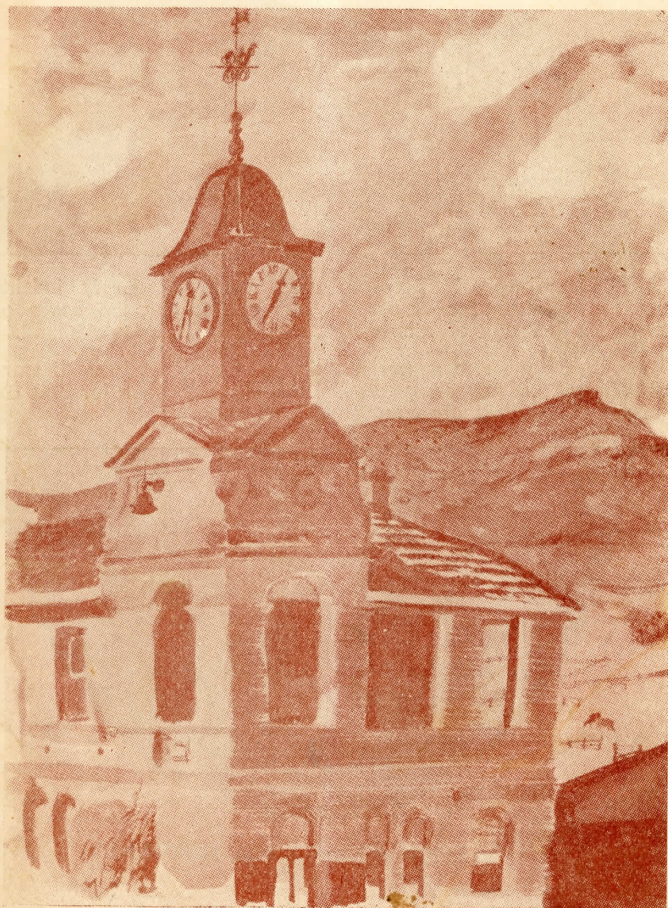


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PICTON - PAST AND PRESENT



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The Committee of "Back-to-Picton Week" is deeply indebted to Ure Smith Pty. Ltd. for permission to reproduce on the cover of this Brochure the painting of Picton Post Office by Douglas Annand.

The Committee also appreciates the co-operation of the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board, the Commissioner for Soil Conservation, and all who kindly contributed articles.

INTRODUCTION



GENERAL SIR THOMAS PICTON

INTRODUCTION

The idea of a "Back-to-Picton Week" came from a few civic-minded people who were desirous of gaining recognition for our small country town. When it was decided to hold the function during the first week in October, the Committee had no particular happening in mind for celebration, but, looking over the early history of the district, we noted with interest, that Hume and Hovell passed this way on their epic journey overland to Port Philip, staying the night at "Tahmoor Park" House on 4th October, 1824. It was the famous explorer and bushman. Hamilton Hume, whose name is perpetuated in the highway which runs through our town.

Picton is proud of the part it has played in the history of Australia and in the growth of its surroundings where both Primary and Secondary Industries flourish. It is also proud of its efforts to uphold the democratic principles of this great nation.

The Committee of "Back-to Picton Week" sincerely appreciates the assistance given by the Shire President, his Councillors and staff; by members of the Clergy, business people, the Press and our public. We trust that the comprehensive programme arranged for the week will be enjoyed by all. May you meet many old friends and make many new ones.

The President and Secretary take this opportunity to thank the members of their Committee for their loyalty and unselfish efforts.

We wish you all the very best of health and enjoyment.

V. ROACH, President.

S. REEKS, Hon. Secretary.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PICTON

The earliest known inhabitants of our district were the natives of the Gundugurra Tribe, whose sub-tribes roamed the area roughly lying between Camden, Goulburn and Katoomba. They believed that in far-past times the animals were superhuman; and in their playing about had made the rivers and hills—much of the Wollondilly country having been shaped by the lashing and burrowing of a huge fish reptile, called Gurangatch in an adventurous hunt by Mirragan, the Tiger Cat.

The natives naturally resented intrusion by settlers and made sporadic attacks on their homesteads. For many years the Government issued them with a rum ration and supplies of red blankets, for which they came into Picton. On ration day they used to celebrate with a corroboree held beside the creek, to the right of Oaks Road, after which they slept the night in the shelter of Reservoir Hill—wrapped in their red blankets. An old resident tells how they could be heard singing and dancing far into the night, and early next morning one could see patches of red scattered on the hillside. Their numbers steadily diminished and early this century their survivors lived in a part of Burragorang reserved for them. Later they were moved to a settlement at La Perouse.

Many of our local names are of native origin: Wollondilly means "A place where spirits dwell." Tahmoor—"The bronze-wing pigeon." Tulwahdowra—"A place of oaks." Wombeyan—"Caves in the hills." Yanderra—"A turpentine tree."

The first known Europeans to enter the Picton area were some Irish prisoners, who were permitted by Governor Hunter to do so, as they believed a colony of whites lived an Utopian existence 150 miles inland. They reached the neighbourhood of Mittagong and proceeded westward to the junction of the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee Rivers at which point they abandoned the search. A record was kept of their journey in which they reported: "We crossed three deep valleys with large ponds of water in each"; other references indicated that these were the Picton Lakes, the native name being Narri-ga-rang, meaning: "The soil around the lakes is not firm."

In the first year of settlement, some cattle of the Black Cape Buffalo breed strayed from Governor Phillip's farm, wandering to the country west of the Nepean, where their presence was reported in 1795 by escaped convicts. Governor Hunter visited the herd (now much increased) giving his name to the little mountain (Mt. Hunter) from which he viewed the countryside. From the Nepean to the Bargo River thereafter was known as "The Cow Pastures."

FRANCIS BARRALLIER

In 1802, a party led by Ensign Francis Barrallier, of the New South Wales Corps, started from Parramatta in an attempt to cross the Blue Mountains. (He had previously surveyed the coast from Wilson's Promontory to Western Port and part of the Hunter River.) With four soldiers, five convicts and a few natives, they journeyed towards the Nepean, crossing a few miles above where Camden now stands. They camped by a swamp, called by the natives "Manhangle," corrupted later to Menangle. Barrallier's course went through Douglas Park, where he reported having seen about

they used to fight—these were on what is now the Sheil's property. They passed close to the present site of Picton and when just north of Thirlmere, turned west towards the Nattai River, making a depot on high land above one of its tributaries (about six miles north west of Thirlmere and near Shea's creek). They descended the valley, for a while following the Nattai River, then travelling across country and along the Kowmung River to a point near the Kanangra Falls where they gave up the attempt. Unfortunately they had been in some of the wildest country of the mountains. Barrallier mentions that the natives, when trying to attract a distant person, shouted several times the word "Coo-ee" with all their strength. This is probably the earliest record of the call. George Caley, the naturalist, between 1802-5 made a detailed study of the district (including the fauna and flora).

GOVERNOR KING

In 1805, Governor King recommended the building of stockyards at Stonequarry, The Oaks and Cawdor. During the next 10-15 years almost the only white inhabitants were those employed at the stockyards, in droving cattle, which were grazed, on land as far south as Bargo. The yards were used for holding Government stock for distribution to settlers, but with the crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813, Bathurst was made the main holding centre. In 1824, a big cattle yard was built on what is now the racecourse paddock of Jarvisfield; all the wild cattle being driven there to be destroyed, as the breed had become very inferior.

Macquarie visited the area in 1815, but it was not until 1822 that the first grants of land were made. These were to Mr. D'Arrietta, Major Antill, Dr. Douglas, Mr. George Harper and Louis Rumker. There was an Inn at Myrtle Creek (partly built before 1824) and kept by a German named Klenendorff. This still stands by the highway and is known as Tahmoor House.

PIONEERS

Mr. D'Arreitta lived and farmed near Douglas Park. Spaniard's Hill derives its name from him.

Charles Louis Rumker, a famous German Astronomer was brought out by the Governors Brisbane and Macquarie as both were enthusiastic amateur astronomers. His property of 1,000 acres lay south of Stonequarry Creek and was called Stargard after his native town in Germany. The present Stargard (now the Rectory) was built much later as an Inn for railway workers. Rumker built his observatory on the top of Reservoir Hill and his observations on Encke's Comet in May 1822, were made from here. For this work he was later awarded the medal of the Royal Astronomical Society. He was appointed Government Astronomer in 1829, but due to some official intrigue, he resigned soon afterwards and returned to Germany, where he was made Director of Hamburg Observatory.

The best known pioneer, was Henry Colden Antill, who was born in New York in 1779. He fought with the English in the Civil War, for which he and his father were banished from America. He joined the British Army in Canada and after returning to England was sent to India. In 1809 he was made a Captain and later the same year was sent to Australia. In 1810 he was appointed A.D.C. to Governor Macquarie and the following year became Major of his brigade. He was actively interested in the social welfare

of the early community of N.S.W. and Macquarie seems to have held him in high regard. In 1825 he moved to his grant at Jarvisfield "close to a much frequented road." This home has since been demolished, the present Jarvisfield being built in 1864. He was made District Magistrate and built a small slab-structure court house near the knoll at the turn of the road to Picton (the lock-up being near the George Inn). Major Antill was deeply religious and assembled his household for prayer and Bible reading twice daily. On Sundays he gathered everyone to the court house (including a neighbouring road gang) and conducted worship according to the rites of the American Episcopal Church to which he belonged (these being the earliest recorded services). He died in 1852 and his remains were placed in the family vault on the hill which was called by the natives "Carbundi," and by the settlers "Mt. Nebo,"—but has since been known as "Vault Hill."

Dr. H. C. Douglas lived in what was then known as "Hoarstown" but was later called Douglas Park. He was a clerk of the Legislative Council and one of the founders of Sydney University. For forty years he played a prominent part in the medical, social and educational life of the colony.

George Harper in 1822, built what was probably the first homestead, "Abbotsford."

PICTON TOWNSHIP

There has been some speculation concerning the name Picton. Some have thought that Major Antill chose the name while others give the credit to Macquarie. It might also have been Governor Brisbane as he had been with General Picton in the Peninsular War. When Macquarie was on his way to "the New Country" in 1820, he chose the site of the present Redbank for a village at Stonequarry Creek. In 1838, a few small buildings comprised the township—on the site of the present Post Office there was a small general store and butcher's shop, whilst on the Bank Corner, there was a blacksmith and wheelwright. It was not until 1840 that steps were taken to construct a township and a notice appeared in the S.M. Herald concerning the sale of 45 building lots for "the township of Stonequarry on Mr. Harper's Estate." In 1841, Antill sub-divided part of his land opposite the lots sold by Harper. It was reported in March 1841 that the name had been officially changed to Picton. In 1842 the post office which had been on Jarvisfield, was moved to the village and the publican at the George Inn also became the postmaster.

The early settlers grew barley, oats, maize, potatoes and wheat which was said to be the finest in the colony. Mr. Thomas Larkin built the first windmill on the hill where Mr. Mark Scott now lives (on the road to Thirlmere). Later in 1847, he also built a steam mill on a level place near Stonequarry Bridge. Rust attacked the wheat about 1860, but the mills continued working with imported wheat until 1870. The settlers turned to producing butter, eggs, bacon and later milk. Several attempts were made to grow tobacco but without success. Lime was at one time burnt and sent away

from the district—one of the kilns being near Maldon on the Stonequarry Creek. A tannery was worked at what is now "Brookside" and was then known as the "Red House." There was another tannery where the Masonic Hall now stands. In the days before rail transport, there was a large coaching and carrying trade creating much business for hotels, grooms, roadmen, blacksmiths, etc. The road maintenance was assisted by a toll bar on Picton Hill (opposite the present Rectory) the small stone cottage being built for the toll-keeper. Sir Thomas Mitchell who was Surveyor General at that time directed the building of the roads and gangs of men were kept continuously working on their construction and maintenance. They became known as "The Iron Gangs." Mitchell built himself a fine country home at Douglas Park (he had originally intended the highway to come that way). The home is now called St. Mary's Towers.

RAILWAY

The construction and opening of the railway line in 1863, was a big event and for some time Picton was the terminus of the Southern Line. Four years later the line was extended to Mittagong. Picton Tunnel, 168 yards long, was the first to be built in the colony. (It is interesting to note that in 1876, the first class fares were 20/-; second class fares 12/3).

The building of the dams from 1878-88 caused great activity and a big population influx during that period.

The Commercial Banking Co. was opened in 1877 and first conducted at the George Inn and afterwards at several other sites. The present Bank was built and opened in 1885.

SCHOOLS

The earliest schools were private, there was one called "Pisa House" which stood between the present bank and the Catholic Church and was run by the Church of England.

The Roman Catholic School was where Oliver's store now stands. The Presbyterians had a school in Colden Street and there was a National School in Upper Picton which was opened in 1855, in a red brick building opposite the present school. In 1867 a new National School (now the Council Chambers) was built in Lower Picton. About 1911 the school was moved to its present site, since when, like the rest of the town, it has undergone considerable improvement.

EARLY INNS

THIRST THINGS FIRST!

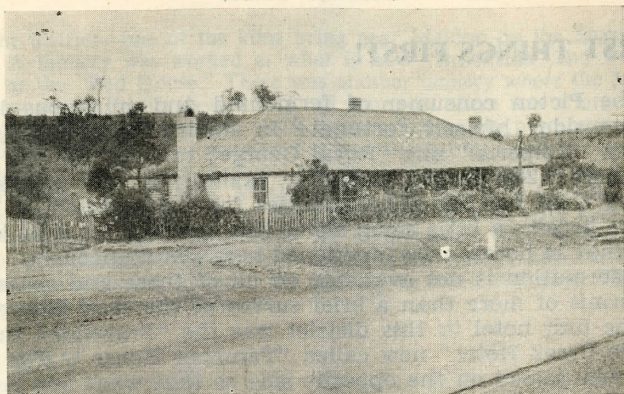
The Picton consumer of fermented and spirituous liquors may consider himself fortunate in having three hotels, the "Picton," "Imperial" and "Royal George" to cater for the needs of a mere 1,200 people, when for example a very well-known country town has the same facilities for a population of 12,000. Lest we become a little smug about this however, let it be known to all that 14 hotels once functioned here simultaneously.

Information is not available on all of these and space does not permit of more than a brief survey of the most interesting.

The first hotel in this district was the "Traveller's Inn" or "Myrtle Creek Hotel," now called "Tahmoor House." The main road then passed on the opposite side so that what can be seen from the existing highway was the rear of the old building. Many features of the house throw sidelights on the social life of the day, but the only historical event of general interest seems to be the fact that Hume and Hovell stayed there on the night of October 4th, 1824. On the following day, they continued their journey to Lake George, which was to be the starting point for their expedition to the South. As these two explorers eventually reached the coast at what is now Geelong, but presumed they were at Westernport, one might be pardoned for wondering at the nature of their send-off from Myrtle Creek.

The Picton district had a bad reputation for bush rangers, and hotels sprang up rapidly to cater for the wary traveller. First "Cullen's Hotel," from all accounts an unsavoury spot then "Keighran's," "the "Sun Inn," sometimes called "Ryans" which was the first licensed hotel in the district, "The Royal George" in 1839, and "St. Patrick's" in 1840. Of these only the "George" still remains, and so it is with some justification that it claims to be the oldest licensed hotel in the state. These hotels gave sanctuary to the traveller from Sydney, who after a day on the road and a possible encounter on Razorback with the bush-ranger John Donohue, would remain for the night and face the notorious Bargo brush in the light of the following day. Not even the hotels were always safe however for the "Traveller's Inn" was attacked more than once and two bushrangers were captured by the publican. Two more bushrangers, Scotchie and Whitten, took over the whole village of Gundaroo, and murdered a Mr. Hume, brother of the explorer, who attempted to interfere.

Perhaps to cater for those who had been delayed and could not make Picton by nightfall, "Lipton's" was built right in the middle of the bushranging country at Bargo in



TAHMOOR PARK HOUSE

1835; and "Mt. Prudhoe" on Razorback in 1842. In the same year as the latter, the "Farrier's Arms" was built in that area which in 1847 was named Upper Picton. This building still stands, called until recently Milton Villa.

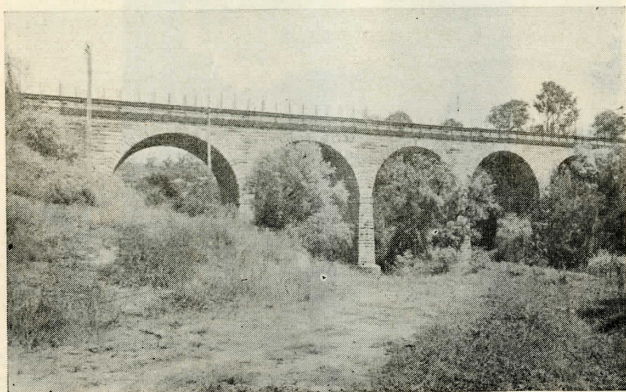
Picton's hotels did not diminish in numbers with the decline in bushranging, for the town then provided a trade and commercial centre for the district, reaching its peak of prosperity with the opening of the railway in 1863. "Ashcroft's," "The Red House," "Royal Arms," "Railway Hotel" and the "Great Southern" appeared. The last-named built in 1863 still stands in Menangle Street, but is now converted into flats. The "Stargard" 1862 bears an historically interesting name. It was so called after the iarm and home town of the German astronomer Rumker, who conducted his own observatory on Reservoir Hill from 1823 to 1826, and after whom a street in Upper Picton was named.

It is difficult to visualise just what these old Inns were like, certainly beer had not reached popularity it enjoys to-day. Almost everybody drank spirits called under the general heading of "Rum." A. Harris, describing a hotel of the 1830's, has this to say, "The few women were all sober and quiet but many of the men were either quite intoxicated or much elevated by liquor . . . almost everybody was drinking rum in drams . . . nor were they niggard on it for we had several invitations from those around us to drink." It is far more likely, however, that the same writer's description of a "Rum Shanty" is much more typical of our early Inns.

"We stopped to-night at one of the grog houses. I do not

recollect whether or not the proprietor had a licence at this time; several of the police, however, were assisting in the spree that was going on. A party of free men had come there on their way down country after taking pretty large sums at the sheep shearing, with the full intention (as free men under such circumstances always have) of having 'only one half pint' of rum and then going on. Meantime (as ever) that one led to a second; the second to a third; the third to a fourth, and so on, until the count was lost in the unfathomable obscurities of a publican's conscience. They were drinking, singing, smoking, dancing, swearing, yelling, fighting; in short, to use the expressive simile of the class, after 'earning their money like horses, they were spending it like asses.' One fellow had hardly trousers enough to retain a legal right to walk about; and he spent there a £17 cheque in two days and a half without purchasing anything. As fast as one batch of police got thoroughly soaked at the expense of these foolish fellows and went out, another batch walked in."

Travellers these days are able to enjoy both their journeys and their refreshments in more peaceful manner.



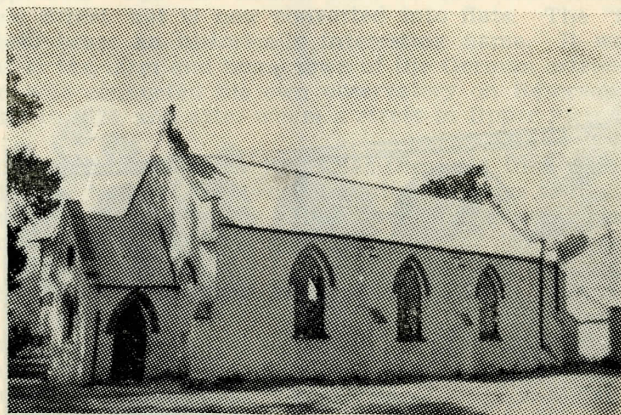
VIADUCT

ST. ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church in Picton looks with pride back to the illustrious Father Joseph Therry as its founder. This pioneer Irish priest, whose life is identical with the establishment of the Catholic Faith in Australia, arrived in Sydney in 1820. As early as 1833 his diary records visits to these parts and as far afield as Yass Plains. Stonequarry and Red Bank are referred to more than once. We now know them as Picton and Upper Picton.

Father Therry's letters are a record of hardships and journeys which would appear to be almost insurmountable. By his trust in Divine Providence, his courage and energy, he conquered even in the face of Government opposition. He became parish priest of Campbelltown in 1835 and from there continued his work as Pastor to all Catholics southwards. He visited the Picton area more than once, long before any Church was built here.

Father Bede Sumner came to reside in Appin in 1840. A church was then in the course of construction there. From then on until 1888 Picton was attended from Appin. In 1888 the priest took up residence at Menangle where a residence was provided near the church already built there. That residence is now a cottage near Douglas Park Railway Station. Father Sumner's name is the first to appear on the old records, which are still at the Picton Presbytery, dating back to June 1840. He was the first Catholic priest ordained in Australia.



THE OLD ST. PATRICK'S, 1847

The next distinguished signature in this historic relic is that of Father James Goold who later became the first Catholic Bishop and Archbishop of Melbourne.

Bishop Goold was the first man to travel overland to Melbourne with a coach and horses. He did the journey in 1848 and, in spite of unmade roads and unbridged rivers, averaged forty miles a day.

As frequently happens when dealing with that period, details of early church buildings are lost or await the research work of the historian to bring them to light. The first Catholic church in Picton was begun about 1845. It was built by John Bollard, a member of one of Picton's pioneer families. The same family, with the Fitzpatrick family, now at Glenlee near Men-

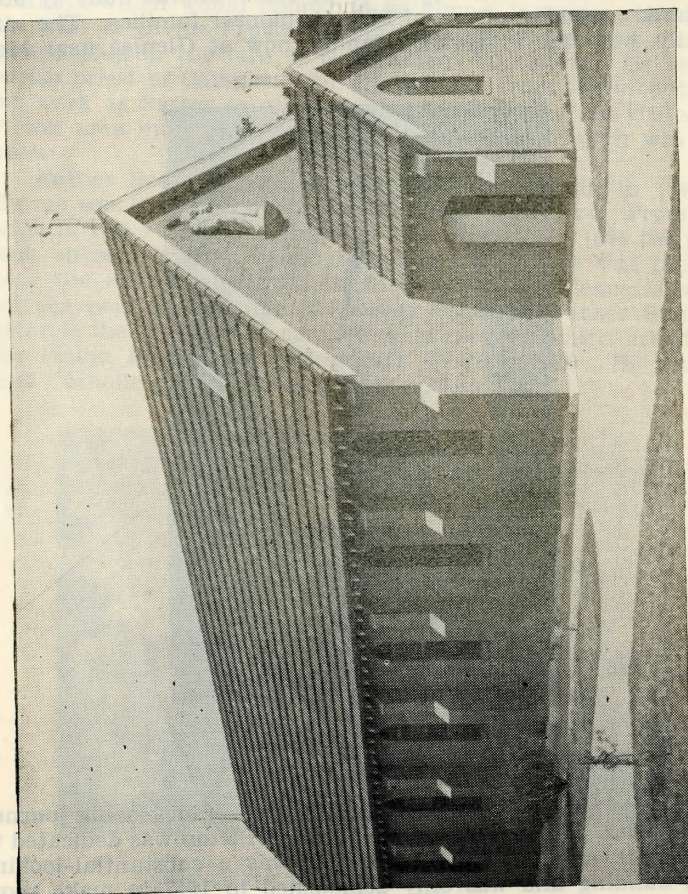


FATHER JOHN GRANT
Priest-in-Charge, 1847

angle, were numbered in Hume and Hovell's trail blazing journey to Victoria. This first Catholic church in Picton was dedicated to St. Patrick and opened in 1847. It was a substantial-looking brick building and was only demolished in 1947 to make room for St. Anthony's new school.

By October, 1843, Father John Grant had succeeded Father Sumner at Appin. To him then must go the credit of having Picton's first Catholic church erected. This same Father Grant was later to achieve fame in the West round Bathurst and Dubbo. It is on record that "he was the most respected and most influential man in the West. A man of great holiness whose acts private and public were constant sermons." He died in 1865 and is buried in the Cathedral Church of Sts. Michael and John which he had erected. A slab of black marble from his native Kilkenny marks his grave.

In time the first St. Patrick's Church was to outlive its cap-



ST. ANTHONY'S (SHEIL MEMORIAL) CHURCH, 1901

acity for the needs of the district. About 1880 a new weather-board church was built alongside it and where the present church stands. These were the days of Father Hewitt and Father Hanly. This weather-board church served the Catholic population for a period of twenty years. It is now the hall in the church grounds. In this wooden church it was that Mr. Francis Sheil of "Round Hill," Maldon, collapsed and died during Sunday Mass on May 3rd, 1896. This sad experience inspired his generous-hearted widow, Mrs. Anne Sheil, to have a new church erected in his memory. This is the present Catholic Church in Picton. To Mrs. Anne Sheil then and to her family, the Catholics of this district owe the substantial, spacious, well-furnished church that has continued for over half a century to serve their spiritual needs. The church was dedicated to St. Anthony of Padua and blessed and opened by Australia's first Cardinal, Cardinal Patrick Moran, on September 1st, 1901. Gothic in design, the woodwork of Kauri pine, even now the workmanship continues to reflect credit on the architect, Mr. T. Maloney, and builder, Mr. F. Fanning of Sydney. A son of the builder, Father Fanning, M.S.C., still comes to Picton each year.

It is interesting to note that St. Anthony's Church, which to-day would cost the most of twenty thousand pounds to complete, was built and furnished for two thousand pounds. A white marble tablet with a background of granite perpetuates the generosity of the donor in this inscription, "This tablet is erected by the Catholics of Picton to testify to Mrs. Anne Sheil, of Maldon, their sincere gratitude for her noble and most charitable gift of this Church." "I have loved O Lord the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."

What memories surround those hallowed spots where the consolations of religion have been made available for over a hundred years by these selfless men of God. From the Father Therry in 1820 whose work had no parochial limits; to Father Sumner in 1835 at Appin; to Father Condon who came to reside at Menangle in 1888, to Father Baugh who came to reside in Picton in 1902, in all forty-four priests have ministered to the flock in this portion of the vineyard.

The parish of St. Anthony's is now part of the new diocese of Wollongong. The present pastor is Father William Fahy, a native of Co. Galway, Ireland, ordained in Dublin in 1930 and appointed to Picton in 1948. Like his long line of predecessors, his duties take him to other districts served by churches at Menangle, Bargo, Douglas Park, and Thirlmere.

It may be that picturesque Picton, for which nature has done more than art, has missed the rapid expansion seen elsewhere but nothing can rob it of its rich heritage of association with many of the pioneers of the nation.

ST. MARK'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The Reverend Thomas Hassall was the first Minister to have the oversight of this area. It was part of his very extensive Parish, which extended from the vicinity of Parramatta to the Berrima-Moss Vale district. Church services were held in those early days at "Jarvisfield," in the Antill home and in the old Court House.

On the 16th July, 1850, during the time of the Rev. Rodgers, the old Oaks Church was built, and the foundation stone of St. Mark's Church was laid, but this building was not completed until 1856 or '57 as a gold rush attracted the workers. The land had been given for the Church by the Antills and the builders were Messrs. Ramsdale and Horne.

Another step forward was made in 1855 when the Crown granted two acres of land for a Parsonage and School Hall. The Rev. James Carter was the first resident Minister, and had charge of the Parish for twelve years, while Mr. Joseph Cross was appointed the first Sexton. In 1871 or '72 the Church was enlarged eastward and the two transepts were added in 1886. The Rector at that time was the Rev. Frank Elder, and Mr. John Bateup the Sexton.

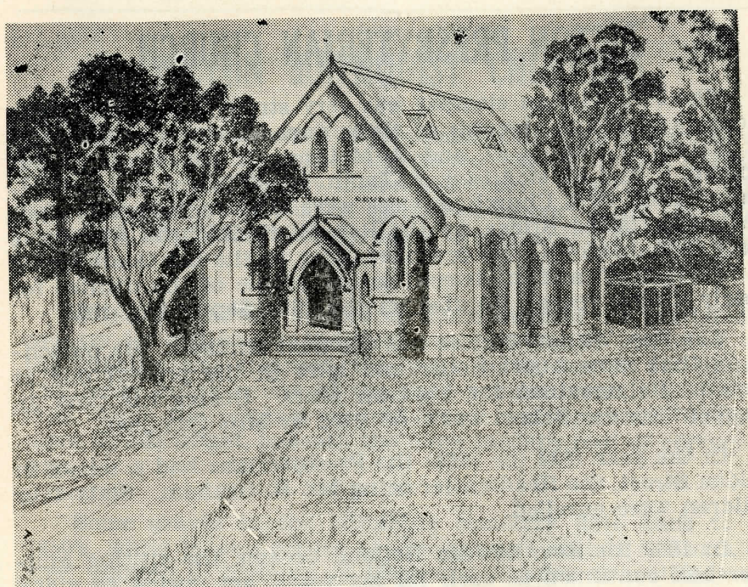
In 1878 the first Rectory was built, approximately opposite the present one, but was later demolished to make way for the new course of the railway line.

Under the Rectorship of the Rev. D. H. Dillon (1894-1902) and the Rev. H. S. Begbie (1902-1905) much progress was made, spiritually as well as materially, as strong evangelistic fervour was evident and the Church was continually filled to capacity. Canon Edward Hargraves (1913-1920) was greatly beloved by his church people and his ministry much appreciated, in this vast Parish which then, and until fairly recently, included The Oaks, Yerranderie, and Cox's River.

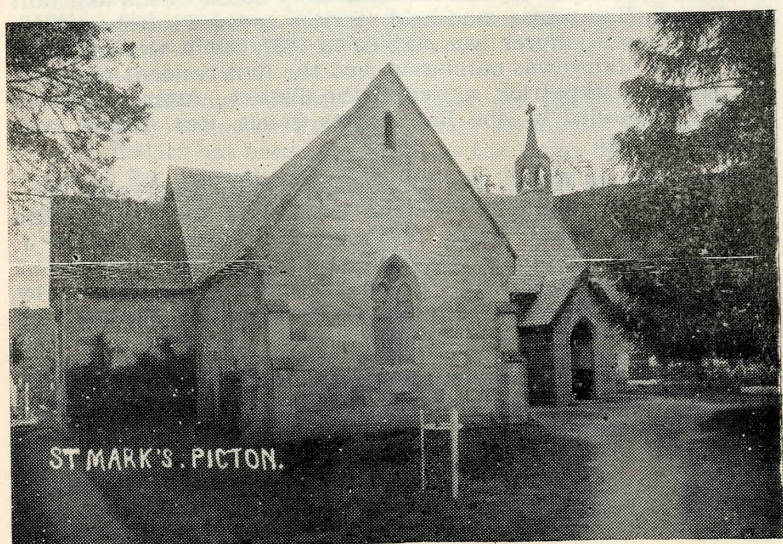
The record for the longest ministry goes to the Rev. F. A. S. Shaw, now Rector of Ashfield. Mr. Shaw was in charge of the Parish from 1935 to 1949, both he and Mrs. Shaw having a particularly warm spot in their affections for St. Mark's. As Rev. Shaw expressed in his letter at the time of the Centenary of the Church, "I cherish the memory of my long and very happy ministry of nearly fifteen years."

The last event of note was the Centenary Celebrations when visitors included His Grace, the Archbishop of Sydney, and the Ven. Archdeacon H. S. Begbie (since gone to his good reward). Unfortunately the Rev. Shaw was prevented from attending by the prevailing wet weather.

The present Rector is the Rev. D. A. Langford, who came here in 1950, having served in the Army in New Guinea and subsequently trained for the Ministry at Moore Theological College.



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



PICTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Presbyterian element was very strong among the early pioneers of Picton; records of those days quoting the names of G. Harper, T. Ingliss, D. and R. McInnes, R. Blackwell, D. McDonald, L. and M. McAlister, R. Dunn, W. McIntyre and R. Graham. Their first Church services were held in 1838 in a barn near Abbottsford Bridge, by the Rev. H. R. Gilchrist who came from Campbelltown. He preached later in the old Court House at "Jarvisfield" and ministered to the people of the district for nearly fifteen years. He died on the 29th September, 1853.

The Rev. William McKee was the next minister. He preached in that same Court House and later in the present one at Picton. He remained for fourteen years. During his time an excellent Sunday School was conducted by Miss Campbell.

In the year 1832 (or 1864) the Presbyterians had a school in Colden Street, the Headmaster being Mr. R. Graham. Sixty-four children were enrolled.

In 1869 the Rev. Edward Holland became the visiting minister and continued as such for six years, but, owing to many families moving to Wagga and Junee, the church attendances declined. The Rev. D. Moore, who came to Campbelltown in 1881, visited Picton for five years and was later aided by his assistant the Rev. S. Humphriss, who held services in the Protestant Hall.

The present church was erected in 1887, but it was not until 1902 that a Manse was purchased, and the first resident minister, the Rev. M. Kirkpatrick, settled in the district. After four years he was succeeded by the Rev. James Steele, Rev. Laurie, and the Rev. Briggs.

The original Manse was situated opposite the present Central School, the fanlight over the front door still bearing the words, "The Manse." Later, the home now occupied by Mr. J. McKenzie and his family was used as a Manse, but the present Minister, Rev. S. Reeks, lives in a home given to the Church by the late Mrs. Dill-Macky for use by Presbyterian Ministers as a Manse.

Once again the Presbyterian element is strong in Picton with many of the descendants of the pioneers regularly attending their church.

PICTON METHODIST CHURCHES

There are at present two Methodist Churches in Picton, one at Redbank and the other in Colden Street. The Redbank Church has a particularly interesting history, the original building having been constructed by convict labour, under the supervision of one James Rogers, on a site granted by the Crown in 1850.

When the railway opened up much more of the surrounding country for settlement, the Methodist community increased, and the building was enlarged, this work being carried out in 1863. The inner lining is one of the once-popular "wattle and daub" type, while the original roof of wooden shingles still remains, more or less intact, beneath the more modern roof of corrugated iron.

Some graves in the adjoining cemetery date back to the 1850's, while in one corner of the grounds stands a Kurrajong tree, planted in memory of Methodist Sunday School lads who lost their lives during World War I.

When the present business section of the town began to develop, the need was felt for a Methodist Church closer to this area, and the Colden Street Church was erected.

Both buildings are still in regular use for Church Services and Sunday Schools. For some years Methodist Church work in this district has been supervised by the Home Mission Department of the Methodist Church Council, Pastor R. George being the minister for the circuit at the present time.

ST. ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The pioneer priests of Picton district, true to the Church's tradition of teaching as well as preaching, were concerned from the beginning with the religious instruction of the children of early settlers. Here then, as elsewhere, instruction in religion was given after the celebration of Mass in private house or Church. Since one of the chief cares imposed on a parish priest is the religious education of children, a parish school is always a fundamental aim.

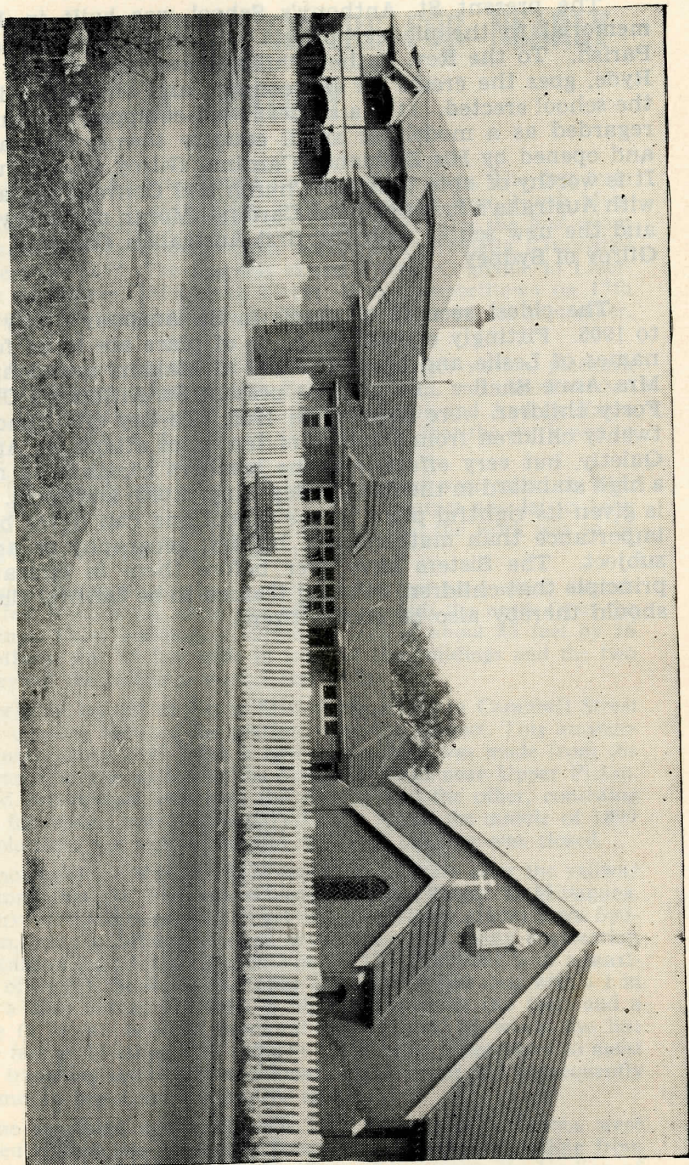
The earliest schools in Picton were of a private nature. They were located on the Menangle Street side of the present Bank and Post Office buildings. As early as 1852 a private school for the children of Catholic parents was conducted by Mrs. Margaret Connellan near where the present St. Anthony's Church stands. Mrs. Connellan was a doctor's widow from C. Clare, Ireland, who had arrived about 1850 with her twelve children. The youngest of those, James, was later to be one of Picton's first Councillors, Mayor of the town, and only died about ten years ago. Mrs. Connellan conducted her school for about ten years and then came a Mr. James Ryan who was succeeded by a Mr. Daniel Finnegan.

This system of Catholic education continued until the arrival in Picton of the Sisters of St. Joseph. For over seventy-four years they have conducted the Catholic School in Picton. Founded in 1867 in South Australia by Mother Mary McKillop, who was born in Melbourne of Scottish parents, the Order came to New South Wales in 1880. Picton has the distinction of being their third establishment in this State. It was the aim of their Foundress to cater for the small country school and the outback school, in particular.

When the Sisters came here in 1880 they were accommodated in the Connellan property in Argyle Street, now occupied by the Oliver family. Very soon the erection of a convent was undertaken. It is of interest now to learn that the first Convent in Picton was a pre-fabricated building brought from America in two sections. This wooden building served the Sisters until 1911 and to-day part of it may be seen along the Oaks Road in Miss Walker's "Woodburn" property. On June 4th, 1911, Cardinal Moran laid the foundation stone of the present Convent.

The Sisters of St. Joseph first taught the children in the old St. Patrick's Church which was demolished in 1947 to make way for the new school. An old photo of about 1890 shows amongst the forty pupils some well known local people—Norah McNamara (Mrs. Frank Gilmore), Mary Bollard (Mrs. M. Hewitt) and Lucy Bollard. Unfortunately no school rolls of this pioneer period are available. It is doubtful if any even exist of these far-off days.

THE CONVENT, ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL AND CHURCH



The present St. Anthony's School was built in 1947 as a memorial to the pioneer priests, Sisters and people of Picton Parish. To the Rev. Father Philip Reeve, now Parish Priest of Ryde, goes the credit for his courage and enterprise in having the school erected. It is a modern well-equipped building that is regarded as a model for small country towns. It was blessed and opened by His Eminence Cardinal Gilroy on 1st June, 1947. It is worthy of note that the Church and Convent are associated with Australia's first Cardinal, Cardinal Moran of Carlow, Ireland, and the new school with the first Australian Cardinal, Cardinal Gilroy of Sydney.

The oldest records of pupils in St. Anthony's only go back to 1905. Fittingly enough, in pride of place are to be found the names of Leslie and Maurice Sheil of Maldon, grandchildren of Mrs. Anne Sheil whose gift the present St. Anthony's Church is. Forty children were enrolled in 1905. To-day one hundred and twenty children from a radius of ten miles attend St. Anthony's. Quietly, but very effectively, the teachers continue to maintain a high standard in the fields of learning, music and sport. Religion is given its rightful place in the school and can never be of less importance than mathematics, history, geography or any other subject. The Sisters have ever before them in education the principle that children, in being trained to be faithful Christians, should thereby also be good citizens.

PICTON — A RAILWAY CENTRE FOR NEARLY A CENTURY

Picton has been a Railway Centre for ninety-one years. The first train steamed into Picton on 1st July, 1863, when the section from North Menangle to Picton was opened. This was only eight years after the first steam train was operated in the Colony—from Sydney to Parramatta (Granville) on 26th September, 1855. The line was extended from Granville to Liverpool on 26th September, 1856, from Liverpool to Campbelltown on 17th May, 1858, and from Campbelltown to North Menangle on 1st September, 1862.

Tenders for the construction of the Picton passenger station, platform slopes, and fencing were called on 17th February, 1863, and closed on 3rd March, 1863. The contract was let to Mathew Jamieson and Andrew Eaton on 25th June for a sum of £2,193, on the condition that the work was to be completed within three months.

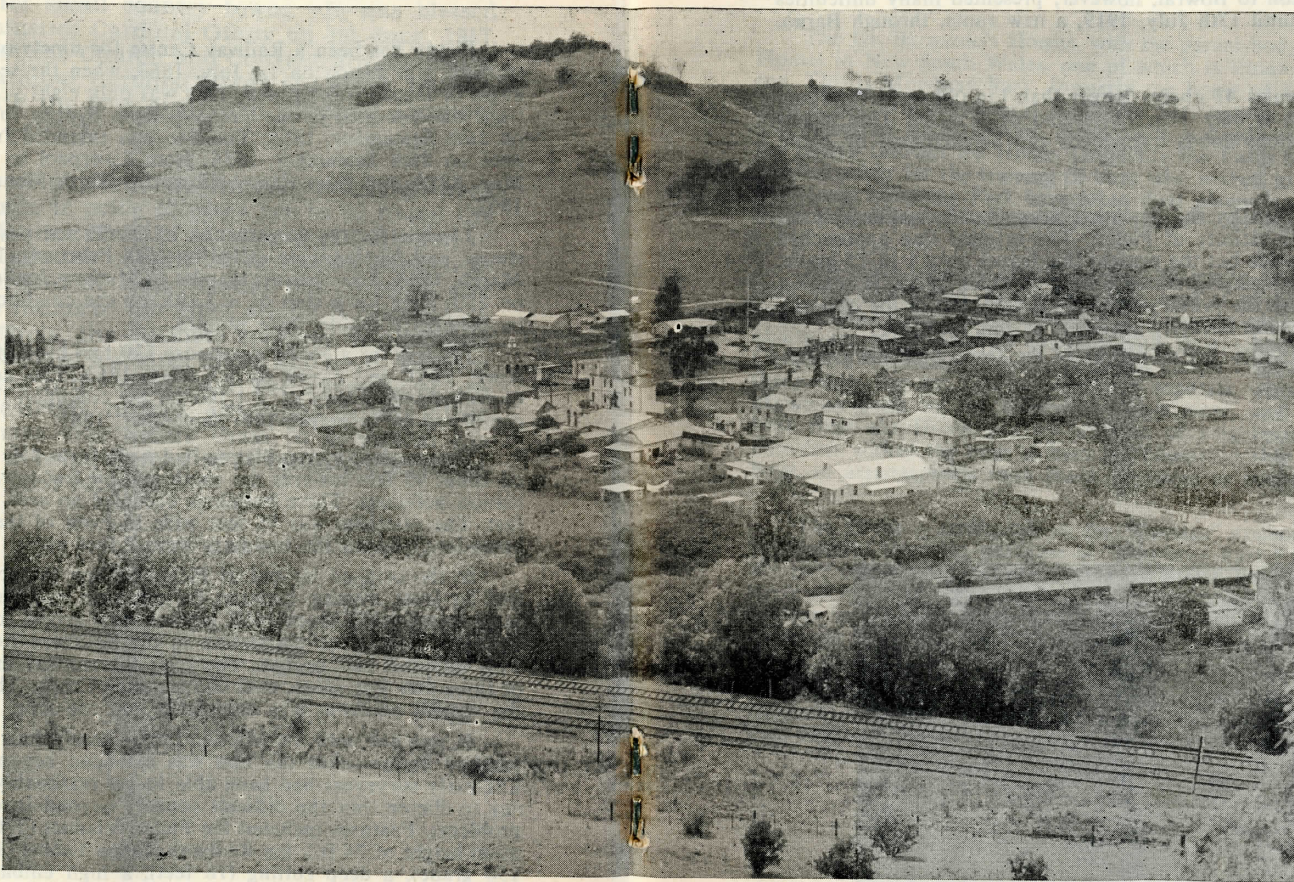
Tenders for a goods warehouse 120 feet by 40 feet were called on 14th April, 1863, and closed on 6th May, 1863. This contract was let to John Gwynneth for a sum of £1,360 on the condition that the work was to be completed on or before 10th September, 1863.

The original Picton Station had a platform 250 feet long, which extended about 95 feet towards the south and 60 feet towards the north from the station buildings. These buildings occupied an area of about 85 feet by 16 feet. The platform was 15 feet wide in front of the buildings and the two extensions beyond the buildings were 7 feet wide.

In the original lay-out of Picton Station the access to Campbell Street was by level crossing between the platform and the viaduct. This arrangement lasted until about 1897 when a new access road was made from the Southern Road near the station to the Southern Road near Upper Picton. This included two bridges, one over the railway and the other, consisting of three 900 feet spans, over Stonequarry Creek. About the middle of 1899 the second platform was completed and the level crossing was closed.

It was not until 1st March, 1867—nearly four years after the railway reached Picton—that the line was extended beyond Picton to Mittagong. The early surveyors had been able to get reasonably easy grades from Sydney to Picton, but the difficult country beyond involved many engineering problems. Features included the Picton Viaduct (276 feet long with a maximum height of 74 ft.), the Redbank Range Tunnel (198 feet long with a 1 in 150 grade), a deep cutting (76 feet), a high embankment (82 feet) and a steep incline (1 in 30) between Balmoral and Hilltop, by which the line climbed 356 feet in 2½ miles. This difficult route made it necessary to assist many trains travelling south with additional engine power and consequently Picton became an important locomotive station.

This line remained unaltered until 1897 when two deviations were made between Hilltop and Mittagong Junction to reduce the grading from 1 in 30 to about 1 in 66. This had the effect of increasing the loading of trains travelling from Picton by 100 per cent., and of trains travelling towards Picton by 120 per cent.



VIEW OF PICTON

A double line of track linked Sydney and Picton from 3rd July, 1892, when the last section to be duplicated—from Campbelltown to Glenlee—was opened. Between 1912 and 1915 the line was duplicated from Bowral to Goulburn and by 1916 the duplication had reached Harden. The steeply-graded section from Picton to Bowral, however, presented many difficulties and was not completed until 13th July, 1919, a new route, through Bargo, being followed.

This new line is 3 miles 42 chains longer than the old (now the loop) line but the ruling grade is only 1 in 75 instead of 1 in 30. This means that under similar conditions goods train loads can be increased by about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times.

The altered route taken by the deviation necessitated considerable alteration in the immediate vicinity of Picton. The original line approached the tunnel on a 1 in 40 grade but the present line leaves on a 1 in 75 grade, with the result that, after swinging round a long 16 chain curve, it enters a tunnel (600 feet long) near the portal of the old tunnel, but in the opposite direction to which the trains formerly travelled at this location.

(This article was contributed by an officer of the Dept. of Railways.)



OLD PICTON TUNNEL

BARNARDO FARM SCHOOL — MOWBRAY PARK, PICTON

The Dr. Barnardo's Homes, with the parent body in England, has three Homes in New South Wales, one of which is situated five miles from Picton. This is Mowbray Park, formerly the home of Sir Frederick and Lady Waley, later a Convalescent Home for Servicemen, and now known as the Dr. Barnardo Farm School. Since 1929 a steady stream of English boys has passed through the Home. Originally the Farm School was intended to be used solely for the training of boys who wished to go "on the land," but boys from Mowbray Park have taken their places in all walks of life, many holding positions of responsibility in all parts of Australia.

The main industry of the Farm is Dairying, and recently an Ayrshire Stud was established. However, other aspects of farming are taught, including pig-raising, poultry-farming and market-gardening. Boys who have ability are encouraged to continue with their schooling until the Leaving Certificate is obtained. The boys attend Picton Central School, being taken there each day by 'bus. (Formerly a separate school was maintained at Mowbray Park by the Education Department, and was attended by the boys from the Home and by children of neighbouring farmers. But the Directors wished the boys to have the companionship of Australian school-boys, so arrangements were made for them to attend Picton School.)

The Home is conducted on the "Cottage" system, five cottages having been erected since the purchase of "Mowbray Park." Each cottage is under the care of a Cottage Mother, who has fifteen boys in her care. The Staff strive to maintain a family atmosphere and endeavour to keep each family as near to a normal home as possible. That these efforts are successful is borne out by the fact that "Old Boys" return to Picton as often as possible.

The greatest need of the boys living at the Home is contact with other families. Many Picton people have been particularly generous in opening their homes to them and the boys sincerely appreciate these invitations

ST. MARY'S TOWERS

St. Mary's Towers, at Douglas Park, was once the home of the celebrated explorer, surveyor and road builder, Sir Thomas Mitchell—a man who played a very important part in opening up and developing the colony of New South Wales. Mitchell, with the keen eye of the explorer and surveyor, chose the site as a good place for a country residence. In 1834 he received a grant of 2,500 acres, later increased by an additional 1,250 acres, in what was then known as East Bargo. In 1842 Mitchell hired stone-masons, carpenters and labourers to begin work on his home which was to be named "Park Hall." In spite of certain misconceptions, there is ample historical evidence that no convict labour was employed on the building. Sir Thomas surrounded the house with vineyards of Madeira grapes from which he made his own wine. "Park Hall" was completed in 1845, and its owner, with his family of six sons and five daughters took up residence in the new home.

A new phase in the history of St. Mary's Towers began with its purchase by Dr. Richard Lewis Jenkins about 1861. He made considerable improvements to the house and estate, adding a beautiful stone colonnade or cloister to the northern and eastern walls, and building a private chapel. He re-named the home "Nepean Towers." Under his management "Nepean Towers" became famous for its herd of Durham Shorthorn cattle, which were well-known throughout the colony. The beautiful grounds, with well-planned lawns and gardens and a grand avenue, attracted many visitors from the city including Queen Victoria's second son, the Duke of Edinburgh, who planted trees at the head of the avenue.

In 1883 Dr. Jenkins died in Brisbane and "Nepean Towers" was bought by Mr. John Wetherill who later subdivided the estate. The main portion of 1720 acres was acquired by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Three Laybrothers (Brothers Robert, Felix and Ferdinand) came from Sydney in 1904 to take charge of the property.

With the coming of the Missionaries the name was changed to "St. Mary's Towers" and a new era began for the old estate. The chapel was converted to Catholic uses, but when it became too small, and a new chapel was built, it was used as a dining hall for the students of the Apostolic School. Fruit trees replaced the grape vines, sheep and poultry were added to the farm and many ornamental trees planted.

The Apostolic School has become a centre of Catholic intellectual activity, while St. Mary's Towers has surely become one of the well-known religious centres of New South Wales.

For over forty years St. Mary's Towers has admirably fulfilled its purpose as the junior training centre of the Australian Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. In the Apostolic School young Australians pursue their studies from First Year to the Leaving Certificate standard. In the Novitiate, the Novices, separated from the rest of the community, spend twelve months of intensive spiritual training in preparation for their religious profession.

As "Park Hall," then as "Nepean Towers" and, finally as "St. Mary's Towers" this fine old house has seen more than a hundred years of history.

THE STORY OF THE QUEEN VICTORIA HOMES

The first institution in Australia to come into operation to combat tuberculosis was what is now known as our Thirlmere Home. Colonel J. M. Goodlet, former head of the well-known firm of Goodlet and Smith, built what is known as Goodlet House, and for many years financially supported the institution from his own pocket. When Colonel Goodlet lived in England as a young man his sister was stricken with tuberculosis and on medical advice left her home during winter to go to Egypt. This was not possible for long however, and in due time Colonel Goodlet's sister passed away. Depressed by the tragic death, Colonel Goodlet said that if ever the opportunity came for him to establish a Home or Institution to combat the disease he would do so, and when in later years, after migration to Australia, he was able to do so, he built this Home on the property owned by him at Thirlmere.

In 1893 Colonel Goodlet found it beyond his resources to continue to maintain the Home and accordingly it was invested in a Public Board of Management and from that time largely supported by public subscription. Expenses again almost outran receipts and in the beginning of 1898 it was feared the sanatorium would be closed, but this unhappy ending was staved off by a special grant of £300, from the Government for three months maintenance.

In the previous year Queen Victoria had celebrated her Diamond Jubilee and Lady Hampden, wife of the Governor of New South Wales, had inaugurated a movement to raise funds to establish a memorial to the Queen. A large sum of money was subscribed and the executives of the Home applied to the fund for assistance, and at the same time an urgent appeal for subscriptions was made through the "Daily Telegraph." Mr. Samuel Hordern, as he was then, came forward and proposed that if the executive of the Memorial Fund would take over Thirlmere he would contribute the sum of £1,000. His offer was accepted and Thirlmere was taken over by the Queen Victoria Fund on the 1st September, 1898, and from that date operated as Queen Victoria Home for Consumptives. Thirlmere was then the only sanatorium and Colonel Goodlet continued to allow the Board the use of the house free of charge.

To-day the Homes stand as monuments to those people who, in the generation passed, so **generously gave** of their services and money to create sanatoria to assist in the **fight against tuberculosis**. The work has gone on till to-day we have now provided, through the kind services of contemporary friends, Rehabilitation Groups, Auxiliaries, Therapy and Entertainment. We to-day are proud of both our Homes, and the Board of Directors are ever seeking to improve in every possible manner, the services we are rendering to the community.

Shortly a new nurses' and domestics' quarters will be commenced at Thirlmere, followed later by a very large reconstruction job on the Goodlet House building.

Office-bearers for the present year are: S. Richardson, President; J. Brown, Hon. Secretary; and A. Redhead, Treasurer. One member of the original committee, Mr. W. Nicolson, is still a member and very actively interested in all its functions. Included also in the membership are Mr. A. Graham and Mr. E. Farrell, veterans of the South African War and still interested in the welfare of Ex-Servicemen, their Association, and the affairs of the nation.

Public recognition and appreciation also goes out to the boys of Picton and the surrounding district who volunteered for service in the Korean War . . . a page of history which has not as yet, been completely turned.

Roll of Honour

Roll of Honour of those who were enlisted from Picton and District in the Great War, 1914-1919:—

Abrahams, S. H.	Cameron, G.	Dowse, A.
Agnew, P. H.	Carnley, P.	Doyle, M.
Allpont, A.	Carty, M.	Drew, J.
Anderson, T.	Casey, J. J.	Dunstan, J. R.
Antill, J. M.	Cash, R. R.	Earl, G. P.
Ashford, J.	Cash, R.	East, A. E.
Ashford, W.	Caton, R.	Eather, J.
Austin, M.	Chalker, E.	Eckersley, F.
Baker, U.	Clark, C. H.	Eldridge, E. A.
Barnard, C.	Clark, J.	Emmett, W. R.
Bates, W.	Cleary, E.	Farrell, E.
Bateup, E.	Cleary, J.	Finlayson, E. J.
Bedford, H.	Coates, P.	Fitzjones, A.
Berry, C. L.	Cook, F.	Fletcher, A. E.
Board, J.	Coulter, E. C.	Franklin, L. C.
Bongers, C.	Cowie, A.	Gardiner, A.
Bongers, A.	Creran, A.	Gawthrop, W. O.
Bradford, T.	Crisp, W. J. R.	Gearie, A.
Bradford, J.	Crump, J. W.	Gillett, J.
Bretherton, J.	Crowley, D.	Gillett, E.
Brewer, A.	Daniels, C.	Giltinan, W.
Brodie, T.	Davis, W.	Grant, L. W.
Brookes, W. L.	Davis, C.	Greenaway, R. R.
Cabrera, F.	Dawson, C.	Greenaway, C.
Cake, D.	Develin, S.	Gunning, H.
Campbell, C.	Dowd, E.	Hackney, H.

Hanna, H. L.	Mathews, W.	Robertson, S. A.
Hanger, H. V.	McEwans, R. A.	Robbin, H.
Hart, A. S.	McGregor, P.	Rowe, W. L.
Hart, M.	McGregor, T.	Rutherford, C. H.
Hassard, T.	McKaigh, J.	Schroth, J.
Hill, A.	McKaigh, J.	Shields, E.
Hooker, W. H.	McLennan, W.	Schields, F.
Hunter, C. C.	McQuigan, E.	Shoobridge, E.
Huon, L.	Meacher, J. O.	Sidebottom, W.
Hutcheson, J.	Monk, D. J. S.	Sinclair, H.
Ingleton, A.	Monaghan, S.	Smart, G.
Ingleton, R.	Moyes, W. H.	Smith, R.
Inglis, T.	Mulhall, L.	Smith, W.
Irving, S. G.	Murphy, P. L.	Smith, C.
Irving, J.	Nicholson, W.	Squelch, E.
Job, C. C.	Norris, S. M.	Squelch, F.
Johnson, J.	Oaks, L.	Stewart, S. S.
Johnson, H.	O'Brian, M.	Tate, A. R.
Johns, W. V.	O'Connell, R.	Taylor, H. G.
Jones, H.	Parkes, H. E.	Taylor, A.
Kelly, L. J.	Parry, C.	Thearle, J. R.
Kelly, H. J.	Parry, E. L.	Thompson, E.
Kelly, L.	Parry, Nurse.	Thompson, C.
Kelso, C.	Perritt, J.	Thompson, A.
Keating, P. W. C.	Peters, D.	Thorpe, E.
Lane, A.	Phelan, P.	Trudgett, W. H.
Leewellyn, A.	Phillips, S.	Vandenbergh, R.
Le Clere, J. H.	Pipping, O.	Wedlock, A.
Lester, J.	Purcell, L.	Willis, W. L.
Little, J.	Roberts, C.	Wilson, D.
MacDougall, R.	Roberts, J.	Wilson, C.
Martin, C. J.	Roberts, R.	Wilson, R. B.
Maroney, J.	Robertson, M. D.	White, J.
Mathews, R. J.	Robertson, M. D.	*—Killed in Action.

The Honour Roll of the 1939-45 War, which has a place of honour in the School of Arts, Picton, was unveiled by President of the Shire, P. W. Early, on Anzac Day, 1953. This beautiful memorial was fully subscribed by the public of the district.

Names of those who enlisted from Picton and District are as follows:—

Armstrong, C.	Baxter, J.	Brooks, R.
Askildson, R.	*Baxter, L.	Brown, G.
Bailey, Rt.	Bentley, H. V.	Brown, H.
*Baker J.	Billington, J.	Brown, K.
Batty, Rex.	Bollard, G. J.	Brown, V.
Baxter, E.	Bollard, W.	Brown, W. F.

Buckley, C.
 Buckley, E.
 Carter, C. E.
 Carter, G.
 Chandler, R.
 Cheetham, R.
 Chiddy, W.
 Cracknell, F.
 Dowse, R.
 Dredge, E.
 Dunk, J. R.
 Dunk, M.
 Eagles, A.
 Farrell, F.
 Gasson, A. B.
 Gibson, N.
 *Gillett, L.
 Gillett, R.
 Graham, J.
 Grahame, S. V.
 Gwyn, A.
 Gwyn, S. P.
 Haddon, S.
 Hamilton, W. G.
 Harvey, L.
 Hill, A. R.
 Hill, L. E.
 Hill, M.
 Hines, A.
 Hughes, J.
 Hull, E. S.
 Isberg, F.
 Jeffery, G.
 Jeffery, R.
 Jeffery, W.
 Kinny, R. H.
 King, K.
 Lindsay, R. C.
 Lowe, L. E.
 Lowe, R.
 McDonald, E.
 McDonald, E. V.
 McGregor, S.
 McGuire, F.
 McInnes, K.
 McInnes, R.
 McKenzie, R.
 McKinnon, I.
 McRae, H.
 Malcolm, I.
 Maynard, S.
 Meredith, W.
 Monaghan, K.
 Murphy, B.
 Murphy, P.
 Nash, J.
 New, O.
 Nicholson, F.
 Nolan, R.
 North, F.
 *North, H.
 O'Connor, R.
 Olsen, J. N.
 Parker, C.
 Parmenter, B.
 Penny, W. N.
 Pike, H.
 Pottie, H. A.
 Prior, C. W.
 Prior, O. P.
 Ray, J.
 *Risby, L.
 Rutter, S.
 Scapt, W.

Sell, E. C.
 Shelldrake, K.
 Shiels, B.
 Smith, C.
 Smith, W. G.
 Stansfield, R.
 Tickner, V.
 Todd, W.
 Trinks, E. C.
 Turner, J. H. R.
 Turner, J.
 Vine, R.
 Vine, W. B.
 Walsh, R.
 Ware, J.
 Wilkinson, K.
 Wood, H. J.
 Woods, A. S.
 Woods, G. A.

*—Killed in Action.
SERVICE-WOMEN

Apps, R.
 Brooks, B.
 Brown, D.
 Cheetham, L.
 Gwyn, R.
 Hayward, L. A.
 Lynch, M.
 McKenzie, I.
 McLachlan, W.
 Milne, A.
 Nicholson, M.
 Shelldrake, G.
 Stinson, I.
 Stinson, J.

PICTON AGRICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

The Picton Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Society was formed in 1934 for the purpose of encouraging the development of the area, mainly by means of an Annual Show at which residents would be able to display the products of the district.

From a small beginning the Society has made steady, if unspectacular progress. Because of the Predominantly Agricultural nature of the district, the Society has until now, despite its name, been an Agricultural Society, and its Show an Agricultural Show. This Show has grown steadily, except for a temporary recess during the war years, until now it is one of the events of the year, if not THE event. Visitors from the Metropolitan Area and from the South Coast and Tablelands regularly attend, whilst to scores of former residents, "Show Day" is the time for their annual return to Picton.

From its inception the Show has been held in the picturesque setting of Victoria Park. In 1946, the Society, realising that this park was inadequate, purchased an adjoining area and there erected new pavilions. The main pavilion, known as the Agricultural Hall, is available for dances and balls, and is, in fact, the only hall in Picton of sufficient size to accommodate a large crowd. This same pavilion has proved a great boon to the Society in staging its indoor exhibits.

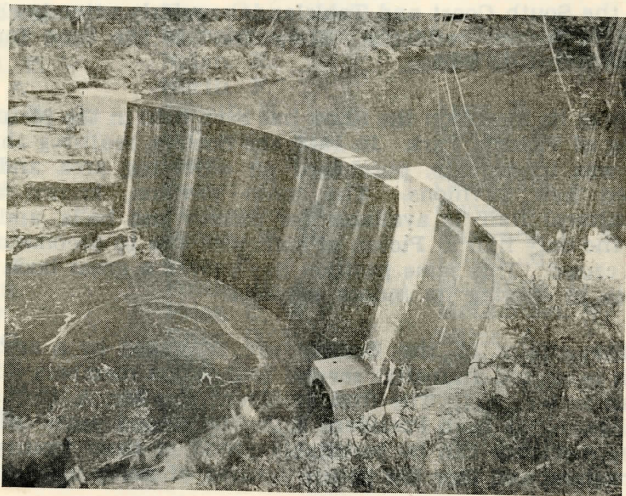
The affairs of the Society are managed by a committee which is elected annually; several foundation members still taking an active part. The first President was Mr. A. Crane. Mr. L. Nicolson has been President since the second year. All Committee members can be justifiably proud of their twenty years of progress, and face the future assured of many more years of advancement.

PICTON WATER SUPPLY

(Reprinted by kind permission of the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board)

A water supply system for the township of Picton was installed by the Public Works Department in 1899 and handed over to the local (municipal) council. The water was obtained from the Bargo River where a weir constructed to R.L. 912, impounded $24\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons. In 1910 the level was raised 8ft. increasing the storage to $38\frac{1}{2}$ million gallons. The weir was raised a further 7ft. in 1947, bringing the capacity up to 67 million gallons.

The original trunk main from the weir to Picton service reservoir comprised some 25,000ft. of 8in. dia. rivetted steel



BARGO RIVER WEIR

pipes and 21,000ft. of 6in. dia. cast iron pipes. In 1947 this main was renewed and amplified and now consists of 10in. and 8in. cast iron and $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. asbestos cement pipes totalling 8.8 miles in length. The route from the weir follows the course of the Bargo River to the Hume Highway, thence parallels the railway to Tahmoor station, next traverses private property to a point near Tahmoor Park House and finally follows the main road to the service reservoir on the hill overlooking the township.

Water is distributed to the township through 8.3 miles of reticulation mains varying in size from 6in. to 1in. in diameter. From the 10in. dia. main between the weir and the Hume Highway water is pumped through a 2in. dia. service to supply Picton Lakes T.B. Settlement. In Picton, immediately upstream from the inlet to the reservoir, another 2in. dia. service supplies pumped water to the Queen Victoria T.B. Homes.

In 1941 the municipality was absorbed in the Shire of Wollondilly. In July, 1952, the Shire Council asked the Board to consider taking over the system, and on 1st January, 1954, the transfer was completed on a walk-in walk-out basis. In advance and in anticipation of this, work was commenced by the Board in 1953 on the renewal and amplification of the 4in. and 3in. dia. main in Menangle Street. Some 3,740ft. of 6in. and 3,190ft. of 4in. mains have been laid at a cost of £7,539.

SOIL CONSERVATION

(Contributed by the Commissioner for Soil Conservation)

An increasing number of farmers throughout the State of New South Wales are adopting the recommendations of the Soil Conservation Service for the prevention and control of soil erosion. The farmers of Picton and surrounding districts are no exception, and many of them (having sought the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service), have received technical advice on their erosion problems. In addition they have been encouraged to adopt soil conservation practices in their farming programme. As a result they have gained first hand experience of the fact that soil conservation pays dividends not only to the farmer but also to the Nation.

A number of Picton landholders have hired earthmoving equipment, ranging from bulldozers to road ploughs, from the Service, under its Plant Hire Scheme. This scheme provides for equipment to be hired at most favourable rates for construction of erosion control measures which are designed and supervised by officers of the Service free of charge.

As a result of considerable work having been undertaken by local landholders, many good demonstrations of the practical application of soil conservation farming methods are to be seen. In some cases lands suffering from erosion of such severity as to be considered beyond reclaim, have been brought back to good productivity. In others where early action was taken before the menace had time to develop to any degree, increased productivity has resulted.

The Soil Conservation Service has an office at Camden (Phone 502) and the Soil Conservationist at that centre will be pleased to assist landholders who are interested in the conservation of their soil.

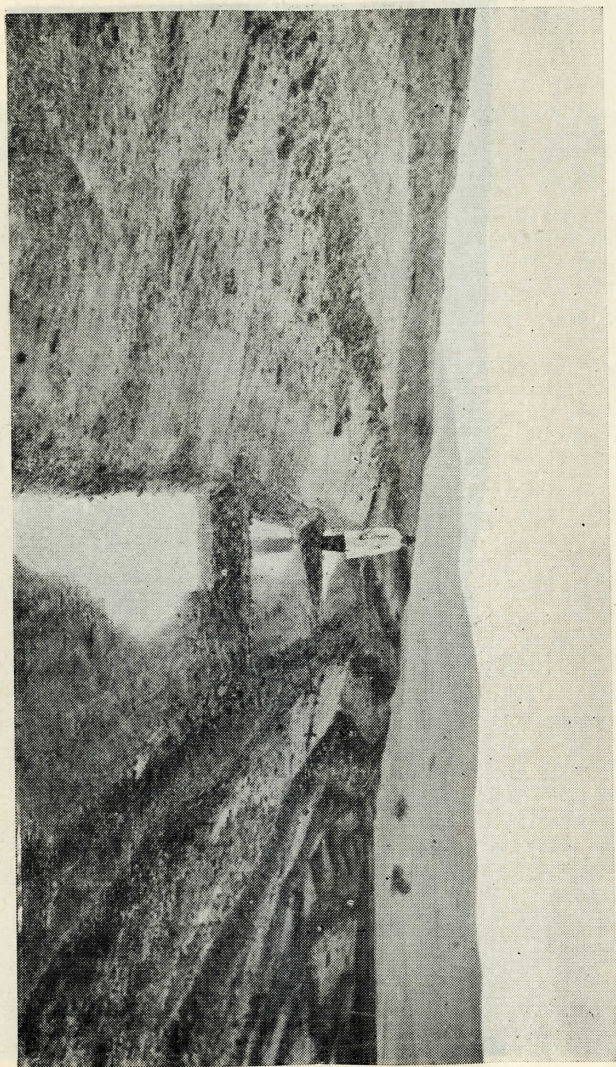


FIG. 1. Pasture furrows and absorption banks installed to prevent loss of soil and water and to assist revegetation.

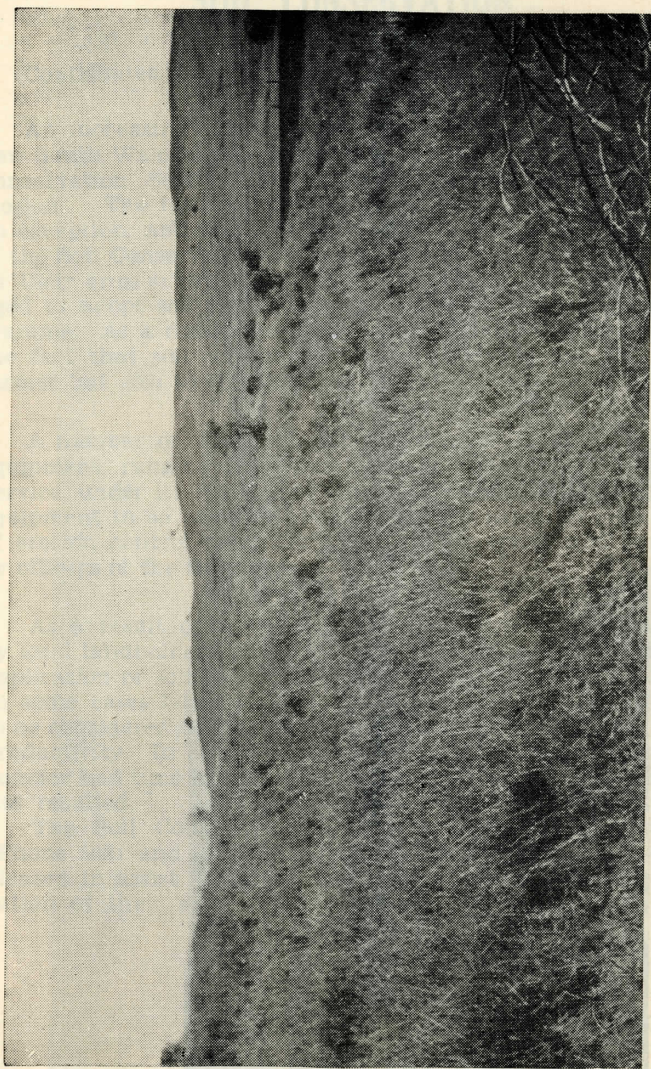
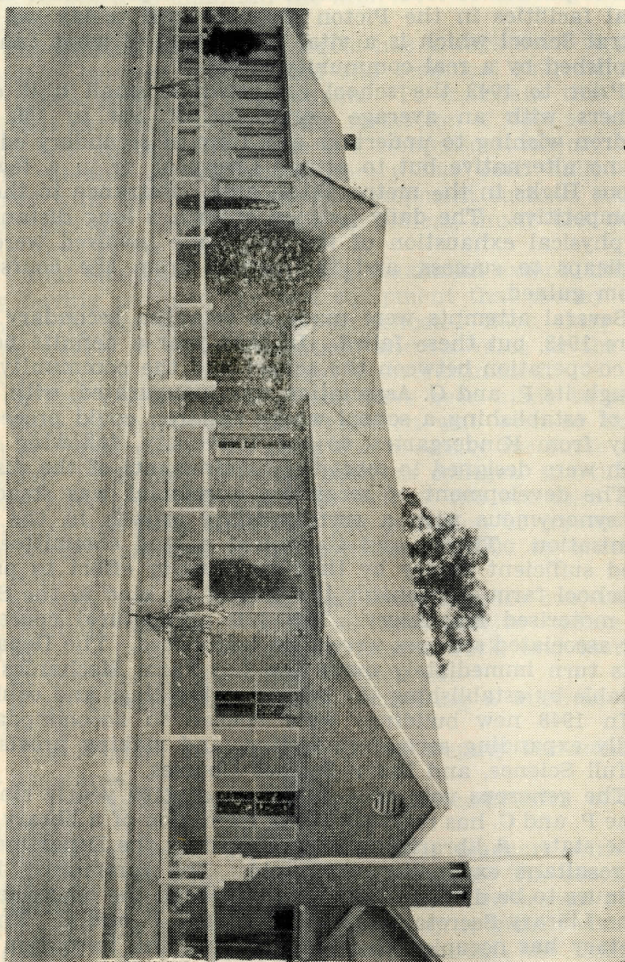


FIG. 2. The same area as in Fig. 1, approximately three years later, showing dense grass cover.

CENTRAL SCHOOL, PICTON



PICTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

The past decade has witnessed a vast improvement of educational facilities in the Picton district, until to-day we have a Central School which is a vital illustration of what can be accomplished by a real community effort.

Prior to 1943 the school comprised a small unit of four teachers with an average enrolment of 160 to 180 pupils. Children wishing to undertake any form of secondary education had no alternative but to attend Liverpool, or in a few cases, various Highs in the metropolitan area. Entrance to the latter is competitive. The daily journey of such a long distance, and the physical exhaustion of the long time involved were grave handicaps to success, and full benefit from the courses was seldom gained.

Several attempts were made to establish secondary classes before 1943, but these failed. In that year a definite policy of full co-operation between the school and the community acting through its P. and C. Association was inaugurated, with the object of establishing a school where children could proceed naturally from Kindergarten to the University, following courses which were designed to meet the requirements of the district.

The development of secondary enrolment was steady, and was synonymous with a corresponding growth in the parent organisation. The P. and C. formed a land committee which raised sufficient money by their community effort to purchase the school farm — probably the best of its kind in the State — and motorised machinery. The full agricultural courses and their associated sciences were then introduced. The Department in its turn immediately made the full Farm Mechanics course available by establishing the necessary buildings and equipment.

In 1948 new buildings were opened to accommodate the rapidly expanding secondary section, and making provision for the full Science, and Home Science Courses.

The generous vote of a minimum of £100 yearly since 1945 by the P. and C. has resulted in the formation of a library unique in the state. A librarian was appointed by the Department and the resultant expansion was rapid. The community interest continues to be directly maintained through the continued work of the Library Secretary appointed by the P. and C. The same secretary has occupied the position since the formation of the library, and still attends to all accounts, payments, and subsidy claims. Several years ago, a great number of reference books were loaned by the Department to commence the Experimental Circulating Reference Section. To-day, as well as supplying nineteen district schools with boxes of fiction books gratis, the librarian also acts as research officer and makes available any

books and other materials required for the purposes of the Circulating Reference Library. The Library could never be maintained without the community interest as nearly £2,000 has now been spent since its inception. Its place in the school is vital and has done much to maintain the high level of Leaving Certificate passes.

The definite aim of the school has always been to preserve a balance between the cultural and technical subjects, without over specialisation in any branch. To maintain this position emphasis has been placed on the formation of flute and recorder bands, and appreciative music is a compulsory subject.

A valuable school record library has been built up, and coupled with the use of valuable equipment such as sound systems, "pick-up," tape recorders, amplifiers, music has become a living force in the school.

Visual education is used to a maximum extent, the parent body having provided the best equipment that money can buy with extras not usually found in schools. Each class has one period weekly of visual education, and its value in the field of general knowledge alone, cannot be overestimated.

Of late years, definite efforts have been made to provide a full business course for those children who wish to enter this field of employment. To avoid the necessity for these students to travel to Sydney to enter business colleges, shorthand and typing have been introduced as well as the standard Business Principles and Book Keeping. The provision of typewriters has been greatly assisted by the donation of £100 by a citizen of the town.

All girls are required to take Home Science subjects to the Intermediate standard, while all boys receive tuition in the practical subjects of Woodwork, Leatherwork, and Metal work.

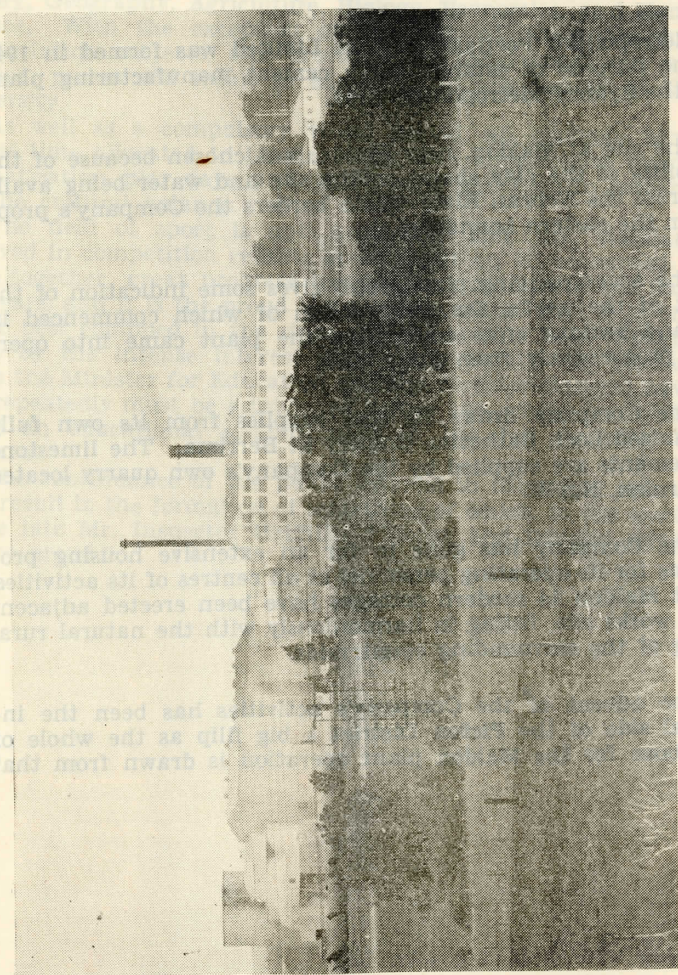
At the present the school consists of:—

1. An Infants' Department comprising a Mistress and two assistants.

2. The Primary Department of the Deputy Headmaster and two assistants.

3. The Secondary Department of Headmaster and twelve assistants.

Altogether there are now nineteen teachers with a total enrolment of the school of nearly 500 pupils. The secondary department is divided into three first years, two second years, one third year, one fourth year and one fifth year. It is most gratifying that the numbers passing through the Intermediate to the Leaving Certificate show a consistent increase. Since the commencement of these senior classes, several students have passed at Honours standard, and very many, including one from the Estonian community, have entered the teaching service of the State.



METROPOLITAN PORTLAND CEMENT LIMITED, MALDON

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The following extracts from a letter are published by kind permission of the writer, Miss H. Walker, of Lakesland. The Committee of "Back-to-Picton Week" deeply appreciate Miss Walker's interest in their Brochure.

"My grandfather, the late Dr. Joseph W. Walker, was one of the early medical men who ministered to the people in the district of Picton. He came out from England as Surgeon/Chaplain of a sailing vessel called the "Navarino" in the 1840's and began the practice of his profession in Camden. From there he ministered to the medical needs of that district and beyond, as far as Picton, The Oaks, Razorback, Burragorang and the Nattai areas, his means of transport being the good old solid four-wheeled buggy . . . he even went on horse-back in emergencies.

"As hospitals were non-existent in those days, all the seriously-ill patients — or most of them — were conveyed by the doctor and his groom in the family landau to his home at Camden. There my grandmother and her elder daughter nursed them back to health and vigour. Dispensers also were unobtainable so my grandfather trained his eldest daughter, my Aunt Clarissa, to be his dispenser at his surgery at Camden.

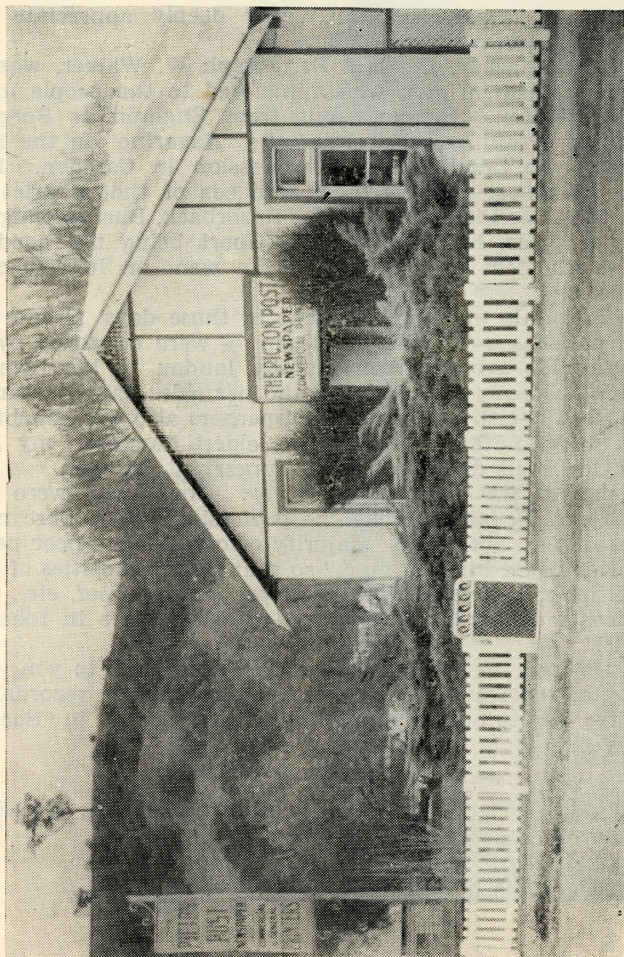
No patient was ever turned away. Those who were poor and needy, and could not pay the professional fees, were never pressed to do so, but, in the majority of cases, these poor people would recompense him "in kind," so that large quantities of such commodities as vegetables, grain, bacon, mutton, beef, etc., were anonymously delivered to my grand-parents' home in token of gratitude."

I trust that the fore-going may be of interest to you. The information represents excerpts from our "family records." I should like this to be an "old family's" contribution to "Back-to-Picton Week."

Yours sincerely,

(Miss) HILDA A. WALKER

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR



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PICTON - PAST AND PRESENT

