

## VON WHO' GLL?

## CARL VON HUGEL IN ILLAWARRA 1834

Whilst I like to think I am a bit of an expert regarding Illawarra in the 1830s - at least I am trying to become one, though it will obviously take many decades of research and study to achieve - I am also aware that our view of the past is constantly changing, not only because of differing perceptions and interpretations based on current events and individual experiences, but also as a result of new information which is regularly being unearthed, or 'discovered' as the newspapers like to proclaim. Remembering that apart from God only historians have the power to change the past, any new piece of information or body of material is greeted with glee. With this in mind I would therefore like to announce the latest 'discovery' in Illawarra history: namely a hitherto unknown collection of diaries by one Baron Carl Alexander Anslem von Hugel (1795 - 1870) describing the region in 1834.

Von Hugel? You may well ask.

According to John Fletcher's bibliographic *German Manuscripts (1538-1864) in the Libraries of Sydney - A Descriptive Catalogue* (Sydney, 1988) Carl von Hugel was an Austrian botanist, traveller, and later diplomat who visited New South Wales during 1833-4 while associated with the HMS Alligator. During that time he travelled extensively throughout the Colony. Von Hugel was a literate diarist, but unfortunately for Australians his first language was German, and it is only in recent times that the three volumes in the Mitchell Library describing his travels (acquired in 1933 and catalogued at B1086-1088) have been translated into English. This has been undertaken by none other than Dymphna Clark, wife of the historian Manning Clark.

There are a number of sections of von Hugel's diaries which are of special interest to Illawarra historians. The first diary mainly deals with Western Australia; however the second and third describe his visit to New South Wales in detail, including two excursions to Illawarra in April and July-August 1834 when he was accompanied by James Macarthur of Camden. Von Hugel's second diary also includes a 4 page entry on the "murder of Captain Waldron" at Springhill (Fletcher, p31). As yet we have not been able to obtain a copy of the translation, however hopefully this will be remedied in the near future and extracts will appear in the *Bulletin*. Von Hugel's diaries are a significant addition to the rich collection of original manuscript material (diaries, letters and images) available to local historians. It will make an interesting comparison with the *Paulsgrove Diary*.

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