

Dr Harry Herbert Lee.

Dr Harry Herbert Lee was born in 1876 at Little Milton, Oxfordshire, son of Dr Timothy Wood Lee, Surgeon, presently of Smith Street Wollongong. The Lee family arrived in the Colony of NSW in 1883 when Harry Lee was just 7 years old.

After studying and receiving his degree at Sydney University Dr Lee first attended to patients in 1901. He joined his father at Mt Kembla to render assistance to those injured in the Mt Kembla Mine Disaster on 31 July 1902.

When Dr Harry Lee qualified there were only 3 doctors practising in Wollongong - Dr T W Lee (his father), Dr Wade and Dr Kerr.

Dr Lee married Miss Nora Margaret Darvall Barton on the evening of 21 April, 1909 at the chapel of All Saints College at Bathurst. The bride was the youngest daughter of Dr Robert Darvall Barton, a pastoralist, who had purchased Esrom House at Bathurst in 1887. The bride was dressed in a white satin gown with a skirt opening over an underskirt. On her head she wore a wreath of Orange Blossoms and a veil of tulle. A reception was held in the college grounds where 170 guests toasted the couple before they caught the late mail train to Sydney for their honeymoon. Dr Robert Darvall Barton published his memoirs in 1917 titled "Reminiscences of an Australian Pioneer".

The young married couple purchased land in Keira Street, Wollongong, where in 1909 they built their home. Dr Lee and his family resided and operated a medical practice from there for 16 years. Over the years, he took on a junior partner and when the practice grew too large in 1925 he built another house in Church Street, which he named Ditchley. Why? Dr Lee was a distant descendant of the 2nd Baronet of Quarendon Francis Henry Lee (1615-1639) and his wife Anne Saint John. Francis Henry Lee named his home Ditchley. Dr Lee was also a distant relation of Sir Henry Lee (1533-1611), Master of the Ordnance under Queen Elizabeth I of England.

In 1953, with failing eyesight Dr Lee, nearing 77 years of age, was appointed supervisor to a young doctor performing surgery at Wollongong District Hospital.

Dr Harry Lee died at Ditchley, Wollongong, on 24 June 1959 aged 83 years and is buried in Berkeley Pioneer Cemetery. His wife Nora died on 28 July 1962 at Bathurst and is buried with him.

Carol Herben