
ILLAWARRA FARM

by
Carol Herben

Illawarra Farm was a crown grant to David Allan on 24th January 1817 consisting of 2,200 acres which was situated at Five Islands and including Red Point.¹

At the time of the grant David Allan was Deputy Commissary General of the Colony. David Allan had built a comfortable cottage on this property. By 1822 David Allan was appointed Deputy Commissary General at Barbados. Both he and his wife left the colony. His wife passed away at Barbados in March 1822.²

During this time he had left Connor Wholohan as the manager of his estate. By June 1822 the whole 2,200 was advertised for lease including the cottage and offices. An area of 200 acres was cleared and it was subdivided into excellent paddocks.³

Richard Jones purchased the whole 2,200 acres of *Illawarra Farm* on the 31st October 1827 for the sum of £1,617 (*LTO O/S Book J No 878*).

Five Islands Estate.

Illawarra Farm was then purchased by William Charles Wentworth on 31st July 1828 for £1,700 who renamed the property *Five Islands Estate*.⁴

It was only a short time before W C Wentworth leased the whole of *Five Islands Estate* to Wakefield Simpson for a period of 1,000 years on 5th June 1830 for £1,000 at 12% per annum. The lease was surrendered on 1st January 1840. (*LTO O/S Book D No 655, Book Z No 896*).

A further lease was signed by William Wilson on 20th August 1837 for Covenant rental with the fees for the lease agreeable between W C Wentworth and William Wilson. (*LTO O/S Book L No 794*).

William Wilson did not stay on Five Islands for long and again the 2,200 acres were up for lease. This time taken up by Michael O'Donnell, a grazier, for a period of 7 years. In the first 3 years Michael O'Donnell was deemed to clear 250 acres and the remaining 4 years a further 250 acres. As with William Wilson, Michael O'Donnell's monetary transactions between him and W C Wentworth were not stated specifically on the lease agreement. (*LTO O/S Book 29 No 293*)

William Charles Wentworth died on 20th March 1872 leaving his *Five Islands Estate* to his son Darcy Bland Wentworth for life. The will of William Charles

Wentworth, dated 19th October 1870, stated that the properties Five Islands and many others were not to be sold within 21 years of his death. Double probate was passed on 11th May 1872 and 17th October 1872 leaving Darcy Bland Wentworth the entire 2,200 acres at Five Islands. (*LTO O/S Book 800 No 943*).

Darcy Bland Wentworth leased 30 acres to Mount Kembla Coal and Oil Company on 1st July 1882. The land consisted of an area from the present Spring Hill Road and Five Island Road intersection to Port Kembla Bay (now the harbour) for the construction of a rail line from Mt Kembla Colliery to the proposed coal jetty. The fee payable to Darcy Wentworth was £150 per annum plus ½d (halfpenny) per ton of coal that was transported through the Wentworth estate. (*LTO O/S Book 676 No 491*).

With the *Port Kembla Harbour Act, 1898*. (*Act No 34, 1898, dated 23 December 1898*) to sanction the construction of a deep-water harbour at Port Kembla, and to provide for levying wharfage rates on goods, merchandise, packages, and articles landed at or laden from wharf or jetty within the said harbour the *Five Islands Estate* automatically became subject to this act.

Resumption of Land, 1899.

In October 1899 the amount of compensation to Mr Darcy Wentworth, in regard to Five Islands Estate, was agreed upon in Parliament as follows:

He accepted the Parliamentary offer of £500 for 500 acres of their original request for 600 acres and 3 miles of railway used by Mt Kembla Coal & Oil Co.⁵ This included the resumption of 496½ acres of foreshore and water around the harbour which was not gazetted until 1 September 1900 and the resumption of the two coal jetties in this area on 5 November 1901⁶. A further 1,470 acres was resumed in 1913 comprising all the available land between the Mt Kembla Rail Line in the south and Allan's Creek in the north.⁷

With the construction of the *Eastern Breakwater* this heralded the closing stages of Five Islands Estate as a whole. In a few short years industries developed and homes were built, leading to the passing of the most historic part of our history, one of the first estates granted in Illawarra, resulting in the industrial town of Port Kembla we know today.

¹Early Land Settlement in Illawarra. Benjamin Lindsay. p 7.

²Sydney Gazette. 15-3-1822.

³Sydney Gazette. 22-6-1824.

⁴The Garden of New South Wales. Arthur Cousins. p 38.

⁵Illawarra Mercury, 28-10-1899.

⁶Port Kembla Plan, 1923, Public Works Dept.

⁷The Dock and Harbour Authority, April 1939, read 30 March 1938, by Hon. E S Spooner M.L.A. p 159.