

THE REVEREND RICHARD HILL AND “MILBRODALE”

It was in the year of 1782 that Richard Hill was born in London. The Bishop of London ordained him as a Church of England clergyman in 1813. In 1818 he was appointed to a chaplaincy in New South Wales.

Taking the office of clergyman on board the “Hibernia”, carrying 160 male convicts bound for Van Diemen’s Land, Rev. Hill and his wife, Phoebe Sapphira, eventually reached Sydney from Hobart on 18 June 1819. A man of compassion, he was appalled by the cruelty, disease and dreadful conditions witnessed.

Ship’s surgeon Charles Carter was not partial to clergymen and involved himself in disputes with them. Rev. Hill complained that Carter had prohibited him from visiting the ship’s sick bay without his permission and had ridiculed his efforts at religious instruction to the convicts. After complaints from other ministers during voyages, the Governor recommended that Carter should never again be employed.

Rev. Hill soon won the good opinion of Governor Macquarie and Rev. Samuel Marsden. His initial appointment was as assistant to Rev. William Cowper at St. Phillips, the only church in Sydney. In 1821 he was given charge of the new district of St. James, and when the church was consecrated in February 1824, Rev. Hill became its regular minister. It soon became the chief church of the Colony. Rev. Hill worked hard at St. James, visiting convict barracks and ministering to the poor. He had advanced ideas about educational methods, and his contemporaries were to remember him chiefly for his work with children. Governor Darling considered him a most zealous and reputable clergyman, but believed that his labours much impaired his health.

Rev. Hill took an active part in humanitarian organisations. He was a founder of the NSW Society for promoting Christian knowledge among the Aborigines, a director of the Natives’ Institution, and joint secretary of the Australian Auxiliary and the Church Missionary Society. His interest in the Australian and Pacific natives was greater than the average clergyman.

Suburban lots of land were acquired by Rev. Hill near Darlinghurst. Then on 30 September 1825, he was promised Grant No. 224 of 1,200 acres of land and an 800 acre grant by purchase adjoining it on Saint Patricks Plains. In 1833 when quit rent was to commence, his 1200 grant was described in the NSW Government Gazette (p. 398)

REV. RICHARD HILL, 1,200 Twelve hundred Acres, *Parish unnamed*, on the West Bank of the Wolombi Brook; bounded on the North by Williams’ purchase, commencing at the confluence of Parsons’ Creek with the Wolombi, and bounded by that Creek and a line West 54 chains to Williams’ South-west corner, and by a continued West line of 53 chains; on the West by a line bearing South 80 chains; on the South by a line bearing East 155 chains to Wolombi Brook; and on the East by Wolombi Brook.

Promised by Sir Thomas Brisbane as a reserve, on 30th September, 1825. Quit rent £10 sterling per annum, commencing 1st January, 1833.

“Milbro Dale” was the name chosen by Rev. Hill for his land. Eventually this became one word “Milbrodale” for the surrounding district. Parsons Creek was his boundary with Robert Williams.

When Rev. Hill arrived with his assigned convicts and free men, their first task was to erect rough bark shelters. Later came huts of hand-adzed slabs with roofs of bark. They had to utilise whatever the land had to offer and packsaddle all other necessities across the precipitous ranges from Windsor. It was hard work, hard living, hard food.

The grant was a world of limitless earth and sky, maddening in its loneliness. Their neighbours were the native inhabitants who lived in harmony with the land. At night came the mournful howl of dingoes with dogs answering from the huts.

Rev. Hill continued to live in Sydney as Minister of St. James. He would ride up to “Milbro Dale” when he could. While there he would perform marriages and baptisms, also funerals if anyone chose the right time to die. On 8 August 1828 he baptised Roseanna, the daughter of William and Ann Maria Clarke. He also conducted church services for the salvation of the convicts’ souls and anyone else who came along. Nine convicts were on the property in 1828 with some free persons. The overseer had a wife and child.

Despite his possessions and a stipend and emoluments valued at near £600 a year, by 1835 Rev. Hill could not resolve his financial difficulties. His tastes were simple, and apart from his wife, his only dependant was his widowed mother in England. There were no children from his marriage. He seems to have been a poor manager of money and a too generous donor to charity.

Giving up his connection with things of time and sense, Rev. Hill died suddenly from an attack of apoplexy in the vestry of St James on 30 May 1836. His constitution had long been weakened by his labours, but his death came as a surprise with many expressions of regret. Mrs Hill, born in London on 29 January 1780, died at Darlinghurst on 7 November 1863.

On 2 March 1839, in partnership with Robert Williams, Thomas Parnell bought Wilbro Dale from Rev. Hassell and John Campbell, executors for the estate of the late Rev. Richard Hill. They paid £2,100 for it. Three months later Robert sold his share to Thomas.

Thomas Parnell died on 11 September 1856, leaving Milbro Dale to his son Charles on condition that he did not sell it for 15 years. Parnells did not always reside on the estate but leased it out. Now known as one word, Milbrodale Estate, was auctioned by Charles on 15 January 1873. It was greatly increased in acreage. Benjamin Richards was the purchaser.

A wealth of history of the pioneer days is associated with Milbro Dale House, lost with the passing of time. Once it was a prominent landmark, 17 miles from Singleton on the Bulga road to the Hawkesbury.

The charming Colonial Georgian homestead on the grant to the Rev. Richard Hill, was set in a bend on the south side of Parsons Creek not far from its confluence with Wollombi Brook. It was a single-storeyed house built in the long, low style, plain and well constructed. Date of construction is uncertain.

Sandstone blocks two feet long, eighteen inches wide and one foot high, were quarried by convicts at the lagoon south of the house. Both end walls were formed of rubblestone masonry.

Shingles were cut for the roof. All joinery in the house was cedar. Nails were hand forged. High windows of paned glass were fitted with louvered wooden shutters for security and to exclude the heat.

There were five rooms along a stone-flagged front verandah. The room on the southern end to the left had a window to the front verandah and also to the back verandah, which was constructed of slabs laid on the ground. There was no outside door to this room, but there was a connecting one close to the back wall to enter the next room.

A double fireplace served both rooms. Above carved cedar mantelpieces, shelves were built. This second room was large with a window at the front and could be entered by a front and back door. Here church services, meetings and dances were held. From this room a door close to the back wall allowed entrance to a third room which only had two windows.

The fourth room had a door and window to the back verandah and a door to the front, but no interior connection, rather a bleak prospect on a cold night. This was perhaps to seal off the first three rooms from intruders. A double fireplace with a large baker's oven also served a fifth room.

A door from the fifth room led to the back verandah and there was a high window in the end wall needing a ladder to reach it. Rings were let into the stone walls. When all supplies had to be transported over the rugged mountains from Windsor, perhaps at six to twelve monthly intervals, all security had to be taken. Boxes of foodstuffs and valuables would be chained to the walls. In later years thieves tore 18 inch skirting boards off this room after hearing a tale of hidden treasure.

At the back of the house a detached slab kitchen, dining room and other necessary rooms were built. A pine dining table with carved legs seated 24 people. Later the rooms were reached by a covered way.

Milbrodale had many outbuildings including men's huts, stables, stockyards, blacksmith's shop, butcher shop, woolshed and piggery. It was described as a lovely old home with a glorious garden enclosed with a high paling fence. Fruit and shade trees reached as far as the creek. One can imagine the convicts toiling on the estate.

In the 1930s a storm caused the shingles to leak, so corrugated iron was placed over them. Some of the timber flooring was replaced and an extra room built on the end of the front verandah.

With time and weathering the old homestead fell into a dangerous state of disrepair and was demolished in 1978. Lying in the grass, only two or three sandstone blocks showing marks of the convicts' hammers and chisels, remain of the Rev. Hill's fine estate.

Owners:

Rev. Richard Hill	1825
Thomas Parnell – Robert Williams	1839
Thomas Parnell	1839
Charles Parnell	1856
Benjamin Richards	1873
Elvina Durham	1898
Alexander Family	1904
C B Alexander Estate	1947
Greg Harris	1967
Gordon Warren Harris	1969

References:

Australian Dictionary of Biography
NSW Government Gazette
Mrs Marion Banks
Mr John St Pierre
Maitland Mercury
Mrs Nina Pike
Mrs Edna Court
Mr Gordon Harris
Singleton Argus
Last Will and Testament of Thomas Parnell

[Information supplied by Jenny Scholes]

IMPORTANT SALE
OF
ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE, DESIRABLY
SITUATED, AND EXTENSIVELY IMPROVED
GRAZING AND AGRICULTURAL ESTATES
IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT,
Within Easy Distance of the Town of Singleton,
APPROXIMATE TO MAITLAND,
And upon the Main Line of Road from the
Northern Interior to Sydney.
THIS MAGNIFICENT PROPERTY
IS KNOWN AS
THE "MILBRODALE" ESTATE,
AND COMPRISES
3060 ACRES OF RICHLY-GRASSED LAND,

1000 Acres of which are ring-barked; and
140 Rods of Three-railed Fence having been
recently erected, renders a splendid plot at
once available for stock. Irrespective of this
vast extent of freehold, there are
4110 ACRES HELD UNDER PRE-EMPTIVE LEASE,
And 200 ACRES CONDITIONALLY PURCHASED,
the whole being PERMANENTLY WATERED
By Running Streams and Neverfailing Waterholes –
the former intersecting the property in
such a manner as to keep stock constantly within
control, and the general management freed from the
disadvantages which accrue in badly-watered districts.

THE IMPROVEMENTS

CONSIST OF –

FAMILY RESIDENCE, with necessary Outhouses;
Enclosed Cultivation, Grazing Paddocks,
Stockyards, &c., &c., &c.

The Proprietor has also contracted for the erection
of a vast extent of 2-railed Fencing, thus completing
every requisite for efficiently working the property.

TERMS:- Cash; or, if elected, One-third Cash – the
residue of the purchase money to remain five
years, bearing interest at the rate of 7 per cent per annum,
payable half-yearly, secured by mortgage upon the property
in the usual manner, the purchaser having the option to
pay off £500 at any time during the currency of the
mortgage, by giving three months' notice.

BRUNKER & SPARKE have received instructions from
Chas. Parnell, Esq., to sell by auction, at the Northumberland
Hotel, West Maitland, on WEDNESDAY, the 15th January,
1873, at Twelve o'clock,

THE "MILBRODALE" ESTATE.

This Valuable and Extensive Property has been occupied for
many years by Mr. W. McAlpin, and may undoubtedly be
classed as one of the most unmistakeable investments
offering. The quality of the Land is unquestionable –
irrespective of its GRAZING CAPABILITIES.

Its adaptation for Agricultural purposes cannot be
Excelled, those portions cultivated have produced

PROLIFIC CROPS OF WHEAT

Of the very best description.

The difficulty to secure Grazing Estates possessing
the advantages of "MILBRODALE" is becoming daily
apparent: to Station Proprietors it would be invaluable as

A DEPOT FOR STOCK,

Enabling the Squatter to hold his consignments for the
most favourable market, without affecting its capacities
or interfering in the slightest degree with the profitable
working of the Estate.

The SITUATION OF "MILBRODALE" IS MOST HEALTHY;
its proximity to the principal Towns in the Hunter River District
and EASY ACCESS BY RAILWAY AND STEAMER TO THE
METROPLIS,

Are privileges not to be overlooked; and must at once convince
Investors that the growing importance of the colony must tend, beyond
conception, to augment the value of such properties as
"MILBRODALE". The Auctioneers therefore invite (with
confidence) the especial attention of parties desirous to secure
A STERLING INVESTMENT,

To the sale of this truly valuable and splendidly situated Estate.
Should this Property not be sold, it will be LEASED BY AUCTION,
for a term of Ten Years, possession to be given in April, 1873.

Intending Purchasers are especially requested to INSPECT THE
PROPERTY – every facility will be afforded by Mr. W. McAlpin, or
Mr. James Moy, who reside on the Estate; and a PLAN can be
Seen at the Office of the Auctioneers, East Maitland.

TITLE UNQUESTIONABLE.

Particulars of which can be obtained upon reference to
Jas. Norton, Esq., Solicitor, Sydney.

Maitland Mercury ND.

CHARLES BOYD ALEXANDER – A GENEROUS BENEFACTOR

The following information has been supplied to me from Bruce and John Gardiner of Millers Forest. John and Bruce's father, the late Dr Samuel S. Gardiner, was a long-time friend and confidant of C B Alexander. Dr Gardiner was a primary force amongst medicine at Newcastle for many years and was instrumental in Newcastle Hospital and its associated facilities being highly regarded within Australia's medical fraternity. Research has recently been undertaken on the history of the Royal Newcastle Hospital and through this information has surfaced recording C B Alexander's generosity to the people of Newcastle.

In the early 20th century there were plans for an Infectious Diseases Hospital in Newcastle, firstly in 1919 later in 1928 but nothing was built.

In 1933 C B Alexander of Tocal wrote to the Newcastle Hospital board,

I have learned through a reliable source that there is inadequate accommodation for infectious diseases cases in Newcastle and other hospitals in the district. The Government also has apparently been unable to render assistance, despite the repeated requests from citizens ... I am enclosing a cheque for 3,000 pounds as the nucleus of a fund to be used for the purpose of establishing an infectious diseases department at your hospital so as to lessen and, if possible, avoid the necessity for two or more patients being accommodated in one bed.

The impasse was finally broken. The government agreed to grant a subsidy of £1 for every £1 from the district, and a further £7,000 was raised by Lake Macquarie, Waratah, Hamilton, Newcastle and other councils, matched by the government's £10,000. The Infectious Diseases Hospital was built at Waratah on the pavilion plan, providing maximum light and air to each room and sheltered open areas for recuperating patients. It was opened as part of Newcastle Hospital on 13 June 1936.

Reference: Marsden, S (2005) *The Royal – A castle grand, a purpose noble. The Royal Newcastle Hospital 1817-2005*. Hunter New England Area Health Service 2005.

Dr Gardiner also prepared a 25-year history of the Royal Newcastle Hospital. C B Alexander's generous support for the Infectious Diseases Hospital is recorded by Gardiner.

In 1893, 80 acres were acquired at Stockton. The people in Newcastle were again clamouring for an infectious diseases hospital in 1933 and the board obtained an estimate of £12,000 to erect a 50 bed unit at Waratah. Mr. Alexander of Paterson was approached and he gave £3,000 and the government £6,000.

Properties 40, 42 and 44 Pacific Street, were acquired from the Porter estate a few days before Dr. Starr the newly appointed superintendent arrived. Dr. Starr commenced duty on the 24th July, 1932 and he resigned from the hospital on the 20th October, 1939. He went to England in November 1935

and returned in January 1937. During this time Dr. McCaffrey acted as medical superintendent.

An appeal for £5,000 to furnish the out-patient department was launched three days before the foundation stone was unveiled, on the 11th November, 1933. This appeal closed on 30th April, 1934 and it realised £4,500 which was an excellent result considering that at the commencement of the appeal there had been a drop of 2/- in the basic wage. On the 16th May, 1934, shortly before the building was opened, the board received a legacy of £1,500 from the Donnelly estate, so the furnishing of the building was made easy.

At the unveiling of the foundation stone which, incidentally took place three weeks after the foundation stone of the main building of the Mater Misericordiae Hospital was laid, Mr. Weaver promised that the government would give £6,000 if the citizens raised £3,000 towards the building of the infectious disease hospital. You will notice, if you look carefully, a groove in the foundation stone. This groove is due to the fact that the date on which the foundation stone was originally to be unveiled was altered on account of the sudden illness of the Minister of Health – Mr. Weaver. Dr. Ellis who was Mayor of Waratah at the time of the ceremony was very interested in the establishment of an Infectious Disease Hospital and it was mainly due to his efforts and conferences convened by the Mayor of Newcastle with various councils and shires in the district that the sum of £3,000 was guaranteed three months after the appeal was made.

Tenders closed for the infectious disease hospital on 4th March, 1935 – a day sacred to every Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons. The lowest tender exceeded the estimate by £500. On this same day a new building which is the home of the Australian College of Surgeons in Australia was opened in Melbourne and it was also on exactly the same day fifty years previously that an editorial appeared in the *Newcastle Morning Herald* agitating for the establishment of an infectious disease hospital in Newcastle. The foundation stone was laid four months later and the institution was officially opened on 15th June, 1936, and the first patient was admitted on 1st October, 1936.

[Information provided by Mr Bruce Gardiner, Millers Forest, 3 November 2005].

NOTES REGARDING ELECTRICAL SUPPLY TO TOCAL HOMESTEAD CREEK PUMP

The following notes have been prepared as a result of conservation works undertaken on the pump on Webbers Creek behind the Homestead.

Some years ago the horse-works were uncovered and the bucket pump on this mechanism was exposed for interpretation. Subsequently the trolley rails for the electric pump installed by the Alexanders' was rebuilt and conserved. At that time the power supply pole adjacent to the pump house was stabilised but it was clear that it required replacing.

In June 2005 the old power pole was removed and a new pole installed. At the time of the removal, an inspection was undertaken of the switch box which was located at the top of the pole.

The pole had insulators on it for both the 110 volt system and the later installed 415 volt system. Within the large switch box on the pole was a smaller 415 switch box. Both of these boxes have been removed, the 415 unit will be relocated into a shed for interpretive purposes. There is no evidence of the switching mechanism left in the box from 110 volt era.

Evidence exists further up the slope of the cross arms and insulators for another supply pole. In the future another pole will be put in place on this site and the cross arms restored on it.

The switch box at the pump site pole will be rebuilt and installed just as it was before. When the project is finished evidence will be on site to interpret the 110 and 415 volt power systems without the wires connected of course. Any initiative to connect the wires would be futile due to branches of a nearby tree.

Close examination reveals a power supply coming out of the back of the stables near where the generator was. This was the 110 volt supply; no doubt the 415 volt supply came directly from the power pole at the corner of the tea rooms.

The 415 power supply for the Homestead used to come in across the valley garden with poles virtually at either end. These were removed when underground power was installed. The above conservation works should provide adequate interpretation for past electrical supply services within and to the Homestead.

Prepared for the record.

AC ARCHER
Principal
16 June 2005

A Day at the Paterson

Maitland Mercury, 25 February 1895

[BY THE VAGRANT.]

The title of my little lay is written, and there it must remain; but nevertheless I don't like it. It reminds me of some gay old Lothario or amorously inclined youth, for it embraces altogether too much and too promiscuously, although it may come to be admitted that it gets in a hug occasionally in the right place. Still under a bad head the phrenologist oft times finds a good body and so it may be with this one of my own creating.

I was at the Paterson on Wednesday, and with me were three companions, the superior of whom no man could desire, and if he did he would be apt to grow tired before he found them. First and foremost there was "Teddy" Keys. That sounds awfully familiar and undignified, but then you are aware, gentle reader, that I know Teddy so well, you know him so well, and in fact everyone knows him so well, that we may all be pardoned for dropping the conventional Mister, and sticking to plain facts. To deny knowledge of the Alderman (for Teddy is one of the Waverley city fathers) is to plead ignorance about the affairs of the Australian turf, upon which E.K. is such a shining light. In his salad days Keys was an excellent horseman, and now he is an excellent trainer, as the ever recurring victories of horses prepared by him go to prove. But I think the Melbourne Cup will make him pull up lame one of those fine November afternoons. He thought he could win it with Sir William; in fact to this day thinks he did win it, but unfortunately the judge said Malvolio and doggedly stuck to it. What a favourite Mr. Keys had in Ruenalf last year, everyone remembers with a look in their eyes that is almost as far away as their money. Another of the company was Mr. Richard O'Connor, also from the metropolis. In the days of yore he was one of the best horsemen in Australia, and was for ten long years an inmate of Tom Lamond's academy, where he often had the honour of wearing Sir Hercules Robinson's popular Zetland spots. In '79 he steered Secundus to victory in the Metropolitan Stakes for Mr. John Mayo, and for the same gentleman he also was the first to weigh in several times on old Black Swan and others of his string. In 1888 he was on the back of Darebin when the expatriated son of The Peer and Lurline struggled home for the Sydney Cup with 9st 8 lb on his back. With the coming of weight and whiskers Dick had to desert the saddle, and he now has a very nice and useful little string of horses at work out Kogarah way. The third in the trap was Mr. George Buxton, who is so popular with gentle and simple, that his virtues need not be here discussed. The fourth was myself, but as I am merely the power behind the throne, so to speak, I will keep down the veil and hide my blushes. The frequency of Mr. Keys's visits to the Paterson give him a sort of preemptive right to much of the neighbourhood, and he looks out on the familiar scene through clouds of tobacco smoke with a somewhat unappreciative gaze as we rattle along the well kept road. Dick has never been locally beyond the outskirts of Maitland, and as he has an eye for the artistic as well as the main chance he scans the valleys and plains, the shining river meandering between its setting of willows, the glittering pools of water still gleaming in the hollows as the mementos of the recent heavy rains and destructive flood, and the snatches of East Maitland, Largs, and Morpeth, which can be caught as we wind through the heights of Bolwarra. O'Connor says "it's beautiful," and so it is, but the leaning cornstalks, the mud-sodden lucerne fields, the wrecked haystacks tell sad tales of what the Hunter and its tributaries can do in the way of destruction when they like. Away out of the area of cultivation the grass is as green as the most verdant clover, and the stock which are lazily brushing flies off their fat frames

in the shade of the gums are fleshy monuments of the excellent character of Nature's fodder. Even the heights about Tocal are thickly clothed with verdure, and if the recent inundation did harm in some ways it did good by setting the foundation for a grand season. I draw my companions' attention to the English aspect of the landscape hereabouts, particularly to the beauties of the river as it sweeps away untiringly beneath the umbrageous shade of weeping willows, but the ever practical Keys breaks in upon my rhapsody by remarking that it didn't look very good to drink, and I had to admit that it was a wee bit discoloured, and that I had somewhere in the past seen more tempting liquid. Then we turned into the gates at Tocal, and as we climbed the hill and passed the ancient drag which has stood sentry-like for generations on the edge of the lagoon, O'Connor got murderously inclined and wept metaphorically for his gun, for some birds were seen taking wing in the distance. Up at the comfortable old homestead we were met by John Kidd, the painstaking stud groom, and the elongated stature of himself and sons as they emerged from the barn where they were threshing rye and oats nearly frightened O'C into fits, for he is only a tiny little fellow. However, when we got among the horses Richard was himself again. We were sorry to hear that Mr. Syd. Reynolds was away ruralising at the Lake, and in the temporary absence of Mr. Frank Reynolds one of his stalwart sons did the honours of the house for us.

Only the colts and stallions are stationed at Tocal, whilst the fillies are kept in retirement across the river at Duninald, and this is an excellent system. The youngsters had only been boxed a few days before our inspection, so that we saw them in the rough, and not at all in the advantageous aspect they will present after about a month's vigorous handling and judicious feeding. They never get pampered at Tocal, and thrive and stay all the better afterwards. First on the catalogue came a well-grown bay colt by Sweet William from China Rose, by Angler from Nathalie, and as his dam also produced Uabba (winner of the Epsom Handicap and many other races), this young gentleman is well worthy of careful inspection. He will be found to stand over much ground, has a good reachy neck and shoulders, a nicely sprung barrel, and well let down quarters. The next box is occupied by a fine brown two-year-old daughter of Splendor and Mingera, which Tom Cush recently had in work at Maitland, but which he had to throw out, as she was growing very fast. She was suffering from dental troubles yesterday; but the clever Alderman soon extracted the offending ivories. Number two on the list is a chestnut colt, with very light-tinted mane and tail, who claims Candour and Candid (now racing successfully in America) as brother and sister, and he is very like the former, being neat and active looking, but he has better bone than Joe Brown's horse, although I like his forehead much better than his hind-quarters. The chestnut colt by Splendor from Algerine, by Hawthornden from Algeria, by Blinkhoolie from Adrastia, is a tremendous big lolloping fellow with knees and hocks big enough for a lorry horse. His middle is a model of strength, and he loses nothing behind for his hind leg is like that of a greyhound. In front he has plenty of room for action, and his head is clean and intelligent looking. This is a very fine colt, and O'Connor lingers long over him, albeit he does not like that strain of Hawthornden on the dam's side. A belief is current that the majority of Hawthornden's stock were curs and jades; but be that as it may he won the English St. Leger, so did his sire Lord Clifden, so did his grand sire Newminster, and so, too, did his great grand sire Touchstone, which is a series of victories not often traceable in a pedigree. The St. Leger is mentioned fourteen times in this colt's lines, which are teeming with Touchstone blood. The chestnut colt by Splendor out of Devotion (dam of Doncaster and Bona Fide), by Goldsbrough from Young Emily, by Leopold out of Empress, by Cossack, takes Keys's fancy, and no wonder, for Doncaster and Bona Fide have both won races for him. He is a stout, well-grown young gentleman with a head

that should make him a masher in the best of equine society, so handsome is it. He has very fine shoulders and middle, whilst his coupling is powerful. His bone is without a flaw, and his sleek coat and lazy movements indicate that he is a good doer. The bay by Splendor from Heather Bell, by the defunct Sardonyx out of Mona, by Young Trumpeter, reminds me somewhat of his dead relative, although not in colour, for he is on the small side, carries little flesh, but is full of muscle, and is well developed about the arms and thighs. I was not surprised to hear that he is very smart when allowed to have a dash in the paddock. The colt by Sweet William from Sea Foam, by The Drummer from Sea Breeze, by The Barb, may not have the best hock in the world, but he is otherwise a well furnished and promising youngster. The bay by Sweet William from Norah, by Goldsbrough from Lady Laura, by Hamlet from Lady Hilda, by Lord of the Isles, possesses tremendous substance all over, and is bred to race. Weight should be no object to him, and if he goes on in the way he has commenced he should create a stir in the sale ring. Sweet William has been much used at Tocal on account of his Yakendon blood, and the next colt we see is by Mr. Gannon's old pet out of Thelma, by Goldsbrough out of Vin Ordinaire, by Ace of Clubs, out of Sour Grapes, by Fisherman, and he is at once secured by Keys, who commenced to orate freely about the good qualities of the colt's mother who carried his colours, and often assisted the genial one to pay the rent. I could not help remarking to myself that it is a characteristic of Keys to tell you more about his horses when they are done than when they are doing, or are likely to do. Standing behind the colt under notice I admitted that I never looked at a more promising fellow, for his hind leg is a model of symmetry and strength; indeed it looks like that of a three-year-old in training. He has a very nice barrel, too, and his heart room is spacious, but his shoulders are somewhat heavy for my taste. He stands back at the knees, too, but his enthusiastic admirer won't have this as a serious objection, and reminds me of Black Swan and many other good ones who were even more calf kneed than the colt. He also snaps up a challenge thrown out by his friend Dick for a wager of a new hat that the Algerine colt would beat No. 8 in price, and so we leave the box at that. Probably what will be regarded as the aristocrat of the lot so far as breeding goes is the chestnut colt by Splendor out of Powder (dam of the Melbourne Cup winner Arsenal and Crossfire), by Blinkhoolie out of Jeu d'Esprit, by Flatcatcher, and he is otherwise a gem of the first water. He has been until lately a bit backward, but he has begun to top-up well, and will be in nice condition in a month or so. He is not at all like his famous half-brother or sister in so far that he is a chestnut, whilst they were nearly black. They were long and low, whilst he is a trifle on the leg, but that will not be noticeable when he thickens. He stands over a deal of space, and is clean boned and wiry all over. His couplings are powerful, his back is short, and no fault can be found with his neat shoulders and fine head. He looks all over a galloper, and I will undertake to eat him if he isn't. That brought us to the end of our tether, and so we went and renewed acquaintance with the stallions. John Kidd knows how to do most things as they should be done, at least he is perfect in stable etiquette, and so he leads our willing footsteps into a sand yard where idly cogitating probably on the joys to come, on the shimmer of silk and satin, the fitting posts, the rattle of stirrups, the resounding turf and the wild scamper over the elastic sward in and out of the straight, are two gaunt specimens of foaldom (one a brother to Uabba), but our mentor breaks in upon their reverie and summarily ejects them. Then he opens the door of a box, and there stands old Goldsbrough looking curiously at the intruders on his privacy. What a magnificent horse the great son of Fireworks and Sylvia is to be sure! His dappled coat shines again on his tremendous frame, and although his wonderful back has begun to drop, there is yet no lack of strength about the beautiful old brown. We never see thoroughbred stallions now with the bone of Goldsbrough, and we are inclined to side with Kidd when he says we will never see another. The old horse

knows his friend of years, and rubs his honest old heat upon John's chest, and is fondled in reciprocation. I do not think Goldsbrough ever had a temper. If he did he hid it when it was young and small and he cannot find it now. Alas, it is a pity that such a grand animal should ever age, but already twenty-five years of his life have flown, and his master of yore John Tait has been long laid away to rest. Splendor is as handsome as ever; and, as he jauntily swings round the yard after a playful struggle with Kidd, he is indeed a thing of beauty as his burnished golden coat gleams in the sunlight. Sweet William has improved within the last few seasons in a wondrous manner, and is now a well nigh perfect horse with great power and symmetry and the temper of an angel. The coaching stallion Santa Claus is a very neat bay, and is said to have produced some beautiful foals from a few Arab mares owned by Mr. Syd. Reynolds. Mr. Keys's fine black colt Inspiration (by Goldsbrough-Happy Thought), who had been turned out to grow, is also on view.

Then we sought the cool recess of the house and took a lunar observation with Mr. Frank Reynolds – who I was sorry to see ailing – before we trotted into the picturesque little town and dined, but not before one of our greys had nearly broken Mr. O'Connor's leg by a kick. After a rest and a smoke we decided to allow the Tocal fillies to remain undisturbed until a future visit, and then we cut away over the hills to Bona Vista, the ancient home of Dr. Bowker, with whom Keys is a great favourite and friend. The venerable medico does not reside on the estate now, but he makes an occasional pilgrimage to it from the metropolis when shooting is available, and then the gun and the doctor are inseparable companions. He is a good marksman, too, despite all his years. As we cast the red and dusty road behind us we saw two mares with foals in a paddock in the distance, and these, Keys told us, were Maid of the Lake and Bona Vista. The former is by Yattendon from Maid of the Lake, and consequently own sister to Black Sister, whilst her companion is a daughter of the mighty Musket and Sister Agnes. They were at one time and another both trained by the man from Waverley, and he is very fond of Bona Vista, who was prevented from doing her best by intermittent attacks of rheumatism. As we drew close Keys alighted and brought the mares and their foals up to be admired. The Musket mare seemed to know him for she followed her old master like a dog. By her side trotted a pledge of affection to Goldsbrough, a very fine bay colt bearing much resemblance to his sire. I do not profess to be a judge of foals, but this youngster is very strong and handsome, and if all goes well he should ripen into a useful horse. Maid of the Lake's brown daughter of Spendor is somewhat puny, but should liven up with the return of fine weather. In an adjoining enclosure are a yearling brother and sister of the foals, and they are a promising pair. The colt is long and lean, with a fine stride and very free action, whilst the filly is a charming young creature, albeit she was a trifle lame when we saw her. Separated from the mates was a bay two-year-old stallion by the imported trotter Huon out of a buggy mare, the property of Mr. Keys, but he will soon be added to the list. Up near the house in a yard is Protos, a bay three-year-old by Goldsbrough from Bona Vista, that has been turned out for a rest by Mr. Keys, who found him growing very rapidly, whilst his teeth troubled him. These were all that Teddy had to show us, and we then took up positions in the broad verandah of the old house, and gazed down at the panorama made up of cultivation and fallow land, of stream and woods, dark valleys and shining rises, and green fields where the famous white-faced Tocal Herefords could be discerned up to their knees in grass. The old homestead is now showing signs of wear and tear, but its position is beautiful, and we can well understand how its owner loves it, for there Mrs. Bowker was born and lived, and there several of the departed lady's now stalwart sons learned to walk and talk. We were back in Maitland in

time for tea, for Teddy and Dick had to get to Sydney by the mail train, and so the happy quartette parted, though parting gave us pain.

[Information supplied by Cynthia Hunter from Harry Boyle's papers]