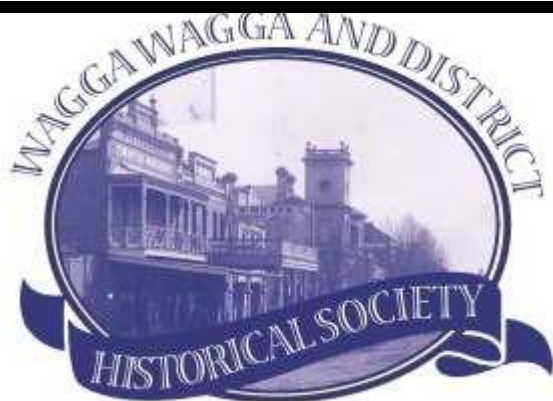




WWDHS NEWSLETTER No. 460 July 2024-Sept. 2024 ISSN 2207-1016

NEXT MEETINGS

The society's next meetings will be held on **Monday 15th July 2024, at the Museum of the Riverina, Willans Hill site.**

**Committee meeting at 1.30 p.m.
General Meeting at 2.00 p.m.**

Guest Speaker: TBA

COMMITTEE

President: Geoff Burch
Vice President: Geoff Haddon
Secretary: Mark Christison
Treasurer: Geoff Burch

Committee Members: Brian Andrews, Judy Buik, Margaret Hill, Leanne Diessel, Craig Dixon, Dianna Lovett, Peter Morris, Sherry Morris, Margaret Nowlan-Jones, Rhonda Reedy, Margaret Walsh.

Membership fees are due from the 1st July.

New members who joined after 1st January 2024, please note your membership renewal does not fall due until July 1st 2025.

Bank Details:

Account Name: Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society
BSB: 062 600
Account #: 00800270

WWDHS Patron: Michael McCormack,
Federal Member for Riverina,

WAGGA WAGGA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
PO BOX 90, WAGGA WAGGA. 2650.

President: Geoff Burch [mob. 0417 277 592]
Vice-President: Geoff Haddon

See society website for additional information.

Newsletter Editor: Sherry Morris
Email: info@wwdhs.org.au
Web site: www.wwdhs.org.au

Committee meetings: 3rd Monday of the month
General meetings: 3rd Monday of the month

Annual Subscriptions: Single: \$20, Couple: \$30.
Due by 1st July each year.

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Happenings

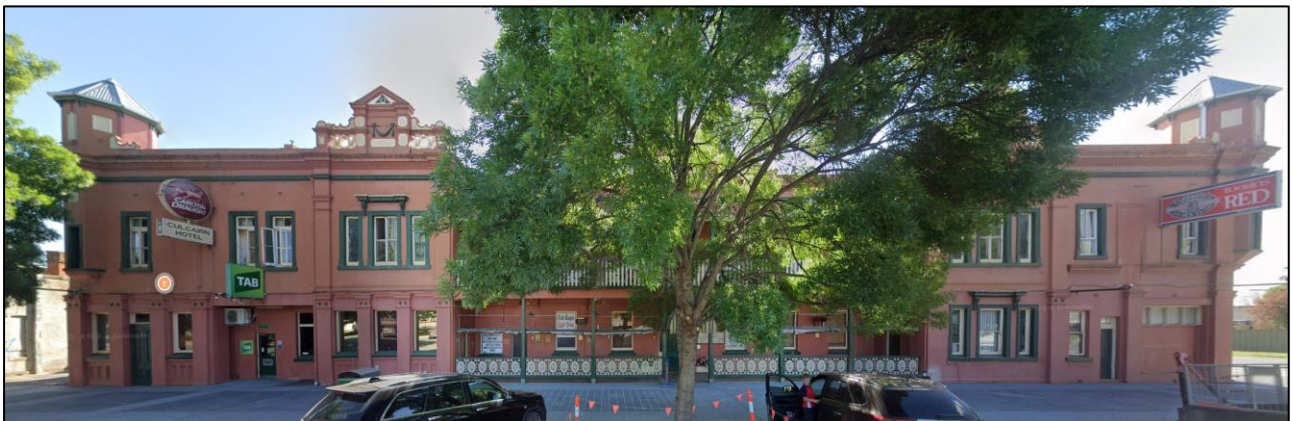
Excursion to Henty – fourteen members enjoyed our most recent bus trip to Henty, Culcairn, and Pleasant Hills on Saturday the 4th May. At Henty we visited the home and workshop of member Mark Porter, the only surviving horse collar and harness maker in Australia employing traditional methods. Mark is planning to retire shortly, and it was a pleasure to experience the process of making horse collars by a true artisan. This was followed by lunch at the historic Culcairn hotel, and then finally a tour of Pleasant Hills – the old Lutheran church [1888], the public hall [c.1911], and the old hotel [1919]. Our thanks to member John Diessel who volunteered as our driver for the day.



Left: Mark in the area where he stuffs the horse collars.



Above: Mark and the group in the cutting room.



Above: The magnificent Culcairn hotel in October 2023. Courtesy Google Maps.



Above: The group in front of the Pleasant Hills Public Hall.



Above: The Pleasant Hills hotel in 2024. Designed by WJ Monks and built by Charles Hardy & Co. Opened in February 1919.

25th Anniversary – MoR



The 1st July 2025 will signify the 25th anniversary of the handover of the museum from the WWDHS to the Wagga Wagga City Council in 1999. The initial agreement was for a twenty five year lease with the option for another twenty five years, which the council will shortly exercise. A formal occasion is planned for Monday 22nd July commencing at 11am at the MoR, Willans Hill site. Members are welcome to attend. More details will be provided as the date draws nearer.

Left: Council's General Manager, Brian Andrews, applying the Council seal to the lease between the WWCC and the WWDHS in 1999, with Dr Henry Gardener, president of the WWDHS (centre), and Councillor Michael Georgio (right). Photo courtesy of the Daily Advertiser.

Redevelopment – Home Hotel site.



Above: An artist's impression of the proposed redevelopment of the Home Hotel site at the corner of Kincaid and Fitzmaurice Streets. Courtesy Wagga Wagga City Council [DA.24-0188].

This may well be the first of many more high rise developments in the main CBD areas that have the potential to revitalize the city centres on both sides of the lagoon.

Feature Articles

There are two feature articles in this quarter's edition. The first, from Sherry Morris, tells the story of another WW1 soldier with connections to Wagga Wagga and surrounding towns.

The second is a subject I have recently been researching – George Forsyth – a prominent Wagga Wagga citizen, and the first mayor of Wagga Wagga. It is, as yet, an incomplete story. Tracking George's arrival in the colony and determining which, if any, of his siblings also migrated to Australia is proving to be an elusive task.

COLVILLE FREDERICK ARMSTRONG - LANCE CORPORAL, WORLD WAR I

By Sherry Morris



Colville Armstrong enlisted on 7 August 1915, when he was just over 18 years of age, with the consent of his mother, Wilhelmina (or 'Mena'), and his father, Colville Beckett Armstrong, a civil engineer and draftsman with the Wagga Wagga Municipal Council.

Colville junior had been born at Yass about July 1897. As a Roman Catholic, he attended the Christian Brothers High School in Wagga Wagga. He also spent four years in the local cadets.

At the time of his enlistment he was described as being about 164 centimetres high and weighing about 62.5 kilograms; he had brown complexion, blue eyes and dark brown hair. He stated that he had been employed as a motor mechanic and he was single.

After six weeks' basic training at the Infantry Depot at Cootamundra and with A Company 6th Battalion at Holdsworthy, he was transferred to the 12th reinforcements of the 4th Battalion on 24 September 1915.

He embarked on HMAT Medic on January 7, 1916 and disembarked one month later at Alexandria in Egypt. At that time the number of divisions in the Australian Army was being expanded. The older divisions of veterans from the Gallipoli campaign who were

returning to Egypt were split into two and the reinforcements used to expand each half into a whole. In addition three entirely new kinds of units – the pioneer battalions, machine gun companies and trench mortar batteries – were being created. Colville Armstrong was assigned to the 12th Brigade Machine Gun Company (Vickers Machine Guns), attached to the Fourth Division.

From March 1916 the new divisions began moving from Egypt to France. Colville, almost four months after his arrival in Egypt, travelled on the Kingstonian to Marseilles in France in June 1916. The Fourth Division initially took over part of the 'nursery' section near Armentieres before accompanying the First and Second Divisions to the Somme sector. In August 1916 it relieved the Second Division at Pozieres and repulsed a major German counterattack. By 13 April 1917, Colville had been promoted to Lance Corporal.

After six months in action, Colville Armstrong became very ill. He suffered with influenza in January, had a month in hospital in March and April for an operation on a hydrocele and for varicose veins ligation and then less than a week later he was again in hospital with pulmonary problems. He did not

rejoin his unit in the field until 21 May 1917, prior to the Fourth Division's participation in the Battle of Messines (in June) and the Battle of Polygon Wood (in September).

Again, at the end of the year on 10 December Colville was taken to hospital with scabies but returned to his unit four days later.

In March 1918 the Fourth Division was rushed to the Somme region to stem the German offensive, participating in hard-fought battles at Hebuterne and Dernancourt. It later went on to fight in the Battles at Hamel, Amiens and the Hindenburg Line. While still at the front, in August 1918, Colville would have heard the news of his father's death on the last day of the previous month. He went on leave in the United Kingdom soon afterwards from 11 to 27 September 1918.

On the day of victory 11 November 1918 Colville committed his only 'crime' during his military career when he went absent without leave from 9 p.m. that night to 3 p.m. the following day and had to forfeit one days' pay.

Unfortunately while still in France, after the war had ended, he again became ill on 3 December 1918. He was taken to the 47th casualty clearing station and by 12 December it was recorded that he was 'dangerously and seriously ill' with influenza. He died just seven days later and was buried nearby at the Maubeuge Cemetery. His death was recorded in The Daily Advertiser on 11 January 1919. He was just 21 years of age.

The Roman Catholic Chaplain, C. Bullock, wrote to Colville's mother, Mena:

"I am writing to you as I promised but this time with the utmost difficulty... It is so hard to have to send this sad news esp'ly after the anxious time you have had. The poor boy was so patient & brave through it all. Obedient in everything he never gave a bit of trouble. Naturally therefore the nurses & the orderlies were much upset when he died... I promise you I will mention him in every Mass that I may have the privilege of saying. May he rest in peace & also may God give you all the grace to bear this sad bereavement with resignation."

Reverend Bullock also wrote to Colville's sister, reassuring her that her brother had:

"Received all the condolences of his Holy religion... the cemetery (is) exceedingly well kept ... nicest I was ever in... But if you wish to give any instructions will you send them to me & I will forward them to some civilian friends of mine who live quite close to the cemetery. I sincerely hope your dear Mother is quite well again... writing as if I knew you all ... pardon me ... only way showing my sympathy... photo enclosed of place where your dear Brother buried & of the Chaplain who performed the Last Rites. Once more I promise you all & especially your Brother an ever remembrance in my Masses."

Colville's mother, Mena, received three packages with his effects, the first in August 1919 with his wallet, papers and envelopes, the second in September with photographs, pocket book, a pair of braces, a mouth organ, a pocket knife (broken), cards, wallet, watch and key, one metal ring, two discs and eight coins and a third in December, his kit bag with one housewife (soldiers' sewing kit), two handkerchiefs, one pair of gloves, one neckerchief, one balaclava, one cap, one scarf and some letters.

The army forwarded a Memorial Scroll in November 1919 and then in the early 1920s a memorial plaque, a photograph of her son's grave at Maubeuge and a Victory Medal. In Wagga Wagga, his name was included on the cenotaph in the list of the men who died in the First World War and in the list of all those who participated in the War on the Memorial Arch.

All these possessions, mementoes and memorials were no doubt treasured by Mena Armstrong in retaining memories of her young son and important in the gradual process of accepting his death.

GEORGE FORSYTH

[1818-1887]



Front Cover: George Forsyth. Courtesy Museum of the Riverina.

© Geoff Burch, July 2024.

GEORGE FORSYTH

PART 1

FAMILY HISTORY

George Forsyth

George Forsyth was born in England, on the 25th February 1818. He was baptised at South Shields, Durham, in the Presbyterian Church, on the 15th March 1818. He was the son of James Forsyth and Isabella Forsyth [nee Williamson]. His father was a native of Sunderland, and a cordwainer [shoemaker] by trade. His paternal grandparents were James Forsyth, also a shoemaker, of Sunderland, and Elizabeth Clerehugh, a native of Garrick, Scotland. His maternal grandparents were George Williamson a farmer of South Shields, and Elen Williamson [nee Kinghorn].¹

George's parents, James and Isabella, were married at Tynemouth, Northumberland, England, on the 10th August 1815.² The couple had at least five children, and possibly more. George's known siblings were,³

- William Forsyth [b.8th June 1816]
- James Forsyth [b.5th May 1821]
- Elizabeth Forsyth [b.19th December 1822]
- Thomas Forsyth [b.5th May 1824]

No record could be found of the family in the English census records [from 1841 onwards], nor could an immigration record be found for George, or his brothers, Thomas and James.

In January 1852 George Forsyth, formerly of South Shields, Durham, England, married Margaret Annie Gordon, the sister of John Gordon, JP, of Barambula [sic], at Lower Tarcutta. The ceremony was performed by the Lord Bishop of Sydney.⁴

On the 12th October 1852 the couple's first child, Thomas James Forsyth, was born at Lower Tarcutta.⁵ On the 17th January 1854, fifteen months old Thomas passed away at Lower Tarcutta.⁶

George was still conducting a store at Lower Tarcutta in August 1854, when a second son was born at that place, on the 26th of said month.⁷ This little fellow survived for nine months before he passed away on the 11th May 1855.⁸

A third child was born to George and Margaret in March 1860.⁹ Named Isabella, presumably after George's mother, the child died eighteen months later on the 5th September 1861.¹⁰

In 1862 the couple's fourth child, Margaret Ann Forsyth, was born at Wagga Wagga.¹¹ Margaret was the only one of their children to survive past infancy.

On the 12th April 1882, Margaret Anne Forsyth married Henry Clement Tingcombe, in the Christ Church, Sydney. Henry was the eldest son of the Rev. Henry Tingcombe of St John's, Camden.¹² A

¹ England and Wales. Non-conformist and Non-parochial Registers: 1567-1970. Ref. 1238. [ancestry.com] / England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 [ancestry] / NSW BDM's. Death registration # 9923.

² England, Select Marriages, 1538-1973 [ancestry].

³ England and Wales. Non-conformist and Non-parochial Registers: 1567-1970. Ref. 1238. [ancestry.com] / England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 [ancestry]

⁴ Goulburn Herald. 10th January 1852, p5c1. / Sydney Morning Herald. 9th January 1852, p3. / NSW BDM's. Marriage registration # 517/1852 V1852517 38C.

⁵ Goulburn Herald. 30th October 1852, p5c1. / NSW BDM's. Birth registration # 1399/1854 V18541399 52.

⁶ Goulburn Herald. 4th February 1854, p2c6.

⁷ Goulburn Herald. 2nd September 1854, p2c6.

⁸ Goulburn Herald. 26th May 1855, p2c4.

⁹ NSW BDMs. Birth registration # 12945.

¹⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 19th May 1906, p4. [quoting from the WWE. 6th September 1861]

¹¹ NSW BDM's. Birth registration # 14336.

¹² NSW BDMs. Marriage registration # 597/1882.

press notice referred to Margaret as Maggie, and her father, George, was said to be a resident of Long Beach, MacLeay River.¹³

Henry Tingcombe [b.1852, Armidale] was the son of the Rev. Henry Tingcombe and Jane Lydia Tingcombe [nee Clements]. Henry senior was born in Devonshire, England, in 1809, and migrated to Australia as a young man, where he first tried squatting in the Monaro district. He then worked for a time with the NSW civil service, before deciding to become a priest. On the 9th March 1849 he was ordained by Bishop Broughton and assigned to St Peter's church, Armidale, where he remained for the next nine years. He later assisted at All Saints', Bathurst, and then moved to Carcoar for a time, before spending his final years at Camden.¹⁴ The Rev. Henryb Tingcombe died on the 23rd July 1874, at Sydney, aged 63.¹⁵

Maggie and Henry junior had two children: William Norman Tingcombe [b.1885, Murrumburrah]¹⁶ and Elsie M Tingcombe [b.1888, Narrandera].¹⁷ Henry was a bank clerk, then manager, which explains the family's movements around the state. Any existing descendants of George Forsyth would descend from either of these two children.

The death of George Forsyth occurred on the 26th May 1887. The Sydney press provided the following details,¹⁸

"Mr. George Forsyth, formerly of Wagga Wagga, a Justice of the Peace and member of the land board, died suddenly at the Star Hotel, Kempsey, today. Deceased arrived in Kempsey yesterday. While seated at dinner he became sick and was removed to the sofa. Death ensued almost immediately. Dr. Casement certified that death was the result of syncope of the heart."

And from the Wagga Wagga press,¹⁹

"It is our painful duty to record the death of Mr. George Forsyth, one of the oldest residents of, Wagga Wagga, which took place at Kempsey on Thursday last. The telegram conveying the sad intelligence states that the deceased gentleman had only arrived in Kempsey on the previous day, for the purpose of attending a meeting of the Local Land Board, of which he was a member, and was sitting at dinner when he was suddenly taken ill and expired almost immediately, death being the result of syncope of the heart.

Mr. George Forsyth was one of the pioneer storekeepers of this town, having purchased a business from Dr. Davidson in the year 1853, which he carried on most successfully for many years, in the premises now occupied by Mr C Dyring, and which are still known as Forsyth's Buildings. The deceased gentleman having amassed a considerable fortune, made many improvements in the town, among which was the building of Westoe House, now the residence of Dr. Piercy. He was one of the original shareholders in the Wagga Wagga Bridge Company, of which he was also a director for many years. Upon the town being incorporated,

¹³ Sydney Morning Herald. 15th April 1882, p1.

¹⁴ Armidale Express. 21st August 1874, p7.

¹⁵ Sydney Morning Herald. 25th July 1874, p1.

¹⁶ Sydney Morning Herald. 30th May 1885, p1.

¹⁷ NSW BDMs. Birth registration # 29714/1888.

¹⁸ Sydney Morning Herald. 27th May 1887, p8.

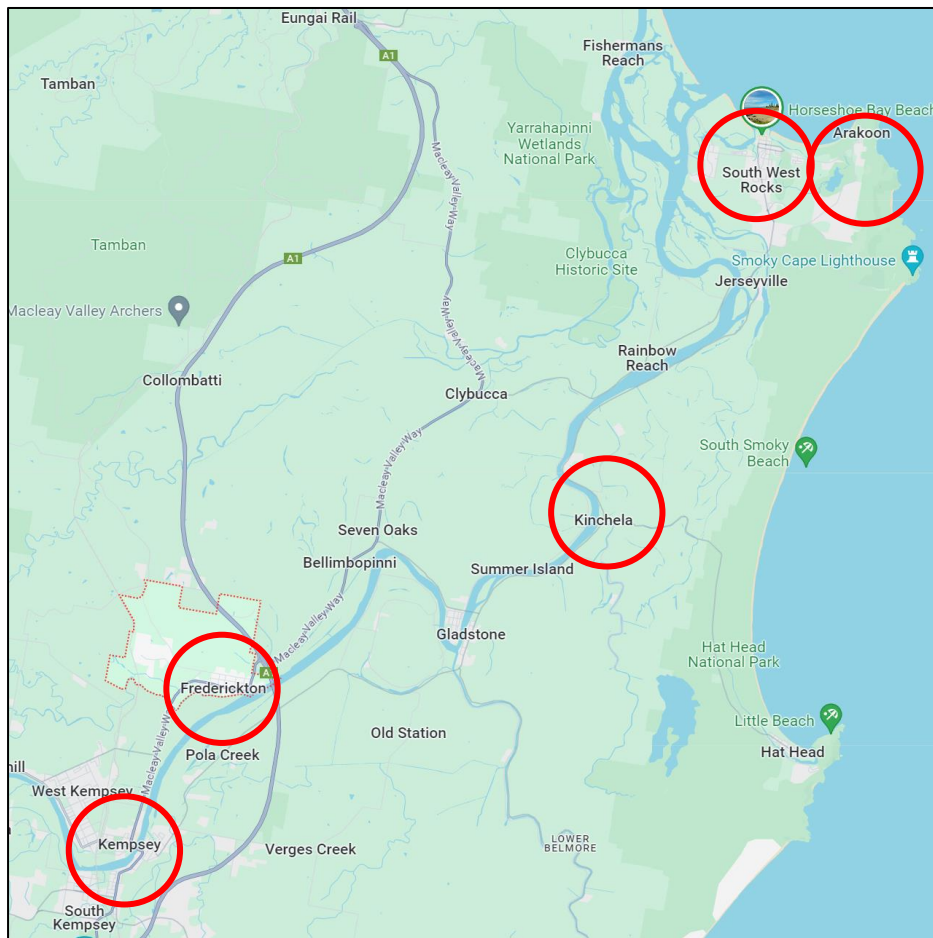
¹⁹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 28th May 1887, p2.

in 1870, Mr. Forsyth, who was one of the first Aldermen, was unanimously elected Mayor of Wagga and it is evidence of the very high esteem in which he was held by his fellow townsmen that he was returned to that honourable position for five successive years. The deceased gentleman was always among the first to promote any movement for the good of the town and district. His generosity was unbounded, and there are many still in this district who have reason to remember his kindness. Mrs. C. U. Tingcombe, wife of the manager of the Commercial Bank at Murrumburrah, is the only daughter of the late Mr. Forsyth.”

A third report confirmed that Forsyth was buried in the cemetery at Frederickton and that he was survived by his wife and one daughter, Mrs Tingcombe.²⁰

In September 1887, probate for the estate of George Forsyth, a grazier “late of South-west Rock, Arakoon,” was granted to his daughter, Margaret Anne Tingcombe, the wife of Henry Clement Tingcombe, a bank manager of Murrumburrah. Margaret was the sole executrix, as George’s widow, Margaret Anne Forsyth of Murrumburrah, had chosen not to act as an executrix.²¹

In November 1888, Margaret Anne Forsyth of Narandera, sought the transmission of certain lands into her name. Specifically, lot 4, section 3 [2 roods; lot 3, section 10 [1 acre], and portion 31 [78 acres and 2 roods], all in the parish of Arakoon, and county of Macquarie.²² These three lots of land were in the area we now know as South West Rocks.



Left: Extract from NSW map showing locations of South West Rocks, Arakoon, Kinchela, Frederickton, and Kempsey, all sites connected with George Forsyth. Courtesy Google Maps.

²⁰ Australian Town & Country Journal. 11th June 1887, p16.

²¹ NSW Government Gazette. 1887, p6537.

²² NSW Government Gazette. 1888, p8168.

The death of Margaret Anne Forsyth [nee Gordon] took place on the 18th March 1890, at Narrandera. Margaret was seventy one years old.²³

The death of George and Margaret Forsyth's only surviving child - Margaret Anne Tingcombe – took place on the 15th February 1935, at Innisfail, Queensland.

In February 1951, an editorial commented that George Forsyth was, "*for many years known as the 'father' of Wagga*", and that at one time it was suggested that the town of Wagga Wagga should be renamed *Forsyth*.²⁴ This was a reference to a letter to the editor of the Wagga Wagga Advertiser in October 1869, signed *No Crow*. It read, in part, as follows,²⁵

"There is at present associated in the mind of every Wagga Waggian, and of everyone who ever had anything to do with the town, an honourable name that ought to be imperishably connected with it; then, why not give it that name at once, and call the town 'Forsyth?' There is no name more popular in this district - none so well known in commercial circles in connection with it - none better known to the pastoral interest, and there is no man, I believe, who knows its worthy bearer that would not join me in desiring to pay him such a compliment."

Two people have been commonly referred to as the "*father of Wagga Wagga*." One was Frederick Anslow Tompson, and the second was George Forsyth.²⁶ Both men made a substantial contribution to the town and its people, and both men deserved the accolade.

The following extract is taken from the Australian Dictionary of Biography, the content of which was researched by Keith Swan,

"For over twenty years Forsyth was also a civic leader in Wagga Wagga. He was prominent in the establishment and management of the Mechanics' Institute, the hospital, the National school and the Presbyterian Church and was a founding director of the Wagga Wagga Bridge Co. which built the toll bridge across the Murrumbidgee in 1862. He was voted to the chair at many meetings and in 1870-74 he was first mayor of Wagga Wagga. In these faction-ridden years Forsyth was respected for his integrity. In 1876 when he decided to leave the town the Wagga Wagga Advertiser suggested that local residents plan 'a right royal parting testimony to the worth of our good King George'. In 1876 Forsyth retired to his property near Yarrangobilly and about 1880 moved to South West Rocks on the Macleay River."

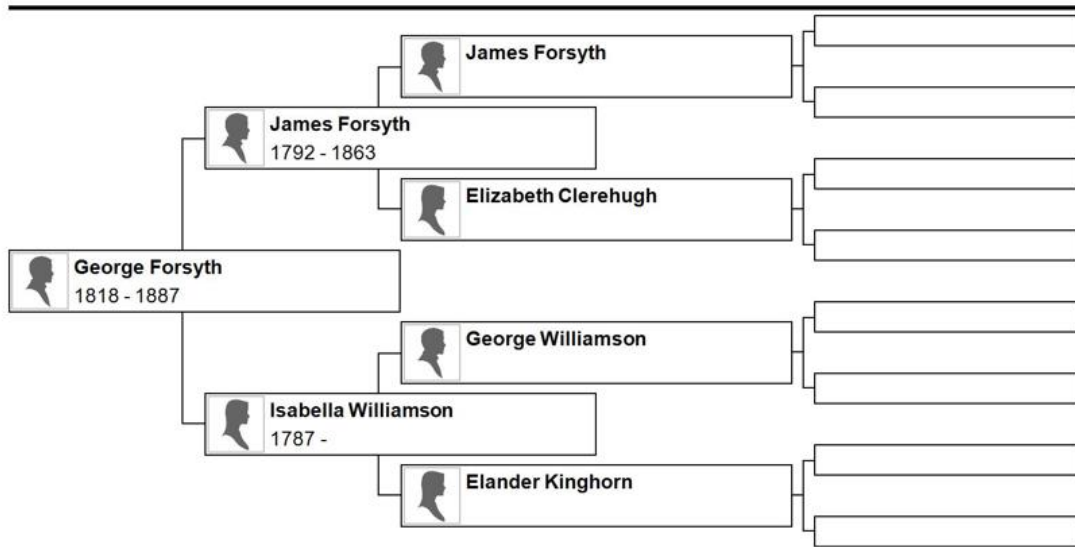
²³ Australian Star [Sydney]. 25th March 1890, p6.

²⁴ Daily Advertiser. 24th February 1951, p2.

²⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 27th October 1869, p3.

²⁶ Daily Advertiser. 24th February 1951, p2. / 26th August 1953, p3.

Family View Report for George Forsyth



George Forsyth

Born: 25 Feb 1818
South Shields, Durham, England
Died: 26 May 1887
Kempsey, New South Wales, Australia

Margaret Annie Gordon

Born: 1819
Keady, Armagh, Northern Ireland
Died: 18 Mar 1890
Narrandera, New South Wales, Australia

Marriage: 31 Dec 1851 in Tarcutta Lower, New South Wales, Australia;

Children:	Sex	Birth	Death
George Forsyth	M	12 Oct 1852 Tarcutta Lower, New South Wales, Australia	17 Jan 1854 Tarcutta Lower, New South Wales, Australia
Thomas James Forsyth	M	26 Aug 1854 Tarcutta Lower, New South Wales, Australia	11 May 1855 Tarcutta Lower, New South Wales, Australia
Isabella Forsyth	F	Mar 1860 Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia	05 Sep 1861 Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia
Margaret Anne Forsyth	F	1862 Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia	15 Feb 1935 Innisfail, Queensland, Australia

GEORGE FORSYTH

PART 2

BUSINESSMAN AND CITIZEN

When the Commissioner for Crown Lands [Murrumbidgee district], Henry Bingham, visited the *Tarrabandra* run near Tumut in July 1839, it was licensed to John Tooth and supervised by Wilson Tooth. The latter, along with four other men, were responsible for some 1500 cattle – no sheep. The only buildings were simple slab huts and stock yards. There were also eleven horses on the run.

In February 1841, George Forsyth offered a reward for a horse that was either stolen, or had wandered from the *Jerricknorah* run around the 21st January, prior. The reward could be collected from either John Wood at Jerricknorah, John Tooth at Kent Brewery, Sydney, or George Forsyth on the *Tarrabunbra* [sic] run. It is assumed that George Forsyth was now managing John Tooth's *Tarrabandra* Station, on the Tumut River.²⁷ John Tooth, and his brother-in-law, Charles Newnham, a brewer by trade, had in fact established the company in 1835. John was financed by his brother, Robert, who lived in Kent, England.²⁸

Morris states that George managed a pastoral run for the Tooth family at Hay in the 1840's, and that he was able to save sufficient funds to establish a store at Lower Tarcutta in 1850, with his brother Thomas Forsyth.²⁹ By March 1851 George Forsyth was definitely settled at Lower Tarcutta and conducting a store at that place.³⁰

It is assumed that George and his brother Thomas arrived in the late 1830s or in 1840. In 1840, George would have been twenty two years old, and his brother, Thomas, would have been sixteen years old.

George Forsyth was still at Lower Tarcutta in August 1853. The Sydney gold escort returned from the Ovens in the first week of this month and a member of the escort provided an account of the journey, which read, in part, as follows,³¹

"The Billybong Creek unexpectedly brought us up, and, finding it impossible to ford it, we rigged a blanket for a breakwind, and sent back three miles for provisions. The next morning we proceeded, finding the water half way up the flaps of our saddles; but just as the carriage was approaching the desired shore, the horses jibbed, the leader got entangled and nearly drowned, so they had to be taken out, and the cadets, getting into the water up to their waists, soon extricated the vehicle. The next creek we encountered was more difficult, for, we had to swim the horses, dragging the carriage across by means of ropes. At Tarcutta Creek we floated the gold over on a couple of empty beer barrels. At Kiamba, our wheels gave way, and we borrowed a spring cart, making an early start. This morning we arrived at the foot of Tarcutta Hill, when the axle broke and upset the cart, throwing out the driver with great violence and bruising him considerably. Captain Stephen returned to Mr. Forsyth's and obtained another cart, and we had proceeded about 50 yards, when, to the astonishment of us all, we suddenly upset, and broke both shafts. Of course we were obliged to return and wait until the axle was mended. Such is a brief outline of some of the difficulties we have encountered and overcome. "

²⁷ Sydney Herald. 25th February 1841, p4. / Government Gazette. 1845, pp1297-1298., 1847, pp579-581.

²⁸ Hamilton, Mary Ann & Anderson, Sue, *An Oral History of Kent Brewery*, 2004.

²⁹ Sherry Morris. *George Forsyth: Wagga Wagga's First Mayor* [article].

³⁰ Goulburn Herald. 8th March 1851, p5. / 2nd August 1851, p7c1.

³¹ Goulburn Herald. 27th August 1853, p4.

In June 1853 George Forsyth was the licensee of the Tarcutta Inn at Lower Tarcutta,³² and was still so in 1854.³³ George had taken over from John Cater. No records survive for 1855, but by 1856 William Sawyer was the licensee of the Tarcutta Inn.³⁴

Strayed,

FROM Mr. Church's Station, Wagga Wagga
in the month of February, 1853, a **BAY**
AB
HORSE, collar marked, switch tail, branded **ET**
conjoined near shoulder, **TH** off; was last heard of
at Junee, supposed on his way to the Fish River,
where he was bred.

A Reward of Ten Pounds will be paid to any
person giving such information to the Under-
signed as will ensure the recovery of the horse:
he was sold by a Mr. John Dial, Fish River, to
Joseph Clory, in August, 1852.

GEORGE FORSYTH.

Tarcutta Stores, July 10, 1854.

In 1854, when Yabtree station offered up some two thousand sheep for sale, George Forsyth was listed as someone who could provide terms.³⁵ In July 1854, George advertised a reward for information on a horse that had “strayed” from Church’s station at Wagga Wagga – last seen at Junee.³⁶ George was clearly a person of influence in the community.

Left: A notice from George Forsyth in July 1854.

IT is this day mutually agreed that the Partnership heretofore existing between us as Storekeepers and General Agents, under the firm of “Forsyth Brothers,” be dissolved, and that all debts due up to this date be discharged by the undersigned George Forsyth.

**GEO. FORSYTHE,
THOS. FORSYTHE.**

Witness to the Signatures hereof,
**ALEXR. JAMIESON,
MATTHEW SAWYER.**

Address—Geo. Forsythe, Tarcuttah Post Office.
Tarcuttah Stores, 17th May, 1855.

990 3s. 6d.

George was actually in partnership with his brother Thomas, but they dissolved same in May 1855.³⁷ George had made the decision to move to Wagga Wagga and take over the business of Robert Davison & Co.³⁸

Left: Notice for dissolution of partnership in May 1855.

³² Goulburn Herald. 25th June 1853, p2c4.

³³ NSW State Records. Treasury Butts & certificates of Publicans’ Licenses. 1854. License # 108.

³⁴ NSW State Records. Treasury Butts & certificates of Publicans’ Licenses. 1856. License # 119.

³⁵ Goulburn Herald. 17th June 1854, p1.

³⁶ Goulburn Herald. 5th August 1854, p1.

³⁷ Goulburn Herald. 2nd June 1855, p2c7.

³⁸ Goulburn Herald. 18th August 1855, p3c1.

It appears George had already established a presence in Wagga Wagga by early March 1855. A meeting was held in the Squatters' Hotel on the 7th of that month, for the purposes of forming a committee to raise money for the "Patriotic Fund." George Forsyth was one of the prominent citizens elected to the committee.³⁹

Right: Details of the Patriotic Fund committee in March 1855.

George was still conducting the Tarcutta Stores in April 1855, when he offered a reward for certain goods stolen on the 5th of that month.

Stolen—Ten Pounds Reward.

WHEREAS on the night of Thursday, the 5th instant, or early on Friday morning, the Tarcutta Stores were feloniously entered, and the following stolen:—

A leather writing desk containing about £60 in One Pound Notes and Sovereigns; a Cheque dated Gumly Gumly, 2nd April, drawn by Donald M'Kellar on the Bank of New South Wales, Sydney, in favor of G. Forsyth, for £5 19s. 3d.; and sundry Orders drawn by Mr. Gordon, Barambulah, on the undersigned. Also two Revolvers, viz.—one a "Colt," the other a "Chard," London, with other articles.

I hereby give notice, that payment of the above Cheques and Orders are stopped. A Reward of £10 will be paid on conviction of the offender or offenders.

GEO. FORSYTH.

Tarcutta, April, 1855.

Above: Ten pounds reward offered by George Forsyth in April 1855.

Patriotic Fund.

A MEETING was held on WEDNESDAY the 7th day of March present, at the "Squatters' Hotel," South Wagga Wagga, for the purpose of forming a Committee to co-operate with the Central Committee, Sydney, to collect subscriptions to the Patriotic Fund.

JOHN PETER ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

- 1.—"That this meeting most cordially responds to the proposition of Her Most Gracious Majesty that a Patriotic Fund be formed for the relief of the Widows and Orphans of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, killed in action, or dying from other casualties, during the present Eastern War, without distinction as to country or religion."
- 2.—"That the following persons be appointed a Committee to carry out the object of this meeting, with power to add to their number; viz:—

MESSES. JOHN G. CHURCH,
JOHN GORDON,
WALTER CLARKE,
ALEX. D. MACLEAY,
WILLIAM MACLEAY,
ROBERT DAVISON,
FRED. A. TOMPSON,
JOHN PETER,
GEORGE FORSYTH,
P. S. MURRAY,
LEOPOLD F. DE SALIS.
ELLIOT HERIOTT,
HENRY LOUGHNAN,
WILLIAM TAYLOR,
JAMES PETER,
JOHN BROUGHTON,
JOHN KENNEDY,
PATRICK H. OSBORNE,
WILLIAM HOWELL,
TOMAS H. MATE,
JOHN PRING,
JOHN SMITH, (Kyamba.)

and that they be instructed to use their best endeavours to procure a Subscription, however small, from every individual, in order that none may be excluded from the privilege of subscribing to an object of such high importance, in which the best sympathies of the whole world have been enlisted."

- 3.—"That Mr. Frederick A. Tompson, of Wagga Wagga, be appointed to act as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer to the Committee."

(Signed) **JNO. PETER,**
CHAIRMAN.

South Wagga Wagga,
 March 7th, 1855.

³⁹ Goulburn Herald. 17th March 1855, p2.

South Wagga Wagga.

ROBERT DAVISON & CO.,

HAVING disposed of their extensive Stock of General Stores to GEO. FORSYTH & Co., beg to recommend their successors to their numerous constituents and supporters; and they cannot allow the opportunity to pass without most cordially thanking their friends for their kind patronage.

GEORGE FORSYTH & CO.,

in entering upon their new Stores, as successors to R. Davison & Co., beg to direct the attention of the inhabitants of North and South Wagga Wagga, and the settlers in the district, to their extensive stock of General Stores, comprising—

**GROCERIES
DRAPERY
IRONMONGERY
EARTHENWARE
SADDLERY
BOOTS AND SHOES
WOOLPACKS, and
SHEARING SUPPLIES,**

which they are ready to sell this season at a small advance on the actual cost.

G. F. & Co. will be glad of a visit from their friends, to inspect their numerous and extensive assortment.

Wagga Wagga, August 10, 1855.

By August 1855, George Forsyth had taken over Davison's store at Wagga Wagga.⁴⁰

Left: A notice advertising the transfer of Davidson's store to George Forsyth in August 1855.

George's community engagement expanded in October 1855, when he was elected to the position of treasurer with a committee chosen to engage a clergyman for the Church of England at Wagga Wagga. The chairman of the committee was John George Church, and the secretary was Frederick Anslow Tompson – two of Wagga Wagga's most influential citizens.⁴¹

In May 1856, George Forsyth subscribed the sum of £10. 10s. to the Wagga Wagga District Hospital. This matched the contribution of Wagga Wagga's most prominent citizens, with the exception of John Peter who contributed the sum of £15. 15s.⁴²

By July 1856, Forsyth & Co., were well established in Wagga Wagga and the firm now carried on business as a general commission agency, in addition to the traditional general store function. With the annual race meeting approaching the firm placed large advertisements in both the Goulburn and Sydney papers, promoting their services – in particular a series of auction sales over the period 5th to 7th August. The firm also gave notice of its intent to hold monthly stock sales at their yards, on the 1st Monday of each month. These yards were located at the rear of the Wagga Wagga stores.⁴³

A gazette notice in September 1856 revealed that the firm of George Forsyth & Co., was in fact a partnership between George Forsyth and Robert Davison of Mount Saint Thomas, near Wollongong. Effective the 3rd September 1856 the partnership was dissolved with Forsyth assuming sole ownership.⁴⁴ In this same month George Forsyth was appointed as agent for the Sydney Morning Herald in the district of Wagga Wagga.⁴⁵

George Forsyth had commenced purchasing town lots in 1856 and was now at the centre of commercial and community affairs in the town and district of Wagga Wagga.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Goulburn Herald. 18th August 1855, p3.

⁴¹ Goulburn Herald. 3rd November 1855, p2.

⁴² Goulburn Herald. 3rd May 1856, p1.

⁴³ Bell's Life in Sydney. 19th July 1856, p3.

⁴⁴ NSW Government Gazette. 26th September 1856, p2563.

⁴⁵ Sydney Morning Herald.

⁴⁶ Goulburn Herald. 20th December 1856, p6.

SOUTH WAGGA WAGGA.

RACE WEEK.

GEORGE FORSYTH AND CO.,
GENERAL COMMISSION AGENTS.

BEG to apprise their numerous friends and the Public, that having combined **AUCTIONEERING** with their other business, they purpose holding a **SALE of HORSES**, viz., draught, saddle, and unbroken, together with a variety of spring carts, drays, and other vehicles, during the three days' races, August 5th, 6th, and 7th.

They particularly invite the attention of sellers as well as buyers, to this very desirable opportunity offered to the former of realizing full value for their Stock, and to the latter in obtaining a good investment of their capital. *And* the late high rates every description of Horse Stock have brought in the Melbourne markets.

The Sales will take place at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of each day, at the Sale Yards in the rear of their Stores. The want of such an **EMPORIUM**

for the disposal of Stock and other property in the town of Wagga Wagga and the district, has long been felt. Such difficulty may be now considered removed.

The stockholder travelling with his flocks and herds from the far North to the markets of **BENDIGO and MELBOURNE**, whether his Stock be of fat or store description, is often, when he reaches half-way, desirous of meeting with purchasers from the ever varying prices in those

GREATER MARKS.

G. F. & Co. beg to inform the public that applications to purchase stock of all kinds are frequent from the

Beechworth, Albury, and Bendigo Markets, the former of which requiring a large supply of fat sheep and cattle from the numerous miners settled and settling there. Buyers, in many instances, would take delivery here or on the road. In such cases, or when parties are desirous of selling at the Yards, G. F. & Co. will be happy to attend to communications by letter, and will afford every information with a view to effecting sales, and thus save the vendor the harassing trouble and anxiety of driving their stock so many

Hundreds of Miles.

The fertile plains of the Billyongoo, continuous to **WAGGA WAGGA**, being a large outlet for store sheep and cattle, parties having that description of Stock can frequently be accommodated with a buyer here. Although Wagga Wagga has hitherto not advanced exactly

At Railway Speed.

it is steadily progressing in improvements, and we are in hopes of the day not being far distant when stock can be sent at locomotive speed to the various depots of consumption, and finding this much to be desired reality, we will strive to meet our constituents half way, by bringing the **Butcher and Grazier**

together.

G. F. and Co., from weekly communications with their friends, and having regular reports of Sales from the Markets, are enabled to afford information to sellers on the desirability of offering their Stock. They also take this opportunity of announcing that they will hold

MONTHLY SALES OF STOCK

at their Yards, on the First Monday of every Month.

Wagga Wagga, 1st July, 1856.

803

Above Left: An advertisement in the Sydney press in July 1856.

Above Right: An advertisement in the Goulburn press in July 1856

South Wagga Wagga.

RACE WEEK.

G. FORSYTH & CO.,
GENERAL COMMISSION AGENTS.

BEg to apprise their numerous friends and the Public that having combined

AUCTIONEERING

with their other business, they purpose holding a

SALE OF HORSES,

viz.:—Draught, Saddle, and unbroken; together with a variety of Spring Carts, Drays, and other vehicles, during the three days' races, August 5th, 6th and 7th.

They particularly invite the attention of sellers as well as buyers to this very desirable opportunity offered; to the former of realising full value for their stock, and the latter in obtaining a good investment for their capital, vide the late high rates every description of horse stock have brought in the Melbourne markets.

The sales will take place at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of each day, at the sale yards in the rear of their stores. The want of such an emporium for the disposal of stock as well as other property, in the town of Wagga Wagga and the District, has long been felt. Such difficulty may now be considered removed.

The stockholder travelling with his flocks and herds from the far north to the markets of Bendigo and Melbourne, whether his stock be of fat or store character, is often when he reaches midway to market desirous of meeting with purchasers, from the ever varying prices in those greater marts. G. F. & Co. beg to inform the public that applications to purchase stock of all kinds are frequent from the Beechworth, Albury, and Bendigo markets, the former of which requiring a large supply of fat sheep and cattle from the numerous miners settled and settling there. Buyers in many instances would take delivery here or on the road. In such cases, or when parties are desirous of selling at the yard, G. F. & Co. will be happy to attend to communications by letter, and will afford every information with a view to effecting sales, and thus save the vendors the harassing trouble and anxiety of driving their stock so many *hundreds of miles*.

The fertile plains of the Billyongoo so contiguous to Wagga Wagga, being a large outlet for store sheep and cattle, parties having that description of stock can frequently be accommodated with a buyer here. Although Wagga Wagga has hitherto not advanced exactly at railway speed, it is steadily progressing in improvement, and we are in hopes of the day not being far distant, when stock can be sent at a locomotive rate to the various depots of consumption, and pending this much to be desired reality, we will strive to meet our friends half-way by bringing the butcher and grazier together, and rest content in carrying out the old established system of the quadrupeds carrying their own carcasses to the market.

G. F. & Co. from weekly communications with their friends and having regular reports of sales from the markets are enabled to afford information to sellers on the desirability of offering their stock. They also take this opportunity of announcing their recent arrivals of

WINTER GOODS

from some of the best and cheapest houses in the capital; they are thereby enabled to sell at unprecedentedly low prices. Their selections are not only large but choice, and they invite an inspection to satisfy even the most fastidious; however much they would hail the puff! puff! puff! of a railway train, as adopted sons of Australia's sunny clime, yet they confess their great aversion to anything like "puff" in mercantile transactions, and may say without egotism they exercise especial care in catering for the requirements of their supporters, so as to have not a single article wanting; to use the common phrase—even from a needle to an anchor.

Wholesale Buyers

are particularly invited to pay a visit. Articles in bulk can be supplied them cheaper than by ordering them from their agents in town, and without risk of delays on the road.

Woolpacks,

SHEARING SUPPLIES,

SPIRITS, WINES, ALE & PORTER,

AND

GENERAL MERCHANDISE,

a large assortment on hand to meet the growing wants of the district.

The highest prices given for wool, tallow, and other colonial produce.

July 1, 1856.

In April 1857, at the AGM of the Wagga Wagga Hospital Committee, George Forsyth was re-elected treasurer for the ensuing year.⁴⁷

A stolen cash box in February 1858 gave an indication of the volume of transactions processed by Forsyth & Co. The stolen box contained a number of bank notes, specifically,⁴⁸

“On the 12th last month, a cash-box was stolen from the stores of Mr. Forsyth of Wagga Wagga, containing eighty-eight one pound Commercial Bank notes, five pound notes to the amount of seventy pounds, half-sovereigns to the amount of sixteen pounds ten shillings, and sovereigns to the amount of twenty-two pounds. “

WAGGA WAGGA.
HORSE, CATTLE, AND SHEEP
B A B A B A B .
GEORGE FORSYTH
AUCTIONEER,
AND
COMMISSION AGENT,
I S prepared to negotiate for the sale or purchase of stock of all descriptions; and also for stations, landed and house property.
THREE EXCELLENT STATIONS FOR SALE,
viz,
“OWRA,” with 12 miles frontage to the Murrumbidgee, and 2 Saltbush Blocks near Yanco Creek; also,
KOLKIBERTO, EAST
STATION, near Marool Creek, on the north side of the Murrumbidgee, a most excellent fattening run, containing about 64,000 acres. Apply to
G. FORSYTH.

SOUTH WAGGA WAGGA
GEORGE FORSYTH,
GENERAL STOREKEEPER,
WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANT,
B EGGS to tender to his friends his best thanks for their kind support during the past three years, and to assure those parties either in the immediate vicinity or at a distance, that their esteemed favours will be met with promptitude and correctness, under the personal superintendence of G. F., who has at present on hand one of the largest stocks of General Merchandise ever offered in Wagga Wagga, judiciously assorted from some of the best houses in Sydney.
Wagga Wagga, October 30, 1858.

River Boats

The whole town was excited in November 1858 when the steamer *Albury* and the barge *Wakool* arrived from down river. This was the first paddle steamer to reach up as far as Wagga Wagga. The leading citizens presented Captain Johnson with a purse of fifty sovereigns in a show of appreciation for his efforts in navigating the rivers from South Australia to Wagga Wagga. The event turned sour when the Chief Constable, James O’Keefe, seized a large array of alcohol, which had been transported on the two vessels, alleging same had been carried about “*without a license.*” When the matter went to court George Forsyth testified that he had ordered a quantity of alcohol and other items back in September 1858, to the value of one thousand pounds, and that the majority of the alcohol conveyed on the two vessels was for his store. The court found in favour of the defendant and the alcohol was released.⁴⁹

River navigation offered a viable alternative to road transport but was heavily dependent on the amount of water in the rivers. Forsyth still relied on road transport from Sydney, as can be seen in a press advertisement in November 1858. In addition, Forsyth & Co. were now trading large rural properties.⁵⁰

Left: Advertisements placed by George Forsyth in November 1858.

⁴⁷ Goulburn Herald. 9th May 1857, p7.

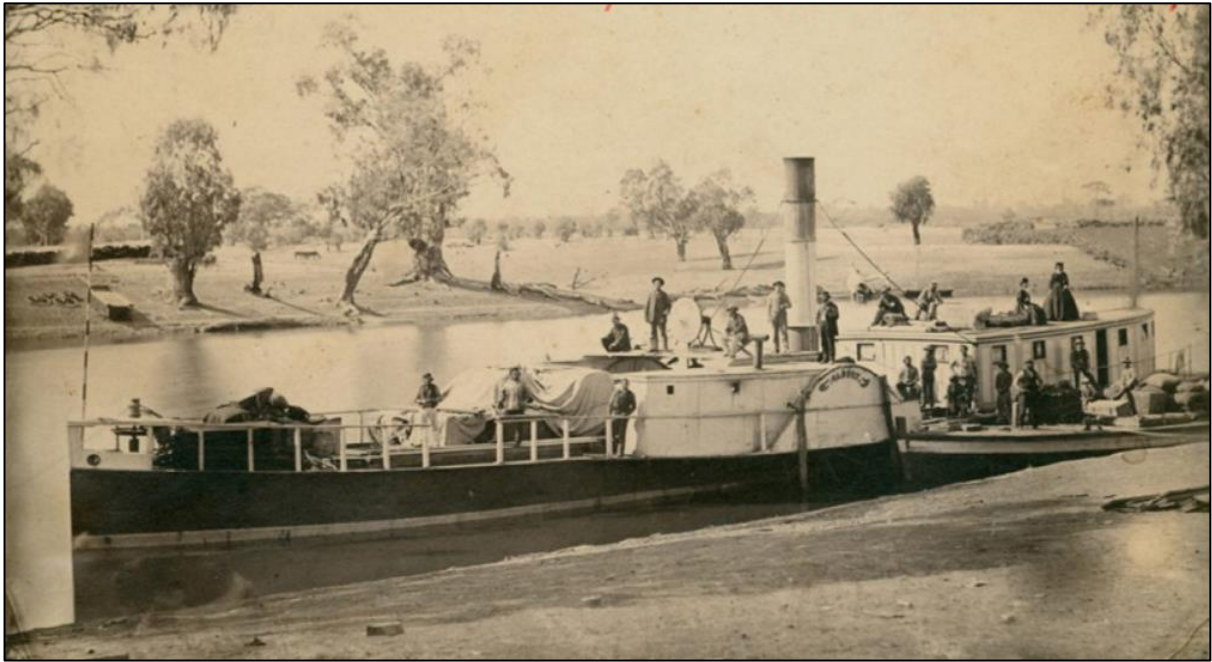
⁴⁸ Yass Courier. 6th March 1858, p2.

⁴⁹ Wagga Wagga Express. 20th November 1858, pp2 & 3.

⁵⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 20th November 1858, p4.

In September 1860. The Albury and two barges, under the control of Captain Cadell arrived in Wagga Wagga with a large cargo, mostly destined for the stores of George Forsyth. The shipment included twenty five tons of flour, along with some fifteen tons of other goods, including a large amount of furniture.⁵¹

The *Albury* delivered another shipment in November 1860, this time under the command of Captain Barber. The vessel docked at the “*Express Wharf*” and unloaded its extensive cargo which was all consigned to George Forsyth. The inventory included “*flour, timber for building purposes, choice cedar, and a large quantity of spirits, wines, ale and porter.*”⁵²



Above: PS Albury, c.1870. Courtesy Albury & District Historical Society.



Left: Captain Francis Cadell. Courtesy South Australia State Library [B.13508]

In May 1869, goods were still being delivered by paddle steamer to Wagga Wagga. On the 30th of that month the side paddle-wheel steamer, *Riverina*, in charge of Captain Bower, arrived from Echuca with some forty tons of goods consigned to G Forsyth & Co.⁵³

⁵¹ Albury Banner. 3rd October 1860, p3.

⁵² Goulburn Herald. 7th November 1860, p2.

⁵³ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 2nd June 1869, p2.

MANIFEST OF THE VICTORIA.

GEORGE FORSYTH AND Co., Wagga Wagga :
 —15 cases claret, 6½ casks port, 4 rolls
 floor cloth, 2 water buckets, 14 bars
 iron, 1 bundle rod ditto, 10 drums tar,
 3 bundles ridge, 1 ditto knives, 10 coils
 wire, 2 cases galvanised iron, 22 cases
 cordials, 1 cask soda, 1 drum soda, 5
 hogsheads ale, 3 bundles mattresses, 1 case
 glass, 2 packages iron stretches, 2 cases mus-
 tard, 1 case sauce, 2 cases peel, 3 cases jams,
 20 bags sugar, 6 boxes tea, 20 ditto raisins,
 20 bags rice, 1 ditto oatmeal, 7 boxes candles,
 1 bag almonds, 1 ditto pease, 1 case choco-
 late, 32 bags and 64 mats sugar, 1 package
 saddlery, 1 case coffee, 2 tierces and
 1 crate earthenware, 1 bundle shovels, 5
 cases stout, 48 empty kegs, 1 case corks, 1
 case drapery, 6 crates bottles, 2 cases bitters,
 2 barrels sugar, 22 ¼-chests tea, 4 colonial
 ovens, 1 bundle shovels, 1 bag dates, 2
 trunks boots, 1 bag nuts, 16 bags sugar, 1
 bundle forks, 1 cask lampblack, 1 bundle
 S. blades, 3 bundles hay forks, 1 bundle S.
 handles, 1 bundle hay rakes, 1 bundle
 scythes, 3 bundles frying pans, 1 stone, 1
 bundle weights, 3 cases, 1 cask hardware, 1
 package hardware, 1 cask chains, 1 bundle
 piping, 10½ chests tea, 56 mats sugar, 15
 crates bottles, 80 bags sugar, 4 cases drapery,
 8 bags guano, 1 truss, 1 pair oars (for Mr.
 Hann), 1 bundle G. grating, 3 casks currants,
 2 cases lobsters, 100 boxes candles. C.

Another river boat shipment arrived in October 1870, on board the *Victoria*, carrying a large array of stock for George Forsyth & Co., and other merchants.⁵⁴

Left: A list of items consigned to George Forsythe & Co., in October 1870, on board the *Victoria*.

Victoria carried more consignments to Wagga Wagga in 1870 and 1871.⁵⁵

River boat consignments would have been a viable transport option up until the arrival of the rail line at Wagga Wagga in 1878.

In March 1859, George Forsyth was appointed secretary of a committee established to facilitate extension of the telegraph line from Tarcutta to Wagga Wagga. The committee had resolved to accept an offer from the New South Wales government to carry out these works and set about collecting £1500, which was part of the agreement.⁵⁶ George was now commonly called upon to chair a variety of community events.

A mechanics institute was formed at Wagga Wagga in June 1859, and George Forsyth was one of a number of prominent citizens elected to the associated management committee.⁵⁷

In August 1859, a new store, to house drapery and fancy goods, was under construction for George Forsyth. The front was composed of plate glass entirely, including the doors, which were set in cedar frames, was described as “one of the prettiest out of Sydney.”⁵⁸ The new building was actually a “wing” of the existing premises.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 12th October 1870, p2.

⁵⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 28th June 1871, p2.

⁵⁶ Wagga Wagga Express. 12th March 1859, p2; 19th March 1859, p5.

⁵⁷ Wagga Wagga Express. 25th June 1859, p3.

⁵⁸ Wagga Wagga Express. 13th August 1859, p2.

⁵⁹ Wagga Wagga Express. 20th August 1859, p2.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

TO
WAGGA WAGGA
AND DISTRICT.

—:—
G. FORSYTH,
WHOLESALE & RETAIL
STOREKEEPER,

Wine & Spirit Merchant,
ETC., ETC.

SOUTH WAGGA WAGGA.

—:—
GEOGE FORSYTH begs most respect-
fully to thank his friends and the
public generally for all past favours, at
the same time, wishes to inform them he has
commenced building a

NEW STORE,

(in addition to the present one now
occupied by him) entirely for

D R A P E R Y

AND

FANCY GOODS,

in consequence of which he has
determined to

SELL OFF!

his present

Stock of Drapery,

AND FANCY GOODS

AT A

GREAT REDUCTION!!

so as to enable him to open the

NEW STORE,

with an

ENTIRELY NEW AND WELL

SELECTED STOCK

suitable for the approaching season.

GEORGE FORSYTH need not enumerate
every article comprised in his stock, as it is
well known that he always keeps the

LARGEST AND BEST
selected

STOCK IN THE DISTRICT,
but he would add that he has just received
FRESH SUPPLIES

direct from London and Sydney, of

GROCERIES

AND

TEAS.

IRONMONGERY,

WINES,

SPIRITS,

ALES

AND

PORTER,

GLASS AND EARTHENWARE

Stationery, Books, &c.

GENTS' and LADIES'

BOOTS AND SHOES,

SADDLERY, &c., &c.

GENTS'

PARIS HATS.

ALSO,

CABBAGE-TREE, PANAMA, and

FELT HATS.

—o—o—
COLONIAL PRODUCE

constantly on hand.

THE SALE OF DRAPERY, AND
FANCY GOODS

WILL COMMENCE

ON MONDAY NEXT,

AUGUST 15

Above: An advertisement for George Forsyth's new store in August 1859.

When a committee was formed in September 1859, for the purposes of securing a bridge over the river at Wagga Wagga, George Forsyth was one of eight prominent citizens elected to the provisional committee.⁶⁰

In August 1861, George Forsyth was conducting a store at Tipperary Gully [Burrangong] manned by two young men – Alfred Bishop and John William Mattison [or Matheson]. Two men entered the sleeping quarters of the latter and stole the cash box kept under Bishop's bed. Bishop was stabbed twice in the leg during the affray, and Mattison was seriously pistol whipped. Forsyth offered a reward of fifty pounds for apprehension of the two perpetrators.⁶¹ An habitual criminal, John Smith [alias Regan] was eventually hanged for the stabbing of Bishop.⁶²

George's influence would have been elevated with his appointment as a justice of the peace in February 1863.⁶³ From 1862 onwards George Forsyth regularly posted commercial reports in the local paper, which were copied in other regional newspapers at Yass, Goulburn, et al.⁶⁴ George Forsyth would have been well known over a large inland area.

The business continued to grow and in May 1864 Forsyth erected new brick stores, with cellars, to the rear of his existing stores.⁶⁵

GEORGE FORSYTH

IN returning thanks to his numerous friends and customers for the generous support they have afforded him in business during the last ten years at Wagga Wagga, begs to inform the public that "Stock-taking" being now completed of his large and well assorted Investments of

**GENERAL
MERCHANDISE,**

Selected with great care from the first Warehouses in Sydney and Melbourne—comprising Drapery, Grocery, Ironmongery, and every other Department. He has admitted as partner into the business Mr. Phineas Hann, and the establishment will in future be carried on under the firm of

GEO. FORSYTH & COMPANY,

By strict attention to the wants of the community, by civility and promptness in the execution of all orders, Wholesale or Retail, with which they may be favoured, G. F. and Company trust to merit a continuance of that support so liberally accorded to the Establishment hitherto.

Fitzmaurice-street,
Wagga Wagga,
June 30, 1866.

**THE STORES
OF
GEORGE FORSYTH**

ARE re-opened this day, **SATURDAY,**
for the resumption of Business.
June 30th, 1866.

In the 1860's and 1870's George Forsyth was dominant in the business environment of Wagga Wagga and its surrounds. He was the major trader in stock, and real estate of all classifications. He commonly bought and sold properties, in his own name, in order to turn a profit. At the same time he actively participated with a wide variety of community groups and events. Many public meetings were chaired by George. His influence was at its peak. Newspapers were laced with notices from George Forsyth & Co., promoting a variety of sales – everything from furniture and stock to large runs.⁶⁶

In 1866, Forsyth took on a partner in Phineas Hann, and as part of that arrangement closed the store for a short period to allow for a stocktake. The store reopened on Saturday 30th June 1866, trading still as Forsyth & Co.⁶⁷

Left: Notice of new partnership in June 1866.

⁶⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 10th September 1859, p2.

⁶¹ Yass Courier. 4th September 1861, p2; 2nd April 1862, p3; Goulburn Herald. 29th March 1862, p2.

⁶² Goulburn Herald. 7th June 1862, p2.

⁶³ Goulburn Herald. 28th February 1863, p2; NSW Government Gazette. 1863, p455.

⁶⁴ Yass Courier. 27th August 1862, p2.

⁶⁵ Yass Courier. 11th May 1864, p2c6.

⁶⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 9th January 1869, p4.

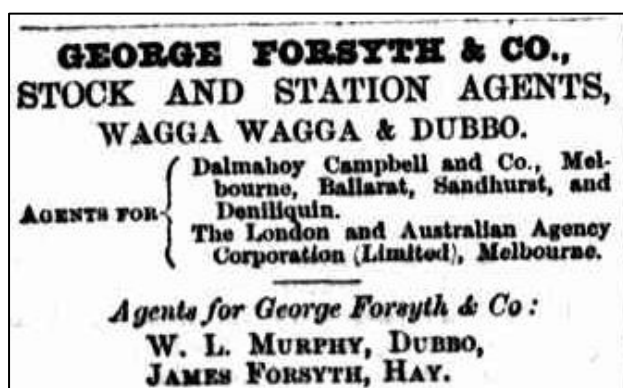
⁶⁷ Wagga Wagga Express. 30th June 1866, p3.

Flooding in June 1867 caused Forsyth to dam the entrance to his stores and the cellars, with sandbags, which was successful in preventing the waters entering same.⁶⁸

In August 1868, a building at Wagga Wagga belonging to George Forsyth was designated a bonded store by the Acting Collector of Customs.⁶⁹

By October 1868, George Forsyth was making connections with the community in the Macleay region when he chaired a public meeting at the Darkwater Sabbath School.⁷⁰ An assumption is made that George had a brother living in the district, but this has not yet been verified.

In January 1869, G Forsyth & Co. gave notice that the firm now had an arrangement with James Forsyth of Hay for the latter to represent them in Hay.⁷¹ The firm also had an agent at Dubbo – WL Murphy.⁷²



Left: A notice from G Forsyth & Co., in June 1869.

Poor health afflicted Forsyth in early 1869, as a consequence of a "*severe attack of erysipelas*."⁷³ Later in February 1869 it was reported that he was improving but yet unable to sit up.⁷⁴ A public meeting at Wagga Wagga in March 1869 resolved to seek incorporation of the town as a borough council. George Forsyth was now well enough to make his first public appearance since his illness, as part of the proceedings, and he was warmly welcomed by those present.⁷⁵

Ater to the editor in October 1869, commented on a suggestion that the town should have a new name, stating, in part,⁷⁶

"There is at present associated in the mind of every Wagga Waggian, and of everyone who ever had anything to do with the town, an honourable name that ought to be imperishably connected with it; then, why not give it that name at once, and call the town "Forsyth?" There is no name more popular in this district - none so well known in commercial circles in connection with it - none better known to the pastoral interest, and there is no man, I believe, who knows its worthy bearer that would not join me in desiring to pay him such a compliment."

⁶⁸ Goulburn Herald. 3rd July 1867, p2.

⁶⁹ Sydney Mail. 22nd August 1868, p9.

⁷⁰ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 17th October 1868, p3.

⁷¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 9th January 1869, p4.

⁷² Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 19th June 1869, p1.

⁷³ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 6th February 1869, p2.

⁷⁴ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 20th February 1869, p2.

⁷⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 3rd April 1869, p2.

⁷⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 27th October 1869, p3.

Forsyth would have been mortified in the early months of 1870, when Mr Samuel Martin, another agent [cattle trader], accused Forsyth's business of not acting in the best interests of its clients. Martin accused the firm of George Forsyth & Co., No.2, of accepting an offer for stock that was below what he, Martin, had offered. The inference was that the firm had done so to benefit a friend – the purchaser. Reputation was everything for Forsyth, both as an agent and as a prominent citizen. When Martin declined to apologise George Forsyth, RB Wilkinson, and JS Lavender – the joint owners of the business - took the matter to court, in April 1870. The jury found in favour of Martin.⁷⁷

GEORGE FORSYTH & CO.,
STOCK AND STATION AGENTS,
WAGGA WAGGA & DUBBO.

DUBBO BRANCH—W. L. MURPHY.

AGENCIES:

MELBOURNE...	{	LONDON & AUSTRALIAN
MELBOURNE & DENILQUIN		AGENCY CORPORATION LIMITED.
SYDNEY	...	DALMAHOY CAMPBELL & Co.
BALLARAT	...	ETTERSHANK EAGLESTONE, & Co.
HAY	...	HEPBURN & LEONARD.
SALE. GIPPS	{	FORSYTH & LOUGHNAN.
LAND		PEARSON, ENGLISH, & PECK.
GOULBURN	...	FINLAY, & Co.
BRAIDWOOD	...	R. CRAIG.
TUMUT	...	WALTER BROWN.
BEECHWORTH	...	J. H. GRAY & Co.

Left: A notice in April 1870 highlighting the extent of Forsyth & Co.'s trading connections.⁷⁸

George may have cursed his partners for the outcome of the court case. George, himself, had been seriously ill for the past twelve months and had been absent from Wagga Wagga during that period. He returned home in April 1870 and was met with a very warm welcome, which was reported in the following terms,⁷⁹

"On Monday Mr. George Forsyth, after an absence of more than twelve months, returned to Wagga. Notwithstanding the heavy rain, a large number of persons, including most of the leading residents, went several miles out to meet him and escort him into the town. As the procession, consisting of about a dozen buggies and several horsemen, passed up Fitzmaurice-street, the balconies, verandahs, &c., were crowded, and waving handkerchiefs and hearty cheers testified to the general delight at Mr. Forsyth's restoration to health and to Wagga."

At the AGM of the Mechanics Institute in May 1870, George Forsyth was re-elected as president. Forsyth declared that he had been restricted in attendance to meetings in past due to "*severe illness*", but his health was now, "*restored*" and he would now be able to devote more time to his duties.⁸⁰

Wagga Wagga's first municipal elections were held on the 16th June 1870, and George Forsyth was one of three men elected to represent the South ward and one of nine aldermen elected in total. Forsyth received the highest number of votes, with 92. Next best was Henry Moxham with 83 votes. The elections were held on a Thursday, with mayoral election to be held on following Monday. Press reports declared Forsyth was a certainty for the job.⁸¹ As predicted George Forsyth was subsequently elected as Wagga Wagga's first ever mayor, on Monday 20th June 1870.⁸²

⁷⁷ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 13th April 1870, p2; Empire [Sydney]. 16th April 1870, p2.

⁷⁸ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 23rd April 1870, p1.

⁷⁹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 27th April 1870, p2.

⁸⁰ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 14th May 1870, p2.

⁸¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 18th June 1870, p2.

⁸² Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 22nd June 1870, p2

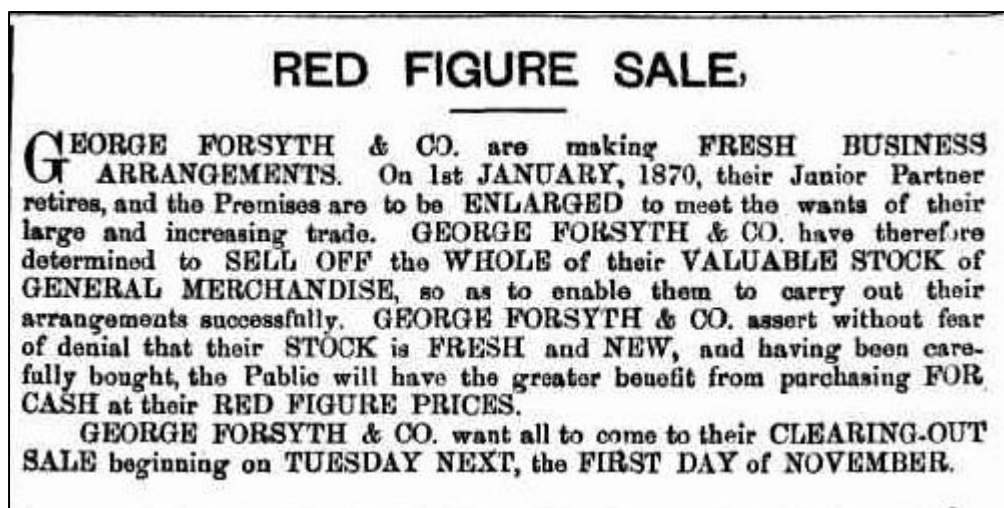
Alleged Failure of Forsyth & Co.

Forsyth was back in court in July 1870, defending the reputation of his firm. An unknown person had sent a telegram to the press at Goulburn declaring Forsyth & Co. had “*failed*.” Forsyth chose to sue the publisher of the offending newspaper – John Lancashire Harris of the *Goulburn Evening Post*. Harris failed to appear at the first hearing in Wagga Wagga, and the bench consequently granted a warrant compelling Harris to attend court.⁸³ Evidence at the next hearing, in August 1870, at Wagga Wagga, suggested the accusation of failure referred to the agency business [Forsyth, Wilkinson and Lavender] and not the general store business. The station master at Wagga Wagga was able to testify that no such telegram had been sent from Wagga Wagga. Harris was committed to trial on the 3rd October, at Wagga Wagga, and released on bail.⁸⁴

Forsyth had also charged the editor of the *Goulburn Evening Post*, Joseph Henniker Heaton, with malicious libel, and that case was heard at Goulburn in July/August 1870. Heaton testified that he had seen the offending telegram at the offices of Walsh & Betts, solicitors of Goulburn. A representative of that firm denied having ever received such a telegram. Heaton was committed to stand trial on the 3rd October at Goulburn.⁸⁵

The attorney general subsequently declined to prosecute.⁸⁶ His reasons were outlined in August and his summary included a suggestion that a civil prosecution might be more feasible.⁸⁷ No record of further action by Forsyth could be found.

From July 1870 onwards George Forsyth took steps to rationalise his business arrangements.⁸⁸



Above: A notice placed by George Forsyth & Co., in October 1870.⁸⁹

Effective the 13th December 1870, the partnership between George Forsyth and Phineas Hann, trading as George Forsyth & Co., general store keepers, and stock, station and commission agents, was dissolved. All debts were payable to Forsyth and all liabilities were his responsibility.⁹⁰

In the same month Forsyth accommodated the retirement of James Smith Lavender, from the partnership of George Forsyth & Co., stock and station agents, effective the 31st December 1870.⁹¹

⁸³ Evening News [Sydney]. 26th July 1870, p2.

⁸⁴ Goulburn Herald. 17th August 1870, p3.

⁸⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 10th August 1870, p3. [Quoting from the Goulburn Herald]

⁸⁶ Evening News. 12th September 1870, p3.

⁸⁷ Yass Courier. 19th August 1870, p3.

⁸⁸ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 20th July 1870, p3.

⁸⁹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 29th October 1870, p3.

⁹⁰ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 31st December 1870, p3.

⁹¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 29th March 1871, p3.

In March 1871, Forsyth wrote a scathing letter attacking the editor of the *Wagga Wagga Express* newspaper. The opposition paper – *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* – favoured Forsyth by publishing the letter in full, including the following extract,⁹²

“Since my connection with the Express newspaper ceased a few years ago, by calling in the money I caused to be lent upon at its first establishment, amongst us, you, Sir, have made it your study, in writing for that paper, to take every opportunity of having a hit at me, either by inuendoes or by gross misrepresentation. I have all along been able to laugh at your attacks, as the emanations of a squeamish little-minded man.”

Many prominent citizens tended to align with one or other of the two local papers, influenced by their political, religious, and business affiliations. The *Yass Courier* joined the fray in March 1871, suggesting Forsyth had overreacted to the Express criticism and highlighted the following extract from George’s original letter,⁹³

“I have met in my time with a few ill-natured weeds like yourself; but I can vouch for this fact, that not one of them could keep pace with you in the art of gross misrepresentation, wilfully and deliberately made without regard to consequences. You have, sir, been rated by your contemporaries for your malevolent, puerile, squeamish productions during your writing for the Express. You have so outraged men's propriety by your ravings in the Express, that when you received a boy-whipping for your misdeeds, the general pry through our little community was not one of commiseration - but that you well deserved it. You sought refuge in a court of justice for compensation for your whipping, and even there your provocation was recorded as meriting your deserts, and you got no recompense. You can continue to write away of me and at me, whenever your humour suits. I can afford to smile at your squeaking attacks, and you can retire to rest without the slightest apprehension at any time of my buying a penny whip for you.”

The *Albury Banner* joined the attack in April 1871, when they repeated an article in the *Wagga Wagga Express* attacking Forsyth for attempting to evade jury duty. It read as follows,⁹⁴

“Yesterday when the case of Carter vs Hurley and O'Donnell came on for hearing, Mr Forsyth was called as a juryman, but instead of answering to the summons, he coolly seated himself outside the Court, and commenced to smoke. To the calls of the police and the officers of the Court he continued obdurately deaf imagining, no doubt, that, as a magistrate in a court in which he has always been accustomed to act as he pleased, no one would dare to compel him to give obedience to the law. Upon His Honor the Judge intimating that he should be obliged to commit the Mayor for contempt of court, if he did not take his seat on the jury, he at last arose and with wonderful alacrity, and condescended for the time to sink into the useful position of a juryman. For persisting in driving over the footpaths, in defiance of the Municipal bye-laws, he has, we understand, been summoned by the police.”

⁹² *Wagga Wagga Advertiser*. 22nd March 1871, p2.

⁹³ *Yass Courier*. 28th March 1871, p2.

⁹⁴ *Albury Banner*. 29th April 1871, p5.

Forsyth continued the rationalisation of his businesses in June 1871, when he gave notice for the dissolution of the partnership between himself and Robert B Wilkinson, trading as George Forsyth & Co., stock, station and commission agents, effective from the 30th of that month, with Forsyth to carry on the business as sole proprietor.⁹⁵

In May 1872, Forsyth offered a number of lots up for sale by auction, through the agency of GA Elliot. The lots included his private residence, *Westoe*, which was described as follows,⁹⁶

“The residence of Mr. GEORGE FORSYTH, called WESTOE HOUSE, and GROUNDS, having a frontage to Kincaid-street and corner of Trail-street, in the town of Wagga Wagga, containing 10 rooms, bathroom, three cellars, and every convenience for a gentleman's residence. It has two wells of water, besides three large tanks. The garden is well stocked with choice vines and fruit trees, besides ornamental trees. The dwelling-house has been built with great care, having a wide, spacious verandah all round, and being on an eminence, commands a view of all the surrounding country.”



Above: The original Westoe. Courtesy of the Hampshire Cultural Trust.

⁹⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 21st June 1871, p3.

⁹⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 1st May 1872, p2.

To Capitalists.

FOR SALE BY AUCTION,

On account of Mr. GEO. FORSYTH, by
G. A. ELLIOT,

This Day,

At 2 o'clock, at the

AUSTRALIAN HOTEL,

Wagga Wagga.

1.—The residence of Mr. **GEORGE FORSYTH**, called

WESTOE HOUSE,

and **GROUNDS**, having a frontage to Kincaid-street and corner of Trail-street, in the town of Wagga Wagga, containing 10 rooms, bathroom, three cellars, and every convenience for a gentleman's residence. It has two wells of water, besides three large tanks. The garden is well stocked with choice vines and fruit trees, besides ornamental trees. The dwelling-house has been built with great care, having a wide, spacious verandah all round, and being on an eminence, commands a view of all the surrounding country.

Lot 2.—A **COTTAGE** of eight rooms, adjoining the above, with entrance from Kincaid and Trail-streets.

Lot 3.—**ALLOTMENT**, adjoining, frontage to Kincaid-street, 66ft. by a depth of 122ft.

Lot 4.—**ALLOTMENT**, adjoining, near the Bonded Stores, same dimensions.

These two lots, well stocked with vines and fruit-trees, are most excellent building sites.

Lot 5.—Corner of Fitzmaurice and Kincaid streets, opposite the old Bank of New South Wales, and next the stores of Geo. Forsyth and Co., having a double frontage, well suitable for the erection of a family hotel. There is a six-roomed cottage, kitchen, and buildings in the rear of this lot, also a good well of water.

Lot 6.—A **COTTAGE** in Kincaid-street, occupied by Mr. James Fox, rented at £26 per annum.

Lot 7.—A **COTTAGE** adjoining the above, in the occupation of Mr. W. Gibbes, rented at £26 a year.

Lot 7.—A **COTTAGE**, opposite the Toll-house, in Fitzmaurice-street; rental, £17 per annum.

Lot 9.—The **WALLACE TOWN HOTEL** and **GROUNDS**, on the Junee-road, occupied by Mr. Simpson, rented at £50 per annum.

The above valuable properties afford an excellent opportunity for the investment of capital, and return a remunerative interest for money.

PLANS and **FULL PARTICULARS** of the above can be had on application to the Proprietor or the Auctioneer.

Wagga Wagga, April 11, 1872.

IMPORTANT SALE

OF

Valuable Freehold Properties.

FOR SALE BY AUCTION,

On account of Mr. **GEORGE FORSYTH**,

BY

G. A. ELLIOT,

This Day,

AT THE

Australian Hotel, Wagga Wagga,

At 2 o'clock.

PADDOCKS.

Lot 1.—A valuable **BLOCK** of **LAND** of 75 acres, Nos. 41 and 42 on the town map, situate at Marshall's Creek, fenced, watered by a creek and dam, within the borough of Wagga Wagga.

Lot 2.—**FARM** of 35 acres (formerly S. Milner's), with Marshall's Creek through it, suitable for cultivation and grazing.

Lot 3.—The **PADDOCKS** known as **BAILLIE'S**, at Rocky Waterhole, on road leading from Lake Albert to the Cemetery, containing 137 acres 3 roods, all securely fenced with strong split fence, large water-hole, yard, &c. The water from the Lake runs through the centre. The land is well grassed and very fine grazing for stock.

Lot 4.—A **FARM** of 37 acres 2 roods, formerly Biddle's, adjoining to the farms of Mr. R. J. Higgins, at North Wagga, having an arm of creek from the river passing through it.

PLANS of the **FARMS** and **ALL PARTICULARS** can be **FURNISHED**.

ALLOTMENTS.

1.—Two **ALLOTMENTS** in Crampton-street, Nos. 12 and 13, section 58, adjoining Mr. Eaton's new residence, near Chapman's Mill.

2.—One **ALLOTMENT** in Crampton-street, 18, section 57, near Race-course.

3.—One do., in Fitzmaurice-street, nearly opposite the Bridge, No. 6, section 7.

4.—One do., do., do., No. 7, section 7.

5.—One do., do., do., corner, No. 8, section 7.

6.—One do., do., No. 9, section 7.

7.—One do., do., No. 10, section 7.

8.—One do., do., No. 12, section 7.

9.—One do., do., No. 13, section 7.

10.—One do., do., No. 14, section 7.

11.—One do., do., No. 15, section 7.

12.—One do., do., No. 16, section 7.

13.—One do., do., No. 17, section 7.

ALLOTMENTS

On the Sand-hills, between the River and Baylis-street.

14.—Five **ALLOTMENTS** in Berry, Thompson, and Forsyth streets, near Love and Roberts's Newtown Stores, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 of section 70.

15.—Two **ALLOTMENTS** in Tarcutta-street, Sandhills, 9 and 10, section 70.

16.—Three do., Morgan and Tarcutta streets, 8, 9, and 10, section 72.

17.—One **MOIETY** of **ALLOTMENTS**, corner Forsyth-street, adjoining Lime-kiln, 13, section 72.

PLANS and **PARTICULARS** can be had on **APPLICATION** to the **AUCTIONEER**.

Above: Sale notices placed by GA Elliot in May 1871.

Around this time George Forsyth had a finger in just about every pie going. In more contemporary times he, and his fellow aldermen, would have had issues with the concept of a pecuniary interest. One example was when the council resolved to spend money on extending a road to the cemetery. The Express lamented the decision and made the following comments,⁹⁷

“It is true that one considerable advantage will be gained by the course which has been taken. The new road will skirt the property of the Mayor, and doubtless considerably enhance the value thereof. The ratepayers will naturally rejoice at being thus enabled to improve the mayoral estate, and to furnish a smooth road upon which the mayoral buggy can roll, if at any time his Worship should think of erecting to himself a country residence. It is pleasant to have such compliant municipal subjects, but pleasanter still to have such compliant councillors, as to thus advance one's property about cent per cent, in value, and especially when it is done at a clear loss to the municipality of some hundreds of pounds.

The mayoral chair will be no longer the barren honour that it has so long been esteemed, and we doubt not that the next election will bring a crowd of candidates for the office. Hitherto Mr. Forsyth has been permitted to wear his laurels uncontested, but no such gross neglect of personal interest will be permitted another year. Alderman Smith will suddenly discover that he has a farm or two a little way out of town, and simultaneously that he is eminently calculated to adorn the chief seat at the Council table. He will endeavour to get the desirable aldermanic element into the Council — plastic men who will yield to anything that he wishes, or stupid men who cannot see when they are being beguiled. Thus supported he may probably assert that the shortest way from Fitzmaurice-street to the Wagga Bridge is certainly via his farms, and maintain that all the rough places upon so important a thoroughfare should be made smooth. The mayorship is decidedly an important and advantageous office, and we trust that all aldermen possessing little properties in out-of-the-way corners will see it.”⁹⁸

GEO. FORSYTH & COMPANY,
MERCHANTS,
WAGGA WAGGA.

Head Establishment - - - - Fitzmaurice-street.
 Bonded Warehouse - - - - Kincaid-street.
 Branch Store - - - - - Newtown.

ANNOUNCE with pleasure to their esteemed customers and the public generally,
THE ARRIVAL
 of a most Comprehensive Assortment of
GENERAL MERCHANDISE,
 (Direct to their Order),
 And now to be seen at the above places of business, which they intend to dispose of at
VERY MODERATE PRICES.

INSPECTION IS RESPECTFULLY INVITED.

In February 1874, George Forsyth was elected mayor for the 5th time.⁹⁹ In January 1875, Forsyth gave notice that he would not be contesting the next mayoral election.¹⁰⁰ He was re-elected as an alderman in February 1875, and as stated, he did not run for mayor.¹⁰¹

In May 1875, George Forsyth & Co. [merchants], were carrying on business in three locations – Fitzmaurice Street, Kincaid Street [bonded store], and Newtown [branch store].¹⁰²

Left: An advertisement for George Forsyth & Co.’s three premises in May 1875.

⁹⁷ Wagga Wagga Express, 31st May 1873, p2.

⁹⁸ Wagga Wagga Express. 31st May 1873, p2.

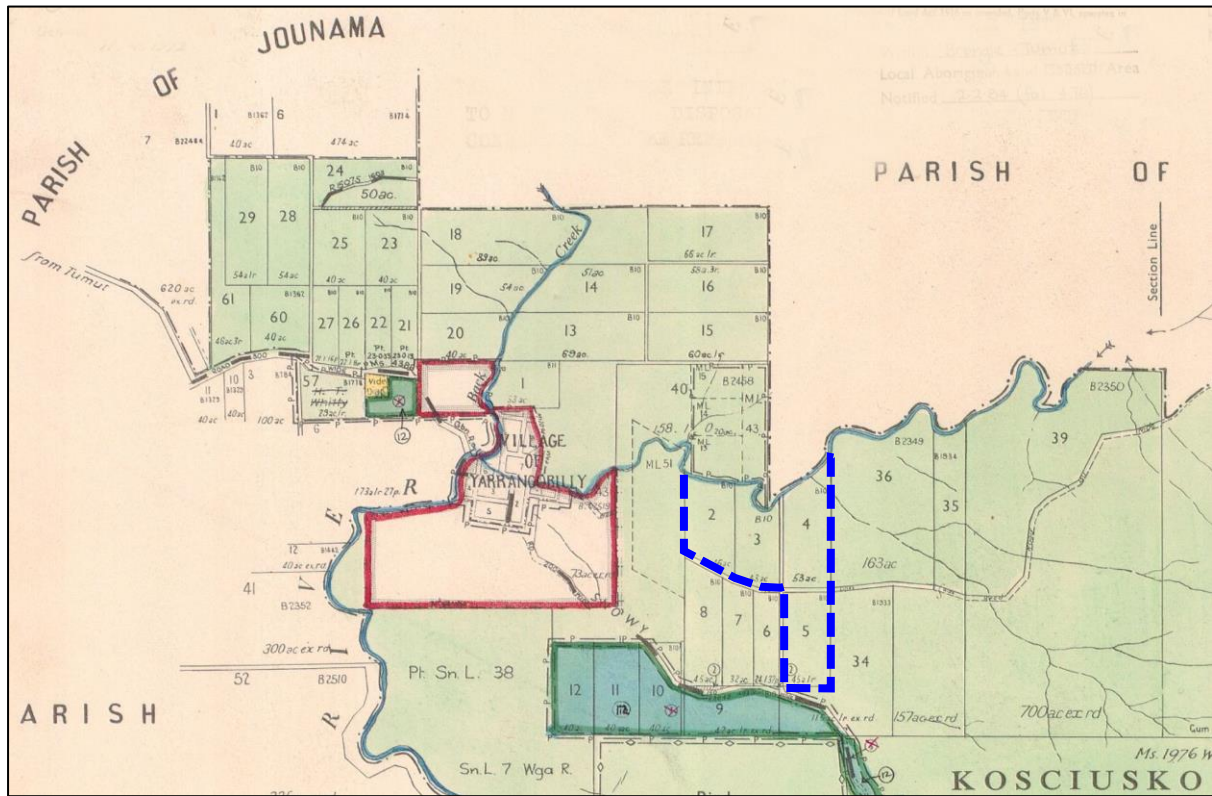
⁹⁹ Pastoral Times. 21st February 1874, p2.

¹⁰⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 20th January 1875, p3; Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 20th January 1875, p3.

¹⁰¹ Wagga Wagga Express. 20th February 1875, p2.

¹⁰² Wagga Wagga Express. 15th May 1875, p3.

By March 1876, George Forsyth had left Wagga Wagga and was residing in, “*the Hill Country, about Kiandra, on a station recently purchased by him.*” Forsyth retained his business interests in Wagga Wagga.¹⁰³ The property referred to was *Yarrangobilly*, on which George had recently constructed a new residence.¹⁰⁴ [A press report in July 1880 refers to Forsyth’s portions 2, 3 & 5, in the parish of Yarrangobilly, on the left bank of the Yarrangobilly River]¹⁰⁵



Above: An extract from a Yarrangobilly parish map showing four lots owned by George Forsythe [portions 2, 3, 4 & 5, with frontages to the Yarrangobilly River. Courtesy NSW Land Registry Services. HLRV.

Portions 6, 7, and 8, adjoining Forsyth’s portions, were owned by John Gordon, while nearby lots 11, 12, and 13, were owned by Samuel Gordon.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Sydney Mail. 11th March 1876, p343.

¹⁰⁴ Australian Town & Country Journal. 4th March 1876, p371.

¹⁰⁵ Yass Courier. 9th July 1880, p4; Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 6th July 1880, p4.

¹⁰⁶ NSW Land Registry Services. HLRV. Status branch charting map, parish of Yarrangobilly.

Although there was no farewell dinner immediately to pre-empt George's departure, subscriptions were raised and the "*Forsyth Testimonial Plate*" was purchased as a gift. The gift was on display in Mr WC Hunter's window, and was described as follows:¹⁰⁷

"The Forsyth Testimonial Plate purchased by the Committee from Mr. W. C. Hunter, has been on view since Wednesday in the window of Mr. Hunter's establishment, and has attracted a good number of spectators who are uniform in admiration of the testimonial. It consists of a very handsome Tea Service, a Lamp, and Inkstand, the whole being exceedingly chaste in design, and beautiful specimens of the silversmith's art. The Tea Service is of solid silver, with figures in bas-relief of cattle, kangaroos and emus, with men on horseback, and the lids are crowned with silver figures of opossums and kangaroos. The lamp is of solid silver with the exception of the bowl or receptacle for the oil, which is an emu egg surrounded by a band of silver supporting human figures of silver, and with silver chains hanging in graceful festoons around it. The Inkstand is an emu-egg set in silver, having an emu surrounded by ferns on the lid. Through the centre of the egg is an available silver penholder. The following inscription is engraved on each piece except the sugar basin and cream ewer, on which is the monogram, G. F., only: 'Presented to George Forsyth, Esq., J.P., by the residents of Wagga Wagga, in recognition of his public services on behalf of the town and district, and in remembrance of his sterling characteristics as a friend.' Three handsome cedar boxes with monograms on brass plates are provided for the safe keeping of this splendid gift."

An illustrated address, purchased from Mr Relph of Sydney, was also on display at Hunters. A brief description provided the following details,¹⁰⁸

"The illumination is admirably executed, the lettering and margins being delineated in a very artistic manner, while great taste characterises all the designs. The address is enclosed in an album of morocco, bearing an appropriate inscription on the cover. "

A farewell dinner for Forsyth was held in April 1876, at the Australian hotel, chaired by Henry Baylis. The aforementioned gifts were presented at this event.¹⁰⁹

On Thursday 3rd April 1876, George Forsyth & Co. closed the branch store at Newtown. At the same time the firm advised that "*very large additions and Improvements*" were being made to the main store in Fitzmaurice Street. Forsyth had sold the store business to JE Jackson & JP Charles, which continued to trade as George Forsyth & Co.¹¹⁰ The arrangements included closure of the branch store in Newtown.¹¹¹

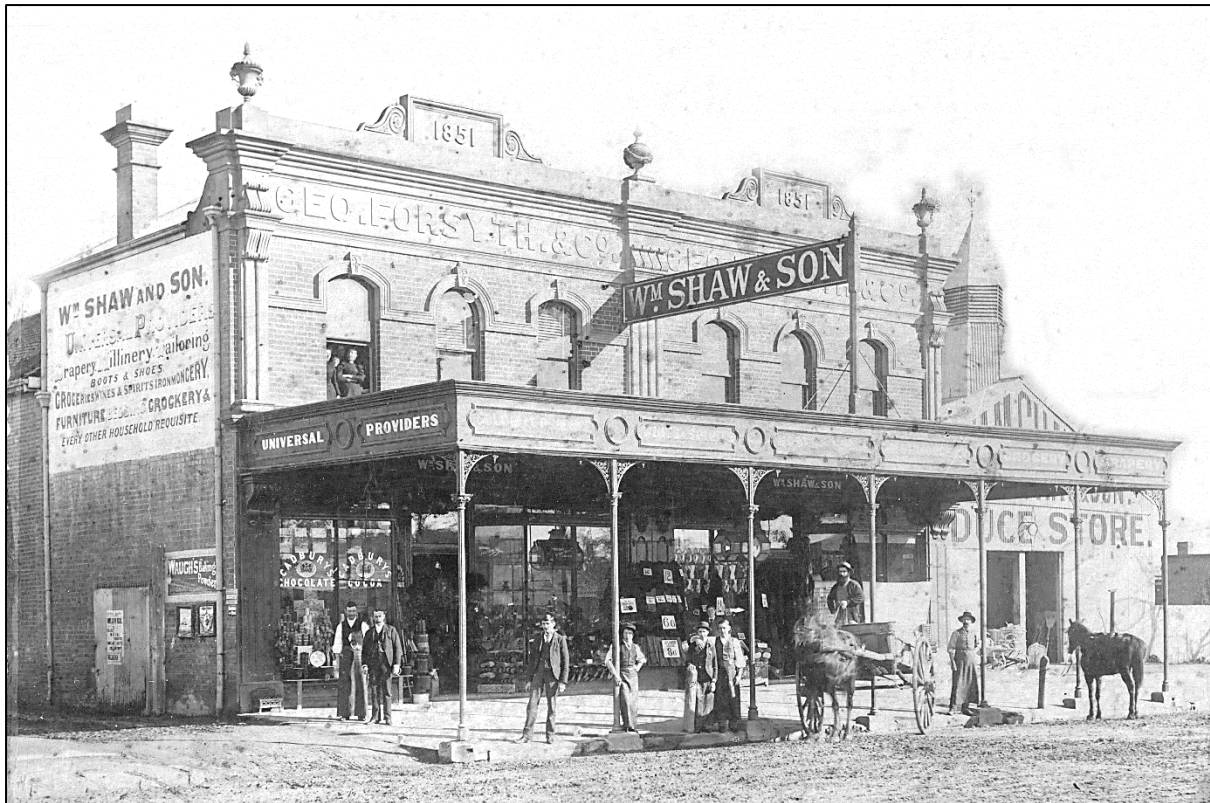
¹⁰⁷ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 1st April 1876, p2.

¹⁰⁸ Wagga Wagga Express. 15th April 1876, p2.

¹⁰⁹ Pastoral Times. 15th April 1876, p4.

¹¹⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 12th April 1876, p3.

¹¹¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 15th April 1876, p3. / 17th May 1876, p3.



Above: George Forsyth's Store, and the adjoining produce store, both facing onto Fitzmaurice Street, c.1890s.

Recorded events confirm Forsyth's presence at Yarrangobilly. Shearing was almost completed at Forsyth's *Yarrangobilly* in December 1877, in what promised to be a good year for the clip.¹¹²

Forsyth's clip was carried by wagon to Bowning, presumably to go from that place by rail, to Sydney.¹¹³

Forsyth held a magisterial enquiry at Gundagai in March 1878, to consider the circumstances surrounding the recent sad and tragic death of Mary Gilbert on the *South Talbingo* run.¹¹⁴

A snowfall in June 1878, saw nineteen inches of snow deposited in Forsyth's garden at *Yarrangobilly*.¹¹⁵

In January 1880, it was reported that George Forsyth was about to leave *Yarrangobilly Station* and that Mr Gordon would take over the management of the property.¹¹⁶ A report in September 1880 confirmed that Forsyth had gone to Sydney, as a consequence of health issues.¹¹⁷ In November 1880, it was announced that Forsyth had "*somewhat recovered*" and was now residing at "*Summer Island, MacLeay River*."¹¹⁸

¹¹² Sydney Mail. 22nd December 1877, p778.

¹¹³ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 21st March 1877, p3.

¹¹⁴ Gundagai Times. 1st March 1878, p2

¹¹⁵ Sydney Morning Herald. 29th June 1878, p6.

¹¹⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 3rd January 1880, p2c2.

¹¹⁷ Gundagai Times. 24th September 1880, p2.

¹¹⁸ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 9th November 1880, p2.

In February 1880, a travelling reporter visited Forsyth's *Yarrangobilly* run and provided the following details,¹¹⁹

"A TRIP TO KIANDRA. Leaving Tumut in the evening, by way of the Punt Road, we passed through the grazing paddocks of Mr J Wilkinson, and after a ride of about four miles reached the old Punt Crossing, at the Tumut River. In summer this crossing is used by both teamsters and horsemen going up and down the river; but in winter and spring, when the river is swollen by the rains and melted snow, the road round by and across Tumut Plains has to be followed. When we crossed the water was barely up to the horses' knees, and running clear as crystal over a gravelly bottom. After following the course of the river for about six miles, we reached Blowering, the station of Messrs Briggs and Norman, situated on a knoll overlooking a pretty river reach. Here we were hospitably entertained, and, after a dip in the rapids, retired, as we intended making an early start the following morning. By five am we were in the saddle, and cantering smartly along, anxious to make the most of the cool morning hours. Fifteen miles over a rather rough road brought us to Mrs Lampe's comfortable homestead, nestled at the foot of the great Talkinga [sic] Hill. Up to this we had followed the river, and had caught several lovely glimpses of it as it pursued its course, now in clear, deep, swift-flowing pools, and again leaping and tumbling over its rocky bed. It has all the appearance of a highland trout-stream, and I felt an irresistible longing for a good rod and cast of flies, to whip those inviting-looking spots where the tail of the rapids subside into the deeper water. And now the ascent of the hill - the real part of the day's work - commenced. It is three miles long, and the gradient nearly all the way as steep as the roof of an ordinary house. It is no slight undertaking for horsemen, but for bullock drays, or even light buggies, it is a wonderful feat to surmount it; and yet we were informed that a gentleman actually drove a four in-hand down it at full gallop - a fool's performance at best. Some people who came down after him say that at the turns his wheel tracks were within the eighth of an inch of the edge, and this eighth was all that intervened between him and perdition, for if he had gone over nothing less than a thousand feet would have pulled him up. Several times during the ascent we were obliged to draw rein and breathe our horses, and then we had time to have a look at the surroundings, and certainly they were very grand. Peak surmounted peak, until they were lost in the blue distance, some wooded to the summit, but the higher ones crowned with primeval rock, the fissures in which still gleamed white with snow. Every foot we ascended the climate changed; we knew by the appearance of the sky that, on the flat country in and about Tumut, the thermometer would stand about 105 degrees in the shade, and yet, while we were thirty miles distant, we could bear coat and waistcoat without inconvenience, and felt the sun rather pleasant than otherwise. Having gained the summit of the range we continued to climb up and down for a couple of hours, and shortly before 10 am, from the summit of a hill, we saw the comfortable homestead of Yarrangobilly, the station of Mr G Forsyth, nestling in a pleasant little valley on a bank of a beautiful stream, which leaped and sparkled in the morning sun. Perhaps it was the weary stretch of barren country we had passed over which made this little oasis so attractive to the eye; yet I hardly think so, for, viewed under any circumstances, it would be pronounced a very pretty spot. We were heartily welcomed by the owner, and invited to spell during the midday hours; this we did - nothing loth - as we intended to stop at Kiandra that night, and had plenty of time to cover the two-

¹¹⁹ Freeman's Journal. 7th February 1880, p18.

and-twenty miles which remained of the journey. During the summer months the climate at this station, and in fact anywhere on the top of the range, is delightful; the heat is never oppressive, and the mornings and evenings are chilly. The night before we got there, a frost had nipped all the potato tops and browned a paddock of springing oats. The grass everywhere was perfectly green, whilst that in the low country, has been burnt up for months past. The young ladies of the family informed us that in winter the snow lies thick on the ground for three weeks or a month at a time, and that the principal amusement is snowballing down the hills which surround their house. Shortly before three o'clock we were again in the saddle, on the last stage of our journey. The country we passed over is very rough, and is thickly strewn with, dead trunks and branches of trees. This is caused by the snow, which collects upon them and breaks them off, during the winter. After about seven miles of this rough country, we sighted what is known as 'The long Plain.' It is the commencement of the Manaro country, and a very refreshing sight it was after the barren country we had lately passed over. Away as far as the eye could reach were a succession of rolling downs interspersed with thin belts of timber, which remind one of the far-famed Darling Downs country, about Westbrook and Jondaryan. Down the centre of this plain runs a clear rivulet - this is the Murrumbidgee. Near its source, you can step across it with ease. Go across country to Gundagai some seventy miles, and you will find it swollen to a rapid, turbulent river a hundred and fifty yards wide. These downs are held as summer country by squatters, on the Lachlan and Darling Rivers, who send their sheep up during the summer months, but have to remove them early in April, as the snow commences then, and lies thickly all winter, in many places drifting up and covering the tops of the telegraph poles. The mailman from Tumut to Kiandra always has to perform this part of his journey on snow-shoes, as it is utterly impossible for the horse to get along. The residents run the wild horses down on snow shoes, heading them into the drifts, where they stick and are easily caught and roped. Eight miles from Kiandra the township is visible, perched on the side of a hill; and we caught frequent glimpses of it as we rose and fell over the undulating country which intervened. On all sides were to be seen traces of the great rush, and half-filled-up holes, long disused races, and over-grown paddocks."

While living on the MacLeay River, Forsyth took on some community activities – both as a JP and as a private citizen. His experiences saw him regularly called upon to chair community meetings.¹²⁰ In August 1885, George Forsyth was appointed a member of the local Land Board at Kempsey.¹²¹

Two years later, in May 1887, George Forsyth died, at Kempsey.

¹²⁰ Sydney Morning Herald. 4th December 1882, p7; Evening News [Sydney]. 23rd July 1883, p2;

¹²¹ Sydney Mail. 22nd August 1885, p427; NSW Government Gazette. 1885, p5288.