150 head of cattle (a mixed herd), 3 horses, 3 mares, 3 foals, 1 mule, 29 pigs, and farming implements, drays, etc. Crops at present on the ground, about ten acres of wheat, and five acres of barley and oats.

A map of the estate can be seen, and further particulars obtained, on application at the office of the Managing Trustee,

MR. GEORGE RATTRAY,
Bathurst St. West.
Terms will be declared at time of sale."

The above is an informative description of "Illawarra Farm", some 26 years after it was granted to David Allan, the Commissary-General on January 24, 1817. The farm was sold to a Richard Jones in 1827, who in turn disposed of it to W.C. Wentworth in 1828, the name was then changed to the "Five Islands Estate". It is now the site of the Steelworks and Port Kembla.

For further details of the grant to Allan the reader is referred to I.H.S. Publication "The First Five Land Grantees and Their Grants in the Illawarra." by B.T. Dowd.

HAPPY RECOLLECTIONS — ILLAWARRA IN THE EIGHTEEN-EIGHTIES

Marianne North has been described as "one of the most remarkable women of the Victorian era. An unmarried lady of independent means born into a highly literary and artistic environment, she became an intrepid traveller, an outstanding botanical artist and an illuminating writer". Among the many places in the Australian colonies which she visited in 1880-81 was Illawarra.

The following account of her visit is taken from her reminiscences edited by her sister and published after her death under the title "Recollections of a Happy Life" (The section covering Australia and New Zealand has recently been reprinted under a slightly different title).

At the point where the extract commences, she was the guest of Sir William Macarthur at Camden Park:

They [the Macarthurs] lent me a buggy with a fat horse and driver for a week, and I went through pretty scenery till I reached the top of the Illewong Mountains, and went down the wonderful bit of road to Balli [Bulli]. At the top I saw many specimens of the great Australian lily or doryanthes [Spear Lily], but they were not in flower. I watched a spike of one, seven feet high, off and on for two months at Camden, and it never came out (the one I afterwards painted at Kew took five months after it had begun to colour before it really came to perfection). There was a fine seaview, and lower down the road took me through the richest vegetation, quite unlike anything else south of Brisbane. Tall seaforthia palms and cabbage or fan palms full of flower, many of them of great height. Often one had helped itself up in the world by means of the branches of a giant gum-tree, resting its tired head against the trunk for support, quite 200 feet above the ground in the valley below.

But it was always raining in this unexpected bit of the tropics, and I had no easy task to finish a picture there. Three times I packed up my things in disgust, and at last brought home my paper wetter with rain than with oil-paint. People were all related to one another, and all hospitable, and I drove from house to house, only regretting that the horse and buggy were not my own, when I could have stayed much longer with enjoyment. Another day I stopped to paint a gigantic fig-tree standing alone, its huge buttresses covered with tangled creepers and parasites. The village was called Fig-tree village after it, and all the population was on horseback, going to the races at Wollongong. At Mr. Henry Osborne's I saw a grand specimen of the 'red cedar'. It had leaves like the ailanthus [Tree-of-Heaven], but its wood
smelt like cedar pencils, and was red as mahogany, which gave it its name. The tea-trees there were covered with tiny white bottle-brush flowers, and were rosy with their young shoots and leaves. Another sort was called the paper-bark tree. One could pull lumps of soft paper from it, tear it apart, and write on it without difficulty in a blotty sort of way. There were some old dead gum-trees left standing near the house to show the steps cut in them by opossum-hunting natives, who now no longer existed in those parts. The notches were probably only cut big enough to rest the great toe in, but the bark and tree had swelled as it grew older, and the holes were now large enough to hold the whole foot. Some of them had been enlarged into nests by the laughing jackass. Lots of those comical birds perched on those trees and gossiped about us, as we sat and watched them.

The garden at Doondale was a sight to see: pink and white Azalea indica fit for London shows, bougainvillea with three yellow blooms at once in their purple bracts, flame-trees [probably Illawarra Flame Tree], gorgeous Cape lilies, and all our home-flowers in perfection. I was offered the loan of this lovely house for a month, when they were all going to another house on the cooler side of the hills. It had a valley of ferns a mile off, and one could see miles of cabbage-palms below like gigantic Turk's-head brooms, such as housemaids use to sweep away spiders with. The road along the coast to Kiama (pronounced 'Kye-aye-mar') was dreary enough, through miles of tall dead trees all ringed or burnt to death purposely by civilised man, who will repent some day when the country is all dried up, and grass refuses to grow any more.

At the lake of Illawarra we again found ourselves in the tropics, all tangled with unknown plants and greenery, abundant stag's-horns, banksias, hakea, and odd things. I put up at the house of a pretty little widow, who apologised for having a party to say goodbye to some friend. They danced till morning, soon after which she was up to see me off. Before this I had wandered on the lovely sea-sands, seeing and hearing the great waves as they dashed in and out of the blowholes. Rocks and giant fig-trees grew close to its edge, and I found basalt pillars as sharply cut as any on the Giant's Causeway itself. The road up the Kangaroo river [Valley] and over the sassafras mountain is pretty. I tried to make out the sassafras leaves by their scent, but nearly all the leaves were much scented on that road, and it was not till some time afterwards that I made out the tree. After turning the top of the hill we came suddenly on the zamia or cycad — a most striking plant, with great cones standing straight up from the stem. When ripe the segments turn bright scarlet, and the whole cone falls to pieces, then they split open, and show seeds as large as acorns, from which a kind of arrowroot can be extracted, after washing out all the poison from it. The natives roast and eat the nut in the centre of the scarlet segments. There were no zamias outside that valley, which seemed to have no outlet. Like that of the Yosemite, it was discovered by a mere accident. It belonged, like the greater part of Illawarra, to the family of Osborne, who were building a large house there. It was certainly the most enticing part of Australia, and I wished I were an Osborne.

We came upon another high platform or cliff with a great waterfall falling from it into the blue depths some thousand feet below, and a distant view, like that at Govell's [Govett's] Leap, over endless misty forests of gum-trees. At the station we found no horse-box, so I left the carriage and walked on through three miles of Camden Park in the broiling sun, not blessing three generations of Macarthurs who had taken such pains to make such a quantity of shadeless turf round their isolated English homes; but I forgave them when I met Bessie's warm welcome amid her children, and saw her dear mother's sweet smile again.

[Some points in this extract which are hard to explain might have been made clear had she been alive to supervise the publication: for instance, the order in
which the various places are mentioned, and the alleged pronunciation of “Kye-aye-mar”.

“Doondale”, says the editor of the 1986 edition, “has so far defied all efforts to identify it.” Might I make one more, and suggest that it was Avondale, then owned by Henry Hill Osborne, and therefore identical with “Mr Henry Osborne’s”, mentioned earlier. Sticking my neck out (as I have not seen the manuscript), I can imagine certain types of handwriting in which “Av” could be read as “Do”-Ed.

(Note — Botanical names of plants have been omitted — Ed.)

HOLIDAY AT THIRROUL, CHRISTMAS 1890

Fred Jeater — the unlikely surname is the most likely reading of an indistinct signature — was an English immigrant of 1887, settling in Sydney with his family, who kept a shop while he became a book-keeper. To his friend Alfred Marsh in London he wrote of a full life, long hours of work and fairly satisfactory pay. Fred was active in Chapel affairs, singing bass in choirs, and was a Sunday School teacher of an evangelical leaning. A particular interest was sport; he gave long descriptions of cricket matches, including Australia-England tests. In politics he seems to have inclined towards a very mild form of socialism. His life emerges from these letters which, written between 1887-91 in a clerkly hand, are all now in the Mitchell Library (ML MSS 1051), to which thanks are due for permission to publish extracts.

On 29th December 1890, writing from Abercrombie Street, Sydney, Fred described Christmas Day, spent on a picnic in National Park. With appetite whetted, a group of young people went to what we now know as Thirroul, but then known as Robbinsville. Fred tells his story:

“On Boxing Day five young men were safely ensconced in a 2nd Class Carriage (there are no third) of a train bound for Robbinsville in the Illawarra District. The town which is comprised principally of miners and men connected with coal mines, is named after an old resident named Robbins, and is situated at the foot of some large hills about a quarter of a mile from the sea shore. The place being rather full, we had to suffer a little inconvenience in our lodgings but that was no serious obstacle to our enjoyment. The day we arrived we took our dinners with us and proceeded to climb the mountain up what is called the Bulli Pass to the Look out, a tramp of about 4 miles or more uphill all the way. At the lookout the view is a splendid panorama of water and land. The coast line extends as far as the eye can see and forms by its large headlands several bays, here and there though very rare are cultivated plots although the greater part of the district is virgin forest. To our left a large volume of smoke arises caused by what is known as a bushfire. At the foot of the mountain between them and the sea for some miles can be seen the towns and villages of Robbinsville, Bulli, Woonona, Corrimal and Wollongong in the distance, most of these places are supported almost entirely by the mining industries, the mountains being rich with coal. The mines are not like the mines in England with shafts letting them down into the earth, but are boreing like railway tunnels; the coal is extracted and put in trucks which are rolled down an incline on to the jetties out into the sea. We returned to our home for the time being by a track through the bush which