WILLIAM BEACH, from the Reminiscences of Frank Wilkinson, read by W. S. Musgrave:

William Beach, born in Sussex, near London, in 1850, as a sculler, gave Illawarra world-wide publicity. Beach's father was a blacksmith and the son followed in his footsteps.

The family migrated to Australia and first lived near Albion Park before moving to Dapto. He was also tutored in the trade by a Mr. William Hewitt, who also taught Beach the art of handling an oar or a pair of sculls.

William Beach's career commenced on Lake Illawarra, where he took part in numerous regattas. Keen rivalry developed between Tom Clifford and himself.

Mr. John Deeble, proprietor of the “Bells,” an inn situated near the Sydney Domain and Woolloomooloo Bay, after seeing Beach row on the Lake was impressed by his style and we next hear of the local sculler taking part in a handicap event on Sydney Harbour.

Beach was not outstanding in this and other events that followed but his style improved rapidly and he graduated from light skiffs to outrigger boats. He soon began to race against the best rowers in Australia.

In 1884, Beach defeated Trickett to become the Australian Champion. He was next matched with Hanlan, the American champion, for the world’s championship on the Parramatta River. Beach won.

Beach, in the next 12 months met and defeated Clifford, his early rival, Hanlan, for the second time, and Neil Masters.

In 1886, he went to England where he won a sweepstakes worth £1,334, defeated the American, J. Gaudur, the side stake being £1,000, and defeated another rower, W. Ross.

Returning to Australia, he again met and defeated Hanlan on the Nepean River. Following this race, Beach announced his retirement and handed over the championship title to Peter Kemp.

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