

ILLAWARRA EXPERIMENTS WITH ALPACAS:

In the early days of Illawarra settlement when almost everything was experimental, the Osbornes tried raising some alpacas. The "Illawarra Mercury" in 1866 recorded the trials.

ALPACAS:

About a dozen of these animals, recently purchased at the Government sale by Mr. P. Osborne, arrived at Marshall Mount yesterday. They came by the Bong Bong Road, and will, no doubt, form a subject of interest to those who have never seen these singular animals.

(Illawarra Mercury 6-7-1866)

THE ALPACAS:

The 14 of these rare and valuable animals, which have been introduced into this district of late, by H. H. Osborne, Esq., are now depasturing at Avondale, and apparently doing very well. Several persons have gone to see them since their arrival in that part, and considering that they are so valuable and highly prized in Peru, their natural country, from which a few of them were smuggled to New South Wales at great risk and expense, and above all that they have cost this country so many tens of thousands of pounds sterling, we have no doubt that many persons for curiosity (**sic**) sake, will embrace the opportunity of inspecting the small flock of those animals now in this district.

(Illawarra Mercury 24-8-1866)

ALPACA TRIALS IN NEW SOUTH WALES:

[Although the export of alpacas was forbidden by the Peruvian Government, Charles Ledger, an Englishman residing in Peru; spent five years of great difficulty and hardship collecting a flock which in 1858 he managed to bring to Sydney. They were purchased by the N.S.W. Government for £15,000, and were placed in the Domain, later being moved to Liverpool and then Wingello. The alpaca was not a success in its new home. Its habitat is in high mountains, and acclimatization was a difficult task. In 1866 the flock was sold to private landowners, who found that the alpaca needed more attention than Merino sheep, and was less profitable. Gradually the flocks waned, and by 1880 all traces of the importations had gone.]

(Information from Australian Encyclopaedia)