BROUGHTON CREEK
IN THE FIFTIES
AND SIXTIES

(From the manuscript reminiscences of George Henry Jaques).

(Mr. L. H. L. Mewton (Member) has kindly made available to the Society a number of manuscripts written in the 1920's by the late George Henry Jaques of "Palm Grove," Ourimbah, in which Mr. Jaques recalled his boyhood experiences at Broughton Creek, now Berry, in the fifties and sixties of last century.

The writer's formal education was cut short at the age of eight or nine by the early death of his father, the schoolmaster at Broughton Creek. While still a boy, G. H. Jaques was earning his own living as a cattle-dealer. He later became a landowner in the Ourimbah district, where he had a 1600-acre holding which included an orchard, a sawmill and a cattle-run. In addition he owned bullock-teams, was a road contractor, and supplied the stone for the Iron Cove Bridge between Rozelle and Drummoyne (Sydney). He used to relate that he had had Ned Kelly working for him during one of the periods when Ned was lost to the sight of the Victorian police.

It is clear that this versatile pioneer, despite his lack of formal education, was a man of strong natural intelligence and force of character. These extracts from his reminiscences are printed verbatim et literatim. To tamper with his idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation would be to lose much of the flavour.

Full photostat copies of the manuscripts are available in the Society's collection in the Reference Section, Wollongong Public Library.

The first signs of starting a village was on a long low ridge stretching for a long distance in a northerly direction. And on both sides of the low range was two large Creeks of Fresh water running through hundreds of acres of the Choicest of Bush land most of it in 1858 Unoccupied by settlers. On the ridge a post office and School was Established and the Overseers residence and one or two of the small places also the School Teachers residence. Both the Creeks flowed into the river about one and a half mile from the School and Post office. It is the two Creeks that I wish to make reference to. About the Fortys to the early date in 1850 The Late David Berry had a Mill race cut from one creek to the other through the Hill for a distance of about one mile all the earth excavated from the hill was carted and high embankments made up on each side of the Mill race for about 1/4 of the distance. Betwine the two creeks in the early days was a very interesting place their was that was called the Mill race. One creek was damed with a very heavy Timbered dam & and the water was turned from one Creek to the other & a considerable distance along the water race was a saw Mill for cutting Seda the Mill was driven by a very large water wheel the water wheel & the old mill Building was still in fairley good Order up till 1861 but the Mill dam was all torn away by Flood waters with the exception of a few very heavy timbers Bolted together . . . .
The water wheel was still in Fairley good order up to 1862. For the School Children often made a swinging Cradel by getting in side of the Wheel. The Old Mill shed was then still standing but falling into decay.

The Seda that was cut at the Mill was most of it brought over the Kangaroo Mountain Farm a place called Brokers Creek. The Head of the Kangaroo River Right up to 1875 their was still hunders of thousands of ft of Seda still in the valley and many The Thousands of feet was burnt up while clearing the land I have seen as many a Fine large Seda Trees lying one across the other that all Had to be turned into Ashes Them same Fine Seda Trees Today Sawn into Timbers would be worth over Two Thousand pounds, at the time they where Burnt The Value of good sawn bords in the Sydney market was 18/- per hundred & Seda drawn from Berry to Braidwood generally brought up to 25/- per 100 ft. It generaly took a bulick dray about a Fortnight to do the trip to Braidwood and a good deal longer to Goldbourne 1845 my Father had his residence almost completely built of Seda Flooring wether Bords doors windows sashes even the battons for Shringling on where Seda Iron was not know not even whire nails all nails where square cut nails No Brace in bits only a gimblet to Bore for the nails & every nail had to be Bored for . . .

(To be continued)

VALE

With regret we announce the sudden passing on June 9th of Mrs. A. L. Prosser. Our late member joined the Society in 1964 and was a regular attender at the excursions and day functions.

She was with us on the Dapto outing and was keenly looking forward to the St. Helen’s Park trip. A widow, condolences are sincerely extended to her relatives.
There was no difficulty in identifying Mount Brisbane as the high part of the Illawarra Range behind Mount Nebo and north of O'Brien's Gap.

Burelli appears on Mitchell's 1834 map. It is the mountain behind Kembla Heights township. Its name is apparently of aboriginal origin, but does not appear in any of the existing lists of Illawarra aboriginal words. T. J. Endacott's "Australian Aboriginal Words and Place Names" lists Burilla (the moon) and Booralie (a star) but does not relate them to any particular district.

BROUGHTON CREEK IN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES:

(From the manuscript reminiscences of George Henry Jaques continue from July Bulletin. The spelling belongs to Jacques).

The Old Road that the Late David Berry had his Seda logs brought up on the Kangaroo Mountain table Land Was up a long ridgerunng almost parallel with the Valey below with deep gorges on the sides Making it almost like a mighty ramp; And on the Mountain top was the Finest belts of Soft wood timber I have ever had the Opertunity of seeing in New South Wales In fact I do not think it was ever beater in any part of the whole world When Sir John Robson (Robertson's-Ed.) Free Selection Act came in into force In the year 1861 And selections where being taken up on Crown lands in every conseivable corner from 40 acres to hunders of Acres. I remember a young man a Mr. Adam Levingstone taking up a block of land about 60 Acres He had it all fell not a Tree left sanding on the whole block; It was a beautiful sight to look at on a moon light night The walls of Standing timbers around the out side looked as if it was cut out of a solid block The three principal timber was Coach wood Sassafras & Ash all had wite Bark with long barrels and very little Top Their was thousands of Acres of this class of soft wood Forest If they existed now they would be worth Millions in Money . . .

The landing place when The Steamer first came to Broughton Creek was called the Crooked S. The steamer was a Stern weeler and a verry slow droger for the River Work; . . .

All the produce of the District was shiped to Sydney Once a week very nearly all the goods where taken to the streamers walf on Pack Horses It was quite a regular thing to see Fifty or Sixty Pack Horses loaded up with Keggs of Butter Boxes of Eggs sides of Backon Coops of Poltry Chees and many other things Corn & Potatoes where generally drawn to the walf on Bank of the river with a pair Bulooks & Sledge No Horses & carts in that time of the day Only Wavid Berreys passion dray drawn by Boolicks and every saturday the Ten Ten Two & a Quart would be doled out to his workmen sawers Stockmen Overseers and Teamesters & some of his tenents . . .

(To be continued)
This little Belgian locomotive was the cow in this case, and a badly damaged cow at that.

— "Old Pioneer", in the Illawarra Mercury, 23 Nov. 1923.

1. 3 feet 8½ inches.

2. According to Mr. C. C. Singleton’s "Railway History in Illawarra", Proudfoot and Logan’s contract was for the section from Clifton Tunnel to Macquarie Rivulet.

3. This suggests that the “Gladstone” was a single-driver express engine, a type totally unsuitable for construction work. Mr. J. F. Webber, in the A.R.H.S. Bulletin for September, 1964, stated that she was an 0-6-0 inside-cylinder tender locomotive with 4’ 6” wheels, built by Beyer Peacock & Co. in 1876 for the Australasia Coal Company, Newcastle, and sold in 1879 to Proudfoot and Logan, who gave it the name of “Gladstone”. — Ed.

**BROUGHTON CREEK IN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES:**

(From the manuscript reminiscences of George Henry Jaques continue from August Bulletin. The spelling belongs to Jaques).

About a ¼ of a mile below where the Mill race came into the other Creek their was a ship building yard Small coastal vessels where built for the Berry Famely as their was still three of the Famely at Sholavin living not excluding Alackzander Berry of North Sydney near the Crows Nest who Departed this life 1874 And left a large estate at North Sydney. The Ship builders name was Ferrguson at Berry; Just when he had completed his lass vessell He took verry Ill and was not able to get the Boat into the water So a settlers working Bee was formed to Launch his vessell for him He was verry bad so His bed was so aranged so that he might be able to give a little Instructions Through the window To the Amateur Bee workers who suckseeded in Launching the Vessell without any mishaps Just as the vessell was sliding down the ways Mr. Furgsons remarks where to this afect Off She did went a few days after the launch he was laid to rest in the Cooling after Cemetery a short distance up the stream was a Tannery and a general store the only store that Mr. Berry would alow at what was then Brought Creek afterwards Changed to the name of Berry So that all Berreyes Tenents that had land on clearing lease and other settlers all had to get their goods from that store; unless they got them by steamer from Sydney.

To get to the General store in the early days the people had to cross what was called the Medow at one corner their was a Bridge over the Mill race and crossed on to a road runing paralal with the water race And Just before coming to the gate turning in to the store & Tannery grounds Their was a Seda Tree with thick heavy branches or limbs spreading out On each steamer day that was only once a week A Fat Boolick would be dressed and hanging on that tree ready for disposial to the people as they came and went from the store Their was no picking and chusing of their Joints It had to be taking as it was cut of from shoulers to Hind quaters and if they where not farley smart they would not get any for it was mostly cut up and sold in about Two and a half hours.

I remember seeing one of W.B. larks (Clarke’s—Ed.) marked lines over the Kangaroo Mountain 67 years go I would not be able to say so only he told me with his own mouth that it was one of his marked lines I was telling him about finding some trinkets in the hollow of a large tree along side the marked track a pair
of sizers a mans thimble and a knife Oh that had been some of
my men that left them their; when we had camped for the night
I may as well tell you before I proseede father that I was the first
white Boy that ever penetrated into the wild timberd table lands
of the Kangroo Mountain I think their was Thousands of Acres
of the finest bits of Coach wood that the world ever produced
it stood so thick & close in its groth that it looked almost like a
great white wall as all the bark was white and a great number
of the Old Coach wood where 6 to 7 ft through the buts and had
to be scaffold well up the barrell to be able to cut them down
for they where so curley it was imposeable to cut a chip out
of them.

The Late Henry Jaques was School Master at Broughton
Creek in the years 1859 untill 1861 when he retired from
the position as Teacher. At what is now called Berry.

LITERATURE ABOUT ILLAWARRA

A famous nineteenth-century novelist gave in one of his
stories a graphic description of the Illawarra railway in its earliest
days, during the great floods of 1889-90.

Another world-famous (or notorious) novelist lived for a
time at Thirroul, and made it, under an alias, the setting for part
of a novel.

Can you name (1) the authors (2) the books (3) the alias
under which Thirroul figured?

TRANSPORTING THE BLACK DIAMOND — Gifford Eardley

Of great local significance by an author highly qualified
to deal with the subject, the new book of 78 pages quarto size,
is the first of a series dealing with the colliery railways of Illa­
warra District, most of which have now ceased to operate —
some even to have disappeared.

Mr. Eardley is president of the St. George Historical Society
and has spent a great number of years in the study of the subject
of his book which deals with the collieries between and including
Mount Keira and South Bulli, leaving Woonona and northwards
and Mount Kembla and southwards for two other books.

It is unfortunate that the Woonona Model Colliery was not
included in this book because its history is necessary to an under­
standing of that of Taylor and Walkers’ beginnng at South Bulli
and the fights which ensued when the lines met at the jetty. The
diagram shows the line to Woonona Model Colliery and the real
natural division lies between there and the Old Bulli Colliery.

However the book, well illustrated with photographs and
diagrams, is almost an encyclopaedia to the history of the colliery
railways.

The book is available from Traction Publications, P.O. Box
438, Canberra City, A.C.T., 2601. for $1.50.