

## DAVIS, DAVIES OR DAVID

We know that in the late 1800s and early 1900s there were Davies and Davids operating foundries not far apart in Wollongong, in fact the David brothers had worked for the Davies in their Gas Works Foundry in Charlotte Street, before they opened their own foundry in Dennison St. Now a Mr. Davis comes on the scene.

The Illawarra Mercury of 24 November 1882 relates the following news:

*WOLLONGONG GAS WORKS.* Mr. Davis, an experienced gas engineer, employed by Mr. Montagu Coward to construct the Wollongong Gas Works, arrived in town on Wednesday, and commenced operations at once, laying the gas mains from the site of the intended works in Charlotte Street at the rear of the hospital. From there, the mains will be carried up the hill in front of the hospital and along Keira-street to Crown-street at the Freemasons Hotel and Royal Alfred Hotel, and then down Crown-street to Corrimal-street at the Cricketer's Arms, again along Corrimal-street and passed the Market Square to the Brighton Hotel near Belmore Basin. This is the course contracted for, and from the mains along the said route, houses will be supplied with gas by service pipes in the usual way. Mr. Davis considers the site chosen for the Gas-works is of the best he has ever seen, and expects to have the town lighted with gas within a few months hence. He now has five men at work, and his son will remain continuously to superintend the operations as they proceed. From the works to about the Market-square 6 inch mains will be used, and 3 inch pipes from there to the Brighton Hotel. It may be stated that Mr. Davis carried out for Mr. Coward the work

of lighting the Royal Arcade just finished, between George and Pitt-streets in Sydney, and that is considered about the best gas lighting arrangement yet completed in the colonies. He has recently arranged a Gas-works at Noumea, New Caledonia, for a company with 12,000 pounds (\$24,000) capital, the French Government giving five acres of land for a site for the works and supplying prison labour to the company at four pence per day.

I think a comparison of the interests of William Davies of the Gas Works Foundry, Charlotte St and Mr. Davis, employed by Mr. Coward, (presumably of the Gas Works) will refute any suggestion that they were one and the same person.

*A.P.Doyle*

Illawarra Historical Society