

WHO REALLY WAS THE FIRST SCHOOLTEACHER IN WOLLONGONG?

As a follow-up to Peter Doyle's unacknowledged piece on "William Davis - our first schoolmaster" in the February Bulletin, a correspondent has alerted the Society to a reference in James Jervis's Illawarra: A Century of History which was printed in the Royal *Australian Historical Society Journal*. In the bound single volume version of this article in Wollongong City Library's Local Studies Collection (pp 140 - 141) Jervis declares:

"A school was established at Wollongong between December, 1826, and June, 1827. The first teacher was J. Stack. Eleven pupils were enrolled and the average attendance was seven, from which it may be assumed that education was not highly appreciated in Illawarra at this period. The school was closed in 1828, and in 1832 it was reported that all attempts to form a new school had failed owing to the dispersed state of the population. It was found that in no part of the district more than ten children could be assembled. In the following year it was reported that a public school, which was much needed, was conducted in Smith's barn.* William Davis was the master, and he was "passing rich on forty pounds a year."

**Sydney Gazette*, October 11, 1832.

Unfortunately, the crucial piece of information concerning "J. Stack" is unsourced. Can anyone help us out?