ILLAWARRA COALFIELD:

Coal was found in many places in Illawarra by all early explorers. The first coal mine was opened in 1849 but coal was sold only in Wollongong until 1857.
Thomas Hale opened a mine at Bellambbi in 1857 and Lahiff and Fawcett at Mount Pleasant in 1861. Soon afterwards mines were opened at Bulli, Coal Cliff and other parts of Illawarra.