed it in 1917. The license was held by Mary Ann McKenzie from 1918-1919, and then by Henry Mellor (again) in 1920. The owner in 1920 was James Downey Boyd of Strathfield.<sup>177</sup>

1921 - The licensee in 1921 was James Stewart.<sup>178</sup> He took over on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1920.<sup>179</sup>

1921 – 27<sup>th</sup> September – Robert Bruce Purvis now licensee.<sup>180</sup>

1923 – 18<sup>th</sup> June<sup>181</sup> - Harold J. Campbell takes over the license of the London hotel from Mr. & Mrs. Purvis.<sup>182</sup> Tied to Lincoln & Co.<sup>183</sup>

1924 – 11<sup>th</sup> November – George Alfred Goodman takes over as licensee.<sup>184</sup>

1925 – 21<sup>st</sup> May<sup>185</sup> – Rudolph Cooter applied for transfer of license for London hotel to himself. Cooter testified that he was a married man with six children, but that he lived apart from his wife. He had lived in NSW for some two years and before that operated six butcher's shops in Adelaide and suburbs. There were many questions and insinuations about his drinking habits and his separation from his wife. The application was refused, and Cooter lodged a notice of appeal.<sup>186</sup> It appears that Cooter came to an arrangement with one Albert Meale who subsequently obtained the license, but it was Cooter who financed the lease and the guarantee to Tooth & Co.<sup>187</sup>



**Above:** The London Hotel in 1925. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

1926 – 26<sup>th</sup> May<sup>188</sup> - the licensee in 1926 was Albert William Meale, who experienced serious financial problems. His unsecured creditors in July 1926 were primarily Sydney' beer, wine & spirit merchants, but a number of local businesses also suffered.

Local unsecured creditors included<sup>189</sup>:

1. F. H. Knox, builder – sum of £278.0s.0d
2. J. F. Donohue, butcher – sum of £162.19s.2d
3. A. L. Davies, butcher - sum of £18.14s.3d
4. E. J. Warren, baker - £24.14s.0d
5. H. W. L. Hill, baker – sum of £8.0s.0d
6. A. E. Warner, green grocer - sum of £7.0s.0d
7. E. J. Davaren, storekeeper – sum of £106.7s.11d
8. P. J. Kirby, storekeeper – sum of £39.7s.3d
9. R. F. Taplin, storekeeper - sum of £13.2s.3d
10. A. H. Webster, cordials – sum of £93.7s.6d
11. J. Thompson, motor garage - sum of £10.13s.0d
12. Knight Bros, plumber - sum of £8.0s.0d
13. J. A. Bradley, printing – sum of £7.13s.6d

1926 – 15<sup>th</sup> July – Frederick William Maloney now the licensee.

<sup>190</sup>

1928 – 1<sup>st</sup> August – James Richard Dixon now licensee.<sup>191</sup>

1930 – January. James Dixon sells lease to Mr. W. M. Rath.<sup>192</sup>

1930 – 27<sup>th</sup> October<sup>193</sup> - James Dixon sells lease to Mrs. Mary Claire Crowe, late of the Criterion hotel, Gundagai. The latter hotel was *controlled* by Tooth & Co.<sup>194</sup>

1931 – 14<sup>th</sup> July<sup>195</sup> - Mrs. Boyd takes over from Mrs. Crowe as licensee of the London Hotel, Ardlethan. She was assisted by her brother, Mr. Fred Pyke.<sup>196</sup> Mrs. Maude Boyd was the legal owner of the property then as James Boyd had passed away in May 1931.<sup>197</sup> She was still the owner in 1949.<sup>198</sup> Up until now the hotel had been *tyed* to Tooth & Co., but Mrs. Boyd declined to enter such an arrangement.<sup>199</sup>

James Boyd died on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 1931 at Strathfield (Sydney), following a long illness. He was fifty five years of age. He was described as “*late of Uley, and the London Hotel, Ardlethan.*”<sup>200</sup>

1933 – The hotel, under the license and ownership of Mrs. Boyd, was a free house drawing Richmond beer.<sup>201</sup>

1933 – 14<sup>th</sup> November<sup>202</sup> - the hotel was leased to John Francis Furlong. He was known to Tooth & Co., having held “*a couple of licenses previously*”, but they were not impressed with his business acumen, noting, “*He has not an impressive record as a licensee, but the Executors of his father’s Estate are trying to place him in a suitable Hotel proposition.*”<sup>203</sup>

A company loan to Furlong ensured the hotel was tied to Tooth & Co. and that Richmond beer was excluded. Purchases of beer for the previous twelve months - up until August 1935 – were 7 x barrels from Tooth and 112 x barrels from Richmond. With the Palace hotel also tied to Tooth & Co. this would have been a serious blow to the suppliers of Richmond beer and a clear lack of choice for the citizens of Ardlethan.<sup>204</sup>

1930’s – in the 1930’s a Mrs. Irene A. Kevill operated the Capital Café next door to the London hotel, and claimed that she often assisted Mr. Furlong and Mrs. Boyd to “*run the hotel.*” Her brother in law, Mr. E. J. Frost was a storekeeper at Ardlethan.<sup>205</sup>

1935 – 26<sup>th</sup> February – Clifford Frederick Mowbray Woods now the licensee having bought out Furlong.<sup>206</sup>

1935 – 24<sup>th</sup> September – Michael Keane the new licensee.<sup>207</sup>

1935 – a report in February 1935 described the hotel as being:

*“a one storey brick building, with an iron roof and tuck pointed front, situated on a corner site having a frontage of about 100’0”. There is plenty of land surrounding the hotel.*

*The accommodation consists of 21 bedrooms, 2 dining rooms, a large sitting room, 2 bathrooms, a bar measuring 33’ by 15’, three parlours surrounding the bar, kitchen, servery and pantry. In the yard there are three garages, six loose boxes, two feed rooms, laundry and man’s room. These are built of brick.*

*The roof was recently blown of the garage and is at the present time lying in the yard of the hotel. The owner is making arrangements to have the roof replaced immediately.*

*There is no septic tank. There is an electric light battery plant.*

*The water supply is good and is contained in two large underground tanks with a windmill to pump the water to an elevated tank.*

*The condition of the furniture and inside of the building is very poor. All the walls are of brick but are badly cracked and have been patched in numerous places.”*

The writer was not impressed with the potential of the hotel noting that:

*“The prospects of the hotel are only moderate as the building is situated on the wrong side of the line. The storekeeper, whose building adjoins the hotel, was burnt out recently and he is making arrangements to rebuild on the other side of the line.”*<sup>208</sup>

1936 – 28<sup>th</sup> January - Hugh Thomas Galvin now the licensee.<sup>209</sup> Galvin was previously licensee of the Post Office hotel, Forbes.<sup>210</sup> It was Galvin who switched from the hotels private lighting plant to the 240 volt town supply, in 1936.<sup>211</sup>

1937 – Hugh Galvin compelled to travel to Sydney for an operation on his appendix. Hotel was looked after by his brother, Mr. D. B. Galvin, whilst Hugh was away. D. B. Galvin had the Royal hotel at Ganmain around this time.<sup>212</sup>

1937 - 27<sup>th</sup> April – Robert Edward Shankland now the licensee.<sup>213</sup>

1937 – 14<sup>th</sup> December – Stanley G. Miller the new licensee.<sup>214</sup>

1938 – 12<sup>th</sup> April – William H. Pont, formerly of the Railway hotel, Merrygoen, now licensee.<sup>215</sup>

1939 - 10<sup>th</sup> January – Robert Clifton takes over as licensee. Clifton was previously licensee of the Victoria hotel at Bathurst.<sup>216</sup>

In the 1940's the hotel had fifteen bedrooms for guests including three for staff. The sanitary system consisted of pans; there was electric lighting, but only tank water. There was no refrigeration in the bar, just an ice box to cool the beer, which was drawn from casks under the counter- the counter was twenty feet long.<sup>217</sup>

Another report in 1940, was prepared by John Hellyer, architect of Sydney, and it painted a sorry story:

*“The main Hotel building is a single storey brick structure with wooden floors and iron roof, with a cellar under portion of the Public Bar.*

*A separate Dining Room and Bed Room Block is contained within the inner Court of the Hotel building. This building is also a brick structure with wooden floors and iron roof.*

*The two street facades and inner Court of main building have skillion verandah roofs to the full extent of the building. The inner Court Verandah has a wood floor.*

*The whole of the walls of the building are in bad condition, due to the collapse of the foundations in various parts.*

*It is apparent that the footings are badly fractured in many places, due to the uneven subsidence of the earth beneath – this has caused the walls to crack from the top of the footings to window sills and up through the window and door heads as well as at junctions of partition walls and main walls.*

*The damp courses within the walls are of malthoid. The malthoid is in an advanced stage of deterioration, the bitumen having dried out, causing the malthoid to become extremely brittle and to crack from shrinkage, thus becoming useless as a damp-proof course, and allowing dampness to rise in the walls from the ground.*

*Many floor timbers and flooring are in bad condition and require renewing.*

*The plaster on the walls is generally in a bad condition, being drummy and crumbling, due to age and rotting, caused by dampness within the walls. A great amount of the wall surfaces require replastering.*

*The joinery, such as doorframes, skirting, etc., is also affected badly by wet rot. The doors and window sashes are in a bad state of repair and all require overhauling, repairing and refitting.*

*Locks and fasteners are badly damaged – many that were missing have been replaced with bolts. All will require renewing.*

*The ceilings require repairing in various places where same are rusted badly.*

*The roof and guttering and downpipes need repair and attention- loose sheets and length of guttering and downpipes require refixing. Some badly rusted sections require renewing.*

*It is possible to make good to the whole of the defects within the main building, but it is not economically possible to prevent the re-occurrence of the moving of the footings, and resulting cracking of the walls and plaster, which will occur due to the seasonal conditions of the earth.*

*The Dining Room Block is in a much worse condition than the main building. It would be cheaper to demolish the Dining Room Block and rebuild same, than to try to efficiently repair the existing building.*

*The electrical installation in the building is very defective and would need to be re-wired.*

*From information obtained at Ardlethan, the building is situated in an area subject to flooding at least once a year. During the rains of last year, sand bags were placed around the Verandah to prevent flood waters pouring into the Cellar.*

*On these occasions the hotel is cut off from remaining sections of the town on the other side of the railway line and is accessible to foot traffic by walking along the railway embankment and entering the hotel at the rear.”*

*The report also noted that extensive work was required on the “Lavatories, Laundry, Garages and Stables and Fencing, which are all in a very bad condition.”*

Total estimated cost for the repairs, including the demolition and rebuilding of the dining room block was £3,475.<sup>218</sup>

The District Licensing Inspector gave due notice, in July 1940, of his intention to apply for an order – from the Temora Licensing Court, under Section 40 of the Liquor Act, 1912 - compelling the owner of the London hotel to “demolish the whole of the existing licensed premises and erect on the same site a modern hotel of brick or concrete..”<sup>219</sup>

The court considered the application on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1940, and although they did not order Mrs. Boyd (the owner) to demolish the buildings, she was ordered to carry out extensive works, within six months.<sup>220</sup>

1940 – 28<sup>th</sup> May – Albert Patrick Iville is new licensee.<sup>221</sup>

Things did not go well for Iville and by 1942 he was seriously considering closing the hotel.<sup>222</sup> Mrs. Boyd arranged for Mr. Monteith B. Mellor, a former hotel broker, to take over the running of the hotel under certain conditions. Mellor insisted that Iville be removed, along with a Mrs. Taylor who was staying at the hotel, by

Mrs. Boyd or Tooth & Co. before he would move in.<sup>223</sup> Tooth & Co. installed Mr. Joseph P. Kenny in the hotel from the 18<sup>th</sup> August 1942, and Meller (Monty Ben<sup>224</sup>) took over from Kenny on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1942.<sup>225</sup> Tooth & Co. arranged for Kenny to take over the Royal hotel at Gosford, on behalf of the company, from the 11<sup>th</sup> September 1942.<sup>226</sup>

Business must have been terrible in this period. The President of the Ardlethan Progress Association wrote to Tooth & Co., in January 1944, expressing their concerns that both the Palace hotel and the London hotel had discontinued the provision of “meals and lodgings to all locals.” It noted that the London hotel had not been able to “take in boarders for either bed or meals owing to a shortage of bed linen and no staff.” He claimed that staff could be obtained locally, but that neither hotel appeared interested in providing these services to the local community. There were no boarding houses in Ardlethan, so the problem was a serious one for the town.

1944 – 20<sup>th</sup> September – Charles Lee Brown now licensee.

1945 – 23<sup>rd</sup> May - Abraham Cass, of Bondi, took over from Charles Lee Brown in May 1945, but he was not suited to the job. A letter to Tooth’s Country manager in January 1946 stated, in reference to Cass, that, “The state of this licensee’s health is such that he should never have been granted a hotel license.” The writer explained that he arrived at the London hotel on a Tuesday evening at around 6pm. The bar had just been closed off and, “a few minutes later Cass attempted to clear the bar, but the crowd who were mostly half drunk only made fun of him.” The writer had never seen anything like this in a hotel before, describing it as a, “regular circus.” When the bar was finally cleared Cass broke down in front of the visitor being unable to speak and bursting into tears. Cass and his wife were at the end of their tether and had managed to sell the business to a Mr. Shanahan, a school teacher on the north coast, whose father had, in recent weeks, taken over the newsagency at Ardlethan.<sup>227</sup>

**Extensive Hotel Furniture Sale**

Account L. A. MURPHY, Esq., Late of London Hotel

**SATURDAY, 11th NOVEMBER, 1950**  
**CAPITOL THEATRE, ARDLETHAN, 2 p.m.**

YOUNGHUSBAND LIMITED, Licensed Auctioneers, Ardlethan, have been favoured with instructions from L. A. Murphy, Esq. (late of London Hotel, Ardlethan) to sell by Public Auction, the whole of his HOTEL FURNITURE, KITCHENWARE, BED LINEN, BAR ACCESSORIES and REFRIGERATION UNIT as follows:—

**BAR and BAR-PARLOUR**—1 Kelvinator refrigerator complete with beer cooling cabinet, 1 National cash register, bottle opener, Kriesler mantle electric radio, 6 iron stools, 7 chairs, 2 cane chairs, 3 tables, quantity glasses, blinds, floor coverings, etc.

**DINING ROOM**—Dining suite, sideboard, 15 chairs, 4 tables, 1 high chair, palm stand, floor rug, curtains, ornaments, etc.

**GUEST LOUNGE**—3-piece lounge suite, 4 cane chairs, cane lounge, cane table, occasional table, 2 electric radio sets, wall mirror, blinds, curtains and floor coverings.

**PRIVATE LOUNGE**—3-piece lounge suite together with loose covers, office table, office desk, 2 occasional tables, overmantle, 3 cushions, standard lamp shade, blinds, curtains, floor rug, etc.

**PARLOUR**—Table, 5 easy chairs, 4 chairs, cane table, overmantle, settee, blinds, curtains and floor coverings, etc.

**BEDROOMS**—Sufficient furniture to furnish 20 hotel bedrooms, including:— 1 4-piece solid walnut bedroom suite, 2 3-piece bedroom suites, 5 iron bedsteads and bedding, 3 1 bedsteads and bedding, 12 wooden bedsteads and bedding, 5 wardrobes, 3 corner wardrobes, 7 loungeboys, 17 dressing tables, 2 chest of draws, 2 bedside cupboards, 7 chairs, 2 cane chairs, 15 sets curtains and blinds, 13 floor coverings, 1 feltex square, 1 carpet, 1 mat, 1 vacuum cleaner, 1 standard lamp, 2 bedside tables.

**BATHROOMS**—3 wash stands, 2 chairs, 2 mirror, 1 plastic shower curtain, 1 mat.

**KITCHEN and PANTRY**—5 tables, 1 sideboard, 1 Electrice 53 cub. ft. refrigerator, quantity jugs, 32 cups and saucers, 30 teaspoons, 44 dessert knives, forks and spoons, 22 soup spoons, meat dishes, table crockery and utensils, saucers, etc. (The vast range of kitchenware offering is far too numerous to mention.)

**LINEN**—12 towels, 79 sheets (double and single), 9 quilts, 15 bed covers, 44 pillow slips, 32 pillows, 49 blankets (double and single), 1 riderdown.

**SUNDRIES**—10 yards hall runner, 1 hall carpet, quantity floor mats, 2 garden hoses (50ft and 30ft), wheelbarrow, garden tools, wringer, clothes basket, 1 Cassey Menk machine and casks, tubs, porch chairs, deck chairs, garden seat, pot flowers, various cupboards, pictures, together with numerous other sundry items.

As Mr. Murphy has transferred his License, the whole of his Furniture and Fittings are for absolute sale and buyers can attend with confidence that every item advertised will be available. This Sale presents an excellent opportunity for Hotel Keepers and Boarding House Proprietors to secure ideal furniture, etc. for their requirements.

**YOUNGHUSBAND LIMITED** (Inc. in Vic.) Licensed Auctioneers  
ALBUKY, ARDLETHAN and BRANCHES

1946 – 20<sup>th</sup> March – Colin R. Shanahan takes over the hotel.<sup>228</sup>

1948 – 19<sup>th</sup> October – John Victor Insley is the new licensee.<sup>229</sup>

1949 – 22<sup>nd</sup> March – Leonard Anthony Murphy takes over as licensee. This was Murphy’s first ever license.<sup>230</sup>

1950 – 23<sup>rd</sup> October – Harry George Bowden, formerly of the Royal hotel, Tambar Springs, is now licensee.<sup>231</sup>

A septic tank was installed in 1951. By then the hotel also had a lounge, a beer garden, and a town water supply. There was a hot water system – Donkey, coke – and there were still fifteen bedrooms, including a separate flat of three bedrooms for licensee. It was still a single story building with an iron roof – unchanged in external appearance since the 1920’s. The beer was now drawn from Temperites (instant coolers).<sup>232</sup>

**Left:** Sale of hotel furniture on account of Leonard Murphy.<sup>233</sup>



**Above:** The London Hotel in 1949. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

1955, March - The hotel was auctioned through L. J. Hooker. Tooth & Co. was not interested in the freehold owing to the poor condition of the building. The hotel was subsequently sold to R. Hunter in April 1955 for £20,250,<sup>234</sup> then quickly resold to Raymond Albert Bennett within three months. Bennett was previously licensee of the Beechwood hotel, Beechwood, and took over the license of the London on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 1955.<sup>235</sup> The freehold was transferred again in August 1958 to Frederick Herbert Handley for £23,230.<sup>236</sup> Handley was still the owner in the 1970's, but it has not yet been determined who owned the freehold between Handley and the Diggins's who purchased the freehold in June 1988.

1958 – 8<sup>th</sup> August – Harry Leslie Jacobsen is now licensee – his first such venture.<sup>237</sup>

1960 – 4<sup>th</sup> March – Fred Thompson, a well known local aussie rules player, takes over the license and keeps it for some eighteen years, until 29<sup>th</sup> August 1978 when Brian Wayne Osmond became the next licensee.<sup>238</sup>

In the 1960's the water was heated by the kitchen stove, there was a cellar listed, and there were now six garages.<sup>239</sup> In February 1966 the Australian currency was converted from pounds to dollars.



**Above:** The London Hotel in 1970. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

In 1971 six new motel units were completed in the block adjoining the hotel, and now formed part of the licensed premises. The new premises opened in June 1971 at a cost of some \$40,000. The hotel now included a bottle shop.<sup>240</sup>



**Above:** The new motel units in 1971. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

Francesco [Frank] Calvi took over the license in 1981<sup>241</sup> and held it until January 1987 when Patricia McMahon became the new licensee. Tooth's records do not cover this period and the records from the Office of Gaming and Liquor are erroneous on the timing of Calvi's accession. Jim Slater and John Hudson both recall that Frank Calvi was the licensee, at some time after Fred Thompson, and presumably 1981 is correct. Shirley Crittenden also recalled that Frank Calvi was at the London around the time that she and Graham moved into the Palace Hotel.<sup>242</sup>

From 1987 the licensees, as determined by the Office of Liquor & Gaming, were as follows:<sup>243</sup>

11<sup>th</sup> March 1960- 6<sup>th</sup> January 1987 > Francesco Calvi. [This is partly incorrect. It is not known when Frank Calvi took over as licensee, but it must have been after 1978, which was when Brian Osmond took over the license, according to Tooth's records], and it was probably in 1981.

6<sup>th</sup> January 1987-27<sup>th</sup> June 1988 > Patricia Mary McMahon

27<sup>th</sup> June 1988-6<sup>th</sup> August 1991 > Geraldine May Diggins

6<sup>th</sup> August 1991-22<sup>nd</sup> December 2003 > Robert Harvey James McGregor

22<sup>nd</sup> December 2003-4<sup>th</sup> February 2005 > Barry Robert Jones

4<sup>th</sup> February 2005-28<sup>th</sup> June 2005 > Kerriann Phillips

28<sup>th</sup> June 2005-6<sup>th</sup> March 2006 > Paul Colin Bandy

6<sup>th</sup> March 2006-15<sup>th</sup> December 2010 > Rex Reginald Staunton

15<sup>th</sup> December 2010- present (1<sup>st</sup> February 2016) > Nicole Woodward

The same source provides the following details:<sup>244</sup>

**Freehold Owners:**

27<sup>th</sup> June 1988-7<sup>th</sup> August 1991 > Colin Diggins and Geraldine Diggins

7<sup>th</sup> August 1991-6<sup>th</sup> March 2006 > Hilary Ignatius Lantry (male) & Elaine Kathleen Lantry

6<sup>th</sup> March 2006-14<sup>th</sup> December 2010 > Brenda May Walsh

15<sup>th</sup> December 2010-present (1<sup>st</sup> February 2016) – JNW Hotels Pty Ltd

Insert photo of Geraldine and colin Diggins



Above: London hotel in March 2010.





**Above:** London hotel in December 2015.

## The Palace Hotel.

There were only ever two hotels at Ardlethan and the second was the Palace hotel, located at the corner of Arianh & Yithan Streets, Ardlethan.<sup>245</sup>

Corner's Coffee Palace was built by George and J. Corner in 1912, and it would later become the Palace hotel.<sup>246</sup>

The original Coffee Palace building was a pise and plaster construction. A dining room and quarters for single men was subsequently added, and thereafter a publican's license was obtained in the name of Frederick James Rath.<sup>247</sup> It is not known when Rath first moved to Ardlethan but he was certainly operating a boarding house there in May of 1913<sup>248</sup>, and presumably it would have been the Coffee Palace.<sup>249</sup> There were other matters effecting Rath's life at the time - his wife gave birth to a son on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1913, at a private hospital in Redfern (Sydney), but the baby only survived for four days.<sup>250</sup>

Commercial development of the town was dramatically increased following the discovery of tin (for mining) in 1912 and by 1913 there was a veritable *rush* and accommodation was at a premium.<sup>251</sup> This would have driven the improvements to the Coffee Palace and the eventual move to a licensed hotel.

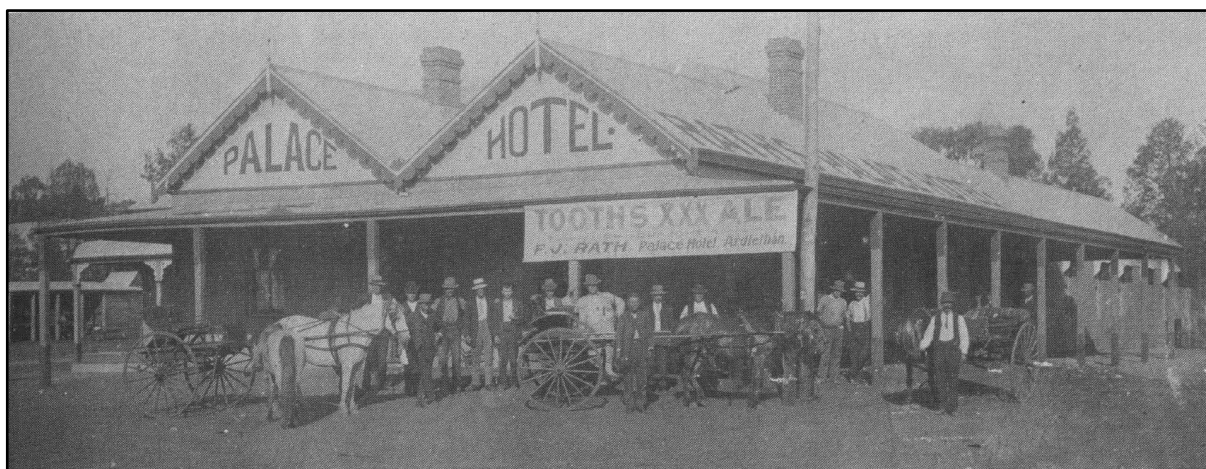
On the 1st August 1913 the Narandera Argus reported on the Aussie Rules game that had just eventuated between Barellan and Ardlethan, which read, in part, as follows:

*"The players were hospitably entertained at supper at Rath's boarding house. The special train returned to Barellan at 8pm, and was well patronised.....The Swift's Co. visited the township on Saturday, and gave a performance at night in the Palace Hall, which was well filled by a most appreciative audience."*<sup>252</sup>

There are no known references to the hotel being open until a report on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1914, which referred to a runaway horse at Ardlethan that had been parked in front of Rath's Palace hotel.<sup>253</sup> The hotel must have opened sometime between the 1st August 1913 and the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1914. Unfortunately there is no surviving copy of the Coolamon Ganmain Farmers review for the months of November/December 1913, this paper being the most likely to have reported the opening of the hotel. The government gazette, however, lists the issuing of the license in the 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of that publication for 1913, and it records that the license was issued to Rath, for the period from the 18<sup>th</sup> July 1913 till the 17<sup>th</sup> July 1914.<sup>254</sup> It is assumed that the opening of the hotel was delayed until November or December, possibly pending modifications to the premises, or maybe as a consequence of his wife's pregnancy or some other influence.

There were a number of people wanting to establish a hotel at Ardlethan, because of the mining boom, and one such prospect was reported in August where it was noted that Mr. J. R. Parnell, former licensee of the Exchange hotel [Parkes] was building a palatial hotel at Ardlethan.<sup>255</sup> This obviously did not eventuate.

1915 - March, - Mr. A. Tengdahl, a well known citizen of Ardlethan was walking up from Wood's billiard saloon towards the hotel [the Palace] when he fell down the open cellar, a depth of about 8 feet, breaking four ribs and severely injuring his shoulder.<sup>256</sup>



Above: Palace Hotel in 1915. Courtesy: Jim Slater.

1920's – The hotel is a single storey building in 1920, but features 2<sup>nd</sup> storey additions by 1924.<sup>257</sup> The additions were for William Walton, in 1922, and the contractor was Sid Dacey.<sup>258</sup>



**Above:** Palace Hotel in 1920, with bricks stacked ready for additions. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater

1920, 1<sup>st</sup> January – Hotel now owned jointly by G. J. Corner of Northcote Street, Haberfield, and James Corner of Ardlethan, whilst James Frederick Rath was the licensee.<sup>259</sup>

Rath and his wife were both from Forbes, where they had family, and where they were both well known.<sup>260</sup>

Frederick's wife passed away on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1922, at Lewisham private hospital. At the time, Frederick was licensee of the Ungarie hotel, Ungarie. Mrs. Rath had suffered from poor health for the previous eight years. She was 51 years old and had been born at Burragorang, NSW.

1920, 1<sup>st</sup> July – William Thomas Walton now the licensee.<sup>261</sup> Walton's situation is an interesting example of the dynamics at play between a publican and a brewery.

Walton had been licensee of Tattersall's hotel at Narandera (1908-1912), and of the Barellan hotel at Barellan (1912-1920).<sup>262</sup> The local brewery would have been that of Lincoln & Co., and no doubt Walton had a strong commercial relationship with this firm.

When Walton took over the license of the Palace hotel he also purchased the freehold. This was financed by a loan from the Bank of New South Wales, with Lincoln & Co., providing the necessary surety.

When Tooth & Co. expanded into rural areas in the mid 1920's they arranged with the bank that they would take over as sureties for Walton's debt to the bank, in place of Lincoln & Co.<sup>263</sup> Tooth's clearly appreciated the advantages of having a licensee indebted to the Company and practiced a strategy designed to develop such financial links.

Tooth's attempted to alter the previous arrangements that Walton had with the bank, by reducing his overdraft limits etc., but Walton fought back. He did not approve of the securities required by Tooth's and preferred to pay off the amount now due on the reduced overdraft. He approached the Bank of New South Wales to request a loan that would allow him to pay off the amount owed. The bank manager, no doubt influenced by the larger client, Tooth & Co, reported the meeting to Tooth's. Correspondence to Tooth's head office noted that, "*He [the bank manager] wishes us to treat this as confidential, and not to let Walton know that he had been to see us, as he thought he [Walton] might object.*"<sup>264</sup>

The bank manager explained that Walton was a valued customer, and one they did not wish to lose, and that they therefore had no option but to grant the loan to Walton.

Tooth's main concern was that any arrangement did not jeopardize their trading tie.<sup>265</sup>

Walton proposed that Tooth's adhere to the terms he had in place with Lincoln & Co., and in return he would not ask for a discharge of the securities in place before August 1930. This would negate the need for a loan from the Bank of New South Wales.<sup>266</sup>

Walton appeared to be a tough man to deal with, and not one whom the bank could easily cajole.

At the same time (October 1925) Tooth's solicitors advised the company that two properties covered by Walton's mortgage had been sold. Specifically, a four roomed cottage and a motor garage. These had been sold, on terms, prior to Tooth & Co. succeeding Lincoln & Co. as sureties.<sup>267</sup> It would appear that Walton was a step ahead of those to whom he was indebted.

Walton continued to push back against the company's demands, as contained within his bond, refusing to

accede to their demands in terms of what and where he could purchase his supplies. The company was compelled to agree that restrictions on the purchases of mineral and aerated waters, cordials and like, would be removed from the terms, and that although they could not agree to remove the terms relating to the purchase of beer, wine, and spirits, he [Walton] could purchase beers, wines, and spirits, from other suppliers, provided Tooth & Co. retained the “*lion’s share of his business.*”



**Above:** The Palace Hotel in 1924. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

What can be said of such relationships in general is that the large majority of publican’s required financing. It would appear that Tooth & Co. provided competitive terms and required less security than the banks. Tooth & Co. were a well managed business with sound financial practices. The same could not always be said of many publicans.



**Above:** The Palace Hotel in 1925. Note the garage to the left. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

By 1928 Les Walton was operating the Reliance Garage, alongside the Palace hotel, which was licensed to his father, William Walton. It was in this year that Les installed a small power plant to generate electricity for the garage, the hotel, his residence, the Masonic Lodge (of which William was a prominent member), and a few other properties.<sup>268</sup>

1928, May – William T. Walton passed away.<sup>269</sup> “*Mr. W. T. Walton, of Ardlethan, and formerly of Narandera and Barellan, had died suddenly.*” The hotel was owned by Mrs. Walton, L. J. Walton, and R. W. Walton in 1930.<sup>270</sup>

William T. Walton had passed away on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 1928, at the Palace hotel, aged 58 years. He had moved to Narandera in the early 1890’s where he held the license for Tattersall’s hotel. When the license for this hotel was transferred to Barellan, around 1913, Walton moved there to conduct the hotel. He sold out at Barellan and subsequently took over the Palace hotel, at Ardlethan, in 1921.<sup>271</sup>

1929, 24<sup>th</sup> May – The executors of Walton’s estate agree to lease the garage portion of the property to Mr. T. C. Baker.<sup>272</sup>

It was a difficult time following the death of William. The hotel was “*poorly managed*” while in the hands of the executors,<sup>273</sup> to the extent that the eldest son advised a Tooth & Co. representative that his mother was “*not looking after the business very well*”, and that several of his brothers and sisters were “*loafing*” around the hotel.<sup>274</sup>

It must have been a very messy will as Mrs. Walton was still carrying on as a trustee of the estate in March 1936.<sup>275</sup> Mrs. Walton wrote to Tooth & Co. in that same month advising that the trustees wished to wind up the estate, and to that end they proposed putting the hotel freehold up for sale at £15,000. She gave Tooth & Co. the first option on the property.<sup>276</sup> Tooth & Co. wrote back advising the price was “*very much greater than the value of the property to us.*”

1929 – 29<sup>th</sup> May – Mary Ann Walton now licensee.<sup>277</sup>

1930’s – The hotel has 21 bedrooms – including two for private use. It had two bathrooms, with chip heaters. The bar was 20 feet long. The hotel had town lighting and tank water but no hot water and no septic tank, only pans.<sup>278</sup> There was a garage and a small office to the east of the Palace hotel in the 1930’s.<sup>279</sup>



**Above:** The Palace Hotel in 1930. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

1936, May – Hotel described as two storey brick & concrete building with balcony, containing twenty six bedrooms, dining room, kitchen, parlour, bar, bathrooms, laundry, hot & cold water, electric light, with tank water. Property includes a garage and shop, let separately, along with three quarters of an acre of land to the rear of the hotel. Splendid furniture, extra good beds and bedding, with refrigerator in dining room and bar. Mrs. Walton asking £14,000 for freehold.<sup>280</sup> Three months later, in August, Mrs. Walton has dropped the price to £12,500,<sup>281</sup> which Tooth & Co. again declined.

1937, 24<sup>th</sup> February – Tooth & Co. are advised that Arnold Hayes has inspected the hotel and is seriously considering taking a lease of the property. He believed that he could considerably improve the business, and further that the furniture at around £800 was good value given that it included a new refrigeration plant that had recently been installed at a cost of £350 [the actual lease set the price of furniture at £1,200]. Hayes was known to Tooth & Co. and was rated “*a good type*” and “*one who has always met his commitments,*” and it was recommended that Tooth & Co. extend a loan to Hayes and that they lock in a five year tie with Hayes. The report noted that Mrs. Walton had endured “*a good deal of family worry & the business had certainly suffered*” as a consequence.<sup>282</sup>

A lease, dated the 20<sup>th</sup> February, between Walton & Hayes, had been drawn up, the purchase price being £2,000 plus £1,200 for the furniture. A second lease, dated 25<sup>th</sup> February, between Hayes and Hugh Thomas Galvin, was also drawn up, the purchase price being £2,600 plus furniture at £1,200.<sup>283</sup>

1937 – 13<sup>th</sup> April – Arnold Hayes takes over as licensee, with five year lease.<sup>284</sup>

1937 – 11<sup>th</sup> May – Hugh Thomas Galvin, formerly of the London hotel at Ardlethan, takes over as licensee.<sup>285</sup>

1941, 11<sup>th</sup> February – Neville H. Dunn takes over as licensee and negotiates a new lease expiring 30<sup>th</sup> June 1943 with owners.<sup>286</sup> By May, Dunn’s wife was “*very discontented with country life,*” and they both wished to return to Sydney and lease a smaller hotel in the suburbs. They missed their friends and found Ardlethan to be “*an awfully quiet place.*” Dunn wanted £1,860 for the sale, but the several brokers he had approached all advised this was too much, and suggested he drop the price if he wanted a quick sale.<sup>287</sup>

1941, 15<sup>th</sup> October – Thomas J. Bowen succeeds Dunn as licensee,<sup>288</sup> buying out the remaining period of

Dunn's lease for the sum of £1,050, which the local Tooth & Co. representative deemed "*not cheap under present conditions.*" Bowen was from Randwick and although he had no direct hotel experience he had been indirectly associated with the Central and Commercial hotels at Moss Vale.<sup>289</sup>

In February 1942 Mrs. Walton invites tenders for purchase of the property, through Dibbs & Farrell, solicitors of Temora. The hotel is described as having a frontage of 198 feet to Ariah Street, and 106 feet 6 inches to Yithan Street, whilst the adjoining garage (part of the property) had a frontage of 58 feet 6 inches to Yithan Street. The hotel building was described as "*part brick and part concrete, iron roof, balcony on each frontage, and containing 35 rooms and cellar. No hotel ties...*" The hotel could be purchased either with or without the garage.<sup>290</sup>

1946, 25<sup>th</sup> June – The hotel would be sold by September, but in the interim there was interest from another party, one Philip Patrick Hassett, of Dorigo. Hassett had been managing the Commercial hotel at Dorigo for a Mr. J. McDonough, and McDonough had advised that he had a judgement for £150 against Hassett, which he intended to enforce. He also believed that Hassett was indebted to another person to the value of £270, for the purchase of furniture.<sup>291</sup>

Hassett appeared before the Temora Licensing Magistrate in June 1946. When asked where he got the money from to pay for the hotel he claimed, under oath, that his wife had a large sum of money stored in a wardrobe. Under subsequent interrogation he admitted this was not true and that he had borrowed the money from several people in Sydney. The magistrate ruled that in light of the fact that Hassett had given false evidence under oath he was not a fit person to hold a license and he therefore refused the application.<sup>292</sup>

1946, 18<sup>th</sup> September – freehold & furniture purchased by Sydney Pierce for sum of £10,500.<sup>293</sup> Sydney Holmwood Pierce was from Randwick, and borrowed £7,000 from Tooth & Co. as part of the financial arrangements. In return the house was tied for twenty years – the period over which the loan was to be repaid.<sup>294</sup> Pierce was known to Tooth & Co., having been a spirit merchant at Coogee, and having satisfactorily met his liabilities to the company he was judged to be "*a suitable type of bloke,*" for a licensee.

At the time the building was described, by a Tooth's representative, as being "*old, but structurally sound,*" with twenty one bedrooms and three bathrooms. It had town water and electricity, but no sewerage or septic tanks. The other hotel in town, the London, was described as "*a poor building in a bad position with a small trade.*"<sup>295</sup>

Within a year, Pierce made approaches to the company asking them to discharge the bill of sale they held over him, in order that he could sell a three year lease of the business. The local representative advised that Pierce had been unwell for some months and that Pierce's doctor had advised him to get out.<sup>296</sup> Tooth & Co. agreed to release the furniture from the bill of sale.

1947, 22<sup>nd</sup> October – Pierce leases hotel to Lily A. Clark for three years. The shop and garage were not included in lease.<sup>297</sup>

1947, 19<sup>th</sup> November – William Andrew Claydon takes over as licensee.<sup>298</sup> Claydon was from North Sydney and although this was his first hotel experience he had conducted a mixed business at Mosman for some years. The previous lessee, Mrs. Clark, apologised to the company for her short tenure, but explained that she had taken up the balance of a lease for a city hotel.<sup>299</sup>

1948, 20<sup>th</sup> April – Harold Kingsley Gorrell is the new licensee.<sup>300</sup> This was his first hotel venture, but he struck the local representative as a "*good type*", and a "*live wire.*"<sup>301</sup>

1948, 7<sup>th</sup> December – John Henry Vost was the next licensee. It was his first venture as well.<sup>302</sup>

1949, 13<sup>th</sup> July - Clarence Joseph Johnson now licensee and owner. Freehold purchase price was £8,750. Hotel still tied to Tooth & Co.<sup>303</sup> Johnson was a member of a syndicate that owned the Oceanic hotel at Coogee. There is some confusion as to the price paid, with the local representative suggesting it was to be £9,250, but noting that "*It seems obvious that the actual price is more than £9,250.*"<sup>304</sup> Subsequent correspondence from Tooth & Co. confirmed the official price as being £9,250.

1949, 2<sup>nd</sup> November – Licensee is now David Leonard Jones, formerly of the NSW Police Force. Jones negotiated a new lease in October 1950 for another three years.<sup>305</sup>

1950's – Temprite cooling installed. Beer drawn from cellar, which had existed in the 1940's and probably earlier. The owner, Johnson, spent an estimated £11,000 on improvements, which included hot & cold water to all upstairs rooms, including the bathroom, and the bar & kitchen downstairs.<sup>306</sup>

1951, 22<sup>nd</sup> May – license transferred to Kieran Edwin Stiff.<sup>307</sup>

1951, 18<sup>th</sup> December – Henry James Thomas Devine becomes the latest licensee. Devine indicated that he would sell all of the old furniture and replace it with new.<sup>308</sup>

1952, 15<sup>th</sup> September - William Norman Chad the new licensee. It is his first license.<sup>309</sup> William Norman Chad, along with the then licensee of the London hotel, Harry George Bowden and the licensees of the Beckom hotel were key witnesses in a case against First Class Constable James Stretton, of Temora. Stretton had been found guilty of accepting bribes – in the form of money and bottled beer – from the aforementioned licensees (in 1952 & 1953), and had subsequently been dismissed from the police force. Stretton appealed against his dismissal in 1954, but lost the appeal.<sup>310</sup>

1954, 2<sup>nd</sup> February – Lease transferred to George Lawrence Meredith and his wife, Frances Edith Pearl Meredith, with George as the licensee. George had formerly held a license in Queensland.<sup>311</sup>

The Meredith's must have had cause to be away from the hotel for a period, and it is assumed that they had an arrangement with a Mr. & Mrs. Sanderson to manage the hotel in their absence. Frances wrote to Tooth & Co. in November 1955, advising that she had been "*flat out since we returned,*" and apologising for not having written sooner. She gave an account of the Sanderson's, stating that Mr. Sanderson was "*ok in the bar & cellar, but not too fussy as regards hygiene.*" She was less kind to Mrs. Sanderson, advising that the latter "*was a total loss.*" Mrs. Sanderson was responsible for the dining room, which was said to be in a shocking state. Mrs. Meredith's daughter had been assisting at this time, but as she was responsible for the housework and bar, plus ordering for the kitchen, she didn't have time to fulfill Mrs. Sanderson's duties. Mrs. Meredith commented that they hadn't had much choice as "*we had to have someone at the time.*" She advised that George was well, but would like to be able to do more than he could at the time. It is assumed that George had been ill and it was this that necessitated their absence. Mrs. Meredith also quoted Mr. Sanderson as having told some that, "*If there was a Richmond pub in the town where he was he wouldn't drink this stuff* [referring to Tooth's beer]."<sup>312</sup>

1957, 12<sup>th</sup> April – The Merediths sell the balance of their lease to Gordon Robert Bates and his wife, Patricia Marie Bates, with Gordon as licensee. It was his first license. This must not have gone well as records note that in December 1958, the owner, C. J. Johnson, was "*in possession under sect. 38.*"<sup>313</sup> Johnson took possession on the 10<sup>th</sup> December and installed Edgar George Cook as his nominee, pending transfer of the license.

1958, 10<sup>th</sup> December – Edgar George Cook now licensee. Initially as nominee for owner, but within a week, in his own right.<sup>314</sup> Cook was initially on a weekly tenancy agreement, at the rate of £40 per week, but in July 1959 the agreement was extended to the 15<sup>th</sup> June 1959, at the same rate, and thereafter at the rate of £45 per week. Cook also had an option to purchase a three year lease at a rental of £35 per week, for a full price of £2,000, such option to be exercised between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1959.<sup>315</sup>



**Above:** The Palace Hotel in 1959. **Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.

In February 1959, Johnson moved to pay off the first mortgage, held by Tooth & Co, and a report to the company noted that the Palace hotel was drawing seven barrels a week (60% Old Kent and 40% Reschs), while the London hotel, which was a free house, was drawing nine barrels per week of Richmond beer, and the local Bowling Club was drawing another four barrels of Richmond per week.<sup>316</sup> The company accepted Johnson's

repayment of their mortgage, which was subsequently discharged.

1959, 30<sup>th</sup> September – Tooth & Co. confirm their acceptance of the proposal by Mr. Johnson to transfer the freehold of the property to his wife, subject to the normal guarantees. It is assumed that this was done before the end of the year (1959).<sup>317</sup>

1960's – The hotel is described as two storey brick & pise, with a galvanised iron roof, Donkey hot water system, and four garages. No bottle department and no beer garden. Now has septic tank. Has fifteen bedrooms for public and two for private use.<sup>318</sup>

1962, 16<sup>th</sup> April – Edgar transfers the license to his wife, Betty Louisa Cook, it being her 1st license.<sup>319</sup>

1962, 8<sup>th</sup> June – freehold purchased by Connors family for £16,000. New owners were Lila Emily Connors, William Leonard Connors, and William Francis Connors, with Lila being the licensee.<sup>320</sup>

1964, 13<sup>th</sup> November – freehold purchased by Eric James Fisher for £18,000. Fisher leased the property to a group consisting of the Kerr family (Joseph Kenneth Kerr and his wife, Gertrude Peace Kerr, plus their son, Graham Kenneth Kerr) and the Southern Acceptance Co. The group installed Graham Kenneth Kerr as the nominated licensee.<sup>321</sup>

1965, 17<sup>th</sup> February – Frederick Herbert Bird and Mrs. Nola Bird now the nominated licensees for lessees.<sup>322</sup>

1966, 18<sup>th</sup> May - Eric Stanley Curtis, formerly of the Beckom hotel, Beckom, now the nominated licensee for lessees.<sup>323</sup>

1967, 19<sup>th</sup> June – Patrick Joseph Halloran now the nominated licensee for lessees.<sup>324</sup>

1968, 27<sup>th</sup> September – Francis Searle Squires now the nominated licensee for lessees.<sup>325</sup>

1969, 28<sup>th</sup> March – Mrs. Alma Phyllis Borham becomes new licensee, in her own right. It was her first license.<sup>326</sup>

1970, 29<sup>th</sup> May – Ronald Arthur Provost the new licensee. It was his 1<sup>st</sup> license.<sup>327</sup>

1972, 28<sup>th</sup> January – Kenneth Arthur King now the licensee.<sup>328</sup>

1973, 2<sup>nd</sup> March – John Mashman now licensee – his first.<sup>329</sup>

1975, 12<sup>th</sup> December – John Richard Flood now licensee – his first.<sup>330</sup>

1976, 5<sup>th</sup> November – Victor Beynon now licensee.<sup>331</sup>

Poppet Heads and Wheatfields list G. Ainsworth as the licensee from 1979-1980, but there is no listing of him in either Tooth's records or the records of the Office of Gaming and Liquor,<sup>332</sup> but Geoff Ainsworth was the licensee for a short period before Graham Crittenden. Geoff was the nephew of Graham Crittenden and the two, along with Graham's wife Shirley, worked together in the hotel.<sup>333</sup>

1980, 10<sup>th</sup> September – Graham John Crittenden now the new licensee.<sup>334</sup> Mrs. Crittenden confirmed that they took over from Victor Beynon, but said this occurred in November 1979 – this would have been when Geoff Ainsworth became the licensee. She recalled that a Mr. Fisher was the owner of the pub when they took over the license and that she sold the license to a Mr. Alder.<sup>335</sup> Government records show that Richard Francis Alder took over the license on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 1982.<sup>336</sup>

Alder was followed by Eric James Fisher who took over on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 1985 but had a very short stay, the license being transferred to Ian Lyons on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 1985.<sup>337</sup> In March 1987 Fisher was still the legal owner of the freehold, but on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 1987 the property was transferred to Alexander Neill Bell, Angela Bell and Jeffrey Neill Bell.<sup>338</sup>

Barry William Thorne followed as licensee from Lyons, in March 1987, and he was followed by Jeffrey Neill Bell on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 1987.<sup>339</sup> Bell came from Narandera and got into the hotel with assistance from his father.<sup>340</sup>

John Desmond Donohue [O'Donoghue?] followed Bell, from 28<sup>th</sup> November 1989, and held the license for some 5 years.<sup>341</sup> J. & M. O'Donoghue Logging Contractors Pty Ltd purchased the freehold from the Bells in November 1989.



John Donohue sold to Irene Joy Boland, with the license transferring to her on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1994,<sup>342</sup> and the freehold transferring a few days later on the 7<sup>th</sup> December to Irene and Phillip Alphonsus Boland.<sup>343</sup> When Irene passed away her partner, John Thomas Hudson, took over the license, in November 2004.<sup>344</sup> The freehold remained with the Estate of Irene Joy Boland until the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 when it was transferred to Robert Nowak.<sup>345</sup>

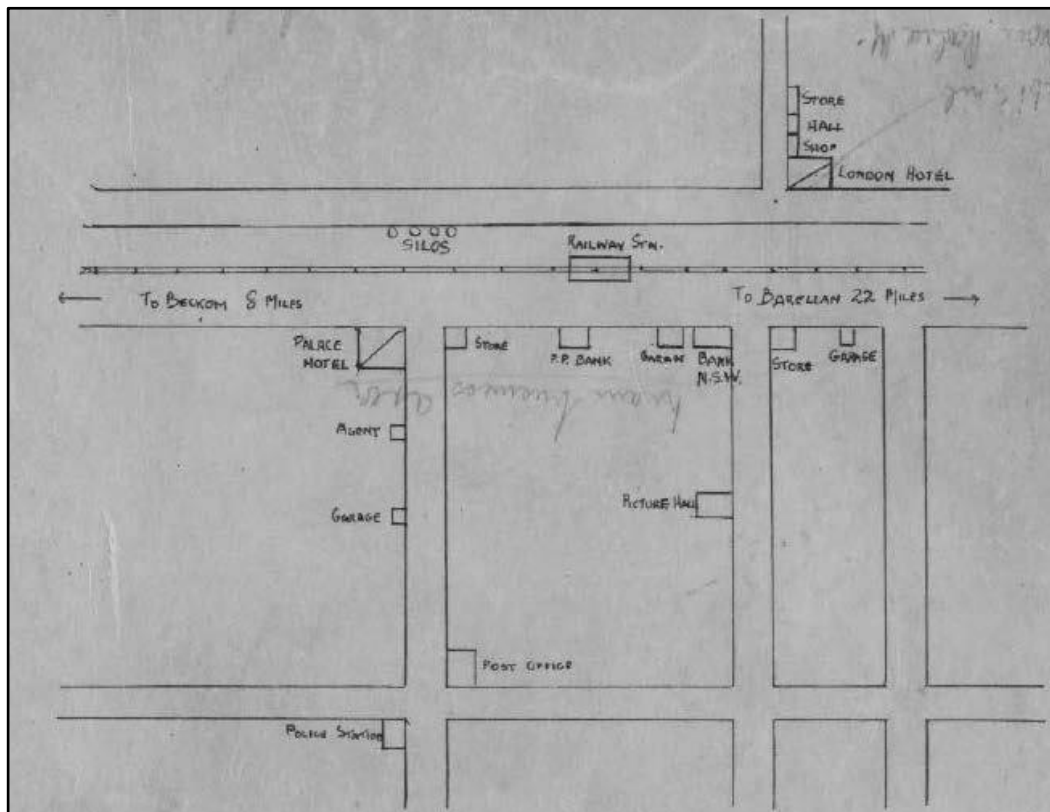
John Hudson purchased his keg beer from Carlton United. He preferred Carlton to Tooth & Co., the latter wanting to know every little thing you did. He purchased his bottled beer from a supplier at Griffith, it being cheaper than what he could purchase from Carlton United.

John Hudson won \$6 million dollars in the NSW State Lottery in December 2008, and only stayed on at the hotel until such time as it could be sold.<sup>346</sup>

Robert Bernard Nowak became the licensee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 and was the current licensee in January 2016.<sup>347</sup>



**Above:** Palace hotel in 2009.



**Above:** Map showing location of prominent buildings in 1929, including the two hotels.  
**Courtesy:** Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.



**Above:** John Hudson in front of the Palace Hotel with Wishbone. Courtesy John Hudson and Jim Slater.

**Below:** John Hudson in the bar of the Palace Hotel. Courtesy John Hudson and Jim Slater



# Ardlethan – Growth & Development.

## Rural development

A primary factor leading to the development of the new township of Ardlethan was the extension of the railway line to Barellan. Arian Park station was opened in 1906 and the line through to Barellan, which included the Ardlethan station, was officially opened in November 1908.

The significance of the railway is exemplified in a banquet held in September 1903<sup>348</sup>. The Minister for Works, Mr. O’Sullivan had, “*turned the first sod of the railway from Temora to Barellan,*” earlier in the year<sup>349</sup> and the purpose of the banquet was a presentation to the local member, Mr. Thomas Fitzpatrick, M.L.A., and Mr. W. Boyd, Secretary of the Warri Railway League. The event was held in the Warri wool shed, some four miles from the Warri homestead, on Friday 12th September. The report noted that the locals went all out to put on a splendid show, which was described as follows:

*“The large wool room was beautifully decorated with green foliage and flags of all nations. Two long tables stretched throughout the length of the hall, and another crossed the end of the building, and at which the guests of the evening, Mr. T. Fitzpatrick, M.L.A., and Mr. W. Boyd, sat on either side of the chairman, Mr. D. Boyd, senr. The tables were beautifully decorated with flowers from Searle Bros, Sydney, and were laden with a menu equal to anything to be seen on a banquet table in this part of the State. The poultry, ham, tongue, salads, jellies, trifle, etc., were all prepared by the ladies, the pastry and fruit being the only viands secured from Sydney.”*

Mr. Humby made the first toast, and in response Fitzpatrick stated that some members of the government considered Humby to be a “*nuisance*”, because he would not take no for an answer. The contribution of Mr. William Boyd was also recognized, he having “*toiled unceasingly for the railway,*” for over ten years. Boyd reminded those present that it was his friend, Mr. Holloway, who had instigated the push, when he called the first meeting of the Warri Railway League in 1895. There can be no doubt as to how significant these leading citizens considered the need for the rail line through to Barellan to be, nor how committed was Mr. Thomas Fitzpatrick who had even left his own shearing to support the push to secure the railway.

There had been a trickle of farmers moving to the Merool district, and to the wider Riverina districts, since the 1880’s, but in the years immediately preceding the establishment of the rail line to Barellan it turned to a constant flow of migrating farmers from Victoria, South Australia, and other areas.

The availability of rail transport induced the breaking up of a number of large runs, and some smaller, resulting in a proliferation of new farms and a healthy increase in local populations, which in turn led to new villages springing up, virtually overnight.<sup>350</sup>

One such subdivision was the property known as the Taylor’s Hill Estate. In June 1907 Messrs. Rowston & Boyd sold the Taylor’s Hill Estate, of some 5,529 acres to a Ganmain syndicate on behalf of the owner Mr. G. Beeby. It was declared that the syndicate’s intention was to subdivide the estate into smaller farms.<sup>351</sup>

It is assumed that the break up commenced shortly afterwards, as in October 1907 Messrs. Rowston & Boyd sold a 320 acre block from the estate to Mr. C. A. Cox.<sup>352</sup>

Rowston & Boyd advertised extensively in South Australia, offering various land in and about the Warri district, around this period, apparently with some success.

In November 1908 Rowston & Boyd advertised the Taylor’s Hill Estate, to be sold by public auction.<sup>353</sup> The estate consisted of some 5,800 acres and was divided into 10 farms of from 320 to 740 acres.<sup>354</sup> By July 1909 it was reported that much of the estate had been taken up by farmers from Victoria & South Australia, who had paid between £3 and £4 per acre, for land that was only worth £1 an acre a few years back.<sup>355</sup> It was this significant increase in land values that saw a number of larger district properties change hands following the opening of the rail line through to Barellan.

The Sydney Morning Herald summarized the development when it reported in December 1908 that, “*Some large properties along the line [railway] are changing hands – presumably the advent of the railway has given them a “rise” – and the class of men who settling there are of the best. Some are Victorians, some South Australians, and they are substituting improved methods for the slipshod ways of earlier days. They fallow and fertilise, and are in a better position if the season is dry.*”<sup>356</sup>

Much of the settled land was timbered with pine and there were several mills taking advantage of this resource as farmers cleared the land, using the timber to build their homes and other structures.<sup>357</sup>

## Village Development

It was the two factors – farm settlement and rail transport – that fed the development of the towns along the rail corridor. The township of Ardlethan started to develop before the rail line was open through to Barellan, in anticipation of the opportunities that would arise.

By 1905 surveyors and others were on site laying out the route of the new railway line.<sup>358</sup> The railway reached Aria Park in 1906, it being the terminus for several years, until the next stage, to Barellan, was opened in 1908.<sup>359</sup>

The village survey (Ardlethan) was completed by surveyor R.W. Meldrum in October 1907, and the village was proclaimed, in the government gazette, on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 1908.<sup>360</sup> The town was first designated Rosebank, but the Department of Railways had changed the station name to Ardlethan by August 1907.<sup>361</sup> It was not until June 1908 that the postal department adopted the same name change.<sup>362</sup>

Early development was gradual with a report in February 1907 highlighting the sparsity of development to date noting that, “*Rosebank Siding, surrounded by a dense pine scrub at present, is an unlikely place for a visitor to find thousands of bags of wheat stacked, waiting for the "iron horse" to come along.*

*The bullock track, which one follows from Warri homestead, is only half a mile to the siding, and Mr Kelly's well known London hotel is only three miles from Rosebank.*”<sup>363</sup>

Some three years later, in January 1910, there is progress but it is limited, it being reported that, “*there has been a land sale and the township of Ardlethan is week by week adding new evidences of civilisation. It now possesses a hotel, three stores, post-office and a sprinkling of little houses, built of sawn pine, which from its pristine character exudes quite a pleasant aroma. The railway station is the scene of daily activity, as the horse and bullock waggons lumber out from the pine scrub to the clearing, and disgorge their grain freights into the shed. Further out settlers are busy felling the forest ready for the plough, and next year nearly all the sidings will be stacked with grain.*”<sup>364</sup>

## Warri Well.

**GPS co-ordinates [H55 East: 0490761 / North: 6197620]**

One of the earliest developments was the Warri Well. In November 1902 the Public Works department accepted a tender for, “*the supply, etc., of one Martin's 14 in galvanised steel aermotor, with appliances complete, for Warri well,*”<sup>365</sup> and in December advised that a test bore for the Warri Well had been completed and that the well was now being “*put down.*” The project was to include a “*tank, pump, and troughing*”.<sup>366</sup> According to Webster the well was established in October 1904.<sup>367</sup>

This was a significant event, as the availability of water for domestic purposes was always an issue in the early days of the town.

The management of the well was to be under lease, by tender. In February 1905 the government invited tenders for a 5 year lease of the Warri well,<sup>368</sup> and in April 1906 it was reported that tenders for the lease of the Warri well would close on 7<sup>th</sup> May. In March 1907 Coolamon Council resolved to call for tenders for leases of both the London tank and the Warri well.<sup>369</sup>

It is not known how many people successfully tendered for the lease during these years, or who they were, but in September 1908 Coolamon Council resolved that if the conditions of the lease of the Warri Well were not fulfilled by the 24<sup>th</sup> instant, that council would take possession and place someone in charge.<sup>370</sup>

A letter to the editor in 1908 confirmed that the council had taken over responsibility for the well. The writer described the well as being the only source of water for domestic purposes, within the town boundaries, and attacked the Coolamon Shire for failing to maintain the well or to respond to the concerns of the local community. He claimed that it was not in a fit state for use by humans. It was uncovered, and a dead carcass had recently been “*hauled up*” from its depths.<sup>371</sup> The issue of a constant, clean water supply would be an issue for many years.

A report in 1907 declared, “*the main problem at Rosebank is drinking water for the men...the government windmill at Warri will not work for want of repair, and the men are using water from Taylor's Hill tank, and it is very bad for drinking.*”<sup>372</sup>

According to *Bohemian* the Warri Well provided “*a splendid supply of good water*” and became a favourite camping ground for navies (railway workers) and horse drivers, with some 150 people camped “*in tents and in tin and bag huts in the clear space adjacent to the well.*”<sup>373</sup>



**Above:** Remnants of the old Warri Well. Photo taken in 2014.

### **Early Businesses.**

According to John Kennedy of Grong Grong, the first store in the area “*was on a miner’s right, south of the present site of the Ardlethan railway station, by the late George Corner who afterwards built more commodious premises opposite where the police station now stand.*”<sup>374</sup> Bohemian also stated that Corner built his store to the south of the railway line.<sup>375</sup>

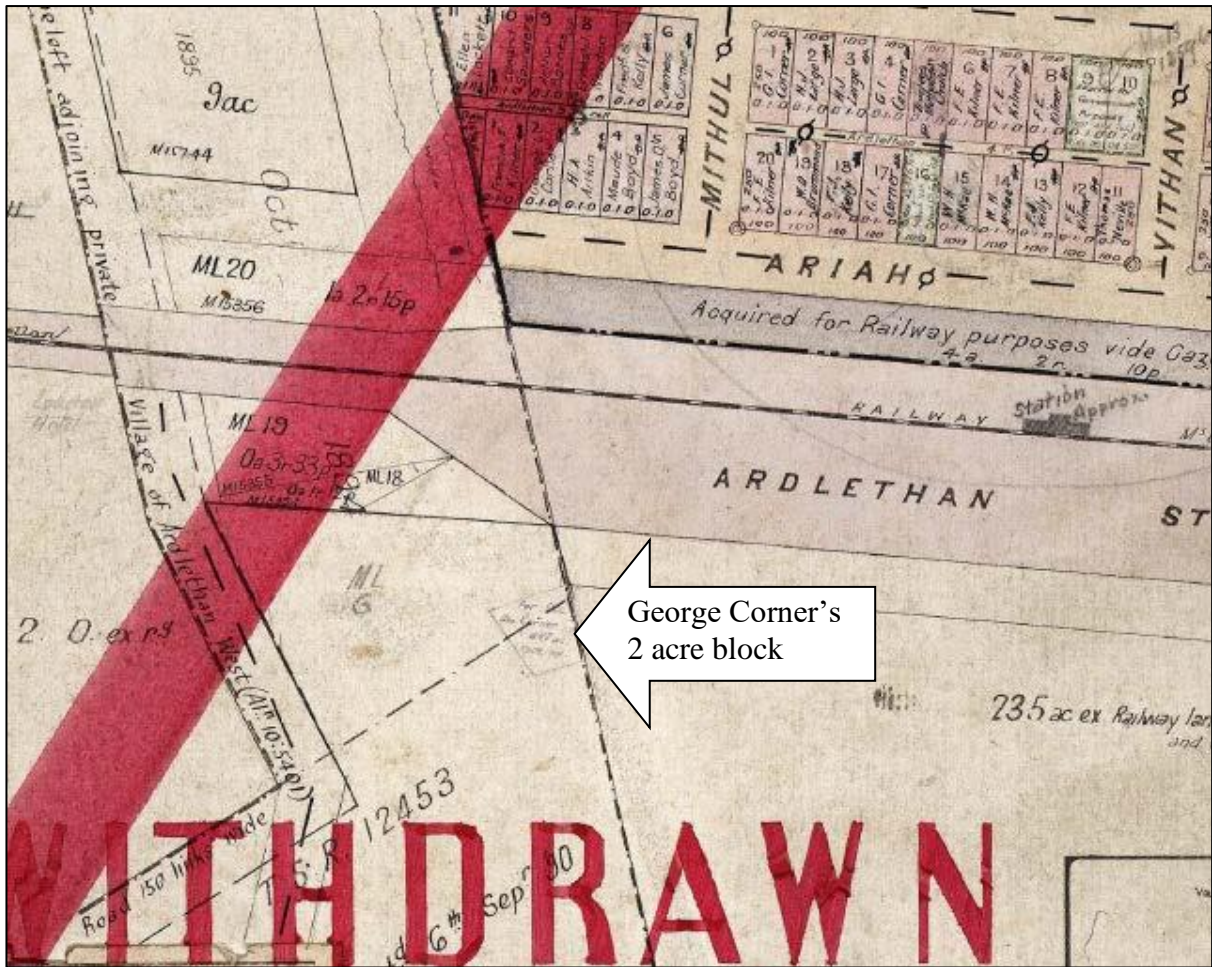
It is stated that prior to setting up at Ardlethan, Corner had a store some three miles north, on the road to Bygoo, on land he had selected.<sup>376</sup> According to *Bohemian* the distance was five miles and the store was established in 1905.<sup>377</sup> The Warri Saw Mill was 3½ miles north of the Warri homestead in 1891<sup>378</sup> and it is assumed that Corner’s first store was in this vicinity and may have been there prior to 1905.

Corner had married Susan Levesque, the daughter of James Stanley Levesque who managed the saw mills at Warri on behalf of his brother in law, Mr. A. G. Humby. Corner worked at the mill and possibly had the support of Levesque in setting up his store nearby.<sup>379</sup>

Humby’s main saw mill, which was situated at North Bolero,<sup>380</sup> was destroyed by fire in November 1901 but Humby rebuilt the mill by September 1903,<sup>381</sup> which was called the Albion Steam Saw Mills.<sup>382</sup> This mill was some twelve miles to the west of Ardlethan.

It has been further stated that when Corner moved to Ardlethan he selected an area of crown land near the Warri Well, “*by virtue of a miner’s right.*”<sup>383</sup>

A report in May 1907 noted that due to the delay by the government in marking out the town, business people had been forced to make other arrangements, and to that end several had set up temporary premises on the stock route. At the time there was a general store [this would have been Corner’s store], and a butcher shop open, with a second store about to be built.<sup>384</sup>



**Above:** 1908 village map with small area marked as “George Corner, about 2 acres” [text is faded, but confident this is a correct reading of the text]. Courtesy NSW Land & property Information.

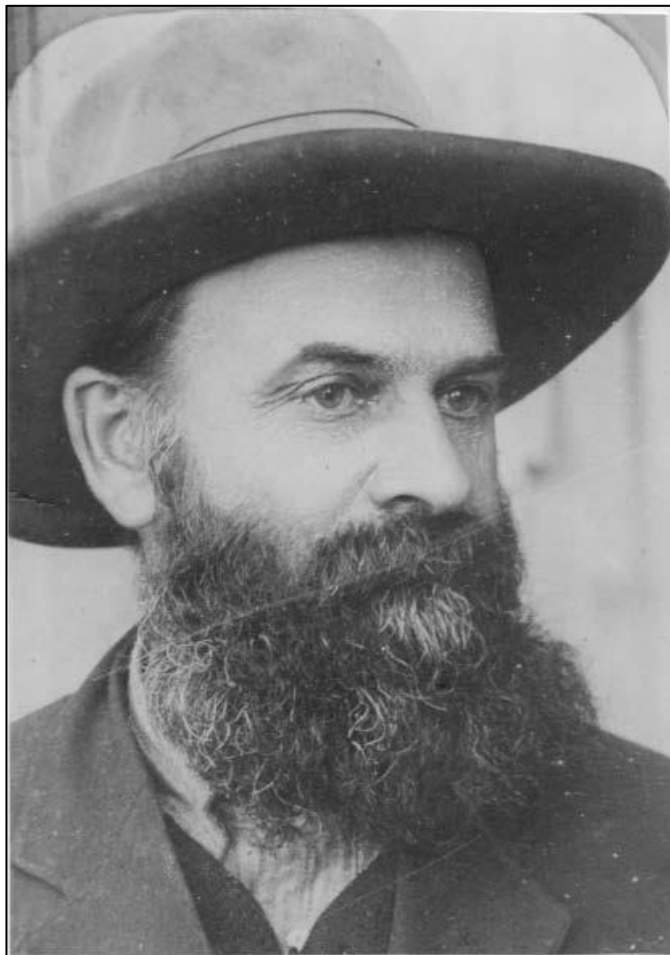


**Above:** George Corner’s first store at Ardlethan. Established c.1906. The building to the right is Corner’s residence. The gentleman to the left of the white horse is George Corner. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater

## George Corner.

George Corner passed away on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1944. An obituary in the Narandera Argus provided the following biographical details:

*“One of Ardlethan's pioneers, Mr. George Ive Corner, passed away at the Windsor District Hospital on 2<sup>nd</sup> November (sic) [should read October]. Deceased, who was 77 years of age, was one of the earliest residents of Ardlethan, and the first man to start a business in the town. His early surmise that the district would go ahead led him to purchase many building sites in the village. Mr. Corner was born at Red Castle, Victoria, and went to Ardlethan in 1892 and 47 years ago he married Susan Levesque, who survives him. After leaving Ardlethan he lived at Haberfield and later at Pitt Town.”*<sup>385</sup>



It is claimed that Corner worked at Humby's sawmill and that he selected land in the area, which was owned by Mr. Barry Carroll in more contemporary times. Corner built a home there which morphed into a store as well. This early house/store was later moved to sit alongside his new store in Ardlethan.<sup>386</sup>

Corner purchased a property on the Hawkesbury River around 1919, and lived in the district up until the time of his death. The locals at Pitt Town considered him to be, “one of our most esteemed residents”, and claimed that George had, “helped to pioneer wheat growing in the Ardlethan district.”

George was survived by his wife, three daughters and three sons. His last years were spent at Pitt Town and it was there that his daughter Dorothy had looked after him during two years of poor health. Another daughter, Daisy also resided at Pitt Town. The third daughter, Gladys Baker, lived in Beckom with her husband who was a mechanical engineer. His three sons, William and Reginald of Pitt Town, and Ralph of Hurstville, had all moved away from Ardlethan.<sup>387</sup>

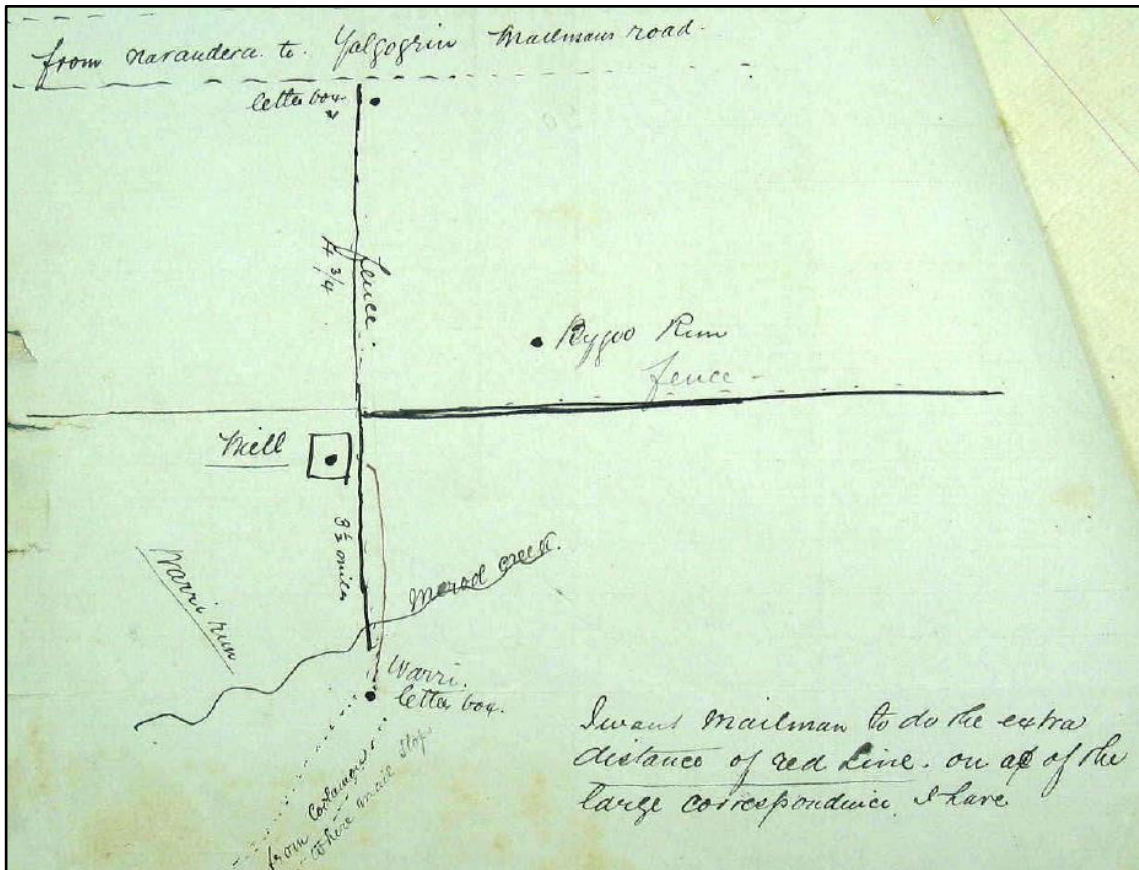
**Left:** George Corner. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater

## Postal Services.

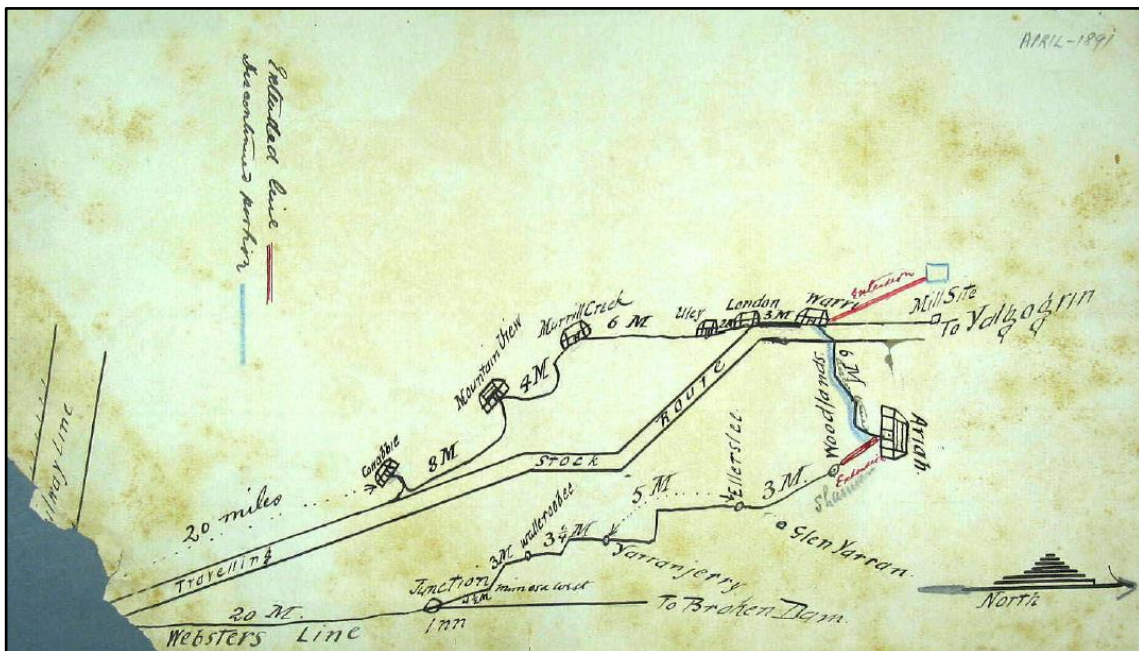
The earliest mail services in the region date back to the 1860's and 1870's,<sup>388</sup> and in 1884, there was a mail run that left from Wagga Wagga every Wednesday via Coolamon, Warri, Murril Creek, Ariaiah and then onto Broken Dam,<sup>389</sup> but there were no post offices in any of these towns except Coolamon, which was established in 1881.<sup>390</sup>

The services did improve (frequency and quality) and in 1891 James Cartwright was the successful tenderer of mail services for the route Coolamon, Uley and Warri Sawmill via Cowabee, Murril Creek and Warri [sic], commencing the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1892. His contract was for 3 years at the rate of £140 per annum.<sup>391</sup>

Earlier in the year (1891) Mr. J. S. Levesque, sawmill manager, wrote to the postal department requesting that the mail run, which then went as far as the Warri homestead (via Aria homestead), be extended another 3.5 miles north to Humby's timber mill.<sup>392</sup> Cartwright agreed to the changes and the postal department changed the run so that it ran from Coolamon, every Wednesday, via Cowabee, Murril Creek, Warri and Warri Sawmill, starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1891. The return trip occurred on the following Sunday. Ariaiah homestead was now covered by a run from Coolamon via Broken Dam.<sup>393</sup>



Above: A hand drawn map by Lévesque, showing the route he was requesting.<sup>394</sup>  
 Courtesy: National Archives.



Above: A 2<sup>nd</sup> drawing showing the planned changes to the mail route. The red markings show proposed extensions, while the blue line shows a section to be discontinued.<sup>395</sup> Courtesy: National Archives

Before the month was out (April), Levesque and then Humby were writing to the department requesting a thrice weekly delivery direct from Grong Grong. A petition from more than 50 people – mostly from Coolamon – opposed the changes.<sup>396</sup> Both groups appear to have been looking after their own interests.



In October 1891, Humby wrote asking for a post office to be established at his Warri saw mills. He advised that there were some one hundred and twenty people at the site and that the education department had established a school there. He also highlighted the need to access money orders etc. Humby offered to provide “*the office accommodation*”, and to personally supervise the necessary arrangements. The department was prepared to consider establishing a “*receiving office*” subject to Humby recommending a suitable person to run the office. Humby nominated his wife and the department subsequently confirmed Mrs. Humby as the “*receiving office keeper*” for the Warri Saw Mills office.<sup>397</sup>

Humby moved his saw mill further north in May 1893 and attempted to have the receiving office moved with him, but the department declined with an officer noting, “*I certainly cannot see reason why Mr. Humby should be presented with £5 a year for conducting a R. O. [receiving office] for the benefit of himself and employees.*” Before the month was out the office was closed and Mrs. Humby had returned the left over “*stores.*”<sup>398</sup>

By early 1905 there were calls for a receiving office to be established at the Warri homestead and by the end of that year funds were available and Mr. W. H. McRae was confirmed as the receiving office keeper at the Warri Station.<sup>399</sup>

In mid 1907 the local Progress Association wrote to the Postmaster general asking for their local receiving office to be upgraded to a full post office, able to issue postal notes and money orders, with a branch of the Government Savings Bank attached.<sup>400</sup>

In July 1907 McRae advised that the property on which the receiving office was located (Warri Station) had been sold and he sought permission to transfer the receiving office, “*to the store where he is working pending the building of a place of his own.*” McRae subsequently advised that he was able to remain, “*in the present premises pending the erection of his new building*”, which he claimed would be “*opposite the Warri Railway Station.*”<sup>401</sup>

It was in the same year that George Corner allegedly contemplated a move to have the receiving office removed to his store, but the postal department advised concerned residents that no such request had been lodged by Corner and that it had been decided to establish a Post Office (as distinct from a receiving office) at Warri, “*at the temporary building erected by Mr. McRae, near the Warri Railway Station, pending erection of more suitable premises, after the town allotments are made available.*”<sup>402</sup> The temporary building would have been in the private township.

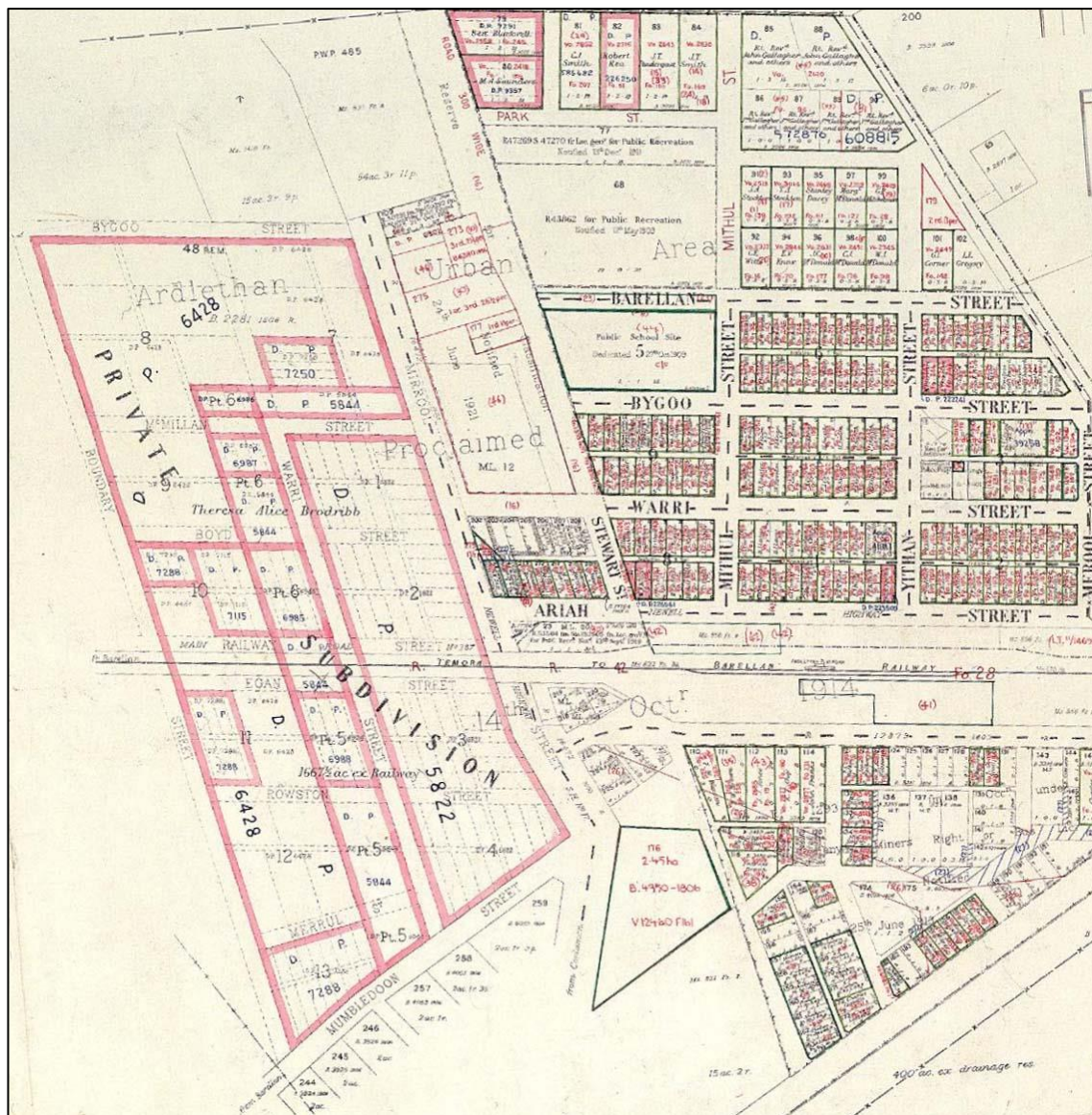
McRae moved the post office to a new building in Aria Street in 1908, and the most contemporary post office, at the corner of Yithan and Warri Streets, was erected around 1916.



**Above:** Ardlethan Post Office at corner of Yithan and Warri Streets. Courtesy National Archives of Australia. Image # B5919, 4/217. Post 1915.

## The Private Township.

In 1907 Rowston, Boyd & Egan had ownership of the land to the west of Mirrool street, contained within their purchase of the Warri run, and they subdivided this land into sixty two allotments – thirty to the south of the railway line and thirty two to the north. The first sale of these allotments took place in October 1907, before the official village had even been surveyed.<sup>403</sup>



**Above:** Extract from 1953 map of the village of Ardlethan showing the “private town” to the west of the official village. **Courtesy:** Land & Property Information.

Sales of these allotments were primarily confined to the southern allotments, with most businesses establishing themselves along Mirrool Street, south of what would become the London hotel site. One of the first such businesses was that of Kennedy & Kelly, stock & station agents, who built approximately halfway between the London hotel site and the Rowston street corner, in 1907. Further south was a boarding house run by Mrs. Barnes and her daughters.<sup>404</sup>

The town’s first post office was erected in the private township by September 1907. Originally a receiving office it was elevated to the status of post office in the following month.<sup>405</sup> The post office relocated to new premises in Ariah Street a year later.<sup>406</sup>

**Important Sale of Township  
Blocks.**

BY AUCTION.

WEDNESDAY, 9th OCTOBER, 1907.

**MESSERS ROWSTON & BOYD,** of  
Ganmain, will sell by public  
auction at the

**LONDON HOTEL, WARRI,**

62 TOWNSHIP ALLOTMENTS. Also  
a number of 2-Acre Blocks at  
Ardlethan Township (late Ross-  
bank), on the Temora-Barrollan  
line.

Trains run from Temora on Tuesdays,  
Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Sale to commence at 2 o'clock.

**NO RESERVE. VERY EASY TERMS.**

Write to **ROWSTON & BOYD,** Auctioneers,  
Ganmain, for Lithographs of blocks for sale.

Traps will leave Coolamon and Ganmain  
after arrival of morning train on day of  
sale.

**ROWSTON & BOYD,**  
Auctioneers, Ganmain.

There were two stores in 1907 – both located in temporary premises, on Crown land.<sup>407</sup> These would have been those of George Corner and Ah Hem. There were also a butcher's shop and a baker's shop, also on Crown land.<sup>408</sup>

A School of Arts Committee was formed in 1907, at a meeting held in the old London hotel on the 26<sup>th</sup> October. The Warri Progress Committee met same day, same location, and it was recorded that Rowston, Boyd & Egan had donated a site for a School of Arts in the Ardlethan West private township.<sup>409</sup>

Left: Sale of town lots in Ardlethan. Courtesy Wagga Wagga Advertiser.<sup>410</sup>



Above: Shops in the private township during flooding. L to R: Kirby's Model Stores, Barrett's Cash Stores, Capital Hall and the Star Picture Theatre. The London hotel would be to the right of the picture. Courtesy Jim Slater.



**Above: Location of early businesses in the private township.**  
 Courtesy Google Earth

## The Government Village.

The first sale of allotments in the official village took place on Tuesday 14th April 1908.<sup>411</sup> The lots on offer were as follows:

Section 1 – allotments 1-8, 11-15, 17-20

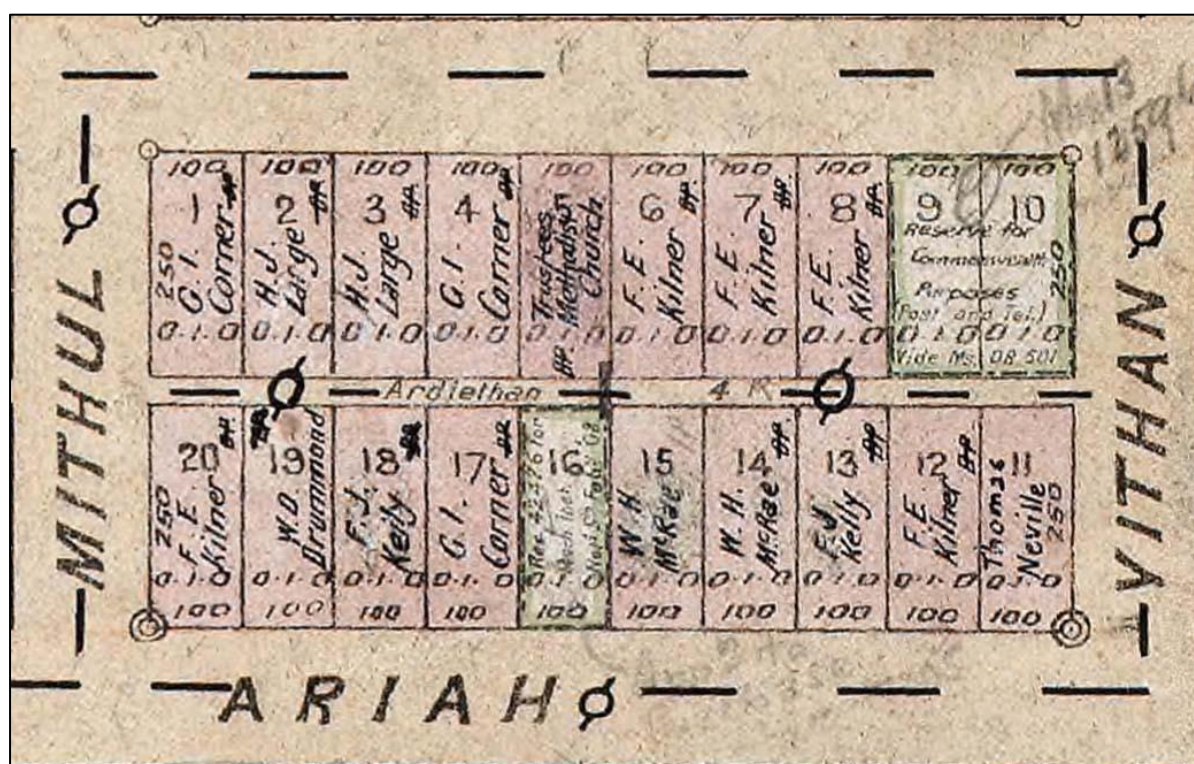
Section 2 – allotments 1-20

Section 4 – allotments 1-20

A total of fifty seven lots were available for purchase.<sup>412</sup>

According to one report there were very few local buyers with the principal buyer being a Mr. Kilner,<sup>413</sup> of Bondi, Sydney. The highest prices paid were £48, £42 and £37,<sup>414</sup> per quarter acre block.<sup>415</sup> Kilner purchased thirteen allotments, G. M. [G. I.] Corner purchased three allotments, as did Jane [Irene] L. Smith and C. Aleore (sic), whilst H. J. Large, F. J. Kelly and J. E. Ranstone [Rowston] purchased two lots each.<sup>416</sup> About twenty eight lots were passed in, some of which were subsequently applied for.

The first purchasers of the individual allotments are recorded on the 1908 village map and these details can be seen in the following extracts from that map:



**Above:** Extract from 1908 village map – section 1. Bounded by Mithul, Ariah, Yithan and Warri Streets.

**Courtesy:** Land & Property Information.

**Below:** List of purchasers – section 1.

Allotment #	Purchaser	Allotment #	Purchaser
1	G. I. Corner	11	Thomas Neville
2	H. J. Large	12	F. E. Kilner
3	H. J. Large	13	F. J. Kelly
4	G. I. Corner	14	W. H. McRae
5	Trustees - Methodist Church	15	W. H. McRae
6	F. E. Kilner	16	Dedicated - Mechanics Institute
7	F. E. Kilner	17	G. I. Corner
8	F. E. Kilner	18	F. J. Kelly
9	Reserved for community	19	W. D. Drummond
10	Reserved for community	20	F. E. Kilner

### Section 1 Businesses:

Allotment 1 - To be determined

Allotment 2 - To be determined

Allotment 3 - To be determined

Allotment 4 - To be determined

Allotment 5 – Originally purchased by the Methodist Church, but then sold to the CWA who built restrooms there in the 1930's.<sup>417</sup>

Allotment 6 - The towns first butcher shop built by George Corner.<sup>418</sup>

Allotment 7 - To be determined

Allotment 8 - To be determined

Allotment 9 – Post Office.

Allotment 10 – Post Office.

Allotment 11 - George Neville's drapery and hairdressers shops. Later the Railway Stores.<sup>419</sup>

Allotment 12 - To be determined

Allotment 13a - B. W. Bean's bakery.<sup>420</sup>

Allotment 13b - R. Sheedy's saddlery (removed from Mirrool Street?)<sup>421</sup>

Allotment 14 - Residence of J. H. McRae and post office.<sup>422</sup>

Allotment 15a - Shop (large) – Farmer's Supply Company.<sup>423</sup>

Allotment 15b - Shop (small) – Lindley Walker – wheat buyers.<sup>424</sup>

Allotment 15c - Shop (large) – Cassim's Refreshment Rooms, Fruiterers & Greengrocers.<sup>425</sup>

Allotment 16 - Dedicated for Mechanics Institute.

Allotment 17a - Shop - Frank Brown's newsagency – the towns first.<sup>426</sup>

Allotment 17b - Shop - Ryan & Kenny's bakery.<sup>427</sup>

Allotment 17c – Shop - David McCallum's butchery (erected in 1913).<sup>428</sup>

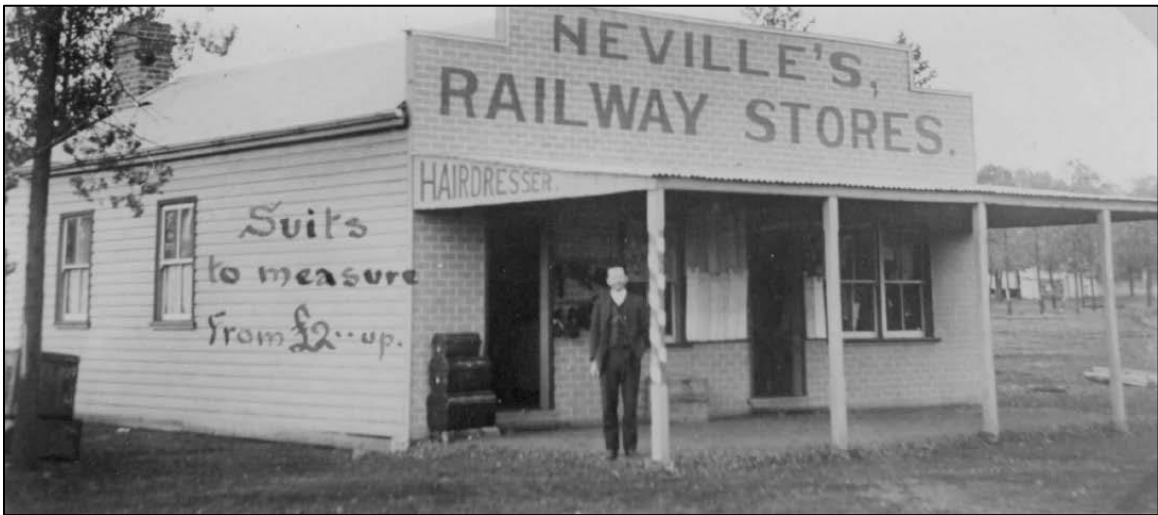
Allotment 18 - To be determined

Allotment 19 – P. J. Kirby & Sons.<sup>429</sup>

Allotment 20 - Bank of NSW – bank & residence (erected in 1914) . The property was acquired by the bank from F. E. Kilner in 1911.<sup>430</sup>



**Above:** The Up To Date bakery in Warri Street. Courtesy Jim Slater.



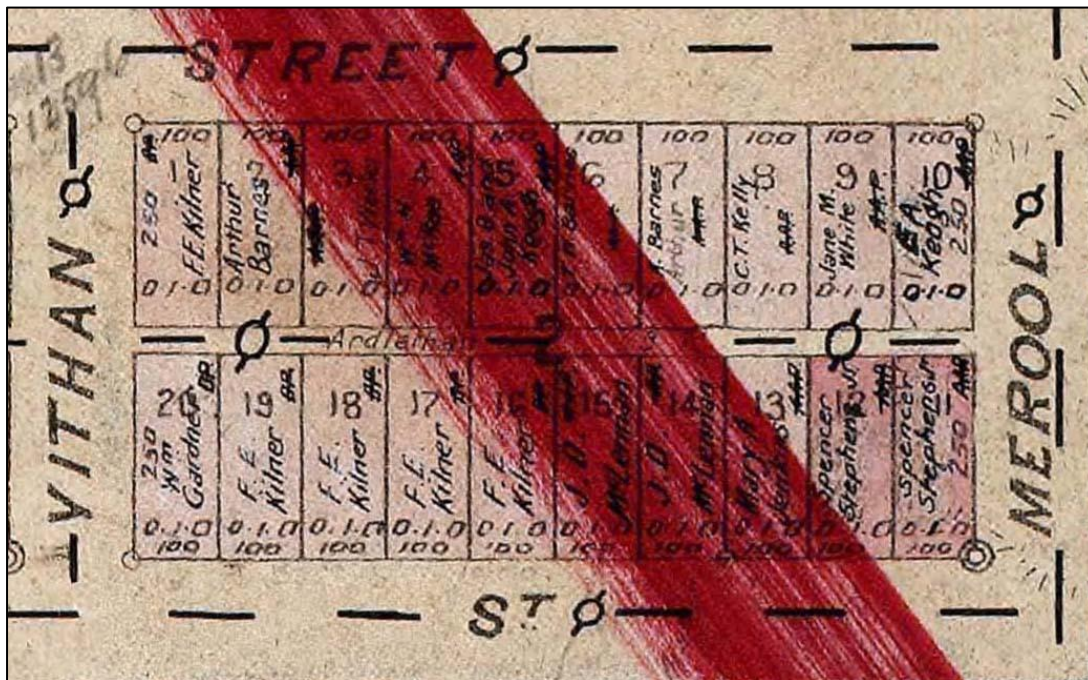
**Above:** George Neville's Railway Stores – section 1. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater



**Above:** Ryan & Kenny, Bakers & Fruiterers – section 1. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater



**Above:** Sheedy's saddlery in Arianh Street (section 1). **Courtesy:** Jim Slater.



**Above:** Extract from 1908 village map – section 2. Bounded by Yithan, Ariah, Merool [now Hawthorne Parade] and Warri Streets. **Courtesy:** Land & Property Information.

**Below:** List of purchasers – section 2.

Allotment #	Purchaser	Allotment #	Purchaser
1	F. E. Kilner	11	Spencer Stephens
2	Arthur Barnes	12	Spencer Stephens
3	J. T. Weeks	13	Mary A. Jenkins
4	W. H. McRae	14	J. D. McLennan
5	James B. & John A. Keogh	15	J. D. McLennan
6	T. W. Barnes	16	F. E. Kilner
7	Arthur Barnes	17	F. E. Kilner
8	C. T. Kelly	18	F. E. Kilner
9	Jane M. White	19	F. E. Kilner
10	E. A. Keogh	20	William Gardner

### Section 2 Businesses:

Allotment 1 - To be determined

Allotment 2 - To be determined

Allotment 3 - To be determined

Allotment 4 - To be determined

Allotment 5 - To be determined

Allotment 6 - To be determined

Allotment 7 - To be determined

Allotment 8 - To be determined

Allotment 9 - To be determined

Allotment 10 - To be determined

Allotment 11 - To be determined

Allotment 12 - To be determined

Allotment 13 - April 1908 –applied for by Mary A. Jenkins - post auction.<sup>431</sup>

Allotment 14 - To be determined

Allotment 15 - April 1908 –applied for by J. D. McLeonard - post auction.<sup>432</sup>

Allotment 16 - To be determined

Allotment 17 - To be determined

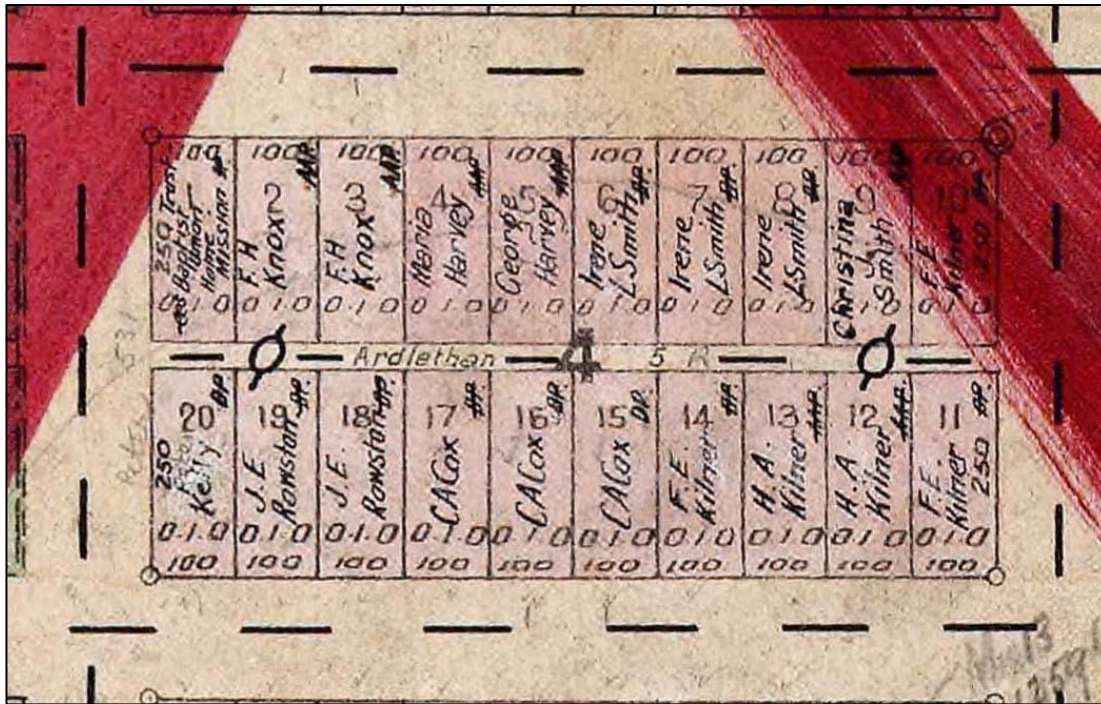
Allotment 18 - To be determined

Allotment 19 - To be determined

Allotment 20 - Corner's Coffee Palace<sup>433</sup>

Further east of the Coffee Palace were a smithy (1917), Edward Rath's coach paint shop, then joinery and timber yards of Stanley (Sid) Dacey, with a residence next door.<sup>434</sup>





**Above:** Extract from 1908 village map – section 4. Bounded by Mithul, Warri, Yithan and Bygoo Streets.  
**Courtesy:** Land & Property Information.

**Below:** List of purchasers – section 4.

Allotment #	Purchaser	Allotment #	Purchaser
1	Trustees Baptist Union Home Mission	11	F. E. Kilner
2	F. H. Knox	12	H. A. Kilner
3	F. H. Knox	13	H. A. Kilner
4	Maria Harvey	14	F. E. Kilner
5	George Harvey	15	C. A. Cox
6	Irene L. Smith	16	C. A. Cox
7	Irene L. Smith	17	C. A. Cox
8	Irene L. Smith	18	J. E. Rowston
9	Christina Smith	19	J. E. Rowston
10	F. E. Kilner	20	Peter Kelly

**Section 4 Businesses:**

- Allotment 1 - To be determined
- Allotment 2 - To be determined
- Allotment 3 - To be determined
- Allotment 4 - To be determined
- Allotment 5 - To be determined
- Allotment 6 - To be determined
- Allotment 7 - To be determined
- Allotment 8 - To be determined
- Allotment 9 - To be determined
- Allotment 10 - To be determined

Allotment 11 & 12 - Corner moved his store, from the Warri Well area, to this section, cnr of Yithan and Warri streets. It is thought that he built on allotment 12 first and then built better premises on allot. 11 (cnr block).<sup>435</sup>

Allotment 13 - Allotments 12 & 13 – April 1908 - applied for by A. Kilner - post auction.<sup>436</sup>

- Allotment 14 - To be determined
- Allotment 15 - To be determined
- Allotment 16 - To be determined
- Allotment 17 - To be determined
- Allotment 18 - To be determined
- Allotment 19 - To be determined

Allotment 20 - April 1908 – applied for by J. Kelly - post auction.<sup>437</sup>

On the day of the sale a reporter noted that George Corner and Ah Hem were still operating their stores to the south of the railway line. He had a cup of tea at Mr. Corner's before moving over to the town where the sale took place. As a consequence of the sale a number of developments were confirmed. Mr. Moriarty was erecting a large general store and dwelling house on his block, no.17. Mr. J. H. Coulter was pegging out a site for a large produce store on the adjoining block, while Mr. S. Cook was building a blacksmith's shop 50 x 20, and Mr. E. Pratt's dwelling was almost finished. All of these structures were on newly purchased township blocks.<sup>438</sup> As can be seen, none of these persons were original purchasers of allotments within the government village.

The post master, W. H. McRae purchased allotments 14 & 15 of section 1, facing Arianh Street,<sup>439</sup> erecting shops and an adjoining residence thereon. The post office business was relocated to these premises (1908). The house was to the east, with entry to the post office off the western end of the house verandah. Businesses to the west (McRae's shops) were firstly a large shop, the Farmer's Supply Company, then a small shop occupied by Lindley Walker, wheat buyers, and lastly a large shop housing Cassim's Refreshment Rooms, Fruiterers & Greengrocers.<sup>440</sup>



**Above:** The Bank of NSW in Arianh Street. Erected in 1914. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater.

## **Progress.**

1908, 18<sup>th</sup> November - regular rail services are now operating following the official opening of the rail line on the 18<sup>th</sup> November.<sup>441</sup>

1909, July - Only "*a few business places*" at Ardlethan, the main one being George Corner's store, which was said to compare favourably with "*many in large centres.*"<sup>442</sup> The locals had commenced the erection of a hall sixty feet by twenty five feet, which was expected to be officially opened on the 6<sup>th</sup> August. There was a small School of Arts building made of pine, described as being "*a laughing joke to some people,*" with an expectation that it would be replaced, with a finer brick building, when finances permitted. There were no accommodation facilities for travelers or visitors, but there was an expectation that the license for the old London hotel would be transferred to a newer building in town shortly [construction of the new hotel having started in 1908].<sup>443</sup> This description would apply to the private town.



**Above:** The old hall, or school of arts in the private township. This building had been erected by August 1909 and its dimensions were stated to be 20ft x 12ft.<sup>444</sup> The first public hall, as distinct from a School of Arts, was also built in 1909, in Warri Street near its intersection with Yithan Street.<sup>445</sup> **Photo Courtesy:** Jim Slater.

1909, August - In August 1909 there was notification in the government gazette of a proposal to establish a new public school at Ardlethan.<sup>446</sup>

P. J. Kirby opened his general store in 1909<sup>447</sup>, also to the south of the London hotel, near Mrs. Barnes's boarding house.<sup>448</sup> This store was situated at the corner of Rowston & Mirrool Streets.<sup>449</sup>  
 1909, December - new race club started at Ardlethan. President is Mr. R. D. Boyd.<sup>450</sup>

1910, January – Mr. Boyd's new London hotel now open. The building was brick with an iron roof and contained fourteen rooms.<sup>451</sup>

1910, February – Mr. T. Neville has recently erected a new shop & dwelling at Ardlethan, from which he operates a draper, mercer, jeweler, boot & shoe business. He also operates a hairdressers business in the adjoining shop.<sup>452</sup> (official town).



**Above:** The Ardlethan court house and warden's court - in the old private township. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater.



**Above:** Enoch Richen's blacksmiths shop in Rowston Street. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater

1910, March - agency for Bank of NSW established at Ardlethan.<sup>453</sup> (private town).

1910, August - Ardlethan described as being at the junction of four stock routes (to Wagga, Coolamon, Borellan, and Yalgogrin<sup>454</sup>). The license for the old London hotel had been transferred to the new London hotel at Ardlethan. There were three stores, a bank, and "*several other businesses*" in the town and Mr. Lincoln, of Narandera, was about to erect four new shops.<sup>455</sup>

One of the other businesses would have been the Olympia café which was opened in 1910 by E. M. Michael, Harry Cassim, and J. Paspalas.<sup>456</sup>



**Above:** The original Bank of NSW building in Mirrool Street (to the south of the London hotel). This building destroyed by fire in 1914. The new building which superseded the old was erected in Ariah Street.

**Courtesy:** Jim Slater.

1910, September - two shops and a billiard room being erected in Mirrool street for Mr. T. Lincoln of Narandera. The new School of Arts is going ahead – the frame being almost completed, but waiting on delivery of timber.<sup>457</sup> Lincoln's buildings were possibly the following businesses: George Jackson's tailor shop: Mrs. Ledger's boarding house: Steepe Bros' bootery, and the billiard room.<sup>458</sup>

1910, November 5<sup>th</sup> – Mr. G. A. McLean, night officer at Uranquinty railway station has been appointed to the position of station master at Ardlethan.<sup>459</sup>

1910, November – the town now has a hotel, a bank, a school, and half a dozen stores.<sup>460</sup> Presumably the bank was the Bank of NSW, which was certainly established by March 1911.<sup>461</sup>

1911, May – the post master is having a new place put up and a residence. Shortage of timber causing delays – most of the timber being shipped to Sydney. [The local school building was erected by now as a meeting was held in same].<sup>462</sup>

1911, May – First sitting of the Small Debts and Police Court at Ardlethan on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May. This was the opening of the court there.<sup>463</sup>

1911, June – G. H. Corner sells his store to Mr. Mitchell of Cootamundra.<sup>464</sup>

1911, July – A new School of Arts opened in Rowston street.<sup>465</sup> This was apparently designed by Mr. Rahnerfeuner of Wyalong and was erected in Rowston Street in 1910. Its dimensions were 56ft x 28ft. This building succeeded the smaller 1909 building and presumably did so until the Soldiers' Memorial School of Arts was erected in Aria Street in 1924.<sup>466</sup>



**Above:** P. J. Kirby's first store, located in Mirrool Street adjacent to (north of) Mrs. Barnes' accommodation house. P. J. Kirby is the man on the extreme left. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater.



**Left:** Kirby's Model Stores, located at the corner of Mirrool and Rowston Streets. These buildings were destroyed by fire in 1935, after which the business was transferred to new premises in Aria Street. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater

1911, July – the town now has two bakers shops, three stores, one hairdresser’s shop, saddler’s shop, three fruit shops, two wheelwrights, hotel, public school, public hall, school of arts, brick kiln, post office, and railway station. The greatest drawback for the town is a lack of water. A 5,000 yard tank has been excavated, not far from the public school, and it is hoped there will be plenty of water once it is filled. There were between forty and fifty children attending school and the teacher was Mr. Cahill.<sup>467</sup>

1911, August – the station master’s house is in course of erection.<sup>468</sup> It is said to be a decided improvement [presumably there was an earlier structure].<sup>469</sup>

1911, August – Boyd has almost completed his additions to the London hotel.<sup>470</sup>

1911, December – Foundation stone of the Baptist church at Ardlethan will be laid on the 9<sup>th</sup> December.<sup>471</sup>

It was in 1912 that tin mining fever took control of Ardlethan. Up until this point the town had slowly progressed, but it was the discovery of substantial tin deposits that catapulted the town into a major growth period. Large numbers of people and capital poured into the town. The original discoveries were some 3 miles to the north-west of Ardlethan, being the White Crystal and Carpathia Mines, both of which delivered phenomenal yields. A report in 1915, by Mr. J. R. Godfrey, B.A., Inspector of Mines,<sup>472</sup> highlighted the fact that there had been an excessive reaction to the discoveries, “*in which hundreds of leases were taken up, many of them containing no minerals of any economic value.*” Godfrey was of the view that, “*The boom was an unfortunate incident in the history of the field,*” that had, “*injured its progress to a most serious extent.*” Godfrey described the field as running north south in a granite belt some twelve miles long and four miles wide, extending from Bald Hill in the south, “*through Mount Charles and Taylor’s Hill to Dumbrell’s Bygoo at the extreme north end.*”

The town, like the mines, would be subject to contrasting periods of *boom and bust*.

1912- Mitchelmore’s store, opposite the post office, was opened in 1912. In the same year Percy Barf and his wife opened a mixed business on the corner of Bygoo road and Warri Street. They later built a hall nearby naming it *Barf’s Coliseum*.<sup>473</sup> P. J. Kirby erected larger premises in 1912, at the corner of Mirrool and Rowston streets, making it the largest department store in the town, and one that could accommodate the increase in business generated by the mining rush.<sup>474</sup>

There was a small fruit shop at the corner of Mirrool Street and The Willows road thought to be run by Mr. Fred Stroh. The Bank of NSW adjoined the London hotel (to the south) in weatherboard premises, along with the saddlery shop of R. Sheedy.<sup>475</sup>



**Above:** The cycle and hairdressing saloon of Mr. Thomas Lockett, located in Rowston Street (private town). Lockett sold to Mr. & Mrs. Percy Barf shortly before the building was destroyed by fire in 1912.

1912, June 28<sup>th</sup> – new Presbyterian Church at Ardlethan officially opened on this day. Estimated cost was £500. £300 raised so far. Building described as “*gothic in style and lined with fibrous cement*”, occupying a commanding site. Contractors were Messrs. MacLean & Co. There was no church building before this, with services for the past twenty years being held at various homesteads.<sup>476</sup>

1912, October – fire at Mrs. Kelly’s boarding house at the corner of Merool [Mirrool] & Mumbledore streets, Ardlethan. The fire spread to two adjoining buildings, occupied as shops and dwellings by Mr. P. Bennett, coach trimmer and boot shop, and Mr. P. Barf, hairdresser and tobacconist. Fears were expressed for Mr. P. J. Kirby’s general store at one stage, but fortunately a chain wide street intervened...All three buildings were reduced to ashes. Mrs. Kelly lost everything but the other two were able to get most of their effects out before it was too late. The buildings were owned by Mrs. H. Saunders.<sup>477</sup>



**Above:** Mrs. Kelly’s boarding house before it was burnt down. **Courtesy:** Jim Slater

1913 – May – *“The field as well as the township of Ardlethan is entirely dependent upon one Government Tank at the Township for its water supply. There are ideal catches for tanks and dams on the fields. At a very small outlay the gully between Taylor's Hill and the 'Commonwealth' could be made to hold sufficient water for the present population. For a permanent supply one undoubtedly looks to the river at or near Narandera, which only means pipe-laying for about forty-two miles, 'in the light of the difficulties which had to be surmounted before Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie could be supplied with water, this is indeed a flea-bite.”*<sup>478</sup>

, further that the locals had established,

*“a Progress Association. The latter body is to move immediately in the direction of water supply, school, roads, hospital, and last but not least, sanitary arrangements, the last of which is a constant menace to public health, and at any moment may cause epidemic. A serious inconvenience is the scarcity of hotel accommodation. The township of Ardlethan is limited to one licensed house and a coffee palace. The field is provided with four boarding houses, for meals only. Residents live in tents, and visitors have either to provide their own tents and nap, or take the precarious pot luck offered by the Ardlethan Hotel or Coffee Palace. It is said that fifteen applications for hotel licenses have been lodged, the applicants being prepared to spend from £ 10,000 to £30,000 on their buildings. There is ample room for two good hotels, in addition to the one in existence, and if due regard is paid to public convenience the Bench should see their way to issuing at least two new licenses. The present condition amounts to a monopoly of the worst kind.”*<sup>479</sup>

1913 – May – *“Ardlethan at Last.*

*Ardlethan at last! There is comparative hustle here, but nothing to indicate a mining boom. "Cab, sir, for the hotel?" We hadn't seen a vehicle of any description since leaving Temora - it was a Saturday, and everyone had evidently "knocked off." To be candid, we were a bit taken aback to find no one awaiting our arrival with precise directions, as we were led to believe that at least sleeping accommodation had been secured. Ardlethan by comparison with the other stations, is a pretentious but very scattered township. It is difficult to realise what things were like before the start of mining operations in the district about nine months ago. With an eye to land*

values, the station site fell a quarter of a mile short of the established hotel, and the Government it may be assumed, with an eye fixed on the business end of things, laid out a township "on its own." But so far no license has been granted within this area.

We elected to "try" the hotel, only to find that there was "no hope" of getting even a bed in such comparatively palatial quarters. The ever-merry boniface, however, proved sympathetic, and accompanied us to the Coffee Palace, opposite the station, where, after a little skillful finessing, we secured very comfortable quarters. There, were beds everywhere, and one was reminded of his early-day experiences on the Barrier. It wasn't, however, so much a rush for as it was a lamentable lack of accommodation. The influx of visitors per train was insignificant, and if any semblance of a rush set in the storage sheds at the railway would have to be utilised as sleeping quarters. A number of buildings are in course of erection, but everyone connected therewith has to take on a double risk - of the boom bursting and of a rival township being surveyed on the tinfields proper, three miles away. Already there are three or more applications for licenses, and it is expected that one will be granted at the existing hostelry a number of extra, rooms are being built. One wonders what will happen should the field prove a duffer and normal conditions be restored. In the case of Silverton, Broken Hill proved a lucrative dumping-ground for all surplus buildings; but Ardlethan has but one string to its bow. The wheat fields are extensive, with occasional runs of "ridgy" country intervening, and the homesteads are few and far between. It would, therefore, be a difficult matter, to find buyers for surplus buildings that may be erected on the strength of the mining industry temporarily usurping the wheat interests of the district.<sup>480</sup>

Plans for a new hotel were definitely being considered by some with a Sydney architect, Mr. Gordon McKinnon, having completed plans for a sixty room hotel in August 1913<sup>481</sup>, and having invited tenders for erection of same by the 13<sup>th</sup> of that same month.<sup>482</sup> It obviously did not eventuate.

1914, March – The wife of the local chemist, Mrs. Morrow, attempted to light a fire with methylated spirits on Saturday. The can exploded, causing severe burns, which resulted in her death.<sup>483</sup>

1914, July - Death by suicide of Mr. A. Lazarus, a storekeeper at Ardlethan – a bullet to the head.....found at rear of his business. Lazarus had purchased Mr. T. Neville's store around the time that the Southern Cross Mine was floated, and had operated same with the assistance of his two nieces, the Misses Leith. Lazarus was aged fifty two and was a single man.<sup>484</sup> [F. R. Lazarus according to a report by the Temora Independent correspondent]<sup>485</sup>

1914, October 1914 – Fire destroys a building of six rooms owned by Mrs. C. J. Smith. Two adjoining buildings narrowly escaped damage.<sup>486</sup> These buildings were on the north side of the town.<sup>487</sup>

1914, November 1914 – Fire destroys Mr. J. Keogh's general store in Warri street. An adjoining photographic studio, of Mr. Coates, was also destroyed. The store building was owned by Mr. D. Kenny.<sup>488</sup>

1914, December 1914 – Fire at 3am Christmas morning - started in an empty office near the London hotel. Spread to a saddler's shop next door and to two offices occupied by Mr. W. C. Wall, and to Stroh's restaurant and greengrocery. All of these buildings reduced to ashes. The school of arts was saved. The buildings were owned by Mr. J. D. Boyd of Strathfield.<sup>489</sup> Another source confirmed that the Bank of NSW, which adjoined the London hotel (to the south) in weatherboard premises, along with the saddlery shop of R. Sheedy were destroyed by fire in 1914.<sup>490</sup>

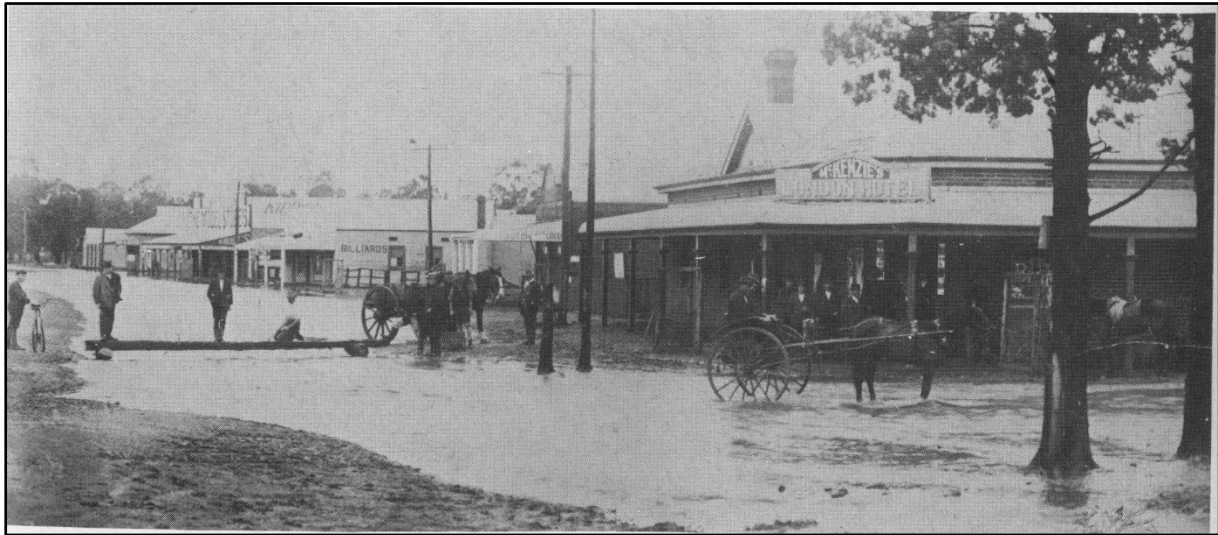
1915, June – Fire destroys Rath's coach building shop. The fire spread first to the large store adjoining, recently occupied by Messrs. Henvelee & Co, and then to a dwelling occupied by Mr. Cray. All three buildings destroyed. The fire-fighters did well to save the whole block, including Taplin's large store of general merchandise.<sup>491</sup>

1915, June 10<sup>th</sup> – fire destroys buildings in Warri street. One occupied by Frederick J. Rath and owned by George Corner, the other a store and dwelling (unoccupied) and owned by Mrs. James Boxsell.<sup>492</sup>

1934, December – The largest and oldest established general store in Ardlethan, Kirby's Model Store, along with its contents and the residence next door, were all destroyed by fire on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The store was just a few doors up from the London hotel. The store and residence were both of weatherboard and iron.<sup>493</sup>

1935, March – A fire at Ardlethan destroyed a brick shop. The occupants were a chemist, Mr. C. W. McCoy, and a dentist, Mr. A. E. Tooze. The contents of the chemist shop were destroyed, but those of the dentist were saved. The building was insured and valued at £2,000.<sup>494</sup>





**Above:** Private town in 1920. London hotel on the right with a variety of business properties to the south.  
**Courtesy:** Jim Slater.

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1. Griffin, James J., *The years of change : a story of the development of the Ardlethan and Beckom districts*. 1970.
2. Taylor, Roy H. (editor), *Poppet Heads and Wheatfields: a History of Ardlethan and District*. 1985.
3. Webster, Rob, *Bygoo & Beyond*. 1969 reprint.

### **Notes:**

1. Webster, and others, often quote Sarah Musgrave's recollections from *The Wayback* but the clearly erroneous dates given by Musgrave and her clearly demonstrated confusion with events such as the 1852 floods on the Murrumbidgee make all of her accounts most unreliable, and certainly not to be accepted without corroborative evidence from other more reliable sources.
2. Webster also quotes extensively from the accounts of George Gow. Gow had no knowledge of the Merool district until he went there in 1894 to manage Warri station. His accounts were written fifty years and more later and his recollections should not be taken as gospel, especially information that had been passed on to him from others. Gow for example states that Ramsay & Johnston took up Warri in 1849 or 1850<sup>495</sup>, which is false as John Hardy was the original licensee of this run and still held the license in these years. According to the Government Gazettes, the property was transferred to Ramsay & Johnston in 1867. The previous transfer was also in 1867, so it is unlikely that Ramsay & Johnston were on Warri much earlier than 1867. Gow claimed that Ramsay & Johnston built two huts on the property in 1859<sup>496</sup>, but again this is probably incorrect as the property was held by John Hardy's wife until 1863. I am unaware of any primary sources that support the claims by Gow. There are other examples of incorrect statements by Gow that reinforce the need for complementary sources – in 1952 for example he wrote a tribute to James Corner, in which he stated that George & James Corner sold the Palace Hotel to Lincoln & Co. in 1919<sup>497</sup>. Tooth's records show that the hotel was still owned by George & James Corner in 1920, when they sold it to William Walton. Lincoln & Co. may have held a mortgage over the property but they were not the owners of the freehold.
3. Webster gives credit to the Under Secretary, Department of Lands, and to B.T. Dowd (F.R.A.H.S.) for information supplied on the early settlement on the Mirrool. The depth and accuracy of the material obtained is impressive and I suspect that much of the credit can be attributed to Dowd. Readers interested in the broader region will find much of interest in Webster's book, *Bygoo and Beyond*.
4. Please note that many of the page numbers quoted in the foot notes are the page numbers displayed in Trove and are often different from the page numbers in the original publications.
5. The writer would be pleased to receive any information or photos that add to, or enhance, the details here within. Contact details in February 2022 are as follows:
  - a. Mob. 0417 277 592
  - b. Email: [geoffrey.burch@bigpond.com](mailto:geoffrey.burch@bigpond.com)

## Source References.

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- <sup>1</sup> Bygoo & Beyond. p1.
- <sup>2</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p1.
- <sup>3</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. pp3-5.
- <sup>4</sup> Sydney Morning Herald.3<sup>rd</sup> February 1847, p2. / 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1847, p2.
- <sup>5</sup> Sydney Morning Herald.3<sup>rd</sup> February 1847, p2. / 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1847, p2.
- <sup>6</sup> Government Gazette. 1843, p1396.
- <sup>7</sup> NSW Returns of the Colony. 1837-1846 (per Ancestry.com)
- <sup>8</sup> Empire. 30<sup>th</sup> September 1856, p3. / Goulburn Herald. 4<sup>th</sup> October 1856, p4.
- <sup>9</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p6.
- <sup>10</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p1.
- <sup>11</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p8.
- <sup>12</sup> Government Gazette. 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1851, p1202.
- <sup>13</sup> Empire. 30<sup>th</sup> September 1856, p3. / Goulburn Herald. 4<sup>th</sup> October 1856, p4.
- <sup>14</sup> Sydney Morning Herald. 1<sup>st</sup> October 1856, p3.
- <sup>15</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p17.
- <sup>16</sup> Empire. 30<sup>th</sup> September 1856, p3. / Goulburn Herald. 4<sup>th</sup> October 1856, p4.
- <sup>17</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p30.
- <sup>18</sup> Sydney Morning Herald. 1<sup>st</sup> October 1856, p3.
- <sup>19</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p8.
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- <sup>24</sup> Sydney Morning Herald. 1<sup>st</sup> October 1856, p3.
- <sup>25</sup> Sydney Morning Herald. 6<sup>th</sup> October 1857, p4.
- <sup>26</sup> Empire. 30<sup>th</sup> September 1856, p3. / Goulburn Herald. 4<sup>th</sup> October 1856, p4./
- <sup>27</sup> Sydney Morning Herald. 1<sup>st</sup> October 1856, p3.
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- <sup>29</sup> New South Wales – Births, Deaths, and Marriages.
- <sup>30</sup> NSW Government Gazette. 1863, p97.
- <sup>31</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p19. Quoting from Sydney Mail. 17<sup>th</sup> June 1876.
- <sup>32</sup> Bygoo and Beyond. p19.
- <sup>33</sup> Government Gazette. 1866, p406.
- <sup>34</sup> Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 8<sup>th</sup> September 1875, p2. / 13<sup>th</sup> October 1875, p2.
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- <sup>331</sup> Toths Records. Yellow Cards, Palace Hotel. Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.
- <sup>332</sup> Poppet Heads and Wheatfields, p75.
- <sup>333</sup> Communication with Shirley Crittenden. 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.
- <sup>334</sup> Toths Records. Yellow Cards, Palace Hotel. Noel Butlin Archives, ANU, Canberra.
- <sup>335</sup> Information provided by Shirley Crittendon 13<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- <sup>336</sup> License History – Palace Hotel. Office of Liquor & Gaming. Oct. 2014.
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- <sup>346</sup> Information provided by John Hudson & Jim Slater on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2014.
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- <sup>349</sup> Evening News. 25<sup>th</sup> March 1903, p6.
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- <sup>351</sup> Wagga Wagga Express. 15<sup>th</sup> June 1907
- <sup>352</sup> Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 31<sup>st</sup> October 1907, p4.
- <sup>353</sup> Albury Banner. 9<sup>th</sup> July 1909, p18.
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- <sup>358</sup> Poppet Heads and Wheatfields, p37.
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- <sup>361</sup> Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1907, p8.
- <sup>362</sup> Coolamon Ganmain Farmers Review. 19<sup>th</sup> June 1908, p4c4.
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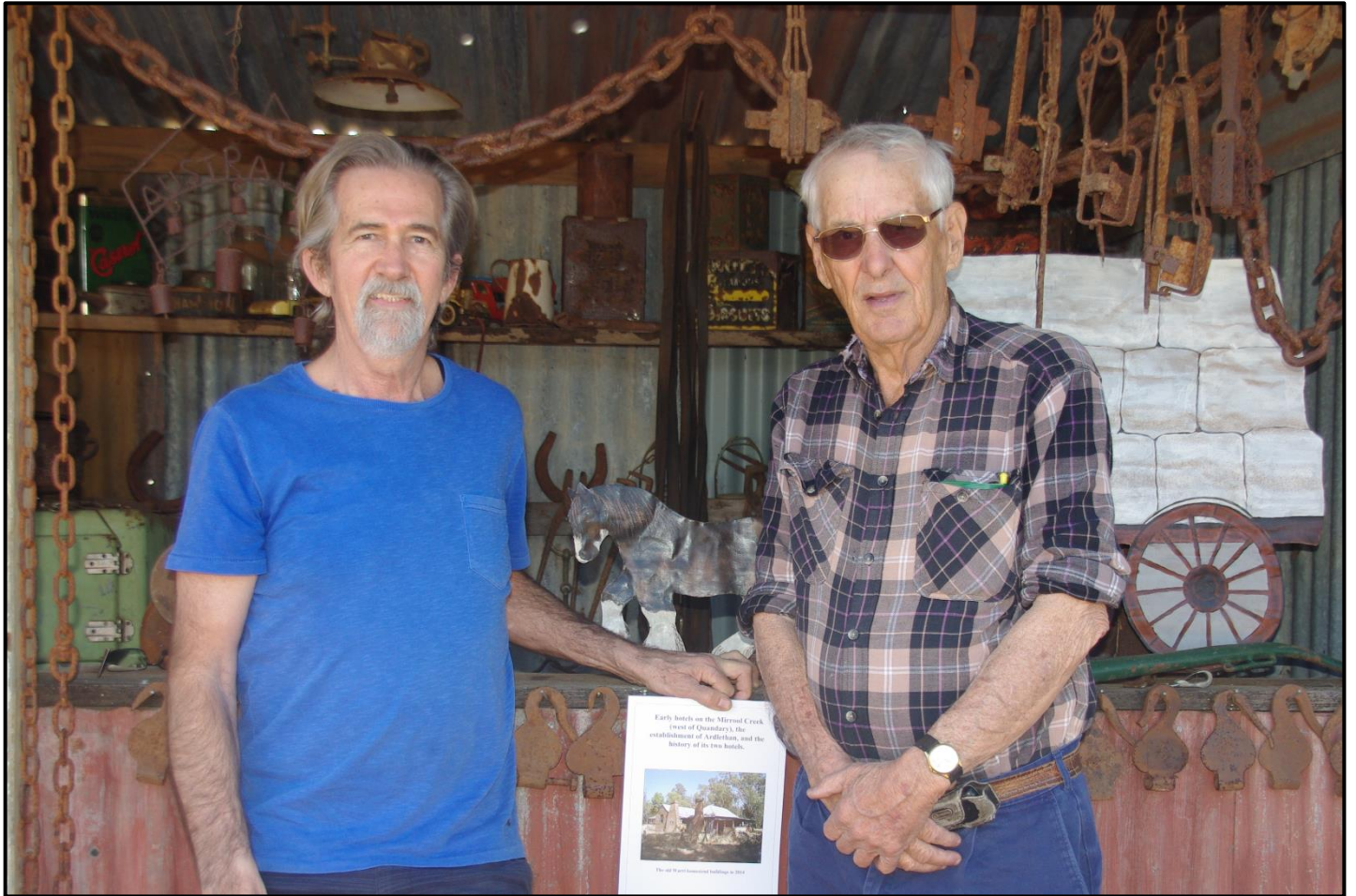
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Courtesy CSU Regional Archives.]  
496 Davidson Collection. Newspaper clippings (RW2409-68A). Courtesy CSU Regional Archives.

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# A Collaborative Project



**Local man Jim Slater and Wagga Wagga amateur historian Geoff Burch have worked together to produce this book on the early days of Ardlethan and the history of the hotels in and around the town.**

**Jim is well known locally for his avid interest in local history and all things pertaining to Ardlethan. He is renowned for his collection of photographs of everything and anything to do with Ardlethan.**

**Geoff is a former president of the Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society and a well known local historian whose primary interest is in hotels and towns throughout the Riverina region. This is his 3<sup>rd</sup> publication. Earlier books having been written about Pomingalarna, and the North Wagga Wagga Public hall.**