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Picton District Historical and Family History Society Inc.

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The society does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed or statements made by authors of papers in this journal.

Membership fees due 1 July each year

Pensioners & school students	\$15.00
Single	\$20.00
Family	\$25.00

Meetings

Meetings held at 9.30 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month except January, on the 1st floor of Wollondilly Public Library, Menangle St., Picton. The December meeting is held at one of the members' homes, at 11 a.m. followed by lunch. **During 2015** meetings will not be at the Library until the refurbishment is completed.

The Annual General Meeting is held on the first Saturday in September, before the monthly meeting.

Research room

First floor Wollondilly Public Library, above entrance. 10 am to 3 pm each Thursday); other times by appointment only. Not available during 2015

Research fees.

Members: Free (plus photocopying costs)

Non members: \$10.00 per hour, + photocopying. Written or emailed enquiries:

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President's Report for year ending September 2014 - Gail Hanger

Welcome to the 2014 Annual General Meeting of Picton & District Historical & Family History Society Inc. We have had a good year, though with a few bumps along the way, and I thank all involved.

We continue to support the John Ruffels History Prize at the Picton High School, always a good night and this year was no exception and our award is greatly appreciated by the school. We were unable to hold a display at the Australia Day celebration this year, due to the late notification that the Council could not provide the usual marquee covering. This year we have offers from members to provide shade and so will have the usual display.

Picton Society was again elected to the committee of the NSW/ACT Association of Family History, at the annual conference held in Canberra in September 2013. Following the election, I was nominated to be the Association's President, an honour which I accepted. This year's conference will be held in Wollongong, and we are nominated for the committee again. We are going to have a stall at the Family History Fair on the open day on Friday, when everyone is welcome to attend and see what's new for your research.

National Family History month was held in August, and we did have a stall at Belgenny Farm, Camden which the attendees found very enjoyable. We also held a heritage walk around Picton which was also well received.

The Library will be closed for refurbishment after Christmas, and we will have to move our resources to members' homes. We will be able to continue carrying out research, but all enquiries will have to be by mail, email or phone; we won't be able to accommodate personal visits. The work will take 6-12 months, and we will then return to the new improved Library and best of all there will be a LIFT to get upstairs, which will be a great relief.

Thank you again for your support and work throughout the year.

Librarian's Report for year ending September 2014 - Helen Hanger

Here I am again, another year gone. Many thanks to all for your wonderful friendship and help in keeping our society going, as our working members are few.

As you have already heard the Picton Library will be closed after Christmas for renovations which may take as little as six months or maybe twelve months, before we are back in a new space – no longer at the front with the big window where we can watch what goes on in Menangle Street.

We have had a good many visitors to our rooms over the past year including some from other states. Many are doing family research, but we also get enquiries about areas that may be up for development. We also answer enquiries by mail, email and telephone. We have lost some members but gained some new ones and hope they will be able to help with the collection and sorting of our resources.

We have been successful in getting two small grants which paid for a laminator and several A1 size folders for holding larger size documents and plans. Otherwise we are still waiting to hear if our application for funding to publish our World War I book on those from the Shire who died during their service overseas. This has been compiled by several members, and we hope to have it out for the Anzac Day centenary in 2015.

During the year our Treasurer had to take several weeks sick leave, and we are glad to see that he has recovered and is back in action.

Our library has been increased this year with one purchase and several donations:

Johnson, Janice Camden's WWI Diggers 1914 to 1918 published by Camden Historical Society Inc., 2014

Illawarra Family History Group Illawarra Piioneers Pre1920 1992 (second copy)
Botany Bay FHS Inc. Writers Interest Group Gems from the Jar An anthology 2012

Special thanks to The Oaks Historical Society for a copy of the transcribed letters from the Cabrera family of Thirlmere to Frank Cabrera while he was serving in World War I; also a CD of Picton Parish records 1902-1937, including St. Stephens, Thirlmere and Francis Charles Carera's 1885 diary.

We also received some photos from the East Gippsland Society, one of Tahmoor House in 1934 and two of the convict quarters at Abbotsford from 1939.

President Gail Hanger has mentioned our non-attendance at the Australia Day event, and successful day at Belgenny Farm thanks to Ken and Caroline.

We have ordered more of the Picton tea towels, which haven't been available for a few years. Our publications continue to sell steadily.

Once again our members will be attending the NSW State conference at Wollongong on the weekend of 12th/13th September, and are hoping for a very interesting time. And thank you to Kate for the walking tour around Picton, organised with help from Carmelina at the Picton Library, on 16th August – another Family History month event.

We have been notified by the Picton Post Office that they are moving from their present position near the Bowling Club to the Picton Mall in October.

I wish you all a happy and successful year in following your research, and hope that my efforts have been O.K. with all.

Treasurer's Annual Report to June 2014 - Ron Calloway

Receipts			Expenditure	
Membership	\$705.00		IBE	\$539.10
Research	417.00		Postage	190.00
Photocopies	110.70		Bank Fees	32.00
Grants	400.00		Picton High School Prize 80.00	
Donations	135.00		Insurance 443.30	
Bank Interest	1.11		Library purchases	60.00
Publication Sales	382.00		Stationery	381.00
Photograph sales	40.00		Post Office box	107.00
A 5			Membership	154.00
Total	2219.81		Total	1998.40
	MCU term	deposit @ 3.2%	\$1234.60	
	MCU term	deposit @ 3.2%	\$ 586.47	
Bank at 30 th June 20	13	\$1650.77	Credit Union	\$5.00
Income	15	\$2219.81	Petty Cash	\$60.00
Total		\$3870.58	i vity Cush	\$ 00.00
Expenditure		\$1998.40		

REMINDER – MOVING OUT OF THE LIBRARY – THE LATEST NEWS IS THAT IT MAY NOT BE UNTIL MARCH/APRIL 2015. This will make it much easier, not having to move during Christmas or the summer heat. So after our summer closing on 18th December, we will be returning in mid January, 2015 for two or three months. The Library refurbishment may take as little as 6 months, but probably a year or so, then we will be moved back to a new space, still upstairs but there will be a LIFT.

\$1952.18

Total

When we do move out (sharing out our resources between a few of our homes, all enquiries will have to be made by mail or email, and it may take some time to complete enquiries because we won't have everything in one place.

NB: Research fees for non-members have been increased to \$25 for a mail enquiry, and for visitors (when this is possible) \$10 per hour.

Obituary - Mrs. Allie Melville (Melvie) Shannon, 28.2.1924-23.8.2014

Melvie Gambrill was the daughter of Walter and Amy (Allie) Gambrill. Walter was born in Windsor, NSW and in his travels met Allie Neal in Albury, though she was born in Melbourne. The family with son Neal and daughter Melvie lived in South Gippsland, Victoria before moving to Tahmoor in 1948. Walter had served with the Australian Field Artillery in Egypt and France during World War I, returning in May 1919 and marrying Allie Neal in June.

Melvie married John Louis Shannon in May 1952, when he was the stationmaster at Tahmoor – he had taken the posting in 1945. John was born at Araluen, NSW and raised in Adelong and Holbrook, and his first job was with the Border Morning Mail in Albury before he joined the NSW Railways. However, in 1954 he left the railway and became editor of the Picton Post, ably assisted by his wife Melvie, in between looking after their three children Philip, Edwina and Frazer. The Shannons lived first in Short Street, Tahmoor and later in the main street, now Remembrance Drive, and did have two years living at Pheasant's Nest in the early years.



Melvie Shannon at a Soroptimists of Macarthur dinner, 1987; she was the third President 1983-4

One thing that everyone says about Melvie is that she was always beautifully dressed, hair and makeup done. She was also very fond of dancing in her younger days, in the 1950s winning Belle (or possibly Queen) of the Tahmoor Ball. The Shannons were devastated when their son Philip was killed in an accident in 1968, when he was only 13 years and 10 months old. Then John died suddenly in 1979, aged 67 – only 18 months after retiring. John's obituary made much of his interest in people and their stories, and his fairness in covering the local news. When he attended his last meeting of the

Wollondilly Shire Council as a journalist, on March 1st 1978, the President, Mr. F. McKay said: "Your reporting of Council activities over the years has, of course, not always pleased everybody all the time, but I am certain, has never done any harm to anybody either ..." John was very involved with the Wollondilly Horse and Pony Club, and he and Melvie provided full coverage to the annual Picton Show – which now includes the John Shannon Memorial Shield.

An article in the Picton News of 11th July, 1985 has more on Melvie's work with the newspaper:

"An era has passed

The retirement this week of Mrs. Melvie Shannon from Picton News marks the end of a long association with local newspapers.

Thirty-one years ago, when her late husband John joined Picton Post, Melvie commenced writing to assist him.

During John's 25 years with the paper, Melvie was the "out and about" journalist, photographer, advertising rep and office girl.

After his retirement in 1978 and his death eighteen months later, Melvie continued on with the paper until it closed in 1982.

Two days later she agreed to run the new newspaper, Picton News, where, until this week, she has remained.

After 31 years as the "eyes and ears of the district" Melvie is looking forward to a complete change in lifestyle, commencing with a good rest."

Melvie suffered another loss with the death of her younger son Frazer some ten or twelve years ago.

A brief report in the Wollondilly Advertiser of 27th August, 2014, noting her death said:

"Mrs. Shannon had many titles – soprano, actress, publisher, editor, florist, equestrian, civil celebrant and Justice of the Peace.... And was involved with Wollondilly emergency services, Picton Theatre Group and CWA."

Melvie was living with her daughter Edwina, at Oxley Grove, Tahmoor where she moved in the 1990s. She was 90 years old.

If any of our members have any further information about Melvie, we would be very happy to include them in a later journal. The Shannons played an important role in the district, and were involved in many local organisations.

Sources: Obituaries for the Gambrills and John Shannon, newspaper articles about Melvie, and the last of a series on Picton newspapers written by Jan Ross, published in the Picton News, April 2, 1997 plus some personal recollections.

World War I - early references in the Picton Post

The first mention in the newspaper was on August 12th, with a notice of mobilization of army reservists in New South Wales:

"His Majesty the King having been graciously pleased to direct by proclamation that the Army Reserve be called out on permanent service, every man belonging to the said Reserve resident in NSW is required to report himself at once to the Paymaster of Imperial Pensions, Sydney. The necessary instructions as to his joining will then be given. Any Reservist failing to comply with the above instructions will be liable to be prosecuted.

By Order, W.A. Holmen, Premier and Treasurer"

By the following week, the paper was able to report that "A number of young men in the town and district have volunteered for active service with the expeditionary forces." The women of the town had met to form a branch of the Red Cross, an intercessory service in connection with the war was to be held at St Mark's Anglican church in Picton, and the local butchers raised the price of all meat: rump steak to 8d (pence) per pound, sirloin 7d, best steak 6d., leg mutton 6d and forequarter mutton $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The new Red Cross Society swung into action, raising money and sewing/knitting articles for the servicemen. By November 18th they had raised £144/6/-, a quite amazing amount for a small town and the surrounding villages. The following week the Society, now known at the Red Cross & Patriotic Fund, had sent to the Naval Depot "for the sailors on duty – 18 flannel shirts (special pattern); games and books; also £3 collected by Mrs. Hort-Brown for tobacco and 6 lbs of tobacco given". There was also a note that Miss Hort-Brown had some "special Xmas cards sent her from Mrs. Macarthur-Onslow for sale, the proceeds to go to an emergency fund in Sydney to held the wives of the men at the front. Prices 4d and 9d each."

This paper, of November 25th, has the first printed letter from one of the serving men in New Guinea, sent to M. Hort-Brown, Hon. Secretary, Red Cross Society, dated 30th October, and from the 1st AN&ME Froces, Ratta, N[ew] B[retain]:

"Dear Sir or Madam, - Your kind and unexpected letter of 13th inst to hand. Owing to insufficiency of address papers have not arrived to date. All reading matter is eagerly looked forward to by all the boys here. Have made full inquiries to find other Picton men, but without success. In regard to anything specially required, the following seem to me to be the most important: Soldiers Field Dressings; Housewife (containing cotton etc for mending clothes); Writing Material. Re field dressings, had there been an engagement at Toma, and a considerable number of men injured, the amount of dressings taken with us would have been inadequate to cope with the demand. Also several of our boys would have been saved a lot of pain and loss of blood from the severe cuts occasionally receive when on outpost duty, had there been any dressings handy. Re housewife: Although these were supposed to have been issued to all, out of nearly fifty men on this post there is only one housewife, with the result that many of us have rips and tears in our uniform and nothing to men them with. Writing material cannot be bought for any price. I have had to borrow this and am going to ask the O.C. for a loan of a pen to address the envelope. If you see any of the railway people or Mr. S. Warters please tell them I'm all right and in the best of health. Will pay your branch a personal visit when we return.

Yrs in all sincerity, Cecil A. Roberts."

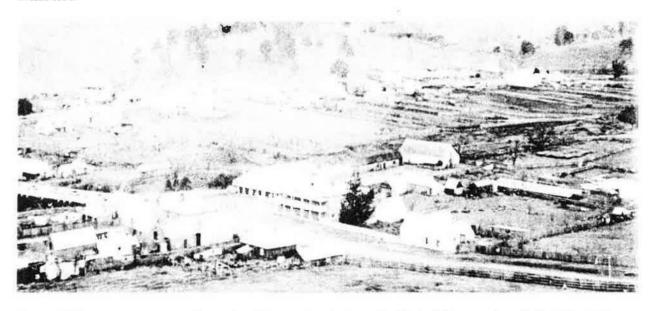
This was followed by a short paragraph that the items were being collected, including some Christmas treats, and would be sent off as soon as possible.

This was the first of many letters printed in the *Picton Post* during the war years, several more by Cecil Roberts who survived after serving in New Guinea, Gallipoli and the Western Front and returned to Australia in 1919. As his name was one of several included in the Mowbray Park Honor Roll, it seems that Cecil may have gone to school and/or worked on the property.

From the Records: "Old Picton" article in the Picton Post, October 15th 1930

(Specially written for the paper and headed Vain Imaginings and on the front page)

But let us hearken back to Old Picton. We hopped from the old Argus office to the showground and we skipped Cowell's [actually Coull]. It was an old-fashioned red brick place with long shutters on the windows that never seemed to be taken down. Mrs. Cowell was a short little lady, and very friendly little body with a warm heart for the little kids who had access to the interior of that place, and they were few. Many are the times she regaled me with cakes and lollies when there was no-one about. Cowell was a tall austere man who was reputed to have a lot of money acquired in very hard ways. There are many old readers who will recall the long rows of green caddies like 3 gallon milk cans, arranged round the shelves in tier on tier. They might remember too, the big gold lettering with black shading - Rice, Tapioca, Blue, Sago, and what not.



Picton 1898 George Inn (Wonson's) 2 storey Coull's building next door, built 1870s-1880s (The original photo, which has been cropped, includes the present Liquorland shop, built by A. Graham in 1898, and the present bridge over Stonequarry Creek was built in 1899, replacing the bridge in the photo.)

What the proprietor lacked in hospitality was atoned for by the lady whose largesse was appreciated by the juveniles of Viles, the Creamers, the Warters, and the Burgess clans of those times. Many a long stick of barley sugar lighted the gloom of the mysterious interior of that place. There was at the rear a number of small iron cannon mounted on blocks and wheels and

round shot beside them. We kids reckoned they meant the battle of Waterloo or Trafalgar, or that Cowell had been a pirate or worse.

Old Cowell passed over one summer's eve as was prophesied by an old witch who put the evil eve on him for an alleged harder financial transaction than usual.

Next door was Wonson's. We saw the Cheap Jacks there; but the Wonsons I'd have you learn came from a family of dinkum pioneers - pure bred in the wool Aussies, whose forbears settled around Appin. They were hospitable and sporty. Down behind there was an old orchard and a sunken running track where sometimes a ped. came from Sydney to train; alongside, towards the Vicarage was a small brickyard.

I noticed in an issue of The Post applications for a maintenance man and I visualize old Dietrich, who looked after the highways round those parts since there were any. Old John Bateup's water-cart didn't make much dust along Menangle Street and Argyle Street. It was good blue metal and wonderfully sound were the old roads. Today they shovel dirt into a long heap, call it a road or spend our good money at the rate of up to £15,000 a mile, and we are appalled at the road we've got.

Down there, too, there were many of the old sports meetings held; though, later, they were over towards the stone viaduct, and an odd race was held on the showground. There are some who will remember a race between a good citizen and a good sport, Maxwell versus Pritchard. It came off behind the showground and the former won. Poor Billy Pritchard commenced business with a John Thomas, as monumental masons and house decorators. He afterwards moved up country and William (who had a brother named Ras [Ray?], who some might recall) married a Miss Quinn. She was a very beautiful lady and lived towards the racecourse. She died afterward and he returned to Wales, whence he and his partner came. He died there not long after his return. He was a good live-wire and public spirited man, and Picton gained by his advent there.

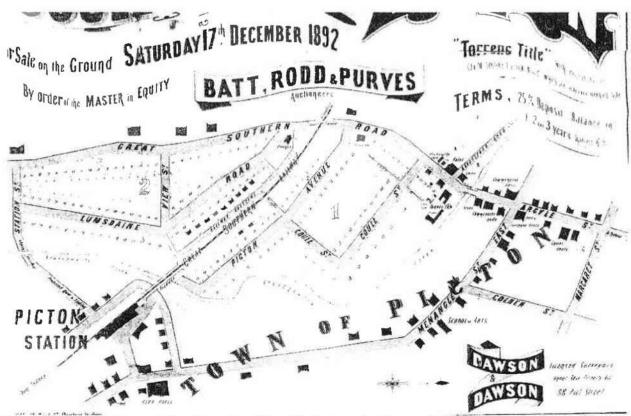
Local historian, the late FB Knox has identified the author as a Frank Powell, born in the 1870s. The BDM records show a Francis C. Powell was born in 1877 to George and Mary [nee Smith) in Goulburn, who married in 1860 and had seven children. So far there is no known connection to Picton, but it is possible that George Powell worked for the railways, and could have moved to Picton during his career.

William Coull died on 8th March1889; Henry Wonson [1858-1892) ran the George IV hotel from around 1887 until his death. The reference to "the ped." is probably to Mr. D. Libeau, who according to the Argus newspaper of October 19, 1887 "has finished his bicycle track at the rear of Mr. Wonson's Hotel and may be seen for several hours each day spinning around" – presumably on a penny-farthing. Although the Argus was started in 1884 and closed in the mid 1890s, very few of the papers survived, and this particular edition was seen by Mr. Knox, but we only have his notes for reference, which is particularly useful in this instance. The Argus was printed in a shed on the south side of the Coull Building, possibly the one near the large tree in the photograph, set back a little from the street.

William Coull was born in Scotland, in about 1823, though his family had moved to Kent by 1839. William came to Sydney some time in the 1850s, and his brother Jacob came to visit in 1860; the two brothers were living in Paddington by 1869. William is first mentioned in Picton in 1870, when he registered as a spirit merchant, and by 1873 was a storekeeper and ran the

post office service from then until 1881. When he applied to take over the postal duties from E.G. Larkin he said he had some experience, having run a post office in the Mittagong area for some years. He married Jane Jones in Mittagong in 1883 and they had no children; Jane died in 1922, aged 80; both are buried in St. Mark's graveyard. William had been appointed a Justice of the Peace by 1885, and donated the land and £100 for the Presbyterian Church, built in 1887; he was one of the trustees. The *Argus* of September 24th 1887 noted William's generosity to the Church, but said he was on a visit to Scotland and so missed the completion of the building.

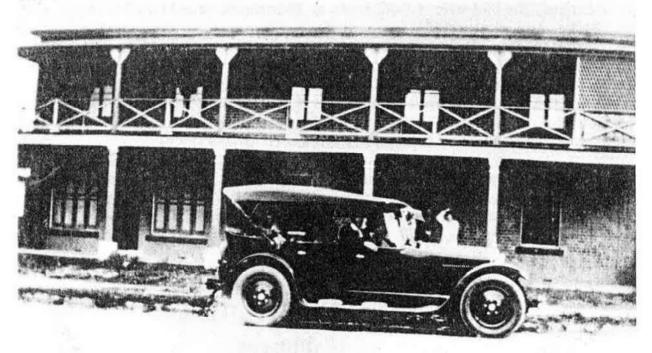
When William died he left an estate worth £17,730, which was substantial for those times. He had over 1,000 acres at Razorback, leased to Mr. Apps and Mr. Clarke, and another 800 acres at Redbank – at least some of this was in the Thirlmere area, the rest was part of the Stilton grant. Then there were eleven weatherboard four-roomed cottages possibly the nine in Lumsdaine Street, then more usually referred to as being in Railway Crescent, which they faced, and 2 in Picton Avenue, which are shown on the 1892 advertisement of the sale of Coull's Estate. Only three of these have survived in Lumsdaine Street, one of which was meticulously restored in the 1980s. William Coull also owned the George IV Inn and its 8-10 acres – although the building was in poor condition, it was let for £80 a week. As well as the store and residence, Coull's building, he owned three other shops, and a 50 acre paddock in the town - possibly the area between View Street and present-day Prince Street, then Station Street. He had a couple of allotments in Picton, a shop in Mittagong and land at Kangaloon and New Sheffield.



The 1892 advertisement for the sale of Coull's Estate, in Picton, from Stonequarry Creek to the Great Southern Road (now Argyle Street) and south to Station Street (now Prince Street]

Although William had made a will, the main beneficiary had died long before William, and his estate was still being dealt with in the 1920s, after Jane's death. It seems she continued to run the store for some time, though by 1915 an advertisement for the People's Cash Store, just opened, "late Coulls" – so it could have just closed, or been closed for a few years.

The building became known as Moggridge's Flats, but may have operated as a boarding house in the 1920s and 1930s. The photo below was taken in 1923, not long after Jane's death. The building was demolished in 1972, and the bricks used in a Sydney house; Picton Tyre and Mechanical have been on the site since 1973.



Of the children mentioned in the article, the Burgesses were probably the children of Henry and Martha (Bateup); he worked on the railway and they married in 1871, having 12 children between 1871 and 1896; they lived in Menangle Street. Another Burgess family could also fit the bill, as William, another railwayman married Ann Fairly also in 1871 and they had 13 children, and their address is given as Jarvisfield.

The children of John Creamer and his wife Hanna/Anna Perrell, who ran the Railway Hotel opposite the George from the 1860s to the late 1880s were much older, but it their eldest daughter Mary Ann had two children in the 1870s. An Emma Creamer married Joseph Viles, a saddler, in 1871, but her connection with the John Creamer family is not clear. The Viles had four children in the 1870s. John Warters was a carpenter and saddler who married Eliza Ray in 1873 and had moved to Picton by 1875 when their second son was born, so all these families would fit with the dates for Frank Powell.

To be continued in our next journal.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

Cemetery Transcripts

Bargo Cemetery Memorials (2010) A4, 121p, illustrated, s/c; photographs of all headstones \$25.00 + \$5 p&p

Burial records of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Picton (2001) A4, 23p, s/c.; lists 849 people known to have been buried in the church graveyard, with locations, date of death, age and remarks. \$12.00 + \$5 p&p

Redbank Uniting Church (formerly Wesleyan Chapel)— A Pictorial view (2004) A4, 132p, s/c; cemetery transcriptions with photographs. \$20.00 + \$5 p&p

Marriage Transcripts

St. Mark's Anglican Church - Vol.1, 1839-1897. A4, 57p, s/c; full transcriptions of all marriages conducted by ministers throughout the parish (which covered much of southern Wollondilly Shire at times. Includes map of parish showing old place names/locations, indices for parties, parents and witnesses for each register.

\$15.00 + \$5 p&p\$

St. Mark's Anglican Church - Vol.2, 1898-1929. A4, 62p, s/c. Includes a register for marriages conducted at Yerranderie from 1911 to 1923, plus list of rectors of the parish from 1826 to 1963. \$15.00 \div \$5 p&p

St. Mark's Anglican Church - Vol.3, 1924-1963. A4, 99p, s/c. Includes a register for St. Alban's at Douglas Park from 1924 to 1957 and master index for all marriages showing groom and bride with date of marriage for the 3 volumes. \$20.00 + \$10 p&p

Set of three volumes

\$50.00 + \$15 p&p

Along the Menangle Road – A concise history of the Land Grants on Menangle Road between Menangle Bridge and Picton Road by Ken Williams 2nd ed. 2009. A4, 44p, illustrated, index, s/c. Contains a record of the landowners of the various grants from time of grant until the land was transferred from the Old System to the Real Property Act (Torrens Title). Family histories, lists of employees and tenant farmers. Owners include Walter Davidson; John, William & James Macarthur; J.B.L. De Arrietta, Samuel Terry & descendants; Arthur Douglass & Dr. Henry Grattan Douglass, William & Thomas Cowper, Lachlan Macalister & descendants; Phillip Cavenagh, Hillas & Pearce families.

\$15.00 + \$5 p&p

Chronicles of the Early Cowpastures and Stonequarry – 1820 to 1850, Vol. 1 (2010). A4, 74p,s/c, illustrated, index, s/c. 12 chapters o people and subject: J.B.L. De Arrietta, A Bushranger Hunt, Frances Macnamara, The Village Shopkeeper – John Martin, Francis Little, Early Burials in the Cowpastures, Park Hall – The Mitchell Connection, The Woolpack Inn, Fairy Hill, Robert Crawford, Andonis Manolis – the Greek Pirate, Vault Hill. \$20.00 + \$5 p&p

1824 Cawdor Bench of Magistrates Population, Land and Stock Book. A biographical register of the inhabitants residing in the Cowpastures by Ken Williams (2011). A4, 176p, sources, index, s/c. The earliest known muster of the district now a major part of Wollondilly Shire (includes absentee landlords). Biographies of the 530 persons recorded, with introductory explanations and appendices. Individual biographies vary from several lines to a page or more. Less than a quarter remained in the area, the rest moved to: Bathurst district (24), Botany (4), Brisbane Waters (Gosford) (3), Campbelltown (19), Cooke (4), Goulburn district (24), Liverpool (18), Maitland district (11), Parramatta (16), Penrith (5), Port Stephens (3), Richmond/Windsor (15), Singleton district (12), Southern Highlands (8), St Vincent (Nowra) (10), Sydney (64). Some 98 were not identified in the 1828 Muster.

\$40.00 + \$10 p&p

If undelivered please return to POSTAGE PAID

PDHFHS
PO Box 64
PICTON NSW 2571

Of Local Interest

There is a record cherry crop around Lakesland and Thirlmere, and Picton Shops are already offering the first pickings.

Picton Post Wednesday October 29, 1930