SHIPS NAMED “ILLAWARRA”

(The following letter from the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, to Miss Grizel Gray of Walmer, Kent, has been kindly passed on by Miss Gray to the Society).

(1) Iron paddle steamer of 522 tons gross, 313 tons net, built in 1878 by Wigham, Richardson & Co., Newcastle on Tyne. Length 190 ft., beam 23.7 ft., depth 16.5 ft., horsepower 217. She was owned by the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company, Sydney (manager, T. H. Jackson).

(2) Iron Clipper of 1972 tons gross, 1802 tons net, built in 1881 by Dobie & Co., Glasgow. Length 269.1 ft., beam 40.6 ft., depth 24 ft. She was rigged with double fore-and main-mast topgallants, single mizen topgallant and royals. She was owned by Devitt & Moore of London, who put her into the Sydney trade. Despite her large cargo capacity she was fairly fast, and her outward and homeward passages averaged under 90 days.

Her best-known commander was Captain Corvasso. The following are her passages in the Australian wool fleet:

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<th>Left Sydney</th>
<th>Reached London</th>
<th>Days Out</th>
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<td>7th December, 1885</td>
<td>21st March, 1886</td>
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<td>12th January, 1887</td>
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<td>5th December, 1887</td>
<td>5th March, 1888</td>
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<tr>
<td>23rd December, 1889</td>
<td>5th April, 1890</td>
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In 1899 she succeeded the Hesperus as a training ship under the scheme started by Lord Brassey and Sir Thomas Devitt in 1890. Under this scheme parents played a larger premium than usual which insured that their sons were given a thorough knowledge of seafaring, and received good food and treatment. Captain Maitland trained the premium cadets aboard her from 1899 to 1907. In 1907 the company decided that it needed a larger ship for a round the world training cruise, sold the Illawarra and the Port Jackson.

Her new owners were Akties Illawarra (N. A. Lydersen), Tvedestrand, Norway. On the 5th March, 1912, she was abandoned in the North Atlantic on passage from Leith to Valparaiso. Her crew were taken off by the s.s. Manchester Mariner and transferred to the s.s. Bengore Head.

There are two photographs of her opposite page 249 of The Colonial Clippers by Basil Lubbock. (Brown, Son & Ferguson. Glasgow, 1948).

(3) Steam yacht built by the Bath Iron Works, Maine, in 1896 at a cost of $60,000. Length 106 ft. 3 in., beam 18 ft. 6 in., depth 10 ft. 11 in., speed 12 knots. Owner: Eugene Tompkins.

WHEN THE LOCOMOTIVE CAME TO WOLLONGONG

It is just on 45 years ago — in the year 1878 — that the silence of the bush was disturbed by the whistle and rumble of the first locomotive. In that year the Mount Keira Company imported a loco to draw the waggons from the bottom of the incline to the wharf. Prior to that horses were employed for the work. Mr. Robert Cook — still living at Garden Hill, with a memory of 75 years for district events — was the driver in charge of the teams. The locomotive; Keira No. 1, was brought to Wollongong
in sections on the "Illawarra" — one of the I.S.N. Company's boats — and assembled and put together at the wharf.

The first driver of the Keira locomotive was Mr. Chambers, who drove the engine for about two years. I remember he lost his position through running over Mr. William Murphy's bull. The next driver was Mr. David, father of the David Bros., of the Wollongong Foundry, Mr. George Fell being the fireman. Then followed Mr. Bill David (at present the owner of the "Hit and Miss" Foundry) as driver.

At Bulli a locomotive was also running on the Bulli line, about the same time, or perhaps a little prior to the Keira Loco. The Bulli locomotive was built in Sydney.

The next locomotive to come was a loco, for the Mount Pleasant Company. This was secured from Belgium about the year 1880, and with it came a Belgian engine driver and engineer. This loco was a narrow gauge engine to suit the gauge of the Mount Pleasant tram-line(1). For some weeks it refused to do its work, but eventually, after certain alterations, it worked very satisfactorily. George Beadle, father of George Beadle, the Wollongong plumber was fireman to Louis Billett, the engineer, and became the first driver for the Mount Pleasant Company.

In the history of Wollongong and its locomotives, a rather unique loco was purchased by the Mount Pleasant Company about the year 1888. This locomotive was secured to haul the skips on a narrow gauge railway from the mine, along the side of the mountain, a distance of about three quarters of a mile. The loco was very light, and this proved its failure. Under any kind of a load the wheels would not grip the rails, and after many trials the loco was sold.

During the years from 1880 to 1886 Wollongong became quite used to the loco whistles. In these years Proudfoot and Logan, the contractors for a section of the Illawarra line, from Unanderra to Helensburgh(2), had three locomotives running on the new railway. One engine in particular, the "Gladstone", was a fine stamp of fast-running locomotive. The driving wheel of this engine was six feet in diameter, and for speed and strength she had no equal in the colony(3). She was a very big and heavy engine, and was employed in drawing blue metal ballast from section of the Illawarra line under construction. During the time this engine was running an amusing incident occurred at the Mount Pleasant railway crossing. For a considerable time there was a dispute between Louis Billett, the driver of the small Mount Pleasant locomotive, and the driver of the "Gladstone" as to which engine should have the right-of-way at the crossing. Billett contended that his engine should be given first place at the Proudfoot and Logan's quarry, on the Kembla line, to the crossing. The driver of the "Gladstone" was equally determined that he must not slow down. The result was a collision one morning. George Stephenson was asked by a friend what would happen if his engine met a cow on the line and he replied in good Geordie vernacular, "It would be bad for the cow".
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 Jacques continue from August Bulletin. The spelling belongs to Jacques).

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 vessel He took very Ill and was not able to get the Boat into the water So a settlers working Bee was formed to Launch his vessel for him He was very 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 vessel! she did went a few days after the launch he was laid to rest in the Cooling atter Cemetery a short distance up the stream was a Tannery and a general store the only store that Mr. Berry would allow at what was then Brought Creek afterwards Changed to the name of Berry So that all Berrey's 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