

## **Billiards and Billiard Saloons**

The most popular of all indoor sports amongst men in the Bulli district last century were billiards and bagatelle. Billiards and bagatelle tables had to be licensed in the NSW Licensing Courts and the first to take advantage of attracting those interested in the table sport was John Floyd of the Railway Hotel at Bulli village in 1870. However the Railway Hotel's annual license was spasmodic and the pub didn't continue with the bagatelle license for any length of time.

Probably due to the fact that hotels were often short on space, and that enterprising business people were erecting purpose built saloons throughout the district, hotels never persisted in offering tables in their establishments. Purpose built billiard saloons sprang up in the Bulli area during the latter part of last century and hit their peak in popularity during the 1920s and 30s.

The billiard rooms were colourful places that usually were a front for illegal activities. The saloons, in most instances, had a barber shop and tobacconist at the front and were

***To be continued in next issue...***