There is a painful appearance of by-gone better days about Wollongong and its neighbourhood. The fictitious value of land, at that period of the history of the colony when its follies and misfortunes formed its leading features, was one of the causes of the decline of this town. Mechanics came in crowds to what they imagined a good market for their labour and skill, houses were run up, but, disappointed in their expectations, they went off to Port Phillip and elsewhere.

—Lt.-Col. G. C. Mundy, “Our Antipodes.”

KIAMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

Kiama is within what has always been this Society’s area of interest, and it holds a great deal that should be preserved and recorded; but there has always been so much to be done in and around Wollongong that we have never been able to give it the attention which it deserved, and which we should have liked to give. We therefore welcome the moves which are being made to establish a historical society there.

A meeting was convened by the Mayor of Kiama, Ald. N. Fredericks, at which it was resolved that a society should be formed to cover the whole of the Municipality of Kiama. A committee was appointed to investigate, draft a constitution, and report back to a further public meeting. This Society was represented at the meeting by the President and Junior Vice-President, and we have undertaken to give any assistance we can in the establishment of the Kiama Society.

The new Society will be fortunate insofar as much more of Kiama’s history is still visible than is the case further north; but the threat to the town’s distinctive character is imminent, and the need for an informed and active local body is urgent.

There should be ample scope for co-operation between this Society and Kiama, and possibly for joint activities. We wish the new Society every success, and ask only one thing—we don’t want to lose our old and valued members around Kiama, Gerringong and Jamberoo!

DENNISS’S BRIEF LIVES: WILLIAM MOLES

[Mr. David Denniss’s notebook included a number of sketches of pioneers of the district one of which is printed below].

William Moles, a member of the first Dapto show committee was the leading early-day resident of Tongarra, the name of the property “Tongarra” being applied to the valley by which Macquarie Pass is approached. William Moles played a prominent part in connection with the various Illawarra shows at which he was an exhibitor.

He is perhaps best remembered for his lengthy and valuable service in connection with the Presbyterian Church of which he was an elder.

He was an early-day magistrate and on one occasion he was approached by a resident of the hills that lay between Calderwood and Tongarra who expressed a desire that he should be apprehended for the murder of wife and children. William Moles did not accept the story as serious and advised the resident to go away and cease his jokery. However, investigation proved that a horrible tragedy had occurred and in the almost forgotten tradegdy which is only a vague memory a husband with an axe had atrociously killed wife and children.