We went our way north through Kangaroo Valley, the weather becoming sunnier as we advanced. The view back into the Valley from Barrangarry Mountain was breathtaking. A short halt at Fitzroy Falls preceded a return through Wildes Meadow, Burrawong, Robertson, and Macquarie Pass and home. It was a day to be remembered.

A True Narrative of A HORRID AND BLOODY MURDER done at the HELL HOLE, Illawarra, A.D. 1826, and of the TRIAL, SENTENCE and the AWFUL EXECUTION of the Murderer. Now set down by W. G. McDonald and printed for the Illawarra Historical Society, to be sold at the sign of the Flame Tree.

[3s. (30c) plus 9d. (8c) post free. Obtainable at the next meeting of the Society or from Mr. W. A. Bayly, 17 Point Street, Bulli.]

Our infernal correspondent Mephistopheles was invited to review this publication, but declined on the ground that it was too near home.

THE STORY OF No. 20 HARBOUR STREET:

The old house which is now No. 20 Harbour Street stands on part of a grant promised to Charles Throsby Smith by Governor Macquarie in 1821. The grant was issued in 1835 by Governor Bourke and the deed registered in 1836.

In December, 1854, Throsby Smith sold a block of land, facing the eastern boundary and comprising 1 rood 4 perches, to Samuel Stumbles for £65.

During Samuel Stumbles' lifetime two cottages were built on the land — one on the eastern corner facing Harbour Street, and the other on the western, or what we would call the back, half of the block. He died in 1889, leaving the property to his wife Annie for life, and then to their two sons — the western moiety to William Westlake Stumbles, and the eastern to Lealand Howard Stumbles, subject to a right of way giving access from Harbour Street to the back property.

When Annie Stumbles died in 1902 and each of the two sons received his share, Lealand Howard sold his eastern half of the property to William Westlake for £125.

About this time the back cottage was moved up and joined to the original building. To this day it has obviously a different level and roof slope, and different inside lining.

Some of the rooms in the front part still have original lath and plaster inside walls.

William Westlake by deed of gift conveyed the property to his daughter Ella, who owned it until it was sold to the present owner, Mr. A. Johnston.

In 1956, when the house was sold to Mr. Johnston, the frontage was only 33 feet — half the original block — and another house had been built on the northern half. Much to the dismay of Mr. Johnston, it was found that, owing to a misreading of the original division of the block, one man owned the other's backyard, and the other the land where his neighbour's house stood. It took three years to get the deeds in order and this tangle straightened out.

There are still a few pieces of cedar furniture that have been in the house a very long time, and one of the early pictures owned by the Historical Society shows the house with The Brighton Hotel in the foreground.

I have always felt, when I unlatched the gate and knocked at the door of this house, that I was stepping back into the last century; and I hope that some means will be found to preserve it as a link with the past. We are fast destroying our past, and once destroyed it cannot be replaced. — M. M. EVANS.

THE DIGGER SPIRIT (1834):

(Major [afterwards Sir Thomas] Mitchell is sometimes depicted as a cantankerous martinet, but there was a human side to him. In his young days he had soldiered under the Iron Duke in the Peninsula, and had a weakness for commemorating it by adding such names as the Pass of Sabugal, the Pyrenees
and Mount Arapiles to the map of Australia. Had he lived today he would undoubtedly have been President or Patron of his local R.S.L. Sub-Branch. When he came to lay out the town of Wollongong, he gave practical expression to his belief that Diggers should stick together, as Alexander Stewart's reminiscences testify."

Harbour Street did not previously run due north and south, but the track from the beach came up what is now Harbour Street to the angle at the convent and then struck across what is now Market Square, where the trust offices now stand, past Mr. Herd's house, across Crown Street, over Spring Hill to Dapto, coming out near the Farmers' Arms Hotel. At the angle of the convent, and running across the last-made portion of Harbour Street to the Market Square and having a frontage to the old track from where the convent now stands a man named Harris had a piece of land. Major Mitchell required this corner piece of land to make it a part of the new portion of Harbour Street, which was to run due north and south. As Major Mitchell was not surveying north of Smith Street, he did not bother about diverting that portion of Harbour Street running from the convent angle to the beach. Harris was an old soldier, life himself, and I suppose that for that reason he did not like taking his corner piece of land from him unless he got some compensation. I heard Major Mitchell say to Harris that "if Smith would not give him something in return for this piece of land, Wollongong could remain as it always had been, and it could go to heaven or heaven's antipodes". Mr. Smith, however, gave Harris in exchange for the small piece in front of where the convent now stands, that square piece of land between the lagoon and the convent, bounded by the sandbank, the convent, Harbour Street and Market Street. The convent now stands on it. Thus Harris got a very big piece in exchange for his small piece and so it was that a portion of Harbour Street was squared and made to run parallel with Corrimal Street.

THAT WAS TELLING 'EM:

"The colony consisted of those who had been transported, and those who ought to have been".—Governor Macquarie, quoted in "The Three Colonies of Australasia", by Samuel Sidney.

WHERE WAS IT?:

Where in Illawarra are, were, or might have been:

(1) Little Bulli; (2) Robbinsville; (3) Newtown; (4) Cramsville; (5) Bustle Town; (6) Fish Town; (7) Charcoal; (8) Geordies' Flat?

If you don't know, don't miss next month's Bulletin.

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