on the same day as that of the reply (21 October 1831) Harris was issued with two draught bullocks, and was later discharged on 30 April 1832. On 31 May he was active in getting his land and the rest of his cattle. In setting himself up for farming, he must have been very materially helped by having received the maximum gratuity on discharge of 18 months’ pay: twenty seven pounds seven shillings and sixpence.

The file (Archives Reel 1136) shows that on the same day he called at the "office" saying he was under great expense with his family in Sydney, and wished to remove immediately to Illawarra, where he had fifty acres of land "adjoining to which he [had] selected his intended purchase", and wished also to take his cattle with him. He was forthwith issued with three cows and two heifers: a small allowance compared with the twenty Fraser had secured. In this he was assisted by the influential Major Macpherson, the Collector of Revenue, an officer of the 39th who would have known Harris. A letter of request for land adjoining Fraser’s at Dapto was filed, dated ten days before, and giving Harris’s address as Macquarie Street Sydney. It asked for the chosen land to be put up for sale, which was presumably the correct procedure, the purchase price being then remitted as one of the terms of a veteran’s grant in consideration of long service. In response to a further letter of 10 November 1832 from Harris then at Wollongong, the remission was approved, and Harris had his land in Illawarra.

(To be continued)

THE SOCIETY’S HISTORICAL COLLECTION
and THE WOLLONGONG PUBLIC LIBRARY

The July meeting of the Society in the Local Studies Room of the Reference Library in the new Council Administration Block in Burelli Street was quite a revelation. We were provided with a comprehensive insight into the most modern system being introduced for the organisation of the Reference Library including the Local History Collection as well as our own Historical Society Archives, so ably explained and described by the Local Studies Librarian Mrs Jan Richards.

Being so impressed by the spaciousness and convenience of the new facilities for the library, the question soon arose as to the library facilities at the time of the formation of the Society and the means for the storage of historical archives.

The conditions at the time of the formation of the Society 42 years ago in 1944 were certainly very different. The Wollongong Municipal Library was housed in a small room upstairs in the School of Arts building in Crown Street opposite the Wollongong East Post Office. The room was a little larger than twice the size of the Local Studies Room, well filled with dark wooden book shelves, poorly lit with the appearance of being in existence for quite some time. The book stock was mostly fiction or general reading, it being difficult to find anything local or of an historical nature. Jan had described the large array of technical publications to which the Reference Library now subscribes. I remember finding the only Journal in the original library was that of the Australian Institution of Engineers which I would read with great interest at the only table in the library, making notes in pencil, twenty years before copying machines.

As for the fledgling Historical Society, fortunately the archives were no more
than what individual members could keep at home, as storage facilities were non-existent.

After the War the Society was approaching the City Council with enquiries for possible quarters for the storage of archives or for the location of a museum. The formation of the Society had originally been promoted by the Council and further consideration was expected. The Council was planning expansion of their operations and modernisation of the Council Chambers in view of the formation of the Council of Greater Wollongong, which took place in 1947. To refurbish the Chambers, they decided to make use of the wartime concrete air-raid shelter that had been built between the Council Chambers and the Post Office for the storage of old records being removed from the Council Chambers, and invited the Society to take over the custody of these records and use the shelter for possible storage of the Society archives. It was better than nothing, but without shelving or any other furnishings everything was in one big pile covering most of the floor space and leaving little room to move.

I remember Rate Books going back 50 years and Estate Subdivision Posters which are now an interesting feature of the Reference Library collection. The greatest find was all the framed photographs showing views of Wollongong which were quite historical. Although hardly the venue for preventing deterioration of these records, it was not until 1959, after the Council had completed the new Chambers on the corner of Burelli Street, that it was decided to transfer the Library to the old Council Chambers in Crown Street. This was a tremendous improvement in library conditions, and the provision of facilities for a Reference Section and Archives Storage was a most professionally executed organisation by our highly esteemed Hon. Research Officer as Council Librarian.

Although the Wollongong Public Library continued to move, advantage was taken each time to improve the facilities further, the move to the Coles building at the corner of Keira Street being made in 1977, and to move to the Wollongong Leagues Club in Burelli Street in 1984 prior to the move to the new Council Administration Block in June this year.

It is a pity that Alec Fleming, who worked so hard to see the formation of an archives collection, did not live to see the move to the corner of Keira Street while Bill Bayley, the greatest collector of historical material passed away before the move to Burelli Street.

J.L.N. Southern

"ALL MY WORLDLY GOODS": A SETTLER’S WILL

Though it would be easy to dismiss the short will of James Williams as something merely amusing, it in truth provides a valuable insight into social history. Found in the papers of Henry Gordon (that pedagogue turned farmer), the text reads:

"I, James Williams in the Colony of New South Wales and District of Illawarra, being of sound memory, yet sensible of the Uncertainty [sic] of human life do make and publish this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following. That is to say, I give to William James my two bullock plough and Harrow. To Henry Gordon I give and bestow my standing crop out of which he is to pay my rent of Four pounds. The Doctors bill to [be] paid in equal shares by William