THE PASTORAL FAMILIES OF THE HUNTER VALLEY

1880-1914

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Australian National University.

May 1978
This thesis is my own work.

Stevan Eldred-Grigg
CONTENTS

Acknowledgements
Abstract
Abbreviations
Introduction
1. A Favoured Province  
2. The Land  
3. Territorial Magnates  
4. Money  
5. Origins, Education and Religion  
6. Marriage and Society  
7. Power  
8. The Estate  
9. The Homestead  
Conclusion  
Appendices  
Bibliography  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A Favoured Province</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Land</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Territorial Magnates</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Money</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Origins, Education and Religion</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Marriage and Society</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Power</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Estate</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Homestead</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This thesis was begun under the guidance of Dr Allan Martin, who first directed my attention to the Hunter valley, provided valuable ideas on method and always responded to my work with a mixture of enthusiasm and rigorous advice.

Many people in the Hunter valley offered me help and hospitality. I wish most particularly to thank Mr Alexander Binnie, Mrs Frances Binnie, Mr W.A. Bishop, Mr W.G. Mackay, Mrs Nancy Mackay, Mrs C.A. Stacy and the Richards and McRae families. Mrs Hilda Abbott was a valuable guide through the papers of her late husband, Mr C.L.A. Abbott. Mr A.J. Gray and Mrs Nancy Gray were generous with their time and helped me uncover material without which this work would be much less informed.

I am grateful above all to Professor Ken Inglis for his lively suggestions and criticisms, which at once encouraged me to be precise and stimulated my curiosity.
The Hunter valley in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a burgeoning rural society. Its population of humans, cattle, sheep and horses grew rapidly. The number of its farms increased from 5,000 in 1885 to over 11,000 by 1914. Although legal and social attacks were launched on the unequal distribution of property in this society between 1880 and 1914, the economic structure remained fairly stable. While the community as a whole grew richer, the rich grew richer too. The principal forms of property in the Hunter valley were land and animals; in 1880 ownership of this property was concentrated in a marked way into the hands of a few score families and after more than thirty years remained almost as concentrated. Ownership of property among this handful of families was largely hereditary, and although there was a good deal of transference of property from one individual or partnership to another, estates tended to remain with the same few score families. These families were a stable and distinct economic elite in a prosperous expanding society.

The economic elite did not form a complete marriage or social elite, being divided within itself into circles of connubiality and acquaintance which on occasion crossed the lines of economic class. Religion acted as an arbitrary divider of the economic elite, but education seemed to unite many members of the group - along with other well-to-do people - into something of a status elite. The economic elite clearly dominated certain fields of political, military, magisterial and other power in the Hunter valley and was certainly
disproportionately influential in most. On the other hand, many members of the economic elite took no part in public life and did not act as leaders. In two particular environments important to the economic elite - their estates and their homesteads - they were clearly distinguishable in their customs from all other people in the community.

The economic elite - which I have dubbed 'the pastoral families' - was a successful propertied group which had acquired, and was acquiring status and power in varying degrees. Those status and power forms that could be paid for in cash were common to all the pastoral families. But where personality, public presence and other intangibles came into play - as in so many institutions of rural society - only some pastoral families held authority or were admired by their economic inferiors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A C</td>
<td>Census of the Commonwealth of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia PP</td>
<td>Papers Presented to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser (up to 1893) and Maitland Daily Mercury (1894 onwards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW C</td>
<td>Census of New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW PD</td>
<td>New South Wales Parliamentary Debates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW PP</td>
<td>New South Wales. Joint Volumes of Papers Presented to the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW VP</td>
<td>New South Wales. Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Australasian Pastoralists' Review (1891-1901), Pastoralists' Review (1901-1913) and Pastoral Review (1914 onwards)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

1. Approaches to the Study of an Australian Landed Elite

Existing work on large Australian landowners divides into several types: family studies, local and colonial histories and theoretical works by historians and sociologists. The former have sometimes the advantage of being written from the inside. Judith Wright, a descendant of one of the pastoral families of the Hunter valley, wrote fluently about some of those families and illuminated them by the use of private papers and memoirs to which she had access. Mary Durack dealt with a rather different family tradition, describing a family of poor Irish farmers which in two generations became owner of vast reaches of territory throughout Australia.

The most thorough and absorbing study of a rural elite is Men of Yesterday, in which Margaret Kiddle traces in great detail the evolution of pastoralists and other groups in the Western District of Victoria. Duncan Waterson, sharing his attention between large pastoralists and other groups in a community, has done similar work for the Darling Downs and Henry Reynolds and Michael Roe have

3. M.L. Kiddle, Men of Yesterday; a social history of the Western district of Victoria 1834-1890, Melbourne 1962.
lightly explored what they have called the gentry of Tasmania and early colonial New South Wales.

Most of this work is based on impressionistic rather than statistical identification of social groups. It presents the reader with the sympathetic advantages of qualitative history, together with the distinct disadvantages of the same tradition. Family historians, like Wright and Durack, suffer from a tendency to ignore the social edifice through which their families moved. Durack interprets the success of her family in personal rather than in social terms, for example attributing the private school education of the younger generation of Duracks to a fondness for learning among their parents. Wright is concerned with a tragic theme; she portrays the early pastoral families of the Hunter valley as doomed guardians of a transplanted country house culture. Estates and families, she concludes, had become 'anachronisms' by the 1890s. Yet most of the big families she describes were by 1914 richer than ever before, as this thesis will show. Whenever family studies venture upon a generalisation it is usually equally ingenuous and personal.

Regional social historians like Kiddle, Waterson and Reynolds are on the other hand very interested in drawing general implications from the particular - especially Waterson. Their weakness is a lack of definition. Kiddle is unsure whether her work is a study of the pastoral elite, or the whole rural society of her region. The subtitle of Men of Yesterday is a social history of the Western district of Victoria, but Kiddle does not define social groups clearly and when she glances at towns, working people and other elements of the

7. Durack, Grass Castles, pp. 159 and 170.
community her emphases are inconsistent. Waterson defines his groups more precisely and takes great pains to trace their relationships. But his definition is wanting in another sense - he is not interested in looking closely at the textures of his community. The reader, while learning much about the political and economic position of the various groups in the Darling Downs, only gets a little insight into the way of life of these groups.

A theoretical approach to landed elite history begins with G.C. Bolton, who in 'The Idea of a Colonial Gentry' discusses precedents in Ireland and Virginia before he deals with Australian landowners. He asserts that these men, 'as they achieved political and social dominance ... took on the outward and visible signs of the British ruling elite; the titles, the veneration of landed estates, the hierarchical attitudes, the myth of gracious living'. While Wright, Nesta Griffiths and other family historians describe a small elite of already graceful colonists recreating their accustomed lifestyle (and then seeing it eroded by nineteenth century 'realities'). Bolton refers to an original group of successful men from obscure backgrounds who grabbed high stakes in the power and class divisions of society. Bolton suggests that these new rich men made themselves legitimate by acquiring status tokens. No debate on the theory of Australian landed elites has followed Bolton's essay. All that exist for an historian to argue with are Bolton's perceptive shafts.

Sociologists might be expected to have come to more precise

10. Ibid., p. 326.
conclusions, but have not yet done so. An Australian landed elite has been evoked by Sol Encel, who calls it 'the pastoral ascendancy'.

His descriptions of this group are typical of the generalisations (often contradictory) that have to be resorted to for lack of research and discussion. An example of Encel's inconsistency is his remark in one place that 'a pastoral ascendancy ... dominated politics ... in eastern Australia until the end of the nineteenth century'; a few pages later he refers to an alleged tendency of pastoralists not to play a large role in government.

Throughout Encel's work there is a critical failure to define his group, and the implied equation of pastoralists with landed gentry is inconsistently sustained and never justified.

Local sociological research is beginning to draw more accurate pictures. The pioneering social study of A.J. and J.J. McIntyre, Country Towns of Victoria, tells the reader much about the structure of landed society. But the work has no entries for 'class' or 'stratification' in its index, and when it discusses 'social groupings' refers mostly to religious, ethnic and other associations - all in a very few pages. Only two pages are devoted to 'alleged social differences between different types of farming districts'. It is occupation and district rather than class that concern the McIntyres.

Some subsequent work has focussed specifically on class and

13. Ibid., p. 294.
16. Ibid., p. 59.
has thus been more useful for elite studies. Precise evaluation of some parts of the Hunter valley began with Jean Craig, who in 1945 employed some of the devices developed by American urban sociologists to analyse 'Some Aspects of Life in Selected Areas of Rural New South Wales'.

Two of the areas she chose were in the Hunter valley and she devoted considerable attention to the rural class structure, finding Denman (in the upper Hunter) to be markedly stratified and an area near Maitland (in the lower Hunter) rather less so. The upper class, she suggested, was based upon family endogamy and its cohesion was reinforced by a traditional life style. Martin subsequently wrote a (much cited) article in which she opened a discussion on the relationship of social class to marriage and the family, making reference to the social rituals of pastoralists.

R.A. Wild's Bradstow, the most complete analysis of a modern rural community, cuts a country town into groups and then tries to trace the qualities and the relationships of the groups - all the while devoting disproportionate space to the elite. But the work of sociologists has still merely scratched the surface of rural society. Martin's generalisations have been cited repeatedly as evidence when their function should have been merely provocative, and Bradstow is only the beginning of detailed investigation into Australian rural elites.

20. Encel mentions that Martin herself came from a country family (implying that she is therefore qualified to discuss rural class), but her father was a Scots engineer.
2. The Hunter Valley

While historians and sociologists have cantered across the Australian countryside, writing down their observations with a good deal of flair, they have not spoken much about their method. It seems to me that there is inadequate selfconsciousness in the writings of historians, and perhaps too much automatic application of American techniques by sociologists. This thesis will be my attempt to experiment with a model for the analysis of a landed elite. The experiment will begin with a single question, and I shall then try to set up an analytical structure that will answer the question.

The question is merely one small probe into the resinous stuff of social class in Australian landed society. It is: was there a distinct economic elite which manifested itself in all the power and status frames of the rural Hunter valley between 1880 and 1914? In other words, did the richest people form a discrete group that acted as a local establishment? To answer the question I shall set up a simple model.

My first problem is to establish the point of economic cut-off. Most sociological techniques for assessing stratification are urban-based and emphasise rankings of occupation, place of residence and other indicators that are of limited use to a rural historian. Bernard Barber argues that 'the primary criteria of evaluation of individuals are those social roles and their associated activities that are functionally essential for society and that require the relatively full-time participation of those who perform the roles'.

This is a helpful notion. Other, rural, sociologists stress the

importance of property holding as the primary indicator of class in rural communities. Land, on first impression, is the 'functionally essential' core of rural society and should be the main indicator of its strata. It is perhaps dubious to define functional importance as the primary social indicator for the Hunter valley; American rural sociologists seldom mention historical factors, but Australian landed society was fairly new and a good many of the tokens of status in such a derivative community were perhaps related not to existing ownership of property, but instead to a sort of cultural memory of British society.

But extracting an economic elite was the first step required by my question. The economic elite I chose to define was not necessarily a real elite; its social importance would in fact be tested by subsequent measurement against other indicators. There were four possible ways of reckoning the economic elite: (i) income, (ii) monetary wealth, (iii) ownership of land, (iv) ownership of the elements of production - in the case of the rural Hunter valley these were sheep, cattle and crops. Income was impossible to measure with enough precision. Monetary wealth could be calculated by ransacking the probate records pertaining to the entire population of the rural Hunter valley, but this was beyond my unassisted ability. This left the two forms of property, and in any case it seemed reasonable to regard property as the best definer of an economic elite in the valley. Counting acres of land and head of stock rather than size of wills would be more meaningful because cash wealth was not common knowledge in the community, while ownership of property was highly visible.

In the Hunter valley stock ownership was even more obvious than land ownership. Herds and flocks were a form of property easily appraised as they were shifted around paddocks, or walked off to freezing works. People in the countryside would know who owned how much stock - regular returns were published and easily available - but they would not know who owned how much money, or even how much land.

Having settled on property as my indicator, I found it difficult to get enough information on land ownership. I was hoping to find a series of statements of all land owned in the region throughout my period, but in the event could only find one - a full return of freeholders for 1885.\(^\text{23}\) Stock ownership, on the other hand, was regularly measured; it was also a more real indicator of propertied wealth than land, because the quality of soil varies widely from one place to another in the Hunter valley - twenty thousand acres of stones in Port Stephens would not make a person half as rich as a thousand acres of river bottom at Singleton. The other source of wealth in the rural Hunter valley was agriculture. With agriculture, as with land-holdings, I found there were not enough complete registers, and I was forced to abandon it as an indicator of wealth. Agriculture was not negligible in the region, and was of growing importance during my period, so this lack of ability to measure crop-growing is unfortunate.

The final solution was the simplest: I drew a notional line across the lists of stockowners in the region. All those owners registered as possessing either 500 cattle or more, or 5,000 sheep or more,

\(^{23}\) 'Alphabetical Return of the several holdings in the Colony, together with the acreage and the number of Horses, Cattle, and Sheep thereon', NSW VP 1885 (2nd Session), Vol. III.
or the equivalent, were the group I would study. By drawing up lists of all owners of such numbers of stock at three points (1885, 1897, and 1915) I provided myself with the names of the people who would concern me - the people I would call 'the pastoral families' (Appendices III-V). I later discovered that some persons qualified as 'pastoral families' in years other than those I had taken as my yardstick - the Windeyer family, for example, although not registered in 1885, 1897 or 1915 as owning over 500 cattle or 5,000 sheep, was so classed in other directories and other years. I decided not to distort my sample by including such families in my definition of the economic class 'pastoral families', but to keep my eye on them as they came to light.

By this means I defined my economic elite. Stockownership as I had divided it was not entirely arbitrary. The Pastoralists' Union charged its members two different subscription rates in the 1890s: owners of over 500 cattle or 5,000 sheep paid a higher rate than those who owned smaller numbers. Pastures protection boards in the country districts gave all owners of over 500 'great cattle' or 5000 sheep three votes each, while lesser proprietors were accorded only one or two votes. My 'pastoral families' in other words enjoyed some distinction beyond that given them by being posthumously chopped off the top of a few lists.

24. I reckoned ten sheep as equal in value to one head of cattle (a very rough equation but common enough at the time). Consequently any number of stock if 'equated' and added together (e.g. 3,000 sheep and 200 cattle) to a total of the equivalent of 500 cattle or more, classed their proprietor as a member of the pastoral families.

25. An entry in Sands', for example, gives 'Windeyer, Lady Mary, Tomago' as the owner of 620 cattle. Sands' Sydney, Suburban and Country Directory 1913, p. 119c.

26. PR, 16 July 1891.

27. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 30 April 1913.
Having defined my group I then planned to test it against a variety of other indicators in order to judge its homogeneity and the consistency of its position in other economic, status and power structures. The first chapter of my thesis sketches in the background to the region. In the second chapter I begin to deal with the land—how it was held and how it was used. Chapter three introduces the pastoral families. I detach them from their wider community for the first time, on the basis of my stock ownership distinction, and look at the size and nature of their landholdings and the manner in which estates were put together—in other words, I appraise the role of my pastoral families as landowners and find whether or not the largest stockowners were also the largest landowners, and whether there was an overall consistency in the means by which they had become large propertied people. Chapter four looks at other economic factors—production, income and wealth. I investigate the commitment of my pastoral families to agriculture and other improvement of their land and I try to guess their financial wealth and their revenues. The purpose as always throughout the thesis is to take the group of large stockowners as a fixed reference point and to measure both its internal consistency and its position in the various other structures of the society. In short, I wish to find whether the group was an harmonious whole and whether it occupied positions of superiority in other fields than the one I had taken as my base.

Measurement of the economic form of the group being as complete as I could manage, it remained to measure it against other indicators. In my fifth and sixth chapters I take four status indicators—education, religion, marriage, and social life—and try to discover whether the pastoral families stuck together and also
whether they were at the top. Chapter seven looks at the various power structures of the community and traces the role of the pastoral families in them. Chapters eight and nine are impressionistic, and are intended to give depth to the definition of the group by looking at it in two selected environments. Chapter eight looks at the estate as a field of action bestrode by large proprietors, and is an attempt to draw a portrait of the men from the pastoral families in action. Chapter nine takes another angle by investigating the domestic surroundings of the pastoral families and looking at the style in which they lived. In my tenth chapter I attempt to draw conclusions in answer to the question posed as the beginning of my research: was there a distinct economic elite which manifested itself in all the power and status frames of the rural Hunter valley between 1880 and 1914?

In this thesis I have found it more difficult to make precise measurements than I had expected. The pastoral families valued their privacy, and their descendants still do. A journalist who toured their estates in the 1890s found them hospitable but reserved. Visiting James Bowman at Strowan he found his host ready to discuss 'a variety of subjects which, for the most part, were for my own special edification, owing to this gentleman's' disinclination to publicity':

'Now don't put that down', exclaimed Mr. Bowman, every time my pencil itched to record it. 'Why not?' I remark. 'I'm sure my readers will be interested to hear it?' 'I would rather not, thank you', came the polite but firm rejoinder, which reluctantly compelled me to stop, so that a great deal of interesting matter in connection with this gentleman's early experiences must be withheld. 28

During my interviews with the children and grandchildren of the pastoral families I found a similar reluctance to discuss matters of money, religion and so on.

The same feeling for privacy has caused the destruction of family papers. Lydia Abbott preserved a large quantity of Abbott family papers during her long life, but on her death in 1902 they were burned by her son, William Edward Abbott: 'He held that these were private'. 29 The papers of such important families as the Dangars of Baroona, Mackays of Minimbah, Bettingtons of Brindley Park and Bells of Pickering have been wholly or partially destroyed too. The Halls, Lindemans and I think the majority of the pastoral families did not bother to collect papers at all. By comparison with the Western District of Victoria and the province of Canterbury in New Zealand, the Hunter valley is unfortunately poor in private papers.

Nor has there been much secondary work on local social history. A deal of interest in the first phase of settlement, up to about 1850, has produced what work there is. A vaguely romantic interest in this heroic period of colonisation has been evidenced in some graceful works of antiquarianism, most notably Elkin's Old Morpeth 30 and W.A. Wood's Dawn in the Valley. 31 A scatter of local historical societies share in the same interest and one, the Scone and Upper Hunter Historical Society, has built up good archives. In the case of the latter the records are very extensive, including a large biographical index and some deposits of private papers. The

30. A.P. Elkin, Morpeth and I, Sydney 1937.
society has also published a number of historical monographs, most of which include information on the pastoral families. The Hunter Valley Register (a compilation of births, deaths and marriages in the Maitland Mercury up to 1884) is of some use, but is incomplete and very thin for the last years of its period.  

Apart from works dealing with the earliest years of colonisation, there are no first-rate secondary essays in local history. Country towns, churches, dairying co-operatives and other communities have produced booklets which sometimes contain long lists of membership and the like, but although very useful for my attempts at quantification, they are too few. Research at the University of Newcastle is almost entirely urban, and has produced no important inquiries into the social history of the Hunter valley. The Hunter Valley Research Foundation, responsible for a very good bibliography of the region, has sponsored monographs dealing with the Hunter valley, but their emphasis is geographical and economic, and their principal interest is in future development. A number of geographical theses and journal articles deal with the Hunter valley, but most are weak on history and not rigorous with evidence - they seem to pass a handful of generalisations on from one to the other.

The sources on which I was forced to rely only partially filled the gap caused by lack of private papers and of local histories. Biographical information is provided by standard sources including Who's Who in Australia, Mowle's Pioneer Families and Burke's Colonial


Gentry, together with the biographical file at Scone. There are also a number of limited edition family histories, private genealogies and newspaper obituaries. Probate records are very useful, since they include not only a precise statement of the value and disposition of estates, but also incidental information about ancestry, quirks of character, philanthropy and so on.

Newspapers are a source of great richness. The large public presence of pastoral families meant that their births, marriages, deaths and other doings were exhaustively documented in the local press. The most important of these papers was the Maitland Mercury. A 'prosperous tri-weekly' which had been founded in 1843 and which became a daily in 1894, the Mercury was one of the largest provincial newspapers in New South Wales. Its proprietor after 1874 was the partnership of T.W. Tucker, John Gillies and John Thompson - all three of them Maitland businessmen and Gillies being a local member of parliament. Under the direction of these men the Mercury maintained its tradition of 'moderately liberal and sometimes reticent politics'.

The Hunter valley was the basic circulation province of the Mercury, although from time to time it laid claim to the whole of northern New South Wales. Correspondents from the various districts sent accounts of social and political gatherings, police court news, associ-


36. Ibid., p. 44.
ation meetings and so forth. Correspondents from Maitland made occasional tours of country districts and wrote sequences of articles describing estates, country towns and the state of the landed interests. The paper contained many items of use to the historian of the pastoral families - notices of estate sales, letters to the editor, advertisements, warnings against poachers, and much more.

In addition to the Mercury there were many small local newspapers filled with the same sort of material. I looked at the remaining files of eight of these papers: the Gloucester Examiner, Dungog Chronicle and Eastern Telegraph, Singleton Argus, Budget and Singleton Advertiser, Muswellbrook Chronicle, Scone Advocate, Merriwa and Cassilis Standard and Murrurundi and Quirindi Times.

A second major provincial newspaper was published in the region, the Newcastle Morning Herald. Walker has noted that the Herald distributed papers 'far up the Hunter valley' by means of the trunk railway,37 but if news content is any indication, the main circulation of the paper was in the city of Newcastle. Few district reports appear in the pages of the Herald and an index of the paper compiled by the Newcastle Public Library includes very few references to Hunter valley pastoral families. Having combed this index and extracted what references it contains, I looked at only a few sample weeks of the Herald and decided to do no further work on it.

The metropolitan press provided valuable material. The Town and Country Journal, Sydney Mail, Illustrated Sydney News, Dalgety's Review and Bulletin were useful, with their occasional feature articles by roving correspondents and their accounts of the social and

37. Ibid., p. 197.
other matters at the capital which were of interest to the Hunter valley pastoral families. I read (at random) sample years of each of these journals.

Most important of metropolitan journals for my purposes and second only in value to the Maitland Mercury was the Pastoral Review. The Review was founded as a monthly in March 1891 under the name of the Australasian Pastoralists' Review. Editorialising on its 'Objects and Uses', the Review began with observations about the threat being posed to 'the present owners of property' by strikers.\(^3\) The editorial praised the Pastoralists' Union as a means for the defence of property and hoped that one of the principal functions of the Review would be to 'keep the members of the several pastoralists' unions in touch with each other'. Then, having made clear its association with the union, the Review went on to speak more generally. It hoped to encourage 'a spirit of unity among pastoralists' and also to work for equitable relations with the 'employés' of the pastoral interest. Throughout its early decades the journal was to push consistently a line of social responsibility; the introductory leader criticised New Zealand 'labour' (actually Liberal) leaders for turning politics into a class war and added very tellingly: 'as if any class could thrive by quarrelling with the others'. The Review also hoped to work for a country party - the editor wished pastoralists would organise 'the smaller settlers' into electoral bodies for the conservation of 'their common interests'. Practical considerations concluded the introductory essay. The Review would hope to provide accurate information for 'sheep and cattle farmers' and also to inform the 'London financial world' of the state of the landed

\(^3\) PR, 16 March 1891.
interest in the colonies.

After a first few copies with rather heavy emphasis on pastoralists' union matters, the Review of the 1890s quickly developed into an important journal crammed with information and prone to political judgements based on its notions of social duty, social harmony and the advantages of the existing economic order to all those who wished to work. Each issue gave editorial space to such matters, and in addition provided reports on union matters, tips on irrigation, information on methods of dealing with rabbits, and so on. It also ran 'Light Literature' (bush stories and anecdotes often contributed by pastoralists), reviews of books, information on the frozen meat and wool trades, descriptions of properties and prominent pastoralists and obituaries. The range of this information was primarily over Australia and New Zealand, but there were regular articles on pastoralism elsewhere - mostly in Argentina, South Africa and Britain. Advertisements in the 1890s were almost all for sheep dips, insurance firms, agricultural machinery and wool brokers.

In March 1901 - its tenth anniversary - the Review changed its name to the Pastoralists Review (but still continued to devote equal space to New Zealand and in its subtitle called itself a journal of 'all matters affecting the Pastoral and Agricultural Interests throughout Australasia'). No editorial comment was made on the change of name - presumably it was a result of federation and a desire to seem up to date.

The Review took its final name in January 1913, when it

39. Ibid.

40. PR, 15 March 1901.
became simply the Pastoral Review (still 'throughout Australasia'). 'The reason for this change', the journal editorialised, 'is that a pastoralist in Australia is now known as an owner of sheep and cattle only'. The Review, on the other hand, had come to contain news of 'every department of the frozen meat trade, agriculture, and dairying in all parts of the world'. The journal, instead of being the social conscience of the pastoral interest, had now become the information broadsheet of all country people. It now supported the idea of closer settlement, for example, but still plugged its old political message about the responsibility of propertied people to be moderate, orderly and generous.

By the 1910s the content of the Review had grown thicker, but was still of much the same type as in the 1890s. The size of the journal grew consistently. The first year contained 504 pages, minus advertisements. By 1900 the number had risen to 832 and by 1913 there were 1,244 pages. New features by 1910 included glossy photographs and texts on 'Prominent Men', 'The Pastoral Homes of Australia', and a much enlarged obituary space. There was also a 'Personal' column giving social gossip about pastoralists and their bankers. The main change since the 1890s was in the number of advertisements. Stud farm advertisements had become so prolific as to be issued in a separate glossy supplement. In the journal proper the sober politics and gloomy calls to duty were jostled by bold type and by pictures intended to seduce pastoralists and their ladies into the mineral waters of Rotorua and Europe, grand hotels, sleek motor cars and rakish ocean liners. Jewellers, headmasters and others offered their various

41. PR, 15 January 1913.
42. For a discussion of this growth, PR, 15 March 1901.
specialised services.

Hunter valley pastoral families appeared frequently in the pages of the Review and I found it useful to read through the entire run from 1891 to 1914. The Review helped fix Hunter valley families more accurately in their colonial, and even international perspective, and by including many Hunter valley homesteads, studs and recently expired men in its glossy pages, fleshed out the material I found in the rather staid local papers.

My work has suffered from the lateness of my conclusion that newspapers would be the meat, and private papers only the sauce. I had hoped that private documents would be more abundant than they are and as a result my documentation is thinner than it should have been. Instead of being able to count heads in a methodical fashion, I was usually forced to resort to scattered impressions derived from a sample I could only hope was representative. The result was that I had often to say 'most', 'some' and 'a few' instead of something more satisfactorily precise. My thesis is not the intensely searching analysis my plan requires if it is to be conclusive. My various indicators stand above small pools of information. I was not even able to compensate for lack of figures by intensifying texture, because literary sources were so few. The answer to the question I posed has thus only been tentatively provided.

3. Notes on Terminology

I had some difficulty in deciding what name should apply to the owners of over 500 cattle and 5,000 sheep and their families. It seemed wisest to avoid using any phrase at first, until the shape
of the group became clearer. I looked around my various sources for
the names used to describe my people, and the names they gave them-
selves. While working on the reports of parliamentary commissions I
noticed that terminology was fairly variable, but that 'grazier' was
the commonest word. In their wills I found them being nominated by
their lawyers in a variety of ways too; Duncan McMaster was called
'Esquire', 43 G.B. Finlay went under the title of 'Grazier', 44 and
George Mackay was a 'Gentleman'. 45 All the wills I looked at used
one of these three terms, except a handful which gave none at all.
The prevalence of gentleman and esquires led me for a time to wonder
if my people might be most neatly called 'gentry'. There are various
precedents. The Hunter valley contained six of the nineteen counties
where the gentry described by Roe is supposed to have lived. 46 Use
of the term 'gentry' for Australian landowners and pastoralists had
been made familiar by Bolton and Reynolds. 47 S.H. Roberts observed
that the colonial policy of the 1820s sought to 'create and uphold
an opulent Gentry'. 48

But I have not come across a single reference in local newspa-
papers to a gentry. The term 'squire' was bandied about from time
to time, in reference to a dozen or so very prominent local pastoral-
ists. F.S. Bowman was called 'the genial squire of Archerfield' by
the Maitland Mercury, 49 and Thomas Cook - 'Squire of Turanville' in

43. Will of Duncan McMaster, 8 April 1910, NSW Probate 48875/4.
44. Will of George Bogle Finlay, 8 June 1893, NSW Probate 4895/4.
46. Roe, Quest for Authority, pp. 35-57.
47. Bolton, 'Colonial Gentry' and Reynolds, 'Tasmanian Gentry'.
48. S.H. Roberts, History of Australian Land Settlement, Melbourne
   1968, p. 37.
49. MM, 5 February 1910.
the local press - was also given the title 'the good old squire' by the Pastoral Review. Other feudal words were occasionally used. A Singleton newspaper spoke on one occasion of the landowners as aristocrats - but a sneer was implicit in the article. A member of the Abbott family called H.L. White of Belltrees 'the King of the Upper Hunter', but I have never found him labelled thus anywhere else. One Maitland journalist, having decided to take the unusual step of calling Hunter valley pastoralists 'squatters', concluded:

They are the squirearchy of the country ... such a body of men - numerous, active, wealthy and united by common traditions and common interests, give an unmistakable bias to the land.

But it would be inaccurate to apply gentry terminology to the group in my study. In the first place, despite scattered references to squires and aristocrats, the great majority of contemporary biographies, newspapers and other sources use the terms 'grazier', 'landowner' and increasingly 'pastoralist'. The property owners in my study were usually honoured with an adjective or adverb to indicate their superior importance over the common run of small and middling graziers. Herbert Laurie, for example, was called 'a well-known grazier'. In the second place, the people of my study do not seem to have used gentry terminology of themselves. Only seven Hunter valley families chose to be included in Burke's Colonial Gentry, compared with thirty-three families from the province of

50. MM, 6 April 1904 and PR, 15 August 1912.
51. Budget and Singleton Advertiser, 4 July 1898.
53. MM, 29 January 1910.
54. PR, 15 April 1912.
Canterbury - a region roughly comparable with the Hunter valley. 55

I decided therefore to coin a phrase which would avoid the problem of seeming to attribute too much to the people under study. To call them 'gentry' would be to use a word lacking contemporary support. To call them 'squatters' would be to use a word equally little noticeable in the region. I had in the first place defined my group on the basis of its ownership of animals, and now decided that the simplest term would derive from that standard and would not impose other values. The great majority of the large stock holdings were in the hands of private individuals and families. Therefore I called the large stockowners 'the pastoral families'. For purposes of convenience, when discussing the actual stockowners (as distinct from their spouses, children and other family members) I have used the phrase 'large proprietors'. In spite of the unfortunate vagueness of this expression, when used in this thesis it always refers only to members of the pastoral families.

55. The province of Canterbury (15,000 square miles) and the Hunter valley (11,000 square miles) were devoted to a similar mixture of grazing and agriculture. Compared with the 106 owners of over 500 cattle and/or 5,000 sheep in the Hunter valley of 1897, there were 188 such large stockowners in Canterbury. Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand 1897, H23.
CHAPTER ONE

A FAVOURED PROVINCE

1. The Hunter Valley Region

On the Northern coast of New South Wales the Manning River meanders through marshy plains to lose itself in a delta; one hundred and forty miles south the Hawkesbury bends east through rugged sandstone hills and opens out into Broken Bay. Between the two rivers a third, the Hunter, debouches into a lagoon. Inland hills and mountain ranges, one hundred miles at their farthest from the coast, close the watershed of the rivers. These rocks and watercourses define the northern, western and southern boundaries of what this study will treat as the Hunter valley region. From the Manning to the Hawkesbury, and the Pacific to the western hills, is an area of about 11,000 square miles.1 The geographical region coincides with the 1829 counties of Gloucester, Durham, Hunter, Brisbane and Northumberland, together with the eastern halves of Bligh and Phillip.2

The area's topography forms it into a distinct province.3 In the south the valleys of the Hawkesbury and Hunter are divided by the

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1. The Hunter-Goulburn catchment area is of about 8,500 square miles and is the region most commonly treated as the Hunter valley. The social and economic region, extending north to the Manning and south to the Hawkesbury, is about 11,000 square miles.

2. The six counties of Gloucester, Northumberland, Durham, Brisbane, Hunter and Phillip had an area of about 13,600 square miles (fluctuating by a few score square miles from one census or statistical report to another).

Hunter range - high hills rising to 3,500 feet. Lacking an obvious summit, they are drained by numerous small streams running in irregular directions. The southern hills continue into the interior, dividing Phillip and Bligh counties down their artificial middles. Although in Bligh they are called 'Great Dividing Range' and 'Blue Mountains', the hills are of diminishing height as they run inland and only after they loop northwards and eastwards do they rise once again, to form the Liverpool range. The Liverpools, jurassic hills up to 4,000 feet high, are rugged and grand. Low passes bisect them to provide avenues for trade. The upper Hunter river in its penultimate stage drains the rough hill country to the east of the Liverpools and cuts gorges in their yellow sides. Further to the east the country rises again into the Mount Royal range - the most substantial hills visible from the Hunter valley. At its highest point, the Barrington Tops, the range reaches 5,400 feet. Mists cling almost perpetually to the Tops and condense to form the first trickles of the Manning and Hunter rivers. Beyond the Tops the heights diminish and break up into spurs which run towards the sea.

These massy hills occupy a substantial portion of the region - the north-eastern mountains, for example, cover one-quarter of the total area of the Hunter valley watershed. But the critical parts of the region - in human terms at least - are the belts of lowlands enclosed within the girdle of large rivers and high hills. Most important is a thin corridor which nestles between the coastal ranges. About twenty-five miles wide at its broadest, the corridor extends from the sea coast to Singleton, some fifty miles inland. It is an old eroded peneplain, rolling and undulating country drained by the lower Hunter river and enriched by it with caches of alluvium.
second area of lowlands lies along the coast, a zone up to twenty miles wide made up of dunes, swamps, lagoons, and outcrops of bare, ancient rocks. A third lowland is the Goulburn river valley. The Goulburn rises in low western hills and debouches into the Hunter below Muswellbrook. Its valley, twenty miles wide at most points, contains pockets of silt but is mostly stony and light country, heavily scoured. A fourth area of lowlands lies to the north of the Goulburn valley and is known as the Merriwa-Cassilis plateau - a southward-sloping high bare plain, pricked with rocky outcrops. It possesses a few favoured spots which a local advocate in 1910 boasted as 'equal to the Darling Downs'. A fifth lowlands area is made up by thin river plains along the upper Hunter from Aberdeen north to Scone and Parkville. Fingers of river flats reach out from the plain into surrounding hills. Here in the upper Hunter, where rich river bottom reclines beside rolling hillsides, was the heartland of Hunter valley pastoralism. A correspondent of the Pastoral Review in 1899 thought that the best land in all Australia was possibly to be found in the Hunter valley, and within the Hunter valley the best single estate was in the upper Hunter. Nowhere had he seen 'such country, such good water, such all-round stock, such management and such method'.

But the soils that clothe the confused geology of the Hunter valley are marked by considerable variety. They include deep alluvium in the lower Hunter, red and black volcanic soils in the upper Hunter,

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5. PR, 16 January 1899.
cracking clays in the Merriwa-Cassilis plateau and stony gravels and skeletal soils in the south - a mixed prospect for human use. For every acre of land equal to the Darling Downs, the Merriwa plateau possesses a hundred acres of bare rock and rough sandstone ridges. Most of the valley's bounty is owed to climate, rather than soil.

The climate of the region is benign. Rainfall varies from west to east, rising from an average of 20" a year in small areas of the Goulburn valley to 60" a year on the Barrington Tops. But the range is much more moderate over most parts of the region, the western lowlands areas getting 25" to 30" and the eastern lowlands up to 40" or 45". Summer months are slightly wetter than other seasons, but precipitation is spread fairly evenly, with greater variability in the western and more continental parts. This rainfall is enough to support good pasture inland and a rich and varied pattern of vegetation near the sea. Annual rainfall fluctuations are slight, although increasing according to distance from the sea. Long-term variations occur from decade to decade, but the cycle of droughts suffered by most of New South Wales is always moderated in the Hunter valley.

Between 1880 and 1914 the only severe climatic crisis was in 1901-2. The disastrous 1895-1903 drought only affected the Hunter valley in its last and most extreme years. Stock numbers in the valley continued to grow during the first years of the great drought - the six pastoral districts of Maitland, Merriwa, Denman, Murrurundi, Singleton and Port Stephens increasing their sheep flocks from a little over 1,000,000 in 1896 to almost 1,250,000 in 1900. In the last two years the drought began to tell - a slight drop in sheep numbers occurred from 1900 to 1901, followed by a spectacular fall of 32% in

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1901-2. Cattle numbers were steadier, dropping only 9% in the same year. Stock losses were quickly made good in 1902-5 and continued to rise, thus showing the resilience of Hunter valley pastures. No drought equalled that of 1901-2, although a dry spell could be expected every few years. In 1908-9 the Agricultural Department reported that the Hunter was 'suffering from the effects of protracted dry weather'. But stock losses during such dry periods were always slight. In the 1908-9 drought sheep numbers fell only from 1,412,000 to 1,390,000 and cattle herds, on the other hand, continued to increase.

Temperatures in the region are similarly clement. The mean daily temperature in summer is 70°F in the middle Hunter and in winter is 56°F. Once again fluctuation is greatest inland, the upper Hunter and Goulburn valleys being subject to frosts in mid-winter and the higher hills being sprinkled with occasional falls of snow. But the climate is on the whole a warm temperate one, favourable for a wide variety of plant growth.

The natural vegetation cover had been dense, with a good deal of splendid timber. Rainforest had covered 3% of the Hunter watershed, opening out into tall woodland on the hills and inland valleys. Among these woodlands were stands of straight-boled red cedar - most of which was subsequently to be sawn into floorboards for Hunter valley houses. Two-thirds of the region was covered by lightly-timbered savannah, over which grantees of the 1820s were to enthuse:

7. Reports of Stock Branch, Department of Agriculture, NSW PP 1897-1906.
10. Daly and Brown, Hunter Region, p. 20.
11. Ibid., pp. 32-5.
In all these luxuriant plains there is scarcely a superfluous tree to be seen, not above a dozen to the acre... you have thus abundance of land fit at once for the plough, and a greater abundance still affording the finest pasture, all without the trouble or expense of cutting down a tree... 12

When European colonists arrived this favourable environment was in a productive equipoise. The pasturage cover was everywhere fair, and in some places rich. In the lower Hunter were dense meadows of kangaroo grass. The more varied pastures in the upper Hunter included a wide range of plains grass, wallaby grass and various species of corkscrew. 13 The human population consisted of perhaps some few thousand nomadic hunters and collectors, whose economy was regulated by availability of uncultivated food and who impinged little upon the environment. Although the seven tribes 14 of the Hunter valley seem to have fluctuated, particularly with the recent incursion of Kamilaroi from the western slopes into the Goulburn valley, 15 there was little if any impact upon the ecosystem as a result of population movements. 16

The Hunter valley was peculiarly attractive to Europeans. The

12. The author was Peter Cunningham, granted Dalswinton in the 1820s. D.S. Macmillan (ed.), Peter Cunningham, Two Years in New South Wales, Sydney 1966, p. 81.


14. The Geawegad, who occupied the upper Hunter, the Birpai along the Manning, the Worimi around Port Stephens, the Awabakal at the mouth of the Hunter and Lake Macquarie, the Wonarua in the middle Hunter, the Darkinung on the Hawkesbury and a branch of the Kamilaroi in the Goulburn valley.

15. The Kamilaroi are reputed to have made raids down the Hunter valley as far as Jerrys Plains. A.W. Howitt, The Native Tribes of South-East Australia, London 1904, p. 84.

16. Aldo Massola, The Aborigines of South-Eastern Australia as they were, Melbourne 1971, passim.
first capitalists in Sydney, penned into their stony patch of land, quickly came to regard the lowlands of the Hunter valley as a grazing paddock. In 1820 cattle were overlanded to Patricks Plains (in the middle Hunter) by John Howe. Henry Dangar was sent by Surveyor-General Oxley to explore and survey the new region, and was rewarded with land grants. Within a very few years a rapid explosion of European population had occurred. By 1826 the Hunter district was the most closely settled area outside Cumberland county. 17

From this point, colonisation in the Hunter valley was profoundly intrusive. Settlement by the 1830s was 'flowing through river-flats which resembled the best country of South Devon' and advancing up the valley into the 'inimitable cattle-walks on the rougher country beyond'. 18 The movement has been described in detail by Perry, who observes that the Hunter valley was by far the most attractive field for free immigrant settlers. 19 Land grants of thousands of acres were handed out by the government - 792 grantees were allotted almost 400,000 acres 20 - converting the valley into the strongest bastion of that gentry described by Roe. 21 Roberts calls

17. Between March 1822 and November 1826, 372,000 acres of land in the Hunter valley was appropriated to settlers. The number of sheep rose from nil to almost 9,000 by 1826 and cattle to 4,000. The valley already contained more cultivated land than any district outside Cumberland. C.J. King, Outline of Closer Settlement in New South Wales, Part I, Sydney 1957, p. 30.


20. 372,000 acres were granted to private settlers 1822-6, another 132,000 were set aside for church and school endowment and 100,000 acres were surveyed but not yet appropriated. F.A. Cadell, 'A Survey of Newcastle from its First settlement to the Present Day', Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society, Vol. XXII (1936), p. 383.

21. Roe, Quest for Authority, pp. 35-57.
Figure 1. Location map of the Hunter valley.
the grantees a 'new class of settlers', rich 'feudalistic holders who for two decades were the butt and the envy of the democrats'.

The original population of the region was quickly annihilated, the aboriginals being harrassed by a process which has not yet been documented, until by the end of the nineteenth century there were only a few score remaining in small reserves. Lowlands were cropped, downlands and hills grazed, and woodlands milled and burnt. The tempo of exploitation was stepped up in the 1850s and 1860s. Ring-barking hastened deforestation. Large tracts of newly cleared land were continually being placed under the molars of ever expanding herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

By 1880 it was obvious that there had been overclearing, over-grazing and extensive destruction of the pasture cover. The subsequent erosion was alarming. Overloaded with detritus, the Hunter and other rivers became subject to wild flooding. Inundations of Maitland became commonplace. Constant ploughing and single-crop cultivation of river flats gave rise to soil depletion after only a few seasons. Monoculture also facilitated the spread of diseases, particularly wheat rust which began to infect the lower Hunter in the 1860s. The rabbit was beginning to cause trouble by the 1880s and the prickly pear (introduced to Australia as a fence plant on two estates near Scone) began to spread wildly in the alien soil.

Although overburdened by chaotic farming in 1880, the Hunter valley was subject to more and more pressures in succeeding decades.

22. Roberts, Squatting Age, p. 164.

23. The 1901 census recorded the aboriginal population by counties. There were 116 resident in Gloucester, 41 in Durham, 14 in Phillip, 10 in Northumberland, 6 in Brisbane and 1 in Hunter - a total of 188. NSW C 1901, Part 4, pp. 307-8 and 312-3.
Intensification and diversification of farming increased the weight of population. In 1891 the six counties of Durham, Northumberland, Gloucester, Hunter, Phillip and Brisbane were inhabited by about 130,000 people. Of this population 70,000 was rural and 60,000 was urban (defining as urban the people housed in Newcastle and Maitland). During the period of this study the population of the region grew substantially, until by the census of 1911 the six counties housed almost 179,000 people - an overall increase in twenty years of 37%. Growth was unevenly spread between town and country. The urban population, in spite of the beginnings of industrialisation in the lower Hunter, grew much more slowly than the rural population. Compared with 37% growth for the region as a whole from 1891 to 1911, the number of rural people increased by 64%. A few country areas lost population - in the heavily-eroded hills of Phillip and Hunter counties people were drifting away. Hunter lost 9% of its population between 1891 and 1901 (and then gained 15% in the next decade) while Phillip's population fell steadily by 15% from 1891 to 1911. Everywhere else the population spurred ahead. Along the rich river flats of the Hunter the dairy farms grew closer and closer. More and more farms were being cut out of the bush in Gloucester and Northumberland. Even the coastal marshes were being scored by ploughs and divided by barbed wire for the first time. The eco-system grew more and more

24. The figure for 1881 cannot be obtained for purposes of comparison. The 1881 census used as its basis the boundaries of electorates; those of 1891, 1901 and 1911 the county boundaries.

25. In 1891 the twelve municipalities of Newcastle housed 49,900 people and East and West Maitland 10,200.


27. The population of Newcastle-Maitland grew from 60,100 in 1891 to 65,900 in 1911, an overall increase of about 10%. All municipalities increased from 69,100 to 78,700, or about 14%.
fragile, but 'development' continued almost unchecked.

2. The Towns

From 1880 to 1914 the towns of the Hunter fluctuated about a norm of steady growth. The larger towns - with populations from one to three thousand each - were mostly in the lower Hunter and were being granted municipal government. The municipalities of the region increased from four outside the Newcastle urban area in 1881 (Morpeth, Muswellbrook and the Maitlands), to eleven in 1911 (Aberdeen, Dungog, Greta, the Maitlands, Morpeth, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook, Raymond Terrace, Scone and Singleton), but this was a change in administrative status rather than a real increase in the size and number of towns. The four 1881 municipalities grew only from 10,500 to 14,200 in 1911, an increase of 36% for thirty years (less than the overall regional growth for the twenty years 1891-1911). Apart from Maitland and Newcastle no town exceeded a population of three thousand in 1911.

The fortunes of country towns were sometimes unsteadier than their progress associations would have liked to admit. Some were in decline. Morpeth, being eclipsed as a port by Newcastle, faded from a population of 1,372 in 1881 to 1,064 in 1911. On the other hand a few somnolent road intersections were transformed by local booms into thriving shanty towns with visions of future grandeur. Mining towns were notoriously susceptible to this process. Minmi, a hamlet since the 1840s, experienced a boom when Brown Bros. of Newcastle began to develop coal mines there. The population jumped to 2,000

1. LOWER HUNTER WOODLANDS. A road near Paterson passing through bush paddocks on the Stradbroke estate, c. 1895.

   (Newcastle Public Library)


   (Newcastle Public Library)
by 1881, reached a maximum of 2,600 in 1901 and with the depletion of
the coal reserves began dwindling rapidly to 800 by 1921. Aberdeen
bloomed when a new freezing works was built in the town, causing a
population increase of 600% in ten years. Murrurundi mushroomed
for a short time while it was the rail head for the Northern Railway.
But quiet growth was the commonest experience. Of the seven country
municipalities of 1891, only two lost population within the next
twenty years. The other five, although some declined for short
periods, scored an overall gain. Greta shrank most quickly (with a
loss of 60% in twenty years) and Singleton grew the fastest (increas­
ing by 67% in the same period).30

Below the rank of the substantial country towns was a scatter
of townships and hamlets. They clustered densely along the lower
reaches of the Hunter and its tributaries, bearing such names as
Hexham, Williamstown, Auckland and Bishops Bridge. The little towns
thinned out to a line of river-crossing settlements on the upper
Hunter, at places like Denman, Jerrys Plains and Gundy. Elsewhere
urbanisation was negligible. Apart from a few gold mining and timber
milling settlements there were no villages in the north-east until the
tide of agriculture passed over the area in the 1890s and 1900s and
left a sprinkle of townships at Gloucester, Barrington and elsewhere.
In the south-east there were only a few hamlets at Wollar, Borambil,
Merriwa and Cassilis. These small dusty settlements existed in 1880
and after thirty years remained substantially the same.

29. Its population increased from 106 in 1891 to 749 in 1901. By
1911 it had fallen slightly to 734.

30. Greta shrank from a population of 1,751 in 1891 to 858 in 1911.
Singleton increased from 1,793 to 1,996.
Urban population was highly concentrated, in short, on the principal towns at the mouth of the Hunter river - Maitland and Newcastle. The two towns were rivals for primacy. Although Newcastle was older, Maitland had in the 1830s gained the modest rank of regional capital. So long as the economy remained pastoral and agricultural Maitland, with its good location in the heart of the richest districts, could predominate over a Newcastle cut off from the hinterland. Maitland became a substantial town with a population of 8,000 by 1881. But with the collapse of the wheat staple (due to the spread of rust in the 1860s and 1870s) and subsequent slowing of rural growth, Maitland lost its impetus. The initiative passed to Newcastle. The new Northern Railway - the first in the region - made Newcastle the terminus for a line reaching north into the upper Hunter by the late 1870s and subsequently into New England. Erosion loaded the Hunter river with silt and destroyed the capacity of Maitland to handle ocean-going ships. At the same time, the size of ships was increasing, further rendering the river ports obsolete. Newcastle became the entrepot for the whole of northern New South Wales, and all the while its mining and industrial base was steadily expanding.

By 1891 the future pattern of regional urbanisation had become clear. Maitland housed a little over 10,000 people; Newcastle, with its suburbs, was a city of 50,000. The proving of the Greta coal seams in 1886 began a temporary dispersal of Newcastle's growth, by directing mining expansion into a ring of satellite towns to the west of the city proper. But the transformation of the simple rural economy of the Hunter Valley into an agricultural-mining-industrial

complex' had been launched, and Newcastle had been established as the centre of it. 32 A railway link with Sydney in 1887 reinforced this transformation, and the laying of a railway from Maitland to Dungog in 1911 could hardly offset the trend. Maitland in the 1890s seemed doomed. Its economy was stagnant and its population actually declined by 1% between 1891 and 1901. 33 But the old place still had some life left in it - the rural boom of the 1900s sent the population up to 11,300 by 1911 and although it would never rival Newcastle again, Maitland had shown an overall increase of 41% in thirty years from 1881 to 1911. Newcastle grew only 9% between 1891 and 1911. 34

The appearance of the country towns of the Hunter valley was generally uniform and monotonous. Their layout was almost always the colonial gridiron, surveyed with little regard for topography and indiscriminately planked down over ridges, hillocks, gullies and watercourses. In Dungog many of the streets were too steep for wheeled traffic, because the surveyor had ignored contours, and in Muswellbrook the useful area was cramped by a hill intruding into the middle of the gridiron. 35 The buildings that (more or less completely) filled the spaces in these rectangles were almost all wooden. Stone was employed for building more widely in the Hunter valley than was usual in the colony, but it was still limited. 36 Rather more build-

32. Ibid., p. 5.
33. From 10,196 to 10,073.
34. Maitland's overall growth was from 8,005 in 1881 to 11,313 in 1911. Newcastle's twelve municipalities grew from 49,910 in 1891 to 54,603 in 1911.
35. For a discussion of the stereotyped layout of Hunter valley towns, see King, Urban Pattern of the Hunter, p. 88.
36. In Durham county, for example, only 48 of a total of 2,564 habitations in 1901 were built of stone. Of the three municipalities in the county, 506 of their 693 habitations were wooden. Most of the remainder were brick or iron. NSW C 1901, Part 6, p. 500.
ings were of brick than stone, but townscapes for the most part con-
sisted of loose clusters of wood, corrugated iron and paint, irregu-
larly spaced along wide dusty streets. Rutted carriage-ways ran up
the middle of the broad thoroughfares, the verges of which were over-
grown with coarse grass. Mobs of sheep and herds of cattle would
frequently be driven through en route to market, or new pastures. Only
in Singleton were the streets narrow, affording kind shade on summer
days. Many trees planted by town councils grew up into attractive
domains and avenues in Scone, Muswellbrook, Hinton and elsewhere.

Journalists' accounts of the towns varied little throughout
the period. A Sydney newspaper described Scone in 1871 as 'very
quiet' but 'a sober, steady little town' which possessed some neat
buildings and good people. 37 A generation later Scone was called:

One of the best ordered and most pleasing little towns in
the north. The hotels are old-fashioned but comfortable,
and the streets ... are straight and planted on either
side with pepper trees, giving the place even in hot
weather a cool and refreshing appearance. 38

Maitland was praised for its more metropolitan appearance. Situated
on undulating land, it was divided into two parts by Wallis creek.
East Maitland was laid out in a gridiron and had failed to grow
according to expectations, having become a leafy suburb of West
Maitland, with a number of substantial brick and stone mansions, many
small wooden villas, avenues, churches and some public buildings
designed with colonial gothic or neo-classical facades. West Mait-
land had grown up unplanned, unlike its government surveyed sister.
The West housed the bulk of the town's population, together with its

38. MM, 30 November 1895.
business houses, light industries and pubs. The High street - the cramped main thoroughfare - ran parallel to wharves on the Hunter river. The town served principally as a market and business centre, but local enterprise had set up in addition some small secondary industries: tanneries, boot factories, coachworks, timber mills, a tobacco processing plant, a brewery and a broom-making factory. But Maitland was no city. In spite of its 'fine new four-storeyed buildings of stone, brick and cement ... which would not discredit Sydney', there was 'an indolent air about everything and everybody'. A Sydney journalist could write that 'Maitland from the railway, seems a nice, prosperous, old-fashioned town ... There seem wide streets and good substantial houses'. But a local newspaper confessed:

West Maitland for all its buildings and trade is not a gainly town ... its low situation, marshy surroundings, and dusty streets give no relief to the intensity of summerheat, and in winter have no protection from floods, so that life is subjected to more than ordinary inconveniences and sometimes more than ordinary danger.

East Maitland had a reputation for respectability; the successful merchants and professional men of the town lived in the East, in a large way. An upper Hunter pastoralist like W.E. Abbott might dismiss the town with doggerel verse:

Farewell, ye houses, low and damp;
Farewell, thou far-surrounding swamp,
Where pestilential vapours rise,
And all that's good or lovely dies.
Oh, grant I ne'er behold again;
A town so cursed of gods and men.

40. Sydney Mail, 30 March 1878.
41. Singleton Argus, 28 April 1877.
But to a certain extent the social life of the lower Hunter was dominated by the little urban elite of Maitland, which 'set the tone' in a way townspeople were not able to do inland. The town councils and local associations were headed by doctors, lawyers, auctioneers and merchants. Their wives dominated social assemblies like the annual St John's ball.\textsuperscript{43} Only one of the pastoral families exerted much influence in Maitland - the Clifts, large proprietors of estates in the Hunter valley and New England, lived in Maitland town houses and served as local patrons. Well-to-do small and middling farmers retired to houses in East Maitland and reinforced its reputation for conservatism. Throughout the years 1880-1914, while Newcastle surpassed Maitland in size and wealth and even began to capture some rural market functions, Newcastle remained not a 'nice' town. A Singleton journalist eschewed the 'sooty atmosphere of the place', criticised the lack of 'any tempting sites for private buildings' and concluded that 'it is not so desirable for purposes of residence as for those of business'.\textsuperscript{44}

The principal function of the country towns was to serve farmers and pastoralists. The towns acted as market centres, where rural produce was collected for shipment and imported goods were distributed. They also provided local agencies for various purposes: magistrates sat in their courthouses, clergymen performed religious services in their churches and bankers gave credit and took investments behind italianate porches. Mining towns were beginning to creep up the valley. Some, like Branxton, were old market villages

\textsuperscript{43} In 1912 the dance attracted 300 people, many from as far away as Sydney and Armidale, but none from the local pastoral families. MM, 13 July 1912.

\textsuperscript{44} Singleton Argus, 18 April 1877.
enriched by the discovery of a coal measure. Others, like Greta, sprang up from nothing. The slight gold rush of the 1880s spawned some other mining towns in the north-east - a scatter of transient townships which had mostly collapsed into the bush by 1900. A few gold towns assumed marketing functions and Copeland, Barrington and Wangat became permanent. Along the forested coastal zone there were also a few timber milling settlements like Bulladelah and Gosford. Some small resort towns were beginning to appear on the bays and peninsulas around Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens.

But the continuing dominance of the rural sector in the region's economy, outside Northumberland county, meant that most townships existed for market and administrative purposes. A correspondent from the Maitland Mercury claimed that they were simply the 'local emporiums' of the pastoral families. Muswellbrook, he declared, was the 'capital of the Bowmans', while Singleton was that of the Loder and Dangar families. These assertions were inaccurate. Muswellbrook and Singleton were both surrounded by hundreds of small and middle-sized farmers who far outnumbered the few large proprietors. In simple economic terms, farmers were the mainstay and support of small country towns. Where cockatoo farmers were fewest, towns were stunted. A Sydney correspondent, remarking on the lack of growth in Murrurundi and Scone, blamed it on 'immense areas of cultivated land in the hands of a few grantees'. Large estates were often self-sufficient in foodstuffs and some also tanned their own leather, coopered their own casks and smithed their own horses. The goods they bought from local towns were confined to a few bulk commodities - ironmongery, seeds,

45. MM, 29 January 1910.
beer. For luxuries the pastoral families went to Sydney. Mackenzie, observing that Denman was not growing into the town it might have been, attributed its atrophy to the neglect of the few 'big' people who owned estates nearby and who:

as a rule, do not patronise poor Denman much. This fashion of well-to-do people not supporting local tradesmen is observable almost everywhere, so that beyond a few actual necessaries, it is generally preferred that everything should come straight from Sydney.47

The same was true of Merriwa, Cassilis and other places in the upper Hunter. Where there was a large small-farming population, towns grew steadily.

The importance of farmers to country towns (and vice versa) was shown by the popularity of rural fairs. The first farmers' co-operative in the Hunter valley was established at Maitland, where the Maitland Farmers' Union was formed in the 1880s. The union set up a weekly market at which all members agreed to sell their farm produce by direct auction. By the late 1890s the scheme was flourishing and the whole town of Maitland came alive every Wednesday, when the market was held. The fair had become a major institution of the valley. Cooperatives and unions spread rapidly among farmers, especially in the new dairy industry. Agricultural and pastoral shows were another form of fair, even more significant than market days. Ten country towns supported shows: Dungog, Gresford, Maitland, Gosford, Singleton, Muswellbrook, Gloucester, Merriwa, Cessnock and Scone.48 The economic value of a show was surpassed by its importance as a meeting place. Singleton, said to be a dull town for most of the year, 'gained the airs and aspects of importance' when the annual show was

47. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 121.
held. The town prided itself, as did most other show centres, upon possessing a 'really fine pavilion' and a well endowed show ground.\textsuperscript{49} When the respected large proprietor A.A. Dangar attempted to unite the small local shows into 'one big show' in the 1890s, his idea gained acceptance only among other large proprietors,\textsuperscript{50} and then collapsed. Dangar's scheme was probably seen as a threat to local community.

There was little other industry in the country towns of the 1880s. In the Upper Hunter electorate, for example, only twelve 'manufactories' could be found, and all were of the simplest kind.\textsuperscript{51} By 1899 the electorate possessed six new works (dairy factories) and the entire region in the same year supported 39 new dairy processing establishments. Another industrial accession was the works of the Australian Meat Chilling and Freezing Co. at Aberdeen. The freezing works, established in 1892, was employing two hundred men by the end of 1893 and had become the largest factory beyond Newcastle.\textsuperscript{53} Dairying and meat-freezing were new, boom industries. The more traditional rural enterprises in country towns remained stable: the three flour mills in the 1889 Upper Hunter electorate had increased only to four a decade later. All the new works in the region continued to be linked with farming. The Hunter valley country towns remained market centres for farmers.

\textsuperscript{50} PR, 15 June 1894.
\textsuperscript{51} Three flour-mills, one saw-mill, four brickfields, one saddlery, one printing works, one wagon works and one railway repair shop. \textit{NSW VP} 1889, Vol. 1, pp. 246-7.
\textsuperscript{52} Yewen's Directory of the Landholders of New South Wales, Sydney 1900, pp. 569-74.
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Sydney Mail}, 19 January 1894.
3. Trade and Communication

In spite of constant pressure from outlying districts, the transport system of the valley changed little from 1880 to 1914. The 1880s saw completion of the Northern Railway which had been started at Newcastle in 1858 and had not reached Tamworth until 1878. This long single track, following the valley of the Hunter up from the seaport to the headwaters at Murrurundi and thence into New England, remained the spine of the region's transport system. A southern connection with Sydney in 1887 directed trade more heavily onto the railways, and reduced the importance of coastal shipping. But the efforts of local advocates to gain tributary lines for their districts failed for the most part. A feeder line to Dungog, expanded to reach Taree by 1913, eliminated some of the river boat trade on the Williams. The region's second feeder, a line to link the Merriwa plateau with Muswellbrook, began to be laid in 1914 and did not reach Merriwa until 1917.

Although the railway system was sparse, it was the principal medium for trade, and became steadily more important. From 1880 to 1910 the number of bales of wool shipped from the railway stations of the region increased from some 8,000 to over 28,000 - a growth of about 350% in thirty years. The water transport system of the Hunter river was in eclipse. King and Woolmington regard the period 1820-60 as the heyday of the river trade, after which came a rapid decline until the trade was virtually non-existent by 1900.

54. In the decade 1880-90 the number of bales of wool shipped from local railway stations increased from 8,326 to 17,281. NSW VP 1881, Vol. IV, p. 100 and 1891-2, Vol. V, p. 33.
river shipping system was largely in the hands of Hunter river shipping companies, based in Maitland and Newcastle, which ran the transshipment operation. Droghers carted produce up and down the tributary rivers, and up the Hunter beyond Morpeth, to be cleared at market towns, or to be transferred to coastal steamers. As late as 1903 it was claimed that the coastal trade of Hunter river steamers was still important. But in 1891–2 the two main steamer companies had found it necessary to amalgamate under the name of the Hunter River Steam Navigation Co. and from that time on the coastal shipping to Sydney appears to have been declining almost as quickly as the river trade. How much this was due to deterioration of Hunter river ports, and how much to the modest spread of the railway system, is debatable. The small droghers continued to be of importance to one section of the community — small dairy farmers, who were increasing in number and whose cream was carried long distances on river boats to the central creameries and factories.

While the railways flourished and the waterways declined, the principal means of conveying produce to railheads or roadsteads remained the same. Everywhere in the region, from the stump-covered valleys of Gloucester county to the open grasslands of Brisbane, farmers and graziers could only move their goods arduously and with costly slowness. Waggons and drays laboured over roads which were extremely bad everywhere but around Maitland. From the Dungog

57. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', NSW PP 1904, Vol. III, p. 35.
58. The amalgamating companies were the Australasian Steamship Co. and the Newcastle Steam Navigation Co.
59. One suggestion is that centralisation of the railway network on Newcastle was the principal cause of the decline in shipping. King, Urban Pattern of the Hunter, p. 18.
district, while dairy produce could be floated down the Williams river, all stock and heavy goods had to be overlanded down execrable roads to Maitland. Apart from the bogs and potholes of ill-formed tracks there were other obstacles to be faced too. Landowners often disputed right of passage across their land, and would sometimes close roads. This led to litigation and acrimony. On other occasions, when much-needed road improvements were attempted, similar obstructions occurred. When the Port Stephens Stock Board tried to form two deviations on the Gloucester-Maitland stock road, entailing the purchase of small areas of land from two large farmers, the farmers refused to sell.

A few places enjoyed fair roads. From Cassilis to a railhead at Mudgee, a distance of fifty miles, there was an 'excellent' road, serving 'very well for the purposes of wool transport and return supplies'. But even on these rare good highways, cartage was costly. In 1904 J.B. Bettington of Brindley Park declared that it did not pay for most men in the Merriwa district to grow grain crops, because cartage involved a loss of ninepence a bushel merely to overland corn to the railway at Muswellbrook. Agriculture was said to be crippled even in the Denman district, only a dozen miles from the railway, because of the prohibitive cost of 'present haulage to

60. For a description of the Dungog and Gloucester districts in 1904 see 'Report, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 11.

61. The White family, for example, shut down roads passing through their Segenhoe estate. This gave rise to a dispute lasting three years. *NSW VP* 1882, Vol. II, pp. 1355-65.


64. Ibid., p. 56.
3. FAT CATTLE GRAZING ON MARTINDALE, 1914.
From this estate the White family sent off 5,000 fattened head every year to the freezing works at Aberdeen.

(PR, 16 February 1914)

4. WOOL TEAMS LEAVING BRINDLEY PARK, 1914. The Bettington family shipped wool by dray to the railway at Muswellbrook and thence to Sydney for sale.

(PR, 16 September 1914)
Muswellbrook'. The impact of motorised road transport was not to be felt until after the war.

Bad roads served to strengthen local markets. Inadequate railway penetration in Gloucester county meant that most local graziers generally overlanded their fat cattle to Maitland and sold them there, rather than pay an extra ten shillings per head to truck their beasts by rail to Sydney. In the upper Hunter the situation was the same. In 1898 it was estimated that while the railways were shipping about 730 trucks of fat cattle from that district to Sydney, another 700 were sent only as far as the local works at Aberdeen. A third substantial proportion was railed to the Maitland sale yards. The manager of Woodlands claimed that while large proprietors tended to send stock directly to Sydney, smaller men in the upper Hunter shipped produce down river to Maitland. The continuing primitiveness of local transport, in short, enabled country towns to retain their market functions, and reinforced the stable pattern of urban settlement in the region.

66. According to G.S. Waller of The Grange (a large proprietor). 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 50.
67. According to the local stock inspector. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 15.
68. Ibid., p. 45.
CHAPTER TWO

THE LAND

1. Land Use

While the towns grew modestly, the rural population of the valley expanded quickly. Rural growth was both a cause and an effect of new forms of land use. In the 1880s the rural economy was still based upon a simple exploitation of unimproved native grasses, on which cattle were grazed to provide Sydney with beef and sheep to provide Europe with wool. Agriculture was slight and largely confined to the river flats of the lower Hunter. In 1860 W.G. Pennington wrote:

up the valley of the Hunter there is at this day large tracts of the finest land in the world in a state of nature ... Proprietors have not found it worth their while to clear the land themselves, and have not been able to offer tenures to tenants sufficiently tempting to induce them to take it upon clearing leases.¹

Agriculture only manifested itself in 'an eruption of feeble blotches'.²

As late as 1896 the same claim could still be made. Of 1,700,000 acres which had been alienated in the Hawkesbury and Hunter valleys, only 60,000 were under cultivation.³ In 1881 the five thousand or so farmers of the Hunter valley owned only 1,937 agricultural machines between them.⁴ Farming in the region was rudimentary and inconsiderable.

1. Southern Cross, 28 April 1860.
2. Ibid.
3. NSW PD 1896, Vol. 82, p. 536.
4. There were 1,937 'works' connected with or dependent upon agriculture in the seven rural districts of the region. Although listed as 'manufactories' these were, except for a few flour mills, simple agricultural plant of the lightest type. Of the 282 'works' in Durham, for example, no fewer than 110 were merely corn-shellers. Statistical Register of New South Wales 1881, pp. 184-7.
By 1914 pastoralism had been revolutionised. In 1885 the valley had been grazing only 740,000 sheep and 190,000 cattle.\(^5\) Thirty years later sheep flocks had risen to 1,320,000 and cattle herds to 400,000 - sheep had almost doubled and cattle had more than doubled.\(^6\) At the same time there was important reform in the methods of grazing, due to the freezing industry. Large scale commercial meat freezing began in the 1880s in Australia, New Zealand and Argentina and by the end of the decade New Zealand in particular had opened up a lucrative new British market for mutton and lamb. By the early 1890s the pastoralists of New South Wales were being 'continually told what superior stock-raisers and meat producers' the New Zealanders were.\(^7\) Local graziers concluded that the best parts of New South Wales - including the Hunter valley - only required the adoption of the New Zealand system of farming and sheep-breeding to make cross-breeding and fattening as successful ... as in New Zealand.\(^8\)

The establishment of the Aberdeen freezing works in the 1890s enabled Hunter valley landowners to introduce the 'New Zealand system'. From 1893 onwards, Hunter valley men were among the New South Wales pastoralists who began to import cross-breeding stock from New Zealand. The formerly ubiquitous Merino of the upper Hunter began to be replaced by the Corriedale.\(^9\) Romney Marsh started to arrive from across the Tasman

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8. Ibid.

9. PR, 15 July 1893.
in 1894 and among the first importers were the White brothers, doyens of upper Hunter pastoral families. 10

Cattle-fattening increased as fast as sheep-fattening. As early as 1899 the works at Aberdeen were processing 6,300 cattle annually, in addition to 220,000 sheep 11 and perhaps as many again were being trucked by landowners to the works at Sydney. A form of specialised grazing became established by 1900, the upper Hunter concentrating on fat sheep and the lower Hunter on cattle. In some districts the two industries grew in a complementary fashion, as at Singleton. 12 The new mixed pastoralism was a lively innovator. Along with the introduction of new breeds and fattening practices came a need for new forms of feed, to enable stock numbers to be built up at artificially high levels during lambing and calving seasons. The result was a rapid proliferation of new feed crops like rape and lucerne, and the beginning of large-scale pasture improvement. New permanent meadows of rye-grass and clover began to be laid down as replacements for native grasses.

Dairying also revolutionised pastoralism in the 1890s. Various innovations of the 1880s - the cream separator, pasteurization, the Babcock butter fat tester and the refrigeration of shipping - were promoted in the 1890s by the establishment of the first co-operative factories in the Hunter valley. 13 The result was a rapid spread of

10. PR, 15 January 1894.
12. From 1903 to 1909 the number of cattle in the Singleton stock district increased from 46,100 to 64,800 and the number of sheep from 37,600 to 69,000.
cash dairy farming. Large proprietors responded by cutting up parts of their estates into share farms. By 1899 the lowlands of the lower and middle Hunter were thick with dairy herds. Even outlying districts like Cassilis and Port Stephens began to hear the noise of milch cow bells. 14

The pastoral revolution was paralleled by reforms in agriculture. What meat freezing and the Babcock tester were to pastoralism, the stump-jump plough is said to have been to agriculture. 15 This innovation was not as important in the Hunter region as elsewhere, however, because the Merriwa plateau and upper Hunter river flats—the scenes of most of the new farming expansion—were almost bare of trees. Development in the Hunter is probably more accurately explained as the advance of an agricultural frontier inland from the rust-blighted lower Hunter. As grain crops were abandoned around Maitland and Singleton, to be replaced by dairy herds and flocks of fat lambs, new fields were broken in on the useful cracking soils of the Merriwa plateau. 16 The Muswellbrook, Scone and Merriwa districts, enjoying something of a wheat boom, shared the advantages of other new wheat areas in the colony—the new Farrer cross-breeds, improved knowledge of soils, seed and fertilisers, better equipment and newly

14. There were 342 dairy farms in the Maitland district in 1899 and 390 in Patricks Plains. 65 dairy farmers had established themselves at Port Stephens and 8 were to be found in the wilderness near Cassilis. Yewen's Directory.

15. The stump-jump plough was introduced in 1875. Other explanations for the success of agriculture in New South Wales between 1890 and 1906 have included Farrer's new wheat strains and innovations in agricultural science. King, Closer Settlement, p. 125.

abundant labour due to economic depression. The area under grain in the upper Hunter increased considerably in the 1890s and then stabilised. A new staple had been found.

As the wheat zone shifted inland, the lower Hunter did more than just replace corn with cows - it diversified and intensified. Although lower Hunter farmers had abandoned wheat altogether by 1899, most were still cropping their land. Of 5,591 farms in the valley, 3,932 were growing crops. In the same year they cultivated 68,000 acres - substantially more than farmers inland. Stimulating factors included not only the new stock fattening system but also population growth. As Newcastle and its satellite mining towns grew, so did the outlet for potatoes, fruit, pumpkins and barley. The 1887 railway link with Sydney made it possible for fresh foodstuffs to reach the metropolitan market. For a time there seems to have been a gap between the new demand for food and the ability of Hunter valley farmers to supply it. Newcastle was importing some of its requirements by sea as late as 1903. There is no doubt that farming specialisation proceeded apace. By 1898 the Broke district alone was producing 25,000 bushels of maize, 15,000 of wheat, 1,000 of barley, 500 of

17. Improvements in transport can be discounted as a factor in this advance; the lack of significant improvements in the railways and roads of the region has already been pointed out.

18. In spite of the upper Hunter wheat boom, the output of the Hunter region as a whole declined. T.A. Coghlan, Wealth and Progress of New South Wales 1892, pp. 298-300.


21. In 1903 two ships from Adelaide and one from South America brought food to Newcastle. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 25.
oats, 2,500 tons of hay, 2,000 tons of pumpkins, 500 tons of potatoes and 500 tons of fruit per annum. 22

By all indices, farming in the Hunter valley was a success story between 1880 and 1914. The challenges of soil depletion and erosion were still being ignored, but productivity was forced ahead by more and more intensive labour. The flocks of sheep grazed, herds of cattle milked, acres of land cultivated and number of horses employed in the valley grew steadily throughout the period. 23 By 1914 the Hunter valley economy had ceased to be one of simple pastoralism. It was an efficient, diversified primary industry - a cornucopia of fruits, vines, herbs, butter and cheese. On the river at Morpeth and by the docks at Newcastle, ocean-going ships were opening their holds to frozen pink carcasses of mutton, lamb and beef. 24

22. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 32.

23. Horses in the six pastoral districts increased in number by 61% (from 39,700 to 63,800 from 1885 to 1914). The acreage of land cultivated in the electorates of Durham, Gloucester, Maitland East, Maitland West, Hunter, Upper Hunter, Newcastle, Northumberland and Morpeth totalled 43,982 acres in 1885. By 1914 the same area (the police districts of Brisbane Water, Cassilis, Dungog, Maitland, Manning River, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Raymond Terrace, Scone, Singleton and Wollombi) was cultivating 120,585 acres - an increase of more than 270%. NSW VP 1885 (2nd Session), Vol. III, pp. 255, 258, 300, 345 and 361 and Statistical Register of New South Wales 1914-5, pp. 1226-9.

24. The degree of development in the region must not be overstated, however. There were still markedly primitive aspects to Hunter valley farming. As late as 1914 the area of land in the Hunter and Manning Division under fertilisation by artificial means or by manure was a mere 1,927 acres. NSW Year Book 1915, p. 867.
2. Land Tenure

The land of the Hunter valley was divided by a complex pattern of land tenure inherited from sixty years of changing policies at Sydney. The primary division was between used and waste land. At the beginning of the period, the greater part of the region remained waste - in 1883 only 4,100,000 acres, or 48% of the land, were being farmed. By 1914 the area of used land had increased slowly to 5,020,000 acres, or 58% of the region.\(^{25}\) Forested rocky hills in southern Northumberland and Hunter, the barrens of coastal Gloucester and the northern mountains accounted for most of the waste land.\(^{26}\)

Used land was divided between freehold and leasehold. The oldest freeholds were those which had been granted to private individuals in the early decades of settlement. These grants still clustered along the river banks, mostly in the form of large estates. Following the period of grants the system of squatting had given rise to a large number of pastoral leases over hills and plateaux in the outlying parts of the region. Conditional purchases and conditional leases were made in thousands under the Robertson legislation. In addition there was a good deal of freeholding of leased land, and many thousands of instances of conveyance, fragmentation and aggregation. The Crown Lands Act of 1884 led to the introduction of new tenures such as Improvement Purchase, Annual Lease, Special Lease, Improvement Purchase, Annual Lease, Special Lease,

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\(^{25}\) Defining the region as the six counties of Northumberland, Gloucester, Durham, Hunter, Phillip and Brisbane.

\(^{26}\) The county with the largest area of waste land in 1883 was Hunter, in which only 11.2% of the total area was under use. Three other counties possessed more waste land than used land (Northumberland, in which only 33.2% of land was used, Phillip with 42.7% used and Gloucester with 42.3% used). Durham and Brisbane possessed 80.0% and 75.4% used land. NSW VP 1883, Vol. II, p. 84.
Occupation Licence and Homestead Lease. The Crown Lands Act of 1895 established Homestead Selection and Settlement Lease. In 1904 the Closer Settlement Act enabled the government to resume land and dispose of it in small selections and leaseholds. The Crown Lands (Amendment) Act of 1908 enabled these lots to be converted into freehold.

The bulk of the used land was, in fact, always freehold. In 1883 private freehold ownership accounted for 83% of the utilised land in the region. The pattern of freehold tenure was complicated to a certain extent by the institution of tenancy. In the Hunter valley, freehold farms were often let by their owners to tenant farmers or, from the 1890s, to share farmers. The extent of tenancy is difficult to measure and fluctuated a good deal from place to place. In 1913 the proportion of freehold land privately rented was 12.4% for the six counties. The area of land farmed under the shares system was documented sporadically, and in 1913 accounted for 1.1% of the total area of alienated land. Tenancy was therefore exceptional among landowners as a whole, but it was disproportionately important for large proprietors—many big estates were at least partially subdivided into farms let out to tenants. The incidence of tenancy was highest in Northumberland, Durham and Hunter, in all of which over 15% of freehold land was let out.

The advent of dairying revived tenantry in the form of the 'halves' system. The Grange estate near Dungog was operated from

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27. Or 3,140,000 acres of a total 4,104,000. Ibid.
28. In 1913 of 3,997,900 acres of freehold land in the six counties, 496,300 were privately rented. Statistical Register of New South Wales 1913, p. 892.
29. The area farmed on shares was 43,890 acres. Ibid., pp. 653-4.
the 1890s in this system which, it was hoped, would 'prove of mutual
benefit to land-lord and tenant alike'. 30 G.S. Waller, the proprie-
tor, found 60 acres for cultivation, while the tenant supplied all
farming implements and other appliances for growing sorghum, lucerne
and other crops. In addition he milked a hundred cows. Profits were
divided between tenant and landlord. 31 Share-farming of this type
occurred most commonly in Gloucester, Durham and Brisbane. In Durham
2.9% of alienated land was held on the shares system by 1913 - much
the largest proportion in the region. Gloucester possibly supported
more tenancy overall. Many small farmers there in the 1880s were
renting their land from the Australian Agricultural Co., or from the
Church and School Lands estate (created in 1826 to endow the colonial
Church of England and given to the Department of Education in 1880,
this was an area of over 100,000 acres subdivided into lots let out
as farms). 32 In the 1890s large numbers of selectors were added to
these tenants and the dismantling of the Australian Agricultural Co.
and Church and School estates led to the establishment of a new pheno-
menon of single-farm tenancy. In spite of a claim in 1904 that the
farmers of the county were 'not speculators' and were living on their
own properties, 33 large numbers of resident farmers were renting
their land from other small men. Their rents were fixed annual sums,
privately negotiated.

Land ownership varied not only according to tenure, but also

31. Ibid.
32. R.B. Walker, 'The Later History of the Church and School
Lands', Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society,
33. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to
South Grafton', p. 51.
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according to scale. At the beginning of the period a complete survey of land ownership was made by the colonial government. This showed that in 1885 there were about 5,000 freehold properties in the Hunter valley. The ownership structure of these freeholdings was like a steep pyramid, with a truncated lowest level. The largest single group of freeholders were some 2,000 persons who owned properties of 21 to 100 acres - or 42% of the freeholders of the valley. Below this group were peasant proprietors who owned 20 acres and under, representing another 14% of the total number of freeholders. Above this base was a consistent tapering off, with 16% of proprietors holding from 101 to 200 acres, 14% from 201 to 500 acres, 7% from 501 to 1,000 acres, 2% from 1,001 to 1,500 acres, 1% from 1,501 to 2,000 acres and under 1% from 2,001 to 2,500 acres. A discrete clump of 82 owners (or nearly 2%) held properties from 2,501 to 5,000 acres and another 97 (or 2%) possessed more than 5,000 freehold acres each.

The ownership pyramid varied considerably from district to district. Coastal districts supported a much broader and somewhat flatter pyramid, with many small farmers and proportionally few large proprietors. Inland, on the grassy plateaux and valleys, the structure of landowning was more unequal. Small farmers were fewer in Merriwa than in Singleton, and in the Murrurundi district the largest single number of proprietors were middle-sized farmers with from 201 to 500 acres each (Appendix I). In every district, however, there was a substantial majority of small holders. Even the 'squatter-ridden districts of Merriwa and Cassilis' had always supported a

34. In the five land districts of Maitland, Merriwa, Murrurundi, Port Stephens and Singleton there were 4,997 freeholdings. 'Return of the holdings in the Colony 1885'.

35. The acreage of 237 properties was not indicated.
population of selectors, and by 1904 the 'small men' of the district owned about 25% of the sheep and considerably outnumbered large proprietors. By 1910, of 351 holders of land in Merriwa Shire and Kerrabee district some 27% owned less than 101 acres each. Another 52% owned from 101 to 1,000 acres apiece, 20% from 1,001 to 5,000 acres and only 1% over 5,000 acres.

The landowning pyramid changed little in shape throughout the period. In 1914 the largest number of holdings were still to be found at the bottom of the pyramid - 54% of all properties being of 100 acres or less. The intermediate group of farmers (101 to 500 acres each) accounted for 29% of proprietors, while large farmers with from 501 to 1,000 acres increased in number slightly to make up 8% of all landowners. There was a similar increase in the proportion of holdings from 1,001 to 5,000 acres. The relative number of holders of more than 5,000 acres fell. In short, there was a very slight compression of the base of the pyramid and a more substantial

37. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 15.
38. 96 owned under 101 acres, 186 from 101 to 1,000 acres, 74 from 1,001 to 5,000 acres and only 4 owned over 5,000 acres. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', pp. 3-5.
39. Proportions of classes of landholders in Hunter region by size of holdings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>size of holdings</th>
<th>% of 1885 holdings</th>
<th>% of 1914-5 holdings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 100 acres</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-500 acres</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-1,000 acres</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,001-5,000 acres</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40. The 97 holdings over 5,000 acres in 1885 were 2.04% of all holdings. In 1914-5 the 119 holdings over 5,000 acres were 1.03% of all holdings.
growth at the centre. Although all classes of property increased in absolute numbers, the most rapidly expanding were large farms and small grazing properties.

But the landholding structure was essentially stable over this period of thirty years. Analysis of stockowning reinforces the impression of continuity. In 1885 some 88 persons in the Hunter region owned flocks of over 5,000 sheep or herds of over 500 cattle. By 1897 there were 107 such large stockowners and by 1915 they numbered 119. The increase in numbers of this group keeps pace, very roughly, with the growth in the number of holders of over 5,000 acres of land. The two groups are, in fact, substantially the same. In 1885 the 1.4% of landowners who possessed over 5,000 acres each owned 54% of all the used land in the region. They also owned 73% of the sheep and 35% of the cattle. By 1896/7 the largest landowners had slightly increased their share of the total, being in possession of 72% of the sheep and 39% of the cattle. This trend was reversed about the turn of the century and by 1914 the largest proprietors held 64% of the sheep in the Hunter valley and their share of the cattle had fallen to 26%.

The region was, then, the scene of rapid growth in productivity from 1880 to 1914, yet saw no important redistribution of land.

41. Australian Pastoral Directory 1897 and 1915.
42. 97 owners possessed 1,802,985 acres, 535,700 sheep and 65,120 cattle. The total acreage of freehold land in the region was 3,334,357 and there were totals of 738,744 sheep and 188,051 cattle.
43. 99 owners possessed 668,100 sheep and 95,633 cattle. The total number of sheep in the region was 1,016,300 and of cattle 256,090.
44. 118 owners possessed 769,090 sheep and 104,851 cattle. The total number of sheep in the region was 1,194,672 and of cattle 399,366.
The farming industry was revolutionised, the number of farmers more than doubled,\(^45\) and the acreage of land under use increased greatly. Yet the organisation of the landowning and stockowning structures remained substantially the same. The Hunter valley remained a region in which one hundred large estates (more or less) grazed most of the sheep and a large share of the cattle. Surrounding these estates were almost 5,000 farms in 1885 and at least 12,000 in 1914.

The district of Jerrys Plains, in the middle Hunter valley, represented something like a norm. The district consisted of a number of shallow valleys and wooded hills. In one valley, on the southern bank of the Hunter river, was a township of about 250 people. In nearby valleys were hamlets with names like Apple-tree Flat and Doyles Creek. There was no railway in the district, but one was being laid from Muswellbrook in 1914. The bulk of the land was engrossed by the estates of Arrowfield, Woodlands, Martindale and Merton. These estates were primarily given over to cattle-grazing, but there were two tenants dairying on Merton. Around the villages and the hamlets were clusters of small farms growing fruit, fattening cattle and increasingly taking to dairying. At Doyles Creek a community of thirty small farmers grew a total of 720 acres of crops between them. The population was on the increase.\(^46\)

\(^{45}\) Statistical Register of New South Wales 1914-5, pp. 1226-9, lists 12,417 holdings of over one acre in the police districts of Brisbane Water, Cassilis, Dungog, Maitland, Manning River, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Raymond Terrace, Scone, Singleton and Wollombi. The area of these twelve districts was roughly equal to that of the five land districts of 1885, in which there were 4,997 land freeholdings. These figures are liable to wide error, but an absolute doubling, at least, of the number of landholdings in the region over the thirty year period is a modest estimate.

\(^{46}\) 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 13.
In the same year, a more egalitarian type of Hunter valley community was found in the Stroud and Dungog districts. Most of the well-watered land in these districts was alienated in farms from 200 to 5,000 acres, and although as in Jerrys Plains the main economic activity of the districts was the grazing of cattle and export of fat stock, there were 'a good many small settlers' in the neighbourhood, and the few estates were not large. Around the town of Gloucester, extensive cultivation in the valleys of the Avon and the Barrington, together with a growing dairy industry in the hills, was carried out entirely by small farmers and there were no big estates at all. In the Merriwa and Cassilis districts, on the other hand, enormous estates still monopolised most of the land.

3. Land Subdivision

Persistence of the status quo in the Hunter valley is surprising, for the years from 1880 to 1914 saw increasing pressure on large estates. These pressures found legislative form in two series of measures, one aimed at dismantling leasehold stations and the other at resumption of freehold estates. The government of New South Wales passed a series of Crown Land Acts aimed at putting selectors on leasehold land, the most important being the 1884 Act. It was believed that the Robertson Acts had failed to establish 'bona fide' settlement on any useful scale, although recent research is coming to different

47. 'Report, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 11.

48. In 1909 thirteen estates contained 513,000 acres of land. The two largest properties, Brindley Park and Collaroy, engrossed 224,000 acres between them. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 12.
conclusions. The Morris-Ranken report exempted the Hunter valley from its criticism of the old selection system, however, and claimed:

selection has shaken down alongside the old grants without bringing monopoly or debt in its train; while large portions of land in the heart of scrubs and in mountain regions, previously unoccupied, have been reclaimed and peopled by selectors.

A second criticism of the Robertson Acts was that they had given rise to 'a feud between invaders and invaded'. The Morris-Ranken report considered the Hunter valley to have avoided this problem too, it being one of the districts the report called

largely free from the bitter class antagonism which has divided the community in the pastoral districts proper ...

But since the bulk of the land in the Hunter valley remained unalienated (and most of that unused), the 1884 Act might be of importance. Under its new conditions, the Hunter valley was included in the Eastern Division, where the price for land was to be £1 per acre. Conditional purchases were to be limited to 640 acres and conditional leases to 1,280 acres. Fencing of boundaries was required within two years and five years' residence was necessary. The Crown Lands (Amendment) Acts of 1889, 1895, 1898 and 1899 were relatively slight adjustments of the system established in 1884.

49. Buxton has shown that in the Riverina at least, the Morris-Ranken report was inaccurate: 'despite all the abuses and unintended uses to which the Crown Lands Alienation Act was put, much "genuine settlement" did take place and the Act was influential in changing the pattern of land settlement, land utilization and social relationships'. Buxton, The Riverina, p. 154.

50. NSW VP 1883, Vol. II, p. 84.

51. Express, 21 October 1882.

52. NSW VP 1883, Vol. II, p. 86.
A second series of measures was aimed at freeholdings. After many years' discussion of estate resumption, the Closer Settlement Act of 1904 was adopted by the New South Wales parliament as a moderate experiment. The Act followed 'well-trodden lines, lines which have been laid down in New Zealand, and which have ... resulted in the settlement on the land of a sturdy yeomanry'.\textsuperscript{53} It established the right of the state to expropriate land should a landowner dispute government valuation of his property for tax purposes. Estates resumed in this way were to be disposed of in the form of small farms. This was the first direct entry of the state into land subdivision in New South Wales, and the legislation was consolidated in 1906, 1907, 1908 and 1910.\textsuperscript{54} Land subdivision was further promoted by the establishment of land and income taxation by the Federal Land Tax Act of 1910, which created a graduated penal tax on land (punishing absenteees in particular) exempting all properties worth less than £5,000.\textsuperscript{55} By 1914 a complete structure of legislation to discourage land aggregation had thus been established: penal taxation, acts to encourage settlement by selection from leasehold properties, and positive intervention in the breaking up of freeholds. The only major omission was the failure to provide cheap money and credit

\textsuperscript{53} Eden George (member for Ashburnham and a supporter of the Carruthers ministry) discussing the Bill. NSW P\&D 1904, Vol. 16, p. 1853.

\textsuperscript{54} The 1904 Act stated in its preamble that its purpose was 'to authorise the acquisition by purchase or by resumption for purposes of settlement of private lands'. The terms of settlement were very easy and the amending legislation of later years was largely to make terms even easier, and to allow for the conversion of settlement leases into freeholds.

\textsuperscript{55} The land tax applied only to freehold estates. The rate began with non-absentee estates worth from £5,000 to £15,000 (one penny in the pound) and reached its highest with absentee estates worth more than £80,000 (sevenpence in the pound).
facilities for intending small farmers. 56

Selection and subdivision certainly did occur on a very large scale in the Hunter valley. From 1880 to 1914 new reserves were constantly being thrown open. The areas made available in this way were usually small ones, fragments of marginal land being advertised, piece by piece, for selectors. The Bulladelah district, for example, held large reserves from which small pieces were detached from time to time and thrown open for selection. In January 1906 an area of 1,000 acres, parish of Telararee, was made available for conditional purchase or conditional lease, and in October of the same year two blocks of 200 and 590 acres in the parishes of Bulladelah and Booloombayt were also thrown open. 57

This myriad of small selections, from waste land rather than from pastoral leaseholds, added up to a substantial expansion of the land used for farming in the Hunter valley. In seven years from the beginning of 1881 to the end of 1887 the total number of conditional purchases taken up in the region came to about 4,800. The area thus selected was over 550,000 acres. 58 As late as 1913 the Maitland land board district could report:

the demand for land is still considerable. Much has been absorbed that was previously regarded with little favour, owing to the need for grazing areas for dry stock ... 59

56. Precedents for such legislation began with the New Zealand Advances to Settlers Act of 1894.
From 1907 to 1913 selection was in fact falling off, but was still considerable. More than 3,700 conditional purchases, covering an area of 710,000 acres, were selected out of a total of 1,250,000 acres in the region made available for settlement. 60 From 1909 to 1913 alone, the area of non-revenue-producing government Crown Lands in the region fell from 1,700,000 acres to 1,090,000 acres. 61

The usual complicating habits of peacock ing, dummying and aggregation of selections occurred in the Hunter valley as elsewhere. Peacocking occurred, for example, when the Wingen population reserve was revoked in 1885 and made available for selection. On the day when lots could first be taken up ten selections were made, of which four were by large neighbouring proprietors. After this the best spots of the reserve had been so thoroughly picked out that the next lot was not taken up for over a month, and it was not until 1890 that the twentieth lot in the reserve was selected. 62 Aggregation sometimes took place on a huge scale. The Collaroy estate, nibbled at by three hundred selections as a result of the Robertson Acts, had bought out 105 of the selectors by 1881, and was every year setting aside part of its income for further buying-up. In 1881 the estate acquired 6,900 acres at rather less than 61 per acre, 63 and by 1904

60. Maitland land board district figures. Demand peaked in 1910, when 699 selections were taken up. By 1913 the annual figure had fallen to 364 selections. Reports of Department of Agriculture, NSW PP 1907-13.
61. Ibid., 1909 and 1913.
62. The large proprietors were W.E. Abbott, F.A. Abbott (mother of the former), J.P. Abbott (brother of the former) and W. Bell. Lydia Shaw, sister of W.E. Abbott, selected another lot for the Abbott family on 8 March 1888. Some of the other selectors were possibly dummies. NSW VP 1891-2, Vol. I, p. 127.
there were only thirty selectors left on Collaroy. 64

Selection nevertheless played a steady if unspectacular role in the expansion of the farming frontier, and must go partly to explain the consistent growth in the number of farms. Growth tended to increase over time — although new selections were fewer in the 1900s than the 1880s, there was a compensatory increase in farms cut out of subdivided estates.

No major estate subdivisions took place in the 1880s. There was, however, a growing expectation that farm lots from big properties would soon be available for small men. Local newspapers regularly canvassed the subject. By 1887 the Scone Advocate was prepared to use even the description of the annual shearing on the Bakewell family's St Aubins estate as a pretext for discussing subdivision. The Advocate concluded:

many residents confidently look forward to the time (when) the sheep will give place to a thrifty and healthy yeomanry. 65

The next step was one of actual political pressure. Discussion of the land question never became a cause of impassioned populist movements in the Hunter valley, but subdivision was widely debated at least by journalists and local associations, and it had become conventional wisdom to talk of smallholding democracy. Local farmers, merchants and professional men began to form committees, as they did in Singleton in 1896, with the aim of advancing petitions to Sydney, and making

64. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 110.
65. Scone Advocate, 4 November 1887.
other gestures. From this rudimentary stage the demand for subdivision became better organised and began to involve the talents of a wider social spectrum. When the upper Hunter was visited by the premier of New South Wales, Sir William Lyne, in the autumn of 1900, solid delegations of influential men were waiting to press him to introduce a bill for 'the resumption of large estates, as had been done ... in New Zealand'. At Singleton the waiting delegation included two large proprietors, one of whom was C.H. Dight of Pelerin, the local member. Dight was supporting land reform and at the same time trying to moderate it.

By the time of the 1904 Closer Settlement Act, well-orchestrated local protests and demands were regularly occurring throughout the region, with farmers' and settlers' associations leading the field. In 1904 the Singleton Farmers' and Settlers' Association asked for government intervention (which was, as usual, not forthcoming) when two estates near Bulga were placed for sale on the open market. Particularly noxious in the eyes of reformers were estates owned by absentees, or by families which held large properties elsewhere. An example of the latter was the Mackay family — very rich, and not much interested in courting public opinion. The Singleton association petitioned

67. Singleton Argus, 19 May 1900.
68. Dight was in favour of resumption and subdivision, but not compulsory expropriation. The other large proprietor in the deputation was William Waddell. Ibid.
69. They were the Milbrodale and St Leonards estates of the late Benjamin Richards and included much good land — 'thousands of acres of the best land in the State'. The 'evil' of their sale was compounded by the fact that Richards had been an absentee. Singleton Argus, 11 August 1904.
for the resumption of the Mackay's Ravensworth estate in 1907. 70

Eventually there was some confusion and doubt even among the large proprietors themselves. Belief in the need for an independent yeomanry has been called by Gollan 'one of the characteristic liberal and radical socio-economic policies of the third quarter of the nineteenth century'. 71 The belief continued in the Hunter valley well into the twentieth century. A broad popular attack on estates, manifested by petitions and the speeches of local farmers' and settlers' associations, was capped by a more or less articulate critique from politicians and journalists. Deep intellectual roots existed in the 'succession of agrarian socialist ideas' of Sir Thomas More, Thomas Spence, William Ogilvie and Thomas Paine. 72 More immediate influences came from the writings of Henry George. By the 1890s colonial reformers used much of George's terminology, even if they had not read him. 73 Radicals called for a single tax on land, replacement of freehold by community ownership and other panaceas. Practical examples of reform were provided by the Liberal government of New Zealand, where compulsory expropriation of estates, cheap money for small men and graduated taxation showed the influence of George's principles. Landowners were at first reluctant to concede the argument. In 1898 the Pastoral Review spoke of the 'evil reign' of 'Socialist dreams' in New Zealand. It argued that a government which had begun there 'with pretensions to introduce a higher and better state of things than the world had

70. Singleton Argus, 12 March 1907.
72. Ibid., p. 40.
hitherto known' was instead 'terminating in a succession of jobs and scandals'.

This was, however, an untenable position. New Zealand not only appeared to be a success story, with its ostentatious social reform, but in fact was so; landed property was substantially redistributed and New Zealand farming became a model. Landowners began to be confounded and even the Pastoral Review began to speak of state land settlement as one of the marks of 'most of the civilised countries of the world'.

In the Hunter valley, the large proprietors made only a nominal resistance to the idea of closer settlement and earlier than the Review were declaring their support for small farms. In 1896 J.B. Bettington, one of the region's largest proprietors, claimed he would 'not be averse' to men coming to 'turn the soil to good account' on his Brindley Park estate. C.H. Dight took a less hopeful view of the state of mind of large proprietors, but believed they would eventually see it would 'pay them better to subdivide'.

Large proprietors not only refrained from opposition to closer settlement, but also began to practise it. There had been a few abortive attempts to subdivide parts of estates in the upper Hunter as early as the 1850s and in the lower Hunter properties had been dismantled for sale almost from the very beginning of settlement. But

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74. PR, 15 March 1898.
76. PR, 16 June 1913.
77. MM, 3 October 1896.
78. Ibid., p. 94.
79. Thomas Haydon subdivided part of Haydonton in 1848, but on his death in 1855 had failed to sell any more than one ten-acre farm. Will of Thomas Haydon, NSW Probate 3420/1, 26 December 1855.
until well into the 1890s estates were generally sold as whole units, or were bequeathed intact to heirs. Occasionally, as when the Parbury family offered Invermein for sale, subdivision was envisaged, but only if the property failed to sell as a whole. In the case of Invermein and most other estates, a buyer was found for the intact property. The first real breakthrough in subdivision was to occur in the lower Hunter, in the county of Gloucester.

In 1880 most of Gloucester was in the hands of two enormous estates: the Church and School Lands estate and the property of the Australian Agricultural Co. Most of the former was leased to farmers and graziers, while the latter was largely run as a single unit. The Church and School estate comprised 289 lots, the largest being a 3,377 acre farm in Horton parish and the poorest being a 40 acre lot in Faulkland parish, for which the tenant paid only £2. The Church and School estate was a peculiar instance of 'land monopoly' because it represented, in a sense, public ownership of land. The rents earned from it helped to support the New South Wales Department of Education. This was near to the spirit of Henry George. Furthermore, there was not much evidence of 'land hunger' over the farms of the estate. When the leases were put up for renewed sale in 1880-1 demand was lukewarm, only 83 of the 289 farms being taken up and the remainder falling into

80. MM, 16 April 1881.

81. The Gloucester property was the largest part of the 300,000 acre endowment of the Church and School Lands of New South Wales. The estate had a long history of legal, religious and economic controversy, from the dissolution of the Church and School Lands Corporation in 1833 till the Dedication Bill (1880) gave the estate to the Department of Education. Walker, 'Later History of the Church and School Lands', pp. 234-44.

82. Of the 289 lots, 135 were from 20 to 200 acres, 20 from 201 to 1,000 acres and 134 from 1,001 to 3,377 acres. NSW VP 1881, Vol. III, pp. 427-31.
The tenants who continued to rent farms from the estate had long been discontented. The terms of their leases subjected them to 'an arbitrary and iniquitous rise of 20 per cent' in their rents every seven years. In addition they were deemed to have no proprietary rights over improvements (which the Crown claimed as its own) and were given no right of purchase. Tenants also claimed that the Department of Education was inefficient in its administration of the estate. By 1896 they had been 'agitating for many years for a substantial redress of their grievances'. Initiative for reform came from the bureaucracy, however. The Public Service Board inquired into management of the Church and School Lands and recommended they be removed from the control of the Department of Education and placed under the Department of Lands. The Reid ministry took up this recommendation and converted it into a popular programme. The Secretary for Lands, J.H. Carruthers, initiated a conference at Sydney in 1897, inviting delegates of the tenants to air their complaints. The conference was unusually successful. It was decided to dismantle the estate and legislation was proposed by Carruthers and passed by the Reid government quickly. The successful bill was applauded as 'a closer settlement scheme' and as such was the first large-scale subdivision to occur in the Hunter valley. A system of convertible leases was established to enable tenants to found freehold farms whose acreage

83. PR, 15 June 1896.
84. Ibid.
85. The Hunter delegates included a large proprietor, George Titcume. Another large proprietor, H.H. Brown, was representing Dungog in his capacity as local member. PR, 15 April 1897.
86. The area involved was 153,371 acres in Gloucester and rather less in Durham. PR, 15 June 1897.
would 'keep a man and his family' and no more. 87

This was large-scale and well-publicised closer settlement, successfully induced by the state. It was followed by the even larger-scale and privately initiated dismantling of the Australian Agricultural Co. property. An enormous estate of 464,640 acres, it reached from Port Stephens to the Manning river, was roughly twenty-five miles wide on average and engrossed over half the county of Gloucester. 88 A long-standing complaint among small men in the district had been that the company was grossly neglecting its huge trust and that there was room for thousands of 'yeomen' on its empty acres. 89 There is no doubt that the property was underdeveloped - the whole estate was grazing only 8,180 cattle in 1897 - and in 1899 the company offered G.H. Reid's government 420,000 acres of it at an average cost of ten shillings per acre. For some time there was discussion and bargaining, but after the failure of a renewed offer in 1902, the company began to sell its holdings privately. 90 This was a signal failure of government initiative.

Subdivision, once resolved upon by the company, occurred very rapidly. By the end of 1902 most of the Port Stephens and Stroud sections had been detached and sold. In 1903 the company sold what was left to the Gloucester Estate Co. - a private syndicate which cut

87. Ibid.
88. The original estate had been 1,000,000 acres. The seaward and unprofitable half had been surrendered in 1830 in return for new grants at Peel River and Warrah.
89. When the estate was operating at its peak in the 1880s and early 1890s, the full-time work force numbered only about eleven men. Gloucester Cash Book, Papers of Australian Agricultural Co., 1/168. Australian National University Archives.
up and readily sold the rump as family farms. By 1905 the enormous and once almost uninhabited domain of the company had been converted into the farms of a vigorous frontier community struggling to make itself viable with dairying and beef cattle. Although some large estates were aggregated from this enormous land transfer, most of the better land went in the form of small farms up to three hundred acres. 91

Redistribution of property in Gloucester in the 1890s and 1900s was extraordinary and by no means equalled elsewhere in the Hunter valley. But the dismantling of the county's estates did inaugurate a period of some large subdivisions and a great deal of talk about more. There was even some direct government intervention. Under the terms of the 1904 Closer Settlement Act the state made a modest use of its powers. There were one or two rude shocks for large proprietors. The old Rossgoll estate had been bought in 1908 by a couple of ambitious men who planned to develop a model property; in 1909 they were informed of the government's intention to resume Rossgoll for closer settlement. The Maitland Mercury applauded, 92 but in the event the resumption did not take place, although the Department of Lands continued to keep its eye on the estate. Other proprietors were not so lucky. By 1914 there had been four resumptions in the valley (two of them privately subdivided under government conditions). By this means Bengalla, Woodlands, Colly Creek and Bylong, with a combined area of over 33,000 acres, were replaced by 125 farms. 93

91. The largest single lot sold by 1903 was of 36,000 acres. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 63.

92. MM, 3 July 1909.

But although avidly reported in the local press, direct government intervention was slight. Most of the subdivision occurring in the region was private and voluntary. The Lands Department claimed an indirect effect of government legislation had been to induce 'the holders of large estates to subdivide them and place them on the market on liberal terms'. Even if this is an accurate assessment of the social, political and economic pressures working on the large proprietors, their ostentatious private subdivisions were not as revolutionary as was widely believed at the time.

The first important subdivision in the upper Hunter was the sale of Segenhoe. Segenhoe was one of the best-known estates in the Hunter valley. It had been a grant of the 1820s, and after passing through the hands of private families had been bought by the Land Company of Australasia in 1888. Containing about 24,000 acres, including some very good land, the estate was ideal for irrigation and subdivision, and it was for those purposes that the company claimed to have bought it. Company pamphlets publicised an ambitious plan to buy more land upstream, to establish holding ponds and to irrigate 12,000 acres. One of the directors also claimed that there would be a surplus of water to sell to local small farmers, but the engineer who had designed the system denied it. A lively controversy grew up, but the company quickly came to grief. Although claiming to be the biggest land company transacting business in Australasia (with a large reserve of uncalled capital in Sydney and

96. Ibid., p. 722.
London), it was found necessary in 1889 to mortgage Segenhoe to the White family, one of the most prominent local families and landowners. More financial difficulties followed, and the company at last was forced to abandon the irrigation scheme and to resort to large-scale subdivision without irrigation. As a speculation in land, it was a failure, but as a means of beginning subdivision and placing a large number of farmers on Segenhoe, it was successful. Some fourteen thousand acres of the estate were sold off as small farms by the mid 1890s.

The Segenhoe subdivision aroused interest equal to that stimulated a little later by the Gloucester sales, but it was not until the 1900s that a scatter of equally large subdivisions began to occur in the upper Hunter. By about 1905, large numbers of companies and individuals were buying estates for the sole purpose of subdivision. The White family formed a combination which they called Martindale White Bros. and bought the three estates of Merton, Martindale and Baerami, totalling 64,000 acres, for about £3 an acre in 1905. By 1910 the family manager, E.R. White, claimed that £60,000 had been invested in improving the estates and in establishing dairy farms, and that the value of the improved land had risen to £7 an acre. The dairy

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97. Most of this uncalled capital, to the value of £396,000, was in England. Ibid., p. 728.


99. The estate was brought under the provisions of the Royal Property Act in 1890 and the mortgage subsequently transferred to the Rev. W.E. White of Muswellbrook, discharged in 1891 and remortgaged to the Scottish Widows Fund. The last mortgagees were the Life Assurance Society, which in 1895 foreclosed. Ibid., pp. 41-3.

100. A rump Segenhoe of over ten thousand acres remained.
farms were let to tenants, who had an option of purchase. The Martindale scheme was very successful and was repeated by others.

Capital from outside the Hunter was attracted by the new possibilities of subdivision. In 1901 a company of six Victorian capitalists was formed to buy and subdivide the 45,000 acre Cullingral estate. By 1910 they had cleared rabbits off the property and were investing money preparatory to the first sale. Unlike most subdivision schemes, the Cullingral one provided for outright sale of freehold small farms, rather than tenantry with an option of purchase.

Subdivision usually occurred on a rather smaller scale than at Martindale and Cullingral. M.H. Blake was one of many when he (a successful produce merchant) bought a small estate near Denman in 1909. He proceeded to develop it after the new custom by subdividing the better land into dairy farms for tenants and retaining the rest as a grazing estate for fat cattle and mutton. More and more established pastoral families began to follow the practice initiated by speculators. When Thomas Cook, one of the largest proprietors in the valley, died in 1912 his will ordered the subdivision and sale of his estate. This was another signpost for subdivision, as the 7,200 acres of Turanville were very fertile. The Singleton Argus applauded Cook and said of Turanville that there was 'probably no Estate in


102. The managing director of the Cullingral Co. was E.H. Lascelles, a Geelong wool-broker, speculator and landowner. He was managing director of Dennys, Lascelles, Austin and Co., one of the largest wool-broking firms in Australia. He aimed at cutting the better parts of Cullingral into farms from 500 to 600 acres.

103. Blakefield was running 325 cattle and 2,200 sheep on the grazing land in 1915. Pastoral Directory 1915.

104. MM, 20 July 1912.
Australia comprising so much rich land and so well and favourably known. The same issue of the Argus advertised subdivision sales of two other old estates - the Loder family's Abbey Green and Ridgelands, a property of the Wiseman family.

Subdivision occurred most extensively about 1912. From 1910 to 1913, of fifteen estate sales advertised in the local press, all but two were subdivisions. The area of land being transferred in this way totalled 121,000 acres and from eleven subdivisions for which details are available, 239 farms came into existence. The rush to subdivide seems to have abated by 1914. This flurry of activity in dismantling estates was similar to what occurred in New Zealand in the 1890s and what was to occur in the United Kingdom.

It has been argued that large proprietors had only been waiting for a period of good prices to sell their estates and that they were ready to cut losses and sell after the end of the 1890s depression.

105. Singleton Argus, 26 April 1913.

106. The sales were: Ellalong (1910), Ravensworth (1910), Underbank (1911), Overton (1912), Bengalla (1912), Lewinsbrook (1912), Bendolba (1912), Berry Park (1912), Plashett (1912), Minimbah (1912), Maryvale (1912), Ridgelands (1913), Turanville (1913), Belltrees (1913) and Glendonbrook (1913). The last two were partial subdivisions.

107. These subdivisions were: Ellalong (42 farms), Lewinsbrook (18 farms), Bendolba (25 farms), Berry Park (20 farms), Plashett (26 farms), Minimbah (38 farms), Maryvale (10 farms), Ridgelands (17 farms), Turanville (34 farms), Belltrees (8 farms), and Glendonbrook (1 farm). The area involved was 57,000 acres and the average size of the farms was about 240 acres.

108. 'Morcellement of landed property ... did not become a noticeable consequence of sales of great estates until about 1910, and did not begin to operate on an important scale until 1919'. F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century, London 1963, p. 43.

109. 'The bulk of the large estates was divided up - not unsatisfactorily to the owners, for bad management, prodigal use of the land, heavy taxation and uncertain markets had in many cases so depleted their former resources as to make [the landowners] willing to accept the good prices offered'. Craig, 'Rural New South Wales', p. 12.
the time, many claimed that subdivision was a result of the development of dairying, which led to the possibility of lucrative share-farming and its consequent division of estates. J.C.L. Fitzpatrick, MHR, was 'confident' in 1904 that large landowners would be willing to cut up 'a very large proportion of their land ... because they would make infinitely more money by that means than they do now'. It is also possible that landowning was losing some of its prestige.

For a few years, from about 1905 to 1913, it looked as though the Hunter valley was on the verge of being transformed into a landscape of small independent proprietors. A local farmer, John Hayes, told railway commissioners of the 'progress' of subdivision in the Broke-Bulga district. He described fragmentation of estates, 'enormous' increase in production and the appearance of farmers on the subdivided Wambo estate - 'a prosperous class, and doing fairly well'. The 'great obstacle' to more complete success, Hayes reported, was the lack of a railway. But there was no substantial redistribution of landownership in the Hunter. Rather, there was a remarkable stability (page 38). Subdivision in its occasional but ostentatious occurrence was mistaken for something more radical. There were too few subdivision sales, and too many large estates.

Even when subdivision did occur, or when blocks of public land were thrown open for selection, there might be no rush for lots. Land hunger was widely supposed to exist in New South Wales. It was being

110. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 21.

111. Thompson has judged that, in the United Kingdom at least, 'land was losing many of its attractions' as an investment and as a source of status. Thompson, Landed Society, p. 325.

112. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 63.
said that 'really good agriculturalists' were 'hunting all over the
country for land, and are unable to obtain it'. Local advocates
claimed that land hunger was particularly strong in the Hunter valley.
Public life was full of utterances such as that of John Gillies, a
local member (and journalist) who claimed:

In West Maitland I could find 200 men out of employment at
present, whereas if their fathers had been able to get
land to settle upon, their fine sons would be working on
that land, and would be of use to the community.

But land hunger manifested itself only intermittently, with wide vari-
ation in time and place. In the lower Hunter schemes for subdivision
and selection often met with a very sluggish response. In 1906 an
area of 80,000 acres near Gosford was set apart for conditional pur-
chase at ten shillings per acre. Over two years later, only 6,400
acres had been selected. At the same time there was a real clamour
for land in some parts of Gloucester. One Sydney journalist described
the 'men with large families - men of the right type' who competed en-
thusiastically with 'many fine sturdy young men' for three new selec-
tions in the county. In the upper Hunter demand was similarly
spasmodic. A homestead selection near Borambil in 1896 met with poor
response and in the early 1900s when J.B. Bettington made it known

113. R.T. Ball (member for Corowa and supporter of the Carruthers
ministry) speaking to the Closer Settlement Bill. *NSW PD*

114. Gillies (member for West Maitland 1891 and Maitland 1904-11)
was one of the partners who owned the Maitland Mercury.
'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South
Grafton', p. 29.


116. 29 applicants contested two selections and there were 16
applicants for a section on the Barrington river. *Sydney
Morning Herald*, 4 November 1907.

117. 29 blocks were made available under the Crown Lands Act (1895).
They were on good soil, but after two months only 6 selections
had been taken up. *Merriwa and Cassilis Standard*, 25 January
and 22 February 1896.
that he would subdivide 1,500 acres he did not get 'a satisfactory offer for any of the land'. A Maitland journalist blamed small men for their 'lack of enterprise':

and so the fine arable soil must remain in its primeval state until an army of yeomen come, who are made of more heroic stuff than the present generation.

A few years later, however, 220 applications were received for fourteen properties thrown open for selection near Denman.

Land settlement in the Hunter valley was, then, an intermittent process which by 1914 had led to a considerable re-shuffling of property titles, but had failed to alter significantly the landholding pattern. The flurry of estate subdivisions around 1905-13 involved few properties. The number of estates supporting flocks and herds of over 500 cattle or 5,000 sheep was constantly increasing. This increase, although proportionally less than the overall growth of the whole farming industry, preserved the top of the property owning structure intact. Intensification of production and the constant breaking-in of new land absorbed population growth without distorting the original economic structure. The years from 1880 to 1914 were ones of social stability, of rapid growth without disruption or revolution. The Hunter valley continued to support a handful of disproportionately rich large proprietors and a great majority of small farmers.

118. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 74.
119. MM, 3 October 1896.
120. 'Report, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. viii.
121. Perhaps thirty estates were subdivided or partially subdivided at that time.
4. The Farmers

Over 98% of Hunter valley landowners held fewer than 5,000 acres each in 1885. By 1914 this rank had become almost 99% of all landowners. Such a large group is meaningless - the owners of fewer than 5,000 sheep, or 500 cattle, or 5,000 acres comprised a broad range of occupational and interest groups. At the bottom were thousands of small farmers; they included dairymen and stock fatteners, orchardists and vigneron, selectors and subsistence husbandmen. Between the small farmers who owned fewer than 500 acres and the large proprietors with over 5,000 was a range of landowners whose social and economic status was ambiguous. It is not the purpose of this study to analyse the composition of these groups - the great majority of the rural population of the Hunter valley - but some indication of the breadth and depth of the economic strata below the pastoral families is necessary.

Of all the landholding groups in the community, those most removed from the pastoral families were the selectors. The word 'selector' retains an opprobrious connotation among descendants of the old pastoral families in the Hunter valley today, and to refer to a family as being 'descended from selectors' is possibly more pejorative than a reference to convict ancestry. The ranks of selectors were constantly being replenished by fresh legislation, and reduced by the passage of time, failure and in some cases success. By the 1890s reference to selectors as a 'class' was common. The Maitland Mercury praised the sons of upper Hunter selectors as 'stalwart and intelligent young men who constitute a yeomanry of which any country might be proud'.

122. MM, 4 January 1898.
The land which selectors took up varied widely in quality. Some lots were small twenty-acre patches on which:

by growing fruit and vegetables, rearing poultry, and by light labour of a similar kind, the children of a family can assist in the support of the home, leaving the father at liberty to follow other pursuits.123

Large numbers of selectors worked on neighbouring farms and estates for wages. Other types of selectors took up bigger pieces of land with the intention of building up a small grazing holding, or a mixed farm. Increasingly common were 'agriculturalists and dairy-farmers' who were 'clearing the heavily-timbered bush lands, and making them fit for cultivation'.124

Many selectors failed. I have already cited the steady reduction of three hundred selectors on Collaroy to thirty by 1904, and one grazier claimed in 1910 that most of the old selectors in the upper Hunter had been bought out by large landowners and that 'the large holdings are to a great extent made up of land which was occupied' by selectors.125 To the obstacles of soil, climate, prices and lack of capital was often added a more bewildering struggle with bureaucratic process. One selector, Robert Jackson, who called himself 'a poor man who wishes to comply with the regulations', found his claim to a forty acre section at Pokolbin was declared void after he had

124. Ibid.
125. According to Allan McRae of Cranbourne. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 45.
owned it for thirteen years.\textsuperscript{126} But prices were good in the 1900s and as the frontier of profitable farming advanced, success seems to have become more common than failure.\textsuperscript{127} A process of slow social mobility was enabling selectors to consolidate their position and rise into the next group, that of freehold small farmers.

Small farmers in possession of secure freeholds tended to cluster in conspicuous enclaves. In the Merriwa-Cassilis district it was the environs of Merriwa township which, although dominated by a few great pastoral estates, also supported a class of independent farmers.\textsuperscript{128} Most small men in this district owned conditional purchase land which had been converted into freehold, and few of them were renting from the state or from local landlords.\textsuperscript{129} Like many selectors, these independent farmers were often 'growing stuff only for their own consumption' and some had to go out working for wages on the local estates.\textsuperscript{130} Wage labouring was not necessarily an in-escapable lot, and J.B. Betlington of Brindley Park claimed that through such 'industry' some men who had arrived in the district with small means had built up properties as large as five thousand acres.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{126} Jackson took up a conditional purchase which he believed in 1870 to be 40 acres, but found to have been officially surveyed as 50 acres. 'The Department of Lands told me it was cancelled. I proferred the remainder of the deposit of the 50 acres; it was refused. I will get no satisfaction in Maitland'. Departmental discussion was not concluded until Jackson's selection was declared void in 1883. NSW VP 1883-4, Vol. III, pp. 780-7.

\textsuperscript{127} Even in the 1880s the rate of failure was much less than it might have been. Between 1881 and 1887 only 555 conditional purchases were transferred compared with 4,756 newly taken up. NSW VP 1887-8, Vol. V, pp. 199-200.

\textsuperscript{128} 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', pp. 64-5.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., p. 64.

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., p. 65.

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., p. 56.
Elsewhere the new dairying industry enabled small men to enter the cash economy. In the middle and lower Hunter some farmers were beginning to earn considerable incomes; one near Denman was reputed to have made £634 in six months from the sale of cream from his seventy cows on a four hundred acre farm.\textsuperscript{132} In the Gloucester district it was said that many men were earning £3 a week off sixty and one hundred acre farms.\textsuperscript{133}

By 1914 some of these small farming families had grown fairly rich, like the Alison family of Coreei, near Dungog. The fortune of the Alison family was founded by Robert Lloyd Alison who arrived in Australia from Dundee in 1839. He built up a farm, established a cornflour mill and married Eliza Cooper, daughter of a local doctor. At his death in 1899 he had laid a solid foundation for the family's prosperity. His son, Robert William Alison, was educated at Maitland High School and from 1890 managed Coreei (by then called 'Coreei Estate') for his father. He was one of the founders of the Dungog Co-Operative Butter Factory in 1905 and was appointed to the first shire council. He made an advantageous marriage to Alicia Hooke, daughter of an old-established pastoral family. By 1914 he had become a prominent local figure, a member of various societies, shire president, president of the Dungog Cottage Hospital and so on. Coreei by that time was supporting costly stud herds of Herefords and Jerseys.\textsuperscript{134}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{132} 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{133} 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 66.
  \item \textsuperscript{134} \textit{Who's Who} 1929, p. 833.
\end{itemize}
share-farmers, were fewer than the selectors and independent farmers, but were in much more direct contact with the pastoral families. Farmers benefited from tenantry in some ways, and were disadvantaged by it in others. On one hand, a man need only gain the good opinion of a landlord to get himself a farm - he need have no capital. On the other hand, tenantry and share-farming were insecure and possessed implications of servility. Farmer and landlord were placed on a servant and master basis and the tenant was subject to the whims of personality as well as those of weather and prices. There is no doubt that landlords found the system increasingly satisfactory, as is indicated by its rapid spread in the 1890s and 1900s. Thomas Ellis was complacent about his tenants on Arrowfield. Of one he said, 'he has a family of twelve children. They seem comfortable; They are well dressed and the children attend school'. The son of another large proprietor, W.P. Fleming, claimed that many farmers who 'only had small holdings' around Muswellbrook and Aberdeen were 'very comfortably off'. Thomas Blunt of Overton thought his six tenant farmers were 'better off than if they were freeholders'. Blunt claimed that he did not allow any of his tenants to employ their children under twelve or eleven years of age. He provided his families (which had an average of twelve children) with six-roomed houses. In addition, tenants had 'no responsibility. They find only labour and a horse and cart'.

135. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 42.

136. He also claimed that one man went onto a small farm near Aberdeen with only £60 and in three years left it with £2,000 cash 'made out of general farming and a small dairy supply to Aberdeen'. Ibid., pp. 98-9.

137. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 27.

138. Ibid.
E.R. White made similar remarks about Martindale. He provided his tenants with a 'six-roomed cottage and kitchen, neatly built and laid out, so that nobody need be ashamed to live in it'. He considered one of the virtues of the system to be that the tenants found 'nothing at all, and they have no responsibility'.

The satisfaction of landlords with the system was not necessarily shared by tenants. J.F. Doyle strode across the tenant farms of his Kaludah estate one day, pointing out the features to Mackenzie:

'Well', exclaimed the host to an old tenant, 'and how are you faring Hopkins?'
To which the farmer replied, 'Thank 'e, sir, we're doin' splendid, but we don't seem to get any forrader!'

Tenancy agreements were usually drawn up in freehand, by the landlord, without legal process, and were for short terms. When R.T. Keys let the Spring Creek Farm on his Bengalla estate in 1895 the contract was typical, being written in longhand on note paper. The agreement became void after five years. After the Landlord and Tenant Act (1899) tenancy agreements became more formal. In 1904 a solicitor was called in by Edwin Smith 'Grazier' to witness an agreement with C.T. Middlebrook 'Farmer'. Middlebrook was renting 56 acres from Smith and covenanted

TO pay rent AND to repair (reasonable wear and tear and damage by accidental fire or by tempest only excepted)
THAT the said lessor may enter and view state of repair ...

139. Ibid., p. 36.
140. Ibid., p. 35.
141. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 91.
142. Papers of Bengalla estate, A135, held by University of New England Archives.
143. Papers of Smith family, held by Mr E.G.F. Smith, Munni, Dungog.
Blunt's tenants could be dismissed 'at a moment's notice', while White needed to give only a month's notice of dismissal. Tenancy agreements favoured the landlord financially too. Blunt received thirteen shillings in the pound on the net commercial return for the cream and pigs of his tenants, and the share-farmers on Martindale were only slightly better off with a return of a little over seven shillings in the pound from butter and ten shillings from pigs. Renting land on 'halves' seldom meant more than the eight shillings in the pound allowed to his tenants by Ellis of Carrington.

Landlords usually found all maintenance and thus had to bear the burden of depreciation. They commonly argued that tenants therefore made substantial incomes. Share-farmers near Denman were said in 1910 to have netted incomes ranging upwards from £250 a year, while Ellis claimed over £200 for a tenant. Blunt spoke of incomes up to £468 a year (or £9 a week) and White of £350 a year for 'some of my men'. But these returns were all for dairy farmers. Tenants who tried to grow crops had less secure incomes, and one large proprietor asserted that most of the farmers in the Huswellbrook

144. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 27.
145. Ibid., p. 36.
146. Ibid., p. 27.
147. Ibid., p. 32.
148. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 42.
150. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 42.
151. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', pp. 27 and 35.
area found it necessary to 'go out and work for other people, they do not rely upon their own farms altogether; they go away shearing'. 152 Even the regular returns of a dairy did not ensure affluence. One of E.R. White's tenants claimed to have made an income of about £250 a year, but said that in the four years he had been farming he was 'just about as I started. I am not much better off and not much worse'. He preferred the idea of his own freehold. 153 Tenant farmers, moreover, only managed to exist by making 'partial slaves' of their children. 154 A great many share-farmers seem to have become life-long tenants, lacking much opportunity for upward mobility. Development of the share-farming system certainly encouraged a continued division of the rural community into groups of masters and servants.

Occupational distinctions were, however, not entirely rigid or even obvious. There was a sizeable rank of farmers who were men of substance and who esteemed themselves highly. Many stockowners who were certainly not large proprietors referred to themselves as 'grazers'. Some large proprietors, on the other hand, were content to call themselves 'farmer', as did Duncan Kennedy - described simply as a 'well-to-do farmer' in his obituary. 155 Of 100 men interviewed by parliamentary commissions in 1891, 1904 and 1910, 30 called themselves pastoralists of some sort ('grazer', 'engaged in pastoral pursuits', 'pastoralist', 'sheep-farmer'). Of these 30 I have classed only 16 as members of the pastoral families. The remaining 14 were

152. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 85.
153. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 42.
154. McCaffrey, Dairying in New South Wales, p. 316.
155. MM, 20 September 1901.
smaller property owners, one at least possessing as few as 725 acres. Another 27 respondents described themselves as a mixture of pastoralist and farmer ('grazier and farmer', 'landowner and farmer', 'pastoralist and farmer', 'grazier and fruitgrower', 'grazier and dairy farmer'). Of these only 3 were owners of over 5,000 sheep or 500 cattle. A third group of 39 men called themselves farmers ('farmer', 'dairyman', 'dairy farmer', 'orchardist', 'farmer and dairyman', 'farmer and orchardist'). I have classed one of these men as a member of the pastoral families. A fourth group of 4 men called themselves 'station manager'.

None of these 100 landowners described himself as a 'selector', although one who called himself 'sheep-farmer' admitted, when pressed by his interviewer, to having been 'a free selector'. Nor did any call himself a 'cockatoo' or 'cocky', even though both words were in wide use in conversation and casual writing. Nor was the word 'squatter' used. The name 'pastoralist' (claimed by Morris to be replacing 'squatter') was not as common as 'grazier'. Morris, interestingly, makes no reference to the latter word and I do not know whether its importance in the Hunter valley was atypical of New South Wales as a whole. Most respondents tended to promote themselves a rank or two. Of the 80 men I do not class as members of the pastoral families, only 38 were prepared to call themselves 'farmer' or some equivalent.

156. 'Segenhoe Estate Irrigation Bill', 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa'.

157. 'Cockatoo' was in use from about 1850 and 'cocky' from at least 1884. 'Squatter' by 1903 denoted a station owner, a managing partner or a salaried manager. S.J. Baker, The Australian Language, Sydney 1945, p. 54.

the 20 men who did belong to the pastoral families, only 4 called themselves anything other than a pastoralist.

Occupational classes were obscured by the existence of many large farms and small runs whose possession gave ambiguous status. One was Warrinilla, a 4,750 acre property adjoining the Belltrees estate. Warrinilla supported a flock of 2,000 sheep and a herd of 50 cattle. It was divided into thirteen paddocks and possessed three four-roomed cottages, outbuildings and the other appurtenances of a small station. On properties like this lived the rising (or falling) men of some property. In a district like Scone, surrounded by large estates and old families, the owners of middle-sized properties lacked lustre. But in the Stroud-Gloucester district, where there were few very large proprietors, most of the prominent roles in local community life were filled by rising farmers like the Alison family of Coreei. The varied mass of persons who were not 'pastoral families' is not a single class. A large proprietor might dismiss the rest of the rural landholders as 'small men', but many of them were not. Only the simplest generalisations can be made about these people. Most of them, for example, lived in houses built of wood. Almost all of the landholders were men and the rural population as a whole was slightly more masculine than feminine. But between one section of the community and another there were wide differences. The selector who grew pumpkins

159. MM, 8 July 1914.
160. In the five counties of Brisbane, Durham, Gloucester, Hunter and Phillip in 1911, only 975 occupied dwellings were built of brick, concrete or stone. The remaining 10,933 were wood, pisé de terre, iron, bark, etc. A C, Part 13, pp. 1997-2002.
161. Males made up over 53% of the population of Durham, Gloucester, Bligh, Brisbane, Hunter and Phillip counties in 1901. NSW C 1901, p. 482.
on his twenty acre lot at Bishops Bridge had as little in common with a dairy farmer at East Gresford as they both had with the Bettingtons of Brindley Park and the Bowmans of Balmoral.
CHAPTER THREE

TERRITORIAL MAGNATES

1. The Estates of the Pastoral Families

In 1885 the seventy-nine estates owned by the pastoral families had a combined area of over 1,800,000 acres. The average size of these holdings was almost 23,000 acres, but they ranged from a 2,500 acre property of Alexander Younie at Rawdon Vale to the nearly half million acres of the Australian Agricultural Co. Most estates were between 5,000 and 50,000 acres each: thirty-five from 5,000 to 10,000 acres, sixteen from 10,001 to 20,000 acres, and seventeen from 20,001 to 50,000 acres. Only six properties were smaller than 5,000 acres and only five were larger than 50,000 acres (Appendix III).

There were no detailed surveys of landholdings after 1885, but a partial picture can be drawn from newspaper and parliamentary reports. A 1904 report by railway commissioners listed the acreage of thirteen estates in the Merriwa and Denman districts. The total area of these thirteen properties had shrunk from 765,000 acres in 1885 to 516,000 acres in 1904 - from an average of about 59,000 acres to about 40,000.¹ Sale notices and other fragmentary sources indicate a similar decline throughout the region. A few estates disappeared altogether. The 97,000 acres of Ravensworth in 1882² had shrunk to 57,000 by 1894;³ by 1910 the estate was down to 30,000 acres and in

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² Town and Country Journal, 7 January 1882.
that year was so completely subdivided as not to figure in the 1915 list of large properties. Some estates were expanding. The 6,000 acres of Carrington in 1885 had grown to over 12,000 acres by 1904. Land aggregation by rising families like the Lawlers and Nobles was creating new estates. Isaac Noble, an 1861 selector, had managed to get over 6,000 acres together by 1885. By 1897 he owned over 10,000 acres, had named his property Hampshire and was running 7,500 sheep and 400 cattle. His neighbours, the Lawlers, were constructing Tara Hall in the same way. But on the whole the size of pastoral family estates was shrinking, while productivity grew. Although I cannot make any precise computation, the area of new land being taken up for farming in the region was not enough to account for the growing number of very large flocks and herds.

Reduction of estates occurred in several ways. A few, as has already been seen, were dismantled and sold off as small farms - particularly in the years 1905-13. Much more common was for large proprietors to detach blocks of land from the edges of their estates, sell them as farms, and leave themselves rump properties - a kind of marginal morcellement. On the rump a pastoral family might farm more intensively and end up carrying more stock than it had on its original holding. The White family, who sold dozens of farms and thousands of acres from the edges of Belltrees, were land vendors of this nature. Marginal morcellement was a means of settling family legacies. In the White family of Edinglassie the minor co-heir, Bruce White, was provided with a cash settlement by the sale of his 2,125 acre portion

5. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 41.
Daughters were provided for in a similar fashion. James Hooke fragmented the 4,100 acre patrimony of Crooks Park by framing his will so that four farms were detached to provide for his daughters. 'Share and share alike' inheritance might require the complete reduction of an estate, but seldom worked out that way in practice (as I shall point out in my fourth chapter). Even where the 'share and share alike' principle was scrupulously observed it might serve only to replace one large estate with two. When Archibald Bell died in 1883 his will halved Migarra between two sons and Pickering between two others - but all four of the new properties were still substantial estates in their own right. The fragmenting tendencies of inheritance did not prevent the estates from surviving at something like their original size.

The tenure under which pastoral families held their estates varied a good deal - as much as the complex systems of tenure in the region afforded. Around Maitland, Singleton and Scone were compact properties of a few thousand acres whose land was all freehold. In the hills and the great yellow plateau around Merriwa and Cassilis the estates were a patchwork of freehold and leasehold. Almost all the pastoral family estates - both upland and lowland - had been put together and pulled apart in bits and pieces over a long period. Few of the land grants from the 1820s and 1830s had survived quite intact. Paddocks were sold off, and others bought up. Boundaries would shift about an old nucleus. New Freugh, a grant acquired by the McDouall family in 1843, emerged after sixty years of vicissitudes.

7. PR, 15 July 1910.
8. Will of James Hooke, NSW Probate 58761/4, 16 September 1912.
9. Will of Archibald Bell, NSW Probate 8846/3, 9 August 1883.
much the same size as it had been in the 1820s, but quite a different shape and held under many different titles. The larger a property was, the more complex its history tended to be. Some of the biggest estates were held under hundreds of separate titles and a number of tenures. Maeranie in 1898 was only 28% freehold, the remainder being a melange of conditional purchase and lease, together with a large block held on annual lease from the Crown. In 1891 only 9% of Murulla was freehold, the rest being agglomerated selections, annual leases and other tenures. One large proprietor, W.J. Braggett, held no freehold land at all, running his flocks on scattered tracts of leased land in which he had only temporary interest.

But freehold was at the heart of Hunter valley estates. Braggett declared that he was exceptional for a large proprietor. Murulla and Maeranie were on some of the highest and poorest land in the valley. The system of land grants had ensured from the beginning that most of the farmland in the Hunter valley would be freehold, and the fringe areas of leasehold seem to have been converted into permanent tenure as quickly as most proprietors could manage. When reserves were revoked, or leasehold lands thrown open for selection, the pastoral families were to the fore in the scramble to secure new land. Freehold land, either descended from old grants, or secured from other tenures, was the foundation of all the Hunter valley estates by 1914.

10. It was of 6,400 acres. FR, 15 June 1905.
12. MM, 8 September 1891.
13. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 57.
Distribution of the estates from one district to another was uneven. In 1885 the three southern counties contained only ten estates, while Gloucester county alone contained almost as many. Estates were most densely concentrated in Brisbane, where twenty-seven estates — more than a third in the whole region — were to be found. Estate distribution remained much the same throughout the years 1880-1914. In 1915, although the breaking in of new country in the south had increased the number of estates in the three southern counties to twenty-six, the rich county of Brisbane, with forty estates, remained the heartland of the pastoral families.

The counties with most people were not those with most estates. Nor was there a simple inverse ratio. 15 Northumberland, with 37% of the regional population in 1891, contained only 10% of the estates. But Durham, although also heavily populated, contained more than a quarter of all the estates both in 1885 and 1915. At the opposite end of the population scale, the thinly inhabited county of Phillip was not host to as many estates as its open countryside might have suggested. There was a closer relationship between distribution of estates and the total number of landholdings. Detailed figures in 1885 are available only by pastoral districts, rather than counties, but in that year there was some degree of inverse correlation between

15. The correlation of rural population to number of estates in the six counties (defining urban population as contained in towns over 10,000) is:

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<th>rural population 1891</th>
<th>estates 1885</th>
<th>rural population 1911</th>
<th>estates 1915</th>
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<tr>
<td>North'd</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<td>Durham</td>
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<td>Gloucester</td>
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<td>Brisbane</td>
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<td>Phillip</td>
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the number of properties in a district and the number of estates. Maitland district, with nearly half the region's farms, contained only 15% of its estates. At the opposite extreme Merriwa, with only 3% of all the farms, contained 14% of the estates.\textsuperscript{16} County figures for 1914-5 are a little more idiosyncratic.\textsuperscript{17} But in general the more farms there were in a district the fewer estates were found there.

Contemporary orators often concluded that estates were the product of under-settlement, and had become obstacles to the proper course of progress. But with both my simple correlations (estates/population and estates/all landholdings) there is no real change over time. The old, settled districts continued to support roughly the same number of estates in 1914 as they had three decades earlier, in spite of the rapid increase both in population and landholdings. Nor, as settlement grew thicker, did the estates of outer districts disappear. The estates cannot be seen merely as the relics of an early phase of settlement, as described by Birrell.\textsuperscript{18}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
& rural holdings 1885 & estates 1885 \\
\hline
Maitland & 46\% & 15\% \\
Port Stephens & 26\% & 13\% \\
Singleton & 14\% & 30\% \\
Merriwa & 3\% & 14\% \\
Murrurundi & 11\% & 28\% \\
& 100\% & 100\% \\
\hline
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\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
& rural holdings 1915 & estates 1915 \\
\hline
Northumberland & 43\% & 13\% \\
Gloucester & 19\% & 13\% \\
Durham & 18\% & 25\% \\
Brisbane & 10\% & 37\% \\
Phillip & 7\% & 3\% \\
Hunter & 3\% & 8\% \\
& 100\% & 100\% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{16} The correlation of all rural holdings to number of estates by pastoral district is:

\textsuperscript{17} The correlation of all rural holdings to number of estates by county is:

and geographical limitations be allowed to completely explain their persistence, as Mauldon has suggested. The distribution and permanence of estates must be related to more complex factors. The exigencies of family, of personality and of taste must be brought into the account.

2. Ownership

It is not always clear who owned the estates. The three lists I am using as my points of reference (Appendices III-V) in their original form contain many small errors of spelling and title. Dartbrook, for instance, is named as belonging to 'Mrs Anne Hall' in 1885 and to 'Miss Hall' in 1897; the latter is a misprint. The owner of a mortgage or a lien on stock might be registered as a large proprietor. My other sources have enabled me to check these entries, but no doubt there are some errors that have eluded me. Given this note of caution it is useful to analyse the ownership of estates as indicated by the three lists.

In 1885 the great majority of estates were owned by individual male proprietors - 63 of a total 79. Another 8 were owned by private male partnerships. The latter were of several types. Some were partnerships between brothers (co-heirs) like that of W.H. and G.A. Abbott at Violet Hill. Others were on a much larger scale and were organised as private companies. Traill Brothers, the owner of Llangollen, was a partnership of seven brothers. The owner of

20. Llangollen had belonged to their father, Rowland John Traill, after whose death in 1873 shares in the estate were held by A.J. Traill, M.W. Traill, A.I. Traill, S.R. Traill, H.G. Traill, C.G. Traill and W.W. Traill.
Belltrees, 'J.F. & H. White' was a combination of three brothers and another White partnership was the proprietor of Segenhoe. One estate was owned by a partnership of two unrelated men - Christian and Millar of Arrowfield - which was unusual in 1885 and was to remain so. Only four estates were owned by women - Mrs G.P. Bowman owned three and Anne Hall held Dartbrook. Mesdames Bowman and Hall were executrixes for dead husbands. There were two other estates owned by trustees - St Aubins, belonging to the estate of W.A. Dumaresq and Retreat, the property of the trustees of Sloper Cox. Two estates were owned by companies that were more than the constructions of single families - the Australian Agricultural Co., which was a public company, and the Collaroy Co., which was private. The latter owned 240,000 acres near Merriwa and had been formed in 1840 as a private partnership between Captain H.G. Hamilton, his brother Edward Hamilton and an English member of parliament, George Clive. Dr R.J. Traill had later been admitted into their partnership, but after his death control had reverted to the Hamilton and Clive families. Not only were almost all the estates of 1885 held privately, and by individual males, but ownership was made even tighter by multiple ownership. I have already mentioned Mrs G.P. Bowman's ownership of three estates. Other multiple owners included G.D. Bell, E. and A. Bowman and D.F. Mackay. Ten families owned 31 estates between them in 1885. The White family alone possessed six estates and the Bowmans and Halls held five each.

22. James White was the initiator and principal partner, but he was mortgaged to his brother, Edward Francis White, and other members of the family held various interests.
23. Namely the Bell, Blaxland, Bowman, Busby, Cox, Hall, Keys, Laurie, Mackay and White families.
Ownership in 1915 was much the same. More estates were owned partly or wholly by outside or public capital, but male and private ownership still predominated. Individual men held 80 of a total 118 estates. Another 23 were owned by private male partnerships, of which 19 were between fathers and sons. In the White family, two new partnerships had been constructed. Martindale White Brothers had been formed by three sons of E.F. White and had acquired vast tracts of land in the valley and in northern New South Wales. 24 Four sons of Francis White (first cousins of the Martindale Whites) had set up H.E.A. & V. White Co., which operated the huge business of Belltrees. 25 On a much smaller scale were three partnerships between fathers and sons - all in the county of Gloucester. 26 Four partnerships were between unrelated men. Two young men, Charles Tyson and Bernard Cunningham, were partners in Rossgoll. They were not speculators, but serious improvers. A second partnership, Braggett & Foley, was a speculation. Braggett has already been mentioned as the possessor of no freehold land; he was a Cassilis publican and Foley was his sleeping partner. Dunn & McTaggart, owners of 600 cattle near Denman, were a transient pair of partners. 27 The fourth combination, Hordern & Woods, owned Turee. Hordern was the scion of a rich Sydney family, which had made several fortunes as drapers. Leonard Hordern wanted a

24. The partners were James Francis White, Edward Reginald White and Harold Hastings White. Their holdings in the Hunter valley included Baerami, Merton, Martindale and Yarrawa.

25. The partners were Henry Luke White, Arthur George White, Victor Martindale White and William Ernest White. The last died in 1914 and left his shares to the three others. Will of William Ernest White, NSW Probate 63182/4, 10 January 1914.


27. I have no information about them apart from the bald entry in the Pastoral Directory 1915. A McTaggart family had, however, been farmers and small graziers in the Singleton district for some generations.
country seat; in 1912 he bought a Bowral estate and followed it up in 1913 by acquiring Turee 'by private treaty'.

Women owned only two estates in 1915. Mary Phoebe Dangar had inherited Baroona from her husband, A.A. Dangar, in 1913. Further up the valley the widow of G.D. MacIntyre was owner of The Cuan. The most significant ownership change between 1885 and 1915 was the increased number of public companies, from one to eight. The Collaroy Co., still in possession of Collaroy, was offering shares on the open market. Five of the other companies were family businesses, constituted like the Plashett Pastoral Co., which owned Plashett. The Pearse family, hereditary owners of Plashett, had formed the company to avoid death duties. The majority of shares were held by members of the family, the directors being William Pearse, Henry Aylmer Bowen Pearse and the family lawyer, H.U. Mackenzie. Apart from this controlling interest, shares were sold on the open market. Only two of the 1915 companies were completely public - the Cullingral Co., a Victorian concern unconnected with the local pastoral families, and P.H. Morton & Co., a Sydney investment company. The last five estates were owned by trustees. Yarrandi, the estate of John Henry Davies, was typical. Four trustees supervised the property, three being sons and one being a family friend - a Sydney solicitor. As in 1885 there was a good deal of multiple ownership in 1915. Thirteen families

28. PR, 15 August 1912 and 15 February 1913.
30. 'Memorandum and Articles of Association, Plashett Pastoral Company', Sydney 1913. Smith papers.
owned 47 estates between them. Those with the most holdings were the Whites and Bowmans, with eight estates each, and the Mackays and Lauries with five and four respectively. The 106 estates not owned by companies were shared between 76 families.

Estate ownership remained constant in type. From 1880 to 1914 family ownership predominated - and ownership by male members of families at that. When women were owners, they were almost always only guardians of property, with a mere life interest in land intended for sons or brothers. On the death or remarriage of a female heir, her estates were usually returned to a male, as in the case of Mary Dangar. Her inheritance of Baroona was for her 'use profit and enjoyment' only during her lifetime, after which it was to pass to her son, Rodney Rouse Dangar. An exception to this custom occurred in the Lindeman family when Eliza Harriet Lindeman was given absolute rights over her husband's Cawarra estate. But even in this case the dead husband trusted that she would use it for the 'maintenance, education and advancement in life of my children'. Increasing participation by companies did not seriously alter the nature of estate ownership. Some of the new companies were only restructuring of family ownership. Others, like the Gundebri, Cullingral and Gloucester companies were a product of the subdivision boom and were in a sense intruders on the pastoral families' preserve. Shares in the Gloucester Estate Co., for example, were almost all taken up by investors outside the valley. Only A.T. Laurie, Thomas Laurie,

32. The Abbott (Violet Hill etc.), Abbott (Murulla etc.), Alexander, Bell, Bowman, Dangar, Hall, Hooke, Kennedy, Laurie, McDonald, Mackay and White families.
33. Will of Albert Augustus Dangar, NSW Probate 64010/4, 5 April 1913.
34. Will of Henry John Lindeman, NSW Probate 5783/3, 19 July 1881.
Within the two boundary years of 1885 and 1915 a good deal more shuffling of land titles took place than is immediately apparent. Of the 71 companies and families that owned the 99 estates in 1897, only 35 remained in 1915. In addition 34 of the 71 owners of 1897 were not listed in 1885 (Appendix VI). This apparent impermanence among the large proprietors needs to be looked at more closely. If we trace the appearances of families, individuals and companies on the three lists of 1885, 1897 and 1915, and look at the fortunes of exemplary cases, the nature of estate ownership in the Hunter valley becomes more meaningful. Fifteen families which qualified as pastoral families both in 1885 and 1897 had dropped out of the 1915 list. They were instances of families declining, or reducing their operations.

One declining family was the Blaxlands. Among the oldest families in the Hunter, the Blaxlands were proprietors in 1885 of 55,000 acres of freehold in two estates. The family was one of the few in the valley entitled to bear a coat of arms. But in 1888 the oldest Blaxland, Charles of Cullingral, died in debt and his mortgaged estate passed out of the family. The other branch was in financial trouble too. When John Arthur Blaxland of Fordwich died in 1878 he left a property which he had hoped to pass on, by means of primogeniture, to his descendants. But the estate was in such a muddle that

35. 9,000 shares were issued. Major shareholders were H.A.M. Merewether (grazier, of Sydney), C.K. Mackellar MLA (Sydney), P.H. Morton (Sydney) and Sir John See MLA (Sydney). There were 48 shareholders in all. Gloucester Examiner, 13 October 1905.

36. Charles Blaxland owned Cullingral and Reginald Thomas Blaxland owned Fordwich. They were second cousins.

its assets exceeded debts by only £100 and their heir, Reginald Thomas Blaxland, was left with a tangle of legacies and creditors to sort out.\textsuperscript{38} He managed to retain much of the family land, but it continued to shrink through the 1880s and 1890s. After his death in 1911 a son, Arthur Dudley Blaxland, inherited. In 1915 there were only 1,300 sheep and 35 cattle grazing on the estate. The family was in eclipse. One member supported himself as an auctioneer in West Maitland. Another was a wool classer for Dalgety's in Sydney.\textsuperscript{39} A third member of the family was sentenced to six months imprisonment in Maitland gaol for larceny.\textsuperscript{40}

Several families shared the fate of the Blaxlands. Others, having never quite established their claims to respectability, failed before they did so. The Holmes family, whose fortunes had been founded by an emigrant Methodist carpenter, had since his death in 1860 become increasingly genteel and Church of England.\textsuperscript{41} They had built up their Oakendale estate and were adding new properties to it. But the eldest son and heir of the insecure patrimony sold out to his younger brother. When this brother died in 1908 his will provided for the subdivision

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{38} Will of John Arthur Blaxland, NSW Probate 2639/3, 30 July 1878.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Francis J. Blaxland, brother of R.T. and J.A. Blaxland of Fordwich and Murinbin was the auctioneer. Reginald Newington Blaxland, son of R.T. Blaxland was the wool classer.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Arthur Wentworth Blaxland. His imprisonment was mentioned in parliament as an embarrassment to the family (and the relationship was denied). \textit{NSW VP} 1891-2, Vol. I, p. 388.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Thomas Holmes, born Lancashire 1803, emigrated 1826. He was described in directories as a carpenter at first and subsequently as a builder. By about 1834 he had settled on Oakendale, planted a vineyard, built a large house and set up a horse stud. Holmes was made a JP in 1851. By the time of his death he was a 'staunch adherent' to the Church of England. W.J. Goold, 'Thomas Holmes of Oakendale - A Pioneer of the Williams River', Newcastle and Hunter District Historical Society Journal, Vol. V (1951), pp. 145-54.
\end{itemize}
of the family's land 'share and share alike'. The peasant preference for equal partition had triumphed and the Holmes family returned to the rank of small farmers. 42

By contrast with the fifteen families that held estates in 1885 and 1897 but not in 1915, there were twelve more that appeared in the two latter lists but not in 1885. These were mostly modest local families on the make. Some were selectors or the sons of selectors. William Titcume was the unwitting founder of a pastoral family when he selected small bits of land in Gloucester county in the 1860s, worked on a threshing machine and on his death in 1884 left land and stock to a son, George. The son quickly acquired large areas of leasehold. In 1885 he was grazing 400 cattle. 43 He entered the rank of pastoral families in 1897, with 500 cattle, 44 and by 1915 had formed a partnership with his sons and owned 860 cattle. Similar rising families had their origins in trade - butchers, auctioneers and produce merchants.

In addition to the families that were either rising or declining slowly, there was a group of highly transient large proprietors. Twenty-two of the large proprietors listed in 1897 appear neither in 1885 nor in 1915. They fall into two main groups. Five were mortgage holding businesses, including two banks. One of these firms was a New Zealand company and the other four Australian. 45 Their transience as large proprietors needs no explanation. The remaining

42. Will of William Henry Holmes, NSW Probate 43568/4, 13 August 1908.
43. He is erroneously listed as 'George Pitcume'.
44. He is erroneously listed as 'George Titanne'.
seventeen owners were almost all individuals. Some were men who made brief investments with no intention of anything more than a quick profit. The Victorian family of Vickery, rich land speculators, dabbled in Hunter valley land in the 1890s and thus appear in my 1897 list of large proprietors. But they were never resident and sold out to the Dangars in 1907. A few owners were completely fugitive. Alfred Bollenhagen was a German of unknown antecedents who married into a family of local Irish butchers, bought land, appears in my 1897 list and then disappears. In addition there were transient proprietors whose tenure was so brief that they appear in none of my three lists of 1885, 1897 and 1915. A large number of sales recorded in newspapers are to buyers who resold almost immediately. Of 58 owners of estates documented in 1885, only 24 recur in the 1915 list (Appendix VII). This, for a period of only thirty years, and considering that the number of large proprietors increased overall, is a high turnover.

But transient buyers and sellers were the dust around the hooves of the successful pastoral families. The main herd of proprietors in the Hunter valley were those who moved slowly - the old families sinking into obscurity and the new men rising from their shops and farms. Even if I define as 'transient' all those proprietors who appear in only one of my three lists, local established families predominate. Of 47 such transients, 26 came from pastoral backgrounds (Appendix IX). They included members of some of the most

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46. PR, 15 October 1907.

47. Ravensworth was sold in 1910 to F.J.L. Measures, Elmwood in 1906 to E. Brooks 'from South Australia' and Gundebri in 1904 to 'Messrs. Jones Bros.' None of these buyers lasted more than a year. PR, 15 November 1910, 15 November 1906 and 17 October 1904.
respectable pastoral families in the Hunter valley. The remaining 21 transients were mostly local people. They included men who attempted to rise, but failed. A family called Darr had been farming at Vacy since the early nineteenth century and in the 1890s one of their number, W.C. Darr, managed to buy the old Bingleburra estate. But Darr went bankrupt and was bought out by the Mackay family. Local tradespeople were among the transient large proprietors too. Malcolm Campbell, a successful and ambitious Muswellbrook merchant, bought the old St Heliers estate in 1895 for his son, but when he died in 1906 the property was largely subdivided and sold off for cash settlements. Campbell's eldest son remained a landowner, no matter how token his estate, and in 1929 was still playing polo like the gentleman his father had wanted him to be and was describing himself as 'Grazier'. Henry Percy Stacy, from a local banking and medical family, in 1884 left his bank after deciding he had had 'quite enough of the Joint'. Subsequently he speculated in local land and appeared in my 1915 list. Other newcomers to Hunter valley estates were from rich Sydney families like the Bakewells, the Binnies and the Lloyd Joneses. All these transients were evidence, as Francis

48. Murrurundi and Quirindi Times, 31 August 1906.
50. H.P. Stacy to H.P. Stacy, 6 March 1884. Papers of Stacy family. Mrs C.A. Stacy, Warrromean, Singleton.
52. Richard Binnie was the third of that name in a family which had begun as Sydney saddlers in 1835 and built up a large business house. Binnie bought Maeranie in 1898 as a safe investment and as a hobby, according to his son, Mr A. Binnie of Merrillong, Singleton (interviewed 26 August 1976).
53. Edward Lloyd Jones, chief partner of David Jones & Co., bought New Freugh in 1912 and sold it again to a 'Mr Lambkins' in 1914. PR, 15 November 1912 and 15 April 1914.
Adams put it, that in New South Wales as everywhere, to own land is 'the thing', and the number of people who play at being squatters, after having worked hard as tradesmen, steadily increases.  

More important in the Hunter valley were the old families - the twenty-four families present in 1885 who by 1915 owned 54 estates between them. If I define as 'permanent' any proprietor or family that appears in at least two of my three base lists, then three of every four permanent large proprietors came from families already well established as landowners (Appendix VIII). Some had held land in New South Wales for two or three generations and were descended from 1820s grantees. Others had established themselves more recently. All had accumulated considerable family capital. The White family provides one of the most spectacular examples. In 1842 James White of Edinglassie, a grantee, died leaving £15,000 to be divided between his children. His eldest son, James White, inherited about £2,000 and by his death in 1890 had built up a fortune of £350,000. His sons in turn were launched into careers which consisted of little more than the multiplication of wealth.

The success of the Whites was exceptional, but their direction was typical enough. The permanent large proprietors inherited large sums from their families and went on to double, treble and in some


55. These 54 estates were almost half of all the big holdings of 1915. Such a distribution of estate ownership is similar to that of Tasmania in the 1870s, when of the 100 largest holdings 46 were owned by seventeen family groups. Reynolds, 'Tasmanian Gentry', p. 63.

56. Will of James White, NSW Probate 1337/1, 30 July 1842.

57. Will of James White, NSW Probate 20470/3, 13 July 1890.
cases vastly increase their patrimony. To be the son of an old pastoral family in the Hunter valley was virtually a formula for success - the decay of the Blaxlands notwithstanding. A son could sit comfortably in his father's country house and do nothing much but accumulate legacies. William John Dangar, eldest son and 'heir at law' of the grantee Henry Dangar was about 32 years old when he inherited Neotsfield in 1861. He subsequently led the indolent life of a country squire, making no attempt to enlarge his holdings or diversify his interests. He was further enriched in 1874 when a brother died and left him the estate of Gostwyck, worth over £50,000. When W.J. Dangar died in 1890 he owned no more or less land than he had inherited, but it had appreciated to the value of £215,000.

Most of the permanent large proprietors were restless capitalists, however, and worked hard to grow richer than their fathers had left them. Albert Augustus Dangar, a brother of W.J. Dangar, was such a man. After some schooling 'of a limited nature' and a brief career as a naval midshipman, Dangar at the age of eighteen was sent up to his father's stations to work as a common employee. After a few years of 'rough experience' he took over the general management of all his mother's estates. This placed him, at the age of twenty-three, in control of 100,000 sheep and 22,000 cattle. The death of his father provided him with about £40,000 and from that time

58. Will of Henry Dangar, NSW Probate 5050/1, 2 March 1861.
60. Will of William John Dangar, NSW Probate 20757/3, 23 October 1890.
61. PR, 15 December 1891.
62. Ibid.
63. Will of Henry Dangar.
Dangar aggregated huge tracts of country. He bought and sold Queensland runs on a princely scale and on returning from a trip to England bought an old Hunter valley grant near his brother's. Over three decades he built there one of the largest houses in the valley. At his death in 1913 his estate was sworn at $315,000.64

Similar tales could be told about almost all the other large proprietors from old pastoral families. If I combine both my 'permanent' and my 'transient' proprietors I find that of 107 owners, 72 came from established pastoral backgrounds. Another 4 inherited capital from rich commercial families and only 31 were self-made. Of these last, most were from local small farming or business backgrounds. Ownership of estates in the Hunter valley was largely a process of augmentation of existing landed wealth. A minority of large proprietors were concerned with capital formation. Most were building pastoral families on a foundation of old money. Ownership at the centre of landed property in the valley was slowly changing, predominantly male, predominantly private and in the hands of family systems.

3. Pastoral Empires

I have already observed that pastoral families tended to accumulate several estates each. The number and spread of these family empires was even greater than my base lists of 1885, 1897 and 1915 indicate, because a single name on a register often conceals several scattered properties all conveniently lumped under one name. In 1880 for example John Hall's 'estate' of Gundebri actually consisted of six different agglomerations of freehold and selected land, each of them some miles distant from the others. His Dartbrook 'estate' was

64. Will of Albert Augustus Dangar.
in five separate pieces. This sort of scattered property meant that some families owned dozens of estates and farms in the valley. Most did not - the majority only bought land when it served to round out an existing property, as did Thomas Ellis when in 1881 he attended the auction of a neighbouring farm and bought it for £2,800. But a minority of the pastoral families were feverish builders of pastoral empires. Like the 'many-stationed Whites', they seem to have been driven by a desire to accumulate more and more land until they exploded beyond the confines of the Hunter valley into Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Northward movement from the valley was an old tradition. Denholm dates the advance of station capital and personnel from the late 1820s. By the 1840s members of the Hall and Fleming families were establishing stations in Queensland, four hundred miles from the Hunter valley. The custom of looking north was thoroughly entrenched by 1880. Cadet branches of Hunter valley families were scattered all over the northern tablelands and reached as far as the Gulf country. Some northern families, like the Nivosons and Munros, were sending their own cadets south to settle on the Hunter. Complex ties of relationship and association bound families over a thousand or more miles and a few families - most notably the Dangars, Hungerfords and Mackays - possessed millions of acres. Family coalitions were formed

65. Some of the six parts of Gundebri were large estates in themselves, their areas being 9,100 acres, 7,300 acres, 6,900 acres, 1,700 acres, 1,100 acres and 900 acres. Subdivision maps of Hall Estate dated 1880. Scone and Upper Hunter Historical Society Archives, Scone.

66. Sydney Mail, 12 February 1881.


to subsidise such investments. In 1901 Martindale White Brothers bought four estates in New England, covering 250,000 acres.\(^69\) Hungerford & Sons owned three million acres in northern Queensland. There were inter-family combinations as well as intra-family ones. Hugh Robert Munro and Thomas Cook formed a partnership in the late 1880s, under the name of T. Cook & Co., and bought New England properties.

In most cases northern stations were established to complement Hunter valley estates. Northern properties were not necessarily vast - W.E. Abbott's New England station was only 7,400 acres\(^70\) - but their climate and soils were inferior to those of the Hunter valley and they were consequently devoted to extensive grazing. Surer grass in the valley meant that the most profitable use of its pastures was intensive fattening. Development of the railway north in the 1870s and of meat-freezing in the 1880s encouraged such a system. By 1897 typical operations were those of J.H. Doyle, whose two properties 'over the range' were carrying sheep for wool and cattle for beef. On Invermein, the Hunter valley estate, 300 cattle from the north were fattened at a time, together with 3,000 sheep for mutton and lambs. The growing of roots and leaf fodder on Invermein further boosted its productivity.\(^71\) Northern stations thus subsidised Hunter valley estates and ensured their continued profitability.

But the northwards movement in some cases far outstripped the ability of owners to co-ordinate farming operations. Large proprietors

\(^69\) Newton Boyd, Glen Elgin, Morvan and Shannon Vale. PR, 15 June 1901.

\(^70\) Sunnyside, near Armidale. PR, 15 July 1909.

wanted to endow sons with land, and there was a romantic appeal about open spaces 'over the range'. The Dangar family farmed each generation of its younger sons out on northern stations. Scores of other families did the same thing. But above all, a few men desired to be great. The more land and animals a proprietor owned, the more meritorious he was. It was said of the Whites, those 'Overlords of many broad acres' that they were living proof that 'the best men succeed' in Australia. Newspaper obituary eulogised the owners of 'broad expanses' in Queensland and New England. Thomas Cook was hailed as 'a magnificent man' by the usually reticent Maitland Mercury. By the 1890s and 1900s such individuals held immense acreages in their own right, quite apart from their shares in family holdings. At the time of his death in 1894 Duncan Forbes Mackay owned 800,000 acres. His home base was a modest 9,300 acre estate near Singleton, where his 'MANSION RESIDENCE' was situated. In addition he owned Gundebri and Ravensworth in the Hunter valley and in Queensland the Tilpal and Iffley stations. On his Queensland properties alone he grazed almost 35,000 cattle and over 300 horses. Later generations of the Mackay family were to believe that it had once been possible to set off on horseback from Dungog and never leave Mackay land till one reached central Queensland. At least one other family, the Bells, said much the same thing of themselves: 'One of the Bells once said that he could travel from Tasmania to the Gulf of Carpentaria staying with relations all the way'.

72. E.J. Brady, Australia Unlimited, Melbourne 1918, p. 966.
73. MM, 20 July 1912.
74. King papers, Vol. 6, p. 105.
75. Ibid., pp. 89-101.
77. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, pp. 6-7.
The passion for acquiring and holding property was a personal thing, but explains much of landowning stability in the Hunter valley. Large proprietors were not speculators. They were conserving existing properties and building upon them. The great pastoral families, with their wide acreages of northern land, could subsidise Hunter valley properties as home stations. Estates on the Hunter were becoming model estates - the 'fancy' stations described by Adams. Successful pastoral families were embellishing the home stations with big houses, horse studs and ornamental trees. Rich tradesmen from the local towns and from Sydney were buying Hunter valley estates as hobbies, or to make themselves respectable. As pastoralism in many parts of Australia moved into a new stage of corporate ownership, it remained in the Hunter valley a matter of family, of personality and of men.

CHAPTER FOUR

MONEY

1. Estate Management

Radical and liberal politicians commonly asserted that large proprietors in New South Wales had made little effort to improve their land. They had been given, or had taken, large tracts of country. In return, they had done little but allow stock to nibble at it. Although their wealth derived from land husbandry, they had failed to manure the land with that wealth. Speaking to his Lands for Closer Settlement Bill, J.H. Carruthers pointed out in parliament in 1896 that the 264 largest landowners in the Hunter and Hawkesbury valleys, owning over 1,200,000 acres between them, cultivated only 4,100 of those acres. But such criticism emphasised cultivation too much. The Hunter valley, by comparison with other parts of the colony, was well populated and fairly productive in 1880. And as I have already observed, its herds, flocks and cultivated acreage increased twofold and more by 1914. The part of large proprietors in this agrarian development was not negligible.

Several indices can be used to plot large proprietors as improving landowners. The first is cultivation. Land in the Hunter valley could be usefully cultivated in two ways: it could be ploughed and planted with cash crops like grain, vegetables, vines and fruit trees; or it could be sown with exotic grasses to increase its stock carrying capacity. Cropping of the first sort had

1. NSW Pd 1896, Vol. 82, p. 536.
occurred since the beginnings of settlement. Pasture improvement, except on a very modest scale, did not take place till after 1900, when paspalum was introduced to the valley. Extension of cultivation required capital investment in the form of seeds and labour and, more importantly, costly machinery. Success could not be certain in many parts of the region without a landowner making the additional capital investment of artificial irrigation.  

In the 1880s there was not much cash layout to promote cultivation on the large estates. Precise quantification is difficult, as no tables giving detailed information of land cultivated have been preserved. However, the number of pigs on a property is a good index of general farming development, since the local practice was to feed swine on the agricultural and dairy products of a home farm. By this reckoning, cultivation on the estates of the pastoral families must have been as slight in the 1880s as Carruthers claimed it was in 1896. Of the 79 pastoral families of 1885, only 44 kept one or more pigs. There were large herds of swine on a few estates - 205 on Plashett and 100 each on Edinglassie and Ravensworth - but the total number of pigs maintained by the 79 families was only 798. This was less than 3% of the regional total.  

If my equation of pigs with good farming is correct, then cultivation was not only underdeveloped in the valley as a whole, but could not be certain in many parts of the region.  

3. There were no pig farms as such in the Hunter valley. Only 50 proprietors owned more than 50 pigs each in the five stock districts of Maitland, Merriwa, Murrurundi, Port Stephens and Singleton, and none of them was solely a swine-master. The average herd among the 3,453 farmers in the region who owned pigs (the majority of farmers) was only 9 animals. 'Return of the holdings in the Colony 1885', pp. 227-55, 257-8, 294-300, 329-45 and 353-61.
but was more so on the estates of the pastoral families. Cyrus Edmund Doyle remarked to public commissioners in 1891, 'I have not gone in for farming'. Most of his friends and relations among the pastoral families would have said the same. Even some estates on the river flats of the Hunter itself made no attempt at cash cropping. The St Aubins estate was cultivating only 60 acres in 1887, and the produce was only for the estate's domestic requirements. Pasture improvement was just as backward. In 1904, Frederick Duncan McMaster of Dalkeith declared that on the large estates in the Cassilis district, artificial pasturage made up 'only an average of about 200 acres per station'.

But by 1904 the area of cultivation was increasing. In 1881 there had been only 58,000 acres of tilled land in the Hunter valley. The dairying boom of the 1890s started feed cropping and its effects were reinforced by the new meat freezing industry, until by 1914 the cultivated area had risen to 121,000 acres. Large proprietors were continuing to lag somewhat, so that in 1901 W.E. Abbott, after praising rape and other fodder crops as a means of raising production levels and declaring that the 'new system of

5. Scone Advocate, 4 November 1887.
6. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 67.
husbandry' would soon be ubiquitous in the valley, had to add 'at least among the small farmers'. Large landowners, Abbott wrote, were 'much more conservative in their views and slower to accept that which is new'. The same was being said in the lower Hunter.

A journalist visited George Titcume in 1904 and wrote, 'I fancied I detected in him ... a tendency to decry any scheme that introduces ... a change of production, or of its methods'. The correspondent thought such attitudes typical of 'old settlers'.

But there were changes even among the large proprietors. A comprehensive survey in 1899 indicated the operations of every owner of rural land in New South Wales. There were 5,591 owners in the Hunter valley, of whom 96 were members of the pastoral families (Appendix X). Of these, 78 grew crops of some sort on their estates, and only 15 neither cropped nor dairied. Wheat and maize were the main crops on the pastoral family estates, almost half of them growing each crop. Orcharding occurred on 25 estates, oat-growing on 17, barley-cropping on 16 and potato-growing on 12. Another 8 estates practised viticulture and one property grew tobacco. Over half the estates also raised 'other crops'.

Some pastoral families were in fact blazing the new agricultural trail and were investing a lot of money in cultivation. The blessings of 'science and agricultural machinery' were applied to Segenhoe from 1899 onwards when a new proprietor, W.R. Wilson, cleared 1,000 acres for cultivation in English grasses and put in crops of 800 acres of wheat, 100 acres of oats, 120 of maize and 90 of lucerne. He also bought some big six-furrow rotary disc

9. PR, 15 August 1901.
ploughs, each requiring eight horses or fourteen bullocks to pull it. 11 On the neighbouring Belltrees 200 acres of wheat were being grown and another 1,000 acres had been placed under cultivation by tenant farmers. They were getting average yields of 35 bushels per acre, with a record crop for one tenant of 45 per acre. 12 The Scone Advocate observed that H.L. White himself manifested intense interest in wheat culture:

at the present time he has going on at the homestead farm eleven different varieties of wheat, recommended by Mr. Farrer, head of the wheat branch of the Agricultural Department ... This is only one example of good work being done in a quiet, unostentatious way. 13

The Eales family of Duckenfield Park were outstandingly innovative. Duckenfield, spreading for two miles along the 'rich, black, loamy soil bordering the Hunter', was an agricultural factory. 14 The work force was provided by 100 tenant farmers, who rented areas of twenty acres and upwards. The larger lessees had bush pastures where cattle were grazed for milk and meat. The smaller tenants grew a wide variety of cash crops. Lucerne was being put down in the 1890s and the growth of linseed was being experimented with. The Eales family had erected the first grain siloes in the Hunter valley and on the estate there was always 'a small army of men ... as busy as nailmakers'. 15

But most pastoral families were more moderate in their ventures into cultivation and a few still retained their suspicion
of the whole business. Frederick Samuel Bell of Pickering, after noting that a neighbouring member of the White family was gleaning only 6 bushels of wheat per acre from 600 acres, said, 'I do not look upon agricultural farming about here as being profitable'. 16 In the Jerrys Plains district only one of several estates practised any cultivation, that being a 55 acre orangery on Baerami. The land on the large properties in that district was 'used almost exclusively for fattening cattle'. 17 In the Denman-Merriwa district it was said by railway commissioners that agriculture 'appears to be unknown'. 18

After 1900 cultivation continued to expand. When G.H. Greene bought Fordwich about 1904 it was carrying only 300 cattle. By 1910 it had been substantially improved and was growing 200 acres of lucerne and 200 of wheat, together with other crops and over 1,000 cattle. It also supported three dairies, each with 100 milch cows. 19 But much tillable land on the estates was still uncultivated in 1914. Cash cropping had not grown as rapidly as it might have. At least one crop, vines, had seriously declined. The old vineyards on estates in the upper Hunter were falling into disuse; at Merton the vines were 'greatly neglected, and ... now almost completely destroyed'. At Pickering all that remained of the vineyard were 'a few old stumps'. 20 It was the same in the lower Hunter, where by 1901 the Wyndham family was bankrupt and their Dalwood estate was being

16. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 51.
17. Ibid., p. 13.
18. Ibid., p. 17.
19. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 70.
broken up after the 'largest sale of wines and caskings ever held in the state'. Small proprietors were taking over winemaking from the pastoral families.

Pasture improvement was more important on the pastoral family estates than cropping. On Turanville, Cook experimented with paspalum and other fodder crops for several years after 1900 - although by 1912 he was 'not in love with the results'. A few large proprietors were described by journalists as being completely opposed to pasture improvement. There were only natural pastures on Harben Vale, for example, where F.R. White declared that he did 'not believe in pampering in any way'. White thought stock should only 'get what they can pick up'. This was conservatism rather than conservation. But other pastoral families did invest very heavily in pasture improvement and by 1914 most newspaper descriptions of estates mention both cropping and the putting in of English grasses. J.H. White, for example, although still keeping most of Timor in native grass as late as 1910, was growing 'a little' lucerne on the side. Only a few large proprietors are described by journalists as making no such investment at all.

A second indicator of land improvement was wire fencing. Close fencing enabled landowners to intensify and diversify pro-

22. In the Goulburn valley, for example, C. Brecht's Rosemount was the largest vineyard by 1881. In the lower Hunter, the Pokolbin and District Vine Growers' Association of 1904 included not a single member from the pastoral families. MM, 12 January 1904.
23. MM, 2 March 1912.
24. PR, 15 May 1908.
25. Ibid.
26. PR, 15 September 1910.
duction by reducing field size. In the 1880s field size varied considerably from one estate to the other. There were only 250 miles of fencing on the 97,000 areas of Ravensworth in 1882. These divided the estate into fields whose average size was almost 1,400 acres.27 Invermein, divided into 25 fields in 1878, included small holding paddocks and cultivation enclosures of a few acres together with large open fields of 600, 1,000 and sometimes 2,000 acres.28 This degree of enclosure represented a large absolute capital investment, but given the possibilities of the land was still cursory.

Investment in fencing was continuous from 1880 to 1914, but the extent and cost of this improvement is hard to measure. Apart from a few estate subdivision maps that have been preserved, the only sources of information I have discovered are sale notices and descriptions of estates in newspapers. A Maitland Mercury correspondent visiting St Clair in 1882 observed that the Loder family was 'still engaged in fencing in the whole of the property with a post and wire fence'.29 1882 was rather a late date to be completing the boundary fencing of an estate. But newspaper reports only throw occasional spotlights. Sale notices are equally scattered. I can compute that the average field size on Ravensworth fell from 1,400 acres in 1882 to 1,030 acres in 1899,30 but I have no subsequent figures. By the end of my period some estates were certainly very well enclosed - the average field size on Cliffdale was down to 88 acres by 191131 - and most of the descriptions of estates

27. There were 70 fields. Town and Country Journal, 7 January 1882.
29. MM, 14 December 1882.
30. MM, 28 October 1899.
31. PR, 15 August 1911.
refer to money being spent on more fences. But there were still properties like Bengalla, whose fields in 1911 were of an average size of 2,000 acres. 32 The erratic nature of this evidence makes it impossible to say anything more than that capital was being invested in fences on the large estates, but the extent of this investment is doubtful.

A third indicator of capital output is the quality of pastoral stock carried by the large proprietors. The development of dairying and of cross-breeding provided new investment possibilities. It was more congenial to the pastoral families to upgrade stock too, as it did not involve the bother of tilling the earth. In both branches of intensified pastoralism the large proprietors took the lead. There had always been a group of Hunter valley pastoral families importing foreign sheep to improve their flocks, and when the direct trade with New Zealand began in the 1890s cross-breeding spread fairly rapidly among large proprietors. By 1899 the Abbotts were running several thousand Merino-Lincoln crossbred sheep, sired by New Zealand rams, on Glengarry and Murulla. These sheep were being fattened for meat. 33 The remainder of the Abbott flocks were Merino, grown for their wool. This was a common division of stock after 1900. Nor was the Merino of 1914 that of 1880. The yield of individual beasts had risen considerably as a result of selective breeding and the importation of stud stock. By 1901 the White family found it necessary to install larger classing tables in their Belltrees woolshed, the fleeces of their sheep having got too large and heavy for the old tables. 34

33. PR, 16 January 1899.
34. PR, 15 October 1902.
Dairying was another major field of investment for the pastoral families. Many busied themselves with the initial promotion of the dairy industry in the 1890s, and others invested in creamery shares and in cutting up some of their land to form dairy farms. By 1899, 44 of the 96 pastoral family estates in the valley supported dairies (Appendix X). This was a very rapid and thorough adaptation to a new industry and was the largest transference of capital from traditional grazing into modern farming that the pastoral families carried out. The number of cattle involved was small at first. In 1900 Joseph Cooper was milking only 80 cows on Greylands. Reginald White kept 'seventy or eighty' milch cows at Douglas and the neighbouring milch herd of 'between 200 and 300 cows' at Piercefield was unusually large. But the scale of dairying operations increased as the business became more and more manifestly profitable. Initial capital investment was large - each dairy cost at least a few hundred pounds for plant - but the market was large and guaranteed. Dairying appealed to the smaller pastoral families rather than the larger. At Edinglassie J.C. White believed that 'the circumstances of the owner' of an estate determined a dairy's profitability. If a landowner had 'outside country' (meaning stations in the north) it was more remunerative to graze stock on them and use the Hunter valley estate for fattening. But if a proprietor had no such land then 'it may pay better to go into dairy-farming'.

There were a great many other possible improvements that the pastoral families could have invested in. Thousands of acres

35. Singleton Argus, 16 September 1900.
36. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', pp. 50-1.
37. Ibid., p. 84.
of Hunter valley land were low and marshy and would have benefited from drainage. I have found occasional references to drainage in the local newspapers. Bernard Haydon used ditch-making machines to dig fifteen miles of drains on Bloomfield and enthused over the results: 'it is now perfectly dry where before it was all swamp and water'. 38 But the general silence on the subject in station journals and the rarity of references in the press seem to indicate that most pastoral families were doing very little about it.

There was a similar laziness towards the use of fertilisers. Super-phosphate was beginning to be applied as a dressing for soil. F.D. McMaster tried it in 1912 and found he got a return of seven bags of wheat as against his usual two. 39 But all landowners, large and small, neglected to experiment with fertiliser in the Hunter valley. Mackenzie, writing of a visit to the Blairmore estate, observed that even though the new meat works at Aberdeen were producing 'splendid fertilizer' in large volumes:

Extraordinary as it may seem, hardly any of their manure is bought locally, nearly all finding its way to New Zealand, where the demand for it is very extensive. 40

Mechanical shearing was a more successful innovation. In 1889 Donald McRae of Cranbourne wrote in his journal:

Monday went to see the machines at work Shearing machines I mean at Brindley Park Shed I shooe a couple of Sheep with one of them I like them grand the old shears will be a thing of the passed. 41

38. PR, 15 June 1896.
39. But the New South Wales Agricultural Department and the South Australian Agricultural College doubted that this increase was due to super. PR, 15 June 1912.
40. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 31.
41. Entry for 3 December in the Journal of Donald McRae for 1889. Papers of McRae family, held by Mr G.J. McRae, Cranbourne, Merriwa.
The new machines at Brindley were the Wolseley 'patent machines' which clipped sheep faster and more thoroughly than the old hand shears. But as late as 1896 the Wolseley shears, 'strange to say, have not become as popular with pastoralists as one would suppose'.

Writing to the Pastoral Review from his Rothbury estate in 1891, E.V.C. Mayne considered:

> After an experience extending over three seasons, I have no hesitation in giving my opinion that, in economy and efficiency, the machine shears are far before hand shears ... the machine shears are a boon to squatter, shearers, and sheep.

In spite of such eulogies, large proprietors were suspicious of the manner in which sheep were more closely clipped by the new shears - it increased the risk of stock losses during unseasonal cold snaps. The initial costs of setting up plant further deterred them, but their conservatism slowly disappeared in the face of persistent enthusiasm from the converted. The Whites began using machine shears at Belltrees in 1902 and were surprised that many pastoral families were still 'clinging to the old process'. By 1914 the machine shear was in universal use.

Pastoral families were in general hesitant improvers. They tended to favour pastoral, rather than agricultural improvement. They were interested in technical innovations, but not much in educational ones. In 1905 James Windeyer of Kinross visited Hawkesbury Agricultural College and wrote that the landowners of northern New South Wales did not 'half appreciate or realise, the good things

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42. MM, 3 October 1896.
43. PR, 15 May 1891.
44. PR, 15 October 1902.
that are there provided for them'. He believed the college capable of providing 'a splendid object lesson ... of how farming, in all its various branches, should be conducted'. But large Hunter valley proprietors seldom troubled the college for advice, or made the investment of sending their sons there. From 1907 to 1915 only two sons of the pastoral families attended Hawkesbury - I am not sure how much this reluctance to send boys to the college reflected uninterest in farming improvement, or merely a lack of social cachet in a Hawkesbury education. Lack of intellectual curiosity is, however, further evidenced by the fact that only one of 120 members of the Maitland Scientific Society was a large proprietor.

The pastoral families were, in other words, traditional intensifiers rather than innovators. This could mean very hard work and considerable expense. W.E. Abbott laboured on his land from adolescence onwards, ring-barking and opening out country whose 'grass was too sour and the timber too heavy'. By 1910 he was able to reflect on his achievements. There were 158 miles of fences on his two estates, together with seven new sheepyards and five new stockyards. Abbott estimated the improvements made during his time as worth £4,000 on 40,000 acres. The land was still, however, underdeveloped.

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45. Dungog Chronicle, 24 November 1905.
46. They were R.S. Bowman and M. Keys. 'Scholars at Hawkesbury', Reports of Department of Agriculture, NSW PP 1907-15.
49. Ibid.
fenced tract of grazing country. The epitome of this conservative model was Belltrees, of which an Abbott wrote:

this fine holding as nearly attains a pastoral ideal as it is possible for any place to do. You will discover nothing wrong with it - from gate-fastenings to woolshed, from boundary-riders' cottages to sheepyards, from the station store to the harvesting machinery.50

The biggest estates were rural 'manufactories' of wool, beef and butter. On Collaroy, together with the traditional two ploughs, two harrows, five drays, two sawmill trucks and sheepwashing plant, there was a mowing machine, a mechanical cultivator, a chaff cutter, four circular saws, two portable steam engines and many other gadgets.51 In addition to the conventional station plant listed by Butlin,52 Hunter valley estates by the late 1890s included milking sheds, hay sheds and various devices powered by the steam and the internal combustion engines.53

Some pastoral families prided themselves on spending rather more on station plant than they need. Shearing sheds and stables were objects of a quiet, though fond ostentation. The architect Horbury Hunt was commissioned to design graceful, needlessly solid outbuildings on White and Dangar estates. At Harben Vale he was employed on a new woolshed, though the finishing touches were the work of R.W. White himself, who gave 'much thought' to the 'laying out of the interior fittings'.54 The two hundred and fifty foot

53. MM, 18 May 1898.
54. Murrurundi and Quirindi Times, 9 September 1899.
long pile of woolshed at Brindley Park was praised as 'modern and magnificent' by Mackenzie. 55

The fields of Hunter valley estates were trimmed and tidied, particularly on the better land near the river banks. At Neotsfield, whose river flats had once been heavily timbered, all the gums had been cleared by 1910 and 'only ornamental trees' existed - exotics that had been planted in copses all over the estate to provide shade and shelter and to give the property 'a charming park-like appearance'.56 The latter phrase was a literary and, it seems, conversational commonplace. Solomon Wiseman, conducting Mackenzie across Cliffdale, declared:

It has been my aim and object to make the place assume a park-like appearance, in view of which I have planted, as you see, shade clumps in all the paddocks, comprising stone-pines, silky oak, and Bunga Bunga. 57

But in spite of this effort and expense, the ideal was a limited one. Large proprietors did not make full use of the possibilities of diversification, intensification and conservation that were open to them. When confronted with the major investment of irrigation they defaulted altogether. There had been talk of irrigating land in the Hunter valley since the 1850s, but until the 1890s 'very few landowners put their ideas on irrigation into practice'. 58 In the 1890s a few private investors started to experiment, but the large proprietors remained uncertain. Duncan Kennedy was suspicious of a scheme to dam the upper Hunter, and

55. MM, 3 October 1896.
56. PR, 15 August 1910.
57. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 47.
observed that 'Many a man builds a house which falls'. His neighbour, W.I. Gardiner, on the other hand, decided 'it is just the description of work the Colony requires'.

Two large proprietors began to irrigate small areas of river flat about 1900. R.T. Keys installed a centrifugal pump on Bengalla 'with wonderful results'. The pump cost him £1,000. Keys was followed by Thomas Ellis of Arrowfield, who in 1903 paid £1,300 to have a 'complete and up-to-date irrigation plant' set up on his estate. Such was the novelty of the project that a crowd of one hundred people came to see the first trial. But the scale of irrigation involved in these and subsequent projects was very small.

The plant on Bengalla was capable of irrigating only forty acres. At Arrowfield, 1,000 gallons of water per minute could be raised to irrigate only thirty acres. Yet Arrowfield possessed four miles of river front 'ideal' for irrigation. Although it had the potential to raise productivity on tens of thousands of acres in the Hunter valley, irrigation by 1914 was still confided to a few small experimental schemes. There was none of the large-scale investment in private irrigation that the pastoral families could well have afforded. The opinion of most large proprietors on improvement of this and other kinds was probably summed up by W.E. Abbott in 1901, when he wrote:

59. 'Segenhoe Estate Irrigation Bill', p. 736.
60. Ibid., p. 738.
61. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, p. 36.
62. PR, 17 August 1903.
63. PR, 16 July 1903.
64. Ibid.
Good old hide-bound conservatism has its office to perform in the economy of things, and, like the governor on a steam engine, saves the community from shaking itself to pieces.65

2. Income Earned from Estates

In 1912 Dame Mary Windeyer was deriving her income from 'rents and profit sharing and the proceeds of fruit and garden and Sale of horses and live Stock' on her Tomago estate.66 In this varied source of revenue she was typical of the large proprietors in the valley. For most of them it was 'Sale of ... live Stock' that was the most remunerative. Cattle and sheep could be sold in a variety of ways. After the establishment of the Aberdeen and other freezing works, beasts could be sold as meat to the factories, or be frozen by them and sold in Europe by a pastoral family's agents. Alternatively, live cattle could be shipped to the Sydney market, or to export points. There was also a trade in horses as military and domestic hacks, and in purebred livestock for stud purposes.

Of these possibilities, the sale of fat cattle was increasing in importance. Most estates ran cattle and most were selling off young fattened head every year. A large estate, Ravensworth, was sending away 1,200 fat bullocks annually from its herd of 5,000.67 A small estate, Lewinsbrook, would sell 100 or 150 head in Sydney every year. This output in the 1880s came largely from natural increase in herd sizes, the landowner selling the surplus. In the 1890s and 1900 it became the practice to take cattle from the north

65. PR, 15 August 1901.
66. Will of Dame Mary Windeyer, NSW Probate 59017/4, 30 January 1913.
for fattening in the Hunter valley, and this meant a far higher turnover in purchases and sales every year. In the Denman district by 1904 every large estate was selling almost its entire herd every year, so that Merton-Martindale was sending away no fewer than 5,000 head of quickly fattened head annually. 68 This new intensive fattening industry spread to the lower Hunter very quickly. By 1900 the lower Hunter estate of Cawarra, with an acreage of only 10,000, was sending 1,000 head of fat bullocks to market every year. 69 Smaller estates numbered their sales in the hundreds - the average sale of fat bullocks from the herds of G.A. Mackay of Melbee numbered about 250 every year from 1902 to 1914. In 1902 Maitland market was paying about £12 a head and by 1914 this had risen marginally to almost £13 a head. Mackay in other words was earning from £2,000 to £3,000 a year from this source, 70 and he was one of the smallest of the large proprietors.

Sheep were few in the lower Hunter, but came to be a major source of stock for sale in the upper Hunter. In the 1880s sheep were still raised exclusively for their wool, but the Aberdeen works meant that in the 1890s fat sheep began to be sent off from estates on the Goulburn and around Scone and Murrurundi. Output grew with cross-breeding, so that by 1904 F.D. McMaster, with a flock of 30,000 sheep at Dalkeith, sold 13,000 of them a year for meat. 71 In 1910 a neighbouring estate, Rotherwood, with a total flock of 20,000,

68. The Denman district produced 17,400 head of fat cattle in 1904. The ten pastoral family estates accounted for 15,500 head. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 15.

69. PR, 15 December 1900.

70. Cattle sale figures noted in the Journals of G.A. Mackay for 1902-14. Mackay papers.

71. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 66.
was sending away 7,000 fat sheep every year to be slaughtered at Homebush.\(^\text{72}\) With some buying-in for quick fattening, turnover could be as large as the 12,000 sheep sold by J.H. Doyle in 1897 from a total flock of 21,000.\(^\text{73}\)

A more glamorous source of income was available in the sale of animals as livestock rather than as meat. Dealers from the towns regularly bought large consignments of horses for sale as carriage horses and hacks, and the Indian army provided a second large market. In 1907 a third market was opened when two French buyers toured the Hunter valley acquiring large numbers of horses for use as military remounts in French Indo-China.\(^\text{74}\) Purebred stock was sold individually at auctions of cattle and sheep in the local towns and at private horse sales outside estate homesteads. Such auctions were major events in Hunter valley life. The Dangars, 'the most enthusiastic and plucky breeders of pedigree stock in New South Wales',\(^\text{75}\) sold Shorthorns and Suffolk Punches in regular sales at Baroona. In 1913, A.A. Dangar estimated that since 1872 he had netted £86,500 from such sales - an average of about £2,600 per annum.\(^\text{76}\) The Turanville sales were even more lucrative. Thomas Cook began an annual auction on his estate in 1893 and it quickly became widely known. Cook culled from and added to his 'colossal stud' until it had become 'one of the most replete and perfect breeding establishments within the boundaries of Australasia'.\(^\text{77}\) By 1912 Turanville attracted buyers not only

\(72\) 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 59.

\(73\) Undated entry in the Letter Book of J.H. Doyle for 1897. Doyle papers.

\(74\) PR, 15 February 1907.

\(75\) PR, 15 April 1891.

\(76\) PR, 15 February 1913.

\(77\) PR, 15 February 1896.
from the length and breadth of Australia, but also from 'the land of rice and rajahs', from England and from Europe. Every year there were festive occasions when buyers gathered 'under the shade of the bamboos and yellow jackets at the rear of the fine old mansion'. A rival of Cook, William Bakewell of St Aubins, was by 1910 offering an annual range of 200 geldings, fillies, ponies and Indian horses.

Along with the sale of meat and of livestock, wool was a third income earner of the pastoral families. Wool-growing, like mutton raising, was confined to the upper Hunter. On Collaroy in 1881 an income of £9,900 was netted from wool, compared with £6,400 from sale of stock. Smaller upper Hunter estates, like F.C. Hall's Ridgelands, probably earned something over £2,000 in the same year from wool sales. From the 1800s productivity per sheep rose dramatically. In 1880 there were almost 110,000 Merinoes on Belltrees, producing a wool clip of 795 bales; by 1901 diversification of the estate had reduced the flock to 90,000 but the yield was of 1,501 bales. Profit did not increase so surely. In 1880 the average price realised in London for Sydney greasy wool was 12½d per lb. By 1894 it had reached a low of 7d per lb., and then began rising. Increasing production could offset this decline, and few estates by the 1900s were dependent solely on wool for their income - by 1915 only 9 of 45 upper Hunter estates did not run cattle as well as

78. MM, 2 March 1912.
81. The sheep flock of Ridgelands was about 7,000, compared with 28,000 on Collaroy. Given a rough similarity in fleece quality, Ridgelands would have earned about one-quarter as much as Collaroy from wool sales.
82. MM, 26 June 1880 and PR, 15 October 1902.
Dairying was a fourth money earner. Almost half the pastoral families enjoyed this source of revenue by 1900 (Appendix X). Contemporary sources gave contradictory accounts of dairying, but it seems on the whole to have paid well. Earnings of at least a pound an acre of clear profit were spoken of. Thomas Ellis owned a dairy farm of only 400 acres from which he earned £500 a year (after the share of the tenant was subtracted). Another large proprietor near Muswellbrook claimed that he made one pound an acre fattening stock and two pounds an acre dairying. The rapid expansion of share-milking seems convincing proof of its profitability to the landlord.

Revenue from rents and profit sharing provided an increasing proportion of the incomes of pastoral families, but I have no information which enables me to measure it. Letting land was commoner than share-farming (page 34), presumably because it was more remunerative. Blunt, on the other hand, was earning only ten shillings per acre from 400 acres of good river flat let to a tenant on Overton in 1910, while from six share-farmers he was making a clear annual profit in the same year of almost £3,500. The importance of rents and profit sharing to incomes of pastoral families as a whole remains problematical.

83. Of the estates in the Merriwa and Upper Hunter districts running over 5,000 sheep or 500 cattle. Appendix V.
84. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', pp. 42 and 99.
86. These six share-farmers each earned about £310 a year, their total earnings being about £1,860 a year. The remaining part of their earnings (65%) went to Blunt. Ibid., p. 27.
In addition to the above principal sources of income, pastoral families could turn a penny or two in many small ways. Around Dungog and other towns, landowners like the Mackays of Melbee operated butcher shops, where they sold a little of their fat stock directly to townspeople. Other large proprietors sold seed from their harvests, fruit from their orchards (the Baerami orangery sent a crop of 105 tons a year to Muswellbrook), timber from their plantations, and many other products.

Expenses came under four main heads: buying in of stock, wages, charges on the land and transport. Stock purchase varied from property to property and from year to year. Sheep grazing estates tended to buy and sell stock less largely than cattle properties, because sheep reproduce more rapidly than cattle. In 1881 the amount spent on the purchase of sheep in the Collaroy accounts came to only £91. The intensive fattening practice that grew up in the 1890s meant spending greater sums. This was financially advantageous. The greater the turnover of stock, the less dead money a proprietor possessed. Buying and selling of stock enabled owners to trim their sales according to market breezes. G.A. Mackay was able to pay £4 10s a head for 250 store bullocks one year, put them onto his pastures for fattening, and six weeks later start selling them at a price of £12 10s. Other forms of stock purchase occurred too. Studs could only be kept up at a large cost and cross-breeding required substantial outlay. Horsebreeding was costliest of

87. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 13.
88. Collaroy papers, Vol. 4, p. 16.
89. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', p. 66.
all. For his stallion 'Confident', H.C. White paid 1,000 guineas. 90

Wage costs varied. In the lower Hunter, where there was more agricultural work, labour needs were greater and costs higher. In the upper Hunter, where some of the estates remained sheepwalks, the need might be only for a few shepherds. The biggest estates - Belltrees, Collaroy, Brindley Park - calculated their wage bills in thousands of pounds. The forty men permanently employed on Belltrees would have cost the White family a wage bill of roughly £1,800 in 1890 and £2,400 in 1913 (not counting keep). 91 Additional labour costs included salaries for managers and accountants and large lump sums paid to contractors. Seasonal labour added another cost, particularly on sheepgrowing estates. Shearers were paid a pound per hundred sheep in 1890 and twenty-four shillings per hundred in 1913. On a large estate like Dalkeith, with about 30,000 sheep in 1913, shearers' wages would have amounted to some £360. An average pastoral family estate, with a labour force of ten permanent hands, would pay out about £400 in wages in the 1880s and perhaps £500 in 1910. The spread of share-farming meant that wages declined as a factor in estate accounts. The wage structure also had the advantage (to the employer) of being more flexible than most other costs. When prices fell, the pastoral family responded by reducing wages. From 1890 to 1895 average wages fell markedly:

90. MM, 12 May 1896.

91. My calculations based on 'Nominal rates of wages', Statistical Register of New South Wales 1890, p. 533 and 'Average rates of wages', Statistical Register of New South Wales 1913, p. 647.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
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<th>Average wage 1895</th>
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<td>£30 - £50</td>
<td>£26 - £39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couple</td>
<td>£65 - £80</td>
<td>£50 - £70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shearer</td>
<td>20/- per 100</td>
<td>17/6 per 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockman</td>
<td>£40 - £60</td>
<td>£50 - £70</td>
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</table>

The only employees who seem to have enjoyed wage rises were stockmen.

Charges on the land took several forms. The most significant was taxation. From 1895 New South Wales was, in the words of the Pastoral Review, 'burdened with class taxation'.

A tax of a penny in the pound was imposed by G.H. Reid's government on the unimproved value of freehold and selected land, together with an income tax of sixpence in the pound. These new taxes were envisaged as liberal measures by the Reid ministry, which hoped they would encourage the dismantling of large estates. They were also a means of providing revenue for the colony to replace tariffs. In 1910 the federal government introduced a heavier land tax (page 42). This new penal tax, set up by the Fisher government as a means of breaking up estates, was roundly condemned by Hunter valley pastoral families. A.A. Dangar declared it 'crude' and judged its cause to be 'class hatred by a handful of extremists'. But in effect the new tax meant that the levy on most pastoral families in the Hunter valley only increased from one to two or threepence in the pound - an annual bill for the resident majority of local large proprietors of only £40 to £150 under the 1895 Act, and up to £500 under the 1910 Act. Neither tax

92. These wages included keep. 'Nominal rates of wages', Statistical Register of New South Wales 1890, p. 533 and 1896, p. 514.

93. PR, 16 December 1895.

94. There was an exemption for properties worth less than £240 and for incomes of less than £200. Mortgage interest repayments were also exempted for up to sixpence in the pound.

95. PR, 15 September 1910.
was crippling.

In addition were rates levied on the land by local authorities. Traditional rating boards (pastures protection, rabbit, stock and other boards) were joined after 1906 by shires and municipalities. Charges on the land, with the extension of tax and the growth of local government, appeared to be proliferating and J.B. Bettington was moved to complain that 'the land will be taxed as much as it can bear'. But he was exaggerating. Taxes and rates were never too large to be unmanageable and the most awkward aspect of such charges on the land was their inflexibility. The response to this lack of pliability seems to have been tax evasion. Land valuations were usually quite unrealistic, lagging far behind real values. Large proprietors accepted anachronistic valuations as a matter of course, so much so that when an increase in assessments was made in the Muswellbrook district in 1904 there were a number of indignation meetings and a flurry of notices of objection fell upon the land tax commissioners. Such protest was usually ineffective in the end, but it slowed down the process of tax adjustment and landowners were advantaged by the lag. The Overton estate was assessed at 33 shillings per acre, but was in reality worth as much as 280 shillings per acre by 1910. So long as there was inefficiency and evasion, such charges on the land could have no sting.

The fourth main expense was transport. Landowners at a distance from the railway, as most were, spent large sums on cartage.

96. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 57.
97. MM, 9 January 1904.
98. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 27.
Bettington observed that every waggon needed a team of ten or twelve horses to cart goods from Merriwa to the railhead, at a cost of ninepence the bushel for wheat. His neighbour, F.D. McMaster, noted in 1903 that it cost him $1,000 to send wool and fat stock to market. Distance from a railway station influenced the economics of agriculture in particular. On Glendarra the Reynolds family produced oranges in tons, but 'the pigs were being fed on them, because it does not pay to pick and sell them'. Nor was the railway always cheaper. Railway charges penalised districts more distant from Sydney. This meant that large upper Hunter proprietors like W.E. Abbott found rail cartage dearer than the road. The main trunk line passed within a hundred yards of Abbott's woolshed, but with a charge of fourpence per ton per mile, 'we are here no better off than if it had never been built'. Abbott sent his wool to port by teamsters.

Other expenses associated with estate management were caused by accidents and other non-calculable factors. Drought, although never disastrously bad in the Hunter valley, caused a drop in incomes. In 1899 Woodlands was sending off 2,200 head of cattle to market - its usual number. The great drought, finally making an impact on the upper Hunter, caused sales from the herd to fall to 1,800 in 1900 and 1,600 the next year. In 1902 the estate was able to sell only 28 head. In the same year the Bettingtons were

99. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 56.
100. Ibid., p. 66.
101. PR, 15 August 1901.
102. PR, 15 June 1901.
103. Ibid.
104. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 44.
forced to feed their stock on hay and chaff. J.H. Bettington lamented, 'it is all waste of money', and the family later estimated that weathering the 1902 drought had cost them nearly $12,000.

But the Merriwa-Cassilis plateau was exceptional. Elsewhere the pastoral families were able to offset low yields in drought years by depasturing stock from further north.

Another loss factor was fluctuating prices. Wool's fall in value in the 1880s and 1890s and rise in the 1900s was particularly unsteadying. Beef and other prices followed similar, though less steep movements. But the well-established large proprietors in the Hunter valley seem to have been fairly immune. When the wool slump began, J.H. Bettington noted that James White of Edinglassie could continue to 'have his fine House & Entertain en grand Seigneurie without feeling the consequences'.

Large proprietors, having the capacity to store produce and wait for better times, could turn price fluctuations into profit. On one occasion, when maize prices were falling, John Eales bought in big quantities at 30d a bushel. He was able to sell later at 78d a bushel.

The pastoral families as a whole were stepping up production, and this was another means of absorbing declining prices. In the words of the Pastoral Review, 'The remedy is ... the concentration of energy upon the increase of production for export'.

Mortgage and debt repayment were a final, and extremely

106. Ibid.
107. J.H. Bettington to Susanna Bettington, 18 February 1876. Papers of Bettington family, held by Mitchell Library.
108. PR, 15 October 1895,
109. PR, 15 May 1893.
complicating factor in the financial management of pastoral families. In order to finance improvements or the acquisition of more land, large proprietors took out loans from banks, finance companies, family and friends. When Richard Binnie bought Maeranie, for example, half the value of the estate was tied up in a private mortgage of £7,000 to the trustees of Joseph Pearse, of the Plashett Pearse family, and the entire Bengalla estate of R.T. Keys was mortgaged for £18,000 at 6% interest. I have not nearly enough evidence to calculate the incidence of this sort of indebtedness among the pastoral families, but it must have been large.

Mortgage was not necessarily an inflexible burden. Large proprietors might manipulate mortgage as a means of raising liquid assets for re-investment. They could use the mortgage system to attain calculated ends, as part of their complicated speculations and other financial ventures. Their estates were, after all, large businesses, and businesses on such a scale generally operated on overdrafts. A high level of debt might indicate a healthy business rather than the reverse. When D.F. Mackay died he was a very rich man, but his Dulcalmah estate was found to be mortgaged for £25,000 at 8% interest. 110 This debt was presumably a method of keeping his capital flexible; his overall assets were certainly far in excess of his debts. On a more modest scale, Edwin Smith of Munni was operating on an overdraft almost every year from the early 1890s to 1914. 111 He was also heavily mortgaged. But his business was

111. His overdraft was £2,400 by 1892 and reached a maximum of £4,800 in 1896. By 1900 he was operating temporarily in the black, with a credit balance of £800. By 1914 his overdraft was back at £1,000. Bank of New South Wales Account Books of Edwin Smith for 1891-1914. Smith Papers.
thriving, he was continuing to acquire land and stock, and was himself mortgagee for neighbouring small farmers. He too died a rich man.

There were occasional disasters. Thomas Hungerford died in the midst of a financial manoeuvre and when his assets of £110,000 were measured against his debts of £222,000, the Hungerfords were bankrupted. Mackenzie observed that Hungerford had speculated 'boldly' and philosophised:

> as all the world knows the best of managers and owners sometimes come to grief, and unfortunately in Mr. Hungerford's case the golden apples have turned to dead-sea-fruit.

There were foreclosures too. Wollara, one of Solomon Wiseman's estates, was sold out from under him in 1894. But even in 1897, when the pastoral economy was touching bottom and 'flocks were contracting, foreclosures were common, and many stations were being abandoned', only five large Hunter valley estates had been foreclosed upon (Appendix IV).

On the whole, the estates of the Hunter valley pastoral families seem to have been producing profits. Where balance sheets have been preserved they substantiate this impression. The largest estates produced generous incomes for their owners. Collaroy in the

112. In 1913, for example, he was mortgagee for Samuel Hipwell to the sum of £500 and John Edmond for £2,000. Munni Estate Ledgers for 1913, pp. 500 and 510. Smith papers.

113. Will of Thomas Hungerford, NSW Probate 32184/4, 23 September 1904.

114. MM, 13 June 1896.

115. Maitland Weekly Mercury, 6 January 1894.

early 1880s was giving a clear profit, after all expenses had been
deducted, of between £5,000 and £10,000 a year. In 1881 the accounts
broke down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheques outstanding</td>
<td>Debts outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of stock</td>
<td>Wages etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>Freight, agency fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of wool (in London)</td>
<td>Flour, salt etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundries</td>
<td>Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Griffiths &amp; Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(stock agents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sundries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£2,276</td>
<td>£5,608</td>
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<tr>
<td>£6,368</td>
<td>£4,598</td>
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<tr>
<td>℃57</td>
<td>℃153</td>
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<tr>
<td>£9,901</td>
<td>℃398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£478</td>
<td>℃560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£2,337</td>
<td>℃432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£21,416</td>
<td>£1,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£1,713</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The clear profit of almost £7,000 was invested in land purchase.

The accounts of Brindley Park, another of the largest estates
in the valley, indicate a similar level of profitability, even for
the slump years of the 1890s. The balance of the estate accounts
are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>£18,561</td>
<td>£23,117</td>
<td>£4,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>£15,854</td>
<td>£22,054</td>
<td>£6,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>£16,896</td>
<td>£22,172</td>
<td>£5,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>£16,530</td>
<td>£19,408</td>
<td>£2,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>£16,196</td>
<td>£24,650</td>
<td>£8,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>£13,713</td>
<td>£19,107</td>
<td>£5,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>£13,215</td>
<td>£14,576</td>
<td>£1,363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there was a severe dip in the bad year of 1897, the overall
balance provided the Bettingtons with a large profit, the average
profit being about £5,000 per annum. The White family reckoned
Martindale's profit at well over £5,000 a year, as that was the

117. These figures have been simplified and re-ordered, with a
consequent distortion of totals by a few pounds. Collaroy
papers, Vol. 14, p. 16.

118. Journals of Brindley Park for 1891-7. University of New
England Archives.
annuity payable from the estate to James White. 119 J.P. Abbott believed in 1881 that if the Whites made less than £9,000 or £10,000 a year from Martindale 'they would think themselves unfortunate'. 120

Smaller estates measured their profits in hundreds rather than thousands of pounds. The difference between cattle costs of £1,725 and cattle earnings of £2,718 on Melbee was the main basis of G.A. Mackay's income in 1890. After other expenses (wages, rent and stores) and income (sale of dairy and other produce) were balanced, the overall profit to Mackay in 1890 stood at about £1,000. His income remained roughly constant until 1914.121 Invermein in 1906 produced a clear profit of a little over £700.122 This sort of return represents the lowest level in profit for the pastoral families.

3. Other Investments

From 1880 to 1914 the Hunter valley was developing a wider economic base. Advances in pastoralism and agriculture were matched by the progress of a third primary industry - mining. There was also a growth of secondary industries and of the financial, shipping and other agencies that grew in symbiosis with them. Money from the land of large proprietors was spreading into this growing capitalist structure.

The pastoral families were very ready to invest in mining,

119. Will of James White the elder.
120. NSW PD 1881, Vol. 5, p. 460.
to the extent of subscribing to shares in mining companies, but were not active promoters. When coal mining began in the region the scale was small, and the Eales family of Duckenfield Park took a leading role. John Eales established a colliery near Minmi - it operated for many years, but remained a small unit. Further up the valley there was a similar stage of capitalism around Muswellbrook. Coal mining began on the Kayuga estate in 1901 and in 1908 the Kayuga Coal Mining Co. was founded by local men. Only one of them was a large proprietor. The capital requirements of the industry quickly eclipsed the resources of the initial investors and the venture went public.

As the mining industry moved into its second phase the pastoral families invested more, but were even less active as leaders. The first large companies were formed in the 1870s - the Australian Alliance Coal Co. and the Newcastle Coal Co. But none of the directors of these operations was a large proprietor. Nor was any of the first shareholders from a Hunter valley pastoral family. A.A. Dangar, who did attempt to play an entrepreneurial role in the 1890s, had his fingers burned. He and a few others bought a large Newcastle coal mine for £50,000. After seven years of operation, in which they paid thousands of pounds in wages, they had not received 'a stiver of a dividend'. The only large proprietors consistently prominent in Hunter valley mining were Samuel Clift and Hector Cameron McDonald. Clift was a director of the important East

123. The founders of the company were J.W. Humphries, W.L. Campbell, R.G.D. Fitzgerald and Thomas Blunt of Overton.


125. PR, 15 August 1896.
Greta Coal Mining Co., centred on Newcastle. McDonald was a director of the Muswellbrook-based St Heliers Coal Mining Co. A few other large proprietors had interests in mining outside the valley. Solomon Wiseman owned one fourteenth of the shares of Broken Hill Proprietary in the 1880s, and A.A. Dangar was the principal partner in the Cobar Copper Syndicate, which eventually sold out to an English group in one of the biggest pre-war mining transactions in Australia.

But apart from this handful of magnates, the local pastoral families were content merely with buying up shares in mining companies, like G.T.P. Close, who acquired interest in the Newcastle Wallsend Coal Co.

Mining served these families merely as an overflow for increasing surplus capital.

More important was the promotion by pastoral families of secondary industries related to processing farm goods. Meat packaging was their particular achievement. From the first, large proprietors had experimented with meat preserving. In 1868 George Loder had started a meat works on Abbey Green, producing tinned meat and meat extract. The tins were made on the estate and cooperers were engaged in large numbers to turn out vats, barrels and casks for the works. When the meat freezing process was perfected in the 1880s, pastoral capital was ready to invest in it. In 1894 the Grazier's Meat Export Co. of New South Wales was formed, with a capital of £250,000, to operate works in Sydney. Hunter valley names were prominent among the list of 98 provisional directors.

126. 'Solomon Wiseman', in W.F. Morrison, Centennial History of New South Wales, Sydney 1888 (unpaginated).
128. Will of George Thomas Palmer Close, NSW Probate 2818/4, 16 April 1892.
Within the Hunter valley, the Aberdeen works were founded, promoted and capitalised by local pastoral families. When the factory began slaughtering beef in 1895 the first lot was 200 fat bullocks from James White's Edinglassie. At the same time, large upper Hunter proprietors were already meeting at Muswellbrook to consider ways of enlarging the new works. In the lower Hunter the Eales family 'had an idea in view ... of starting a freezing works on their own account'. The Pastoral Review thought it would be 'quite a feather in the cap ... when private landowners begin such enterprise as this'. As it turned out, no plans for private freezing works did come to fruition. The Eales family failed to find enough capital and the Aberdeen factory expanded at a rate great enough to keep up with demand. As the industry matured, Hunter valley pastoral families settled down into sleeping partnerships and shareholding.

A deal of energy also went into the foundation of dairy factories. The first dairy factory co-operatives began to be formed in the 1890s. Pastoral families joined with local businessmen to fund and promote them. At Muswellbrook, for example, the co-operative was founded by A.S. Bowman, J.H. Keys and J.M. Campbell, together with a townsman. The Denman co-operative was set up by Edward Bowman and at Scone the board of directors included W.E. Abbott, F.A. Parbury and J.H. Doyle. Some large proprietors established private dairy factories, like Thomas Blunt on Overton and the Eales family at Duckenfield Park. The Eales family imported their plant from the United States and by 1896 were turning out 24 tons of butter a day. As early as 1899 there were 39 dairy factories in the Hunter

130. PR, 15 June 1895.
131. PR, 15 October 1895.
132. K.W.D. Humphries, a local businessman.
valley. Large proprietors were prominent in most of them and in control of several.  

Pastoral families were less important to other rural industries. Most of the flour mills, for example, were owned by private small men. The Scone mill - owned by the Campbell family - represents a certain pastoral investment, but other large proprietors confined themselves to shareholding in the little milling companies at Dungog, Merriwa, Singleton and elsewhere. The shareholders of the Merriwa Flour Milling Co. in 1896, for example, included J.B. Bettington and A.P. Cooper. Nor did pastoral families enter much into the commercial agencies that were growing up in the midst of the rural expansion of the late nineteenth century. Local firms were not invested in and only a few Sydney based enterprises had some capital from the local families. Duncan McMaster was typical, with his 2,000 shares in the Co-operative Wool and Produce Co. of Sydney. The only large Hunter valley proprietors exceptional to this role of sleeping capitalist were Samuel Clift and W.H. Mackay, who were both directors of Pitt, Son & Badgery Ltd.

The pastoral families acquired little urban property. Thomas Cook owned small properties dotted through the local towns. In 1913 they included a hotel, a shop, a dwelling house, 47 suburban allotments, 16 town allotments and two brick cottages in Muswellbrook. At

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133. V.J. Doyle owned the controlling interest in Cessnock Creamery, the Eales family the Duckenfield Park Butter Factory, R. Withycombe the Millgrove Butter Factory, A. Perrett the Australian Dairying Co. Ltd. of Failford, J.W. Pearse the Jerrys Plains Creamery, C.F. Noble the Sydenham factory at Glennie Creek and E.R. White the works at Denman. Yewen's Directory, pp. 569-74.

134. Merriwa and Cassilis Standard, 28 March 1892.

135. Will of Duncan McMaster, NSW Probate 48875/4, 8 April 1910.
Scone he owned another 35 town lots including a shop, bakery, three cottages and one 'commodious brick residence'. A.A. Dangar bought and sold urban property on a much larger scale - by 1913 he was earning at least £3,000 a year from his Newcastle holdings and in addition was making large sums from dealing in other city land. Thomas Hungerford owned Sydney property and one Hunter valley proprietor, R.H. D. White, had holdings in Melbourne. But the urban property of other pastoral families seems generally to have consisted of a single town house in Sydney - if any at all. These town houses were family residences and did not produce rents. Hunter valley pastoral families were not comparable with the South Australian landowners whose Adelaide properties gave them valuable sources of alternative income.

Two or three families had important shipping assets. The Dangar family was developing its own shipping line. Most of the members of the family held shares in Dangar, Geyde & Mallock Ltd. and Dangar, Grant & Co., the two merchant firms founded by Henry Dangar for his youngest brother. In 1895 these firms launched 'a new line of large cargo steamers, of 2000 to 3000 tons capacity each'. This, the Regular Line, began operations with four vessels

136. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 8 January 1913.
137. Will of Albert Augustus Dangar.
138. He sold a twenty acre property at Wickham in four sales from 1874 to 1885 and realised £16,000 on the deal. 'Minutes of Evidence on the land fronting Throsby and Cottage Creeks, sold by A.A. Dangar, Esq.', NSW VP 1898 (2nd Session), Vol. III, p. 878.
139. Will of Robert Hoddle Driberg White, NSW Probate 21732/4, 28 October 1900.
140. An exception were two of the three houses owned in Sydney by Duncan McMaster. Will of Duncan McMaster.
142. PR, 15 August 1895.
sailing the trade routes to Europe. The Clift and Eales families put money into ships too. Samuel Clift was a shareholder in one or other of the Hunter river steamship companies for 47 years and chairman of directors for 42 years. 143 John Eales was a founding director of the Hunter River Steam Navigation Co. A member of the Dangar family was also one of the directors of the Clarence & Richmond River Steam Navigation Co. 144

Banking and insurance houses were the principal urban investment of the pastoral families. The will of J.C.S. McDouall mentions stocks and shares in the Bank of New South Wales and the Bank of New Zealand. 145 Most of the wills I have seen include reference to similar property. Large proprietors seldom held directorships, however. In 1880 of nine banks registered in Sydney only two had the names of Hunter valley pastoral families on their boards. 146 This was usual throughout the period.

On the whole, then, there was a good deal of investment in business and industry by the pastoral families. It was not always successful. In the financial crisis of 1893, James Bowman, who had speculated heavily in city building societies, lost about £30,000. 147

143. PR, 16 December 1912.
145. Will of John Crichton Stuart McDouall, NSW Probate 210/4, 5 March 1891.
146. The banks were the Bank of New South Wales, City Bank, Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney, English Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank, London Chartered Bank of Australia, Mercantile Bank of Sydney, Savings Bank of New South Wales, Australian Joint Stock Bank and Union Bank. F.H. Dangar was a director of the CBC and William Busby of the Mercantile Bank of Sydney. Sands' Directory 1880, pp. 1-xi.
147. Singleton Argus, 7 July 1891.
But in general money earned from land was spreading steadily into other investments. This was part of the gradual accumulation of wealth occurring in the successful pastoral families. Agricultural and pastoral diversification were being matched by a degree of income diversification. Widening nets of interest were tying the pastoral families to Sydney and the commercial and industrial worlds. In return, urban businessmen were buying Hunter valley estates. The process was one of cross-fertilisation. In addition to their one or two thousand pounds a year, or more, from Hunter valley property, their growing investments in trade and industry must have been providing the pastoral families with substantial and rising incomes.

4. Wealth

It is possible to measure the absolute wealth of the pastoral families by looking at probate records. In those cases where debts exceeded assets at the time of death, probate documents give both figures. In the case of assets exceeding debts, only a single credit figure is given. This applies even when debts were obviously very large, and all but cancelled assets, as in the case of George Thomas Loder, whose estate was so heavily debt-ridden at the time of his death in 1901 that it was probated at only £938. There is an element of uncertainty in probate valuations. Some large proprietors perhaps gave property to heirs before their death in order to avoid duties; others owned estates that were over- or under-valued. But on the whole, probate valuations are reliable.

Before 1880 the estates bequeathed by pastoral families were

148. Will of George Thomas Loder, NSW Probate 22040/4, 1 January 1901.
generally fairly modest. The Dangar family had already accumulated riches, but most others were only beginning to do so. James White died in 1842 worth only £15,000. Thomas Haydon's surplus of assets over debts only came to £2,000 in 1855, and John Mackay's in 1851 to £1,000. The wealth of these families increased more or less steadily. One branch of the White family was worth £80,000 by 1875. By 1914 money had accumulated over two or three generations. Of 31 estates probated between 1880 and 1914 the total value came to almost £2,000,000 and the average was about £64,000 (Appendix XI). At the same time there was currency inflation. The Muswellbrook Chronicle in 1913 was lamenting the rise of prices which, it thought, had begun 'some fifteen years ago'. Inflation of property beyond appreciation through improvement is difficult to calculate, but the degree of general inflation was something in the nature of 50%. This leaves a considerable balance in favour of the wealth of pastoral families.

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149. Will of Henry Dangar.
150. Will of James White the elder.
151. Will of Thomas Haydon.
152. Will of John Mackay, NSW Probate 2241/1, 20 January 1851.
153. Will of Francis White, NSW Probate 1469/2, 26 May 1875.
154. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 1 February 1913.
155. Butlin suggests a large number of price series to indicate inflation and deflation and shows (using as a basis 1910/11 = 1000) that prices in 1880 ranged from 828 for 'property and finance, government services, professional and personal' to 1740 for 'water, transport, government undertakings'. By 1913/14 prices ranged from 1080 for 'water, transport, government undertakings' to 2244 for 'pastoralism'. Overall inflation indicated by these series was at worst 50% - but it was very irregular. N.G. Butlin, Australian Domestic Product, Investment and Foreign Borrowing 1861-1938/9, Cambridge 1962, pp. 455-6.
Most of the value of estates came from land. Of Thomas Cook's property, real estate accounted for £209,000 of a total £325,000.\textsuperscript{156} This land was in the form of the Turanville estate, together with stations on the Barwon and Namoi rivers and in Queensland, and town properties. Cook was unusually rich. More typical of the pastoral families was Herbert Walker Laurie, whose estate was probated at £43,000 in the same year as Cook's. Of the estate £30,000 came from land.\textsuperscript{157} It seems to have been usual for land to account for two thirds or more of estates in the 1900s. An exception was A.H. Lindeman, who died worth £26,000, of which £17,000 came from shares in public companies.\textsuperscript{158}

Disposition of wealth in wills was highly variable. It depended a great deal on whether or not a family had acquired notions of primogeniture. Of 32 estates bequeathed from 1880 to 1914, the wills in 11 cases expressly specified that the Hunter valley property be kept intact. Another 6 allowed for a degree of partition, but favoured sons heavily. In other words, in 17 wills the notion of preserving family continuity by vesting property in male heirs predominated. But in 11 more wills the principle of equal partition between all heirs, male and female, was allowed. Another 4 wills vested property in female heirs alone (Appendix XI).

Of those wills that transmitted estates intact, several were couched in the terms of primogeniture. The will of John Nowlan, worth almost £50,000, left a little over £20,000 to a variety of legatees - two friends got £1,000 each, relations in Ireland got

\textsuperscript{156.} \textsc{MM}, 19 October 1912.
\textsuperscript{157.} \textsc{MM}, 6 July 1912.
\textsuperscript{158.} \textsc{MM}, 13 January 1912.
similar sums and there were gifts to old servants and to charities. But the bulk of the estate, particularly the 7,100 acre Eelah property, was to pass to 'sons in tail male successively'. 159 In this particular case it was necessary to go some distance to find such heirs. Nowlan was childless, his nearest male relative being a first cousin, John Ryan of Castle Comer, Kilkenny. Nowlan directed that Eelah be let to 'a person of undoubted character and large means' and that the income go to Ryan. His cousin's son was to inherit. 160

Such rigid primogeniture was unusual. When R.H.D. White died he divided his estate, while still favouring his eldest son. Tahlee, the family property, was left to this son and 'heir at law', Sefrey Beecher Steward White. He also inherited an island off the coast and urban lots in Newcastle. The remainder of R.H.D. White's properties were divided equally between his other children. 161 Mary Windeyer favoured male heirs just as much as many male large proprietors. Of her three sons, one was to inherit her town house, another a large cash legacy and a third the country estate of Tomago. The daughters were provided with small cash annuities, payable from the income of Tomago. 162

Wills showing less favouritism to sons were typified by that of D.F. Mackay. Mackay left a small estate near Denman and a large cattle station in Queensland to trustees. From these properties they were to pay Mackay's wife and daughter generous annuities. But his most valuable estates were bequeathed to two sons. 163 J.H. Davies

159. Will of John Nowlan, NSW Probate 9019/4, 9 March 1895.
160. Ibid.
161. Will of Robert Hoddle Driberg White.
162. Will of Dame Mary Windeyer.
163. Will of Duncan Forbes Mackay, NSW Probate 32052/4, 16 June 1887.
favoured his sons in a different fashion, by giving them options of purchase (on very easy terms) on the family properties. 164

Equal partition tended to occur in families whose recent origins were humble. The will of W.H. Holmes, for example, although marginally favouring his sons, provided for the fragmentation of property and the disposal of the bulk of the money 'share and share alike' between all sons and daughters. 165 A few of the oldest and most respected pastoral families also allowed equal partition - the Close, Hooke and Blaxland families all splitting some of their legacies in that fashion.

Four wills left estates entirely to women. In one case this disposition was caused by the legator possessing no close male relative. His wife inherited and held the property in trust for their daughter. 166 The remaining three wills left land to wives of men who possessed sons. It was common - in fact probably usual - for wills to allow widows to remain in residence on estates. These three wills took the additional step of giving widows control of the property during their lifetimes. Widows given discretion over estates were inclined, like their husbands, to favour sons. Rebecca Bettington, who had been given full control of her husband's estate, distributed it in a conventional manner. She gave land to her sons (the biggest part to her eldest) and cash to her daughters. 167

There was only a faint tendency, then, for the pastoral

164. Will of John Henry Davies.
165. Will of William Henry Holmes.
166. Will of James Hooke.
families to dispose of their property in an aristocratic manner. Many wished to keep their lands and other interests relatively concentrated. But almost as many allowed them to be divided. Some of the oldest and a few of the most successful families allowed the latter principle. The Blaxlands were sometimes as much disposed to equal partition as the Lauries. But on the whole the richer families favoured male inheritance, usually with some element of primogeniture. Even when a will did provide for the splitting of a landed estate, it seldom occurred in fact. A convention had been established by the late nineteenth century of providing for the equal shares accorded to women by making over cash settlements. These were raised by the mortgaging of an estate, or perhaps by the sale of some paddocks as small farms. A son or brother would retain control of the property and eventually would buy up his siblings' or mother's shares. It was a middle class method of property disposal, being neither aristocratic primogeniture, nor peasant morcellement. Males tended to be favoured in word, and almost always in deed. And a favoured son generally emerged from most inheritances.

The pastoral families of the Hunter valley were in possession of solid wealth. They were rich and, on the whole, getting richer. They enjoyed substantial incomes from land which they were beginning to divert into other economic fields, and they tended to transmit their wealth from one generation to another in a way that served to consolidate it.
CHAPTER FIVE

ORIGINS, EDUCATION AND RELIGION

1. Origins

The people who established themselves as Hunter valley pastoral families were of mixed origins. Of 66 families, 27 migrated from England and formed the slightly largest national group. Next most numerous were Scottish migrants, numbering 23. In addition there were 14 Irish families, one Welsh and one German (Appendix XII). The proportion of Scots in the total is higher than in the community at large. In 1891 the overseas-born population of New South Wales in general, and of the Hunter valley in particular, were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NSW migrant population</th>
<th>Hunter migrant population</th>
<th>Pastoral families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My information is too scrappy to tabulate usefully, but each national group seems to have been disparate within itself. A large number of the English families originated in the borderlands of the south-west and the north. The Cooks, Dangars and Richardses came from Cornwall, the Badgery family had its roots in Devon, the Coxes in Dorset and the Stacy in Somerset. From the northern borderlands came McDoualls, Robinsons and Parks. Other families, however, were urban migrants or from the home counties. Several had been Londoners for some generations, like the Close family, which began its recorded

Numbers of families had their origins in provincial towns - the Bettingtons from Bristol, the Clifts from Warwick and the Blaxlands from Fordwich, in Kent. 3

Geographical origins among the Scottish families were equally varied. Some were highlanders, like the Kennedys and McRaes from Invernessshire and the Macintyres of Argyll. The McDonald family came to the upper Hunter from the Isle of Skye. But other Scots migrants originated in the borderlands and lowlands, like the Campbells from Kirkcudbrightshire, the Dodds family from Roxburgh and the Binnies from West Lothian. Towns were represented among Scots migrants as among the English. There were Glaswegians, like the Waddells and Flemings, and at the other extreme inhabitants of small country towns like Dingwallburgh in Cromarty, from which the Munro family migrated.

The Irish families were a little less heterogeneous. A few were from Ulster - like the McMullins of Fermanagh and the Smiths of Strahane, county Tyrone - but more had their origins in Munster and Leinster. The Drinans of county Cork, the Blakes of Galway and the Wallers of Limerick represent the geographical spread. There were Ascendancy families from the south, like the Higgins family of county Mayo, and there were Roman Catholic families from Ulster, like the Haydons and Lawlers. But unlike the Scots and English, few of the Irish pastoral families originated in towns - probably a function of the low level of urbanisation in Ireland rather than an indication of any greater ability of country people to succeed as colonial landowners.

2. John Close was the earliest ancestor the family admitted to. He lived in London and was a merchant connected with the East India trade. His grandson settled in the Hunter valley. Mowle, Pioneer Families, p. 47.

It is difficult to see any pattern in the geographical origins of this motley collection of families. Except in Ireland there was no preponderance of rural over urban elements. Nor were lowlands Scots any more likely to become rich Hunter valley pastoralists than were highlanders or Glaswegians. The only important generalisation that can be made is that there was a higher proportion of Scottish families among the large proprietors than in the colonial population at large. This is consistent with the similar success of Scots migrants in the Darling Downs, the Western District of Victoria, and in southern New Zealand.

The social origins of pastoral families are more difficult to classify. British social class was prescribed by much more than occupation and complete justice cannot be done to its nuances by dividing the migrant families into simple categories. But for rough purposes at least I have defined four groups (Appendix XIII). The first group, 'upper class', consists of the nobility, the landed gentry, the superior clergy, the higher military ranks and businessmen with country seats - it includes, in other words, what people of the time might have spoken of as the upper middle class. The second group, 'middle class', comprises the liberal professions, the inferior clergy, lesser military officers, well-to-do businessmen and large independent farmers. The third group, 'lower middle class', includes shopkeepers, tenant farmers, tradesmen and other owners of modest property. The fourth group, 'lower class', comprises labourers, private soldiers, shepherds and sailors. There must always be a good deal of ambiguity in such classifications, but the overall pattern is firm enough to be useful.

The smallest groups are at the two extremes. Only 3 families
of 57 were upper class and only 5 were lower class. The middle class accounted for 24 families and the lower middle class 25. In some ways the distinction between the middle and the lower middle classes is therefore the most significant, it being roughly the watershed between the genteel and the common, the respectable and the merely honest. A Scots crofter or an English sergeant would seldom be thought of the same order as a rich yeoman or a half-pay captain. Distinct habits of education, ritual and marriage defined the border more clearly than I have been able to do. But it is perhaps important to say that of 57 successful pastoral families, roughly half came to the colony as gentlefolk. The remaining half were not gentlefolk, but only a very few of them were unskilled workers.

None of the three upper class families had been very great or powerful in Britain. The Clive family of Collaroy was the most distinguished, numbering generals, landed magnates and politicians in its ranks. C.F. Clive had also married into the noble house of Lyttelton - but only a cadet branch. The second upper class family, the Wallers of The Grange, were obscure Irish gentry. The Reynolds family of Tocal had its origins among Essex landed gentlemen.

The middle class families were quite a melange. Some had been on the way up in Britain, and others on the way down. With some it is hard to know. The Arndell family in New South Wales was founded by a surgeon, Thomas Arndell, who secured a grant on the Hawkesbury river. The family later claimed that its founder had changed his name


5. Charles Reynolds, son of Thomas Reynolds of Raddon Court, Essex. MM, 10 January 1901.
from Arundel and that he was a descendant of the noble family of Arundel. This claim has never been proven and is not noted by the usual genealogical authorities. 6 A whole tribe of colourful Irish families in the Hunter valley also claimed gentle or noble blood. The Doyles at first preferred to claim descent from Huguenot refugees named D'Oyly. Later they pointed to the D'Oyly family that had settled in Ireland in 1333 under Edward III. Yet all that is definitely known is that one Andrew Doyle of county Wicklow was involved in the troubles of 1798 and 1801 and was exiled for life. He arrived in New South Wales with a little money and lived in obscurity as a small farmer of no distinction in county Cumberland. It was only in the second generation that the Doyles 'rose to affluence'. 7

But most families felt they could be fairly frank about their antecedents. Bourgeois origins were rare enough in the local community to be sufficient mark of distinction. A wide range of middle class backgrounds were admitted to by pastoral families. They included clerical and medical careers. The father of the first Traill was a Presbyterian minister. 8 The Sucklings and the McDoualls were from Anglican clerical stock. The Lindeman estates were put together by the son of a London doctor who in his turn graduated from St Bart- holomew's Hospital, became a naval surgeon and later a medical practitioner in the Hunter valley. The Browns, Dights and Parks were of similar origins. One medical family, the Stacy's of Warromean, was

6. The Arndells' noble descent is supposed to have been via Thomas Arundel, born 1696, second son of Henry 5th Baron Arundel. Mowle, Pioneer Families, p. 7.


dignified with a gentle ancestry. The Stacys had been old landowners in Somerset and had lost their estate of Cassington Castle only in the late eighteenth century. The doctor who founded the Hunter valley branch of the family was not of the same social order as Traill or Brown.

Other middle class migrants were men from merchant families - particularly those that were putting sons into the military profession. Several junior officers who arrived in New South Wales in the early nineteenth century, sons of rich merchants, were given grants in the Hunter valley. Few of them could trace their pedigree beyond a century. Typical was the Cox family, which had been respectable since the early eighteenth century. The family consisted mostly of London merchants - migrants from Dorset - one of whose sons sailed to New South Wales as an army lieutenant and sired a large pastoral family. Similar cases were the Bell, Close and Lethbridge families. One merchant family, the Bettingtons, had not made the intermediate step of establishing sons as officers and gentlemen. The middle class migrants also included a few members of other, more ambiguous professions. The Busby family, for example, began as engineers.

Landed backgrounds were rarer. One landed family were the Hookes - people of substance in Worcestershire who had risen in trade and begun to acquire farms. When a son of the family migrated with his wife in 1823 he hired a ship for the purpose and brought with him servants, a small flock of sheep, some cattle, a thoroughbred horse and some mares. A more usual type was exemplified by the Hunger-

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10. PR, 15 October 1912.
fords, who had long been landowners but whose fortune had dwindled considerably. They were proud of their descent from a Somerset gentry family that had settled in Ireland under Cromwell. But Emanuel Hungerford, captain of South Cork Militia, was penniless when he arrived in New South Wales in 1828. His nearest ancestor of any distinction was a great-great-grandfather. 11

While few of the middle class migrant families were from landed backgrounds, a large number of the lower middle class people had been small farmers. The Abbotts, for example, had been settled as yeomen in Ireland under Cromwell. By the beginning of the nineteenth century they had lost their land and were reduced to tenant farmers on twenty acres. Thomas Abbott arrived in New South Wales in 1838 with no money and no connections. His first job was as turnkey at a Sydney gaol. 12 Not all the small farmers were so poor. The Waddells, Binnies and Bishops were yeomen families of some substance. Henry Dangar was the son of a Cornish farmer whose Lampen Farm, near St Neot, had been in Dangar hands for some generations. The family was later to claim descent from a Huguenot emigre, but that was a fabrication. 13 Like most of the other small farming families, the Dangars knew only a rustic past of three or four generations.

Tradesmen in the group of lower middle class migrants were of a variety of types. The Haydons were Irish ironmongers in a small way and the Holmes family were Lancashire carpenters. The father of George McMullin, who arrived in the colony in 1839, was a stone

12. Subsequently described as 'looking about and gaining experience'. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, p. 53.
5. THE DANGAR DYNASTY.
( R., 15 February 1913 )

Henry Dangar of Neotsfield

William Dangar of Turanville

Albert Augustus Dangar
of Baroona
mason; his mother had been a farmer's daughter. Some families were founded by men who began as bailiffs in Britain and became overseers in Australia. The White, Laurie and Keys families got their starts in that fashion.

I could trace none of the lower class families beyond the fathers of the founding generation. The father of the migrant Allan McDonald was a shepherd in Scotland and that of Donald Macintyre a highlands drover. Three families cannot be traced beyond the founder himself. The Loder family began with George Loder, a private soldier in the 102nd Regiment, who arrived in Sydney in 1788. Loder's son was a farmer and his grandsons were large landowners. The Clifts and the Wisemans were of convict origins.

The religious antecedents of the pastoral families were as varied as their nationality and social class. Of 65 families, 27 were attached to the Church of England, 26 were Presbyterian and 8 were Roman Catholic. Nonconformist sects accounted for the final 4 families. The distribution of religious affiliation in the colony as a whole and in the Hunter valley was as follows:

15. MM, 3 January 1901.
16. Solomon Wiseman, transported in 1801, was grandfather of Samuel Clift, transported in 1818, was father of the Hunter valley Samuel Clift.
17. Three Methodists and one Baptist.
Anglicanism, in other words, was rather weaker among the pastoral families than in the community at large but correlates almost exactly with the English element in the pastoral group (page 137). Affiliation to Roman Catholicism and to nonconformist churches was relatively weaker still. But Roman Catholics, given that in 1863 Therry remarked that there were 'not half a dozen families of that religious denomination belonging to the gentry' in New South Wales, were more numerous than might have been expected. The existence of a fairly large number of Roman Catholic pastoral families in the Hunter valley coincides with Walderssee's analysis of the 1828 census and his conclusion that the Catholics 'covered a very wide spectrum of society' in terms of wealth, occupation and civil condition. Nonconformity was espoused solely by families of lower middle class origins, with the exception of the Hookes. Presbyterians were numerous among the pastoral families because of the large number of Scots and Scots-Irish among them.

In no way were the migrant forbears of the Hunter valley pastoral families a coherent group. In their nationality, social class and religion they represented a wide range of backgrounds. There

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18. The category 'nonconformist' is my own, being made up of Wesleyans, Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists. NSW C 1891, Part 4, pp. 361 and 407-22.


were few from any sort of elite - many were obscure and a few quite poor. But most were somewhere in between and represented, albeit in an irregular fashion, the middling ranks of life in eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain. Wakefield was not inaccurate, as far as the migrants who were to succeed in the Hunter valley were concerned, when he described New South Welsh colonists as:

Excellent people in their way, most of them; farmers, army and navy surgeons, subalterns on half-pay, and a number of indescribable adventurers, from about the twentieth rank in England.21

The forbears of Hunter valley pastoral families lacked even the coherence of successful pastoralists in the Western District of Victoria. There two-thirds of the big landowners came from farms in the Scottish lowlands. Although such men possessed few marks of status, they were at least an homogeneous group.22 Hunter valley pastoral families were more like the Tasmanian gentry, whose forbears had been 'men of modest capital from the urban and rural middle classes of England, Scotland and Ireland'.23 Even this broad description only serves so long as it is emphasised that the lower middle class made up an unduly large part of the whole.

This degree of social, geographical and religious differentiation is too high for the first generations of the pastoral families to be considered a coherent group, let alone a status elite. Yet by the 1880s land ownership among them had become concentrated and hereditary (Chapter Three). Within the limits of my definition by


property ownership, a motley collection of migrants had formed into a stable group. It remains to be seen whether they cohered in other respects than their ownership of land, flocks and herds. If the pastoral families had come to constitute a status elite then they would need to have consolidated the possession of status characteristics. Entry into a status elite was fairly swift and easy in contemporary British society, 'provided that the newcomer adopted the conventions of gentry behaviour in his style of living and pursuit of country interests'. Sociologists describe the process as identification with the 'minority of the best' in an elite. Powerful sections of a socially mobile community model themselves on an admired minority among them. This image they project towards outsiders. It is a process of idealisation. In the Hunter valley the minority of the best among pastoral families were those descended from grantees of the 1820s and 1830s - mostly gentry and military families. The question I shall ask is: did all large proprietors acquire the status characteristics of the minority and pass them on to their children? Did they all mingle with one another and share the same life style, thus becoming a status elite? In order to answer the question I shall look at status in relation to education, to religion, to marriage and to customs of social life.

2. Education

By 1880 there were two parallel systems of education available to the pastoral families. The Public Instruction Act (1880) of the

Parkes government did not greatly increase the already large number of state schools in the Hunter valley. When under the 1880 Act the Newcastle and Maitland districts were amalgamated to embrace the entire Hunter valley, there were found to be 259 local state schools. The number of these schools remained stable. By 1901 the Maitland division - only marginally smaller than in 1880 - still contained 259 schools. The pastoral families, choosing between Public and private schools from 1880 to 1914, always had wide options. The local state schools seem to have been accessible in a physical sense too. Most of them were in the country districts - 198 of the 259 schools of 1901 - where they were rivalled by only 41 private schools (most of which were Roman Catholic). The censuses of 1891 and 1911 showed that 85% of all boys in the region attended state schools. Distances were not great in the Hunter valley and if such a large majority of boys could manage to attend state schools then it must have been easy enough for sons of the pastoral families - whose fathers owned plenty of horses - to do the same. Nor do the private schools seem to have offered a superior education. A parliamentary inquiry found the quality of non-Catholic private schools in

28. Ibid.
29. 'Reports of School Attendance Officers having reference to private schools', NSW VP 1885-6, Vol. IV, pp. 254-5.
30. In 1891 4,890 were attending state schools, 407 denominational schools, 213 were under 'private tuition' and 263 were declared to be studying at home. Counties of Bligh, Brisbane, Durham, Gloucester, Hunter and Phillip. NSW C 1891, Part 2, pp. 248-65. In 1911 of 5,462 for whom place of education was indicated, 4,617 were attending state schools, 623 private schools and 222 were being educated at home in the six counties. A C 1911, Part 5, pp. 634-42.
the Maitland and Newcastle districts to be highly variable, often bad and certainly not obviously better than their state equivalents. 31

I do not know how many children from pastoral families were educated at private schools. Biographical sources occasionally describe the schooling of their male subjects, but because some of them are celebratory (Mowle's Pioneer Families and Burke's Colonial Gentry, for example) they are possibly inclined to mention private education, but suppress state schooling. Private family histories, Who's Who and the Scone Historical Society's biographical dictionary do not suffer from quite the same inhibitions, but are all unsystematic in their references to education. I was consequently unable to count heads in any useful way - hundreds of boys from pastoral families were at school between 1880 and 1914 and I could not find accurate information for even a fraction of them. The education of girls is still more difficult to quantify, given the cursory nature of entries for women in conventional pastoral genealogies. For want of any proper figures, I shall look in an impressionistic way at the various types of education available to children from pastoral families.

There was a schoolroom in many homesteads and it seems to have been common for children to have begun their education with a period of instruction at home. For this purpose a governess might be employed. Some families found a governess too costly, so pooled their resources to hire a teacher between them. Such a communal school was operating in the homestead on the Hambledon Hill estate in the 1870s. 32 On the other hand, comparatively poor families like the Smiths of Munni thought they could afford to keep their own

31. 'Reports of private schools', pp. 154-5.
Pastoral women seem to have had a hand in this stage of their children's education. Mrs Bishop helped the governess at Wootton, and 'used the strap quite often' to reinforce the education of her children. J.H. Bettington wrote of his fears that children were being excessively spoiled and indulged—he thought this threatened to become 'an universal failing, and what the rising generation will be is rather problematical'. He told his niece that in order to train her unruly son she 'must muzzle the young Tiger or he will get the Master'. I do not know whether infant education at home, under the eyes of such governesses and Mammas, was usual or not.

Local state primary schools, however, do not seem to have figured very largely. Andrew Noble, son of Isaac Noble of Hampshire, a rising man, followed a period of private tuition with a few years at the Cassilis state primary school. All the children of A.R. Fremlin attended the Wingen state school in the 1880s. In 1887 Fremlin himself participated in a concert in the Wingen schoolroom. His children performed recitations 'most creditably', while Fremlin was among the 'lady and gentlemen amateurs' who sang to the other parents. But Fremlin was of ambiguous status and never established a permanent pastoral family. Noble was a new man. The pastoral families in general seem to have eschewed the local state schools. Newspapers ran many accounts of the little concerts and fund-raising.

33. The Smiths began employing a governess (Miss Blackmore) at £13 per half-year in 1903. By 1912 they were paying Miss Feltham £30 per annum. Account Books of Edwin Smith for 1903 and 1912. Smith papers.
34. Bishop, 'Notes on the family', p. 20.
37. MM, 2 July 1887.
drives that were such an important part of the state primary school community, but the names of pastoral families seldom appear. Unless large proprietors sent their children to state schools but did not bother to participate in school activities, this lack of newspaper reference to them seems to indicate that they looked elsewhere for the formal education of their children.

An alternative to the state primary schools were the local private preparatory schools. Of eleven private schools in the upper Hunter in 1885, four were Roman Catholic and the remaining seven were protestant preparatory schools, with a total attendance of about 70 pupils. These schools varied a great deal in quality. At one extreme was the Singleton Church of England Grammar School, which was housed in 'a fine two-storied building, built of brick'. Forty pupils were taught by three resident masters and three visiting masters. The grounds were 'large, and beautifully laid out in gardens' of four acres.\(^{38}\) The school educated boys. At the other extreme were some mean little ladies' seminaries, 'totally unfit for education purposes' in the opinion of a local inspector.\(^ {39}\) One of the worst of these schools, Miss Richardson's Church of England school at Raymond Terrace, was conducted in an old stone building. The enrolment was 17 and average attendance was 12.\(^ {40}\)

These schools advertised themselves as 'HIGH-CLASS'.\(^ {41}\) They charged fees equal to a third of the annual wages of a labourer.\(^ {42}\)

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38. 'Reports of private schools', pp. 254-5.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Sydney Stock and Station Journal, 1 November 1907.
42. At Scone Grammar rates were 13 guineas a year for boys under twelve years and 14 guineas for older boys. Ibid.
of their income - of 42 boys attending Singleton Grammar in 1876-7, 13 were from local pastoral families (the remainder from local and Newcastle business families). The largest of them offered secondary education and acted as alternatives not only to local state primary schools but also state secondary schools and private schools at Sydney. Some children passed through a succession of such places. William Alexander Bishop began his education at the age of five years as a weekly boarder at Miss Stephenson's school in Glen Innes. He was subsequently removed to 'Mr Reed's Grammar School' and then to 'Mr Moss's School'. Six months at the Sydney Preparatory School were followed by eighteen months at a branch of Sydney Preparatory at Bowral. Bishop finished his schooling at a small place in Glen Innes called New England Grammar.

State secondary schools were beginning to offer an alternative to small and unreliable private establishments. Maitland High School was set up in 1883, one of the first state secondary schools established under the Public Instruction Act (1880). The new school occupied Sauchie House - premises that had just been evacuated by a private grammar school. The girls' school of Maitland High was set up in the buildings of a former Presbyterian grammar school. Maitland High was joined by Newcastle High in 1906 and together the two schools provided pastoral families with an alternative to private education. Entrance was fairly exclusive, being limited by examination and by fees of eight guineas a year (abolished 1911). For want

44. Bishop, 'Notes on the family', p. 35.
of accurate school lists from the state secondary schools, however, I do not know how many pastoral families experimented with state education.

If my impressions are to be formed entirely by conventional biographical and genealogical sources, the principal finishing school for pastoral sons was The King's School, followed by the other great public schools of New South Wales. These institutions were modelled more or less on English public schools of the Arnold type and in 1891-2 formed themselves into a headmasters' conference, adopting the title 'Great Public Schools'. Bean has suggested that these schools resembled British public schools 'more closely than ... any other group of schools in the world'. The purpose of King's, according to Bishop Barry, was 'to train our boys of the upper and middle classes'. By 1910 the school had 229 boys on its roll, of whom 73 were boarders - most of them from the country. Fresh consignments of Hunter valley pastoral family boys arrived every year. From 1889 to 1894 names that recur in the school list are Abbott, Bowman, Cox, Dight, Ellis, Hall, Holmes, Wiseman, Bettington, Brown, Windeyer, Blaxland, Doyle, Bell, White, Davies and Parbury. In 1912-4 the same names recur, many of them sons of the earlier generation. In addition new Hunter valley names appear, like that of the Laurie family. Hugh Barrington Laurie, sent to King's in 1914, was the family's first

46. C.E.W. Bean, Here, My Son: An account of the independent and other corporate boys' schools of Australia, Sydney 1950, p. 73.
47. Ibid., p. 1.
49. Bean, Here, My Son, p. 80.
pupil at the school. 51

There were five other great public schools in New South Wales - all of them junior to King's, but beginning to rival it by the 1900s. Sydney Grammar School was a special case, having its origins in state support but having become a 'G.P.S.' by the 1890s. The school roll was 572 in 1910, but only 45 boys were boarders. 52 As at King's, most of the boarders were the sons of country families and a large number of them were from the Hunter valley, including members of the Abbott, Binnie, Campbell, Bishop, Dangar, Higgins, Lindeman, McMaster and Munro families. Newer schools were Scots College, Sydney Church of England Grammar School, Newington and The Armidale School. The Mackay family sent sons to Scots, but the only school that seems to have equalled King's and Sydney Grammar in importance for Hunter valley pastoral families was The Armidale School. Advertising itself by 1909 as a place for boys to gain 'a good education, a grand constitution' and to come out as 'gentlemen', 53 the school for many years had a member of the Abbott family as headmaster and educated the sons of increasing numbers of upper Hunter families.

There was also a growing number of lesser private secondary schools. Some of the local private schools extended their classes to the upper sixth form (like Scone Church of England Grammar) and in Sydney and large country towns new schools were established from time to time, more or less on the model of public schools. The formation of the headmasters' conference in the 1890s 'tended strongly to encourage the growth of distinctions such as had existed in England

51. Ibid., pp. 356-7.
52. Bean, Here, My Son, p. 80.
53. PR, 16 April 1909.
... between the larger and older of the independent schools and the remainder of them'. The lesser private schools were of uncertain importance for Hunter valley pastoral families. One of the Smith boys attended Barker, a school in the Blue Mountains set up by Bishop Barker, and H.S. Badgery was educated at Goulburn Grammar, but I am not sure of absolute numbers of Hunter valley boys attending such places.

It seems to have been very unusual to send children to Britain for their education; this is consistent with Bolton's observations. Francis John White, who began his schooling under private tuition in England, subsequently attended the Muswellbrook Church of England school, went on to two more small private schools at Singleton and Newcastle, and ended his education back in England at Clifton (a public school near Bristol), was one of a mere four boys I know of who received primary or secondary schooling in Britain. No doubt there were others, not mentioned by my fragmentary biographical sources, but if a British education had been regarded as a mark of status then presumably Burke, Mowle and others would have mentioned it in their genealogical notes on pastoral families. It seems likely that most boys were given the sort of Anglo-Australian education provided by colonial private schools.

Academic content was that of conventional English liberal education. J.H.M. Abbott studied divinity, English, French, Latin, maths and drawing in his fourth form year at King's in 1892. Boys like Charles Lydiard Aubrey Abbott arrived 'bewildered untidy and

54. Bean, Here, My Son, p. 74.
unfledged', to be disciplined by a regimen severer and more methodical than that of Mamma. William Bishop recalled that at New England Grammar weekly doses of castor oil were given the boys by matron. At King's, clubs were used for punishment drills. Older boys bullied the younger; William Abbott was bossed at King's by his cousin, who was captain of the school and 'a tremendous swell'. Boys would assume airs of style, at their parents' expense. Lindsay Fowler Smith, attending Barker College in 1913, was constantly petitioning his father for more money to keep up appearances. 'Linny' was given an allowance of fifteen shillings a week, and was usually overdrawn. In addition his father sent him cheques for bills at Anthony Hordern's and David Jones'. In three years from 1913, Smith paid for five suits, two hats, boots, galoshes, trousers, a bag, riding trousers, ties, tennis shoes, shirts and gloves for his son.

Private schools, for the large number of pastoral families boys who were sent to them, must have been a marked experience. The schools were certainly different from the paddocks and sheep dips of the Hunter valley. The roughness and institutionalised brutality of King's caused a sensitive Abbott boy to 'go to pieces' after two years - William Abbott hated school life and later wrote doggerel about King's and Parramatta:

58. Bishop, 'Notes on the family', p. 35.
60. Ibid., p. 68.
A dirty town, and oh, the people,  
Stupid as their Double Steeple.  
... tell me, were you ever at a  
Beastlier place than Parramatta? 63

Others perhaps found the experience pleasant, as Lindsay Smith seems to have done. But all the enforced proximity and tight discipline must have done something to create a sense of group identity. In the Victorian gothic cloisters of private schools, boys as different in background as the Reynolds from Tocal, whose ancestors were gentlemen, and the Wisemans, whose grandfather had been a convict, formed friendships and played team games together. Some at least must have been moulded in the image of the desirable 'upper and middle' class model of Bishop Barry.

Tertiary education was insignificant. The agricultural college at Hawkesbury failed to attract sons of Hunter valley landowners, as I have already shown, and universities seem to have taken only a trickle of men from pastoral families. In the six wholly rural counties of the Hunter valley in 1911, there were only six boys attending university. 64 Sydney University attracted some future barristers and solicitors from Hunter valley pastoral families. The Dangars enrolled sons in the legal profession, via Sydney University, and young men of the Bowman family read for medical degrees there. A few youths were interested in a purely liberal education - Alexander Bowman and Harold Fletcher White, who graduated with degrees in arts, were examples of this rare type.

Even fewer Hunter valley young men seem to have gone on to British universities, and of those who did, only Dangars and Whites

63. Ibid., p. 35.
64. A C 1911, Part 5, pp. 634-42.
were destined for Oxbridge. Henry Cary Dangar was one of the few who graduated at Cambridge. He entered Trinity College and read successfully for a BA. He had already graduated from Sydney University. Subsequently he became a barrister and a sleeping partner in the family's estates. Other pastoral sons went to London University (like Edward Bowman MA, LLB) or Edinburgh (like Alister Stuart Bowman BA, BM and MCh). Bolton observes that such men 'made very little impact on Australian public life'.65 They certainly made no impact on colonial politics (except H.C. Dangar, who in his career as a Legislative Councillor showed himself to have broad sympathies) and a university education was not noticeably useful in the personal relationships that governed public life in the Hunter valley. University education instead served specific family or personal interests - it was useful for a member of a pastoral family to know the law, and younger sons could be provided with a profession.

As families waxed prosperous, their education seems to have become progressively conventionalised. There were ambiguities. Simon Richards of Greenmount, a self-made man who was not accepted into the social and marriage circle of the older pastoral families, was uncertain how to educate his children. During his poorer days they were sent to the local state school, but as he grew richer he sent the boys to Singleton Grammar and the girls to the Methodist Ladies' College in Sydney. The death of his wife caused Richards to withdraw his daughters from the Sydney school and send them instead to Maitland Girls' High, in order to keep them closer to home. But in general, increasing wealth seems to have meant a growing preference for private schools. The first son of Edwin Smith was sent to Mait-

land High; the second son and the daughters, whose father was now rich, went to private schools. The Dangar family was well past such ambiguities - one generation had included men with schooling 'of limited nature' (as the Pastoral Review tactfully put it), but the second and third generations were firm pillars of Sydney Grammar and The Armidale School.

The system was effectively elitist. Bolton has noted that 'attendance at the right school and assimilation to its code could do much to compensate for unfortunate or recent social origin' in colonial Australia. Encel has implied that landowners did not think of private education as a means of training sons to serve the community, in the supposed manner of the British upper middle class; he further remarks that the education system supported by large pastoralists was selfish. I have not come across any prolonged discussion of education in the papers of Hunter valley pastoral families, and this suggests that they were not much given to philosophising over the subject. But what references I have found seem to point to different motives from those suggested by Bolton and Encel. Landowners seem to have thought of education as a practical preparation for careers; the management of estates certainly required a high degree of literacy by the late nineteenth century and mathematics and drawing would be useful. Divinity, Greek, English, French and Latin were perhaps functionless, but were still thought of as intrinsically valuable - one large proprietor was prepared to estimate the value of his son's education in financial terms and reckoned it as £3,000. This sum

66. FR, 15 December 1891.
68. Encel, Equality and Authority, p. 298.
69. Will of John Henry Davies.
was the value, not the cost, of schooling. Education was perhaps seen as part of the grubstake a father gave his sons. J.H. Bettington wrote of his sons: 'I am determined to give them all a first-rate education, which under any circumstances will always enable them to get their own living'.

I have not found enough private papers to make worthwhile conclusions, but it is possible that Encel and Bolton have mistaken latent for manifest purposes. A vague faith that education makes gentlemen no doubt sat deep in the breasts of ambitious Hunter Valley pastoral families. The Scottish and English traditions emphasised schooling as a means of social mobility. To send a son to a respectable public school would certainly give a landowner a feeling of pride similar to his establishment of a first-rate stable of bloodstock. But large proprietors also talked about schooling as a useful commodity, of practical application in the landowning or professional careers ahead of their sons. Such talk certainly was not much akin to that of a service aristocracy, but nor was it as selfish as Encel suggests.

Having made this point I suggest that the effect of these various motives, by creating a fairly strong tradition of private education among pastoral families, was to confirm their membership of an elite. The custom united a disparate collection of people, almost all of whose origins were 'unfortunate' or 'recent' and, allowing them to spend several years having edges rubbed off by practitioners of the liberal arts, went a long way to moulding them into a status elite.

3. Religion

Some successful pastoral families abandoned nonconformity or Roman Catholicism in favour of the Church of England. Thomas Haydon arrived in New South Wales from county Rosconnen as a Catholic, but married a Presbyterian woman and brought up his children as Anglicans. Thomas Holmes began as a member of the Baptist church but by his death had become a 'staunch adherent' of Anglicanism. But Presbyterians did not become Anglican, and the number of conversions from any of the sects to another was always small. There was no crystallisation of religious loyalty around one church. On the contrary, most families remained stubbornly adherent to their non-establishment denomination. The Waller family remained 'staunchly' Roman Catholic in an area of strong Anglicanism and George Mackay created his own schism by breaking away from the Presbyterian church in Dungog, in a fit of outrage against its decadence, and building his own free kirk in the town. Not until 1891 did his son rejoin the other local Presbyterians and sell his father's church to them. Private passions preserved small sects and the overall strength of Anglicanism and Presbyterianism was too evenly matched for either to gain at the expense of the other. The identification of religion with nationality was a further cause of persisting schism within the pastoral families. Almost all the Anglican families were of English origins and the Roman Catholics were mostly Irish. Presbyterianism drew its strength from migrant Scots and Ulstermen.

72. Clipping describing the Waller family (dated only 1913) in the file of local history clippings, offices of the Dungog Chronicle, Dungog.
The result was that the pastoral families did not create a religious establishment in the Hunter valley. They were split into fragments of mild religious loyalty, inextricably confused with national loyalty. Religious tolerance was fairly easy. J.F. Doyle of Kaludah, though a Presbyterian, might 'kindly' invite the local Wesleyan Sunday school to hold its New Year picnic in the grounds of his estate, and Miss Lily Bakewell, the protestant lady of St Aubins, might perform musical pieces at a Roman Catholic bazaar fund concert in Scone from time to time. Politicians from the pastoral families were often prepared to overstep their loyalties too, as C.H. Dight of Pelerin did in 1898 when he, though Anglican, contributed a large sum of money to the Presbyterian church in Singleton. But in spite of this geniality, religious customs of a Sunday were not cross-denominational.

In spite of steadfastness to a particular denomination, pastoral families were seldom ardent. Few mentioned Christ's passion in their diaries and memoirs. The name of God came readily to the lips and pens of many, but only as a conventional invocation. When Hunter valley pastoral families did seriously talk about their religion, it was likely to resemble the philosophising of W.E. Abbott. When Abbott wrote in 1902:

\[\text{God's work ... requires to be done, and when God calls who that recognises the call can hold back or shirk the duty that lies plainly before him or her?}\]

74. MM, 5 January 1900.
75. Scone Advocate, 18 October 1898.
77. PR, 15 April 1902.
he was referring to the need to colonise the world and spread technological progress. Few landowners would venture even as far as an Abbott. They were like Jesse Bishop of Wootton, who 'often quoted bits of ... the Bible, but he was not at all a religious man'.

Women in the pastoral families sometimes made a more emotional response to their religion (or at least it was seen as proper for them to do so); it was perhaps a function of their greater leisure. The sisters of Jesse Bishop were 'deeply religious' and 'despaired' at their brother's secularism.

The Anglican church had a highly structured lay organisation. At the local level the Hunter valley was divided into parishes, each of which was partially governed by a vestry. Sitting on vestries were clergymen's wardens, people's wardens and parochial councillors, all of whom were laymen. In addition there were various lay functionaries associated with religious services. Each parish elected lay members to represent it on the diocesan synod, which in the case of the Hunter valley was the diocese of Newcastle. There were various boards and committees of the diocese which also included lay members.

This structure provided a great deal of room for lay influence. In addition, the dependence of the Anglican church in New South Wales upon voluntary subscriptions rather than tithes or other forms of guaranteed income from property meant that rich landowners could potentially be very powerful indeed, in spite of a centralised church government based on the principle of apostolic succession. The pastoral families realised only part of this potential. In some parishes

78. Bishop, 'Notes on the family', p. 20.
79. Ibid.
their influence conformed with possibilities. The parish of Gundy included five members of pastoral families in its vestry of eleven men in 1898. But this was unusual. In 1880, of 55 parochial councillors elected to eight vestries in the rural Hunter valley, only 12 were large proprietors.

Pastoral families played a greater role at the diocesan level. Each vestry elected two lay members to the diocesan synod, and these were likely to be large proprietors. The Denman vestry sent E.R. White and H.H. White to the synod in 1906, and in the same year Singleton's vestry elected C.H. Dight as one of its members of synod. Other diocesan institutions, such as the Presentation Board, were also heavily stacked with big proprietors, who were thus enabled to influence the appointment of local clergymen. The Newcastle diocese also often asked large Anglican proprietors to act as special advisers in the management of the landed endowment of the bishopric. In 1886, for example, J.B. Bettington, Samuel Clift and F.R. White formed a management committee to run the church estates.

But if their influence at the diocesan level was larger than it was locally, the large proprietors still failed to dominate the

80. They were L.E. Wiseman (churchwarden), H.L. White, T. Seaward, W. Pinkerton and J. Wiseman (parochial councillors). Scone Advocate, 22 April 1898.

81. The vestries were St Paul's West Maitland, St Mary's West Maitland, St Peter's East Maitland, St James' Morpeth, Dungog Church of England, All Saints Singleton, St Matthew's Gundy and St Matthias' Denman. The pastoral families represented were the Jackson, Clift, Sherwood, Dangar, Stacy, McDouall, Bell, White, Hewitt and Hungerford families. MM, 1, 3 and 6 April 1880.

82. MM, 4 and 5 May 1906.

83. Denman parish members of the 1906 presentation board were Edward White, F.S. Bell, and E.R. White. Singleton members were C.H. Dight, A.A. Dangar and one man not a large proprietor. Ibid.

Anglican church as they might have done. Often, for example, land­
owners of the diocesan synod did not bother to travel down to Newcastle to attend synod meetings, which occurred once a year and lasted for several days or even weeks at a time. At a typical meeting, in 1900, there were only five members of pastoral families present at the prayers and holy communion in Newcastle Pro­cathedral which preceded synod. They were a minority among the 26 lay members present, and although J.B. Bettington, C.H. Cox and E.R. White turned up for some of the later sessions, representation by large proprietors was still much slighter than it might have been. 85

The Presbyterian church allowed even more room for laymen to occupy positions of authority. The elective component was larger and the episcopalian principle absent entirely. A Presbyterian parish elected a group of elders whose powers, including control over the appointment of ministers, were more extensive than those of the vestries of the Church of England. The second level of administration was the presbytery, a union of parishes, in which both elders and clergy assembled at regular intervals to discuss church affairs. The parishes of the Hunter valley were part of the presbytery of the Hunter. The tertiary level of the hierarchy consisted of the General Assembly of New South Wales, which met at Sydney and included elders. After 1901 New South Wales was part of the federated Presbyterian Church of Australia and Tasmania, and lay members sat on its General Assembly.

The part played by large proprietors at the parish level was similar to that of the Anglicans. There were a few parishes where a tradition of pastoral family influence had become established. Scone

85. MM, 29 May 1900.
parish, in the middle of a strong enclave of Scots landowners, usually included several large proprietors among its elders. Particularly prominent there were G.P. Hall of Blairmore, Kenneth Kennedy of Rock Hill, David Hall of Cressfield Park and W.T. Seaward of Miranee. 86
But more often, as at Dungog, only two or three pastoral families were very active in church government. At Dungog the Hooke and Mackay families were important, and the Abbotts a little less so, but most of the initiative in the parish came from farmers and small graziers. In parishes like Hamilton, Greta and Hinton there were no large proprietors at all acting as elders in 1904, and there were other districts where Presbyterianism was similarly left in the hands of small men. 87

There were other parts Presbyterian landowners might take in their local parishes. At Dungog, for example, G.A. Mackay was session clerk of the church for thirty-seven years, was a lay preacher and was praised by a church historian as a 'faithful and zealous servant'. 88 Whenever there was to be some sort of festival or celebration, it was likely that a large proprietor would be asked to act as chairman, as A.S. Bowman was when a jubilee committee was formed at Muswellbrook in 1898. 89 Pastoral leadership in such matters was probably encouraged by the likelihood that large proprietors would give cash in return for honours; Bowman gave a purse of 200 guineas to the jubilee. Women from the pastoral families were favoured for ribbon-

86. James Cameron, Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales, Sydney 1905, p. 278.
87. Ibid., pp. 265-8.
89. The jubilee in question was to celebrate fifty years of ministry by the Rev. J.S. White. Spence, St. Andrew's Singleton, p. 25.
cutting ceremonies. In 1913 Sarah Hall of Dartbrook laid the foundation stone for a new church in Muswellbrook and in 1906 Mrs G.P. Bowman of Grampian Hills took part in an opening ceremony at Singleton.

But in general the Presbyterian parishes, by virtue of their large democratic element, were not in the pocket of pastoral families. Sometimes Presbyterian democracy might even cause positive embarrassment to the old families. Landowning elders of the Singleton parish in the 1900s found themselves having to accept the authority of a senior elder who was head gardener on A.A. Dangar's Baroona. Few large proprietors were elected to sit on the various general assemblies of the church. In 1897, for example, there was not a single large proprietor from the Hunter valley at the General Assembly of New South Wales.

Roman Catholicism was associated with the Irish, who in the Hunter valley were generally seen either as servants or as feckless no-hopers. A character in one of J.H.M. Abbott's short stories described the local Roman Catholics as 'mostly low Irish, bad luck to them. All shape-stalers an' ex-bushrangers'. But a number of the largest protestant proprietors were of Irish origins (including the Abbotts) and although most of the Roman Catholics were Irish, the McRaes of Cranbourne were Scots and Alfred Bollenhagen was German.

The real factor held in common by Catholic families was their isolation. Each Catholic pastoral family lived in a parish where no other

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90. White, Challenge of the Years, p. 456.
91. Ibid., p. 461.
92. He was A.P. Aitken. Spence, St. Andrew's Singleton, p. 44.
93. Cameron, Presbyterian Church, p. 418.
big propertied people (or at most one other family) were of their faith - where all their co-religionists were small people. A Catholic homestead was a rare oasis in a landscape of protestant estates.

But in spite of the pressure of social conformity that might be expected to erode Catholicism in successful pastoral families, they seem to have taken a position of pride and independence. A few were inclined to fly their colours ostentatiously. The McRaes regularly gathered the local Catholic community together for masses at Cranbourne homestead, as they did on 19 January 1905, when thirty-two people were present. When alone, the McRaes made it 'a practies [sic] to say the Holy Rosary of the Blessed virgin mary every Sunday and the first Monday of Every month'. In the lower Hunter it was only the 'generous' patronage of the Waller family that kept the church at Summer Hill going; the Wallers sent out their estate drays every Sunday to gather in a congregation of the faithful from among the tenants, labourers and small farmers of the district.

Their isolation meant that the closest religious ties of Catholic pastoral families were formed with people less successful than themselves. The Hunter valley was divided into Roman Catholic parishes under the diocese of Maitland. Each parochial district supported one or more parish churches, and in addition a number of 'stations'. In Merriwa parish, for example, the bluestone church of St Anne was complemented by seven stations. Two of these were the homesteads of pastoral families - Cranbourne and Tara Hall - and one

97. Waller family clipping. Dungog Chronicle files.
6. WILLIAM EDWARD ABBOTT
   of Abbotsford.
   (PR, 15 May 1905)

7. EDWARD WHITE
   of Martindale.
   (PR, 15 September 1913)
other, Collaroy, was the estate of Presbyterian proprietors who allowed quarterly masses to be held in the men's quarters. The simplicity of Catholic organisation, together with its position as a minority church, helped to make it less obviously worldly than the Anglican and Presbyterian churches. Private families were modest in their display of memorial glass, stone and carved wood in Catholic churches. Catholic pastoral families were probably more devout than Anglicans and Presbyterians. The McRae family diaries are full of entries such as:

at home all day having a good read at the life of the Blessed virgin Mary mother of god.  
... in Merriwa had yarn with the Mother Superior of the Merriwa convent of the order of Saint Joseph ... a good and kind lady.  

Nonconformity, involving a similar self-conscious membership of a minority, tended to divide the loyalties of large proprietors like Roman Catholicism. Each nonconformist family was sealed off from intercourse with landowning peers, at least on Sundays, and thus formed vertical rather than horizontal social loyalties. The nonconformist churches were organised on a democratic basis, similar to Presbyterianism, but the small number of large proprietors committed to nonconformism meant that their role in the various churches was very slight overall. The Methodist church, for example, although supporting eight circuits in the Hunter valley by 1905, saw the pastoral families make no impact. Large Methodist proprietors were so few as to be insignificant locally, and at the conference of the uniting Methodist clergy and laity in 1902, none of the Hunter valley

representatives was a large proprietor. Individual nonconformists might, like the Waddells - Congregationalists who 'held the kirk in great reverence,' - behave actively in church affairs. The Waddells attended services scrupulously and busied themselves with lay reading and church government. But their activity was local and was invisible outside their sect and parish.

But if division into sects prevented group solidarity, there were other ways in which religion might serve to support a status elite. Apart from religious affiliation and involvement in church government, large proprietors might employ religious rituals, iconography, buildings and charities in a way to distinguish themselves. Charitable benefactions were perhaps the most potentially important. By giving large sums of money to churches, pastoral families could at once discharge their own sense of moral responsibility and at the same time exert their power. Money gifts gave influence over a parish and status in the community at large. In all religious denominations there were several notable benefactors from the pastoral families.

The largest gifts to the Anglican church in the Hunter valley were made by A.A. Dangar. During his lifetime he repeatedly donated thousands of pounds to his local parish and to the diocese as a whole. All Saints in Singleton became the most richly endowed church in the valley as a result. In 1907 he made an offer of £5,000 to help pay for the reconstruction of the church; in the end the cost exceeded first estimates by a great deal and Dangar paid to have the building completed. On his death in 1913 several of his many charitable benefactions were commemorated.

101. Singleton Argus, 29 September 1904.
102. Goold, 'We Visit Singleton', p. 2.
bequests of £1,000 and £2,000 were to local religious institutions. \(^{103}\)

Dangar's brother, W.J. Dangar of Neotsfield, was a more modest benefactor. He bequeathed £1,000 to the Anglican clergy of Singleton in 1890. \(^{104}\) The Bettington family substantially patronised Merriwa parish \(^{105}\) and at Murrurundi the White family erected a memorial tower to St Paul's Anglican church, at a cost of several hundred pounds. \(^{106}\)

Thomas Cook was another large benefactor, his gifts ranging from the east window in a rebuilt St Luke's Scone in 1884, to £500 left in his will to the Newcastle cathedral building fund. \(^{107}\) But such large philanthropies were uncommon. Most Anglican pastoral families only gave a score or two pounds to various appeals of their church, and in their wills left nothing at all.

Presbyterian pastoral families were not as munificent as the Dangars, Whites and Bettings. Robert Logan of Toryburn was the most prominent among them, earning eulogies as a 'Wise and Generous Benefactor'. \(^{108}\) This 'splendid specimen ... of enlightened Christian liberality' was continually giving large sums to his parish and the presbytery. \(^{109}\) When the Presbyterian church launched a centenary fund in 1899, R.T. Keys and J.F. Fleming were among the first contributors, with 500 guineas and £500 respectively. \(^{110}\) But Presbyterian pastoralists, although as rich as Anglicans, were not often generous

\(^{103}\) Will of Albert Augustus Dangar.

\(^{104}\) Will of William John Dangar.

\(^{105}\) Will of James Brindley Bettington, NSW Probate 74024/4, 24 May 1916.

\(^{106}\) MM, 6 April 1912.

\(^{107}\) MM, 20 July 1912.

\(^{108}\) Cameron, Presbyterian Church, plate 23 (facing p. 96).

\(^{109}\) In 1893, for example, he gave £250 to the Capital Fund (for aged and infirm ministers) and £250 to the Widows and Orphans Fund. Ibid., pp. 99, 147 and 149.

\(^{110}\) Ibid., p. 144.
in their wills. Duncan McMaster was extravagant in bequeathing £250 to the church in 1910, and that was to a Sydney parish. More common was a sum of £25 left to the Muswellbrook Presbyterian church by R.T. Keys. Most landowners made no bequests to the church at all.

Although their financial support of churches was spasmodic and uneven, and their influence over religious life correspondingly patchy, pastoral families seem to have felt a strong sense of attachment to their country parishes. Many of the churches were established on land given by large proprietors. The Bakewell family of St Aubins gave the land on which a new church was built at Scone in 1892, and A.R. and F. Bowman donated the churchyard of a new building at Bunnan in 1907. As the ecclesiastical buildings, large and small, rose on such sites, pastoral families made tangible gifts rather than cash benefactions. Sometimes they might build the church themselves, as the Windeyers did at Tomago. Mrs Donald Macintyre of The Cuan built and furnished a small church and Mrs McDouall of New Freugh gave land and men to help set up the Church of the Good Shepherd on her estate in 1885.

111. The Grahame Memorial Church and Manse at Waverley. Will of Duncan McMaster.
112. From an estate worth £98,000. Will of Richard Thorn Keys, NSW Probat 46887/4, 19 August 1909.
113. Of 40 members of the pastoral families who died between 1880 and 1914 only 7 left bequests for religious purposes (J.B. Bettington, Thomas Cook, A.A. Dangar, W.J. Dangar, Duncan McMaster, John Nowlan and R.T. Keys).
114. White, Challenge of the Years, p. 459.
116. White, Challenge of the Years, p. 459.
The size and appearance of country churches varied a good deal according to the generosity of pastoral families. Some were small wooden buildings without ornament, like the plain Methodist church at Goorangoola patronised by the Richards family of Greenmount. Others were as large as the Muswellbrook Presbyterian church, built to a design of the English ecclesiastical architect, Sir Gilbert Scott, at a cost of £11,000. Most usual were buildings like the Presbyterian church at Dungog. Built of brick in 1856, it seated 150 people. A manse and glebe of eight acres were attached. The largest benefactor was J.K. Mackay of Cangon, who had given 300 guineas to one church fund, but most of the regular support came from small men and women.

Some of the pastoral families gave money and gifts for internal ornamentation of churches. The Laurie family, already noted for its 'liberality and service' to the Gloucester Presbyterian church (having provided it with the Laurie Memorial Hall and a church belfry) contributed a peal of bells. Mrs McDouall of New Freugh gave an organ to the Glendon Anglican church in 1899. Members of the Loder family presented St Andrew's Singleton with a set of communion trays and cups in silver plate. All Saints Singleton received a great bell from Henry Dangar and iron gates, stone pillars and a marble pulpit from W.J. Dangar. Pastoral families certainly felt a strong affection for their local churches. When in Sydney, large proprietors might visit cathedrals, or the First Kirk, but their

119. Cameron, Presbyterian Church, p. 264.
120. White, Challenge of the Years, p. 302.
121. Whinfield, 'Singleton families' (unpaginated).
122. Spence, St. Andrew's Singleton, p. 44.
123. Whinfield, 'Singleton families' (unpaginated).
principal affiliation generally remained to their country parishes.

A McRae visiting St Mary's cathedral in 1905 wrote:

The surroundings are awe inspiring but for pure simple devotion give me a little country church with an earnest preacher whom you can hear & understand. When I die let me die in the country with the simplest surroundings with a good simple earnest priest to give me the last sacraments. 124

The funerals of large proprietors generally did take place in the country. Sometimes they were far from simple. Large funerals were the proof of popularity among local people. When a great magnate like A.A. Dangar died there was universal mourning in Singleton and an oration in his honour at Newcastle cathedral. 125 The coffin of Thomas Cook was followed by a cortege almost a mile long; all business premises in Scone were closed as it wound through the town, headed by the town band, the mounted police and walking groups of Masons and Oddfellows. 126 When W.H.K. Christian of Rosemount died in 1897 popular pressure caused the Christian family to modify their plans:

the tenants on the Rosemount Estate and the inhabitants of Hinton, made an earnest request to the members of Mr Christian's family ... that the remains should be placed to rest in the Hinton cemetery; and they undertook to provide boats for crossing the river. 127

An archdeacon and two priests presided and a choir lamented at the funeral service held by the Christian family in the Morpeth Church of England. The coffin was then carried by tenants to the wharf where four boats carried the cortege across the 'swollen stream of the

125. Singleton Argus, 8 April 1913.
126. MM, 20 July 1912.
127. MM, 29 July 1897.
river' to Hinton. A procession formed there 'augmented by the remaining tenantry, the Sunday school children, and many inhabitants of the village'. 128

Most members of the pastoral families were buried in churchyards and public cemeteries. Perhaps a dozen families like the Hookes maintained private graveyards on their estates, and a few more had family vaults. The Abbots were all buried in public cemeteries, with the exception of Frances Amanda Brady Abbott, who was laid to rest in 1901 at the summit of a smooth green hill, overlooking her family's estate. Her son, W.E. Abbott, was even more idiosyncratic when he had inscribed on her tombstone that his heart was buried there with her. 129 At All Saints Singleton, A.A. Dangar was buried under the altar. But these interments were extraordinary. Most large proprietors were put to rest in promiscuous company. In the Dungog public cemetery the Mackay family and some of the Hookes were buried together in a family plot marked by a cluster of largeish stones, all engraved with conventional biblical phrases. They were distinguished from the graves of others only by the uniform use of marble, and usually by a proud reference to an estate, as on the tomb of Frederick Augustus Hooke 'OF DINGADEE'. The graves of large proprietors were frequently surrounded by railings of vaguely classical design. Jean Scott Mackay's grave was unusual, in that it was fenced by a florid art nouveau railing decorated with vines and leaves moulded in cast iron. 130 The cost of graves and family tombstones seldom exceeded more than a few score pounds. J.B. Bettington jotted in a business-

128. Ibid.
129. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, p. 54.
130. Graves of F.A. Hooke (1850-1915) and J.S. Mackay (d. 1884) in the Dungog public cemetery.
like manner:

Agreed with Bill Raynor to erect a new Curb Stone parapet around my Tomb in the Church Yard at Merriwa. Concrete foundation & Stone Coping 15 in high all around. Stone to be 9 in thick & champfered on the top & set in concrete I to do all the drawing & find Cement. Amount of Contract £20. 131

Pastoral families established memorials for dead members, usually in the form of glass. The Stacy family paid for a window in All Saints Singleton and a ceremony took place in which Mrs H.P. Stacy unveiled it. St John’s Church of England in Merriwa glowed with the stained glass of the Bettington and Cooper families. One was a very large four-panelled window erected in 1893 by the second J.B. Bettington for his eldest son, who drowned at the age of twenty-eight. A second was a more modest double-paned window for Sarah Mary Cooper, wife of Joseph Cooper of Cullingral. The most substantial of all pastoral family monuments was a small Roman temple built in the grounds of All Saints Singleton to commemorate the Dangar family. Ten marble columns (vaguely Doric) rose from a sandstone podium to support a sandstone cornice decorated with classical triglyphs, which alternated with metopes and medallions. A terracotta roof sheltered a central cask on which family names and honours were carved in Latin script. The building cost £1,300. 132 Other pastoral families limited themselves to memorial plaques. The result was that a place like St Matthias’ Church of England, a small sandstone building in Denman, was studded with tablets commemorating the Whites of Martindale, the Arndells and the Bells of Pickering. But in this they were not unique. Other families - small landowners and townspeople – also put up

plaques. In the churches of the larger towns, memorials of pastoral families were outnumbered by others.

In their memorials, as in their burial rituals, the large proprietors sometimes stood out, but usually did not. In graveyards and churches their monuments were elbows by others, equally solid, which honoured the families of doctors, of farmers, of shopkeepers - and sometimes even of a particularly devout labourer. A few large proprietors were laid to rest in the midst of great state. Most were not. They were buried in a relatively simple, middle class fashion like Richard Binnie, whose funeral was attended by a few close friends and a number of business acquaintances. A conspicuous minority of pastoral families were leaders of their churches, giving money, gifts and their talents for government. But most were not conspicuous. By continuing to adhere to a number of different religious denominations, the pastoral families formed loyalties across class lines rather than within them. Religion, rather than setting the large proprietors apart as a discrete class, split them up into groups.
1. Marriage

Marriage patterns among the pastoral families differed significantly from those of the population as a whole. In 1891 25% of males in New South Wales aged from 45 to 49 had never married, and only 6% of females in the same age group. By 1911 the number of unmarried males had fallen to 22% and unmarried females had risen to 12%. McDonald has explained these proportions as resulting from disparities in the sex ratios of the population.¹ But customs were different among the pastoral families. Of 292 members of Hunter valley pastoral families aged sixteen or more between 1880 and 1914, 82% married once and 2% married twice.² Men from the pastoral families were more likely to marry than women. Of 97 marriageable women between 1880 and 1914, 27% never married. Of 195 men only 13% remained unmarried.³ I have not found any women from the pastoral families who married more than once. The high level of spinsterhood in the pastoral families and low level of bachelorhood indicate that marriage in the propertied classes differed considerably from the

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¹ P.F. McDonald, Marriage in Australia, Canberra 1974, p. 96.
² These 292 persons belonged to sixty families: Abbott, Arndell, Badgery, Bell, Bettington, Binnie, Bishop, Blaxland, Blunt, Bollenhagen, Bowman, Brooker, Brown, Busby, Christian, Clift, Clive, Close, Cox, Dangar, Daniel, Davies, Dight, Dodds, Doyle, Drinan, Durham, Eales, Finlay, Fleming, Gardiner, Hall, Haydon, Higgins, Holmes, Hooke, Hungerford, Kelman, Kennedy, Keys, Laurie, Lindeman, Loder, McMullin, Morton, McDonald, McDoall, Macintyre, Mackay, McMaster, Munro, Noble, Nowlan, Richards, Smith, Stacy, Tindale, Traill, Waller and White families.
³ 26 women and 26 men did not marry.
Spinsterhood and bachelorhood were by no means evenly spread among the families. The four daughters of the second J.B. Bettington - Minnie, Irene, Hilda and Constance - defied averages by all finding husbands. All seven sons of Dr R.J. Traill of Llangollen married in the late 1870s and the 1880s. These families combined the advantages of handsome children with handsome fortunes. Plain girls, and men whose fathers had not yet established themselves properly, were less likely to marry. In the socially uncertain Richards family of Greenmount, only one of a group of six sisters ever married, although two or three of them were regarded as conventionally pretty. There were idiosyncrasies. Four of the seven daughters of H.C. Dangar, although they possessed all the advantages of their cousins, refrained from marrying. The men of the Close family seem to have lost the procreative urge altogether. But for the most part, male members of the pastoral families married - it was part of the obligation of property to sire heirs.

The average age of 78 men contracting their first marriage was about 31 years. The youngest married at 21 and the oldest at 55. The youngest men to marry were generally from old-established families like the Traills, while men from newer families tended to marry later.

4. They were Ethel, Janet, Ada, May, Mildred and Edna Richards, daughters of Gavin Richards, second son of Simon Richards of Greenmount. Two or three were conventionally pretty in the opinion of Mrs Simon Richards of Greenmount, Singleton (interviewed 25 August 1976).

5. Elinor, Mabel, Muriel and Dorothy Dangar died unmarried. Their sisters, Lucy, Ruth and Nora, made three of the impeccable marriages usual in their generation of the family.

6. Of the three sons of E.C. Close of Barraba, two never married (Edward Charles and Thomas Valentine) and a third - Peter Collinson - married but died without issue.

7. Harold George Traill married at 24 years of age.
Presumably old families could better afford sentiment. But those men who married at the greatest age were also from the older pastoral families. Harold Forster Blaxland, son of Charles Blaxland of Cullingral, postponed marriage till the age of 43 and Frederick William Cox, who married at 55, was the eldest son of one of the valley's most respectable families. Extremes were in fact atypical of all. Of 78 men who married between 1880 and 1914, 62 were between the ages of 26 and 40. The largest single group clustered at the bottom of this range - 32 men who married between 26 and 30 years of age. Only 6 men married at an age greater than 40 and only 10 were younger than 26 years on signing their first marriage contract. The median age of male marriage was 38 years; in New South Wales as a whole it was about 27 years in 1901.

Marriage ages of women are harder to pin down, largely because it was genealogical custom to indicate the birth and marriage dates of sons, but only the marriage dates of daughters. However there is no doubt that women, when they married at all, did so at an earlier age than men. Of 14 known marriages contracted by women between 1880 and 1914 the average age was 23 and the absolute range was only from 18 to 29. The median age of female marriage in New South Wales as a whole was 23 years in 1901. With such a minute sample it is impossible to make a more detailed analysis of marriage ages for women. But it was certainly rare for women to marry after the

8. He was a son of Sloper Cox of The Retreat.
9. McDonald, Marriage in Australia, p. 140.
10. These marriages were contracted by members of the Arndell, Close, Cox, Dangar, Fisher, Hall, Mackay and Stacy families, which represent a sample of pastoral families with widely varying origins.
11. McDonald, Marriage in Australia, p. 140.
age of 30 and many would marry in their late teens - an impossible thing for a man. Women gained and lost marriageability much earlier than men.

If all the pastoral families, old and new, practised similar customs of marriage, then the group might have been united into a class. But although the number of pastoral families was only a few score, the nature of their relationships was complex. Families possessing over 500 cattle or 5,000 sheep did not necessarily intermarry. Status and notions of marriage desirability were governed by subtler standards than that. Some of the oldest Anglican families would have regarded an alliance with the Congregationalist Waddells, or the Roman Catholic McRaes, as entirely out of the question. The Waddells and McRaes would no doubt have felt the reverse with equal strength. Other concepts of mesalliance connected family pride with antiquity of residence in the Hunter valley, or with skill in breeding horse-flesh. When members of the Busby and White families joined others of their circle in a party at Government House in 1885, a social columnist could note:

So many old friends rallied to the occasion that there was quite an air of the ancien regime pervading everything, which is pleasantly novel in these days of nouveaux riches. 12

Members of the old pastoral families were less scrupulous in fact, but the new riches of a prospective mate would need to be substantial indeed for a match to be considered desirable. It might be thought wiser to marry a gentleman in a profession, or a merchant, than a doubtful local landowner. Liaisons of Dangars and Bettingtons with the rising pastoral families on the Goorangoola or up the

Wollombi did not take place at all. The rate of marriage between pastoral families was consequently not particularly high. Of 163 marriages contracted by men of the pastoral families, only 23% were with women from the same group of families. Women were rather more likely than men to marry endogamously. Of 71 women's marriages, 30% were with men from other Hunter valley pastoral families, presumably a result of the greater geographical and social immobility of girls as well as their greater urgency to marry quickly and safely.

A more detailed analysis shows that there was a division into two groups: old families and new families. The old families practised intermarriage of a rather intensive kind and made up a group of insiders. Of 176 marriages contracted by members of families in the 1885 list of large proprietors, 47 (over a quarter) were formed with other local pastoral families. New families were the outsiders - they did not marry with one another, or with old families, until such time as they might be accepted into the inside group. Of 72 marriages contracted by new families (those listed as large proprietors in 1897 or 1915 but not in 1885) only 10, or less than one-seventh, were formed with other local pastoral families. The inside circle was based upon several even tighter alliances. In the

13. 37 of 163 marriages.
14. 21 of 71 marriages.
15. The families present in 1885 were the Abbott, Arndell, Bell, Bettington, Blaxland, Bowman, Brown, Busby, Christian, Close, Cox, Dangar, Davies, Doyle, Drinan, Durham, Finlay, Gardiner, Hall, Haydon, Holmes, Hooke, Hungerford, Kelman, Kennedy, Keys, Laurie, Lindeman, Loder, Macintyre, Mackay, Nowlan, Traill and White families. Those listed as large proprietors in 1897 or 1915 but not in 1885 were the Badgery, Binnie, Bishop, Blunt, Bollenhagen, Brooker, Clift, Clive, Daniel, Dight, Dodds, Fleming, Higgins, McDonald, McDouall, McMaster, McMullin, Morton, Munro, Noble, Richards, Smith, Stacy, Tindale and Waller families.
lower Hunter the Mackay and Hooke families were at the heart of a close marriage group which dated from the first Australian-born generation of the two families. Another series of intermarriages built up a Busby-Kelman-Bettington circle, collaterally connected with the Bells, Nivisons, Lindemans and several other old families. A third system centred on the connection of the Davies, Finlay and Bell families (Figure 4). Mackenzie noted a fourth:

the very mention of the names Bowman, Doyle, or White, in these parts suggests such a bewildering genealogical tree to the mind's eye, that to enquire about the branches, is sometimes as vague and indefinite as asking is one knows Jno. Smith, of London.16

Some of the old families, like the Dangars, did not form an integral part of these marriage circles. The Dangars maintained close ties with Sydney and formed marriage connections there rather than in the Hunter valley. Nevertheless, should they marry locally, they drew spouses from the inside circles. Only two of the seven children of A.A. Dangar married local people, and both went no further than three degrees of cousinhood. Grace Dangar was united with R.M. Bell of Pickering and Nora Dangar married her first cousin, Clive Collingwood Dangar. Within the circle of old families there was a good deal of marriage between cousins. Marriage within first cousinhood was very common in the Hooke-Mackay family system. Among the McMaster family, John McMaster the younger, son of Duncan McMaster the elder, married Christina McMaster, daughter of his father's only brother. The sister of John McMaster the younger married Duncan McMaster the younger, son and heir of John McMaster the elder, her first cousin. Marriage of first cousins was also notable in the Arndell, Bell, Busby, Dangar, Bowman and Cox families.

Figure 4: showing some marriage connections (Hunter valley pastoral families indicated by capitalised surnames)
The range of acceptable marriages for the inside group of families was nevertheless much wider than for other such local families. Within the Hunter valley they regarded as equal several landed families which did not fall within my classification of pastoral families. The Tyrrell family, descended from a bishop of Newcastle, and the Wyndhams of Dalwood, were old families which did not possess large flocks and herds, but which were included within the inner marriage group. The Wyndhams were impoverished, with only a little land at Dalwood, some vines and their past gentility to draw on. But until the sale of Dalwood in 1904 they still formed an integral part of the marriage circle of the old families.

In addition there were marriages between old Hunter valley families and similar landed people elsewhere in the colony, met at house parties and in Sydney. Two of the seven sons of Dr R.T. Traill married daughters of large pastoralists 'over the range': Harold George Traill married Gertrude Emily Lee, whose father was Hon. George Lee MLC, and Walter Windeyer Traill married Fanny Australia Irby, daughter of Edward Irby. Similar marriages occurred in almost every family of old-established Hunter valley pastoralists. Some sons and daughters married into Queensland and Victorian landed families, thus extending the interconnecting world of landed cousinhood even further.

Most of the remaining marriages made by scions of old families were with professional, business or military people. Local doctors, lawyers, bank managers and clergymen provided a steady, if not brilliant stream of new blood into the old families. It was fairly common for one or two members of all but the richest and proudest old families to marry into such local interests. The Arndells were not rich, but they never married into local shops or professions.
The Bettingtons, on the other hand, were quite ready to do so.

William John Henshall Bettington's marriage in 1897 to Una Gertrude Theodora White, daughter of the Ven. Archdeacon William White of Muswellbrook, was only one of several Bettington connections with trade and church in Maitland, Muswellbrook, Parramatta and Sydney. The clergy were, in some family's minds, highly desirable connections. The Christian family and the Whites were among those families who repeatedly married Anglican clerics. There were other marriage possibilities still. In 1879 Bernard Haydon of Bloomfield married the daughter of a Murrurundi railway contractor. 17 Other members of old pastoral families established connections with successful country storekeepers, lawyers, country doctors and stock and station agents. But marriages of this nature were unusual, and there was no mesalliance of a more extreme nature. Selectors, small shopkeepers, station overseers and office clerks were outside the limits of marriage possibilities. In view of the fairly high social mobility of the old families, it is surprising how firmly the marriage line was drawn, and how automatically it seems to have influenced the marital choices even of men. It could be disastrous for a woman to marry beneath her, but need only be uncomfortable for a man. Nevertheless, social consensus was such that mesalliance did not occur.

More desirable than the forging of local trade or professional connections was to do the same in the city. City marriages had always been common among the inner circle of Hunter valley families and continued to be so from 1880 to 1914. The city usually meant Sydney. Newcastle, although growing richer, had few social contacts with pastoral families. In 1899 the Bell family was allied with a New-

17. Blanche Elizabeth Wakeford, daughter of William Wakeford.
castle business family when George Douglas Bell of Milgarra married Ellen Cary Duckham. But the Duckhams were already linked with Thomas Cook of Turanville. The Cooks, although not an old family, were respectable by 1899 and must have given some solidity to the connection. Thomas Cook, uncle of Ellen Duckham, was conspicuously present at her wedding and gave her away. But in general, the city was Sydney. Almost every Hunter valley family of the inner circle was reconnected with Sydney in every generation. Local people married into prominent professional and commercial families, as did James Cobb White, who married Emmeline Eliza Ebsworth, daughter of a Williams street banker. A generation later White's niece indicated the adaptability of the family when she married Dr H.V. Hordern in 1913. Hordern combined the advantages of membership of a rich trade family with a gentlemanly profession, and the Whites were not concerned at the Horderns having made their money through 'glorified sockselling'. Marriage to the families of schoolmasters, virtually beyond the pale in the local community, was honourable in the case of large city schools - as when the third J.B. Bettington returned to Brindley Park with a bride whose father was headmaster of The King's School.

The old landed families were flexible and wide-ranging in their establishment of marriage connections. Every generation forged new links with powerful and rich people elsewhere in the valley, among other landed families of the colony and in Sydney. In addition they looked overseas. Two Dangar cousins, Rodney Rouse Dangar and

21. Una Mary Harris, daughter of Edward Harris DD.
Reginald Dangar, found wives from important New Zealand families. Reginald married Beatrice Weston, whose father was a New Plymouth merchant, and Rodney Dangar met his wife, the daughter of a prominent Auckland family, during a voyage homeward on the steamer Marmora. Other pastoral families made connections with well-to-do people in South Africa and Canada. A handful of the richest capped their prestige by establishing alliances with the source of all that was civilised and powerful – metropolitan Britain. There had always been a few Hunter valley pastoral families which had attempted to live both in Britain and Australia. They commuted from one hemisphere to the other and over the two or three generations up to the First World War married into families of minor English gentry, like Archibald James Traill, who married Mary Anastasia Tunstall Haverfield, daughter of Herefordshire gentry. Others found wives or occasionally husbands among the families of doctors, lawyers and tradesmen in London and provincial towns. Andrew Noble of Hampshire married the daughter of a prosperous family of London merchants in 1895. Men from pastoral families met middle class girls during their tours Home and were beguiled by soft accents and a vague Hunter valley belief that Englishwomen were a social asset. It was an old-fashioned way of marrying by the 1880s, and was becoming less customary among the bigger pastoral families. John Kenneth Mackay of Cangon was unusual in his family when he was content, in 1895, to bring back with him from his tour of Europe a fairly humble bride – a Miss Partridge, whose father was a gentleman farmer of Devon. By the 1890s the Mackays were

22. PR, 15 July 1905.
23. Emma Myers, daughter of Thomas Myers. The marriage took place at London on 5 September 1895.
24. John Partridge of Nymett Rowland, Morchard Bishop, Lapford, Devon.
aiming their sights rather higher.

Getting the entree into London high society, and keeping up style there, was beyond the means or wishes even of Bettingtons, Abbotts and Closes. But the Mackays and a few other of the richest Hunter valley families could and did marry into distinguished British families. Most of the Dangars spent half their lives in England. The family shipping firm had offices there, and through their multifarious landed, military, naval and official connections, the Dangars could open most doors by the end of the nineteenth century. The result was that a few of them married with conspicuous brilliance. Ruth Dangar won an aristocratic English admiral for her husband and Elsie Dangar secured Sir Henry Honywood Curtis-Bennett, a leading lawyer and county magnate of Essex. 25 The Busby family was even more successful. Of thirteen children of Alexander and William Busby who married, five connected themselves with Englishmen or women. They included a colonel in the West Yorkshire regiment, a prominent surgeon, a Kentish landed magnate, a naval commander and - the largest prize - another admiral, Courtland Herbert Simpson CB, who married Edith Octavia Busby in 1895. Of the eight remaining marriages in the family, one was to a Frenchman (met in London), a second to a Bettington, the third and fourth were the union of two Busby cousins, the fifth to a member of the Merewether family of Sydney, the sixth to a Learmonth of Victoria, the seventh to a South African landed family and the last to a family of pastoralists in the Riverina. 26

25. Ruth Dangar, daughter of H.C. Dangar, married Admiral C. la P. Lewin. Elsie Dangar's husband was the son and heir of Sir Henry Curtis-Bennett, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.
That even members of the richest and most successful families in the Hunter valley needed the fillip of English marriage connections indicates a certain lack of confidence among them. But in general the marriage habits of old families were quite firm and undoubting. In the 1940s, Jean Craig noted, 'upper class members look for mates of similar status outside their own community, while the middle class marry largely within their community'.²⁷ Francis Adams in 1893 had made the similar observation that squatters would go into the local metropolis 'giving the girls "a chance to get married"'.²⁸ Newer pastoral families tended to marry in a fashion which Craig would refer to as middle class. It is possible to see marriage habits change as people became more secure - the acquisition of pastoral property might be followed, within a generation, by incorporation within the outer layers of the marriage circles of the old families. New families would begin to make connections with professional and business people and then, after an ambiguous period, would possess some sort of marriage respectability. But this did not necessarily lead to inclusion with the circle of old families. The Smith family of Munni exemplified the process. Edwin Smith did not marry until the age of 34, by which time he had managed to build up a modest estate from his selections. His wife was the daughter of an indigent naturalist on the Clarence River.²⁹ Thirty years later, when Smith's first son married, it was to the daughter of a successful Sydney solicitor,³⁰ and Smith's other children made similar matches. This made the Smith family rather more urbane and, in Craig's terms, upper class. But

²⁹. Florence Wilcox, daughter of James Wilcox of Dallinga, Clarence River.
it had still to enter the inner circle of old families, and in fact never did so.

Social mobility was not always upwards. The Stacy family, with its long and gentle pedigree, was in some senses more respectable than most of the old pastoral families. The result was that Henry Peter Stacy, son of a Newcastle doctor and a bank manager in Singleton, was able to marry into the prominent grantee family of Caswell in 1851. The Caswells became extinct and the Stacys, although H.P. Stacy bought land and acted as agent for the Caswell and Lang estates, were not comfortably within the circle of old families. The children of H.P. Stacy tended to weaken the claim of the family to legitimate membership. One son established himself as a Sydney doctor, but a second was a failure as a bank clerk, became a struggling sugar planter and married into an obscure farming family from the lower Hunter.31 One daughter married into an old family, in the person of Gerald Hastings Crichton McDouall, of the New Freugh McDoualls, but his family was declining and marriage into it did not imply complete acceptance into the inner circle.32 And when Henry Percy Stacy, the only son of Stacy to found a large estate in the Hunter valley, secured a wife in 1898 she was from a family of Shellharbour civil engineers, and did nothing to consolidate the Stacy family's status.33

Marriage was governed by subtle tastes. The Smiths might make themselves presentable, but did not manage to marry into the old families. The Stacys remained socially ambiguous after three generations of well-to-do residence in the Hunter valley. And some outside families

31. Frederick Lewis Stacy married a daughter of C.J. Frankland, farmer, of Mowbray, Paterson.
32. G.H.C. McDouall was employed as a bank manager in New England.
33. Adelaide Jane Allan, sister of Allan Bros. of Shellharbour.
never even got a leg in. The Richards family of Greenmount never became respectable, let alone marriageable. Of nine children of Simon Richards, none married into other large landed families. All four sons wed daughters of local selectors or dairy farmers. Two daughters married small graziers, a third a local farmer, a fourth a surveyor (and 'gave herself airs') and a fifth was united in marriage with a Barrington schoolteacher.34

The gap between Eileen Riley, daughter of a Goorangoola selector and wife of William Richards, and Anne Elizabeth Moriarty, daughter of an Irish gentry family, granddaughter of an admiral, who accepted marriage with George Bogle Finlay of Thornthwaite, was almost impossible to bridge in two, and sometimes even three generations. The result was that marriage, like religion, both united and divided the group of pastoral families. Within the circle of old families, marriage served to confirm status. Outside the circle it defined the status of aspirant families. People like the Abbotts who had been on the edge of the marriage circle in 1860 were firmly accepted by 1880. The same process was legitimising families between 1880 and 1914. But there always continued a large number of pastoral families firmly excluded.

Marriage rituals further underlined the importance of the

business. Marriage in the old pastoral families was a public affair. Local newspapers would describe the minutiae of dress and ceremony under headlines declaring a 'FASHIONABLE WEDDING'. If a family was particularly well-known, the metropolitan press might retail gossip about possible alliances. In 1885 a friend wrote to J.B. Bettington,

I see the Bulletin cannot leave your family alone - they announce the approaching marriage between Donald McIntyre and one of Mrs Maguire's daughters.

Once a marriage was settled upon, paterfamilias would run to an expense of hundreds, perhaps thousands of pounds. The most desirable weddings took place in Sydney or London. When Ida Bowman married the eldest son of the Bell family of Pickering, James Bowman provided a Sydney wedding. The ceremony took place at the fashionable St Stephen's Hunters Hill, and was followed by a garden party at Springfield, the Bowman town house in Darlinghurst road. The Clives of Collaroy celebrated in even more state when Kathleen Clive married into the English county family of Ratcliff in 1896. Wedded at St Mary Abbot's Kensington, Kathleen Clive was followed to a 'very pretty' altar by eight bridesmaids, including the Hon. Hester Lyttelton. The ceremony was described in the London society journal, The Lady. A good deal of attention was lavished on even the simpler local weddings. When Lily, daughter of R.H.D. White of Tahlee married a lawyer in 1892, the ceremony was held in a local church, observed only by family and a few friends. But the religious ritual was elaborate and was presided

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35. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 17 April 1912.
37. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 17 April 1912.
over by the Dean of Sydney and two lesser clergymen. 39

Often a wedding ceremony would be preceded by days of festivities. When a son of John Taylor of Glenalvon married the daughter of a New England pastoral family in 1896, there were three days of celebrations. On the first day a ball for fifty guests 'passed over in a most enjoyable manner' and ended with refreshments at four in the morning. On the second day 'the numerous guests were entertained by the host and hostess with various amusements - tennis forming the chief attraction'. An impromptu dance took place in the evening. On the third day the marriage ceremony was performed by the local clergyman in the drawing room of the homestead. 40 Popular interest in the marriages of old families was indicated by gifts and applause from local people. When Kathleen Clive married in London her ornaments included a pearl and gold necklace presented to her by 'the employés at Collaroy'. 41 At Norah White's wedding the employees on Belltrees were provided with a feast and other entertainments and gave the bride and groom 'a rousing cheer' as they left the estate. 42 Guest lists at weddings of old families revealed the closed nature of their circle. The Bell-Bowman wedding guests of 1912 almost all possessed the surnames of Bell, Bowman, Rouse, White, Dight or Mackay. In addition there were some city families, including solicitors, rich businessmen and the owners of a stock and station agency. 43 The guest list at the Moore-Taylor wedding of 1896, being held in the country and rather

39. Illustrated Sydney News, 2 January 1892.
40. MM, 30 June 1896.
42. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 30 April 1912.
43. They included Frank Osborne, a Sydney solicitor and notary, J.H. Keep, an ironmonger and F.G. Weaver and J.W. Perry, owners of a stock and station agency. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 17 April 1912.
less fashionable, consisted almost entirely of old pastoral families.

New families did not marry with the same eclat. There could not be the same popular interest. Guest lists were necessarily less respectable, the positions of families less well defined, the conventions not so clearly formed. When a son of the Kennedy family of Glencoe married the daughter of a Newcastle publisher in 1913, the wedding breakfast was eaten in the Great Northern Hotel, Newcastle. After the reception the bride and groom 'motored from the hotel' to stay with the Kennedys at Glencoe prior to their honeymoon in Tasmania. Awkwardness of this nature would have compromised members of the old families. 44

The marriage system of pastoral families was not as hermetic as the education system. Education could be bought; a newly rich father needed only the school fees to educate his sons and daughters in exactly the same manner as the scions of grantee families. Education was a standardised commodity, pretty well available for ready money. Marriage was a more complex matter. Money could buy most of the rituals of aristocratic marriage, but could not attract popular interest. Nor did the possession of mere money necessarily enable a person to win a spouse from the old families. While the education system encouraged rapid mobility, the marriage system slowed it down. Among old families a reluctance to accept connubiality with newly enriched people prevented the formation of a united status elite.

2. Social Life

Like marriage, social life might be expected to provide a useful definition of the insiders and outsiders among pastoral families.

44. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 22 March 1913.
I have come across occasional references to social life as a way of meeting prospective marriage partners. One upper Hunter valley lady wrote in 1883: 'Lawn Tennising (is) chiefly for flirting'.\(^{45}\) C.L.A. Abbott remembered how his uncle met a Miss Lydiard at the Maitland Show in 1881 and then proposed to her during a house party held by the Dangars at Baroona, where Miss Lydiard 'danced beautifully'.\(^{46}\) It might be expected that people would measure their success by acceptance into the private society of old pastoral families.

But the Miss Lydiard who enchanted T.K. Abbott was the daughter of a petty government official; the upper Hunter lady who described lawn tennis as an excuse for flirting was herself a member of the pastoral families, but her correspondent - the manager of H.H. Brown's Colstoun estate - was not. It is clear, as I have discussed, that marriageability for all the pastoral families, both old and new, extended far beyond other pastoral families. Old families married into important city and English families. Newer people married local doctors and shopkeepers. The newest were even prepared to form alliances with the children of butchers and selectors. The social connections kept up by pastoral families in the valley obviously varied a good deal, and even the house parties at Baroona comprehended a rather more motley crowd than the Dangars would have invited to a party in smart Sydney.

Diaries and journals indicate the pastoral family society was like marriage in being based upon small circles. There were no occasions that drew all the pastoral families together - not even all the old families. Instead, each family knew well several other families,

45. Charles Walsh to H.P. Stacy, 28 November 1883. Stacy papers.
46. Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 54.
of which most were other pastoral families. The basic unit seems to have been the calling circle - families repeatedly calling upon one another within such a circle. Peter Wright described his family's calling circuit in the 1910s as consisting of the nineteen respectable families within a few hours' drive; all were other pastoral families, with the exception of 'two Bank Managers, the Crown Lands Agent, Clerk of Petty Sessions and a Surveyor' in the local town.47 People would ride or drive to the houses of such neighbours and spend from fifteen minutes to several hours making conversation about politics, the land and the servant problem. Mackenzie described the conversation of Captain Cameron at Cairnsmore as a canvass of:

the price of fat cattle, the injustices that a landowner suffers being rated by a municipality, and the threatened imposition of a land tax.48

The Doyle papers continually mention the social calls of Marjory Doyle:

Madge & Mrs F. Haydon to Satur for Evening.
Madge & Mrs Fred out along Gundy Deviation and at Mrs Menns.
Madge to Satur & home to tea.49

Men spent less time calling, but did not necessarily value it less than their wives and daughters. C.F. Clive wrote to J.B. Bettington of a day spent in 'a perfect round of Gaiety in the shape of callers'.50

Visiting was a second level of social contact which strength-

49. Satur was an estate of the Parbury family. Gundy Deviation was a scenic road. Entries for 3 and 4 February and 9 January in the Journal of J.H. Doyle for 1916. Doyle papers.
ened that of the short call. By contrast with the 'call', the 'visit' was an overnight stay. Visiting seems to have occurred fairly frequently, and to have taken place within the confines of the calling circle. The Doyle and Bettington families made visits every two or three weeks. Visitors might come from within the family, as when 'Mrs Edwin Smith and her daughter, Winnie' were 'guests of Mrs Grafton Smith at Munni' for a few days in 1914.51 Or they might be friends from among the little circle of neighbours. The Haydons of Bloomfield, Parburys of Satur, Abbotts of Abbotsford and Doyles of Invermein were linked in a close group by calling and visiting. Dorothy Parbury would 'come up for afternoon' at Invermein as frequently as 'Mrs Fred Haydon came from Bloomfield', and Marjory Doyle was often noted as being 'just home' from the Abbotts.52 In weekends the whole Doyle family took the motor car to see the Abbotts, Haydons and Parburys.53 The Bettingtons belonged to a similar circle; visitors at Brindley Park in 1887 were usually of the Fitzgerald, Busby, Traill and Doyle families.54

After calling and visiting there was a third layer of social contact - the party. Dinner parties and small concerts are mentioned occasionally in pastoral family papers. The Bishops gave formal dinners at Wootton, two maidservants waiting upon guests in evening wear. Roast peacock was one of the dishes Mrs Bishop liked to offer her friends on such occasions.55 The Dangars, Abbotts and Bettingtons

51. MM, 16 July 1914.
8. PASTORAL HEIRS. The Mackay children of Melbee, c. 1900. Left to right: Jean Abbott Mackay, George Alexander Mackay the younger, Alistair Gordon Mackay, Donald Reay Mackay.

( Mackay papers )

9. MAMMA AND DAUGHTER. Jean Abbott Mackay with her hand on the shoulder of Emma Abbott Mackay, c. 1912.

( Mackay papers )
gave dinner parties too, but the McRaes, Smiths and Mackays of Melbee only ate en famille. Concerts were usually impromptu and casual, like one described by a young man on an estate near Muswellbrook. The guests and hosts sang 'all kinds of songs &c. at the piano' and the entertainment ended when

a gentleman who played very nicely sat down to an American organ and played 'Nearer my God to thee'. There wasn't a sound while he played and when he stopped if I had not been a boy I would have been crying. It was simply lovely.56

Mrs J.K. Mackay was able to mount an unusually stylish entertainment when Nellie Melba came to stay at Minimbah,57 but evening parties were generally simple, with few guests. Large gatherings were held by most families only during weddings and at Christmas. These were important times of social reunion. Parties would fill homestead rooms and picnics spill across lawns. At Abbotsford the Abbotts and their guests usually numbered about thirty during the Christmas holiday. Single men slept in quarters over the stables while married men, women and children were housed in the homestead. In the daytime were picnics and riding parties and in the evenings 'charades and novel tea parties'.58 Young Abbotts wrote farces and performed them to the family, friends and servants. At Brindley Part the Christmas holiday was rounded off at New Year with a 'pic-nic' and private horse races.59

The only other parties I have found mentioned were of a political nature. The Mackays entertained governors with 'select' re-

56. Unsigned letter (probably from her brother) to Adelaide Stacy, 22 October (about 1891). Stacy papers.
58. Abbott, 'Family Background', pp. 82-3.
ceptions at Minimbah, as did the Whites at Edinglassie and the Dangars at Baroona. The Dights of Pelerin held a garden party in 1904 to thank the ladies' committee that had backed C.H. Dight in his electoral campaign. Sixty guests arrived for this afternoon of pleasure:

In the drawing-room, made bright with lovely Daffodils, Hyacinths and Arum Lilies, items of vocal and instrumental music were rendered, and refreshments handed round; while many of the guests sat in the spacious verandahs, which had been carpeted and furnished for the occasion, or strolled about the beautiful grounds, played croquet, or ascended to the balconies to admire the panoramic view from that coign of vantage.

A fourth level of social intercourse occurred on the sports field. Sport was more obviously enjoyed by the pastoral families than calling and partying, and was also less exclusive. Like other forms of social contact, however, sport remained on a fairly simple scale of organisation. Hunts, for example, had never developed into an important institution of the pastoral families. There was game in plenty, but attempts to establish hunt circuits in the 1850s and 1860s, when J.B. Bettington and a few other large proprietors kept packs of fox and harehounds, failed. An effort to establish hunting took place in the early 1880s when a committee of landowners and professional men formed itself in the lower Hunter and set up a subscription pack. The local pastoral families responded with temporary enthusiasm. In 1882 a successful hunt was run across Duckenfield Park. A field of several dozen riders followed the hounds through seven miles of wet, stiff country and a large number were 'purled' (thrown off):

60. Goold, 'Notes on Homes', p. 115.
61. Singleton Argus, 3 September 1904.
62. PR, 16 December 1907.
Among those present were the following well-known individuals: Miss Alice Eales on Duffer ... Mr Percy Reynolds on Belmont, Mr John Eales, jun., on Walkover, Mr Walter Reynolds on Wonder ... Mr Walter Eales on Countess, Mr A. Eales on Nigger, Mr William Eales on Duke of Buckingham, Mr W. Stacey on a Yattendon mare ... 63

But a subscription pack if it was to survive needed sustained support from pastoral families and this was not forthcoming. The lower Hunter pack was dispersed and no other attempts were made to set up formal hunting in the valley.

It is curious that red coats, masters of hounds and view hallowing did not flourish in the Hunter valley - hunts played a very important part in county life in southern New Zealand and also established themselves securely in the Western District of Victoria. Perhaps hunt clubs failed because the region lacked county life - unlike New Zealand, where local government was deep-rooted and the counties were important social as well as political units. That pastoral society in the Hunter valley in general comprised nothing but a series of little visiting circles, rather than a united upper class, was most clearly exemplified by hunting. Red coats and fields of a hundred were never seen in the valley, but large proprietors loved to shoot and went about it in an informal, individual way. Neighbouring men from pastoral and other families would gather casually for drinks at a homestead and would then take to their horses for heavy riding and shooting. The McRaes enjoyed impromptu dingo hunts, especially when boosted by the company of neighbours as one day in 1883, when 'nearly all Brindley Park's chaps turned out' for a fast ride across Cranbourne. 64 The biggest fields numbered twenty or thirty. A hare drive

64. Entry for 29 May in the Journal of Donald McRae for 1883. McRae papers.
at Turanville in 1906 was joined by eighteen men, who accounted for a bag of 307 hares. When H.P. Stacy entertained thirty to a 'very enjoyable' hare hunt in 1910, Mrs Stacy gave luncheon at midday and tea at five o'clock. By six o'clock the total bag was 268, of which two were dingoes, some twenty or thirty wallabies and the rest hares.

Women did not hunt (except Alice Eales of Duckenfield) but they were active in other sports. Everybody rode. They formed themselves into parties to canter across the rolling brown fields and leap the amber streams of the Hunter valley. At Colstoun the Browns and their manager, Charles Walsh, rode in every spare moment and were 'at it above 5 a.m. every morning'. Tennis was popular too. In the lower Hunter the pastoral families were 'mad on tennis' - Charles Walsh at Colstoun played twice a week, and although in his opinion the local players were not 'blessed with that elasticity of muscle, with which other players about the Hunter, are gifted with', he believed it 'to the point, in a social way' to play. At weekend tennis parties, hostesses provided extra pleasures in the form of strawberries and ices. At Baroona and Duckenfield the tennis courts were flanked by comfortable pavilions, to encourage conversation. Guests might come from far afield. When Mrs F. Reynolds gave a tennis party at Tocal in 1914 there were people from Maitland and Sydney, together with members of the Mackay, Logan, Richards and Blaxland families. 'The visitors played a team representing Tocal ... and won by 35 games'.

Golf was a vogue of the 1890s and 1900s and a few pastoral

65. \( \) MM, 26 January 1906.
66. \( \) Singleton Argus, 19 July 1910.
67. \( \) Charles Walsh to H.P. Stacy, 28 October 1883. Stacy papers.
68. \( \) Ibid.
69. \( \) Town and Country Journal, 19 August 1914.
families laid out courses on their estates, as the Bettingtons did at Terragong. But a good golf course was expensive, and most pastoral families instead joined with respectable townspeople to form clubs. The result was that golf took in a rather wider social range than the visiting circles. In 1914 J.H. Bettington and a team of his friends and neighbours travelled down to Muswellbrook to play a team of eight men at the club links there. Only two of the Muswellbrook team belonged to pastoral families. 70 A few advanced women took up golf too - most notably a Miss Parbury of Satur, who in 1909 won the 'ladies country golf championship' of New South Wales. 71

Although there was no general 'high society' in the Hunter valley, the pastoral families instead finding social life largely within overlapping kinship and calling circles, the gap could be filled by Sydney. As they grew richer and transport got better, pastoral families were spending more and more time in the city. Sydney established itself in the 1870s as a wool market (replacing London) and in the 1890s as a meat freezing centre; in 1887 a railway linked Sydney with the Hunter valley for the first time. As a result it became more and more important, and increasingly convenient, for large proprietors to travel to the capital. As pastoral families diversified their interests into shipping, mining and industry, business ties with the city grew more compelling still. By 1900 Sydney journals were compiling registers of landowners who had come up to town. In one 1910 list of 'INLANDERS IN THE CITY' it was noted that 'Messrs. Alexander


71. MM, 8 July 1909.
Bros., of Bulga, were at Flemington on Thursday looking out for store stock. Other Hunter valley landowners in town at the time were 'Mr Frank Reynolds, of Tocal', together with H.R. Munro and Augustus Hooke. The owner of Sunnyside, near Merriwa, 'saw his sheep quitted at the early sales last week'.

Travelling to Sydney on business was only part of the story. The 'Sydney Show' - the show of the New South Wales Royal Agricultural Society - was held in the city every autumn and was growing bigger and better every decade. The sheep section of the show, detached and made into the 'Sheep Carnival' (the New South Wales Sheepbreeders' Association show) provided a winter attraction. August saw the Royal Agricultural Society's grand horse parade and 'Horse Show'. Horse racing was equally interesting to country people. Although nothing in Sydney could match the eclat of the Melbourne Cup, races were run throughout the year and the number of courses was increasing. By 1914 the value of prize money given annually by the Australian Jockey Club totalled £97,000. Apart from the Jockey Club course at Randwick, proprietary meets began to be held in 1884 with the opening of Canterbury Park. By 1901 there were as many as seven or eight race meets a week in Sydney during race seasons. Other Sydney attractions were the reviews and regattas, the theatre, Government House and the great shops.

In the Hunter valley there seem to have been divided feelings about the capital. An editorial of the Maitland Mercury described Sydney as 'the splendid metropolis of which provincial New South Wales

74. Ibid., p. 92.
is justly proud, though at times a little jealous too'. But the pastoral families felt differently. Sydney tempted some into absentee landownership. A number of large proprietors had been absentees from the beginning - those rich Sydney families that bought Hunter valley estates seldom gave up residence in the city. P.H. Morton and his lady remained at Pareli, near Sydney, and only made occasional visits to their Hunter valley estate of Oban. Richard Binnie lived at Point Piper and took his family up to Maeranie for holidays. Other large proprietors, having begun as resident landowners, took more and more resort to the city. Thomas Hungerford retired from active supervision of his estates to spend most of his working time in an office at Killowen, his town house in Ashfield. By the time of his death in 1904 this office, with its 'Office desk and letter press and fireproof safe and my Ronisch piano', was his favourite room. H.H. Brown incorporated Colstoun and other landholdings into 'Messrs. Brown & Co.' and became a Pitt street grazier, running all his affairs in an office in the Exchange buildings, Pitt street. Absenteeism was certainly on the increase. Mackenzie noted it among several pastoral families in the Hunter valley of the 1890s and suggested 'the advisability of levying an Absentee Tax without delay, which might be the means of curtailing the exodus of our moneyed class'. The homestead of one estate near Denman was empty save for 'an elderly housekeeper':

75. MM, 26 June 1897.
76. Will of Thomas Hungerford.
Fences, stables, and the house itself have a neglected look, though the interior is comfortable enough, so far as furniture goes. The garden is a wilderness of thistles and other choke-alls.79

But most absentees exercised close personal supervision of their estates. Benjamin Richards visited Wambo every week. He was what may be termed a 'Saturday to Monday man', coming from Sydney at the end of each week, having a look around, and then back again to the 'big smoke'.80

George Lee of Bylong, dividing his attention between politics, stock breeding, estate ownership and social life, was something of a caricature of the absentee:

When the owner of Bylong condescends to pay the place a visit he is more like a physical telegram than a human being, the idea evidently being to beat the record between Bathurst to Bylong and back again.81

The great majority of pastoral families remained resident proprietors, however, who spent most of their time in the country and visited Sydney for perhaps two or three months a year.

More and more large proprietors were buying or building Sydney town houses. These were generally large houses set in ornamental grounds - suburban residences rather than town houses proper. The Windeyer town house - a narrow three-storeyed house without grounds in Premier terrace, off William street - was exceptional. The usual house was of two storeys, with about five acres of grounds. The Bettingtons put up at Oatlands near Parramatta, Charles Blaxland owned Cleves at Ryde and Edward White spent several months a year at Kigwigil.

79. MM, 11 July 1896.
80. MM, 15 February 1896.
81. MM, 11 July 1896.
his house on Kirribilli Point. Cranbrook, the town house of James
White, was bought by him about 1858. Added to by Horbury Hunt and
others, Cranbrook grew into a great white pile and by 1900 was pompous
enough to be converted into a viceregal residence. Point Piper came
to contain a small colony of Hunter valley pastoral families. Richard
Binnie in 1901 built a villa there measuring 117 feet by 92 feet and
called Cooeytong. He was dissatisfied and in 1908 built a larger
house next door called Linlithgow - a riot of stone, stucco and
sweeping roofs. His sister Florence built another mansion which she
called Seaward and Charles Binnie subsequently raised a 'cottage'
which in 1912 was rebuilt by Herbert Binnie and named Wamboin.82
The neighbouring Redleaf House passed through the hands of three
Hunter valley families. Bought by William Busby about 1890, its in-
terior was decorated with bas-relief wall panels shipped from Italy.
In the grounds Busby planted a pine tree from a seed brought back
with him from Hadrian's Villa. In 1910 W.H. Mackay bought Redleaf
and it was subsequently leased to Mrs A.A. Hall.83

Most of the pastoral families could not afford such luxuries
- only about a quarter of the wills I have looked at refer to a town
house. Accommodation in the capital might instead be found in rented
houses, in hotels and in clubs. When the Smiths of Munni went to
town for the summer in 1914, they rented a house at Manly.84 The
most notable hotel was the Australia, built in 1889-90, containing
hundreds of bedrooms, dining-rooms, coffee rooms, ballroom and

82. G. Nesta Griffiths, Point Piper Past and Present, Sydney
83. Ibid., p. 82.
84. Entry in Journal of Edwin Smith for 1914, p. 481. Smith
papers.
billiards-rooms - 'the biggest and most sumptuous hotel in Sydney'.

Hunter valley pastoral families took to the Australia immediately, like other landowners of the colony. Social columns began to mention notable people staying at the Australia, and among them appeared the surnames White, Dangar, Parbury and so on. For the men, clubs were probably more important still. Froude observed that a gentleman's club in the colony answered 'the double purpose of the club proper and the private hotel, where members, and strangers for whom a member will become responsible, can not only have the use of the public rooms, but can reside altogether'. The gravest Sydney club was the Australian. Situated in Macquarie street, its windows overlooked 'the gardens and the harbour, and the prospect from it was exquisite'. Froude decided the club had 'not the splendour of Melbourne, but there was equal comfort'. I have not been able to gain access to the records of the Australian Club, but there is no doubt that many large Hunter valley proprietors were members. The Union Club was younger, but very reputable. Hunter valley membership was significant; James White was president in 1880 and thirty years later A.A. Dangar was vice-president. Between 1880 and 1914 forty-four men, representing twenty-two Hunter valley pastoral families, were members of the Union Club. Other clubs, smaller than the Australian and the Union, were

87. J.A. Froude, Oceana, or England and her Colonies, London 1886, p. 129.
88. Ibid., p. 143.
89. Ibid., p. 144.
90. The families represented were the Abbott, Bettington, Busby, Bell, Binnie, Cox, Close, Dangar, Doyle, Davies, Eales, Fitzgerald, Hooke, Hungerford, Keys, Nowlan, Parbury, Pearse, Reynolds, Traill, White and Windeyer families. R.H. Goddard, The Union Club, 1857-1957, Sydney 1957, pp. 119-40.
not necessarily less respected. The Warrigal Club, formed in 1884, was specifically for landowners and occupied a terrace house on Macquarie street, its rooms full of big leather chairs and cigar smoke. A number of Hunter valley men - among them H.R. Munro and W.E. Abbott - were members.91

As they came to spend more and more time at Sydney, Hunter valley pastoral families became influential city patrons. Some did not care for such display. Donald McRae wrote: 'I dont Care about horse racesing I dont see any fun in it and its a ver risky spectacula­tion'.92 But a high regard for sport was pretty universal among the pastoral families and nothing brought them to Sydney in such large numbers as racing and shows. The Australian Jockey Club was chaired for most of the 1880s and much of the 1890s by large proprietors from the Hunter valley.93 The pastoral families put their finest horses on the courses at Randwick, Warwick Farm, Rose Hill and elsewhere and were rewarded with cups and prizes. Of the thirty-five winners of the AJC Derby from 1880 to 1914, seven were owned by Hunter valley pastoral families.94 Only the richest could manage the money and knowledge to command such success, but the other pastoral families could and did travel to Sydney to applaud and to join in the fashionable display.

The big pastoral families were similarly successful on the showgrounds. In a typical year of the 1890s a vice-president of the

91. Information supplied by Mr A.J. Gray of Scone (interviewed 24 June 1975).
93. James White (chairman 1880 and 1883-8) and H.C. Dangar (chairman 1881-2, 1896-9 and 1901).
Royal Agricultural Society was George Loder of Abbey Green and three of the committee members also came from Hunter valley families. The 'Sheep Carnival' was under the same influence. In 1898 the president was a member of the Cox family and George Lee was vice-president. When the governor attended the Carnival that year he was accompanied by Cox, Lee, P.C. Close and Samuel Cox, among others. The success of Hunter valley breeders on the showgrounds was commensurate with their influence on committees.

Laurels won at the race course or in the show rings of Sydney were more highly prized than those taken in the Hunter valley. The same was true of social laurels. Sydney high society was as much the ultimate goal of Hunter valley pastoral women as membership of the race committees was to the men. Adams sneered at colonial high society:

The little cliques that gather round the governors ... are mostly Anglo-Australians who have 'risen'.

Beatrice Webb made similar remarks after dining at Grantham, the town house of the H.C. Dangars:

These rich folk with their ludicrous view that they are the cream of colonial society need an interminable course of chaff ...

People in the Hunter valley generally had their doubts about Sydney high society. A Singleton journalist observed:

97. Adams, The Australians, p. 44.
98. Austin, The Webbs' Australian Diary, p. 50.
We sometimes hear of the doings of the so-called 'upper ten', and of scenes in Sydney streets enacted by male and female swells on their way home from aristocratic orgies... We blush with shame for those who should be - but are not - honourable in the land.99

But ladies from the pastoral families wanted to belong to this world of fashionable folk, and were pleased to sponsor its 'aristocratic orgies'.

Highest high society centred on Government House. The governor presided over dinners and levees for the most important men in the colony. In 1892, when 'His Excellency the Governor entertained the following gentlemen at dinner on Queen's Birthday', the guests were leading politicians and judges. Among them were two men from Hunter valley families - J.P. Abbott and Sir William Windeyer - and both were there as public men, not as representatives of the landed interest.100

Other official functions were similarly composed. In 1902 the farewell levee of Lord Hopetoun, governor-general of Australia, was attended by a large crowd of men eminent in the political, legal, business, military and pastoral worlds. Among them from Hunter valley families were Commander G.S. Lindeman (representing the navy), R.W. Windeyer (law), Arthur Bowman (medicine) and W. Pearse Bowman (pastoralism).101

The governor's lady received the curtseys of debutantes and officiated at galas and balls.

Viceroyalty served as a sort of symbolic nucleus to the social life of great families. The great families thus made up the 'cliques' mentioned by Adams and recorded by social correspondents in the press.

99. Budget and Singleton Advertiser, 4 July 1898.
100. Illustrated Sydney News, 4 June 1892.
They included rich old families from the city, like the Horderns and Fairfaxes, together with grandee pastoral families. Only the oldest Hunter valley families belonged to this high society - the Busbys, Abbotts, Bettingtons, Whites, Dangars and a few others. Some of them - public figures as well as large proprietors - enjoyed a measure of intimacy with the viceregal ear. A.A. Dangar, James White and Sir Joseph Abbott were men of such stamp. Abbott was in the habit of sending friendly little notes to Lord Beauchamp:

I am sending you a wild Turkey which was sent to me today. I think it was shot on Monday, it will therefore be the better for eating if it is allowed to hang for a few days. The turkey is regarded by the Colonists as good game and I trust you will enjoy it.102

But intimacy with governors was uncommon. The real lights of high society were the big families themselves - the governor merely added colour. Viceroy's might come and go, but the Horderns and Macarthur Onslows went on forever.

High society was, like Hunter valley society, domestic rather than splendid. Social arrangements, in houses which were large yet not palaces, had an air of contrivance about them. Guests might dance on a verandah, for want of a ballroom, and supper might be laid out in the billiards-room, for lack of a spare salon. A typical party was given by the Mortons at their town house, Pareli:

Tall palms and grasses, with flowers intermingled, made the drawing room (where the dance took place) and the sitting-rooms look attractive; the verandahs were enclosed with bunting, and comfortable lounges and chairs placed here and there. In the dining-room were an assortment of tempting refreshments, the tables being arrayed with flowers in season.103


103. Town and Country Journal, 8 July 1914.
Beatrice Webb called such a party, at the Dangars', 'the ordinary entertainment of commonplace rich folk ... The company was made up of Legislative Councillors - rich and commonplace'. What the snobbish Beatrice Webb called commonplace might be more amiably termed comfortable.

The social columns saw high society as essentially feminine. Parties were attributed to women rather than men. Gossip writers were female and their speculations on society people generally concentrated on impending marriages, proposed parties and fashions in dress. Dress was noted with especial care. At Randwick one year it was observed by 'Society in Town & Country' that Dorothy Dangar wore a 'pale blue linen coat and skirt ... with a black hat' and Mrs G. Parbury was attired in a gown of 'blue crepe-de-chine ... with a Tagal straw hat with pink roses'. To a ball in 1902 Mrs Alexander Busby wore 'heliotrope brocade, with an underskirt of cream lace' and Miss Bowman a 'turquoise blue silk'. Adams laughed at the social columnists:

the toilets of Lady Brown and Mrs. Jones and Miss Robinson are the subject of a public attention and record quite as grave and reverent as the sartorial tomfoolery of London 'society organs'.

But the women described by them were undoubtedly pleased. The prominence pastoral women won by entering Sydney social columns was something denied all other Hunter valley women.

Society women had also another institution - the tea. While

104. Austin, The Webbs' Australian Diary, p. 50.
105. Town and Country Journal, 8 January 1912.
their men attended sales or the clubs, ladies drove backwards and forwards between their suburban mansions drinking tea and swapping gossip. A correspondent of the 1880s noted:

The five o'clock tea is now a recognised institution in Sydney life. It seems to possess sufficient power of attraction to assemble ladies together in large numbers without their necessary adjuncts - the men.108

Tea-partying flourished throughout my period. In 1912 Mrs Vincent Dowling (nee Mackay) and her daughters, Mrs R.H. Dangar and Miss Lue Dowling, entertained 'a number of their friends at tea at the golf links, Rose Bay'. These friends included Muriel Dangar, Madge Cox, Mrs Cox and Mrs C.C. Dangar from the Hunter valley, together with important women bearing surnames like Fairfax and Macarthur Onslow.109

A most important season for tea parties was whenever racing or a show brought landed women to town for a few days. In July 1914, for example:

Tea parties at the Australia were frequent all the week, and after the cold winds at Kensington were greatly enjoyed.110

Among the ladies who presided over tea tables on this occasion were Mrs E.R. White of Merton and Mrs F.D. McMaster of Dalkeith.

Most Hunter valley pastoral families did not belong to the cliques of high society. During their trips to Sydney they too drank tea with one another and danced, but their doings were not described by social columnists. When Allan McRae visited Sydney for a week in 1905 he spent his time much as a Bettington or a Dangar might - only

108. Illustrated Sydney News, 15 February 1887.
more privately. He put up at the Railway Hotel for his first night in the city and subsequently stayed with relatives in their house at Leichhardt. He spent one day in town 'with Emily, who did some Shopping for me' and another day contacting lawyers and agents and having his eyes tested. On Thursday he attended mass in St Mary's cathedral and the following day attended a show and looked at agricultural machinery. He spent Saturday at the races. The children of the McRae family (they called themselves 'the Mcs') spent several weeks each year at Sydney too, and visited the races, meatworks, theatres and beaches. John McRae, on holiday with his two brothers and sister Kate, kept a journal:

Went about Sightseeing. Went out to Leichhardt saw Emily came back & went to Coogee & the Zoo came back & went to bed. Went to railway station & met Tom & Nellie Mc, then went to Manly with them we lads had a dip in the surf came back & went to a theatre (Criterion) Lured to London was being staged I went out to Riverstone with the Mcs on the midnight train.

Almost all the pastoral families were familiar with Sydney. They spent time there and were linked to it by ties of business, pleasure, kinship and admiration. These ties meant that their position as large property owners in the Hunter valley was enhanced by urbanity.

A final element should be looked at in the social life of pastoral families - the holiday. Unlike their employees, their tenants, the neighbouring small farmers and other local people, pastoral families could afford lengthy sojourns abroad. Holidays provided

them with pleasure, with opportunities to extend their connections, and with status. In the 1880s and 1890s they were resorting to the local seaside or to the mountains. The summer season at Sydney was often uncomfortably hot. 'Phiz', a social correspondent, described one season:

Another sweltering week in Sydney ... Theatre goers wait uneasily for intervals between the acts, when a thirsty male throng shoulders one another at the door in an excited rush for adjacent bars. Ladies bless the décolleté, and the breeze that filters through the half-opened sky-lights.113

And if Sydney in summer was tiresome, a country estate in the same season was positively alarming - with fires, grasshoppers and bad water. The growing fondness for holiday cottages resulted. A number of upper Hunter pastoral families built themselves weatherboard bungalows on the beach front at Terrigal, on the Central Coast. There the Dangars, Busbys, Whites and Horderns travelled every summer with nurses and nannies to live in sandy simplicity, play quoits, ride donkeys and indulge in a little sea-bathing. Social correspondents traced their movements:

Mrs and Miss Dowling, Mrs R.H. Dangar, and her children, have gone to Terrigal Haven, near Gosford, for some weeks.114

More formal resorts were found at Moss Vale and the Blue Mountains. By the late 1880s the Illustrated Sydney News was running a summer column entitled 'Visitors to the Mountains'. Hunter valley names appeared on this social register, along with those of wealthy businessmen and other pastoralists from throughout the colony.

113. Dungog Chronicle, 9 December 1904.
114. Town and Country Journal, 8 January 1912.
Holiday-makers also travelled south during the summer months. Melbourne, being a little cooler than Sydney and offering all its social advantages, attracted Hunter valley families from time to time. One summer Susanna Bettington took her children to Melbourne and ran into some Hunter valley friends there. Her uncle commented: 'Annie & Marjorie being there for the Summer must have been most gratifying'.

R.H.D. White owned a yacht called the White Star and during summer months was fond of pottering in it along the coast of New South Wales. In 1896 he took the governor, Lord Hampden and his aide on a cruise up the Hawkesbury river to visit Kuringai Chase. Honeymooners from the pastoral families retreated into the Blue Mountains or to Melbourne or, like M.S. Kennedy and his bride, made the crossing to Tasmania.

More important than these sojourns at beaches, mountains and colonial capitals of Australia was the trip abroad. It was a distinction of pastoral families to have 'travelled largely in European and Eastern countries', like J.K. Mackay of Cangon. Large proprietors were spoken of as 'knowing' countries across the sea in the same way as they 'knew' livestock and men. Obituaries and other newspaper portraits listed their foreign experience as though it was a social credential:

Mr Wiseman knows Palestine and Egypt as well almost as he knows New South Wales, he is acquainted with the United Kingdom and the Continent, had been in America, and spent some time in Java.

117. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 22 March 1913.
118. PR, 15 May 1909.
Most of the pastoral families went abroad at least once in their lifetime. Many travelled several times. The experience was not necessarily regarded as a pleasure. Travel could be wearing and tedious. G.A. Mackay, whose family holidayed in New Zealand one year, noted in his journal:

Mother & Mary arrived at home this afternoon ... looking pretty rough from the trip.\(^{120}\)

But to stay quietly at home was to run the risk of seeming provincial.

Social correspondents underlined the status value of travel by cataloguing the names of people as they embarked and disembarked at Sydney. In 1913 at least six Hunter valley families were mentioned in this way. H.W. Bell left with his family on the Themistocles for Britain and the C.F. Lindemans and children sailed for a year in Europe. Richard Binnie, Mrs Binnie and family left Sydney on the Marmora for Europe and Lebbeus Hordern of Turee with his wife occupied a stateroom on the Union ship Niagara, bound for the United States. In November J.W. Mackay disembarked from the Otranto after a visit to England and W.E. Abbott sailed for a holiday in New Zealand.\(^{121}\)

Groups of young men travelled together. In 1914 F.W. Nivison, J.A. Nivison and A.S. Nivison joined with D'Arcy Bucknell and J.R. Love in 'touring the "East"; on the Montoro'.\(^{122}\) Women, on the other hand, seldom travelled in groups. Young unmarried women, if they could not travel with their families, went under the wings of chaperones.

In 1910 'Miss Bettington of Brindley Park', sailing without her

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121. PR, 15 January, 15 March, 15 April, 15 June, 15 November and 15 December 1913.
122. PR, 16 July 1914.
parents to Canada and England, was under the protection of the Robertsons (New England landowners). Florence Binnie - unmarried but very rich - who travelled alone to Adelaide and Europe in 1912 was exceptional. For the most part pastoral families travelled en famille. Their holidays abroad were serious undertakings which were carefully planned with proper attention to form.

There was a busy tourist commerce with other British colonies, with America and 'the East'. New Zealand, advertising itself as the 'land of contrasts', received a steady flow of Hunter valley pastoral families throughout the years 1880-1914. Its peculiar attractions were mountains, glaciers and hot springs. Charles Walsh wrote in 1883 that 'everybody' in the Hunter seemed to be visiting the island colony and added to H.P. Stacy: 'I think, Stacy, that you & I had better do New Zealand'. George Mackay (a sufferer from gout) 'did' the Rotorua hot springs several times in the 1880s. Mackay was a firm believer in the efficacy of mineral waters, but still thought travel something of an adventure. At the happy conclusion of one trip to New Zealand he reflected:

I thank our Heavenly Father for his care of me and of all here ... and for restoring me to ordinary health which for a long time had gone from me.

The Rotorua hot springs continued to attract Hunter valley families into the 1890s and 1900s. In 1904 T.J. Haydon visited the springs.

123. PR, 15 July 1910.
125. Charles Walsh to H.P. Stacy, 28 October 1883. Stacy papers.
on a health tour, having latterly suffered very much from rheumatism, and being therefore desirous of testing the curative powers of the hot springs of the land of the Maori.127

A mock tudor pump house raised the spa to a height of popularity in the Edwardian period, creating at Rotorua something of the atmosphere of Bath during the Regency. Hunter valley families, like the Kennedys in 1912, mingled there with rich Americans and Australasians in echoing salons full of alabaster statuary. The remarks of visiting Hunter valley pastoralists and their ladies remain in the visitors' book.129

Others sailed to the Orient. R.T. Keys and his daughter visited Japan in 1909 and looked at shrines, tea-houses and fishing villages. Tiger hunting lured the Dangar family to India in 1908. While at Ootacamund A.A. Dangar in a typical fit of ostentatious generosity paid for five miles of jungle to be cleared and formed into an avenue, known as Dangar's Ride.131 The Bettingtons made several trips to the 'East' and also to America, where J.B. Bettington admired the agricultural machinery and where Mrs and the Misses Bettington stayed at the Palace Hotel - the Hotel Australia of San Francisco.132 The Flemings of Kelvinside spent a holiday in Ceylon during 1913.133 Other families visited South Africa, Argentina and Turkey.

127. MM, 9 January 1904.
128. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 13 April 1912.
130. PR, 15 May 1909.
131. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, p. 22.
132. PR, 15 June 1906.
133. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 22 February 1913.
But the most compelling attraction was 'Home'. Almost every family seems to have made at least one pilgrimage to Britain. The Richard Binnies went Home three times. A.A. Dangar made four trips to England, the fourth being to fetch back his wife and daughters, who had been living in London for six years. From 1880 to 1914 there was always a colony of Dangars in England, and members of the Busby, Mackay and a few other families spent equally long periods there. Most other Hunter valley families went only once or twice in each generation. Sojourns of six months were usual and a year or two years not uncommon. In 1903 the Bishop family stayed for a year, putting up with the rich Stewart relations of Mrs Bishop in Scotland and with Bishop's successful brother at Posenhall, a small manor near Bridgemouth. But most of the relations left behind in Britain by migrating families were rather humble, and I think Hunter valley pastoralists would not usually have searched out their kin. Instead they took the leases of farm houses or manors. The Binnies, who rented a Sussex manor in 1912 and saw nothing of their poor relations, were probably typical.

The richest and best-connected Hunter families entered important society during their overseas holidays. Families like the Dangars and Busbys were introduced into the highest ranks of English society. The Dangar family, whose shipping interests required a permanent establishment in London, together with a wide network of contacts and patrons, could drop many names. When A.A. Dangar visited South Africa in 1902 he was escorted around the colony with much ceremony; he spent four

134. PR, 15 February 1913.
136. Information supplied by Mr A. Binnie of Merrilong, Singleton (interviewed 26 August 1976).
days with General Lord Lyttelton and his family at Kimberley, declined an invitation from General Baden Powell to go to Mafeking and twice visited Cecil Rhodes' house, Groote Schuur, in the company of Sir Lewis Mitchell (chairman of De Beers and general manager of the Standard Bank) and his family. Dangar also stayed a week with General Featherstonhaugh, commander-in-chief of Natal. But the Dangars, Whites, Busbys and Mackays were exceptional. In 1886 R.H.D. White lunched at Windsor with Queen Victoria and was described by the Times as 'not only a distinguished colonist, but a jolly good fellow to boot', but most of his Hunter valley neighbours were not even noticed by the London press. James White entered a horse in the Epsom Derby of 1890, but other pastoral families would have counted themselves distinguished by being able to sit in the grandstands.

The mementoes preserved of overseas trips by the pastoral families reveal a cheerful sort of philistinism. The Busby family - fond of Italian marble - brought back objets d'art of at least refined taste, but most Hunter valley interiors are full of curiosities and bric-a-brac. Solomon Wiseman stole things from antique sites; with a 'merry twinkle' in his eyes he told Mackenzie how he had lifted the mummified foot of an Egyptian princess. Wiseman 'had a great time up the Nile among the old crumbling cities with their buried curiosities'. On returning to the colony, pastoral families displayed

137. PR, 16 October 1903.
138. Cited in MM, 4 September 1886.
139. White was the only Australian in the years 1880-1914 to do so. Barrie, Turf Cavalcade, p. 187.
140. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 47.
141. Ibid.
such ornaments in their drawing-rooms. At Belltrees was a scatter of photographs showing Whites in Scottish glens and Whites outside stately English houses. At Melbee the Mackays kept on their mantels a collection of New Zealand spiders preserved in kauri gum. And the walls and cabinets of Cliffdale were filled by the Wisemans with

miniature gods and goddesses, rare old coins, broken plaques - brass ornaments - old teeth, and ... an olla podria of Egyptian antiquities.142

Three Hunter valley landowners settled permanently in Britain. In the 1870s J.H. Bettington (who had been born in England) took his family Home, bought a house at Weston-Super-Mare and became an absentee. F.H. Dangar (born in Australia) kept a house at Ealing in Middlesex and spent much of his life there. Mrs J.R. Smart, widowed owner of the 'fine property' of Dulwich, near Singleton, left an almost new house with 'splendid stables, coach houses and other buildings' to take up residence in her native England.143 Mackenzie lamented her absence:

It always seems a pity to me that people who go to so much trouble and expense in providing themselves with beautiful houses in this country should forsake them in quest of something better in Europe.144

But the great majority of pastoral families limited their quest to the shops, hotels and theatres of the West End of London and the 'picturesque' charms of rural England and Scotland. For large Hunter valley proprietors an overseas holiday was something envisaged in relation to the place one left behind, and returned to. There was a

142. Ibid.
144. Ibid.
whiff of romance and danger about travel to some places. The Bettingtons were caught by the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 and 'had a narrow escape of their lives' when the Palace collapsed around them.\textsuperscript{145} R.T. Keys dropped dead during a tour of Japan,\textsuperscript{146} leaving his daughter alone and unchaperoned in that foreign place, to cope with getting herself and her father's body back to the Hunter valley. But the holiday abroad was essentially a predictable, highly conventionalised thing. Families made their sallies onto other continents in a careful - even demure - fashion, and by making them earned esteem at home.

Education, religion, marriage and social customs did not mould the pastoral families into a status elite. A fairly standardised system of private education encouraged the development of an elite. Religious life did not. Marriage occurred within small circles and separated the pastoral families into groups of insiders and outsiders. Social life made the picture even more complex. Like marriage, social intercourse took place within small circles which might include people outside the economic class - the families of professional, business and city men, for example. The formation of a single status elite was thus discouraged. On the other hand, almost all the pastoral families enjoyed a partly metropolitan life style - with trips to Sydney for business and pleasure, and long holidays abroad. A few of them were prominent in high society and on the sports fields of Sydney. By their familiarity with foreign places they earned respect from journalists and no doubt from other local people.

Those of the pastoral families who raised gothic church towers, who married English aristocrats and whose names were mentioned

\textsuperscript{145} PR, 15 June 1906.
\textsuperscript{146} PR, 15 May 1909.
in Sydney newspapers looked like an elite. The Dangars, Whites and other grandees unquestionably bestrode the provincial world of the Hunter valley. But among other pastoral families customs varied too much for social unity. Up and down the river were little circles and little status elites; an uncertain number of pastoral families were outside these elites. There was no single unifying institution - like the hunt clubs of Canterbury or the Presbyterian church of the Western District - to make the richest property owners of the Hunter valley into a status elite.
CHAPTER SEVEN

POWER

1. Political Power

(a) Parliament

In this chapter I shall look at various power structures to see what role large Hunter valley proprietors played in them, and whether the pastoral families stood out clearly as a power elite. The highest level of formal power in New South Wales was parliament. I shall first look at the numerical importance of large proprietors in parliament.

Of 41 men who represented the Hunter valley in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales from 1880 to 1914, eight were members of pastoral families.¹ The remaining 33 members came from a variety of backgrounds, most being small businessmen, lawyers and journalists. A very few were small farmers and labourers.² Pastoral families were disproportionately represented, but their men were nonetheless a small minority. Of the four men who held Hunter valley seats in the Australian House of Representatives from 1901 to 1914, none was from a pastoral family.³


2. 14 were small businessmen, 6 lawyers, 6 journalists or other professional men, 3 civil servants, 2 small farmers and 2 labourers. A.W. Martin and P. Wardle, Members of the Legislative Assembly New South Wales 1856-1901, Canberra 1959.

3. They were Sir Edmund Barton (Hunter 1901-5), F. Liddell (Hunter 1905-10), M. Charlton (Hunter 1910-4) and D. Watkins (Newcastle 1901-14).
In the Legislative Council of New South Wales there was an enclave of large landowners from the valley. In 1880 four of the 48 MLCs were large Hunter valley proprietors: Archibald Bell, William Busby, John Eales and James White. Of 75 MLCs in 1900 only three were from the Hunter valley and all were absentees - H.C. Dangar, G.H. Greene and George Lee. The Council of 1910 included one resident Hunter valley proprietor (J.C. White) together with the three absentees of 1900. At every Council there was, however, a small number of other members who were closely related to Hunter valley pastoral families and provided some voice for their interest - men with the surnames of Blaxland, Cox, Robertson and Mackay. 4

Pastoral families in other words were a significant factor in local political representation at the capital, but were by no means in a position of dominant political power. Only in one electorate - the Upper Hunter - did they provide a member of the Legislative Assembly for almost half the years from 1880 to 1914. 5 Most electorates only occasionally returned a large proprietor, and some not at all. Even the Upper Hunter was represented for years at a time by men who were the antithesis of landed gentlemen. John McElhone, hide and tallow merchant, was MLA for the Upper Hunter during seven years of the 1880s. He launched frequent personal attacks on local pastoral families. Speaking to the Crown Lands Bill in 1882, he referred to the White family as being under 'the curse of greed' 6 and called John Mackay 'as rich as Croesus, but as mean as cat's-meat'. 7 His choicest

4. John Blaxland, G.H. Cox, Sir John Robertson and J.A.K. Mackay were all closely related to Hunter valley pastoral families.

5. In 15 years (1885-7, 1889-91, 1904-10 and 1913-4) of a total of 35 there was a member of the pastoral families representing the Upper Hunter.


7. Ibid., p. 1288.
words were reserved for Thomas Hungerford, a fellow member and frequent political rival:

I have received a few lines from one of my constituents named Hornery who selected on the leasehold of the honourable member for Northumberland, Mr. Hungerford ... The honourable member says that justice is the first principle in politics; but this is a case which shows that justice is not the first principle with some politicians. The honourable member said to the selector, 'Go on to my neighbour's run, and I will help you; come on to my own, and I will crush you'.

McElhone was persistently disorderly both in committee and in the house.

Plainly deference democracy was not a primary element of local politics. The pastoral families did not seem to be natural leaders. Editors of local newspapers were ready to adopt mildly populist stances from time to time, and to speak with hostility of big men. The Budget and Singleton Advertiser declared that the 'poor man stands no chance' with rich parliamentary representatives:

If your aristocratic friend objects to a road near his property, the poor man has to travel miles about to get to market with his produce.

But the prevailing tone, both of editors and of political advertisements, was one of politeness. The principal function of a Hunter valley member was to act as local advocate at the capital, and in this large proprietors, connected with people in high places at Sydney, could be seen to have some advantages over small men. Pastoral families also emphasised the value of a stake in local community, rather than in party. J.C. White, presenting his son R.H.D. White to the

8. Ibid., pp. 1286-7.
10. The paper was attacking A.J. Gould, Budget and Singleton Advertiser, 4 July 1898.
electors of Gloucester, indicated the young man's eligibility as a parliamentary representative by pointing out that he owned 'considerable property' in the district and had been born there, so felt 'great interest in your progress and prosperity'. Thomas Hungerford used similar terms to prove his value as a member of parliament, claiming to his electors to be someone who 'knows your wants', who 'will not disgrace the constituency' (this was aimed at McElhone), who 'seeks no office, but to serve you justly', and to be a man who 'can devote his time to the electorate'. In other words, he stressed the importance of good manners, leisure, wealth (leading to incorruptibility) and loyalty to the district.

If such appeals were united with the ability to secure favours at the capital and to stump personally for votes, then they provided a formula for solid popularity, regardless of class or faction. H.H. Brown was particularly adroit at suggesting his substance, respectability and influence and was returned for nineteen years as member for Durham. His brother William was subsequently elected for another eleven years. The moderately liberal Maitland Mercury often praised the 'energy and influence' of H.H. Brown in providing for the electorate:

Mr. Brown has looked so well after the roads and bridges and other little local requirements ... that he has become exceedingly popular.

11. MM, 28 November 1882.
12. MM, 9 December 1882.
13. W. Brown, MLA for Durham from 1907 to 1917, had sold off most of his brother's Colstoun estate by 1907, so was not being elected because of a stake in the property of the electorate.
There was not an automatic preference among pastoral families for members from their group. In three elections of the 1880s the McRaes of Cranbourne noted their votes in journals and showed a flexibility that I think was probably typical. In 1882 there were four candidates contesting the two Upper Hunter seats. At Sydney the Parkes-Robertson coalition was appealing to the electorate to support their land policy. In the Upper Hunter supporters of the government were Thomas Hungerford and a local businessman, J.T. Wilshire. Hungerford promised (apart from seemly and devoted representation) to secure railway workshops for Murrurundi, unspecified reform of the land laws and the introduction of 'the eight hour system'. Wilshire talked of reforming the land laws, granting local self-government, free trade, more railways and federation of the colonies. The other two candidates were McElhone and John McLaughlin (a local solicitor). McElhone and McLaughlin were opposed to the government, McElhone calling it the 'prostitute' of Sir Henry Parkes, and protesting his devotion to overcoming the 'injustices and scandalous wrongs which have been worked under the Land Laws of this country'. McLaughlin criticised the government for having not carried out the reform of the land laws which the people had expected of it, and pledged himself for such reforms against a system 'bristling with injustice'.

Although in 1882 Hungerford and Wilshire would seem to have represented the establishment of the local community, and McElhone and McLaughlin the dissatisfied, in fact there was no such equation. On nomination day in Scone McElhone was proposed by J.L. Suckling of

15. MM, 9 December 1882.
16. Ibid.
17. MM, 2 and 7 December 1882.
18. MM, 28 November 1882.
Barsham, a large proprietor and brother-in-law of the White family. Donald and Allan McRae both voted for the rough-spoken McElhone and McLaughlin, preferring them to Hungerford and his comforting assurances of intelligent government. Neither of the McRaes mentioned why they voted as they did.

In the election of 1887 the Upper Hunter pastoral families were even more obviously divided. The Stuart ministry's Land Act (1884) had, by establishing a workable system of selection, virtually removed land as a significant question. At Sydney the main issue was now free trade/protection, over which the colony's first political parties were forming. In the Upper Hunter R.G.D. Fitzgerald, a Muswellbrook lawyer and candidate, called free trade the 'distinct issue to be tried in this contest'. Hungerford referred to the 'two great questions of the day - Free-trade and Protection'. McElhone agreed and only W.E. Abbott (entering the contest at the last moment) declared that the land laws were more important. In this Abbott was behind the times. The two candidates from pastoral families were opposed, Hungerford being in favour of free trade and Abbott being a protectionist. The McRaes divided on the question. Allan McRae was in some dilemma; he regarded free trade as desirable but did not like the way McElhone, also a free trader, had compromised himself by changing sides. In the end he voted for McElhone in spite of these doubts:

21. MM, 29 January 1887.
22. MM, 1 February 1887.
23. MM, 10 February 1887.
I don't care much about the tone of old Mc this time too much in favour of Sir 'enery [Parkes]'s policy but must vote for him + Hungerford.\textsuperscript{24}

Donald McRae voted for the opposite faction, giving his support to the protectionist Abbott and the uncommitted Fitzgerald.\textsuperscript{25}

In 1889 there were only three candidates for the Upper Hunter and once again free trade was the most important issue. W.E. Abbott remained for protection, R.G.D. Fitzgerald had admitted the virtue of protection too and Hungerford had changed his mind, abandoned free trade and taken up the cause of protection like his fellow landowner, Abbott.\textsuperscript{26} Donald McRae voted for Abbott and Fitzgerald once again.\textsuperscript{27}

Having taken their seats in parliament, members from pastoral families made little impact on government. They usually initiated legislation only if it pertained to local, or to rural interests. W.E. Abbott in his brief parliamentary career (1889-91) uttered a mere thirty-seven speeches and questions in the Legislative Assembly and of them thirteen were addressed to the Crown Lands Amendment Act (1889), two were to the Sheep Boards Bill (1889) and almost all the rest were also about local or pastoral matters. In the opinion of the Pastoral Review Abbott's political achievement was as 'the real author of the conditional leasing system' which in 1884 replaced the 1861 pre-emptive system (page 41).\textsuperscript{28} The Review did not say how Abbott was author of the scheme, other than that it was his idea and

\textsuperscript{24} Entry for 12 February in the Journal of Allan McRae for 1887. McRae papers.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} MM, 2 and 5 February 1889.
\textsuperscript{27} Entry for 4 February in the Journal of Donald McRae for 1889. McRae papers.
\textsuperscript{28} PR, 15 July 1892.
that it was 'adopted by the Stuart Administration, and was passed into law'.

As Abbott was not a member of parliament at the time, he presumably acted through private interest with his brother and with other pastoral politicians. Abbott's brother, Sir Joseph Palmer Abbott, was the only large Hunter valley proprietor to reach the first rank of colonial politics.

Hunter valley proprietors were not only rare initiators of legislation, they were also rather ineffectual in debates. In the 1881 session the three most important debates (or those which occupied the most time) were the Influx of Chinese Restriction Bill, the Ring-barking on Crown Lands Regulation Bill and the Licensing Bill debates. Of six Hunter valley pastoral family MLAs and five MLCs from the same background, only three spoke to the Chinese Bill, three to the Ring-barking Bill and four to the Licensing Bill. The largest number of speeches they made concerned the Ring-barking Bill - a measure which was of direct interest to them. In the entire 1881 session J.P. Abbott spoke to forty-two matters, H.C. Dangar twenty-four and G.H. Cox fourteen. The other members with Hunter valley connections hardly said a thing. R.P. Abbott gave three speeches.

29. Ibid.
30. Sir Joseph Abbott was MLA 1880-1901, Speaker 1889-1901, Minister for Mines 1882-5, Minister for Lands 1885-7 and was made KCMG 1895.
33. Eleven speeches were made by Dangar, Abbott and Brown to the Ring-barking Bill. Eight such speeches were made to the Chinese Restriction Bill and seven to the Licensing Bill.
Alexander Bowman four, H.H. Brown three and T.C.G. Dangar one. The remaining four did not speak at all.

In their speeches and votes, pastoral family members shifted their positions fairly flexibly and were seldom intransigent. On matters not directly concerning the rural or pastoral interests they might oppose one another. The 1881 Licensing Bill, concerning the abolition of licences to wine shops, led H.H. Brown to fear 'a great increase in sly grog selling in the outlying districts'. Alexander Bowman on the other hand thought wine licences could be done away with and hoped that hotels might become more 'respectable', and H.C. Dangar wished to see wine replace tea as the colonial beverage, since tea was 'more deleterious than intoxicating liquors'. Their response to the Chinese Restriction Bill was similarly divided. G.H. Cox regretted the bill, which he thought 'unstatesmanlike and unjustifiable'. He believed that country people found Chinese settlers 'of enormous benefit'. J.P. Abbott on the contrary proposed an amendment to the bill which would remove the right of Chinese to vote for members of parliament and to sit on juries (this amendment was rejected). On the ring-barking bill, however, the pastoral members were all in agreement - ring-barking should be permitted on the Crown Lands on which most of them grazed flocks and herds.

The slight role of Hunter valley pastoral families in parliament was most evident whenever they were presented with an issue which

34. NSW PD 1881, Vol. 6, p. 1588.
35. Ibid., p. 1590.
36. Ibid., p. 1461.
38. Ibid., p. 349.
they believed directly threatened their property. At such times they spoke consistently in opposition and were consistently defeated. Land tax, closer settlement and selection were obstructed by the pastoral members, and the success of such legislation is proof of their impotence. The two most important were the Land and Income Tax Bills of the Reid government in 1894-5 and the Closer Settlement Bill of 1904 (page 42). Hunter valley families were articulately represented in the 1890s debates by G.H. Cox, H.C. Dangar and R.H.D. White (of whom only the last was a resident proprietor). All three used defeatist language when they spoke to the bills; they opposed the principle of graduated tax, but could do nothing about it. White declared: 'I would fight the devil if I thought we could beat him', but admitted that landowners were 'licked' and must take their 'gruel' quietly.40 Dangar spoke at great length:

I suppose it is inevitable that the country will have to submit to this new financial policy ... the great industry of the country ... is to be taxed.41

Cox lamented the way in which pastoralists were being penalised for their enterprise. 'The pastoralists are ... the saviours of the country. They are the people who made the country what it is'.42

By 1904 the air of defeat was evident even before the battle was fought. H.C. Dangar spoke much as he had in 1895. He declared himself 'opposed to the principle of attacking a man's sacred right to his property' but believed it was his 'duty' to vote for the bill in the 'true interests of all the people in this country'.43

40. NSW PD 1895, Vol. 81, p. 2887.
41. Ibid., pp. 2962-3.
42. NSW PD 1895, Vol. 80, p. 2014.
43. NSW PD 1904, Vol. 17, p. 2731.
Fleming, representing a younger generation of Hunter valley pastoral families, believed that nobody could any longer discuss the principle of closer settlement:

> We are all agreed in this House, and I believe the country is unanimously agreed, that a closer settlement bill is absolutely necessary ... 44

Fleming only wanted to make sure that selectors would be given freehold and that there would be no compulsory expropriation of estates. He was defeated on both points.

At Sydney, then, pastoral families were unable to act as an effective power elite. But for the most part there was little conflict in politics that deeply moved Hunter valley people. The extremes of antagonism arising from selection legislation had not occurred in the valley, largely because little land had been leasehold in 1861. Settlement was growing denser in the region between 1880 and 1914, but not at the expense of the pastoral families. The 1883 Morris-Ranken report had correctly noted that the region included no social group 'endangered by selection'.45 Rural politics were consequently sedate. The application of the Land and Income Tax Acts (1895) brought people into the streets of Merriwa, according to a journalist:

> Our little village has laid aside its wonted air of somnolence and calm stagnation, and has acquired in its place an atmosphere of intense excitement; the raison d'être being, G.H. Reid's latest experiment in speculative politics, the Land and Income Tax. One of our oldest records is broken, there having been more men than dogs visible in our main street.46

44. NSW PO 1904, Vol. 16, p. 1859.
45. NSW VP 1883, Vol. II, p. 84.
But political life was usually tranquil. At election times the land question did not necessarily predominate. By 1898 federation had become the main issue in the newspaper columns of the Singleton electorate. Most of the discussion between rival candidates in that year - A.J. Gould from Sydney and C.H. Dight, a large proprietor - dealt with free trade and protection in the federation. When land matters were brought up, neither identified himself with the large estates. Dight favoured measures for advancing money to small men to enable them to buy freehold land, and Gould praised land tax for having led to the growth of agriculture - a 'highly satisfactory state of affairs'.

Even in the important election of 1904, when voting was very heavy in the Upper Hunter electorate, the land question was by no means predominant in questions, speeches and advertisements. Strong partisan feelings were aroused, but not along any apparent class lines; issues were the 'quicksands of indebtedness and corrupt government', education, local government, reform of the 'liquor traffic' and, only incidentally, closer settlement.

In such a mild political climate there was no need for pastoral families to huddle together in a tight political group. There was plenty of room for idiosyncrasies. A few large proprietors embraced liberal or radical causes from the comfort of their drawing-rooms. They might, in the jargon of the time, be labelled 'faddists', like William Pearse of Plashett who was a vigorous promoter of the Bimetallic League. Pearse blamed the gold standard for many of the ills

47. Singleton Argus, 21 July 1898.
48. Ibid., 14 July 1898.
49. Ibid., 11 August 1904.
50. Ibid., 4 August 1904.
of society, particularly the fall in wages for workers. He argued that employers

delude themselves with the mistake that their interest lies in the small present profit they reap ... while they shut their eyes to the enormous loss it must ultimately bring upon them, as well as upon the working classes.51

But if one can judge from parliamentary speeches, political advertisements and the occasional letter to an editor, the political interest of pastoral families was as slight as their participation in parliament. Perhaps they were like W.E. Abbott - a drifting, ad hoc conservative committed to the defence of the country against the town, and the pastoral interest against land reform. His conventional belief was that the existing economy benefited all classes so long as people would work hard. He asserted that the 'wage fund of a community' could increase only with the 'total wealth production of that community'. Any interference by classes, or by politicians, in the system of wealth production would be harmful. Abbott wished that 'workmen and politicians had sufficient intelligence' to understand this 'fundamental proposition'.52

Distaste for politics was perhaps encouraged by the necessity for politicians, no matter what their background, to lend some sort of support to closer settlement. Political credibility depended on judicious talk about 'throwing open the land to the people on easy terms'.53 Equally important was to get a new railway, or a bridge, or something else from the government at Sydney. There was not much that was

51. Budget and Singleton Advertiser, 12 September 1898.
52. MM, 8 May 1896.
53. In the words of L.E. Hewitt, a member of the pastoral family standing for election in the Upper Hunter. Singleton Argus, 6 December 1913.
alluring in being a colonial politician, and it could be hard work. Local politicians of all stripes would have to promiscuously band together, large proprietors alongside storekeepers, to petition ministers for favour.  

The influence of pastoral families was a little stronger than their actual parliamentary representation indicates. In 1872 J.P. Abbott complained to Parkes of the 'feeling' in the Upper Hunter electorate that there was no use in any respectable man opposing the White family, hence for some time we have had men opposed to them who were without private or political character and each defeat of such opponents by the White family has made the latter more dominant than ever.

At the same time, the Abbotts were regarding themselves as 'liberals' opposed to the 'conservative' Whites. But by the 1900s both families had united their interest and gained control of the Liberal and Reform Association of the upper Hunter. In 1909 H.L. White presided over the association with another large proprietor, W.T. Seaward, as honorary secretary. By 1913 the association's president was J.C. White and the approved nominees for the election of that year included three members of pastoral families, the successful candidate being J.H.M. Abbott.

54. One such deputation was formed across all political and social lines in the upper Hunter to press for a Merriwa railway. The deputation included W.M. Fleming MLA, J.C. White MLC, Allan McRae and E.R. White from the pastoral families, together with five other local MLAs, one other MLC and a justice of the peace - all small farmers, lawyers and a tailor. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 2.


56. MM, 8 July 1909.

But the sort of informal influence this suggests in party politics varied from place to place. Northumberland was quite outside the orbit of influence. In the middle Hunter, on the other hand, the leisure of large proprietors and their identification with districts gave them political authority something like that found in the upper Hunter. But everywhere in the valley parliamentary representation by the pastoral interest was (although disproportionate) fairly marginal. The same was true of New South Wales from the 1880s onwards. In the colony as a whole, pastoralists were by the late 1880s forming a political alliance with merchants and financiers. The Hunter valley reflected on a provincial level this wider development, the pastoral families sharing political power with local businessmen, lawyers and journalists. This pattern of power remained until 1914. The pastoral families did not form a power elite in parliamentary politics.

(b) Local government

Local government was divided between parallel hierarchies, some of which represented de jure and others de facto politics. Before 1906 formal local government was limited to town councils. These had come into being from the Municipalities Acts (1867 and 1897) which had established 'boroughs' and 'municipal districts' to govern towns by elected councils. Several Hunter valley towns were incorporated under the Acts and by 1901 there were fourteen self-governing towns in the region. Rural areas had no local government under the Acts. Subsequently the Local Government Act (1906) swept away the limited


earlier jurisdictions and divided the whole state into shires and municipalities. Plural voting, based upon property, which had been part of the Municipalities Acts, was abolished in 1906. Rural areas (shires) were chaired by elected presidents and governed by councillors. Municipalities were headed by mayors and governed by aldermen.

In spite of plural voting, the early town councils were seldom under the influence of large proprietors. Borough boundaries usually included little of the surrounding countryside and consequently tended to be dominated by professional men and the more successful tradesmen. Of the nine mayors of Singleton - a town in the centre of large estates and powerful families - from 1880 to 1906 only one, George Loder of Abbey Green, was a member of the pastoral families. In Dungog was exceptional; for reasons that are not clear the Hooke and Abbott families exerted unusual influence and possessed the mayoralty of the town several times.

After 1906 some families staked out the new shires as their private bailiwicks. The provisional shire council of Woolooma in 1905 included four large proprietors among its five members and when elections took place in 1906, three of the six council seats were occupied by members of pastoral families. The shire councils of Muswellbrook, Merriwa and Gloucester all included a disproportionate number of large proprietors, while small farmers predominated in Wallarobba shire.

60. Singleton Argus, Centenary of the Municipality of Singleton, Singleton 1966, p. 27.

Port Stephens shire and Cessnock shire. Large proprietors tended to have less influence in municipal councils, but in Scone they were sometimes in the majority, perhaps because Scone was surrounded by the largest number of resident pastoral families in the Hunter valley.

As in parliamentary politics, the influence of pastoral families was informally based. The leisure of large proprietors made them readier to sit on councils whose proceedings were long and painstaking, and their wealth made them better able than most to occupy the unpaid executive positions. In addition, members of old families enjoyed a certain presence, especially in the upper Hunter, which, if united with a commanding personality, could sway other citizens. Arthur Bowman could note on one occasion when the mayoralty of Singleton was under discussion:

I took the Council by Surprise when I got into the Town by the last train and it was ten minutes to 8 when I made my appearance at the Hall and was waited on by Three to know if I would except [sic] The office I said no. Then they said who will be the Mayor & I said I am going in to propose Mr Loder & they all said they would support me.

De facto local government was even more under the sway of the personalities, status and wealth of pastoral families. A number of boards existed to discharge various functions of local administration: pastures protection boards, stock boards, rabbit boards and others. The purpose of the boards was to regulate pasture use, eradicate noxious animals and weeds, administer branding and earmarking of

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62. The Muswellbrook council included four members of pastoral families (E. Bowman, J.C. White, T. Blunt and E.R. White) in a council of six; Merriwa three out of six; Gloucester three out of six; Wallarobba two out of six and Cessnock one out of six. Nobody from a pastoral family sat on the Port Stephens council.

63. Arthur Bowman to H.P. Stacy, 19 February 1884. Stacy papers.
domesticated animals, protect travelling stock reserves, regulate watering places and so on. Boards also granted permits and licences, were entitled to compel acceptance of their rulings and were empowered to collect rates to pay for these functions. They were elected by secret ballot, but although in this they were similarly constituted to the de jure local governments, they were not subject to the same open scrutiny or the same popular interest. Votes were unequally allocated. In the election of pastures protection boards, for example, very small farmers were allowed no vote at all and larger farmers were given votes on a basis of property. Owners of over 500 cattle or 5,000 sheep (co-inciding with my definition of large proprietors) were given three votes each. 64 And voting was not only unequal, it was also irregular - or so the local press asserted from time to time. In 1898 R.T. Blaxland created a minor stir in Singleton when he, president of the local stock board, claimed that when it came to voting for such bodies, tenants were 'bad eggs' and landowners were 'more wusser':

The tenant is a miserable weakling who will take his five shillings or half a crown and vote according to his landlord's directions, and the landowner is a villain who will assume the powers of an autocrat and give those directions. 65

But few people were interested enough in boards to inquire into such matters. The result was that most rural boards were in the pockets of large proprietors. The Denman pastures protection board of 1912 exemplified the type: its chairman was J.C. White and of its four

64. Every owner of 300 acres or more, or who possessed 10 'great cattle' or more, or 100 sheep or more, was entitled to one vote. Two votes were given to owners of over 200 'great cattle' or 2,000 sheep. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 30 April 1913.

other members, two were from pastoral families. Sometimes the committee of a board was entirely made up of large proprietors, like the Scone pastures protection board of 1902. Sheep boards were much the same. The five members of the Singleton sheep board of 1898 included four men from pastoral families and a fifth who was manager of a big estate. Rabbit boards, prickly pear boards and other such bodies were similarly stacked with large proprietors.

The influence gained by pastoral families through boards must not be overrated. Board incomes were not large and the disposal of these funds was notoriously ineffectual. Nor did the large proprietors who sat on boards always take their position seriously. Boards were inefficient, lackadaisical and met a long way from landowners' homesteads. Sometimes they ran down altogether, as the Merriwa board of sheep directors had done by 1881. In three years the Merriwa board had held only three meetings; three others lapsed for want of a quorum. No elections had taken place since 1878, four meetings to elect new directors having lapsed for lack of interest.

If the role played by pastoral families in local politics was significant it nevertheless involved only some of them. Many large proprietors took little or no part. Henry Bailey of Greylands had

69. R.T. Keys, for example, a member of the NSW Pastures Protection Board Council of Advice, was also on the Rabbit Destruction Fund Committee in 1906 and on the Licensing Board.
been 'several times requested to stand for municipal honours' but had always declined. 71 There were a great many more like him. Even some of the richest and most reputable kept clear of local politics. A.A. Dangar eschewed 'politics and public gatherings generally'. 72 Of 131 male members of pastoral families for whom I have fairly full biographical information, only 50 seem to have taken part in parliamentary, local and board politics between 1880 and 1914. Politics can thus be seen as a field in which the pastoral families were important, but not dominant. They did not comprise a rural oligarchy. Nor, although politics were interesting to the pastoral families, did the majority of men from those families play an active part. Their political power varied considerably from family to family, from district to district and from institution to institution.

2. Institutional Power

(a) The magistracy

Police courts met regularly in the country towns to dispense summary justice. They were presided over by stipendiary or presiding magistrates (professional officers in the pay of the Justice Department) assisted by a bench of at least one justice of the peace. Justices were honorary officers appointed in the name of the governor from among men of substance in a community. The actual means by which they were appointed was nomination to the Justice Department. Local members of parliament could submit names for the department to consider, as could the friends and relations of politicians, existing justices and in fact any local people who might possess influence at Sydney. But the main channel of appointments seems to have been local

71. 'Henry Bailey', Morrison, Centennial History (unpaginated).
72. PR, 15 December 1891.
members of parliament. Alexander Bowman, speaking of the difficulty in maintaining standards in the justiceship, declared that he had been applied to by '400 or 500 persons to recommend them for appointment to the commission of the peace'. But he claimed to have 'always declined' any person for whose fitness he could not vouch.

Offences which might be dealt with by summary justice were very limited. Local benches could inflict sentences of up to two years imprisonment for breaches of the Distillation Act, the Customs Regulations Acts, the Chinese Restriction Act and the Children's Protection Act, and sentences of up to six months gaol, or a fine of twenty pounds, or a whipping, for any other offence. The ability to deliver judgments in police courts did not greatly enhance the material power of a justice. The work was tiresome and not very rewarding, and so might be regarded as one of the more subtle manifestations of power, as a function of the social duty of propertied people.

The pastoral families only partially filled this power role. Of 254 justices in the Hunter valley in 1912 only 50 were members of pastoral families. These fifty men represented only thirty-two of the hundred or more families that owned large estates in 1912. In a sense, two-thirds of the valley's large proprietors thus ignored

73. NSW PD 1881, Vol. 6, p. 2754.
74. Ibid.
75. Whipping was allowed as a punishment by the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1883).
77. Namely the Abbott (upper Hunter), Abbott (lower Hunter), Bailey, Blaxland, Bowman, Bettington, Cox, Dight, Doyle, Finlay, Higgins, Haydon, Hill, Kennedy, Loder, Lethbridge, Laurie, Macintyre, McMaster, McDonald (lower Hunter), McDonald (upper Hunter), Parbury, Pearse, Perrett, Reynolds, Seaward, Taylor, Traill, White, Windeyer, Wilson and Wright families.
their ability to wield power in the community. As in political life, involvement varied a good deal from one place to another. In Cassilis the large proprietors completely dominated the police court - of five justices, three were owners of large estates and a fourth was the manager of Collaroy.\textsuperscript{78} Large proprietors predominated less at Murrundindi, but their numbers on the bench were equal to all other interests combined, and were quite disproportionate to their share of the propertied population as a whole.\textsuperscript{79} In Singleton only twelve members of a forty-three man bench were from pastoral families, and in the lower Hunter there were a number of courts - Maitland, Morpeth and Kurri Kurri - where not a single large proprietor sat on the bench. In general, the smaller the town, the more likely that its magistracy was dominated by pastoral families. The influence of large proprietors, being based upon personal presence, thinned out in larger towns.

The magisterial authority of pastoral families was in some cases spread beyond the Hunter valley. If they owned estates elsewhere in New South Wales or in Queensland, large Hunter valley proprietors might be justices there. A.A. Dangar was a member of the Queensland magistracy and some of his sons sat on benches in New England. Other families had the advantage of a son who was a stipendiary magistrate, like Thomas Kingsmill Abbott. But such men were exceptional and found only in the richest pastoral families.

Among those large proprietors who did accept magisterial duties I have found no evidence of corruption; the possibilities for

\begin{enumerate}
\item F.D. McMaster, A.J. Traill, D. McDonald and M.E. Maher. Moore's Almanac, p. 264.
\item Of twelve magistrates six (W.A. Wilson, B. Haydon, H.A. McDonald, H.A. Wright, R.P. Abbott and John Taylor) were of pastoral families.
\end{enumerate}
it were not very extensive. For the most part, justices sat through sessions like one held at Muswellbrook in 1886. Sitting beside the local presiding magistrate were C.E. Doyle, William Bowman, Edward Bowman, J.C. White and a fifth justice not from a pastoral family. The court dealt with a charge of 'furious riding' in the streets of the town, a breach of the licensing law and some small debt claims. The bench also corrected and allowed the jury list for 1887, renewed some billiards licences and did the same for some slaughtering licences.

When family interests were concerned in a legal dispute, large proprietors usually declined to adjudicate. In 1896 Arthur Bowman was the sole justice present when his brother pressed a charge against a small farmer for illegally removing fencing material from his estate. Bowman stood down. Thus far did a sense of social duty serve large proprietors. Nor did pastoral families necessarily favour the rights of property. The laws of trespass, for example, worked somewhat whimsically. On one occasion Simon Richards of Greenmount sued a drover for allowing a bullock to trespass on his estate. When the suit came before the Singleton police court, C.H. Dight of Pelerin was sitting, along with two justices not from pastoral families. The case was dismissed. 'Law is a peculiar thing', a newspaper correspondent mused, because a similar case some weeks earlier had resulted in a fine of five pounds for the drover. Richards was not quite inside the circle of old families of the district, and the bench before which he brought his suit was not as substantially under the influence of large proprietors as it might have been, but on the whole summary

80. MM, 18 December 1886.
81. MM, 5 August 1896.
82. Budget and Singleton Advertiser, 17 and 20 June 1898.
justice did not serve selfish ends. Police courts were capricious, but not sinister.

Much more common than an obvious failure of social morality was a failure of personality. Landowning justices frequently figured in small scandals. They were proud, independent and irascible. They enjoyed combining and sitting on public bodies, but they also liked to use them as an opportunity for squabbling. John Dight JP exchanged hot words with the presiding magistrate of his court in 1898, after having been accused by the magistrate of 'acting dishonourably towards him and behind his back'. Dight became 'excited and insolent'. After the Department of Justice refused to hold an inquiry, Dight wrote to the Attorney-General saying, 'I decline to sit in [the presiding magistrate's] company'. On another occasion, Otho Orde Dangar was involved in a similar scandal. Dangar accused the member of parliament for the Macleay, R.B. Smith, of corrupt electioneering and brought Smith to trial before the Committee of Elections. Dangar lost the case and then his head. He accused Smith of perjury. Smith responded by asking the Department of Justice to inquire into the conduct of Dangar. T.K. Abbott (brother of W.E. Abbott and Sir Joseph Abbott) was appointed special commissioner and removed Dangar from the magistracy.

In addition to their quarrels, the justices seem also to have neglected their duties. Like a sheep board, a police court was often a long ride away from a landowner's homestead, and the result was that sessions sometimes lapsed for want of a justice, and at most

84. NSW PD 1885-6, Vol. 50, p. 5139.
sittings there were only one or two on the bench. In a sample twenty-two police court sittings in late 1882 and early 1887, the number of justices present totalled only thirty-seven. At four sittings there were three or four justices and at four sittings there were two; only one justice (the minimum permitted by the Justice Acts) attended the remaining thirteen sittings. The Bulletin claimed in 1885 that one Hunter valley landowner, asked to adjudicate in a case, replied:

Go to incarnadined Sheol. I've got to look after my corn. I only took the billet of Justice of the Peace to get off serving on the Jury.

(b) The military

During the predominantly peaceful years from 1880 to 1914 there was an air of martial readiness in New South Wales. A united colonial military force had been established by the Volunteer Force Regulation Act (1867) which had set up volunteer forces of artillery, infantry, engineers and torpedoes to complement a tiny standing army, known as the Permanent Artillery. Each district of the colony was empowered to form its own volunteer corps by petition to the government. The government would provide arms, equipment and uniforms (regulations on these matters varied from time to time) and the local district supplemented this support by raising money as best it could. All volunteers were retained on a partially paid basis, being given a small remuneration for days spent on manoeuvres. Officers were appointed in the name of the governor, on the advice of the commanding

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85. Sittings of West Maitland, East Maitland, Muswellbrook, Singleton and Dungog police courts. MM, 28 November, 7, 9, 12, 16 and 19 December 1882 and 25, 27, 29 January and 1, 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24 and 26 February 1887.

officer. The leading men of a district, if they wished, could exert influence over the volunteers by gifts of money and equipment, and were thus in a position to be recommended as officers. Subalterns in the volunteers were required to pass examinations before a board of officers and were supposed also to have passed the colonial civil service examination, or a higher degree.

The military establishment thus set up was not large. In 1883, the last year of its operation, the whole of New South Wales maintained a standing army of only 310 men, supported by fewer than 2,000 partially paid volunteers. 87 In the Hunter valley there were three units: an artillery force of 49 men at Newcastle, a company of 84 volunteer infantry at Newcastle and a company of 85 volunteer infantry at Maitland. These units were made up of smaller local groups, one branch of the Maitland volunteers being a sub-unit known as the Singleton Corps Volunteer Rifles.

In 1883 new military regulations established a much larger force. A third section (in addition to permanent and volunteer forces) was set up and called the Volunteer Reserve. The new volunteers, entirely unpaid, were subsidised by the government only for equipment and uniforms. The number of country units increased rapidly, in both the partially-paid and unpaid sections. By 1885 the total armed force of the colony numbered almost 8,000 men and of these over 4,000 were partially-paid volunteers and over 3,000 volunteer reserves. 88 The size of these forces fluctuated according to the economic policies of

88. NSW VP 1887 (2nd Session), Vol. II, pp. 23-5. The army was at a similar strength in 1898 when it consisted of 737 Permanent Troops, 4,141 Partially-Paid Volunteers and 2,301 Volunteer Reservists. Coghlan, Wealth and Progress 1898-9, p. 209.
succeeding governments, but throughout the 1880s and 1890s the volunteers were an important and colourful element of local community in the Hunter valley. They held marches, camps and rifle shoots and were toasted at banquets.

From their beginnings in the 1860s the volunteers had been sponsored by pastoral families. In the upper Hunter, several of the biggest families felt it their duty to be 'Greatly interested in military matters', like the Loders of Abbey Green. George Loder, appointed an officer of the Singleton Corps Volunteer Rifles 4th Regiment in 1869, filled that rank for eleven years and was known in public life as Captain Loder. He was succeeded as captain of the Singleton volunteers by A.S. Bowman. The Bowmans, like the Loders, were very interested in affairs military. Edward Bowman of Skellatar was appointed major in the 4th Regiment and like Loder was known to the local people by his military title. Junior officers in the volunteers came from pastoral families too, men like H.P. Stacy serving alongside doctors, lawyers and tradesmen from the towns. Three of the pastoral families in the lower Hunter showed a similar interest. The Maitland Corps Volunteer Rifles were under the influence of the Close family. E.C. Close was commanding officer of the rifles for many years and provided them with banquets on notable occasions. The Eales and Dodds families were important in the Maitland volunteers too.

A second layer of voluntary military activity was established with the rifle association and rifle club movements. The National Rifle Association had been founded in 1861 by prominent men at Sydney,

89. MM, 3 January 1901.
90. Ibid.
who modelled it upon the National Rifle Association of England. Among the founders was H.C. Dangar - lawyer, businessman and absentee Hunter valley landowner. A council of twenty such men ran the association, whose purpose was 'the encouragement of rifle shooting in the Defence Forces of the Colony'. The association offered prizes and organised shoots. Unlike the English body, however, the colonial association was not wholly dependent on private subscriptions, but was also subsidised by the government. An offshoot was the Northern Rifle Association in the Hunter valley, founded largely at the instigation of the Dangar and White families. Like the parent body the Northern Association was governed by a council of 'estimable gentlemen'. A.A. Dangar was president and dominated the body for many years. The presence of pastoral families in the association was supreme throughout the period up to the Anglo-Boer War and this fact caused the Singleton Argus some unease. The association, being subsidised by the government, was a 'public institution' in the eyes of the Argus, and although the newspaper paid respect to the men who sat on the council, the Argus wished the local community as a whole might exert rather more influence over the allocation of prizes and funds.

Rifle clubs, the least formal level of military life, were completely non-official. Organised by voluntary combination at a country town level, they grew rapidly in the 1880s and 1890s. Rifle clubs for the most part were initiated by small men; the pastoral families took little part in their government and did not participate in the shoots and competitions the rifle clubs sponsored. Large proprietors did, however, keep a fatherly eye on them. In 1898 H.L. White

94. Ibid.
invited the Moonan gun club to have a day's shoot on Belltrees. He provided the field, donated the birds and entertained the men in the evening with a dinner. Local newspapers made irregular mention of such patronage throughout the period.

The 1890s saw a flowering of landed chivalry in the valley. The establishment of the Sydney Light Horse Volunteers in 1885 had been followed in 1886 by the incorporation of the West Maitland Reserve Corps of Volunteer Light Horse - a corps of sixty men under three officers. Renamed the Hunter River Light Horse in 1887, the elan of this new crack corps was shown in 1891 when its officers provided mounts for the New South Wales Cavalry regimental band; in the 1890s the band was stationed at Morpeth and added colour to local festivals. During the same years a Hunter valley landowner became commanding officer of the New South Wales cavalry - A.J. Dodds of Barraba, a lieutenant in the Sydney Light Horse in 1885, captain in 1886 and major in 1893, was given command of the regiment in 1894. In 1893 Dodds sailed to Britain in charge of a tournament team sent to show what colonial volunteers were made of:

He was a fine figure on horseback, with his white helmet and red and white horsehair plumes.

Reorganisation of the volunteers after the Anglo-Boer War reduced active leadership by pastoral families. In 1901 responsibility for defence passed to the federal government. By 1903-4 a complete reorganisation had been put into effect under the various Defence

95. Scone Advocate, 26 April 1898.
97. Ibid., p. 335.
Acts of those years. Three forces were created - the Permanent Cadre Force (or standing army), the Field Force (paid militia for Commonwealth defence) and the Garrison Force (paid militia and volunteer troops for local defence). Various re-shufflings occurred up to 1913, but for most of the period the Hunter valley constituted a single military district of cavalry and three districts of infantry. The cavalry unit, based at Scone, was the 5th Australian Light Horse Regiment, known as the 'Hunter River Lancers' and descended from the Light Horse of the 1890s. The three infantry regiments were the 14th and 16th at Maitland and the 25th at Scone. The general staff moved from Sydney to Melbourne, well beyond the orbit of influence of pastoral families. General E.T.H. Hutton, Commander of Commonwealth Forces, decided that 'military instruction hitherto given in Australia, and the training hitherto carried out are not sufficient to meet modern requirements'. 98 The result was that the training and qualifications of officers in the volunteers were tightened up. In 1905-6 new and separate syllabi of examinations were issued for each arm of the service. Officers of the volunteers were now required to become semi-professional. If a landowner wished to become an officer it was necessary for him to work much harder at it than in colonial times. The imposition of universal military training by the Defence Act of 1910 further swamped the personal influence of big local proprietors. Pastoralists no longer led the local volunteers. By 1913 of the fifteen officers in the Hunter Valley Lancers only two - Captain Edward Windeyer and Lieutenant M.S. Kennedy - came from pastoral families. Colonel of the regiment was a Raymond Terrace doctor and other officers included a Maitland dentist and a Scone storekeeper.

The majority of the officers were small farmers. 99

After the Anglo-Boer War the federal government also extended its control over rifle clubs, by granting them aid and giving them the status of an unpaid reserve for the militia. Annual courses of musketry were organised for the rifle clubs by the government, which in turn extended various regulations over the clubs. In this new form rifle clubs continued to grow — from 142 in New South Wales at the end of 1905, to 302 by the end of 1913. 100 The role of pastoral families as occasional patrons of rifle clubs seems not to have changed. In 1913 although none of the large proprietors was taking part in the actual shooting activities of the Muswellbrook rifle club, prizes and other gifts to encourage the prowess of shooters were presented by J.C. White, E.R. White and J.H. Keys. 101

There can be no doubt of the temper of pastoral families. They continually displayed an imperial patriotism. When they died, it was common for their wills to stipulate that 'any Stocks funds or bonds' secured on their estates were only to be bought

In an Australian state or any Colony or Dependency of the United Kingdom or upon the debentures or guaranteed Stock of any local or public authority in any of the Australian States or in the United Kingdom or British India or any Colony or Dependency of the United Kingdom. 102

On his eighty-five foot high flagpole in the grounds of Baroona, A.A. Dangar flew the Union Jack every Sunday. 103 R.T. Keys bought and presented two flags to the town of Muswellbrook. In a public cere-

102. Will of John Henry Davies.
103. PR, 15 April 1910.
Mony Keys handed the flags (the Union Jack and the British Ensign) to the mayor, 'made a patriotic speech', saw his flags run up and was rewarded with 'enthusiastic cheers' from a crowd. At times of stirring crisis, large proprietors positively flaunted their warlike spirits. During the Queen's birthday celebrations of 1900, the 'most conspicuous' of the displays in Maitland was at Roseneath, East Maitland, the private residence of Mr. George Clift, which was artistically adorned with some fifty flags, and illuminated with a large gas star, burning brightly above a transparent motto, composed of the letters V.R., a crown, and the significant initials B.P., in honour of the hero of Mafeking.

Wars acted as a rallying point for the pastoral families, in 1899 and again in 1914. Only in 1885, when the death of Gordon caused New South Wales to raise and despatch a contingent of 750 men to the Sudan, were the pastoral families quiet. A patriotic meeting, held at West Maitland to discuss the contingent, had 'very meagre, if any, pecuniary results'. The gift of £1,000 to the Patriotic Fund by B.W. Levy, a Maitland merchant, was not followed by any similar gifts from large proprietors. The 1885 movement seems to have been largely a Sydney one. It was also brief - less than a month passed between Sir Edward Strickland's appeal for local troops and the embarkation. A month was too short a time for the slow machinery of rural patronage to get working properly.

The Boer War showed what the pastoral families could do. In 1899 and 1900, sentiment among the people of the Hunter valley was by no means united. Local newspapers, although all in favour of the

104. MM, 9 June 1900.
105. MM, 25 May 1900.
106. MM, 5 March 1885.
conflict, made occasional angry mention of 'DISCOURTEOUS PRO-BOERS' in the valley. In February 1900 some lady collectors for the Patriotic Fund in a Hunter valley town met with 'curt rebuffs' everywhere, and at one place a person said, 'if he had his way, he would throw them and their list into the river'. The Maitland Mercury decided that there were 'certainly far too many people in Australia at the present time who give expression to disloyal utterances'.

But among the pastoral families there appears to have been unanimity. I have not discovered any family which privately or publicly condemned the war. Some of them rushed to show their positive approval. A.A. Dangar horsed a gun in 1899 and F.D. McMaster was called 'a generous squire' for equipping and mounting five men from his estate at his own expense. His neighbour, J.B. Bettington, did the same. George Loder of St Clair presented six 'fine upstanding' horses to the cavalry and other landowners made 'substantial donations' of cash. The Pastoral Review praised A.A. Dangar in particular for pointing out that the supremacy of the British Empire not only in South Africa, but all over the world, is involved in the Transvaal difficulty, and his offer to bear the expense of sending a battery reflects credit upon pastoralists all round.

Women from the pastoral families rallied to the cause too. Committees

107. MM, 17 February 1900.
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid.
111. PR, 16 December 1907.
112. MM, 27 January 1900.
113. MM, 20 July 1912.
114. PR, 16 October 1899.
of ladies sprang up in the country towns to collect funds and appeal for gifts of clothing. The Maitland committee included Mrs Robert Logan of Torryburn, Miss Mackay of Anambah, Miss N. Hooke of Dingadee and nine women whose husbands and fathers were prominent townsmen. These ladies bent over their sewing machines, held luncheons and ran the risk of being thrown into the Hunter river by discourteous pro-Boers. Mrs W.H. Mackay worked like a Trojan to make up twelve pairs of pyjamas and sent them to the war wounded in South Africa. Throughout the valley women from the pastoral families were doing the same sort of thing.

The pastoral families also donated their youth. Sons of large proprietors won commissions and were sent off with blessings. Three of the officers in the New South Wales contingent of 1899 came from Hunter valley pastoral families: H.P. Dangar (formerly a lieutenant in the Imperial 13th Hussars) was promoted to the rank of major in the New South Wales forces, H.W. Dangar was made a captain of artillery and S.E. Christian a lieutenant of artillery. C.C. Dangar was in England when the war broke out; he was given a commission in the 3rd Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment of Yorkshire. But pastoral family sons, as they rallied to the colours in 1899, did not stand apart from others—they overflowed into all ranks, joining the hoi-polloi of shopkeepers' sons, farmers' sons and even labourers who filled the uncommissioned ranks of the new voluntary forces. Members of the Abbott, Doyle, Hall and Waddell families joined up as non-

115. MM, 27 January 1900.
116. MM, 10 February 1900.
commissioned officers in the district forces. The customary distinction in most Hunter valley institutions between officers and ranks, patrons and clients, pastoral families and small people, were temporarily blurred.

I have not found much evidence for a discussion of the motives and feelings of these young men. J.H.M. Abbott, son of Sir Joseph Abbott, wrote several short stories and one book (Tommy Cornstalk) about his experiences as a warrant officer in the war and his impressions of other soldiers from the country districts. He invented a fictional Hunter valley landowner's son called Tommy Carmichael. Of him, Abbott wrote:

There was little in [the war] that stirred him deeply. He did not feel very much afraid in action. Neither was he over keen for distinguishment. His father had wished him to volunteer.

The historicity of Tommy Carmichael is uncertain, and a few large proprietors' sons certainly did distinguish themselves in action. John Percy Kelman, in the 1st New South Wales Mounted Infantry, was decorated with five bars. But most of the biographical notes of men who took part in the Anglo-Boer War mention no such decorations. J.H.M. Abbott creates the impression that the war was regarded as an adventure, not as a defence of principles, although at one point he briefly observes:

we thought we were right, and just, and ethically correct in assisting the mother country to make war in Africa ...

119. Abbott, Plain and Veldt, p. 41.
120. Who's Who 1929, p. 1109.
Abbott also suggests that war weariness overcame the young country soldiers within a year or so; they sobered themselves in scenes of misery from the drunkenness of the 'hurrahing' streets, and the hysterical quays, and the lying newspapers.122

By July 1900 Edward Windeyer was tired of 'chasing Boers' and wrote to his mother that he and his friends were 'wishing one and all that the war was over'.123 Tommy Carmichael's 'only enthusiasm' for the war consisted of his 'whole-souled admiration of the pastoral capabilities of ... the Free State'.124

But for my purposes the war in Africa is secondary to the symbolic importance of the 'cause' at home. Foreign conflict united the interest of pastoral families with the other militant sections of the local community. At Scone there were encampments and banquets for days before the departure of troops, and the town bore an unwonted 'lively appearance'.125 On one occasion the Belltrees contingent (seventeen men under the command of Lieutenant A.G. White of Belltrees) rode into Scone early in the morning of a departure day:

Their appearance, and the style and condition of their mounts, were the subject of much favourable comment.126

Later the same day there was a parade. Landowners' sons pranced on their fathers' horses, the bits jingling and the bayonets glinting. Speeches were read by the town notables. Finally there was a 'great crush' at the railway station where a crowd gathered to see 'the

122. Ibid., p. 236.
123. Edward Windeyer to Lady Windeyer, 3 July 1900. Papers of Windeyer family, Mitchell Library.
125. Scone Advocate, 30 March 1899.
126. Ibid.
defenders of our hearths and homes take their departure'. The biggest scenes of public ceremony occurred at Maitland, the final send off point for Hunter valley troops. At one farewell to volunteers in 1900 'A GREAT DEMONSTRATION' took place at Maitland. Over thirteen hundred people, including 'a large proportion of ladies' filled the Town Hall to overflowing, while nearly as many stood in the street outside. There were processions and mass renderings of the patriotic songs 'Rule Britannia', 'Soldiers of the Queen' and 'Sons of the Sea'.

A GREAT DEMONSTRATION

The First World War provoked a similar response. Once again the pastoral families took the lead in conspicuous displays of loyalty. In 1914 the Pastoralists' Union launched a war fund to which W.E. Abbott gave £500. The Abbotts were followed by other large Hunter valley proprietors giving donations of £50 and £25. F.D. McMaster gave cattle and sheep to the value of £87. W.T. Seaward raised contributions from the small farmers of the Gundy district. Other families gave guns, horses, uniforms and sometimes larger gifts. The White family presented the British army with an aeroplane, at a cost of £2,500.

And every pastoral family sent one or more of its sons. Mary Abbott voiced their feelings in a letter of 1914: 'I am proud to give my two sons to England'.

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127. Ibid.
128. MM, 17 February 1900.
129. Ibid.
130. Ibid.
131. Ibid.
132. Brady, Australia Unlimited, p. 951.
133. Quoted by Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 195.
Patronage by prominent persons was an important social custom in the rural Hunter valley. In a society which accorded little power to the state, where hospitals and some schools were supported by private rather than by state money, and where the most pervasive form of social organisation was the committee, strong personalities played a large part. As in political life, and in the magistracy and military, there was a wide opportunity for pastoral families to deploy social power. In the community at large there was an expectation that landowners should act as patrons. To be called 'a warm patron of all movements for the well-being of the community', like A.S. Bowman, was to be accorded significant praise. 134

Patronage was exercised in two forms. In many local organisations a patron simply acted as a figurehead, a sonorous name at the head of a working committee. In other organisations patronage was executive; the patron actively led his committee and devoted time and labour to his functions. It was usual for the second type of patronage to occur in organisations which were close to the sectional interests of the pastoral families. Committees of such bodies would be filled with members of the pastoral families too, and the resulting group was often something approaching a pastoral association.

Bodies in which patronage was at its most nominal were those connected with education and charity. Neither of these was a negligible function in a pre-welfare state. But government schools were almost entirely ignored by large proprietors, with a few exceptions. One newspaper in 1907 noted that R.W. White had 'very liberally' 134.

134. 'Alister Stuart Bowman', Morrison, Centennial History (unpaginated).
presented the Glen Dhu district with a new primary school building. The Loder family took some consistent interest in elementary schools for their community. George Loder of Abbey Green was one of the founders of the National School (afterwards the Public School) at Singleton and spent almost three decades sitting on its board. Loder and his family also contributed money and prizes to help the school pupils. But the boards of most state schools were made up of men from other social groups.

Large proprietors also tended to overlook the schools of arts. Of eight institutes in the Hunter valley in 1912 only one was presided over by a member of the pastoral families - E.J. Sherwood, at Scone. William Christian of Rosemount was one of the founders of the Maitland School of Arts, and was president and patron of it for the rest of his life, but after his death no other large proprietor stepped into his shoes.

For most pastoral families the patronage of education meant supporting private schools and colleges. Alexander Dodds was one of several Presbyterian pastoralists who sat on the council of St Andrew's College of Sydney University (but no Hunter valley men were governors of St Paul's). Sir Joseph Abbott was a governor of The King's School. More significant than the few men involved in education at the capital were large local proprietors who gave money and acted as referees for

135. Murrurundi and Quirindi Times, 21 January 1907.
136. MM, 3 January 1901.
137. The eight schools of arts were at Cessnock, Denman, Gresford, Greta, Merriwa, Murrurundi, Scone and Maitland. Moore's Almanac, pp. 264-538.
the Hunter valley preparatory schools. A.C. Bowman, C.E. Doyle, Thomas Hungerford and George Clift acted as patrons of the Chadlington Collegiate School for Young Ladies at East Maitland. Others supported Scone Grammar, Singleton Grammar and lesser schools in the same fashion. Patronage of these establishments served to reinforce institutions of merely private value to the pastoral families. It was not an aspect of wider social power.

Benevolent societies and hospital boards were fields of more energetic patronage. Care of the sick was left largely to private initiative throughout the years 1880 to 1914. The New South Wales Department of Health extended its hand steadily, but slowly. In 1880 most hospitals in the colony were still small and private. Some were subsidised by the state, others were entirely voluntary charities. Mid-nineteenth century laws providing for a rudimentary system of state hospitals were consolidated in 1898 by the Public Hospitals Act, which prepared the way for construction of new hospitals in the 1900s. In 1908 the Private Hospital Act established a licensing system which gave the state some regulative powers over private hospitals. In 1914 the Department of Public Health was finally given a separate ministerial portfolio. While the legal powers of the state grew steadily, expenditure increased in leaps and bounds. By 1914 the large towns of New South Wales were being provided with large, well-endowed state hospitals. Smaller towns, including all the country towns of the Hunter valley, still relied upon private establishments. They also supported a range of charitable societies which provided homes for women, refuges for the poor and asylums for the blind, the deaf and the dumb.

139. MM, 9 July 1887.
Local benevolent societies had been set up since the mid-nineteenth century at the instigation of large proprietors and their ladies working in combination with professional and business people from the towns. In some places a tradition of continuous patronage by pastoral families had been established. At Muswellbrook the benevolent society was almost entirely led and funded by the Bowman, White, Keys and Macintyre families. James White of Edinglassie was president of the society for seventeen years. At Scone, Singleton, and Murrurundi the picture was similar. But rural benevolent societies were not very large. In 1885 the Muswellbrook society's main achievement was in giving outdoor relief to a mere seven people. The largest charity ever made by the society was in 1890, when it supported 22 people on outdoor relief. But by 1912 the number was down to one person. I do not know whether these numbers show that there were few indigents in the local community, or whether the benevolent societies were ineffectual and a form of social window dressing.

Hospitals were more significant institutions, and towards them a dozen or so of the pastoral families showed themselves consistently generous. Muswellbrook, Scone and Singleton were effectively helped by large proprietors. In Singleton the Dangar family gave land, money, buildings and their name to found the Dangar Cottage Hospital in 1909. At Muswellbrook most of the largest endowments of the hospital were provided by pastoral families: £250 given by Edward White for instruments and a new theatre, £70 from James White for an x-ray machine and a gift of £500 from Mrs H. Campbell for two wards, a sterilising room.

141. Ibid., p. 13.
and an operating theatre. Elsewhere the pastoral families were more nominal patrons. The president of the Merriwa Hospital board in 1892 was J.B. Bettington. He did little but chair the board meetings and provide occasional cash donations of five or ten pounds. Thomas Cook, president of the Scone hospital in 1906, attended none of the twelve committee meetings during the course of his presidency. He did, however, provide 'a sumptuous Christmas dinner' for the patients and staff. The real work of the boards was carried out by committee men, who were generally farmers, small graziers and townspersons.

Active patronage was commoner in sports clubs. Throughout the valley sporting bodies, large and small, competed with one another and divided the community by rivalries and affections which cut across the lines of class. A sporty tradition among large proprietors, encouraged by their private schools, inclined them to find pleasure in the patronage of a sports club. Cricket even saw them participate. It was the custom for landowners to organise teams from among the men on their estates. These teams would play one another and be entertained at the expense of the landowner. Men from the pastoral families were very ready to join their employees in bowling, batting and fielding on these cricket pitches. In the 1890s one such match was an annual contest between the teams of the Tocal and Cardoness estates. Cricket clubs were also organised among people in the towns, and although men from the pastoral families seldom played with these teams, they lent their support by means of little gifts. The Muswell-
brook Perseverance Club was under patronage from Edward Bowman, who in 1887 gave the club two cricket bats, one set of stumps and two balls. Other patrons were Donald Macintyre of Kayuga (£2 and two bats) and I.B. Keys (one guinea). 146 Town cricket teams met estate teams in games which were a sort of rural fete. In 1888 the Scone cricket club played the Wingen estate. W.E. Abbott was the only large proprietor in either team - he was there in his capacity as the proprietor of Wingen, providing the team with 'right royal' entertainments including a dinner 'of the best description' laid out under some oak trees. 147

On such occasions the conservative ideal of social harmony was almost realised. But barriers were still maintained. Cricket teams were invited to dine outside the homestead, not in it. Pastoral family women were not mentioned by newspapers as having been present at cricket matches. And participation in play by a man or two from the patron family was not really an agent of social intercourse, it was rather evidence of confidence in their social power. This confidence was illustrated in 1904 when a cricket eleven chosen from among members of the Laurie family played a team from the town of Gloucester. The match was described by a local newspaper under the heading, 'LAURIE FAMILY v. GLOUCESTER''

The two heads of the families, Mr. James Laurie, J.P., of Halton, who is 69 years old, and Mr. A.G. Laurie, of Bonnington Park (60), the old veteran and well-known cricketer, both took part in the match, and looked quite familiar and at ease in flannels. 148

146. MM, 2 July 1887.
147. Scone Advocate, 17 November 1888.
148. I have corrected spelling errors. MM, 11 January 1904.
Among the spectators were thirty-two members of four generations of the Laurie family, including the great-grandfather, aged 87.

It being a special day ... a great number of spectators rolled up. The cheering and clapping was almost deafening when Mr. James Laurie returned to the pavilion with his well-earned 2.

Horse racing was strongly patronised by pastoral families. The Denman Race Club of 1899 was presided over by E.R. White and of his three vice-presidents two (F.S. Bell and Edward White) were fellow pastoralists. On the committee of seven were four men from the White, Bell, Hewitt and Doyle families. Near Merriwa the Bettington family owned the private racecourse which was the town's only facility for horse racing. The Bettingtons were also the founders and patrons of the Brindley Park Race Club which raced on the course, and allowed the more democratically organised Bligh Race Club to use their facilities every second year. Elsewhere the pastoral families were more nominal in their patronage. At Muswellbrook in 1913 the jockey club was mostly made up of townspeople. The actual racing of horses was shared between large proprietors, professional stud farmers and successful country town doctors. The wider community participated only as an audience and as punters. Races were popular - and the influence of pastoral families in their organisation consequently conspicuous - but were not as compelling a social institution as agricultural shows. A typical race day was held every St Patrick's Day by the Hunter River Amateur Turf Club. In 1880 the president and patron of the club was John Eales of Duckenfield Park. One of the vice-presidents was a member of the Reynolds family and among the stewards were A.A. Dangar

149. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 4 January 1899.
150. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, p. 51.
151. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 29 January 1913.
and Samuel Clift. The races took place on the private course of the
Eales family, near West Maitland. There was an attendance of 500
people, the stands being half empty and the heat 'very oppressive'.
Of five races run, the Reynolds family won one, and of fifteen place
getters only two belonged to large proprietors - Thomas Hungerford's
'Marchaway' and William Reynolds' 'Ione'.

There were many other sporting bodies in the Hunter valley
and the role of patrons in them varied considerably. Athletic clubs
were, like rifle clubs, objects of patronage from a distance. Athletic
meets, occurring on most public holidays, were organised by committees
but did not interest large proprietors as much as horse races. Pa-
toral patrons, if they did involve themselves with such committees,
were sometimes content to take their duties lightly and to compensate
with money gifts. Allan McRae of Cranbourne would jot in his diary:

Meeting to arrange for St Patricks Day sports - School of
Arts tonight - Sent an apology for non attendance promising
a fat cheque. 153

Women from the pastoral families were much the same. A few stood out
as conspicuous patrons. Mrs J.K. Mackay initiated the Scotch Fair at
Dungog in 1895, with the assistance of 'other ladies' who were not
identified by the local press. The mayor of Dungog (a smallish farmer)
praised Mrs Mackay's name as 'a pseudonym for success in whatever she
undertook'. 154 But judging by other newspaper accounts, it was more
common for pastoral ladies to form a committee and to delegate active
responsibility. Patronage in such committees worked as in such male

152. MM, 18 March 1880.
McRae papers.
institutions as race clubs and stock boards. One meeting occurred in 1897 when 'the ladies of the town and district' of Singleton met to discuss the hospital hall under the rather negligent patronage of Mrs A.A. Dangar, who wrote 'apologising for her absence as she was in Sydney'. In her stead a town woman chaired the meeting. The newspaper, in its list of those present, recorded the names of the pastoral women first - 'Mesdames R.H. Dangar, A.S. Bowman M.D., P.J.C. McDouall' - followed by a number of women from the town. Other pastoralists' ladies sent cheques and apologies: Mrs D.F. Mackay of Minimbah who gave three guineas, Mrs William Pearse of Plashett who sent a pound, and Mrs C.H. Dight of Pelerin who gave only five shillings and a note 'regretting that she would be unable to take any part'.155

If the patronage of pastoral families was only sporadic in most educational, charitable, sporting and recreational organisations, it was not so in bodies like agricultural societies, which affected their material interests. Every old-established town of any consequence in the Hunter valley supported an agricultural society. From their beginnings the societies had been nurtured by large landowners who had endowed them with land, given them money and sat on their committees. The gradual increase of small farming populations was strengthening the broad base of agricultural societies by 1900, but large proprietors continued to dominate at the top.

The most important was the Northern Agricultural Association, based at Singleton and drawing entries from all over northern New South Wales. In 1898 its president was R.T. Blaxland of Murinbin and its committee was a typical mix of men from the Dight, Loder, Bowman, 

155. MM, 29 July 1897.
Lethbridge, Dangar and Waddell families with big farmers and townpeople. Occasionally the society's president was drawn from another interest group (as in 1910, when H. York, a large farmer, held the position), but the committee always included a majority of large proprietors - in spite of the fact that, with 310 members in 1914, the most numerous people in the association were small men.

The Hunter River Agricultural and Pastoral Association, almost as important as the Northern Association (its membership was slightly larger but its prizes less valuable) drew most of its entries from the small farms around Maitland. It tended to be an association of cockatoo farmers. In 1912 only two of its committee members were from the pastoral families. At the top was a large proprietor as patron - Samuel Clift, who was president for thirty years.

Small societies were even more likely to be dominated by a few large proprietors. The Dungog society, formed in 1886 at the instigation of J.K. Mackay of Cangon, was presided over by Mackay for many years. His regime as patron was subsequently replaced by that of G.B. Waller of The Grange and G.A. Mackay of Melbee. Members of the Abbott family of Violet Hill and the Hookes of Dingadee contributed prizes, but did not sit on the committee. Patronage in agricultural societies was more than leadership of committees, it also involved concepts of social duty. Most large proprietors were not

156. Singleton Argus, 13 January 1898.
157. Committee members included men from the Bailey, Dight, Bell, McDonald, Waddell, Dangar, Mayne, Bowman and Macarthur-Onslow families. Singleton Argus, 12 July 1910.
159. G.R. Waller of The Grange and T.H. Pearse of Plashett. MM, 6 April 1912.
notably progressive farmers, in spite of their interest in agricultural societies. The societies were important as an arena for display - both of men and animals - and also for the performance of acts of conspicuous generosity. Such a performance took place at a meeting of the Upper Hunter Pastoral and Agricultural Association in Muswellbrook in 1897. The meeting was discussing a proposal by Hawkesbury agricultural college that an experimental farm be established in the district. A prosperous farmer offered fifty acres of his land, at a rental of £40 a year. A large proprietor could do better. Malcolm Campbell rose to address the meeting and made an offer which, in the words of the Maitland Mercury, was 'still more liberal'. He offered no fewer than 200 acres of his Ascot estate, 'the pick of the district', for a nominal sum of ten shillings per acres. The real value of the land was much greater.  

Pastoral families showed similar style in their patronage of farmers and settlers associations. These bodies, formed in the Hunter valley during the 1880s and 1890s, often pressed for the subdivision of large estates. Nevertheless they were usually under some patronage from large proprietors. When an upper Hunter association was formed in 1899 it was chaired by a farmer, and seventeen of the twenty-three men on its committee were small graziers and farmers, but there was still a considerable pastoral presence - one of the vice-presidents was W.E. Abbott, and six of the committee members belonged to pastoral families. Railway associations, although they too might lead to demand for the dismantling of estates, were

161. MM, 30 July 1897.
patronised by at least some of the large proprietors. In the words of Donald McRae, 'great Spouting' would take place at railway association meetings,\(^{163}\) where McRaes, Abbots, Haydons and other pastoral families could be seen sitting in chairs, heading petitions and making money gifts. Progress associations were on some occasions led by pastoralists too, even though 'progress' meant more people and, by the logic of the times, small estates.\(^{164}\)

A few pastoral families were prepared to go even further in disinterested patronage. In 1879 a number of large proprietors gave their support to a petition from 133 small farmers and graziers in the upper Hunter which prayed that the White family open up an old road through Segenhoe. The interests of the large proprietors who supported this confrontation with the Whites were not substantially involved in the matter, and by supporting the petition they were in a sense challenging the right of landowners to absolute possession of their land. The Whites stood fast against the petition and their antagonism underlined the altruistic aspect of the patronage given by men like J.T. McDouall and R.A. McDouall of New Freugh.\(^{165}\)

Pastoral families also assumed leadership of local bodies which were of a wider, colonial or national importance. At Scone a public meeting was held in 1898 to discuss federation. Everywhere in the colony federation associations were being set up and the movement was beginning to assume a large popular scale. At Scone the

\(^{163}\) Entry for 30 October in the Journal of Allan McRae for 1882. McRae papers.

\(^{164}\) One progress association which for some reason large proprietors made no attempt to influence was the Lower Hunter Progress Association, formed in 1901 by a group of farmers and professional men. Gloucester Examiner, 16 August 1901.

meeting opened with the reading of letters from H.L. White and Solomon Wiseman, signifying approval of federation. The meeting then elected W.E. Abbott to the chair and voted him president of a Scone Federation Association. A committee was elected which included members of the Doyle, Sherwood, White, Kennedy, Wiseman, Corbett and Lawler families, along with a number of local doctors, clergymen and businessmen.166 At Muswellbrook a similar meeting was held under the patronage of the Bowman, Keys, Macintyre, Doyle, Cox and White families.167 There was no organised opposition to federation anywhere in the rural Hunter valley, and when a referendum was held on the question in June, the local majority in favour of federation was 58% (compared with 52% for New South Wales as a whole). West Maitland in particular was a stronghold of federalism, with 771 votes in favour and only 267 opposing.168 The pastoral families were presiding over a successful popular movement.

Visits to the community by governors were handled in the same fashion. Official notification from Government House to a mayor would lead to a public meeting. The pastoral families would be present in force and their personalities would generally sway the meeting. A committee would be formed to draw up plans for the viceregal reception and a public holiday for the district would be declared. Such occasions showed the acceptance of pastoral families' prominence at great social ceremonies. When Sir Harry Rawson and Lady Rawson visited the valley in 1904, J.E. Macintyre, one of the largest local

166. Scone Advocate, 26 April 1898.
167. MM, 18 May 1898.
168. Yes votes in the districts of Durham, Gloucester, East Maitland, West Maitland, Singleton, Bligh and Phillip totalled 4,102, while the no votes came to 3,307. MM, 11 June 1898.
proprietors, chairman of the reception committee and mayor of the town, met them at Muswellbrook.\(^{169}\) Lord and Lady Denman were greeted at Maitland in 1912 by Samuel Clift, and subsequently entertained by Miss Clift.\(^{170}\) From the railway station to a banquet in Muswellbrook, the Rawsons in 1904 were escorted by the Muswellbrook company of the 1st Australian horse under the leadership of its lieutenant, E.R. White of Martindale. Banqueting and a reception took place in the court house, 'which had been transformed into a bower of foliage and flowers by the Misses White, of Edinglassie'.\(^{171}\) Later in the day the governor's party was driven to Baroona, 'the palatial residence of Mr. A.A. Dangar'.\(^{172}\) Rawson, Lady Rawson and their suite stayed two nights at Baroona. The streets of Singleton were decorated with two triumphal arches the while, and when the Rawsons made their descents upon the town, in company with the Dangar family, the viceroy and the great landowner would pass under the arches side-by-side. The Denmans stayed for three days at Merton, the estate of E.R. White, and were accompanied by the Whites to the Upper Hunter Amateur Race Club meeting of 1912.\(^{173}\) I do not know how many people came into the streets and racecourses to witness such ceremonies (newspapers refer vaguely to 'crowds'), but during them the identification of pastoral families with power was complete.

\(^{169}\) MM, 26 April 1904.
\(^{170}\) MM, 23 March 1912.
\(^{171}\) MM, 26 April 1904.
\(^{172}\) MM, 28 April 1904.
\(^{173}\) MM, 14 and 16 March 1912.
3. Associations

Although large proprietors were often prepared to act as disinterested patrons of popular local movements, and on occasions like the visits of governors were symbols of social order, their talent for combination could also possess a more defensive, and even destructive aspect. They were inveterate organisers of interest group associations. Large proprietors varied in their commitment to politics, and their patronage of local institutions, but when it came to defending or advancing their section, they were capable of uniting almost to a man.

Associations between pastoralists were not necessarily agents of social confrontation. In times of good prices and good wages pastoral associations could assist the material progress that was theoretically so dear to large proprietors. Associations acted as a form of club, where landowners could meet, swap ideas, talk horseflesh and perhaps make a few decisions about rabbits. None of the main associations of the 1880s were agents of social confrontation - the most important, the Commercial Pastoral and Agricultural Association of New South Wales, represented a wide alliance between urban and rural interests. The Agricultural Society and the Horticultural Society of New South Wales were even more benign. The Agricultural Society interested itself solely in improvement and shows; in 1881 of eleven vice-presidents, three were Hunter valley landowners. The Horticultural Society, resuscitated in 1881, was also concerned with farming improvement and in its first year included two Hunter valley

proprietors among its twenty-one vice-presidents. 175

Things changed in the 1890s. The shearers' strike increased self-consciousness among pastoralists, and economic depression encouraged bad tempers. The peaceful Commercial Pastoral and Agricultural Association expired in 1890. In the same year the militant Pastoralists' Union came into existence, and Hunter valley pastoral families flocked to join it. In 1897 the Stockowners' Association of New South Wales was founded, and from the beginning its committee usually included a few men from the Hunter valley. The Union and the Stockowners' Association became institutionalised and permanent. In 1903, of twenty-one committee members at the annual meeting of the Stockowners' Association, four were from Hunter valley pastoral families. 176 Four of sixteen members of the 1913 committee were from similar backgrounds. 177 A.A. Dangar in particular was an important supporter of the Stockowners' Association, taking 'the deepest interest' in the work of the body and being 'ever ready to assist it in every possible way'. 178

Less formal associations came into being from time to time in the 1890s too. In 1894 a Pastoralists' Conversazione was held at Sydney by a group of New South Wales and New Zealand landowners. They discussed diversification in the sheepraising industry. From the Hunter valley were men like W.E. Abbott, J.B. Bettington and

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178. Ibid.
J.D. Mackay who contributed opinions to the forum. The conversazione recurred in 1895 and irregularly for some years afterwards. Similar associations dealt with other sectional matters. From 1897 a Rabbit Conference met in Sydney, the Hunter valley being represented in that year by the absentee owner, F.A. Oatley. The Pastoral Review, founded in 1891, became another form of pastoral association. Subscribers to the Review came to use its offices as an informal club; a list of visitors to the offices was published monthly in the journal. From 1911 to 1913, thirty Hunter valley landowners are noted as having visited the offices at Sydney, and most of them called a great many times. The Review, like other associations, served both to consolidate and to form the opinions of its members.

The interest associations began as instruments of pastoral cohesion. But large proprietors also used them as devices of power. Pastoral associations, being centralised on Sydney, enabled landowners to strengthen their ties with powerful men in the capital. A landowner recognised this function in a speech to the 1895 Pastoralists' Conversazione by praising the Pastoral Review as a 'method of bringing the squattocracy into social intercourse with their city confreres'.

The associations focussed a naturally diffuse landed interest upon

179. PR, 15 June 1894.


182. PR, 17 September 1895.
certain specific questions. They provided large proprietors with an opportunity to exert pressure both directly, through contact with men of influence in the city and through lobbying, and indirectly, by means of conspicuous decision-making. They had the potential to act as powerful pressure groups.

In the crisis of the 1890 shearer’s strike they realised that potential. The strike outraged large proprietors in the Hunter valley. The cause of this response is not obvious, as there was little difficulty with local shearing labour during the strike or at any other time. Most Hunter valley estates seem to have drawn their shearing labour from among a stable pool in the local population. At Brindley Park, for example, the stands were occupied by 'the same shearers year after year'. In 1896 J.B. Bettington believed he had 'never had any cause for complaint' about his men. Few local landowners would have been quite so sanguine, but Belltrees and St Aubins employed mostly local labour like Brindley Park, and migrant shearers do not rate much mention in local newspapers in any of the years from 1880 to 1914. In spite of the relative quiescence of their shearing population, large proprietors in the upper Hunter turned out 'in force' to form committees in 1890. At Scone a 'nominate' district committee was formed - in other words, a group of large proprietors dominated by W.E. Abbott and A.A. Dangar deemed themselves to be a committee. No elections were held. Local landowners also hurried up to Sydney to join with other pastoralists in founding the New South Wales Pastoralists' Union. A.A. Dangar was elected president (and was to hold the position for five years). W.E. Abbott also

183. MM, 3 October 1896.
184. Ibid.
185. PR, 16 June 1891.
played an important role and was to be one of the New South Wales members of the Pastoralists' Federal Councils of 1891 and 1892.\footnote{186} Members of the Cox, Blaxland, Mackay and Loder families were also founding members of the union. A.A. Dangar, generally so desirous of playing the part of benevolent Tory landowner, wrote:

\begin{quote}
I hold that no body of men have any right to acquire ... power over those who employ them, and thus practically have them at their mercy ... \footnote{187}
\end{quote}

Dangar did represent the hysterical van of the union. Most large proprietors in the Hunter valley seem to have been ready to accept the unionisation of labour as early as 1891 and did not necessarily regard Dangar as their spokesman. One pastoralist called him 'a cocky little gentleman' and considered him a trouble-maker.\footnote{188} W.E. Abbott eventually decided that shearsers were 'quite within their rights as freemen' to form a union. But he believed it equally just for landowners to

so arrange their work that the whole of the shearing in Australia can be done by that portion of the shearsers who have refused to join the union ... \footnote{189}

Pastoralists were led by the strike to modify their notions of social duty. Many justices of the peace who acted in the shearers' dispute were large proprietors, who would normally have declined to exercise their magisterial functions in a case which so clearly involved their own interests. But a politician complained in parliament that such justices were adjudicating in the dispute and that many, like R.T.

\begin{flushright}
186. PR, 15 July 1892. \\
187. PR, 16 June 1891. \\
189. PR, 16 March 1891. 
\end{flushright}
Blaxland of Murinbin, were secretaries and agents of the Pastoralists' Union.190

The defeat of the shearers' strike was not followed by the dismantling of the Pastoralists' Union. The association instead became institutionalised. District committees were reformed, their nominative structure replaced by an elective one. At Scone a meeting of the nominative committee was attended by a large number of pastoralists, big and small, and after 'listening to Messrs. Dangar and Abbott, resolved to establish their committee on an elective basis'.191 A Scone merchant, J.J. Dodd, was elected secretary. The union became an integral part of the local community. At Sydney the central committee continued to include a large Hunter valley element. In 1894 A.A. Dangar was still president and the committee included a large number of landowners from the valley.192 By the time of the twentieth meeting in 1910, leadership had ceased to come from the Hunter, but Samuel Clift was trustee of the union and men like R.R. Dangar, F.D. McMaster and F.J. White were playing an important part.193

Nor did their victory in 1890-1 mitigate the severity with which large Hunter valley proprietors greeted every new strike of the 1890s and 1900s. A miners' dispute of 1896 caused W.E. Abbott to trot out the familiar doctrine:

191. PR, 16 June 1891.
193. PR, 15 July 1910.
I admit that the miners have a perfect right to strike ... and to fix the terms and conditions on which they will work (but) they must be prepared to take the consequences of their own acts. 194

However, the power of pastoral families to form sectional combinations and to exert pressure was generally latent. There were few crises to radicalise society in the rural Hunter valley. And although in the shearers' strike the pastoral interest was victorious, it was a solitary triumph. Hunter valley landowners were too few in parliament to block taxation and land resumption, and when the volunteers were centralised after the Anglo-Boer War it was impossible for the pastoral families even to retain control of their local military units. The power of pastoral families was largely that of custom, of personality and of locality.

194. MM, 8 May 1896.
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ESTATE

1. Work

(a) The labour force

The pastoral families were sometimes embarrassed by their position as employers of labour and would protest at being called bosses. Thomas Ellis told railway commissioners in 1904 that the labour force on the 22,000 acre Arrowfield estate consisted only of himself and one stockman (apart from a family of tenant farmers). 1 A neighbour of Ellis, J.W. Pearse of Plashett, later told the same commissioners that Ellis was misrepresenting his position. Plashett, well under half the size of its neighbour, employed many men. 2 In spite of Ellis and his protests, all the pastoral families needed sizeable work forces to run their estates, and in the scale of their operations were comparable with the factories of contemporary New South Wales. They employed groups of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled people in the performance of standardised tasks under the supervision of foremen and managers. Their estates were complex enough in operation to be well removed from peasant farming.

The biggest labour forces were found at Belltrees and Brindley Park - the former employing fifty permanent workers in 1912 3 and

1. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 43.
2. Ibid., p. 44.
3. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 6 January 1912.
the latter forty in 1904. At the opposite end of the scale were estates maintained by permanent staffs of fewer than ten men. The Mackays of Melbee kept only five hands on their two properties near Dungog in 1907 and at Munni Edwin Smith managed his 5,000 acres with only three permanent labourers in 1891. An average work force for pastoral family estates would number about ten permanent men, as on middle-sized estates like St Aubins and Invermein. In 1901 the average factory work force in New South Wales numbered twenty. On smaller estates at least, the factory image is of limited use until contract labour is taken into account. Journals of large proprietors all mention people taken on as casual labour through each year. At Munni the Smith family asked for help from its tenantry. Sidney McLennan, son of a widowed tenant of the Smiths, did occasional ploughing and ditch-digging for the landlord; the Hudson and Muddle boys from the other tenant farms on Munni also shared in the work. Arrangements were settled on a personal basis. Edwin Smith would note in his ledger:

I have this day agreed with [Herbert Muddle's] Father to pay him 52/- per quarter for 3 days per Week work That is half Time which is 1/4 per day.

4. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed railway from Singleton to Cassilis', p. 56.
5. Entries in the Melbee Ledgers for 1907. Mackay papers.
6. They were John Muddle, C. Harewood and C. Harris. Entries in the Munni Ledgers for 1891. Smith papers.
7. Scone Advocate, 4 November 1887 (for St Aubins) and entries in the Invermein Day Book for 1916, Doyle papers (for Invermein).
8. 3,367 works employed 66,135 hands. 'Number of Manufactories and Works', Statistical Register of New South Wales 1901, p. 625.
Larger proprietors took casual labour on in a more formal way, by public advertisement. Country newspapers carried notices like the following:

**TENDERS will be received by the undersigned up to WEDNESDAY NEXT, 4th., for CLEARING, BURNING OFF, and PLOUGHING about 700 acres of the Scone end of Segenhoe Estate.**

By order of S.R. Wilson.\(^{10}\)

Tenders were then submitted in a formal manner:

I James Kenny ... do hereby agree to erect at Dunmore your wire fencing at 8d eight pence per rod and complete the same within six weeks and do it in work man like manner.

I remain Dear Sir
yours most Obedient
Servant James Kenny.\(^{11}\)

The biggest casual labour forces were taken on at shearing time - at Belltrees in 1902 thirty-seven men were clipping the fleeces.\(^{12}\) St Aubins, employing a gang of ten men in the 1880s,\(^{13}\) was typical of the smaller pastoral family estates. Shearers were recruited from local smallholders (page 283) and as there were no advertisements for them in valley newspapers, they must have come either as contract groups or else by private understanding with landowners. Large proprietors sometimes criticised the habits of shearers - Donald McRae thought the Brindley Park gang positively godless: "they are continually going on with the most filthy language God forgive them,"\(^{14}\) but they had no other grounds for complaint. Everywhere in the Hunter valley casual workers and permanent hands alike seem to have been

\(^{10}\) Scone Advocate, 26 April 1898.
\(^{11}\) James Kenny to H.P. Stacy, 21 June 1887. Stacy papers.
\(^{12}\) PR, 15 October 1902.
\(^{13}\) Scone Advocate, 4 November 1887.
\(^{14}\) Entry for 14 September in the Journal of Donald McRae for 1883. McRae papers.
domestic and even docile. Large proprietors grumbled about drunkenness, poor workmanship and the difficulty of getting men, but their workers were tranquil people who took no part in labour disputes. Together with the wives and children of permanent hands, they made up on some properties a population of over one hundred people. Thomas Blunt was finding work for 120 people (most of them women and children helping in dairies) on Overton in 1910. Even the smallest pastoral family estates (like Cranbourne, Munni and Melbee) were being busily tended by a dozen or so people during most seasons of the year.

The size of the working population was sufficient to produce some sort of hierarchy, with varying delegations of authority. The hierarchy was expressed in wages. On a middle-sized estate like Wootton the bottom of the pile consisted of the three rabbiters and the two prickly-pear men. They lived in quarters near the homestead and went out onto the estate daily to keep down the two pests which threatened the pastures. Higher in the scale were two men employed as farm hands, who were probably earning about £40 a year each in the early 1890s and twice as much by 1914. Their duties were to act as yard men around the homestead and to perform agricultural tasks. The aristocracy of the work force were the two men employed on the cattle

15. A common entry in the Munni diaries ran something like the 'Kelly incapable of work through drink' entered on 17 January in the Journal of Edwin Smith for 1883. Smith papers.

16. One squabble between H.P. Stacy's manager and a contractor over poor workmanship lasted for several months and caused Stacy much trouble. Illegible signature to H.P. Stacy, 17 December 1883. Stacy papers.

17. 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', p. 74.

18. Ibid., p. 28.
run. They probably earned about £50 each per annum in the early 1890s and up to £70 by 1914. Unlike the other employees, they worked on horseback. In addition there was a tenth employee on Wootton - the manager.

Cadets and managers formed a distinct branch of the labour force. Large proprietors spent long periods away from their estates and good managers were consequently important. A manager was paid a salary of two hundred pounds a year, or more. He would have to know how to handle men, how to judge stock and how to write. The pastoral families during their absences expected regular reports from managers, detailing everything in the estate economy:

We have had plenty of rain & the bush in places is very wet & even boggy. There is a nice fresh in the creek but the lagoon is not full; a nice shoot in the grass in some places it is fully 3 in. long. I seen Peters about the bull but he had got one from Drinan. The steers are filling themselves well ...

Managers on the biggest pastoral family estates were often men of education and good family - and often young twenty- or thirty-year old sons of cousins, neighbours or ambitious city men. The Bowman family's manager at Archerfield in 1910 was William Hewitt, 'a smart, intelligent young man' from the neighbouring Hewitt family of Drogheda. Young men sometimes acted as managers for their own fathers, as J.W. Pearse did for the whimsical William Pearse of Plashett in the 1900s. A second managerial group consisted of men who had worked their way up through the estate hierarchy (as the immediate forbears

19. Information on Wootton's labour force was provided by Mr W.A. Bishop of Wootton (interviewed 2 September 1976). Wages based upon 'Nominal Rates of Wages', Statistical Register of New South Wales 1890, p. 533 and 'Average Rates of Wages', Statistical Register of New South Wales 1913, p. 647.
20. William Webster to H.P. Stacy, 30 April 1884. Stacy papers.
of many of the pastoral families had done themselves). Self-made men of this type were found on the smaller estates in particular. H.C. White's manager of his 2,100 acre Maryvale estate was Hugh McConnell, who had arrived penniless from Belfast in 1857 and been taken on as a farm hand by the Whites. He had worked as a stockman for ten years on one estate and for several more years on another, eventually being promoted to overseer. After fifteen or sixteen years on the second estate he was appointed manager of Maryvale and established there 'an air of comfort and prosperity'. By 1896 he had been in the employ of the White family for thirty-six years. Men of McConnell's type were sometimes rewarded with the management of quite large estates - although, from my incomplete information, they were unusual. R.J. Gollan, who managed Archerfield for many years, was an example. Although his origins were obscure he gained the respect of the Bowman family and the affection of the workers - when he retired he was presented by the latter with a 'neat silver hotwater turnover' and a spokesman of the men called him 'kind and gentlemanly'. The manager of Plashett in the 1890s, William Farrell, had also risen from a humble beginning and so won the confidence of William Pearse that the boss left Plashett for an extended holiday in Europe, leaving Farrell in complete authority even over the Pearse sons:

\[
\text{It is sufficient to state merely that during Mr. Pearse's absence - more or less of an indefinite character - he has carte blanche to do as he thinks fit.}^{25}
\]

Cadets, or jackeroos, had less responsibility, together with

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22. MM, 12 May 1896.
23. Ibid.
25. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 139.
a somewhat ambiguous rank. The theory behind cadetship was that young
men would live on an estate and learn its organisation at first hand.
Cadets had originally paid for this privilege, but by the late nine-
teenth century were more often on wages, their work now strictly
supervised and regulated. Cadets were supposed, in time, to advance
to estate management or ownership, and could be sons of the pastoral
families, like a member of the Keys family sent in 1897 to 'gain ex-
perience on the famous Collaroy Estate in the breeding and management
of sheep'." Others were sons of city men, but I have not enough
information to characterise them as a group.

Cadets constituted a colourful community of cavaliers who
worked hard, with little responsibility, and rode about the coun-
tryside in groups. J.H.M. Abbott described the amusements of cadets on
estates around 'Merringiddi' (Murrurundi):

it was rather a custom to ride in force to Merringiddi
on Saturday evenings and remain there the night, going
home next evening after tea. Sometimes there was nap,
or snooker, or pool, or the universal euchre. Sometimes
[the publican and his wife] gave what they termed an
'evening' ... The talk wandered from horses to dogs,
from dogs to sheep and snakes, from snakes to metropoli-
tan private bars, and back again to dogs.27

The members of this 'Jackaroos' Club' also included a young man from
the Merringiddi Creamery and 'Creswell from the bank'. C.L.A. Abbott
in an unpublished novel described the cadets of a Hunter valley pas-
toral family (disguised Abbotts) in a frolic with the servant girls
one night during the absence of the landowner and his wife. He de-
scribed the drinking, dancing and singing of naughty songs that

27. PR, 15 November 1897.
accompanied transvestism and the kissing of a 'swelling breast'.

But cadets, like shearers and other employees, were quiet enough during the working week. The institution of cadetship into a wage-earning part of estate labour forces implies that the large proprietors were finding cadets useful.

Large proprietors thought a good deal about relations with their workers. One consistent faith that appears in the letters and political statements of pastoral families was the notion that all men in rural Australia were workers, and that all should be united and strive after the same goals. W.E. Abbott believed the bush was a place where

the best men of all classes that Australia has produced in the past or will produce in the future, and some of the best men from the old land, may be found, and the work that is being done there is the best of the world's work.

In 1913 A.A. and H.C. Dangar - men who had inherited estates built up by their grandfather and father - still attributed their success to 'sheer hard work'. Certainly there were large proprietors who worked side-by-side with their men. Donald McRae would note in his journals that he had 'gathered in all the Sheep and draughted all the wedders out' on one day, and on another 'Commenced to reep the oats Three of us'. Even a grandee like J.B. Bettington would tramp the floor of his own woolshed, as he did in 1882: 'Mr Bettington himself


29. PR, 15 January 1910.

30. PR, 15 February 1913.

... Boss today'. 32 J.H.M. Abbott was able to write, not too unrealistically, of a 'democratic friendship' between a young station hand and the son of a landowner in the upper Hunter. 33

The cottages on Hunter valley estates seem to have been proof of a concern for the welfare of workers. Men's quarters appear to have been fairly good everywhere in the valley (I have come across no complaints in local papers) and on some estates were exemplary. The Pastoral Review praised 'the squire of Baroona' for taking an interest in everything on his estates:

even to the housing and comfort of his employees. I have never seen better cottages than those at Baroona and Gostwyck. 34

At Gostwyck the workers' huts were solidly built of timber and were lined inside, ceiled and panelled throughout. The windows gave plenty of light through 'stout rolled glass'. 35 The Belltrees quarters were less admirable - built of corrugated iron (which must have been unpleasant during rain and frost) and divided into compartments each with eight bunks. 36 These huts were at least watertight and better than might be found in pastoral districts over the range.

Kindness towards workers took other forms too. When James White of Belltrees died in 1890 he left £1,000 each to two male employees 'in recognition of their faithful services'. 37 When an employee died, his former master or mistress might pay for a burial.

34. PR, 15 April 1910.
35. Dalgety's Review, 1 June 1897.
36. PR, 15 October 1902.
37. Will of James White the younger.
site and erect a simple memorial. In the Dungog cemetery are several stones dedicated to estate workers. One reads:

Erected by J.K. MACKAY IN MEMORY OF THOMAS KIMBER, AN OLD AND RESPECTED SERVANT.\textsuperscript{38}

The Doyle family went so far as to bury one of their old workers in their family plot.\textsuperscript{39} Another form of generosity was that of A.A. Dangar, who gave pensions to several of his employees on their retirement.\textsuperscript{40} But it was usually domestic servants, rather than farm workers, who benefited from such attention. The only bequests made by John Nowlan of Eelah were to 'Mrs Patrick Kelly Maiden name Skinner an old Servant' who got £100, and to a tenant, who was left a cellar full of empty wine casks.\textsuperscript{41} Duncan McMaster left bequests of £50 each to four servants, all of them domestics - 'my coachman Herbert Wild' together with 'Annie Armstrong, Nellie Martin and Emily Morrow in recognition of their faithful services'.\textsuperscript{42} Even rather rapacious capitalists like the Whites of Belltrees made efforts to gain the affection of their employees, so that a correspondent from the Pastoral Review would think it proper to note:

No men could be more generally liked, or more locally regarded as friends of the working man than the four brothers who administrate this large territory.\textsuperscript{43}

There were large proprietors genuinely popular among their men. Local newspapers frequently reported little ceremonies where employees gave gifts and illuminated addresses to their masters, and cheered

\begin{itemize}
  \item 38. Died in 1881 at the age of 78. Dungog public cemetery.
  \item 39. Scone Church of England cemetery.
  \item 40. Singleton Argus, 8 April 1913.
  \item 41. Will of John Nowlan.
  \item 42. Will of Duncan McMaster.
  \item 43. PR, 16 January 1899.
\end{itemize}
lustily at family celebrations in the homestead. In 1899 John Eales, about to leave Duckenfield Park for Sydney, was presented with 'a handsomely illuminated address, as a token of esteem' from his father's retainers. 44 Similar rituals took place up and down the valley all year. Some workers were so content with their employers as to settle permanently on estates and identify their fortunes with those of their bosses. The Lambleys proved loyal servants of the Holmes family. Harry Lambley served at Oakendale for the entire thirty-three years between his landing in New South Wales and his death at the age of sixty-seven; he married and with his wife brought up another generation in the service of the Holmes family. 45 The papers of the Bettington, Doyle, Smith, Mackay and Bishop families refer to similar old retainers. I think labourers stayed put more often on Hunter valley estates than in outback New South Wales, and because of their relatively sedentary habits, their employers were able to grow fond of them and treat them generously. There was ever a sprinkling of Tory gentlemen among the large proprietors of the Hunter valley—men who loved their land, who did their best by their people and believed they were all fellow toilers. Hunter valley estates were businesses on the same scale as urban factories in the rest of the colony, but they were also communities in their own right. The workers remained subordinate, of course, but the capitalists were not reluctant to act as fathers. 'Vagabond', a wandering journalist, summed up their labour relations when in 1910 he wrote that pastoralists were 'not tyrants ... Numbers of them are known to be generous and enlightened men'. 46

44. Gloucester Examiner, 10 March 1899.
45. MM, 10 February 1900.
46. MM, 29 January 1910.
(b) Daily life

The routine of work on estates varied a great deal from place to place and from season to season. The large agricultural operations on lower and middle Hunter estates required a lot of intensive attention. Fields needed ploughing, sowing, harrowing, fertilising, harvesting and stooking. Agriculture also involved some simple processing on the estate - operations like grape pressing and rick making. Mixed estates, with dairying and grazing in addition to cropping, kept up a multitude of simultaneous activities. One day on Invermein J.H. Doyle noted:

Stanley & Bert milked.
Syd in garden & at [prickly] Pears.
Wallace ab[ou]t among Cattle & horses.
Stanley to Pears.
Peckman clearing.
Storm went round us we only got a few drops.
Wallace killed 1 Wedder.
Thomas making Stack in old Tank Lucerne.47

Doyle himself went to a sheep and cattle sale, but 'Could not buy for Val[ua]tions too high'.

Estates devoted solely to grazing needed different skills - intensive labour for shearing, mustering and so on, interspersed with long slack periods of comparative leisure. But even on these properties 'scientific' farming was making some impact and traditionally slow periods were devoted to pasture improvement, breeding and the construction and maintenance of new plant. J.B. Bettington divided a typical day at Brindley Park as follows:

Weather fine & cool. Wind East.
Finished innoculating cattle at 8 a.m.
Howard went and West into Swamp & looked at the Pumps & Windmills.
Saw Studs at troughs, lambs are dying apparently from Grass seed.
Sent Ch[arles] Busby's Grey Mare out to Boggabri paddock to go up with Mr Traill's Mares.48

While their employees fenced and ploughed, snared rabbits and crutched lambs, large proprietors were involved in the more mobile operations. The day would begin with the giving of orders to overseers. If there was some particularly important work at hand, like shearing, then the large proprietor would participate. Otherwise he would follow the direction of his particular interests. For George Mackay of Melbee, that might mean pottering about with the men and burning old stumps. In an 1886 diary entry he records giving orders to Marquet, his manager, in the 'forenoon'. Mackay then 'Sent hay to Mr Wade' and, while his men were 'Mowing & feeding Cattle', paid off a boy, Hy McPherson, and sent him on 'to Dingadee to finish his time with F.A. Hooke'. Mackay ended the day by addressing himself to an annoying tree stump in one of the home paddocks: 'Put fire to a stump in the road to lower Shed'. The following day Mackay spent hauling 'round posts & Stays' and repairing 'a broked place in Creek bridge fed Cattle &c.'49 Or weather, indolence and visitors might permit a large proprietor to do nothing much. Donald McRae noted:

Friday doing nothing raining.
Saturday doing nothing at home Mountain Station.
Sunday at home.
Monday raining only wrote a letter to Mrs Bayley.
Tuesday doing nothing much. W. McNaught and Nick McNamara came.
Wednesday Out on the run having a look at the sheep.
Thursday out on the run the head of Mountain Station creek walking.
Friday digging a little patch of ground to sow broad beans.
Saturday Cangaroo hunting with Willy McDonald.50

But the tempers of most large proprietors were too ambitious to allow them many idle moments. They seem to have treated their estates as businesses - or factories, to continue the analogy - which were large capital enterprises and required constant supervision.

Mackenzie visited George Lee one day while the latter did his rounds of Bylong estate:

So quickly is everything done, that he seldom has time to speak, unless in dotted crochets and semi-breves, and is said to have tired every well-bred horse on the station.51

Estate ownership involved constant peregrination - trips to sales, to outlying estates, to auctions, to lawyers, merchants and bankers.

The journals of G.A. Mackay note constant travel between his Wards River, Cheerup and Melbee estates and the local towns:

30 July. Went by afternoon train to Maitland, and on by the Moree Mail to Scone to be at a sale of Durhams tomorrow.
31 July. Attended Sale today.
3 August. Went to meeting of [court] Session at 2 pm. And Committee meeting at 3 pm. in school hall and in Ev[enin]g to Electric Light meeting and after to Wards River by train.
4 August. Went up through top paddock & had a look at Steers.

51. MM, 11 July 1896.
5 August. Took the Car & went to Cheerup with Tom. Got out 29 bullocks for Maitland & two of Mundford's ... and took to Monkerai.

Put Cattle in W.A.'s paddock & staid at Alex Forbeses'.

6 August. Brought cattle over - arriving about 4 pm.

7 August. Took cattle to Paterson.52

Larger proprietors travelled longer distances. Jesse Bishop spent the 1900s hurrying backwards and forwards between the Hunter valley, Sydney and northern New England. William Pearse of Plashett regularly rode north to inspect Collymongle, his estate in New England; he travelled on horseback all the way, with 'only a black boy' for company.53 In a little over six months of 1887 the diary of J.B. Bettington recorded three trips to Sydney, one to Newcastle and many shorter trips to Cassilis, Muswellbrook and Singleton. Reasons for these journeys included taking 'Alby' (his son Albermarle) to The King's School, inspecting ewes for sale, attending a show and most usually unspecified 'business'.54

Old age failed to slow many of them down. Allan McRae was exasperated by his advancing age and after one day 'Pottering about' on Cranbourne and feeling 'Rhumatic pains' he wrote:

Feel getting helpless - fat and lazy - could sleep all day & all night - if I knock about I get full of pain and if I dont knock about I keep getting heavier - I weigh 19 stone 3 lbs in my Shirt Sleeves.55

George Mackay worked every day till he dropped dead at Melbee and Benjamin Richards, though an 'old gentleman' by 1896, was

53. Griffiths, Some Northern Homes, p. 28.
still very active and personally supervises everything that is taking place on his estates. It may be taken for granted that he is a true believer in the old saying, 'If you want a thing well done, you must do it yourself'.

Although the Hunter valley was relatively free of the natural disasters that dogged pastoralists over the range, local large proprietors still found plenty to fret about. Their difficulties included rabbits, fires and other pests and freaks of weather. No rabbit plague ever came to the Hunter valley, but landowners were forever worrying that it would. From the 1880s onwards, fearful prophecies were being uttered. As late as 1914 J.C. White warned the Scone district that it was getting 'in a bad way with rabbits':

rabbits are increasing in all parts of the district. They were numerous on large and small holdings. In the majority of cases something was being done in the destruction of the pest, but not sufficient, whilst several landowners were doing nothing. There were 40 prosecutions in Scone ...

But in fact most stock districts in the period reported themselves as 'Not infested' or 'Slightly infested' and the number of rabbits as stationary or decreasing. In 1914 some parts of the upper Hunter were calling themselves 'Badly infested in places', with numbers reportedly on the increase, but infestation was really still mild and manageable. The number of applications for government loans to assist rabbit-proof fencing between 1908 and 1912 was very small - there were no applications for the Maitland district, and even in 'infested' Denman never rose above twenty.

56. MM, 15 February 1896.
57. A paraphrase of White's speech. MM, 3 July 1914.
Fires were a more serious problem. Every summer flames rose from the coastal bush and the Barrington Tops and moved down into valleys, burning out some of the paddocks of graziers and farmers. Every year the newspapers carried notes like one in 1904 which told how 'a big fire gave a deal of trouble to a large number of fighters' on Vacy, the estate of A.A.W. Nivison. Large proprietors incurred the costs of labour lost by their men being thrown into fire-fighting and of making good the material destruction. On Collaroy in the 1905 season thirty men were needed - working night and day - to hold back 'bush fires which were threatening the Collaroy homestead'. On rare occasions a whole season's profit might be obliterated:

Dalreck is burnt out all except the house which we saved with the greatest difficulty & there is not a blade of grass within miles of the Rouchell ... We (about 20 of us) have been at work night & day but I fear we will never stop the fire until rain comes.62

The 1905 season was worse than usual in the upper Hunter. The Muswellbrook Chronicle noted fire after fire:

BUSH fires are reported to be burning in many districts and since Sunday evening Muswellbrook has been enveloped in smoke. On Sunday fires broke out on Gyarran and Skellatar estates, but were fortunately got out without any more serious damage than the loss of some acres of grass. Huge fires also raged in the vicinity of Broke, at Murinbin and Yellow Rock in Singleton district ... Yesterday a fire broke out on the hills above Dartmouth homestead and spread to St. Helier's paddocks.63

The lower Hunter was ravaged in 1903, when the harassed letters of the manager of Gloucester speak of weeks of effort fighting blazes and apportioning blame. The 'feeble attempts ... to Stop the fires'

60. Dungog Chronicle, 4 November 1904.
63. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 8 November 1905.
by large proprietors upriver caused the manager much anger. 'I have reason to believe that Robinson, Holmes, & Easton are to be blamed for all our loss & trouble'.

The Laurie family, James Hooke and J.K. Mackay were other heavy sufferers in this season in which 'fences & grass have been completely swept away & the County left bare'. In the lower Hunter the 1903 fire season was exceptionally bad, as was the upper Hunter season of 1905. In most years bush fires rated only occasional mention in the local newspapers. They were also becoming less common as more and more land was stripped of its timber.

Unhappy emotions were stirred by other natural crises. By 1900 prickly pear had come to be regarded as a serious problem like the rabbit 'plague'. Large proprietors wrote anxious letters to one another about pear and began to take on more men in an attempt to eliminate the cactus. On large half-wild estates like Glengarry the number of pear men employed might number as many as half a dozen. And there were other noxious plants causing trouble to pastoral families. In 1905 the Bowmans found it necessary to employ six men on cutting down 'the Scotch or variegated thistles' infesting Archerfield.

In 1907:

Mr E.R. White had 30 head of cattle die on his Baerami estate through eating a poisonous week known as 'wild turnip'. 230 others were seriously affected.

In 1885 Pickering was 'very badly off' with another type of pest -

64. J.A. Townshend to J. Gregson, 30 January 1884. Australian Agricultural Co. papers.
65. Ibid.
67. PR, 16 January 1899.
68. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 8 November 1905.
69. Murrurundi and Quirindi Times, 23 August 1907.
a plague of grasshoppers. In one season Baroona was so badly infested with beetles that the grounds around the house were devastated and the ornamental trees were 'stripped of a good deal of foliage, considerably detracting from their otherwise handsome appearance', which added insult to injury. In 1905 the McRaes wrote of a mice plague in the Merriwa district:

The mice that have been so bad in Merriwa and many other places are making their appearance here - they are killing them by the 1000s in Merriwa and it doesn't seem to lessen them one bit.

But problems were more than a physical actuality - they were part of the pastoral families' view of things. Rabbits, pear, fire, flood and grasshopper were real difficulties, but no large proprietor to my knowledge was ruined by such a disaster. Their troubles were vexations rather than real threats to property and substance. One or two diarists were sensible about 'catastrophes'. The only reference George Mackay made to the great Maitland flood of 1893 was: 'Misses Alf. Hooke rescued from Hay stack'. The flood had inundated thousands of acres of the lower Hunter and the Misses Hooke, surprised by the rapid flux of waters, had fled to the nearest refuge - one of their father's haystacks. There they sat in the rain and flood for two days. The McRaes were even more balanced than George Mackay and their reaction to mishaps was positively humorous. On Cranbourne one day some bullocks jibbed at their harness when Allan and Donald McRae were trying to yoke them to a dray:

70. W.A. Mackenzie to J.B. Bettington, 10 November 1885. Bettington papers.
71. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 34.
we had a lively time of it until Sundown to Sober them down they run away with the old dray and capsized it in their mad Carrer which brought them to a full stop Allan and I had a job to put it on its legs again.74

All the other journals I have looked at, however, are gloomy documents, peppered with terse remarks about the difficulty of life. The local press echoed those feelings, balancing occasional eulogies of country life with suspicious essays about city politics and rural problems. This was just whingeing. The estates of pastoral families were turning handsome profits. Life on them was methodical, predictable and quiet. Problems there were, but most strongly manifested in the minds of feverish and ambitious large proprietors themselves.

2. Breeding

Large proprietors had gone in for stock breeding almost since the first years of settlement. In the 1830s a few of them had begun to import British bloodstock, in an attempt to improve the quality of their draught horses. 75 Horseflesh in New South Wales was to remain rather unclassical in quality throughout the nineteenth century. After seventy years of breeding effort, very little evidence of Arab blood could be found in the horses of the colony and the mixed-breed 'Waler' was ubiquitous. There was really no need to 'improve' this stock for work purposes, but breeders felt that the Waler was an inferior animal. The rational justification for inbreeding has always been improved performance, but in fact the concentration on race-horses, the shape of fetlocks in draught horses and so on indicate different motives.


75. A generalised account of the horsebreeding industry can be found in Burley, 'Land Use in the Hunter Valley'.

Pastoralists wished to make their hacks and carriage horses a bit more respectable by adding 'good' blood to them. They were also attracted to the romantic picture of the gentleman breeder.

Another motive for horse breeding was economic. The enormous needs of India, where horses could not be successfully bred, created a constantly growing market for remounts. Walers provided for most of this need, but purebred animals fetched higher prices. The racing and show worlds, where there was also money to be made, encouraged upbreeding too. Prizes were always increasing, both in number and value, and enabled James White to win prize money to the total of £121,000 with sixty horses over a twelve year period. This was a heady incentive to add to the artistic pleasure in 'good' stock.

By the 1860s and 1870s the Hunter valley, with its reliable pastures, temperate climate and accretion of old money was one of the leading horse breeding regions of Australia. Most studs were on the pastoral family estates. All the largest of those families - the Dangars, Whites, Bettingtons, Busbys, Mackays and Clifts - maintained at least one stud, and each owned scores and sometimes hundreds of thoroughbreds. Their blood, maintained by costly imports from Britain and New Zealand (and latterly America) formed pure drops in a sea of Walers. The Suffolk Punch stud of the Dangar family at Baroona and Neotsfield was one of the most heavily-decorated in New South Wales. Some of the local 'robust colonial-raised' families of thoroughbreds were of lines which had become extinct in Britain. The annual sales

of stock at Turanville and St Aubins, together with the irregular sales at Baroona, Martindale and other well-known estates, attracted buyers from all over the British Empire.

Cattle and sheep breeding were practised on a similar scale. Cattle studs had been initiated in the valley on the Gloucester estate and were subsequently established on many more large properties throughout the valley. As with horse studs, herds of purebred cattle were generally found on the estates of pastoral families, rather than on smaller properties. Sheep studs had first been established in the upper Hunter in the 1840s and 1850s, and although the district never became as pre-eminent in sheepbreeding as in horses and cattle, the upper Hunter was dotted with stud flocks of well-pedigreed Merinoes by the 1880s. A dozen or so of the pastoral families had established the custom of keeping studs of two or three kinds of stock by the same period. The Reynolds family of Tocal bred cattle and horses which were equally famous in the breeding worlds, and built them up over two generations. Tocal was home of 'Goldsborough', a sire who from 1879 to 1895 produced offspring whose value in prize money reached 'the extraordinary sum of £66,000. The estate also grazed splendid herds of purebred Devon and Hereford cattle.

New studs were being founded by pastoral families in the 1880s. In 1882 H.A. Wright bought 150 ewes and three rams from Havilah and set them up as a Merino stud at Bickham. H.H. Brown founded a horse stud at Colstoun, and he and his manager shared great hopes for it:

78. PR, 17 September 1895.
79. PR, 16 June 1904.
Four mares from Oamaru N[ew] Zealand came up last week, they average 10 guineas each in Sydney. He has now about 50 N. Zealand mares ... So it is only a matter of time, when this place will be a tip-top breeding place.80

But by 1900 the pastoral families had ceased to set up new studs. Instead, professional breeders and Sydney businessmen were beginning to acquire small Hunter valley properties and were devoting them to a new type of intensive breeding. W. and F.A. Moses, city businessmen who bought Arrowfield in 1912 as a site for their thoroughbred Combadello stud, were examples of the new horse breeding entrepreneurs. Unlike the pastoral families, who bred horses only as a sideline, or a hobby, the new men were breeders pure and simple. Their new stud farms, with white-painted fences and strict management, were a form of specialised and highly-capitalised breeding encouraged by increasing prize moneys and the consequent growth in value of stock. Breeding was becoming more serious.

The pastoral families, by the time the Moses brothers bought Arrowfield, were not only refraining from establishing new studs, but were also beginning to abandon their old ones. Amateur breeding, the local newspapers regretted, was no longer economic. If it was to survive in the face of tougher standards it must adopt more efficient methods. A number of the gentlemen breeders simply packed up. The Eales family closed the Duckenfield Park horse stud in the late 1890s and in 1901 the Reynolds family abandoned their Tocal stud. 'The Vagrant' of the Maitland Mercury regarded this as a sure sign that breeding was in decline and the gentleman breeders were losing heart. Professional breeders, the journalist concluded, were the coming men.81

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80. Charles Walsh to H.P. Stacy, 28 October 1883. Stacy papers.
81. MM, 10 January 1901.
Two more important studs were dispersed in 1904 - Neotsfield, closed down by R.H. Dangar, and the hundred horse Martindale stud sold by Edward White, whose father had established it in 1865.

A similar decline of gentlemanly breeding was occurring in the cattle world. By 1895 a journalist noted:

in the Upper Hunter, at one time noted for its stud herds, owners find it no longer profitable to breed on their own account, turning their attention solely to fattening drafts from Queensland ... The show-rings likewise in the county of Durham no longer are characterised by that universal excellence that two decades since made them famous.

In the lower Hunter large proprietors with stud herds proved more tenacious, but after 1900 more and more dispersal sales occurred. By 1913, after a dismal turnout at the Muswellbrook show, the Chronicle deplored:

The show of cattle was the poorest we ever remember to have seen on the ground ... A few years ago Muswellbrook could confidently claim to be the premier fat stock show of the north. When such famous breeders as Martindale White Bros., J.C. White, H.E.A. and V. White, F.S. and H.W. Bell, late R.T. Keys, late T. Cook, E.G. and W.P. Bowman, not to mention a host of smaller settlers, sent their best to compete for the Society's prizes ... There is not the same interest taken by stock owners in the district nowadays.

Sheep breeding, requiring rather less attention than cattle and much less than horse breeding, maintained itself more steadily. Families like the Whites, Busbys and Bettingtons continued to dominate the field, but there too a number of new men established themselves as professionals and began to compete with the old pastoral families.

82. MM, 6 April 1904.
83. MM, 29 June 1904.
84. PR, 17 September 1895.
85. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 15 March 1913.
Stock breeding had always been more than an economic matter, however. In spite of the growing money worries associated with breeding, and also in spite of what seems to me to have been a more careless attitude to breeding among younger generations of the pastoral families, most of the stock breeding large proprietors held on to their quality animals. Several of the stud sales of the 1900s - most importantly the Tocal and Neotsfield dispersals - followed the death of a parent. But the cadre of old breeders remained loyal to their avocation. In the seven years 1908-14, most breeders who imported foreign stock to the Hunter valley were members of the pastoral families. Of seven importers of bloodstock horses, six belonged to the pastoral families (Reginald White, H.C. McDonald, Alexander Bailey, E.R. White, A.A. Dangar and Richard Binnie) and only one was a professional breeder (T.H. Mann of Morpeth). Of six importers of cattle, four were from the pastoral families (James White, H.C. White, White Bros. and George Loder) and two were not (Dr Meredith of Raymond Terrace and E.E. Perry, a professional breeder). Of four importers of sheep all were members of the pastoral families (White Bros., F.G. White, A.A. Dangar and R.R. Dangar). 86

The breeding world of the Hunter valley constituted a strong thread of relationships among the pastoral families and with the wider community. Stock breeding, like sports, patronage and other institutions, set large proprietors apart from the community, yet united them with it. In horse breeding, for example, the best animals were owned by pastoral families (with increasing numbers of professional breeders rivalling them by the 1900s), but there were also many small

86. 'Importers of Foreign Stock', Agricultural Department Reports, NSW PP 1908-14.
local men who bred in a modest way. These men competed with the pastoral families for prizes at shows, attended the same sales, and placed advertisements in newspapers to advertise stud services alongside the bold proclamations of the big men. In one issue of 1905 advertisements of small men in the Muswellbrook Chronicle outnumbered two to one the notices of pastoral families. The latter were represented by D'Arcy Osborne, W.P. Bowman, J.H. Doyle and E.R. White. Osborne's notice read:

**TO STAND THIS SEASON AT**
Ridgelands, Muswellbrook,
THE PUREBRED CLYDESDALE
STALLION
RICHMOND.

Osborne also advertised a second stallion, 'Prince of Wales'. His two horses would travel the district at a charge of three guineas for each mare serviced. Bowman was offering 'Banquo' and 'Duncan Grey' at three guineas per mare, and J.H. Doyle's 'Saracen' and 'Dragoman' were available at two and three guineas respectively. The costliest stallions advertised were those of E.R. White, who wanted fifteen guineas for each mare serviced by 'Flavus' and twelve for 'Dalmeny'. The notices from men not belonging to pastoral families offered cheaper horses with more plebeian names like 'Dick', 'Clyde', 'Bobs', 'Merv' and 'Donald'. These stallions would cover mares at a cost of one or two guineas apiece.

The pastoral families usually took most of the cups and medals in local shows and the Whites, Dangars, Keys and a few other families scored successes at Sydney shows, which were well beyond the means of local small men. Large proprietors could afford to be more venture-

87. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 28 October 1905.
some than small men in an occupation famous for its conservatism. A few men like the Whites and J.B. Bettington were prepared to go to a great deal of expense to keep pace with professional breeders, to try to secure new blood lines, and to try some fancy in-and-in breeding. J.B. Bettington was the first sheep breeder in New South Wales to import stud from America, thus creating some stir in the Merino world. Mackenzie paid a visit to Brindley Park in 1896 to look at the stud flock:

knowing what a conservative feeling, as a rule, prevails among sheep-breeders who continue year after year breeding in the same strain, whence the mention of anything in the shape of foreign blood comes as an electric shock, I was not a little surprised to learn that the Vermont or Spanish-American blood largely permeates the flocks at Brindley.88

In Mackenzie's and Bettington's opinion this 'Yankee strain of blood' had in great measure revolutionised local sheep breeding.89

The pastoral families not only earned distinction for themselves by such ostentatious championing of 'good' stock, they were also put in direct contact with the community by displaying it at public shows. Their ribbons and medals were talismans of which they were proud. People ushered into the estate office at Wootton found the walls thick with silk, gold and silver trophies. A coup at the Sydney show was regarded as a matter of local, as well as family pride. Dungog felt some share of the distinction attached to James Hooke's victories as 'noted breeder of Shorthorn cattle'.90 In one memorable year the Hooke family won nearly all the fat stock prizes at the Royal

88. MM, 3 October 1896.
89. Ibid.
90. PR, 15 October 1912.
Sydney Show. In private large proprietors lovingly compiled long lists of their breeding successes. The best breeders could even include European victories among their other triumphs. The Collaroy prize list for the years 1877 to 1892 included 89 prizes won at country shows like Muswellbrook, Mudgee and Gunnedah, together with many from Sydney. Exhibition prizes, of which there were 80 won by Collaroy between 1862 and 1906, had been bestowed at Sydney and Melbourne, at Christchurch and Dunedin, and at Philadelphia and London. In the homestead at Martindale:

A most interesting document in Mr. White's office records, in alphabetical order, the performances of all his late brother's celebrated 'cracks' for the last twelve years. To give some idea of the brilliancy of Mr. White's racing career it may be stated that no less than 240 races were won by 60 horses.

Breeding not only made large proprietors into public figures, but also into members of a close circle of other breeders, large and small, of dealers, of auctioneers and of agents. The result was a sort of breeding fraternity which crossed class lines. The pastoral families also used breeding as an agent of social generosity. Small farmers in the valley tended to keep 'scrub' rams and in consequence were continually 'debasing' their flocks. In 1898 J.B. Bettington and a few neighbouring 'owners of high-class Merino studs' decided to supply the owners of small flocks in their district with rams free of cost:

On the condition that they will not keep any rams of their own. The farmers have accepted the terms, and by so doing they obtain the services of much higher-class rams than they could hope to secure if they had to buy in the market.

91. Ibid.
92. The Collaroy Prize List, Collaroy papers, Vol. 17.
94. PR, 15 August 1898.
The vitality of interest in breeding among pastoral families remained strong, then - particularly among men of the older generations. There was something almost passionate in their intensity of interest towards a well-formed fetlock, or a nice instep. Proprietors were often spoken of as 'lovers' of their breeding stock, like William Bakewell, 'lover of fine horses'. At Tocal the cream of the blood entires were housed in roomy loose boxes close to the homestead; a journalist noted:

as Mr. Reynolds steps up to 'Goldsborough' and taps his nose with his hunting crop the sire of innumerable winners rubs affectionately against him.

Large proprietors spent thousands of pounds on the erection of handsome stables. Horbury Hunt was commissioned to design the stables at Edinglassie, Glenalvon and Baroona. Those at Baroona were eulogised by Mackenzie:

cool, lofty and well-ventilated, the fittings being of varnished Kauri pine, embellished where necessary with nickel-plated fastenings.

And once they had finally achieved great success and public applause, large proprietors permitted themselves to adopt a certain grandeur:

Mr. Lee, who has gained for himself such wide-spread fame as a breeder of bulls, has, no doubt, like many another successful man, become surfeited with fame and prize-taking, and, of course, is indifferent to eulogistic accounts in the press of what his bulls are made of. They are good stuff, and he knows it ...

The occasion of a sale of bloodstock represented a gathering of the landed cousinhood of the valley. At one such Maitland sale

95. Gray, Promised Land, p. 43.
96. PR, 17 September 1895.
98. MM, 11 July 1896.
those veritable sons of Anak, Thomas Cook and Gus Hooke, towered above their fellows at the ringside. Whites were there from Edinglassie, Belltrees, and Saumarez, and of course the Reynolds brothers were not absent. The cousins Rodney and R.H. Dangar chatted socially close to B. Bettington of Brindley Part, and the Clift brothers ... 99

Such men, although a dying race among the pastoral families, continued indulging their passion throughout the years 1880 to 1914. Thomas Cook, their doyen, persisted with his stud in spite of disagreeable economics, and admitted that his horses were 'bad property' and had been so for years. 100 The Muswellbrook Chronicle calculated that Cook could find little profit in breeding. But to be a studmaster was his felicity:

nothing gives him greater pleasure than the rearing of noble animals. 101

99. MM, 10 January 1901.
100. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 1 April 1899.
101. Ibid.
1. The House

Within the first decade of European settlement in the Hunter valley, big houses began to rise on the grantee estates. In the 1830s and 1840s the wooded knolls above elbows of the Hunter, Allyn, Williams and Paterson rivers were capped with rectangular sandstone and brick houses, and given British names - Aberglasslyn, Stradbrook, Gostwyck, New Osterley, Closebourne, Kinross and Neotsfield. Most were verandahed single storey buildings. A few rose into a second storey and some included a third attic level, lit by dormers. They were usually poorly built; the only consistently high quality of workmanship to be found in them was the joinery - often Hunter valley cedar - of well-crafted framed and panelled doors, flanking sidelights and crowning fanlights.¹

Similar houses were being built in the countryside elsewhere in New South Wales and in Tasmania.² They were stolid, provincial variants of Georgian country house architecture.

The 'axial simplicity and regularity'³ of this colonial and Georgian idiom continued to prescribe estate house architecture in the Hunter valley throughout the nineteenth century. By 1880 the old grantee houses around Maitland, Singleton and elsewhere in the lower Hunter were not all in the hands of large proprietors. Some, like the

² J.M. Freeland, Architecture in Australia, Melbourne 1972, p. 68.
³ Deamer, 'Houses on land grants', p. 84.
Dalwood of the Wyndham family, survived into the 1880s and 1890s as the homestead of rump estates. Some others were demolished to make way for larger buildings, like St Aubins, or were buried in new additions, like Baroona. Near the towns, old grantee houses were acquired by doctors, lawyers and auctioneers, and ceased to function as the heart of estates. But the architectural canon which had been established by the first grantees lingered. Large proprietors of the 1850s and 1860s continued to build square houses of one, two or two-and-a-half storeys. A typical house of the period was Cliffdale, a ten-roomed house built in 1865 near Scone for the Wiseman family. The floor plan was Georgian, the verandahs which girdled three of its walls were colonial and its roof was hipped. Such a house - with minor anachronisms like the details of verandah decoration - could well have been built a generation earlier. Larger houses of the period were in the same style. Hambledon Hill, rebuilt in 1865 to contain twenty-five rooms, was one of the biggest private residences on the Hunter, but its plan was little more than a storeyed version of Cliffdale. Its hipped roof was slate (rather than the shingles of Cliffdale) and some cast iron decoration was allowed to appear on the balconies, but the concept of the house's proportions remained chaste.

Use of cast iron increased, so that by the 1880s verandahs and balconies in the Hunter valley were as much encrusted with iron lace as those in Sydney, but the architectural idiom remained the same beneath the frills. Jacobean influence crept into a few houses - at St Aubins, rebuilt in the 1880s, two gables on the entrance front were scalloped à la James I. 4 A Jacobean touch was added to Baroona.

4. 'St. Aubins' (sale pamphlet of estate, c. 1922). Scone and Upper Hunter Historical Society Archives.
10. **NEOTSFIELD**, c. 1890. One of the largest houses in the early colonial idiom. Constructed of stone, with doric columns and marble urns as decoration, the simple lines of the house were obscured by the iron balcony added about the 1860s.

( Newcastle Public Library )

11. **BRINDLEY PARK**, c. 1895. Another variant of the early colonial idiom, this sandstone house remained unchanged but for a projecting wing (to the right) thrown out about 1880.

( Newcastle Public Library )
by the architect Benjamin Backhouse, acting under the orders of A.A. Dangar, and the tower and facade were converted into crags of a 'Mannerist mountain'. 5 But the basic layout of St Aubins was conventional, with three wings arranged in a U-shape to enclose a courtyard, the front wing being bisected by a corridor and subdivided in the usual fashion. Even Baroona retained some classic proportions beneath its frills. And on all the other Hunter valley estates, architectural fashion remained muted. Domestic Gothic, so important elsewhere in New South Wales, 6 had little impact. No estate houses of the 1850s and 1860s were Gothic, and the merging of Gothic with colonial in the 1870s 7 produced no significant change in local architectural conventions. The dormer, never very important locally, and a vital part of 'cottage' Gothic, was disappearing altogether by the 1880s. 8

Conservatism among the builders of large houses in the Hunter valley is also indicated by the architects they chose. Most pastoral families employed local men, in particular J.W. Pender, a Maitland architect who held a virtual monopoly in the 1880s and 1890s. His designs were neat, comfortable versions of the old colonial Georgian type. Rather less popular was Frederick Menkens of Newcastle. He had been trained in Germany, and his houses could show a Queen Anne-ish or Gothic fondness for busy silhouettes, terracotta and other deviations from the local idiom. But even his most bustling architecture involved little more than modifying the superficials of an essentially classical floor plan.

7. Ibid., p. 181.
8. Deamer notes the rareness of dormer windows in the grantee houses. Deamer, 'Houses on land grants', p. 84.
12. TOCAL. An early colonial house modified only by the glazed verandah corner. Built of brick with sandstone quoining, Tocal is typical of its period but for the bracketed hoods over the upper storey windows.

( Newcastle Public Library )

13. HAMBLEDON HILL. Built in the 1860s this house, with its plain brickwork, hipped roof, regular proportions and details is little different from early colonial houses, with the exception of the decorative cast iron.

( Newcastle Public Library )
A third architect of significance to Hunter valley pastoral families was J. Horbury Hunt. Hunt’s career was launched under the patronage of the White family, and to a lesser extent that of the Eales and Dangar families. The first major commissions given him were from James White and H.C. White; he designed a cottage at Glenalvon for the former, and stables and outbuildings at Edinglassie for the latter. James White then gave Hunt the job of designing extensions to Cranbrook, White’s town house in Sydney. The relationship of patron and protege was underlined when Hunt built Cranbrook Cottage on part of the grounds of Cranbrook, and lived from then on at the gates of the White family. His other major commission was as architect to the Eales family, designing additions to Duckenfield Park. But although launched by Hunter valley pastoral families, Hunt did not remain their darling. Cranbrook and Duckenfield were both handled ad conservatively as a local architect might have done, with Georgian, colonial and neo-classical elements mixed according to a fairly recognisable pattern. But as Hunt became more and more influenced by Lutyens and by the eclecticism of Queen Anne, he seems to have fallen out of favour on the Hunter. A.A. Dangar employed him on extensions to Baroona in 1885, but Baroona was a mess already. The later part of Hunt’s career saw a New England branch of the White family commission a large house from him, but after Baroona he was never again employed within the valley.

Fender, Menkens and Horbury Hunt did not have a complete monopoly of the Hunter valley pastoral family trade. One house - J.H. Mackay’s Minimbah - was designed by a London architect. The Sydney

14. TURANVILLE, 1891. A one-storeyed brick house of the mid-nineteenth century. Thomas Cook stands to the left. Mrs Cook seated on the fountain and the Misses Cook standing to the right.

( Newcastle Public Library )

15. EDINGLASSIE, c. 1890. An early colonial sandstone house buried under additions of the mid-nineteenth century and 1880s.

( Newcastle Public Library )
architectural family, the Blackets, was commissioned at various times to draw plans for the Dangar and Bowman families. There were no doubt other architects working in the valley whose names I have not discovered. But the general uniformity of style implies that all these architects had to accept a high degree of intervention from their patrons. Herman has noted that Edmund Blacket was subjected to constant redrafting of designs when he was being employed by the Bowmans and by Henry Dangar:

Dangar concerned himself intimately with the design of Grantham, writing copious notes and suggestions on the design sketches which Blacket submitted to him. So persistent was he in examining all possibilities that the architect produced no less than seven versions of the two-storeyed arcade at the entrance door before Dangar was satisfied. 11

In the 1880s these men designed dozens of estate houses for the Hunter valley. Flush economic times caused a building boom. The pastoral families erected mansions bigger than anything ever to be built in the valley. Duckenfield Park set the pace. Built by the first John Eales as a large rectangular house in the 1850s and added to by Horbury Hunt, Duckenfield was extended 'on an even grander scale by ... the Hon. John Gresley Eales MLC' in the 1880s. 12 The enlarged house, one of the biggest in the colony, and crowning a rise in the middle of an estate granted to the Eales family some sixty years earlier, 13 was a symbol of continuity and success. Baroona grew to a similar scale, and the entirely new Minimbah, built on a nearby

16. MARTINDALE, c. 1890. The mid-nineteenth century wing added to a single-storeyed early colonial house. The new wing retains the hallmarks of earlier style, together with a georgianesque hexagonal balcony.

( Newcastle Public Library )

17. DUCKENFIELD PARK, c. 1890. The 1880s wing of a house dating from early colonial times. This addition, although incorporating more modern elements than the new wing at Martindale, is still very conservative.

( Newcastle Public Library )
hillside, was in emulation of Baroona. On hilltops around Muswellbrook and Scone the Bowman, Hungerford, Fleming and Wiseman families built big rectangular houses with white cast iron balconies and hipped roofs which almost equalled Baroona and Duckenfield in grandeur. Such houses were costly. Thomas Hungerford, who rebuilt Baerami into 'quite a splendid house' after the death of his father in the 1880s, paid £5,000 for the job. J.K. Mackay spent £27,000 on building Anambah for his son Thomas, and another £60,000 on Minimbah for a second son, John.

In spite of increases in scale, the conventions remained simple. None of the Whites, Mackays, Flemings or Wisemans sought to emulate the 'aristocratic looking' Baroona (as Mackenzie called it) in anything but size. An interesting illustration of the conservatism of local pastoral families occurred with the rebuilding of Skellatar in the 1880s. In 1881 Edward and Arthur Bowman commissioned a plan from the Blackets for a large country house. Edmund Blacket got out the first design, which was 'manifestly Victorian' in the opinion of Herman, but was nevertheless 'controlled and firm in its lines'. Herman, in his account of the Blackets, thought that the quietude of the scheme must have dissatisfied the Bowman family, for in 1882 a new design for Skellatar was produced by Cyril Blacket. This was a much more elaborate version, with 'heavy ornamental woodwork' on the verandahs and 'wild' chimneys. Herman has concluded:

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15. MM, 13 June 1896.
17. Ibid., p. 117.
19. Ibid.
Figure 2. Showing the evolving design of Skellatar homestead, built for the Bowman family in the 1880s.

( Morton Herman )
we can see clearly just what was happening to architecture. The transition from Georgian design was now almost complete, and queer detail and formless mass, which the Victorians considered romantic, had won the day.\footnote{Ibid., p. 186.}

But the Bowman family rejected the second design too, and took their commission elsewhere. Skellatar was finally rebuilt along much more conservative lines (figure 2). Most of the details proposed by Cyril Blacket were stripped away, including the 'wild' chimneys. The gabled roof incorporated by Edmund Blacket was replaced by an old-fashioned hip, and the frontage of the house was united by a double-storeyed verandah supported on slim Corinthian columns. The result was still fussy, but was recognisably descended from the grantee idiom.

Other pastoral families rebuilding in the 1880s showed an even stronger preference for the old mode. The Fremlin family built a typical new house on Murulla. One-storeyed, containing twenty-one rooms, its design was plain and unadorned. Simple verandahs shaded three sides of the house and a courtyard occupied the rear. Bow windows provided the main detail. Satur, rebuilt by Frederick Parbury in 1886, was equally plain, and Ravensworth was described in the 1890s by Mackenzie as being 'all that can be desired in a quiet sort of way, the house being a well-built cottage with a slate roof'.\footnote{Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 40.} Mackenzie also described the appearance of Kayuga, near Aberdeen, as demonstrating:

the idea that comfort has been studied before outward show, and were the same homely-looking bungalow popped down on the plains of India it would not be out of keeping.\footnote{Ibid., p. 119.}
18. ABBEY GREEN. A slightly heterodox mid-colonial house, built in 1861 and incorporating a gable, with fretted bargeboards.

( Newcastle Public Library )

19. BAROONA, 1913. The 'mannerist mountain' which A.A. Dangar caused to be raised in several stages around an early colonial core. Horbury Hunt and Benjamin Backhouse were among the architects who contributed to this, the most fantastic country house in the Hunter valley.

( PR, 15 February 1913 )
Even in the building boom of the 1880s, pastoral families were inclined to enlarge existing houses, rather than rebuild completely. The richest families preferred to add, and so did the most modest. The Mackays of Melbee – only just qualifying as 'pastoral families' – had spent two generations living in a house based upon a two-roomed stone cottage built by their convicts in the 1830s. A stone dairy and a wooden annex had been added to the original cottage, but the annex was decrepit by the 1880s. In 1883 G.A. Mackay decided to surprise his father (away in New Zealand seeking a cure for gout) by demolishing the wooden wing and commissioning Pender to plan additions. The result was a concrete front wing, veneered in brick, linking the original cottage and the dairy. A courtyard was thus enclosed on three sides at the rear of the house. Verandahs were erected in the courtyard and on the entrance front. The house thus came to contain ten rooms under its new slate roof. It was low, solid and conventional, with a modest garden front overlooking a new carriage drive. The Mackays were able to enjoy all the comforts of the 1880s, together with the knowledge that their house dated back to the first years of settlement.

Only in the early twentieth century did the colonial Georgian vernacular become attenuated beyond recognition. Few houses were built in the 1890s, and when a new building boom occurred in the 1900s, architecture was more obviously under metropolitan influence. Harben Vale was rebuilt by R.W. White about 1905 according to the latest mode of Queen Anne architecture. Axial planning was abandoned, to be replaced by a busy structure in which wing projected from wing, the skyline was broken up by gables and high ridges, and whimsical bays, bows, turrets and arches were scattered across red-brick walls. Gables were treated heavily, half-timbering being superimposed, in arches,
20. BELLTREES, c. 1900. This newly-rebuilt house retains many of the features of early colonial country houses. Note, however, the use of half-timbered gables. Verandah details are simpler than those of the 1880s.

( Newcastle Public Library )

21. CRESSFIELD PARK. Incorporating stone quarried for a house of 1827, Cressfield was rebuilt in the 1900s upon a Georgian floor plan. The simple proportions were buried underneath heavy stone and timber verandahs.

( Newcastle Public Library )
over their steep fronts. Terracotta tiles ornamented the remaining spaces of wall and roof, to make up what the Pastoral Review called a 'beautiful house'.

Harben Vale was the most extravagant and was also the last of the great houses built by Hunter valley pastoral families. Instead of being completely bemused by city fashions, other large proprietors continued to employ Maitland and Newcastle men when they contemplated reconstruction. The result was an uneasy struggle between the colonial Georgian idiom and encrustations of Queen Anne or Art Nouveau. Cressfield Park, rebuilt by David Hall about 1910, retained the old-fashioned layout and basic structure of an earlier house built in the 1830s. It was covered, however, with fretted verandahs and looped stone balustrades. A stone arch guarded the front entrance to the house, and the windows were paned with designs derived from a simplified Art Nouveau. Half-timbered spaces, hooded windows and similar cliches completed the concubinage of styles. Two or three old-fashioned landowners still shrugged off new modes altogether. Thomas Cook, when Turanville was destroyed by fire in 1902, rebuilt the house to a plan almost exactly the same as that of the original. The new house was rectangular, axial and one-storeyed. On its garden front a verandah was supported by slender columns; French doors opened in regular classical intervals along the facade. With a few minor modifications of detail, the 1902 Turanville could even have been built in 1840.

In the Hunter valley old houses were equated with old families. Status and authority, the inheritance of an old grant, and the possession of a big old-fashioned house were all mixed in the public mind.

23. PR, 15 May 1908.
Craig noted as late as the 1940s that a big historic house on an old grant was an important social symbol in the Hunter valley. Horne, growing up in Muswellbrook in the 1920s, was impressed by the resemblance of the old families to the Normans, living in big houses on lands seized during the conquest. Newspaper correspondents made tours of homesteads and commented on the antiquity of them, and their resident families. One journalist in 1898 made a tour of the Broke district, which possessed 'some admirable and comfortable homesteads, the figure heads of considerable landed estates'. He praised the Blaxland family, which had dwelt at Fordwich for seventy years, and noted that a new generation was rising in the old family 'mansion'.

Mackenzie observed:

In the Hunter district ... the residences are nearly all old [and] have seen generations come and go without any visible alteration in structure.

He continually stressed the age and associations of the houses of pastoral families visited by him on his tours:

Neotsfield ... has a charming park-like appearance, with clumps here and there of fine old elms and pines surrounding a solid stone edifice that cannot be less than 60 years of age. The ancient appearance of such a residence as Neotsfield immediately excites one's curiosity in reference to its past history.

Continuity was also emphasised by the retention of old names for houses and by a marked preference for evocative British names, rather than more mellifluous Aboriginal nomenclature. Mackenzie remarked on the 'distorted' pronunciation of estate names among the 'vulgar' in the

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26. Singleton Argus, 6 February 1898.
27. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 76.
28. Ibid., p. 131.
22. HARBEN VALE, 1908. Representing a final divergence from the early colonial idiom, this was the last big house built in the Hunter valley. It combined elements of colonial, tudor and Queen Anne architecture.

( PR, 15 June 1908 )

23. BAROONA STABLES, c. 1900. Built of brick and designed by Horbury Hunt.

( Newcastle Public Library )
local community. The splendid Maison de Dieu of the Brown family was, he noted, 'commonly known as Maison Doo'.29 But the symbolism of a name was probably more important that its prettiness. Mackenzie, interviewing G.S. Waller of The Grange, found that Waller disliked the English name of his estate:

Mr. Waller ... in speaking of aboriginal names, prefers, when practicable, to adhere to the native dialect and no doubt would at once change the name of his place to something pretty, like Walleringa, for example, the name of a creek running through the property, were it not for ... people accustomed to the old name.30

Another means of stressing continuity has already been noted - the predominant custom of adding to houses, rather than building completely anew. The owners of such houses still point with pride to their vestiges from the 1820s and 1830s: some old column drums, part of a wall, or a chimney from the heroic days. An enlarged old house manifested both past and present success, like the monumental pile of Baroona, augmented in several successive additions through the long lifetime of A.A. Dangar. Baroona was old, yet new. It was antique, yet showed that Dangar still had money to spend. Smaller additions to estate houses up and down the valley added majesty to age, or enhanced venerability with comfort. The power of the symbolism varied from district to district. Around Dungog and Merriwa the pastoral families did not build on a palatial scale, preferring rather a low profile, their houses one-storeyed and conservative. The hills around Singleton, Muswellbrook and Scone, on the other hand, groaned under the weight of stately piles of masonry. Personality determined building styles. Around Merriwa the tone was set by Bettingtons and Traills, who did not

29. Ibid., p. 90.
30. Ibid., p. 62.
believe in display. At Singleton the same had been true until the Dangar megalomania occurred in the 1870s; subsequently, the Dangars and Mackays vied with one another in architectural splendour and lesser pastoral families followed the lead. Once a district had begun to aspire to a Dangar-ish or White-ish grandeur, its country houses tended to rise to double storeys.

The intensity of architectural symbolism thus varied, but was essentially similar. In each district there were recognisable 'old houses', just as there were 'old families' with their own discrete marriage and education circles. Each district, or family, interpreted the custom of house building differently in detail, but all seem to have possessed the same commitment to the idea of the big house. The big house must not only be large, but must also be best. As a result most of the pastoral families built in brick or stone, while the great majority of people lived in houses of wood. 31 Estate houses of the grantee period had tended to be built of local sandstone, quarried on the property. 32 By the 1880s brick had become more usual than stone; it required less labour and, being available in bulk from Maitland and Newcastle, was cheaper. Landowners who wished to impress still favoured stone. The additions to Duckenfield Park in the 1880s were carried out in Pyrmont stone shipped by sea on the Eales family's vessels. 33 Those who could not afford stone would sometimes have their brick stuccoed over. St Aubins was a stuccoed house, its plaster having been moulded to resemble stone, with mock quoining of its corners.

31. In 1901 the number of stone houses in the counties of Bligh, Brisbane, Durham, Gloucester, Hunter and Phillip numbered only 194 in a total of 10,471 habitations. Another 720 were brick. NSW C 1901, Part 6, pp. 500-3 and 510-1.
32. Deamer, 'Houses on land grants', p. 56.
33. Ibid.
Straining after effect in this manner was by no means universal among the pastoral families. Stucco fell out of use in the Edwardian period, when brick was treated as worthy of respect. And a number of estate houses were built of timber. The homesteads at Clifftle, East Glendon, Redbank and Satur— all built or rebuilt late in the nineteenth century—were timber. I think about twenty of the 120 pastoral families of 1914–5 were living in wooden houses. Timber construction, although not affording the same sort of splendour as stone, did not necessarily compromise the status of its inhabitants. East Glendon was praised as a notable ‘gentleman’s residence’ by a correspondent of the Maitland Mercury. 34

The houses of pastoral families were certainly the biggest in every country district. The richest merchants and professional men owned equally substantial houses in the towns—although none could rank with a Belltrees, Baroona or Edinglassie—but in the country proper, the biggest houses could be identified with the big pastoral families. Almost all were houses of ten rooms or more. The homestead of the Richards family at Greenmount was a small wooden bungalow with only five rooms, and the old house at Bridgman Park 'which is fast falling to ruin', was the barest cottage. 35 But the other pastoral families lived in a big way on their country estates, and with the exception of grantee houses which had been bought by townspeople from Maitland and Singleton, the biggest houses in the valley were all inhabited by pastoral families.

Proprietors occasionally referred to their houses as 'cottages'.

34. MM, 15 April 1904.
35. PR, 15 November 1912.
Morpeth Cottage, the homestead of the Close family, was an example. There were twelve rooms in the house, all flanking four sides of a flower-gardened court. To call a country homestead a 'mansion' seems in fact to have been in rather bad taste. Only the very largest houses were given the title - houses like Belltrees, called by one journalist 'one of the very few mansions that grace the domains of sheep breeders'. The term found wider use only in advertisements, when its application was sometimes a little indiscriminate. In 1898 Cressfield Park was offered for sale along with its 'Large Stone Mansion of 9 rooms'. The most common word used both in the press and in private papers was 'homestead'.

The number of rooms contained in the houses of most pastoral families ranged from ten to twenty. Collaroy house in 1887 contained twelve rooms: 'Master bedroom', 'West bedroom', 'East bedroom', two north bedrooms, 'Office bedroom', nursery, dressing-room, drawing-room, dining-room, office and kitchen. There were also a hall, pantry, lobby, verandah, wash house and cellar. Green baize doors divided main rooms from 'offices'. The largest houses were almost palatial. Anambah contained twenty-seven rooms, including a billiards-room and a ballroom. By the 1890s there were twenty-seven rooms in Baroona too, including a billiard-room - 'a most luxurious apartment' - and the unusual refinement of a library - 'a snug retreat well stocked with books'.

36. Close, 'Edward Charles Close', p. 239.
37. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 6 January 1912.
38. MM, 18 May 1898.
41. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 33.
The largest room was generally the drawing-room (only a dozen or so of the largest houses contained more than one drawing-room), which might measure fifteen by fifteen feet in the smaller estate houses. In Edinglassie the dimensions were twenty-two feet by eighteen feet and in Anambah and Baroona the main drawing-room was thirty feet long. The largest spaces in the private houses in the Hunter valley were in Duckenfield Park, where the billiard-room measured forty feet by twenty-eight, and the ballroom was sixty-five feet by thirty. Dining-rooms and master bedrooms approached and sometimes equalled drawing-rooms in size and stateliness. Main rooms were airy and high-ceiled if they were built up to the 1890s. Ground floor rooms in Skellatar and St Aubins were fourteen feet high, which seems to have been usual. Houses built in the Edwardian period had lower ceilings and less light; Harben Vale, although it contained thirty rooms and was the last great house, allowed only twelve feet between floor and ceiling. If a house possessed an upper storey, its rooms on the second level were usually ten or eleven feet high.

Wide verandahs flanked the walls of almost every estate house and dominated, with their play of light and shade, the main facades. More attention went into verandahs and balconies than into the brick and stonework. Verandahs were paved with sandstone flags or (more
Figure 3. Showing the floor plan and main front of Skellatar.

( Morton Herman )
cheaply) with concrete surfaced by a stone veneer. Polychrome tiles and mosaics recur on the verandah floors of estate houses. Upper storey verandahs were floored with timber. Verandah columns were usually of cast iron, and were very slender. The four Orders were seldom employed, pastoral families instead preferring the mass-produced slenderised variants of Corinthian made available by workshops in the towns. The 'Early English' branched column could also be found on some houses. Columns were occasionally coupled, as at Belltrees, and set on wooden podiums. They were often light and graceful, balancing nicely against the dull dun of sandstone and the red bricks of the valley. A small army of iron columns might bristle around the facade of a house; Skellatar was surrounded by thirty-two slim Corinthian pillars.

These wide shady verandahs, rising from the one-floor convention of the Regency into the two-floor convention of the mid-nineteenth century, reached their apogee about 1880. Mansions like Duckenfield, Kelvinside and the slightly later Belltrees resembled Mississippi steamers. Their serried ranks of verandah and balcony, painted white or cream, sailed above the paddocks. About their capitals were bouquets of cast iron foliage, iron fish scales, medallions and roses. The verandah had become possibly the most distinguishing feature of the big house - the most consistently romantic aspect of its design. A correspondent of the Maitland Mercury could only resort to poetry when he attempted to describe the verandahs of a 'mansion' near Aberdeen. The verandahs there were 'so broad and shady that a lotus eater might well be content to swing his hammock there; a weary saint camping on the spot' might sing a hymn:
My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this
And sit and sing herself away
In everlasting bliss. 48

Even the smallest pastoral family house allowed ample verandah space. At Kayuga it was

the respectable length of 150 feet by 12 feet in width, where, no doubt, much of the time is spent in hot weather, off which all the rooms open by means of French lights.49

Verandahs were a symbol of space, plenty and casual comfort. Pastoral families reclining on them might survey their domains. Mackenzie noted that from the verandah at The Grange

the air, the view, and the general mise en scene was delightful ... with groves of sweet-smelling lemon, bees humming in the drowsy summer air, and a general feeling of limpness and lassitude.50

And he observed that at Baroona one might

take a cigar in one of the capacious verandah lounges and allow the eye to roam for miles and miles over an undulating landscape ... Laziness well carried out is an art that must be acquired ... It is only people bred to this sort of thing who know when occasion demands, how to do nothing busily all day long.51

The verandah shrunk when Queen Anne arrived in the valley. It withered into the small rusticated porch, or the picturesque niche among the lumps and bumps of a red-brick frontage at Harben Vale. But the romantic and practical appeal of a shady front verandah proved resilient enough to be incorporated into the rebuilt Turanville and Cressfield.

49. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 119.
50. Ibid., p. 63.
51. Ibid., p. 33.
2. **Decoration**

Behind their vivacious, old-fashioned exteriors, the houses of pastoral families were being busily tricked out with the latest conveniences of Sydney and London. Between 1880 and 1914, people spoke much of 'comfort'. Houses needed new gadgets to make life easier. Pastoral ladies would return to their country houses determined to reproduce the latest little elegancies observed in the capital. Their husbands might wish to install telephones, or electric bells. While most rural people continued to live in small wood and corrugated iron cottages, the pastoral families began to toy with insect screens, then with hot and cold running water, and by 1910 with electric fans. The desire to impress probably mingled with the wish for comfort and convenience. In the 1890s the overseers on Brindley Park began to be required to made daily telephone reports from the outstations to the big house. By the 1910s domestic servants could be summoned by electric bells in Baroona. It was a source of pride for landowners to incorporate 'all the latest improvements' in their houses, as F.A. Drinan did in his new East Glendon.  

There were unevennesses in the acquisition of modern conveniences. The most basic arrangements for lighting and room allocation remained unchanged. There was a curious reluctance to introduce electric lighting into public rooms. Electricity - generated on the estate - for bells and 'force pumps' was quickly adopted, as it was for lighting cellars and storerooms. But gas remained to fire the chandeliers and lamps of drawing-room and bedroom. Perhaps gas was thought to give a better, or softer light. Even Harben Vale, in most

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52. MM, 15 April 1904.
ways a house in the van of all the latest styles, used electricity very sparingly. The establishment incorporated electric bells, 'telephonettes', hot and cold water services and an external telephone which connected the study with the woolshed. But in spite of this dazzling array of gadgetry - the best that 1905 had to offer - the main part of the house was lit by acetylene gas. 53 Houses being built a few years later incorporated electric lighting, but older establishments persisted with gas. As late as 1910 all the lighting in Neotsfield was provided by acetylene gas. 54

A similar conservatism was shown towards the bathroom. The plumbing of estate houses was advanced and lavish. Most houses had the capacity to withstand a drought or a siege. At St Aubins there was a typical water supply system; an underground water tank built of brick overlaid with concrete held 100,000 gallons and had been built at a cost of £400. 55 Water at St Aubins was raised from this tank by means of electric pumps and was carried through pipes to gas water heaters. More advanced proprietors replaced gas with electric water heating. But in spite of the sophistication of their plumbing, most pastoral families clung to the idea of a communal bathroom. The bathrooms of houses built in the 1880s were almost baronial - large, high-ceiled rooms which contained iron or marble baths on podiums, English flush lavatories connected to septic tanks, china wash stands, wooden and iron seats and lavish displays of black and white tiles and cut crystal. At St Aubins the bath and lavatory were both of marble and the tiles were tesselated. 56 At Skellatar the bath was iron and

53. PR, 15 June 1908.
54. PR, 15 August 1910.
55. St Aubins sale pamphlet.
56. Ibid.
the lavatory of china.

Skellatar was unusual, in that there were two bathrooms - one for general use and one contained in a suite of three rooms at the front of the upper storey. The notion of a suite - bedroom, dressing-room and bathroom - was absent elsewhere in the Hunter valley. Mel-bee, Kelvinside, Satur and Cranbourne all contained only one bathroom. Very large houses, like Duckenfield and Edinglassie, installed additional bathrooms, but they were still intended for communal use and not made part of a separate suite of rooms. The bathroom of the 1880s remained unchanged up to 1914; it remained large, sumptuous and central. Family and guests shared the ablution facilities it offered on a communal basis. Servants, except in the biggest houses, cleansed themselves from pitchers and basins in their rooms and evacuated into earth closets lodged in rear courtyards.

Bathroom conservatism was possibly due to a notion of country hospitality, or informality. There was perhaps a feeling that it did not do to become over-refined. That feeling certainly exists today among descendents of the pastoral families; it is a feeling of discrimination, of drawing a line between seemly comfort and indulgent fussiness. What is signified by reluctance to accept electric lighting is not clear. Perhaps pastoral families preferred the softer light of gas, or perhaps a distinction was made between new devices which added to the repertoire of conveniences (bells, telephones) and those which merely improved existing ones. But the most important point to be made is that there was still a good deal of hesitation in the midst of the haste of most pastoral families to deck out their houses with modern conveniences. The communal bathroom remained inviolate; the tried and true was retained in the face of new rivals.
Furnishing and decoration of houses showed a similar conservatism. Old houses seem not to have been redecorated much between 1880 and 1914 - they simply acquired new layers which were indiscriminately added to the old. New houses appear to have been decorated in the heaviest and most solid of the latest mode, and then subjected to the same accretion of styles that was found in old houses. There was a continual refurbishing and re-arranging of jumbled effects. In 1900 a typical new layer was put on the decorations of Clifton. Joseph Clift had the front door of the sober old house repainted in 'bronze green, finished with two bands of gold leaf'. The verandah columns were 'splash-painted' to resemble marble and all prominent parts of walls were picked out in 'choice colours'. The verandah was retiled with 'rich encaustic, mosaic and ornamental tiles'. Few interiors showed much concern for consistency, or calculated effect. Elements of classicism, while obvious on exteriors, were almost entirely absent in the drawing and other rooms of estate houses, save in cornices and some other plaster work. Instead, families showed a penchant for the colourful, the substantial and the busy.

In the 1880s, 'exquisite taste' in the Hunter valley consisted of the 'hunting emblems and pictures in the midst of greenery and floral ornamentations' which decorated a ballroom of the Northern Hunt Club. The fireplaces of Skellatar, first decorated in the 1880s, were all of black marble (but for one of heavily-carved cedar). The entrance hall was paved in coloured mosaic, set in a geometric pattern. The stairway rose between turned cedar balustrades and the air vents of the rooms were decorated with ornamental cast iron. Ceilings were

57. MM, 27 July 1900.
24. DINING ROOM AT TURANVILLE, c. 1890. Oil portraits of the Cook and Dangar families hang over french-polished furniture. Chintz drapes the window and the dining chairs are placed against the wall, after the eighteenth-century custom. Note the plain ceiling and the dado.

( Newcastle Public Library )

25. DINING ROOM AT BRINDLEY PARK, c. 1890. One oil portrait together with landscapes and a group of cameos over the mantel. Dining chairs are placed against the table and easy chairs take up much of the room. Once again, the ceiling is simple.

( Newcastle Public Library )
relatively simple and pale, with light plasterwork. The contemporaneous Melbee was a smaller version of the same style, with marble and cedar in substantial evidence, and rich multicoloured tiles on floors. The overall impression of 1880s houses was one of colour and geometry.

A new botanic element, highly stylised and simplified, returned to interior decoration by the 1900s, but overall the same appearance of rooms prevailed. Rooms grew darker with the fashion for lead lighting. In Harben Vale all the glazing in the hall and principal rooms was 'executed in leaded lights' which cast stained reflections through the rooms in what was judged by the Pastoral Review to be a 'refined' manner.⁵⁹ Timber panelling rose from the skirtings of the 1880s to cover whole walls in the 1900s, and was usually dark stained. In Cressfield Park, wainscotes rose half the height of most rooms. These were topped by wooden platforms for china and gew gaws. Walls, when left untimbered, were generally lighter in colour than they had been in the 1880s, but were often beamed or half-timbered in compensation. Ceilings might be of open timber work, rather than of neo-classical plasterwork. Rooms were closed boxes, open only through single doors, french doors and double-hung windows. Few houses experimented with the trompe l'oeil effects that colonnades, looking-glasses and arcades created at Duckenfield Park. It was not usual for reception rooms to open onto one another, providing a sequence of state rooms; they instead were accessible only via passages and halls.

Few houses contained objects of high art. Hanging on the drawing-room walls at Tomago were two copies of Rembrandt cartoons - 'The Death of the Virgin' and 'Christ Leading the Sick'.⁶⁰

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⁵⁹. PR, 15 June 1908.
⁶⁰. Will of Dame Mary Windeyer.
26. DINING ROOM AT CRESSFIELD PARK. An Edwardian interior with plain pastel-coloured walls and half-timbering. The room is small and plainer than dining rooms of the 1880s and 1890s.

( Newcastle Public Library )

27. DRAWING ROOM AT BLAIRMORE, c.-1890. A polychrome dado with floral wallpaper above and brocade drapes. Photographs and prints hang on the walls, pier glass over the mantel. Most of the furniture is wicker.

( Newcastle Public Library )
Bettingtons at Brindley Park possessed some engravings of 'Raffaelle's Cartoons'. But most walls were crowded with tinted photographs and landscape paintings of slight worth. Favourite subjects were quadrupedic or religious. Paintings of race horses, dogs and cattle bristled. Ranging around the dining-room of the Tindale family at Torrie Lodge were 'two well executed oils of Bylong and Cossack - noted "cracks" in their day'. Adorning the 1896 billiard-room at Cliffdale (a 'fine, spacious apartment, all Gunnedah pine lined') were the photographs of twenty Melbourne Cup winners. Mackenzie, visiting the Wiseman family at Cliffdale, noted that his hosts were enthusiastic collectors of pictures:

The subjects are all sacred, and by good masters. The Jews' Wailing Place at a Portion of the Walls of Solomon's Temple is the first. Then comes the 'Sea of Galilee', bringing Mr. Hasket-Smith's vivid description of the silent lake to mind, 'The Cedars of Lebanon', 'Golgotha', 'The Virgin Mary's Tomb', 'The Tomb in which Our Saviour was laid after crucifixion', 'Jerusalem by Moonlight' - a grand and fascinating view of the Golden City, and lastly 'The Dead Sea' with the pale light of the moon just emerging from behind an ink-black mass of clouds. The silent charm of this last work must be seen to be realised. Here no sign of life, of either animal or vegetable, exists, no bird carols forth its joyous lay, nor does even a fish exist in its mysterious depths. The eternal lap, lap of the 'Mare Asphaltum' waves on a sunbaked, desolate, sandy shore is all that breaks the profound and awful stillness.

Portraiture seems to have been uncommon. Thomas Cook possessed a portrait of himself, painted by a Maitland artist, but the picture had been presented by the local school of arts and had not been commissioned by Cook. Peter Macintyre had brought a full length portrait

61. Will of Rebecca Bettington.
62. MM, 11 July 1896.
63. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 47.
64. Ibid.
28. DRAWING ROOM AT EDINGLASSIE, c. 1890. Tinted photographs on floral wallpaper, pier glass, a Japanese screen, floral carpet covering the entire floor and urns of flowers in the bow window.

( Newcastle Public Library )

29. DRAWING ROOM AT BELLTREES, c. 1900. A plain varnished timber ceiling, wicker furniture, chintz and a cluster of family photographs on the mantel.

( Newcastle Public Library )
of himself, painted by an obscure Scots artist, to the Hunter valley when he arrived to settle, and this had become the Macintyre family's single ancestral portrait. The Bettingtons hung some oils of their forbears at Brindley Park, and on the walls of Negoa were 'framed portraits of the late Mr and Mrs George Cox at Winbourn', a 'framed portrait of the Honourable George Henry Cox', an oil painting of Negoa house and a 'framed photo of the late Archibald Bell Cox of Mudgee'. Photograph portraits were certainly very numerous, both hanging on walls and inserted into heavy photograph albums.

Drawing-rooms contained a few bits of statuary too. A marble bust of the first James Brindley Bettington, commissioned from a Sydney sculptor, became an heirloom at Brindley Park. But the rare examples of plastic art to be found in the houses of pastoral families were mostly small mass produced copies of famous Hellenistic statues.

Houses were crammed with a muddle of styles and prosaic objects of art and craft. English and Scottish landscapes, American religious and moral prints and amateur watercolours of the homestead jostled fans, screens, small nude statues in plaster or alabaster and japonaisette vases full of peacock feathers and pampas grass. Buried underneath were dark printed wallpapers of the 1880s and timbered panels or roughcast of the 1900s. One type of interior was represented by Blairmore, its dark reception rooms lined with polychrome dadoes and dark wallpapers. Wicker and leather furniture from the various Victorian epochs was mixed indiscriminately and reflected by heavy pier glasses. Cassilis showed a little more panache; its rooms were dark

65. Will of John Hobart Cox, NSW Probate 1495/4, 24 August 1891.
66. Will of Rebecca Bettington.
to the point of the theatrical, and small touches like a dried crab hanging on the wall of one drawing-room lent a certain macabre interest. Another type was the feudal hearty style of Baroona, where dozens of deer heads adorned the walls, or the insipid bourgeois fashion of Belltrees, with acres of dainty chintzes. Overall there was very little originality. The estate houses stuck to a general style of conservative solidity. Whimsy was out of place. So too was anything excessively daring or fashionable.

3. Gardens

Just as a canon of architecture had been established in the first decades of settlement, together with a custom of house layout and decoration, so too did the estate houses conform to a convention of surrounding gardens which was formed in the 1830s and 1840s. Siting of houses was often better than their architecture. An architectural historian, commenting on estate houses before 1850, has judged that 'the one consistently fine effort was in the siting of the houses'. Undulating ground was utilised to advantage, houses being built on eminent knolls overlooking estate and river. At New Osterley all the main rooms of the house had a vista along a two mile reach of the Hunter. Houses built after 1850 continued to be sited on eminences. From the windows of such houses distant prospects were afforded. To the passer-by, the big house would appear more impressive because of its elevation and isolation. Mackenzie was impressed by the appearance of Baroona towering 'dignified and solemn looking at an elevation of some 60 feet' above the railway as travellers 'whirled

68. Ibid., p. 88.
It is difficult to decide which motive was uppermost in the minds of the pastoral families that built mansions; did they care for the effect on the outsider, or for the view to be got from the inside? While the situation of a house might appear formal, its builder might justify the siting in purely functional terms. The Pastoral Review was told by R.W. White that the location of Harben Vale had been regulated by existing surroundings - woolshed, stables and workers' quarters to the east, carriage drive to the north and a lake to the south. Yet the resulting plan put the house in a prominent position and made it look forbidding from the east and 'beautiful' from the north and south.

Romantic motives were spoken of too. Builders of estate houses liked to gain long prospects, or 'views' as they were now being called. Thomas Cook of Turanville was attributed with an appreciation of the 'picturesque'. His house overlooked a stream and rolling hill and seemed at its most 'grandly picturesque' to him 'when he can peep out from his broad verandah and see the rain falling in sheets, whilst Kingdon Ponds is a broad stream of roaring, yellow flood water'. The principal rooms at Harben Vale were so arranged as to 'command views of the lofty hills that surround the fertile valley'.

But the desire for comely views from inside were, like the

70. PR, 15 June 1908.
71. MM, 20 May 1898.
72. PR, 15 June 1908.
wish for comfort in the house, partially mingled with a habit of ex-
hibition. The more romantic a view from a house, the more romantic
the house would generally look to an outsider. Even the simplest
places, like Melbee and Timor, commanded vistas and at the same time
dignity. The biggest houses were positively flagrant. Baroona, tow-
ering over the roads and railway leading into Singleton, was like a
chateau dominating a medieval town. Skellatar, built on the brow of
a hill over Muswellbrook, was even more consummately symbolic. The
main front of the house was oriented to a view of the picturesque
hilly town, with its spires, trees and the Hunter river in front. The
Bowmans could sit on their balcony and watch the town bustle beneath
them. But the siting of the house in this fashion also meant that it
terminated an axial prospect gained by travellers in the main street
of the town. By an interesting accident the street sloped downhill,
so that a traveller moving south through the town towards Skellatar
two miles away was descending the nearer he got to the house, which
thus seemed to rise ever higher above him.

Too much conscious contrivance should not be attributed to
the pastoral families, however. The main consideration seems to have
been custom. Calculations about the observer and the observed might
have been thought of in the 1820s and 1830s, but the convention of
siting houses on eminences and orienting them to prospects was durable.
A big house on a hill was simply an inherited notion of architectural
propriety, just as were the design and decoration of the house.

The grounds around estate houses were subject to similar
customs in their layout. The model was established by the first
grantee houses, where 'the garden attempted to ape ... the park or
30. GOSTWYCK, 1831. The early colonial image of a Hunter valley country house, depicted somewhat wishfully in a watercolour.

( Newcastle Public Library )

31. GOSTWYCK, 1900. The late colonial reality of a Hunter valley country house. The weir is gone ( or never existed ), the gums around the house have been replaced by willows and pines, but there are no formal grounds.

( Newcastle Public Library )
gardens of the houses their owners remembered in England'. The original model was English, but the convention was provincial and distinct. Throughout the period landowners believed they were laying out 'English' grounds. Neotsfield was described by a journalist in the conventional phrases of the time as being 'exactly like an old English house, the trees and garden, stables and buildings, all being quite Englishlike'. As late as 1904 the grounds of a new estate house could be described in terms applicable to the 1830s:

The homestead paddock [has] been turned from a thickly-timbered country and comparative wilderness into one of the prettiest and best-laid-out grounds to be seen outside the metropolis.

The laying out had been done by an 'experienced English gardener in the most approved English style', but with its drives, walks, lawns and flower beds it was in fact a reproduction of most of the other estate gardens in the valley.

The conventions of the garden were highly artificial. Grounds were designed to stand apart from the 'Australian' landscape. This might be regarded in the mid-twentieth century as 'clumsy and out of harmony with the Australian browns and ochres', but it was a source of satisfaction to the pastoral families themselves. Journalists praised the contrast of artificial garden with natural surrounds. In 1871 the 'very attractive and cheerful aspect' of the grounds at Edinglassie were compared with the 'native and rather monotonous foliage of the bush' which surrounded them. Attitudes were much the

73. Deamer, 'Houses on land grants', p. 91.
74. PR, 15 November 1898.
75. MM 15 April 1904.
76. Deamer, 'Houses on land grants', p. 41.
same in the 1900s. The shrubs and lawns of Edinglassie, continually watered by sprinklers, were still being complimented in 1907 for being 'luxuriantly green, presenting a beautiful and refreshing contrast to the burnt-up aspect of the surrounding country'. Mackenzie described Turanville in even lusher terms:

Here in glorious profusion were sweet-scented verbenas, stocks, daffodils, and pretty creepers of all kinds, whilst green, velvety grass bordering well-kept drives, and tortuous paths, sloping toward a brown valley beneath, struck a note of discord like unto Gehenna compared with the Garden of Eden.

But although artificial, gardens were not highly formal. Their plan was generally quite open, with none of the desire to enclose a park within an impenetrable wall of woods that was found in colonial New Zealand. Most houses fronted onto a grassed parterre, circled or divided by a carriage drive. The parterre might be decorated with flower beds, and was usually fenced off with posts and rails, or pickets. A few ornamental trees would stand on the lawn, and a scatter of others around the house. A tennis court and possibly an orchard would be laid out on either side of the house. Garages and stables were usually to the rear, but were seldom screened from the garden.

There was very little high artifice in this layout - little pretence that the house was not in the midst of a sheepgrowing or cattle raising estate. A clear line between green and dun divided grounds from paddock, without a substantial barrier of trees or walls. The appearance could sometimes even be described as suburban. Cullin-gral, with its neatly fenced garden, was thought by Mackenzie to be

78. PR, 15 February 1907.
79. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 163.
32. GATES AND LODGE AT NEOTSFIELD. The brick and stone lodge is domestic gothic; the gateway pillars are concrete and the gates of iron. Neither lodge nor gateway was found at the entrance of most Hunter valley estates.

( Newcastle Public Library )

33. GARDEN AT NEOTSFIELD. A small avenue seen from the front door, with British and Italian trees and decorative urns of Italian marble.

( Newcastle Public Library )
like 'a comfortable house in a Sydney suburb' in the 1890s. But the tradition was really rural, and an impression of space predominated in spite of the small actual area devoted to formal garden. The garden at Neotsfield was only two acres in extent. East Glendon was fringed with an unusually large garden of seven acres. Some gardens included small hot houses and pergolas, but most did not. Statuary could be found at St Aubins, where a flagged colonnaded courtyard contained marble folletti playing upon a sculpted fountain. There was also tasteful terracotta statuary in a small Italian garden to one side of St Aubins. Two statues of near-naked women (at several removes from Roman copies of Hellenistic originals) stood on the parterre before Turanville. But elsewhere the stonework in gardens was limited to urns and flagged steps, and even these seem to have been rare. Entrance drives were gravelled only for the width of the parterre, rather than all the way from the public road. There were few avenues planted around houses, and lodges at gates were found only in the lower Hunter. Most entrance gates were wooden pickets, fairly unassuming. Pastoral families possibly felt a certain inverted pride in their simple gateways and rutted dirt tracks. Out buildings might include, as at Clifton, 'stables, summer-house, aviary, pigeon house, canary house [and] picket fences'.

Only half a dozen or so estate houses were surrounded by grounds laid out with complete formality. Duckenfield Park was a miniature Versailles, with several acres of garden divided with baroque precision into walks, ponds and clipped hedges. A wide

81. Mackenzie, 'Among the Pastoralists', p. 43.
82. PR, 15 August 1910.
83. MM, 15 April 1904.
84. MM, 27 July 1900.
terrace before the house was lined with Hellenistic marble statues imported from England. Neotsfield was adorned with a row of Carrara marble urns shipped from Italy and lined along its terrace, and Black Buck from India grazed in its deer park. The garden was entered through gates guarded by a gabled lodge. Baroona was approached by means of a 'splendid elm avenue', which ascended to the most formal parterre in the Hunter valley. An embankment had been formed 'with very great trouble' in front of the house, and was bounded by a great brick wall. Beneath the parterre the whole of the Singleton plain spread before the Dangars and their friends. English trees, planted on the parterre in the 1860s, were maturing by the 1900s. To the rear of the house a stony hillock was removed, A.A. Dangar having 'conceived the idea of levelling it down and levelling it up, placing courts on top, and surrounding the whole ... with a hedge of pepper and other trees'. By 1898 Baroona was the 'show place' of the valley; a journalist enthused:

So many spots of beauty and interest were shown me that were I to describe them all I could fill columns. However, I saw Queensland bottle trees, glorious creepers of all sorts in full bloom; tennis courts surrounded by every description of beautiful shrub and tree, amongst which were oranges. The tennis courts themselves are made entirely from a fine gravel, with red bricks, made for the purpose, let in to mark the boundaries. Every Saturday, when Mr. Dangar's family is at home, a big contingent of friends arrive from the district to play here.

There was a large lake in front of the house too, but it evaporated in dry spells.

85. Goold, 'These Old Homes', pp. 33-4.
86. PR, 15 November 1898.
87. PR, 15 April 1910.
88. Ibid.
89. PR, 15 November 1898.
34. GROUNDS AT TURANVILLE, c. 1890. A small, ornate garden with fountain, statuary and ordered riot of English shrubs against a background of sunburnt paddocks and gums - 'a note of discord like unto Gehenna compared with the Garden of Eden'.

( Newcastle Public Library )

35. CAWARRA IN ITS HOME PADDOCKS, c. 1890. Like most estate houses, Cawarra sat in a small picketed garden with a few ornamental trees and stables, farm buildings and wine cellars.

( Newcastle Public Library )
4. The Establishment

In spite of the increasing number of gadgets with which they were being tricked out, estate houses were operated largely by woman power. Every pastoral family employed a domestic staff, and most of these domestics were women. The largest staffs, employed by the Dangar, White, and Mackay families, were headed by a butler. At Edinglassie the Whites maintained a butler, a cook, a kitchen maid and two housemaids. But the remainder of the pastoral families lived in rather less style, a butler being a status symbol they could not afford. Three female house servants - like the cook and two maids employed at Abbotsford by the Abbott family - were the norm. In addition a washerwoman called at Abbotsford once a week.  

A few (perhaps a dozen or so) pastoral families employed only one or two women. At Munni the Smith family made do with one woman full time, together with a charwoman who came on a casual basis. At Cranbourne the McRae family employed only one woman, Kate Hiles, as their 'general Servant'.

In addition to household staff proper, the pastoral families each employed at least one gardener. At Munni the Smiths paid one of their tenants to work in the garden from time to time. The Abbots maintained a full-time gardener at Abbotsford and the garden at Baroona was tended by two men 'constantly employed'. Staff was also taken on for special purposes. When birth or sickness struck the pastoral families they hired a nurse or two, according to their means, rather than sending the patient to a local hospital. When Mary Hooke,

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90. Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 83.
the 'little daughter of Mr and Mrs F.A. Hooke, of Dingadee', contracted typhoid fever in 1904, the Hookes took on a trained nurse. The nurse at Abbotsford was almost a permanent institution and there were often two or three nurses at Edinglassie. A governess might complete the domestic staff, depending on the educational policy of a family. Governesses were not quite servants; pastoral families seem to have treated them fairly equally, allowing them to dine at the main table and to socialise with family and guests. They were referred to as 'Miss Blackmore' and 'Miss Feltham' in the Munni diaries, unlike 'May Muddle', 'Kate Nash' and 'Millie Jackson', who were cooks and maids.

Pastoral families found their servants from among their tenantry or the local small farming people. All the women servants at Abbotsford were locally recruited by Mrs Abbott, who let it be known whenever she was in want of a girl or a woman and would interview applicants as they were brought up to the house by mothers or husbands. Tenant families would send up a boy or two to help a gardener, or to work in the kitchen. But this method of getting servants was apparently not adequate and families were forced to advertise for staff in local newspapers. In 1898 Mrs G.B. Finlay of Thornthwaite advertised:

A HOUSE and PARLOUR MAID. Apply to MRS. FINLAY, Thornthwaite.

But she was still asking for a servant to fill the position nine months later. Registry offices were no doubt a third source of servants

94. Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 93.
96. Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 83.
97. Scone Advocate, 8 April 1898 and 6 January 1899.
for pastoral families, but I have not found any information about these establishments.

The length of service any individual servant gave to a family was probably fairly short. According to the Smith, Doyle and Bettington diaries, cooks might come and go in weeks. A maid might last a year or two (cooks were proverbially difficult) and then marry a local farmer. Washerwomen, chars and nurses were by the nature of their duties transient. The Smiths of Munni were lucky with Kate Nash, their maid-of-all-work, taken on by Mrs Smith for £26 a year in 1902 - she remained in service till 1909. But in that year she left Munni and a period of rapid turnover followed: 'Mrs Rhode' (£26 a year and no travelling expenses) in 1909, 'Clarke' in 1910, Rose Muddle in 1911 and Millie Johnson in 1913. 98

Maintaining a squad of servants about the house was a means of indicating the substance of a landed family; its coach house full of carriages and motor cars was a token of a second form of distinction - mobility. All the pastoral families kept at least one carriage. At his three estates of Minimbah, Ravensworth and St Heliers, D.F. Mackay maintained an establishment of five private carriages, including a waggonette, a phaeton, a Victoria, a small American buggy and a large family carriage. 99 Such an imposing collection of vehicles was confined to the richest families. Phaetons (lightly constructed vehicles designed for driving in parks) and Victorias (equally dainty, with collapsible hoods and a raised box for a coachman), were rare. Most people from the pastoral families clattered about in buggies,

99. Will of Duncan Forbes Mackay.
dog carts and the heavy, clumsy waggonettes favoured by large family parties. The Bells of Pickering kept four carriages on their two estates, but all four were small, cheap equipages, including a 'Basket carriage', a black buggy, a yellow buggy and the 'Best yellow buggy' which served as the state carriage. 100 At Abbotsford the Abbotts maintained two carriages - one a high, old-fashioned buggy which was used for driving around the countryside and which was rather 'shabby', and the second a Victoria, which was kept for formal occasions. 101 Roads in the Hunter were too poor everywhere except around Maitland for any but the sturdiest and most rustic carriages to be practical.

The possession of carriages did not set pastoral families apart from the rest of the local community as clearly as their houses did. Many small graziers and farmers seem to have been able to find the few score pounds necessary to buy a buggy and drive like the pastoral families. Few large proprietors bothered to travel in style when they were in the valley. If a pastoralist wished to visit a neighbour, or attend a meeting in town, he usually rode. Young bloods from pastoral families, men like Herbert Laurie, 'a well-known grazier' were mentioned in local newspapers for their extravagant horsemanship and occasionally killed themselves in the process. 102 Such exuberance might be expected of young men of good family, but more surprising is the propensity for riding about the countryside to be found among elderly landowners. Prominent men of great age and respectability, like James Bowman of Strowan, would be seen cantering down dusty roads with their sons and grandsons. James Bowman kept it up in spite

100. Will of Archibald Bell.
101. Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 82.
102. PR, 15 April 1912.
of suffering from 'weakness of the heart and from gout' until one day, as he and his son were riding into Muswellbrook, he 'fell from his horse quite dead'.

Large proprietors did not set themselves apart by surrounding themselves with grooms and cavaliers when they rode. It was quite common for them to ride alone, undistinguishable from any travelling shearer or salesman except by the quality of horseflesh and costliness of a bridle. Women, too, rode rather more than they drove - estate journals mention them 'out riding' more often than 'out driving'. In a rural society where horses were cheap and almost all social groups could afford to ride, the big pastoral families did not stand out. They also used public transport, travelling to Sydney by stage coach and by rail rather than by private carriage. On one occasion Allan McRae of Cranbourne caught the stage from Merriwa to Muswellbrook. He took 'Dan' (one of his employees) with him and found 'Mr Bettington and little son were passengers also'. The stage 'picked up four young fellows in the way going to School' and it turned out that two were 'young Hungerfords'. That members of rich families like the Bettingtons and Hungerfords travelled by public coach is more telling than that the modest McRaes should do so.

Even when landowners employed their carriages it was in an unobtrusive fashion. They drove themselves, rather than employing a coachman. The establishment at Edinglassie included a stately four-in-hand, one of the few in the valley, but it was driven by J.C. White himself. The sight of a pastoral family being driven in full state

103. Budget and Singleton Advertiser, 8 July 1898.
105. PR, 16 April 1909.
was rare indeed. It was regarded as news fit for the local paper when 'Mr A.A. Dangar and son and coachman' passed through one country town-
ship in a tandem and sulky, 'Master Dangar on horseback', en route for Sydney.\textsuperscript{106} If they felt occasion demanded some pomp, pastoral families got a groom or gardener to temporarily fill the function of coachman. Guests of the Abbott family would be met at the railway station with the 'shabby' buggy, driven by the yardman. It was only special guests who were conveyed in the Victoria. When Sir Joseph Abbott, absentee partner in Abbotsford, came to stay he would alight from a reserved first class compartment at the railway station, 'the door being opened by the station master in his gold braided cap' and step into the Victoria, to be driven off by the yardman dressed in a uniform bearing some resemblance to livery.\textsuperscript{107}

The carriage establishments of most pastoral families did not, then, greatly distinguish them from the rest of the community. Horse transport was relatively democratic. The motor car, on the other hand, added a new status factor to the community. The first 'automobile car' reported in Maitland passed through the town, driven by 'two gentlemen' in 1901.\textsuperscript{108} Pastoral families and rich townspeople began buying 'motors' by about 1905. The first motor car seen in Dungog was in 1904 and 'caused quite a stir'.\textsuperscript{109} Some old pastoralists were suspicious of the transport revolution. As early as 1876 J.H. Bettington had grumbled that 'the world is going a great deal too fast

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{106} Singleton Argus, 8 January 1898.
\item \textsuperscript{107} Abbott, 'Family Background', p. 82.
\item \textsuperscript{108} MM, 1 April 1901.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Dungog Chronicle, 29 March 1904.
\end{itemize}
for safety as those who live 20 years longer will find'. 110 Bettington was right, in a sense. The equestrian scrapes of pastoral families were replaced by dangerous motor crashes. By 1912 there was an occasional headline in local papers saying 'NARROW ESCAPE' or something similar:

Mr C.H. Trindale had a narrow escape from a serious accident on Sunday last. It appears he was in his motor car in George-street, Sydney, and when attempting to turn into Dudley Lane was run into by an electric tram car. The force of the collision threw Mr Tindale out into the street, but he escaped with a slight injury to one of his knees and a shaking. 111

But pastoral families, once the fashion for buying motor cars was established, joined in a rush to acquire them. In one year Jesse Bishop of Wootton took the train to Sydney with F.J. White and returned with two four-cylinder Buicks. The neighbours caught their enthusiasm and hurried to buy their own. Two years later, Mrs Bishop bought herself a single-seater Overland coupe. 112 Advertising space in the Pastoral Review began to feature large illustrated advertisements for Talbots, Studebakers and Buicks.

The money that pastoral families could not lavish on stately carriages (because country roads were so bad) they could now pour into motors. Built of iron, vivid with yellow, red and green enamel, the motor car was at once durable enough for country life, and private. To be motorised meant that social life was intensified. Afternoon calls could be made over radii of fifty miles, and the habit of pastoral families mixing only with one another was reinforced. Edwardian

111. Muswellbrook Chronicle, 17 April 1912.
country house parties were larger than those of the 1880s. At Dalkeith there would be 'a great roll up for tennis' on Saturdays, 'the visitors coming in their cars from all directions'. The motor car also meant that a landed family could now drive to Sydney directly from its homestead to the gate of its town house, or the front door of the Australia Hotel. The indiscriminate democracy of stage coaches and railway carriages was replaced by a new independence and privacy in travel. I do not know how quickly other local people got motors, but the general effect of them was certainly to set people apart from one another, and to undermine public transport. Large proprietors and their ladies roared through country towns in hats, goggles and veils. They were as separate from the farmers, shopkeepers and labourers as noise, elevation and the dazzle of enamel and chrome could make them.

5. Domestic Life

The households of pastoral families were large. The nuclear family alone was larger than in most households of the community - presumably a result of affluence. The marriages of 24 large proprietors in the years 1880-1914 produced 165 offspring to survive beyond childhood - this meant an average of almost seven children per family, compared with a little over five persons making up the average household in the six counties of the Hunter valley in 1901. In addition, households incorporated members of the extended family. A number of

113. PR, 15 October 1912.
114. The Putty road seems to have been more popular than the coastal road via Newcastle and Gosford, but both were execrable. Travel to Sydney was hardly easy even with a motor car.
115. Measuring household size as the number of persons per habitable dwelling in the counties of Durham, Gloucester, Phillip, Bligh, Brisbane, and Hunter. NSW C 1901, Part 6, p. 482.
maiden aunts lived at Melbee, Warromean, New Freugh, Wootton and no doubt many other houses; one in three daughters of the pastoral families did not marry, and most seem to have spent their lives living in the houses of their fathers, and subsequently of their brothers. Other relations and connections swelled family size. When Beresford Pierce was left fatherless, he and his mother went to live at Bengalla with his uncle, R.T. Keys. The household at Abbotsford in the 1890s included three generations and several degrees of relationships: along with the proprietor, W.E. Abbott, were his widowed mother, his sister-in-law, his widowed sister and several nephews and nieces. A son who married might settle in the house of his father, or would be accommodated in a newly built or refurbished cottage somewhere on the estate. When George Blomfield Waller of The Grange married in 1905, he and his bride were provided with 'a very comfortable dwelling' which had been erected 'on the upper end of the paternal property'. In addition to the extended family, the household was enlarged by the presence of domestic staff, which might bring the number of residents up to twenty or even thirty in Baroona, Edinglassie and Minimbah. One might also add dogs, parrots, cats and other pets.

Management of the household was the province of the ladies of a pastoral family. In most families the head of the domestic household was the wife of the proprietor. In the case of unmarried men, like W.E. Abbott and Thomas Cook, the landowner's mother might act as a sort of dowager and run the servants, or a sister would perform the same office. They were assisted by sisters, daughters and daughters-

116. See 'Marriage', Chapter Six.
117. MM, 27 July 1897.
118. Abbott, 'Family Background', pp. 80-1.
119. Dungog Chronicle, 7 November 1905.
in-law. The relative modesty of most domestic establishments meant that a lady spent a great deal of time at domestic tasks. She would rise early, give the day's orders in the kitchen and often stay there actively supervising. She made pastries, dressed poultry, darned socks and embroidered fancy work. None of the pastoral women had any hard physical labour, but all except the White, Dangar and a few other ladies would probably have been seen with pins between their teeth, or flour on their hands, at some hour of every day.

Women were in a sense the unsalaried dependants of husbands and fathers. In the Smith family the household economy was based upon a regular payment to Florence Smith by her husband, Edwin Smith of Munni. In addition Mrs Smith was allowed 'pin' money. In 1914 she was being paid an allowance of £5 a week to keep herself and run the country house at Munni. When she and her daughters went to stay at a rented town house in Sydney, she was allowed £6 a week. The Smith daughters also received weekly allowances. When Myra Lydia West Smith reached the age of seventeen her father began to give her eight shillings a week. By the time Myra reached the age of 26, and had just about lost her stock on the marriage market, her allowance was raised to twenty shillings a week.

Rules of conduct for women and households were widely disseminated. The Sydney newspapers ran social columns and 'ladies' pages', although only the Maitland Mercury among local papers did so. The number of these pages increased markedly from 1880 to 1914. In the 1880s the Illustrated Sydney News, Sydney Mail and Town and

120. Entry for 12 August in the Ledgers of Edwin Smith for 1914. Smith papers.
121. Entries for 4 August and 11 February in the Ledgers of Edwin Smith for 1905 and 1914.
Country Journal had half-page or one-page sections giving hints on French polishing and costume, together with occasional accounts of social events. By 1914 these had blossomed. The Sydney Mail, for example, gave the ladies five pages of glossy paper and illustrations. These included information on etiquette, dress and social news. In addition to the Sydney journals, Hunter valley pastoral ladies no doubt conned books like *Australian Etiquette* or *the Rules and Usages of the Best Society in the Australasian Colonies*.122

These sources of information were genteel rather than aristocratic. They assumed that women did tasks in their kitchens, and decorated their own hats. They aimed at a model household presided over by a bland, filleted woman of charm and practicability. The aim was possibly achieved in the houses of the pastoral families. Beatrice Webb described Mrs Henry Dangar as 'a ladylike old-fashioned woman' and her daughters as 'nicely-mannered but idle empty-headed young women'.123 Relations within the pastoral families could be rather courtly. The Abbotts addressed their mother as 'Madam'.124 Only Donald McRae was so casual in his diary as to refer to his wife as 'my old woman'.125 W.E. Abbott stereotyped men as 'strong, masterful, and far-reaching' and women as 'gentle, tender, and loving'.126 Women did not as a rule smoke, damn or play billiards, although in the liberal atmosphere of the Wiseman family at Cliffdale they did the last.127

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122. *Melbourne 1885* (no author indicated).
The households of pastoral families ran with a great deal of formality, tempered by some relaxation of what were believed to be 'English' principles of household management. Members of pastoral families entered their houses by the back door rather than the formal front entrances. If visitors were on horseback they might use the kitchen entrance too. But life in the big houses was unquestionably more ritualised and decorous than that in the neighbouring cottages and shanties. Meals and other routines took place at regulated hours.

Mackenzie, visiting the Wisemans, observed:

Everyone at Cliffdale knows his work, and so the daily routine is carried on from the breeding of magnificent Lincoln sheep down to the arrangement of cut flowers on the dining-room table in a manner quite refreshing to see. 128

Food was served on large sets of 'good' china. The dressers of Collaroy contained a solid store of crockery and cutlery, including thirty-six soup plates, fifteen dinner plates, fifteen pudding plates, similar numbers of cheese, dessert and bread-and-butter plates, together with ten silver candlesticks, three wine decanters and many other instruments. 129 Baroona and Edinglassie contained sterling silver services and German porcelain; other pastoral families used e.p.s. and English bone china. They seem to have drunk wine with their meals.

Houses had large wine cellars like that at Skellatar, a stone room under the house, twenty feet square, roofed with cement. Eight estates in 1899 maintained their own vineyards (Appendix X), but more usually local reds and imported hocks, sherrys and ports were shipped in bulk from Maitland and Sydney. Even Presbyterian families drank wine. The diary of G.A. Mackay frequently included entries like one

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128. Ibid.
in 1883: 'sent Mike to Dungog for cases of Wine'.

The formal regulations by which pastoral families governed their lives were, while unusual enough in the community at large, not those of high style. The rules were flexible. Women rode sidesaddle in the 1880s and 1890s, for example, but when a few like Beatrice Bishop began to ride astride in the Edwardian period, the use of sidesaddle lapsed fairly quickly among younger women. And pastoral families did not indulge much in quasi-aristocratic paraphernalia. Families were fond of giving heraldic names to their sons, but did not care much about length of European pedigree (which most of them lacked). What mattered was age of residence in the Hunter valley, and some boys' names celebrated this by incorporating local geography, like Henry Hunter Cox, James Hunter White and Victor Martindale White. John Eales was sent in 1887 a letter which asked him to favour the publishers of the impending Burke's Colonial Gentry with any information he possessed concerning the history of his family:

A history of the various families of distinction and landed fortune residing in Her Majesty's Colonies is being prepared for publication and in this work your family is entitled to be placed. The volume is to form a companion work to The Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland by Sir Bernard Burke and will be entitled The Colonial Gentry. An early answer giving the particulars on the enclosed form will greatly oblige.

Eales ignored the request, however. I do not know if any other large proprietors were offered space in the Colonial Gentry and refused, but in the event only seven Hunter valley landed families - the Hungerfords,

Abbotts, Blaxlands, Closes, Dangars, Windeyers and Wyndhams - were included in the work. 133

Only two Hunter valley pastoral families petitioned for coats of arms from the beginning of settlement to 1898. Arms were granted in 1860 to William Pearse of Plashett and in the 1850s to Henry Dangar 'of Grantham, county Cumberland, Noetsville, county Cumberland, Turanville and Brisbane, New South Wales [sic]'. 134 Some families wrote their letters on costly paper embossed with arms or a crest (usually spurious). The Browns of Colstoun used letter paper headed with the words 'Colstoun, Paterson' in blue Gothic print, together with a blue crest and the motto 'La Virtu est la seule Noblesse', which in their case was true. 135 But most letters from pastoral families which I have seen were written on plain paper, or else had businesslike letterheads with simply the name of their estate and district. The headings used by R.T. Blaxland resembled the business paper of a shopkeeper or stock and station agent. 136

In their domestic lives the pastoral families seem to have been pretty methodical and sensible. Their days were punctuated by early risings, large meals, the rustles of women and servants' skirts, guffaws and the crinkling of newspaper in evenings. They seem on average to have taken two or three papers, mixing local with Sydney journals. Edwin Smith subscribed to two papers - the Dungog Chronicle and the Maitland Mercury - but he was a landowner with narrow


135. Charles Walsh to H.P. Stacy, 28 October 1883. Stacy papers.

horizons. More typical was the mixed bag of papers taken by the Mackays of Melbee, including the Maitland Mercury, Pastoral Review and Southern Cross (along with the Australian Christian World and Australian Young Folk - two evangelical papers printed in Sydney). The Doyles of Invermein ignored the local press altogether, receiving only the Pastoral Review, the Sydney Morning Herald and the Sydney Stock and Station Journal. Life in estate houses might have become a little more frenetic in the Edwardian period, with its motor cars, telephones and other innovations. William Bishop remembers being stunned by the return of his father from a Sydney trip shorn of his beard and moustache and carrying the family's first gramophone under his arm. But in its general style domestic life probably remained much the same.

Life in the homesteads of pastoral families seems fairly neatly symbolised by the houses themselves - old-fashioned, solid and square. Only a Dangar or an occasional Mackay would build a tower on his house. Mansions and gardens were notable for their studied traditionalism, their privacy without ostentation. Large proprietors rode about on horseback, eschewing showy carriages. Their domestic staffs were comfortable, but included no black-coated butler or periwigged footman. Furnishings were solid rather than brilliant, 'good' rather than elegant. The estate houses symbolised and contained moderate distinction. Pastoral families lived systematic lives in surroundings which set them apart from the rest of the local community, but did not remove them entirely from public sight.

137. Entries in the Ledgers of Edwin Smith for 1891. Smith papers.
140. Bishop, 'Notes on the family', p. 8.
CONCLUSION

In my introduction I observed that work on Australian landed elites has been impressionistic and has left many questions unanswered - or indeed unasked. Family historians, like Wright and Durack, have emphasised the particular at the expense of the general. Regional social historians have not defined their groups clearly enough to allow systematic evaluation of the qualities and relationships of landed elites. In some cases - most notably Kiddle and Waterson - this has been a fruitful neglect. Sociologists have merely scratched the surface of rural society. In general, studies of all kinds have emphasised political life at the capitals, economic development and confrontation between bosses and labour. There is little work on politics in the local community, accumulation of private wealth, labour relations of a harmonious nature and many other matters that might be called sociological or anthropological.

Pastoral historians have often glanced at the question of whether or not pastoralists made up a power and status class, but there has been no methodical study. Contradictory remarks can be found even within the works of single writers. Waterson, while discussing the origins of Darling Downs pastoralists, says 'it would be a mistake to accept uncritically the "pastoral legend" of a solid oligarchy, united by breeding, education, taste and social custom'.\(^1\) But elsewhere he says 'all groups eventually came to subscribe to the ideals of the Pure Merinos and to imitate their way of life as far as their means would allow'.\(^2\) There has not really been any systematic discussion

1. Waterson, Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper, p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
of the importance of marriage, education and other customs in the making of a pastoral elite. Bolton suggests: 'Property apart, they distinguished themselves largely by the nature of their education'. 3 But Waterson says an alliance of large pastoralists was 'cemented by intermarriage, wealth and social polish'. 4 Kiddle does not trace the marriage habits of pastoralists in any detail; she does deal with education as a socially uniting force 5 and also makes observations from time to time about other status characteristics - at one point she says 'it was considered essential to have visited Italy'. 6 Buxton, asking how pastoralists in the Riverina, with very diverse origins, acquired and maintained status, suggests that 'the basic criterion was wealth'. 7 However he does mention elsewhere that newspaper announcements used different formulae of words according to the social status of subjects. 8 When the literature of landed elites discusses power roles in the local community it resorts to similar guesses, impressions and contradictions.

This thesis, by way of making a small probe into the complex matter of rural society, has addressed itself particularly to the confusion over social and power roles of pastoralists. I have attempted to make measurements. I began by asking a question: was there a distinct economic elite which manifested itself in all the power and status frames of the Hunter valley between 1880 and 1914? Did the richest people form a discrete group which acted as a local establishment

4. Waterson, Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper, p. 17.
6. Ibid., p. 493.
8. Ibid., p. 102.
I defined an economic elite on the basis of property ownership - in this case, the ownership of animals. This elite seemed fairly distinct. Although its members had obscure and diverse origins, by 1880-1914 they formed a homogeneous economic group. Three-fourths of permanent large proprietors in those years came from well-established second or third generation landowning families. Over half the temporary large proprietors were from similar backgrounds. This means that by the late nineteenth century the pastoral families in the Hunter valley had for the most part inherited their money and their commitment to land. Not all sons of old-established pastoral families went onto the land, and not all of the large proprietors were sons of landowners. But most of them were perpetuating a tradition of hereditary land and stock ownership and were a distinct economic elite.

The members of this elite were rather nomadic, and their landholding was based on high capital liquidity - estates operating on overdrafts and mortgages. Large proprietors were restless and moved from one estate to another, buying, selling and speculating. Between 1880 and 1914 many Hunter valley estates passed through several hands. Many pastoral families moved house from one property to another during the same years. But in spite of a continual reshuffling there was overall consistency. No matter how often properties were bought and sold, they tended to stay among the same group of people. Infiltration of the economic elite by people from different groups - particularly successful local businessmen and rich Sydney people - was important but always secondary. A group of hereditary proprietors had come into being, and was growing richer and richer. Enormous multiplication of wealth occurred from one generation to another in the White, Dangar and Mackay families and was paralleled in a quieter
way by scores of others.

Having established the distinctiveness of the economic elite
I then looked at various institutions through which it might unite
itself into a status elite. After first pointing out the diverse
social, national and religious origins of the group, I looked at edu­
cation, religion, marriage and social life among the pastoral families.
After attempting to count heads in a methodical fashion (with not much
success in education and social life) I decided that the economic elite
did not form a complete marriage or social elite. Rather, a number of
old-established pastoral families made up an inside circle which in­
cluded city families and excluded a large proportion of the other
pastoral families. I found that religion acted as an arbitrary divider
of pastoral families, but that education seemed to unite them - along
with other well-to-do people - by being easily available at a price.

I next considered various power structures. Looking at the
magistracy, at the volunteers, at patronage and at political power as
they manifested themselves in the Hunter valley, I found that the
pastoral families clearly dominated certain fields of power and were
influential in most. On the other hand, many pastoral families took
no part in public life and did not act as leaders. It seemed that in
the discussion of power among pastoral families there was a distinction
to be made, as in status institutions, between the old, best established
members of the economic elite and the newer people.

When I investigated two particular environments of the pastoral
families - the estate and the homestead - I found a certain group
homogeneity. Each estate made up a community of workers and bosses,
and large proprietors played something of a fatherly role in those
communities. Pastoral family estates were all well removed from peas­
sant farming and large proprietors tended to spend their working hours
in managerial and even entrepreneurial pursuits rather than in personal
farming. An important group of them - new men and old - engaged with
a passion in the breeding of purebred stock. In these habits they
were clearly distinguished from other economic groups in the Hunter
valley.

The homestead made up another community. Nearly all pastoral
families stood out among their neighbours by the scale and mode of
their domestic life. Most of them lived in large rectangular houses
on the tops of eminences, surrounded by their broad acres. Their
houses were the grandest and most historic of each district. They
were further distinguished by their staffs of domestic servants, the
amplitude of their domestic habits, their stables full of quality
horseflesh and, later, by their coach houses sheltering Studebakers,
Bugattis and Packards.

For a proper understanding of the pastoral families it is
really necessary for new work to be done on the lives of their neigh­
bours - people like the share milkers, the local clergy and the country
town storekeepers. My thesis has been limited by my not knowing enough
about the non-pastoral families. As it is, I have made generalisations
about my group which lack the clarity they might gain by comparison with
other people in the same districts. Research into the independent
cockatoo farmers would help my discussion of the economic role of large
proprietors. I have no substantial information on how innovative
middle-sized farmers were - I have tended to emphasise the importance
of pastoral families in dairying and other rural advances, and from
that have concluded that they were not mere economic drones. A study of cockatoo farmers would make discussion of the question more definite. Research into education, religious life and leisure - in all of which my information was lopsided - would be of great use too. With such qualifications, the answer to my question can only be a guarded one.

There was a distinct economic elite in the Hunter valley between 1880 and 1914, but it did not manifest itself in all the power and status frames. The richest people did form a discrete economic group, but they did not act consistently as a local establishment. Members of the economic elite acquired status and power in varying degree. Those status and power forms that could simply be bought, like large houses, motor cars (and perhaps education) were held in common by all pastoral families. Other qualities, like admission into marriage and visiting circles, or the deference of voters, could not be secured so universally. The old families of any given district were an elite that manifested itself in almost all the power and status frames and formed a local establishment. Newer pastoral families stood ambiguously in the regard of their economic equals and were not necessarily admired by their inferiors.

Together the old and new families made up a group of spirited, thrusting people. There is a tendency in the literature of Australian landed elites to represent pastoralists as losers. Not only do large proprietors appear as defenders of a barren attempt to reconstruct old world society, they are also shown to have been doomed by

economics, land laws and social change. Kiddle blames the depression of the 1890s.\textsuperscript{10} Waterson gives responsibility to selection legislation; 'The squatter was doomed as soon as he was forced to purchase large quantities of land'.\textsuperscript{11} He goes on to suggest another economic argument - the lack of ability in pastoralists to adopt new forms of farming so that 'at the turn of the century the remaining Pure Merinos were observers of, rather than participants in, the evolution of the area'.\textsuperscript{12}

But in the Hunter valley at least, large pastoralists were successful. They were in the van of certain critical rural developments - meat freezing, cross-breeding, improved and intensified pastoralism (although behindhand in agriculture). Their estates were shrinking in area, but increasing in productivity. Pastoral families remained clearly on top of the economic pile. They were helped by their legacy of grants from the 1820s and 1830s. The grants, having vested freehold estates in families, freed them from the cost of securing land against selectors. Land purchase was a huge drain on pastoralists in New England - where there were 'years of bitter struggle and constant strain' in the late nineteenth century\textsuperscript{13} - and in the Darling Downs, the Riverina and the Western District of Victoria. But Hunter valley pastoral families were enjoying the fruits of unearned increment on land granted in perpetuity to their forbears. They grumbled about legal inroads on their property - land reform and taxation in particular - but in fact they survived with flocks and herds intact. Their wills show them getting richer and richer.

\textsuperscript{10} Kiddle, \textit{Men of Yesterday}, p. 511.
\textsuperscript{11} Waterson, \textit{Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper}, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 20.
\textsuperscript{13} Walker, \textit{Old New England}, p. 83.
Hunter valley pastoral families were not backward-looking people interested in preserving an old-world civilisation. Even if their fathers and grandfathers mimicked Georgian country house design in the 1830s, by the mid and late nineteenth century local proprietors were building houses strictly in a local tradition. They hardly even employed English architects, nor did they construct properly 'English' country houses. The fashions of Greek Revival, Gothic and Queen Anne that reshaped houses in Britain had little impact on Hunter valley homesteads. Large proprietors were interested principally in local notions of propriety. This must have been reinforced by the overwhelming predominance of native-born among pastoral families. Of 97 owners of large flocks and herds in 1897 whose origins I know of, 86 were born in Australia. And most of the remaining 11 had spent all but their infancy in the colony. Although patriotic in an imperial

way, Hunter valley pastoral families seem to have identified themselves with Australia. A.A. Dangar, although he ran the Union Jack up his flagpole at Baroona every Sunday, flew the Australian ensign during the rest of the week. \[15\] Bolton's observation seems to be true for the Hunter valley: 'colonial elites very early develop a sense of their own self-interest which transcends any nostalgic emotions of loyalty to the mother-country'. \[16\]

Nor were the pastoral families doomed. They were active partners in an aggressive colonial society - and in some cases its leaders. The parasitic, even mortifying role attributed so commonly to pastoralists in Australian economic and social history does not seem apt for the Hunter valley. At their best, local pastoral families were proud but generous, like A.A. Dangar and his 'esteemed lady' dispensing largesse from their hilltop at Baroona. \[17\] At their worst they were mean-minded capitalists like the Laurie family, so disliked by the local people as to have a plague of leaf-eating insects named after them - the 'Laurie flying gang'. \[18\] In all aspects of their lives into which I have inquired, pastoral families seem to have fitted comfortably into their colonial environment. If they had wanted old world institutions like hunt clubs and coachmen, the Dangars, Bettingtons and Whites could have afforded them. Instead they sought status and power within local structures. By the 1880s they were part of a new rural society with its own tradition. Their role was even creative - their houses, for example, were the most fully-blown manifestation of local

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15. PR, 15 April 1910.
17. MM, 24 June 1897.
architectural idiom. They were successful, acquisitive people, but they were not oppressive, and were not noticeably retarding the economic and social development of the Hunter valley. The pastoral families made up an economic elite which, while it did not dominate all fields of society, was distinctive and important.
Showing the number of freehold properties by acreage in each land district of the Hunter valley. 'Alphabetical Return of the several holdings in the Colony, together with the acreage and the number of Horses, Cattle, and Sheep thereon', *NSW VP 1885* (2nd Session), Vol. III.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>size of holding</th>
<th>number of freehold properties by land district</th>
<th>total</th>
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<td>Ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>474</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 to 100 acres</td>
<td>1080</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 200 acres</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 to 500 acres</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 to 1000 acres</td>
<td>135</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 to 2500 acres</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2501 to 5000 acres</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 5000 acres</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not shown</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>

abbreviations: Md = Maitland, Ma = Merriwa, Mi = Murrurundi, PS = Port Stephens, Sn = Singleton.
APPENDIX II (a)

Showing the number of properties (alienated and crown lands) by acre-age in each county of the Hunter valley. *Statistical Register of New South Wales* 1914-5, pp. 1226-9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>size of holding</th>
<th>number of properties by county</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gr</td>
<td>Nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 51 acres</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>3068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 100 acres</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>667</td>
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<tr>
<td>101 to 500 acres</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>923</td>
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<tr>
<td>501 to 1000 acres</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>158</td>
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<tr>
<td>1001 to 3000 acres</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3001 to 5000 acres</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>over 5000 acres</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*abbreviations: Gr = Gloucester, Nd = Northumberland, Dm = Durham, Hr = Hunter, Be = Brisbane, Pp = Phillip.*
APPENDIX II (b)

Showing the acreage of land contained by each class of land holding (alienated and crown land) in each county of the Hunter valley. Statistical Register of New South Wales 1914-5, pp. 1226-9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>class of holding</th>
<th>acreage of land (in thousands) by county</th>
<th>total</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Gr</td>
<td>Nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 51 acres</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>254</td>
<td>204</td>
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<tr>
<td>501 to 1000 acres</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001 to 3000 acres</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3001 to 5000 acres</td>
<td>122</td>
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<tr>
<td>over 5000 acres</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX III

Showing all flockowners with 5000 or more sheep and all cattle owners with 500 or more head in the Hunter valley. 'Return of the several holdings in the Colony'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maitland District</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Kelman, J.B.</td>
<td>7523</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Brown, H.H.</td>
<td>20060</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Nowlan, John</td>
<td>8500</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Close, E.C.</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Fisher, William</td>
<td>5700</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Park, Robert</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Abbott, W.H. &amp; G.A.</td>
<td>23000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Reynolds, F.S.</td>
<td>4500</td>
<td>835</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Logan, Robert</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Sherwood, William</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Forster, William</td>
<td>10500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Merriwa District</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 Bettington, J.B.</td>
<td>80000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>40090</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Busby, Hon. W., MLC.</td>
<td>42000</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>16990</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Busby, Alexander</td>
<td>32000</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>15318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Collaroy Co.</td>
<td>240000</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>28088</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Blaxland, Charles</td>
<td>45000</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>8600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Bowman, Mrs G.P.</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>7683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Hall, M.H.</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>3477</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Traill Bros.</td>
<td>60000</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>18500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Hall, F.C.</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6949</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Cooper, Joseph</td>
<td>27873</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>20910</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Murrurundi District</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22 White, J.F. &amp; H.</td>
<td>251000</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>107363</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Hall, G.P.</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>1160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Wright, P.W.</td>
<td>11500</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Haydon, Bernard</td>
<td>7979</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6525</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Suckling, J.L.</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11180</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Wiseman, L.E.</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>8640</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Bowman, Mrs G.P.</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>7683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Taylor, John</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 McIntyre, Donald</td>
<td>47560</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>21510</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Arndell, J.A. &amp; G.</td>
<td>17986</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11909</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Abbott, W.E.</td>
<td>26000</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 White, F.R.</td>
<td>37000</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>29700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Fremlin, A.R.</td>
<td>13000</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Davies, J.H.</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>7110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 Gardiner, W.I.</td>
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<td>5605</td>
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### APPENDIX III (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
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<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cox, S. (Estate)</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>720</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parbury, F.A.</td>
<td>7080</td>
<td>572</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumaresq, W. (Estate)</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>11300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Bros.</td>
<td>23986</td>
<td>835</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlay, G.B.</td>
<td>19200</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>6600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**PORT STEPHENS DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robinson, George</td>
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<td>600</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooke, James</td>
<td>8003</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, H.H.</td>
<td>13968</td>
<td>1700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holmes, W.H.</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>1200</td>
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<td>Townshend, J.A.</td>
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<td>Laurie, A.T.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laurie, Andrew</td>
<td>5002</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younie, Alexander</td>
<td>2504</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hough, Thomas</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**SINGLETON DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Millar</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td>516</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loder, George</td>
<td>25460</td>
<td>2850</td>
<td>1804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, William</td>
<td>10100</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>2568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys, J.H.</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>3280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungerford, Thomas</td>
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<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, D.F.</td>
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<td>7850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinan, Thomas</td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, J.C.</td>
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<td>1600</td>
<td>1840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaxland, R.T.</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>2320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearse, William</td>
<td>8800</td>
<td>1180</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Edward</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox, J.H.</td>
<td>7250</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>6030</td>
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<tr>
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<td>903</td>
<td>1047</td>
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<td>820</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
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<td>Withycombe, James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cook, T.</td>
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<td>500</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, E. &amp; A.</td>
<td>10239</td>
<td>877</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham, C.</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, H.C.</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX III (cont.)

Showing all owners of flocks and herds the total number of head of which is equivalent to 5000 or more sheep, or 500 or more cattle (calculating 10 head of sheep as equivalent to 1 head of cattle), in the Hunter valley, 1885.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MERRIWA DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 Bell, G.D.</td>
<td>8736</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>3050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 Hall, D. &amp; G.</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 Hall, Mrs Anne</td>
<td>6021</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>3173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 Doyle, J.H.</td>
<td>5427</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>2401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 Bell, G.D.</td>
<td>6047</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 Keys, J.H.</td>
<td>13500</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MURRURUNDI DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 Bowman, Mrs G.P.</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79 Lethbridge, G.L.</td>
<td>7318</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>2983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing all flockowners with 5000 or more sheep, and all cattle owners with 500 or more head, and all owners of flocks and herds the total number of head of which is equivalent to 5000 or more sheep, or 500 or more cattle, in that part of the MUDGEE DISTRICT situated in the Goulburn river watershed of the Hunter valley.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80 Jones, A.T.</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 Bowman, E. &amp; A.</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>12545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82 Fitzgerald, R.M.</td>
<td>44296</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>21160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 Campbell &amp; Co.</td>
<td>52300</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX IV

Showing all flockowners with 5000 or more sheep and all cattle owners with 500 or more head in the Hunter valley. *Australian Pastoral Directory* 1897 (spelling corrected where necessary).

### DENMAN DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank N.S.W.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell, F.S. &amp; H.W.</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>1660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blunt, T.</td>
<td>5940</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, W.</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, J.</td>
<td></td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, M.</td>
<td></td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel, J.</td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellis, T.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys, R.T.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearse, W.</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vickery &amp; Sons</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Bros.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, E.</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>3423</td>
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</table>

### MAITLAND DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown, H.H.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper, J.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darr, W.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodds, A.J. &amp; F.</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes, W.H.</td>
<td></td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan, R. (Estate)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, J.K.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, J.K. Jr.</td>
<td></td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayne, J.C., Jr.</td>
<td></td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nivison, A.A.W.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park, Alexander</td>
<td></td>
<td>775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randall, Mrs Susan</td>
<td></td>
<td>1088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds, F.</td>
<td></td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, E.</td>
<td></td>
<td>580</td>
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### MERRIWA DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell, G.</td>
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<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettington, J.B.</td>
<td>57476</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettington, J.H.</td>
<td>20700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busby, A.</td>
<td>26622</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaroy Co.</td>
<td>83536</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper &amp; Son</td>
<td>24289</td>
<td>2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldsborough Mort. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>3810</td>
<td>721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall, R.T.</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawler Bros.</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster, D.</td>
<td>38505</td>
<td>366</td>
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</table>
### APPENDIX IV (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noble, I.</td>
<td>7490</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traill Bros.</td>
<td>34949</td>
<td>383</td>
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#### MURRURUNDI DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott, W.E.</td>
<td>27160</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakewell Bros.</td>
<td>13570</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blunt, T.</td>
<td>7244</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bollenhagen, A.</td>
<td>7943</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbett, J.</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davies, J.H.</td>
<td>11274</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doyle, J.H.</td>
<td>2803</td>
<td>676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlay, Mrs G.B.</td>
<td>9199</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydon, B.</td>
<td>8427</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McIntyre, D.</td>
<td>35512</td>
<td>774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maunsell, C.D.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.Z.L. &amp; M.A. Co.</td>
<td>3808</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parbury, F.A.</td>
<td>5956</td>
<td>803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vickery, E. &amp; Son</td>
<td>33487</td>
<td>3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, F.R.</td>
<td>71000</td>
<td>3300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, H.E.A. &amp; V.</td>
<td>14150</td>
<td>1172</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wiseman, S.</td>
<td>9915</td>
<td>370</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wiseman, L.E.</td>
<td>5820</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wiseman, H.R.</td>
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#### PORT STEPHEN DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott, W. &amp; G.</td>
<td>950</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.A. Co.</td>
<td>8180</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Easton, R.</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooke, J.</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie, A.T.</td>
<td>950</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie, J.E. &amp; J.R.</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie, J.N.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan, R. (Estate)</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson, G.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titcume, G.</td>
<td>500</td>
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</table>

#### SINGLETON DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bailey, H.</td>
<td>1750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blaxland, R.T.</td>
<td>840</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, A.R. &amp; P.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper, J.</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangar, R.H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dangar, A.A.</td>
<td>800</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinan, T.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellis, T.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson, T.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loder, G.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, J.L.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, L. &amp; W.</td>
<td>3140</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mayne, W.E.</td>
<td>1086</td>
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</table>
## APPENDIX IV (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>sheep</th>
<th>cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McDouall, P.J.C.</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oatley, Flood &amp; Oatley</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richards, B.</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richards, S.</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing all owners of flocks and herds the total number of head of which is equivalent to 5000 or more sheep, or 500 or more cattle (calculating 10 head of sheep as equivalent to 1 head of cattle), in the Hunter valley, 1897.

### DENMAN DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>sheep</th>
<th>cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cox, C.H.</td>
<td>4192</td>
<td>95</td>
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</table>

### MERRIWA DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>sheep</th>
<th>cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, A.R. &amp; F.</td>
<td>4649</td>
<td>343</td>
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<tr>
<td>McRae, D. &amp; H.</td>
<td>4334</td>
<td>89</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### MURRURUNDI DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>sheep</th>
<th>cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell, A. (Estate)</td>
<td>4796</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowman, A.R. &amp; F.</td>
<td>4644</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooker, W.</td>
<td>3280</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Bank of Australia Ltd.</td>
<td>4688</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall, D. &amp; G.</td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hall, 'Miss' (Mrs Anne)</td>
<td>2610</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy, D.</td>
<td>3112</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald, A.</td>
<td>4685</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinkerton, J.</td>
<td>3975</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright, Mrs E.J.</td>
<td>2775</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing all flockowners with 5000 or more sheep, and all cattle owners with 500 or more head, and all owners of flocks and herds the total number of head of which is equivalent to 5000 or more sheep, or 500 or more cattle, in that part of the MUDGEE DISTRICT situated in the Goulburn river watershed of the Hunter valley.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>sheep</th>
<th>cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, E. &amp; A.</td>
<td>23646</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell Bros. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>14118</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell Bros. &amp; Co.</td>
<td>11700</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzgerald, R.M.</td>
<td>18001</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single, H.E.</td>
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<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiseman, S.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiseman, S.</td>
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<td>1340</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX V

Showing all flockowners with 5000 or more sheep and all cattle owners with 500 or more head in the Hunter valley. Australian Pastoral Directory 1915 (spelling corrected where necessary).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DENMAN DISTRICT</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>owner</td>
<td>cattle</td>
<td>sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Allen, D.H.</td>
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<td>7650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bell, F.S. &amp; H.W.</td>
<td>1319</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bowman, A.</td>
<td>809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bowman, E.</td>
<td>1681</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Bowman, W.P.</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>8600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Brown, J.</td>
<td>671</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Cox, C.H.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Daniel, J.</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dunn &amp; McTaggart</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Hewitt, F. (Estate)</td>
<td>717</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Keys, J.H.</td>
<td>1049</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 McDonald, H.C.</td>
<td>1091</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Mackay, W.H.</td>
<td>2036</td>
<td>9588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Martindale White Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Martindale White Bros.</td>
<td>1293</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Martindale White Bros.</td>
<td>1008</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Plashett Pastoral Co.</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>10910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 White, C.W.</td>
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<td>6742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 White Bros.</td>
<td>4114</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAITLAND DISTRICT</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott, J.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Badgery, W.T.</td>
<td>574</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Cameron, K.M.</td>
<td>538</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Laurie, A.G. &amp; Sons</td>
<td>964</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Lindeman, A.H. &amp; G.B.</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 McDonald, H.C.</td>
<td>1573</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 McDonald, W.J.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Mackay, J.K.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Mackay, J.K.</td>
<td>1043</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Nivison, A.A.W.</td>
<td>1409</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Reynolds, F.</td>
<td>1484</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Smith, E.</td>
<td>741</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Waller, G.S. &amp; Son</td>
<td>1004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MERRIWA DISTRICT</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bettington, J.H.</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>16279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Bishop, J.</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>7370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Bowman, E. &amp; A.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>20050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 Bowman, A.R. &amp; F.</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>6354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Braggett &amp; Foley</td>
<td></td>
<td>5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 Brindley Park Pastoral Co.</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>60026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX V (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Busby, A.</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>21718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaroy Co.</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>62822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cullingral Co.</td>
<td>1370</td>
<td>30462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzgerald, R.M. (Estate)</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>15751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hordern &amp; Woods</td>
<td></td>
<td>8091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean, G., Co.</td>
<td>527</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster, F.D.</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>28138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morton, P.H., &amp; Co.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munro, H.R.</td>
<td>2659</td>
<td>21671</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PORT STEPHENS DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott, G.A.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbott, W.H.</td>
<td>1705</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, W.</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higgins, J.R.</td>
<td>810</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill, G.S.</td>
<td>750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooke, E.G.</td>
<td>512</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooke, T.M. &amp; C.A.</td>
<td>2783</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie, J.N.</td>
<td>964</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie, A.R.</td>
<td>853</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie, J.E.</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonnell, A.D.</td>
<td>519</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, G.A.</td>
<td>559</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perrett, A.</td>
<td>661</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titcume, G. &amp; Sons</td>
<td>860</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, R.</td>
<td>545</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SINGLETON DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, C.B.</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, D.</td>
<td>551</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey, H.M.</td>
<td>640</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binnie, R.</td>
<td>1879</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, A.R. &amp; F.</td>
<td>1426</td>
<td>1124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden Park Est. Ltd.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clift, E.A.</td>
<td>598</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clydesdale, J.M.</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>6001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangar, Mrs A.A.</td>
<td>654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangar, R.H.</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dight, P.J.R.</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greene, G.H. (Estate)</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, E.L.</td>
<td>539</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay, W.H.</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>15266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrissey, J.</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>7047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers, T.D.</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacy, H.P.</td>
<td>1178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tindale, J.R.</td>
<td>532</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waddell, W.</td>
<td>645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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### APPENDIX V (cont.)

#### UPPER HUNTER DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>83 Abbott, R.P.</td>
<td>1167</td>
<td>8187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 Abbott, W.E.</td>
<td>1015</td>
<td>15520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 Bakewell, W.</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>10628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 Bell, A.H. &amp; J.</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>5900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 Bowman, A.R. &amp; F.</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>6442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 Brayshaw, W.H.</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>17700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89 Brooker, W.</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>9540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 Corbett, J.</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>4055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 Dangar, R.H.</td>
<td>1043</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92 Dartbrook Estate Co.</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>10200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 Davies, J.H. (Estate)</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>13243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 Finlay, G.M.</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>4200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 Fleming, J.K.</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>5550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96 Hall, D.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97 Hall, G.</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>14946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98 Haydon, B.</td>
<td>650</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 Kennedy, D.</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>1272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 Kennedy, K.</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>7373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 McDonald, A.</td>
<td>1613</td>
<td>38540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102 McIntyre, Mrs C.H.</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103 McMullin, W.G.</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>6478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104 Martin, J.</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>4038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 Seaward, W.T.</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>11110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106 Taylor, J.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107 Tyson &amp; Cunningham</td>
<td>10851</td>
<td>71183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108 White, H.E.A. &amp; V.</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>17850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109 White, J.H.</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>28396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 White, R.W.</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>9760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111 Wright, H.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing all owners of flocks and herds the total number of head of which is equivalent to 5000 or more sheep, or 500 or more cattle (calculating 10 head of sheep as equivalent to 1 head of cattle), in the Hunter valley 1897.

#### DENMAN DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>112 Blake, M.H.</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113 Bowman Bros.</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>1523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MERRIWA DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>114 Lawler Bros.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4825</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SINGLETON DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>115 McMahon, E.H.</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>3972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116 Moore, E.R.</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>2032</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX V (cont.)

UPPER HUNTER DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>cattle</th>
<th>sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy, W.R. (Estate)</td>
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<td>4006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinkerton, M.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4419</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX VI

Showing those Hunter valley flockowners with 5000 or more sheep, and cattle owners with 500 or more head, and those stockowners with an equivalent number of beasts, in 1897, who also held such numbers of stock in 1885, and 1915.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large stockowner 1897</th>
<th>Large stockowner 1885</th>
<th>Large stockowner 1915</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank N.S.W.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blunt, T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowman family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, M.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellis, T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearse family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vickery &amp; Sons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown family (Colstoun)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darr, W.C.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodds, A.J. &amp; F.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayne family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nivison family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randall, Mrs Susan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith family (Munni)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettington family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busby family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaroy Co.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldsborough Mort &amp; Co.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawler family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble, I.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traill family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbott family (Glengarry)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakewell family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bollenhagen, A.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbett family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davies family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doyle family</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlay family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydon family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McIntyre family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX VII

Showing those Hunter valley flockowners with 5000 or more sheep, and cattle owners with 500 or more head, and those stockowners with an equivalent number of beasts, in 1885, who also held such numbers of stock in 1915.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large stockowner 1885</th>
<th>Large stockowner 1915</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.A. Co.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbott family (Violet Hill)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbott family (Glengarry)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arndell family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettington family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaxland family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowmum family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown family (Colstoun)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busby family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Millar</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaroy Co.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook, T.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangar family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davies family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doyle family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinan family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumaresq Estate</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlay family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher, W.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forster, W.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremlin, A.R.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardiner, W.I.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydon family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooke family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hough, T.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungerford, T.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelman, J.B.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethbridge, G.L.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loder family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large stockowner 1885</td>
<td>Large stockowner 1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McIntyre family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayne family</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, H.H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowlan, J.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park, R.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parbury family</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearse family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson, G.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherwood, W.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suckling, J.L.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traill family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiseman family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withycombe family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright family</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younie, A.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX VIII

Showing principal source of original capital of large stockowners who appear in at least two registers (Appendices III, IV, V). In the case of a family, the source of capital only of the first registered members is indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>owner</th>
<th>INHERITED</th>
<th>source of capital</th>
<th>EARNED</th>
</tr>
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APPENDIX IX

Showing principal source of original capital of large stockowners who appear in only one register (Appendices III, IV, V).

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abbreviations:  
- w = wheat,  
- m = maize,  
- b = barley,  
- o = oats,  
- p = potatoes,  
- t = tobacco,  
- v = vines,  
- f = orchards
APPENDIX XI

Wills of large Hunter valley landowners 1880-1914

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APPENDIX XII

National origins of first migrant generation of pastoral family.

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Private Collections

(a) Binnie papers. Deeds, financial accounts, memoirs and other papers of the Binnie family, held by Mr A. Binnie, Merrilong, Singleton.

(b) Bishop papers. Deeds, memoirs and other papers of the Bishop family, held by Mr W.A. Bishop, Wootton, Scone.

(c) Mackay papers. Deeds, financial accounts, journals, ledgers, letters and other papers of the Mackay family, held by Mr W.G. Mackay, Melbee, Dungog.

(d) McRae papers. Journals, ledgers and other papers of the McRae family, held by Mr G.J. McRae, Cranbourne, Merriwa.

(e) Smith papers. Deeds, financial accounts, journals, ledgers, letters and other papers of the Smith family, held by Mr E.G.F. Smith, Munni, Dungog.

(f) Stacy papers. Deeds, financial accounts, letters and other papers of the Stacy family, held by Mrs C.A. Stacy, Warrromean, Singleton.

Public Collections

(a) Australian National University Archives of Business and Labour.

(i) Australian Agricultural Company papers. Financial accounts, journals, ledgers, letters and other papers of the Australian Agricultural Company.

(b) Mitchell Library.

(i) Abbott, Sir Joseph, 'Selections from the Scrapbook, 1873-98'.

(ii) Almanac of the Diocese of Maitland (pamphlet), Maitland 1900-14.

(iii) Bettington papers. Letters and other papers of the Bettington family.

(iv) Busby (?), 'Genealogical Tree of the Busby Family' (typescript).
(v) Collaroy papers. Deeds, financial accounts, journals, letters and other papers of Collaroy Station, 1849-1922.


(vii) King papers. Letters and other papers of the King family.

(viii) Mackenzie, H.M., 'Among the Pastoralists and Producers' (bound newspaper clippings).

(ix) Reay, Audley, 'Memoirs of the Hunter and Newcastle in the Eighties'.

(x) Whinfield, Rev. J.F.R., 'Notes on old Singleton families'.

(xi) Wright, P.P., 'Seventy-two Years in Australia and the South Pacific' (typescript), 1919.

(c) National Library of Australia.


(d) University of New England Archives.

(i) Bengalla papers. Journals, ledgers and other papers of the Bengalla estate.

(ii) Brindley Park papers. Journals and ledgers of the Brindley Park estate.


(iv) Macintyre, Donald, 'Reminiscences 1924'.

Noble (1919), John Nowlan (1895), Alexander Smith (1874), Edward White (1913), F. White (1875), James White (1842), James White the younger (1890), R.H.D. White (1900), W.E. White (1914), and Mary Windeyer (1913).

(f) Scone and Upper Hunter Historical Society Archives.

(ii) Doyle papers. Deeds, financial accounts, journals, ledgers, letters and other papers of the Doyle family.

(iii) McClintock, R.E., 'Back to Muswellbrook'.

(iii) Miscellaneous deeds, estate maps, financial accounts, memoirs, letters and other papers pertaining to the Hall, Eales, Bakewell and other families.

II PARLIAMENTARY AND OTHER OFFICIAL PAPERS

New South Wales. Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. Most notably:

(i) 'Alphabetical Return of the several holdings in the Colony, together with the acreage and the number of Horses, Cattle, and Sheep thereon', 1885 (2nd Session), Vol. III.

(ii) 'Segenhoe Estate Irrigation Bill', 1891-2, Vol. III.

New South Wales. Joint Volumes of Papers Presented to the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly. Most notably:

(i) 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Maitland to South Grafton', 1904, Vol. III.

(ii) 'Minutes of Evidence, Proposed Railway from Muswellbrook to Merriwa', 1910, Vol. II.

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