

DARLINGTON FROM THE BEGINNING

First Written in 1962 by Trevor Tuckfield – the following is some background to the Author

Trevor was born in 1899 at Coolgardie to parents Harold James Tuckfield and Constance Ettie Olden. Harold was a well-known Dental Surgeon in Perth. Trevor married later in life in 1942 at the age of 42 to Eva Phyllis Hyde, who was 10 years his junior. Trevor states his occupation as an electrician. The couple were noted in the newspapers of the day as adventurers where in 1948 they made their way in a small craft across the numerous salt lakes to Bunbury. In 1950 the couple set out in a 30 foot ketch named "Waroo" to circumnavigate Australia. When on Cockatoo Island in 1952 Trevor wrote an article on island life. The couple appear to have retired to Albany where Trevor was honoured with Life Membership to the Albany Historical Society. He died in 1980 aged 80 after a colourful life writing about his numerous adventures and the history of different places where he lived.



Trevor and wife Eva on their yacht "Waroo", 1950



Trevor Tuckfield, 1978

Part 1

When Alice asked the Queen where to begin her story, the Queen replied that the beginning was as good as any.

This being the case, one might go back some thousands of years and discover that where Darlington stands today, towering Eucalyptuses stood sentinel over a primitive bush sheltering the hilly land heavily encrusted with primitive rock. Here, prehistoric

fauna silently roamed at will, thousands of years after its kind had disappeared from the lands of Europe and Asia.

Shrieking black cockatoos disturbed the silence and drowned the carolling of magpies in the tall tree tops, as they did the softer, though also strident calls of the brightly hued parrots that flitted from branch to branch.

So it remained until the coming of the Paleolithic man, who, aided by the devastating lightning, received fire from a stricken and burning forest giant and made his presence known by the blue smoke spiral rising from his small fire beside the primitive mia-mia set up in the shelter of a rocky outcrop. And the primitive sounds of corroborees, rather than disturbing, blended in with the surrounding bush sounds.

With the coming of each spring, the drabness of the West Australian bush was transformed into a riot of colour. The birds sang, carolled and shrieked more happily and a multitude of creeks, swollen by the winter's rains, gurgled gleefully as they tore down the hillsides to join the rushing river.

Through such a scene on a spring day of September 1831, passed the vanguard of a more devastating invasion than the bush hereabouts has ever experienced.

It was a strange scene; frightening and bewildering to the blacks; while the squeaking of axles; the sounds of chopping and the occasional firing of guns were also most disturbing to the other wild denizens of the bush. Apart from a circus parade, this cavalcade would be just as strange to a present day white inhabitant of these hills.

This disturbing element - this cavalcade, that passed slowly and laboriously across the hills of the Darlington-to-be, on its way to the newly discovered rich lands of the Avon Valley, consisted of twenty one of the British Colonists who had landed on these shores two years before. What a strange sight this cavalcade must have been to the wild-eyed blacks - peering cautiously from the dark places of the surrounding bush. Such strange contraptions they had never seen. Such weird animals were beyond their simple comprehension. There was a cart belonging to Messrs. Clarkson and Hardey. It was drawn by two horses and two cows. Another cart was drawn by two cows. There were three pack horses bearing provisions, clothes and so on, while on ahead were a number of men blazing and chopping small trees and scrub as they moved slowly across the higher ground of the Darlington-to-be.

This weird party had left Guildford on Sept. 6th 1831. Slowly and awkwardly they picked their way around the swamps and marshy ground of what is now Midland till it came to the foothills of the Darling Ranges at the entrance of the Boya Valley. The party continued on, and keeping as much as possible to the high land.

The trail they blazed led up the valley, through about the middle of the Boya quarry works - across the north side of Mr. Hammond's place (and strangely enough where the first people of Darlington originally settled). Then across Mr. Fischer's farmlet, keeping on that ridge south of his house - across Lionel Road and across Eric Palmer's property and, bearing more northwards, crossed the present Great Eastern Highway where stands a large neglected orchard. Then it bore into the valley on the eastern side of National Park - and on to York.

After the appearance of the strange cavalcade on its way to the Avon Valley, the Darlington area remained in its primitive state; its natural beauty untouched; inhabited only by natives for some forty years. As far as is known historically, the Colonial march of progress passed by unconcerned and the first nearest settlement

around the 1850's was a convict camp on the main York Road, which ran a mile north of the Darlington-to-be area. This camp was established alongside the Bilgomen well, discovered, and used by the earliest travellers. (At the Darlington turn-off, opposite National Park main gates.) The only other known settlers that may have been close by, were timber cutters who established themselves temporarily close to the road, where it was easy to get their timber out and onto the road for transport to Guildford.

Whether the old Dale track through Boya and Darlington was used much is not known, although its presence was known and recorded by surveyor Chauncey in the first official survey of the York Road from Guildford to York in 1846.

Chauncey dotted in a line of road across Darlington area and through Boya Valley and so to Guildford. This can be seen today on a copy of Chauncey's map that hangs in the hall of the Old Mahogany Inn Museum at Mahogany Creek.

This old track to Guildford went fairly close to Clayton House (between Boya and Bushmead, on Clayton Road) built by Richard Smith in the 1860's. Whilst this house and property is outside the boundary of Darlington, its history is of interest because, apart from the convict settlement, it was the nearest neighbouring settlement and the oldest neighbour. The property itself, lying alongside Clayton Road consisted of 1100 acres and was first granted in the 1830's to Henry Camfield, who leased it to James Drummond, the first Colonial Botanist. Later, it was leased to John Clayton and referred to locally as "Clayton's Place" or just "Clayton". In the latter part of 1860, when Richard Smith purchased the property from Camfield, and built thereon a two storey brick building, he named it "Clayton". This house is still there and inhabited today by an employee of the present owners, Elders Goldsborough, Mort and is used as a holding paddock.

The next neighbour did not appear until 1876 when Alfred, son of Richard Smith, left Clayton and established a timber mill at what is now Glen Forrest. Smith's land extended as far west as Lionel Road. A few years later R.W. Hardey MLA and Wm. McGlew took up land in the vicinity of Smith's mill. Here, Hardey planted a vineyard which he called Glen Hardey. Hardey was a son of Joseph Hardey who with his brother John, took up land on the Peninsula at Maylands. John was the Hardey previously mentioned as one of the party who first passed through the Darlington area. Incidentally, these two brothers, together with the Clarksons, were devout Methodists and Joseph was the first such preacher in the early Colony. His first church was under a large gum tree in St. George's Terrace.

But still, except for occasional forays by Smith's timber cutters, the Darlington area still remained in its virgin state.

Part 2

Darlington remained in its virgin state until about 1800 when Dr. Waylen of Guildford bought three blocks of 50 acres each on the slopes of the hills surrounded by heavy jarrah forests and began the clearing to establish a vineyard. This, as you might say, was the birth of Darlington. Dr. Waylen received the title deeds for these three blocks (951, 952, 953) in September 1883.

Many of the present residents facing the railway line, in both Darlington Road and Pine Terrace, will notice on their titles, "Lot so and so - part of Lot 951 or 952 or 953", (as the case may be). As is usual in many cases, Dr. Waylen was already in

occupation and had already started his project some time before his title deeds were issued.

On March 31st 1886, the *West Australian* contained an advertisement which is of sufficient historical interest to some Darlington residents to be quoted in full because as I have just mentioned, in latter years after subdivision, many have built their homes on the grounds of the old vineyards - others might see it as "that first smack on the bottom of the newly born Darlington."

Said the *West* -

"Darlington Vineyard.

The well-known property belonging to Dr. Waylen M.D. consists of 130 acres freehold, being amongst one of the first sections on the Eastern Railway line and specially selected for vine growing by the owner.

Improvements consisting of 24 acres planted with choice wines, 3 roomed cottage, stable and 30 acres paddock with sheep-proof fence of which 4 acres are cleared. The vineyard has been thoroughly cleared and is fenced with wire netting, barbed wire and mahogany posts. The vines comprise Burgandy Fontenableau and shiraz for red wines - Sweetwaters, Pedro and Reisling for white wines.

Supply of permanent water from 3 wells and any quantity can be obtained by shallow sinking. The present plant consists of horse, cart, scarifier and all necessary tools.

At the advice of two friends, Dr. Waylen has decided to extend operations and open a share list upon the following terms; present capital to be 20 shares of £150 each, of which Dr. Waylen receives (fully paid up) 10 shares to recoup him for his outlay (about £1200) and for supervision and goodwill £300 or 2 shares. Therefore only 10 shares to dispose of. Or is willing to entertain a partnership.

The Garden Hill wine, so long well known, made on Dr. Waylen's Guildford vineyard is sufficient guarantee to the probable value of the improvements completed, and Dr. Waylen is prepared to undertake supervision at Darlington.

For further particulars

Morrison and Crossland (late James Morrison)"

As a result of this advertisement, the Honorable Josceline George Herbert Amherst offered and was accepted as a partner. It was arranged that the Doctor would remain at Guildford and handle the affairs there and at Perth while the Hon. Amherst would look after the Darlington part. He built a large stone house on the property as his residence. This, he named "Holmesdale". It still stands today and is the residence of Mr. And Mrs. R.F.L. Hammond.

The Hon. Amherst also owned an estate at West Midland on the southern boundary of Gov. Stirling's "Woodbridge" estate. If West Midland residents read De Brett's Peerage they will recognise the significance of some of their street names. This also applies somewhat to Darlington. The Hon. J.G.H. Amherst was the first son of the late Rt. Hon. William Pitt Amherst of Aracan in the West Indies; Viscount Holmesdale and Baron Amherst of Montreal (Kent) in the peerage of the United Kingdom by his marriage with Gertrude, sixth daughter of the late Hon. and Rt. Rev. Hugh Percy

D.D., Lord Bishop of Carlisle, third son of the 1st Earl of Beverley and Grandson of the 1st Duke of Northumberland.

(Owing to lack of space, see De Brett's for several pages of further information.)

This shows that Darlington started off on a high level, but owing to a shortage of Earls, has not been able to maintain this auspicious beginning.

The Hon. Amherst, born in Kent in 1846, educated at Cambridge and a barrister of the Inner Temple arrived in the Colony as Private Secretary to the Governor, Sir Napier Broome. When the governor completed his term of office and left the Colony, the Hon. Amherst remained and embarked on viniculture. Later he became a member of the Legislative Council of the first parliament under the present Constitution.

For some years the two partners carried on the successful Darlington vineyards. When the Hon. Amherst, who had been ailing for some time, died at his residence at Darlington on February 1st 1900, and Dr. Waylen died a year later, the vineyard was kept going under a manager, C.E. Mumme Jr, who resided on the property at "Holmesdale". Other managers followed - including A.E. Ross, John Chipper, Alex McBain, T.O Gaze, T.J. Jacoby and .. Pelissier. Finally, the estate was wound up and subdivided.

In March 1884, several years after Dr. Waylen established his vineyard in the hills, the second stage of the Eastern Railway (Guildford to Chidlows) was opened. Although giving considerable impetus to the growth of Darlington, this railway could hardly be called an unqualified success. The surveyors had presented the Government with three alternative routes, and today, we realize they chose the worst of the three.

Let us look back at the first Colonial railway system that was planned to be built in three stages. We have plenty of time and it might help some of us in Darlington to understand why the Government was loathe to entertain the many petitions to re-open the railway.

From the foundations of the Colony until 1884, all produce from the rich hinterland east of Guildford, in fact, all transport to and from was by wagons, drays, carts or horseback between Guildford and the Eastern districts. At the Port of Guildford, the road transport terminated. From there all goods to and from Perth and Fremantle went by river. In fact, it was not until 1930 did the last barge cease to run between Perth and Fremantle.

Part 3

In 1874 Henry E. Victor, a professional engineer, had drawn up a set of proposals for a railway between Fremantle and Guildford. One of which was south of the river, and although easier and more economical and did not necessitate any bridges across the river, it would have by-passed Perth. Another route, north of the river, which although meant building two bridges between Fremantle and Guildford, was finally chosen.

By 1881, with the long route controversy ended, the railway to Guildford was a going concern. This (as was previously mentioned) was stage 1 of a railway system for the eastern farming districts. The Government, although disappointed in its hopes that the railway would eliminate the river traffic and so bolster the rail expenditure, was

now planning the 2nd stage with a choice of three routes. It could go from Guildford to York via the Helena Valley or to Northam via the northern side of Greenmount, or to Toodyay via the Swan or Chittering Valley. Of the three, the worst was chosen. There were some critics who said that powerful interest dictated the ultimate decision and quoted Amherst, Hardey and Monger as being Members of Parliament and who, as landowners were directly interested. Maybe so! But let us be fair. It must be remembered that the idea of a railway was not intended as a passenger service, but as a quicker and easier method of transporting materials, merchandise and produce to and from the interior. The Government coffers were far from inexhaustible and as the Helena Valley was the most settled area between Guildford and York, it seemed that this route would cost less for the most returns. So, with the best intentions, this route was ultimately chosen. But when the 3rd stage to Southern Cross and later to the newer goldfields of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie was built, the government soon realized its mistake. The Kalgoorlie express, which of course, passed through Darlington, found many problems during the wet weather. The gradient was steep and some of the rail was laid across clay subsoil and when rain-soaked this proved to be a menace. Clay, as most people know, is a very poor foundation for building, and when soft, the rails tended to slither, with the result that as the engine drivers drove so slowly over these tricky patches in wet weather, they were invariably unable to get enough speed to take a run at the next gradient and also with wet rails, the wheels just skidded. This often meant leaving half the train - taking the first half over the bad patches and then returning for the other half. This couldn't go on, so the main line was diverted to a new route via Swan Hill. This route necessitated a tunnel that was not an overwhelming success either because the slow moving UP train passing through the tunnel had a tendency to suffocate the engine crew with engine smoke.

But for many years after, the local trains still used the first route to Mundaring and Chidlows. These also met with the same difficulties, but being smaller, not quite so much.

Kirwan Ward, who lived in Darlington for some years, often made mention in his Wardian manner of the "Mundaring Meteor". If taken seriously, it was quite an undeserved compliment, as the said train was certainly no "meteor". This would be confirmed by many disgruntled Darlington train commuters arriving home long after sundown to an overcooked, re-heated dinner. Many of the older Darlington residents tell of their experiences around a sharp bend near Boya, facetiously referred to as "Cape Horn". Some of their other adjectives used to qualify these and other such places, while most descriptive and illuminating, hardly qualify for mention in a family magazine. There was another bad spot between Darlington and Glen Forrest (or Smith's Mill as it was previously known).

When the rail came through, a siding called Darlington was placed for the benefit of the Waylen vineyard and any others who might take up land in the future. As a matter of fact an area of 6,000 acres reaching from the railway line to the Helena River had already been conditionally crown granted some years before to a W. Smith and a T.R. Smith (3,000 each). But nothing had been done to this land and possibly reverted. It was 150 acres of W. Smith's grant that was taken up by Dr. Waylen for his vineyard. This comprised two 50 acre blocks (952 and 953). As the rail later passed through the middle of the estate, it placed 952 and 3 on the north side, and the third 50 acre block (951) on the south side. This Darlington railway siding was situated opposite the old Ranger home, and I was able to verify its position by pacing the distance west from the present station.

It has been said that some time during the survey of the railway routes, Henry E. Victor when following the valley along the Helena, fell in love with a parcel of land, which he and his son, William later took up for a vineyard. This estate they called the "Glen". By the late 1890's several other settlers had arrived in the district and had taken up land for vineyards and orchards. The best known of these, (apart from Waylen, Amherst and Wm. E. Victor) were Thomas Cockshott, who named his property "Bellair" and John Allpike, who called his place "Leithdale". For the convenience of these people the railways placed another siding a mile further east and called it "Darlington Vineyards". As a point of interest, the fares from either siding to Perth was 2/3d first 1/4d second single and 3/5d and 2/- return.

Meanwhile the siding and area around Alfred Smith's, timber mill was given the name of Amherst. About 1901 the name Amherst was changed to Smith's Mill. There was some talk of naming it "Glen Hardey" because of Richard Hardey's vineyard established south of Smith's Mill but nothing came of it. So now until 1901, Darlington possessed two railway stations, viz "Darlington" and "Darlington Vineyards".

Although the village was growing larger all the time, it was now found that one railway station would be sufficient. This paradoxical state of affairs was due to the fact that the village was extending in an unusual direction - eastwards! It is strange but true that unless blocked by some natural obstacle nearly every town or city grows westwards, and the business and residential centre also moves westwards, often leaving the original part or the east side, to gradually fall into disrepair and often to degenerate into a slum area. For example, most Londoners know the difference between the East and the West End. The East side of New York is another instance. Look back on any town or village you know well. Has it not normally extended westward, rather than eastwards?

Perth, itself grew westwards. At first, the western extremity was more or less at the jetty around the foot of William Street with the town centre more or less bisected by Barrack Street. While the residential area of the nobility (for want of a better word) was along Adelaide Terrace. As the town expanded, it went mainly westward and the aforementioned residential slowly moved westward to King's Park Road and Dalkeith. Even Helena Vale (or Midland Junction as it was later renamed) grew around the railway station of Helena Vale. It also spread West and North. As a result of Darlington's eastward growth, the "Darlington" siding was abandoned and "Darlington Vineyards" became "Darlington". Today, still paradoxically, Darlington changed its original course and is moving westwards. It will probably "box the compass" before it finishes.

The Darlington station still stands - forlorn and neglected. The Meteor is history and the rails are gone forever and there remains little evidence of a government error. Let us hope that some future historian is not forced to write of how the "one train a day" that puffed through Darlington's middle was replaced by a main road for semi-trailers shooting through the township almost bumper to bumper. However, whatever it was, Darlington profited by the rail which encouraged other vingerons to establish vineyards. It encouraged more residents and promoted tourism and the establishment of a number of guest houses. And until the coming of the automobile, it was the means for many, many visitors to enjoy happy, restful days in the beauty of the surrounding hills and valleys.

Part 4

It has already been mentioned that Dr. Waylen and the Hon. J.G.H. Amherst were the first two settlers in Darlington and that the first house was built ("Holmesdale") by Amherst, but who came next into the district is a matter of conjecture. There seems to be no way of ascertaining exactly when these people applied for or occupied their grants or purchases. The only certainty is when the deeds were signed and issued and this could be two or three (or even more) years after such land was actually occupied. Government Departments were even slower in those days than today and by the time the Government surveyors got around to that district and passed results over to the drafting office and then to the titles office, much time could have elapsed.

Many early records have been lost - left to the care of the white ants or mildew - or "stored away in a safe place" and the storer who knew where has long since gone to a silent grave. Sometimes rate records and such have simply been destroyed. So all we can be sure of at the moment is that Edward Thomas Hope was issued with a title deed on May 13th 1890 for some 17 acres known as Swan Lot 33. Five months later, 7 acres of this was transferred to Thomas Dobson Cockshott (Oct. 22nd 1890). When E.T. Hope died in Aug. 1894 Thomas Cockshott took over the remaining 10 acres and the deed was dated October 1897.

W.E. Victor's deed for Swan Lot 35 and which he called the "Glen" was issued on the same day as E.T. Hope's (May 13th 1890) and as it is seen that Thos. Cockshott's was issued five months later it would seem that the former was the second settler in Darlington. This might well be so and as has already been stated, the deeds themselves have no strict bearing on when these locations were first actually occupied.

The remains of the homes of these two pioneers, Victor and Cockshott may still be seen by anyone interested and not certain of the locality by travelling down Glen Road and turning into Victor Road. There, on the right hand side on a hill is the forlorn remains of Thos. Cockshott's once happy homestead, "Bellair" where the laughter of children and the oft sounds of parties and dances is but a memory to the few Darlington people who lived here in those days. Almost opposite, down in the glen, on the south side of Victor Road on a rise overlooking a gurgling rivulet, spanned by a rustic bridge, Henry Victor and his son William, built their home appropriately named the "Glen". What now remains, fast decaying and neglected fruit trees and overgrown gardens do little to remind us of the hard times and the happy times spent by these pioneers. They, themselves have since passed on and in the 1930's both properties were taken over by Albert James Prater and have been subdivided.

The next settler in the district was John Allpike who had been manager of Padbury and Loton's store in Guildford for many years, Allpike took up Swan Lot 32, just over 19 acres and the deed was signed on May 15th 1894. This was bounded on the west by the present Gladys Road and on the east by the present Allpike Road. The present Lukin Avenue more or less bisects the original Lot, which has since been subdivided. As a point of interest, Lukin Avenue no doubt is named after George Lukin who with Henry Cooke and Constance Gull were "tenants in common" of the property around 1913.

On this Lot 32, John Allpike established a vineyard and wine cellars. And there he built a large stately home which he called "Leithdale". Of 66 squares and some 7 or

8 rooms built of stone. According to Sam Hort the stone was brought in from Smith Mill. Sam also says there was no road from Darlington to Leithdale and that when he contracted to cart a load of timber from Holmesdale to Leithdale, he was forced to find and clear his own track. On looking at a photograph of Holmesdale taken just after its completion in the 1880's and then looking at Leithdale, one is lead to surmise that both could have been built from the same plan and possibly the same architect for there is a remarkable similarity.

When Allpike died in June 1899, his wife carried the place on for a year or so, from then it was occupied by numerous people. This gracious old home which is still in very good condition and now the residence of Dr. and Mrs. H.L. Chester, has perhaps the most varied and interesting history of any of the old homes in Darlington.

It is interesting to note that the old stone wine cellars which belonged to Leithdale are still in existence and although now on a different block due to subdivision are in no danger of disappearing because about 9 or 10 years ago a builder, Jack Holt covered the entire cellar roof with a thick layer of concrete. Upon this he built a house. The Cellars, he made as cosy as a rabbit warren and stocked them with tin food, fully convinced that here he would be safe from the approaching and inevitable bomb blasts and radiation. Looking at present world events one might come to the conclusion that perhaps he wasn't quite as eccentric as people said. However, for reasons best known to himself, he vacated the place and it is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. AW. Brown.

Leithdale, itself, saw many owners and occupiers and the early directories lead one to believe that on several occasions, two families were residing there at the same time. As an example, around 1912, Vickery K. Jones was in residence at the same time as J.L. Leach, a bank manager whose (second wife was an Allpike). This also applied earlier to Mrs. Growse and the Gliddens.

This apparent anomaly arose from the fact that on a rise of the hill behind Leithdale and approached from Leithdale itself, a house had been built for the manager. This was locally referred to as Leithdale Cottage. It was still part of the Leithdale property. Today, it is known as "Flagstaff" and approached by Allpike Road. When John Allpike died in June 1899, probate was granted to the executor William George Johnson. In 1903, Johnson granted a lease of the Leithdale property to Edgar Howard Glidden as from May 7th 1903 to the 11th June 1909 at a yearly rental of £130. E.H. Glidden was Perth City Engineer for some 14 years. Apparently he gave up the lease after a couple of years. In 1905 and 6, Ernest Giles gave his address as "Leithdale", but whether he was at Leithdale proper or Leithdale Cottage is not known. Later, the property was taken over by Vickery K. Jones (in the printing business).

In 1912 by some arrangement with the Education Dept., V.K. Jones made his dining room available to the Department as a temporary school room and so on 28th May of that year, the first school in Darlington was opened with an enrolment of ten children under Miss Hogan who also resided at Leithdale. On 28th October 1913, the school was transferred to its new premises on the present school location. Around 1919, John Scown opened Leithdale as a guest house. In 1922, it was taken over by Miss Mollie Skinner and Nurse Ellen Beakbane (a Quakeress) and was still occupied by them as a guest house as late as 1929.

Sometime about 1922, the author of "Lady Chatterly's Lover" D.H. Lawrence and his wife Frieda, seeking peace and quiet, found it at Leithdale and while there, much attracted by the writings of Mollie Skinner, collaborated with her to write "Boy on the Bush".

I first knew Mollie in the 1940's as a member of the Fellowship of Writers. A daughter of Col. and Mrs. J.T. Skinner and a grand-daughter of Mr. Geo. Leake Q.C. Mollie spent her childhood in England and Ireland. On her return, she trained as a nurse and midwife. During World War I she served with Lady Minto's Nursing Service. She wrote "Letters of a V.A.D.", "Black Swans", "Tucker sees India" and also wrote her autobiography. She died at York on May 25th 1955 aged 78. Later for some years, Nurse Wills used Leithdale as a convalescent home until seven years ago when the old home was bought by Dr. and Mrs. Chester.

When Mrs. Chester very kindly showed me over this gracious old home with its varied history - its tall ceilings, delightful marble fire places in spacious rooms and the small hall or cloak room that once led to the large outside ballroom (since disappeared), she pointed to a small (portable) polished jarrah lectern standing in a corner of the patterned terra-cotta tiled entrance hall and said that the front sitting room had once been consecrated and used for church services.

As V.K. Jones was said to be a staunch non-conformist perhaps - such is the atmosphere that permeates "Leithdale". The vines have gone but the old English trees and Cape lilacs live on and spread their gnarled branches protectingly over the old place that has once more reverted to a private dwelling. Many of the sheds have tumbled down or otherwise disappeared.

Rather than steal from this gracious home the atmosphere that surrounds it, no mention will be made of modern improvements so necessary to present day gracious living.

Part 5

Too little is known of Darlington until in 1898 when a town directory showed a list of the residents of Darlington and their addresses.

These consisted of John Allpike (Leithdale). Lamb and Spice (also at Leithdale). They were probably employees. There was H.E. Victor (The Glen); Hon. J.G.H. Amherst (Holmesdale); T.D. Cockshott; Bechay (no address); C. Mumme junior and J. Mumme (also no address). It is thought that the two Mummes were related to William Mumme, a brewer who was born in Hamburg in 1838 gaining his brewery experience in Germany and later starting business in Albany in 1869. Not faring so well there, he came to Perth and went into partnership with Dr. Ferguson of the Houghton vineyards (on the Swan). After some years with the old Stanley Brewery they took over an existing brewery, started in the 50's by Fred Sherwood called the "Swan". This was behind the United Service Tavern in St. George's Terrace and close to what is now Sherwood Court.

In July 1890, Richard Adolphus Sholl, Post Master General, received the title to Swan Location 1234. This block of some eleven acres bounded by Darlington Road and Dalry Road, now contains the residence of Sisters Lefroy, Bennett, and others. In 1892, this block was leased to a Perth Land agent, Samuel Alfred Hutchinson for seven years and in July 1897, it was transferred by endorsement to the Hon. J.G.H., Amherst - separated only from his residence "Holmesdale" by Darlington Road.

When Amherst died in 1900, this block was transferred by the trustees to John Frederick Stone in 1903, and in that year, Stone also purchased the nearby 12 acre block to the eastward, Location 1235. In 1890, R.A. Sholl also took up Lot 54 on the north of his block, now divided by Dalry Road. The lot (55) on the eastern boundary, containing some 15 acres was taken up by E.T. Hope in 1890. Today, now subdivided, this block contains the residences of Dr. Cuthbert and Messrs. Steel, Lyall, Hennessey and Henderson.

In 1899, this block (Lot 55) was transferred to Caroline May Drummond of Peppermint Grove and transferred to J.F. Stone in 1903. In 1903, Swan Loc. 1235 of 12 acres was taken up by J.F. Stone and in 1909, probated to his wife Amelia Stone, then of Mount Street, Perth. The block 1236 was also owned by Mrs. Stone. What better name could be given to Stone Crescent?

We know that Alfred Sandover had his home removed from one side of Dalry Road and reassembled on a portion of Lot 55, and where Kenneth Steel now lives, and we know that Alfred Sandover built a rather large coach house or garage on the south side of Dairy Road, to be used as a garage and/or a week-ender for his son Eric and friends. We also know that in 1924, Alfred Sandover received the title to a corner block (Lot 376, part of Loc. 55) bounded by Dalry and Hillsden roads, but it has not been ascertained just what other land might have been owned by Mr. Sandover, nor is it known at present from which block he moved his house, but wherever it was, it must have been originally part of J.F. Stone's extensive holdings.

After Dr. Waylen died in 1901, the Darlington vineyards were subdivided into two estates. That on the south side of the railway (lots 952 and 953) was taken over by Richard Holmes and Co., wine merchants of Perth, with C. Mumme junior as manager. Lot 951 on the north side is a bit of a mystery until it was later subdivided and Alfred Vincent built a home on a portion of it.

It might be surmised that where Amherst built Holmesdale was part of this Lot 951, but that is not so, but was a small 10 acre block (Swan Loc. 1191) - sandwiched between 951 and Darlington Road. Of course at this time, Darlington Road was but a dream of the future - or at best a pair of cart ruts. This Swan Loc. 1191 was first issued to Dr. Waylen and dated Jan 31st 1889. Two years later the title was transferred to J.G.H. Amherst and upon which he built his "Holmesdale". After the deaths of Dr. Waylen and Amherst, Loc. 1191 was bought by John Chipper, a descendent of the John Chipper who put Chipper's Leap into the local history. Some years later Wm. Allnut Saw, an Inspector of Plans and Surveys etc. took over the estate.

In 1901 the Directory tells us of an influx of four Italians, Messrs. Bertachi, Bertetto, Roccochiolo and Trancatti. Also that Miss M. Castilla, a friend of the Cockshott's, who for a few years, gave her address as "Bellair". Her sister-in-law, Mrs. De Castilla was well known in Claremont and was a Bussell before her marriage. Other new names to Darlington gave no address, so where and why they lived here is not known. These included, Miss L. Evans, Louis Hasluck, Alfred H. Spalding, Louisa Stapleton, Evan Wade and Charles Stuart Russel Palmer, C.S.R. Palmer lived in Darlington for a number of years and built the old Stone house on the north side of Stone Crescent and by the castellated brickwork at the end of some of the walls, intended to add extra rooms, but this was not done and apparently after his death, the land (Loc. 52) was transferred to Lewis Henry Duval, civil servant, in 1910, and in 1957 to George Alexander MacMillan. Now transferred to a syndicate and, with other blocks, subdivided.

C.S.R. Palmer was the State Engineer for roads and bridges and in 1901 was instructed to investigate the construction of a bridge across the Perth Narrows. He envisaged wooden piles and decked bridge 905 feet long, carrying 2 lanes for tram tracks; 2 lanes for vehicular traffic and two pedestrian paths. This was carefully filed away and forgotten for the next fifty years.

In 1903 while still living at Darlington, Palmer as State Engineer-in-Chief, was in charge of dredging Perth Waters, and to this, we owe much of the Esplanade and Union Square. It is said he was against a proposed plan to convert Perth waters into a deep water channel connected with Fremantle.

In the year of 1901, the "Darlington Vineyard" railway station was changed to "Darlington" and the former station, which was opposite Ranger's old home, was closed down.

By 1902, Mrs. Growse had taken over "Leithdale" and Chinese market gardeners, Ah Ling & Co., had established themselves in Darlington. In 1902, after J.F. Stone had taken up his property bounded by Darlington Road and almost to Montrose Avenue, Ah Ling and Co., had their gardens on the hillside of this property - facing Darlington Road and opposite "Holmesdale" for which, it is said, they paid a rental of £70 a year to the Stones. Sam Hort says he remembers vast quantities of cape gooseberries which, with other fruit and vegetables, found their way to Ah Ling's shop in Perth. A tin shed in which these people lived is still there (or was when going to press).

By 1902 the Directory showed a further influx of "colonists". J.C. Chipper was still living at Holmesdale and A.E. Ross was now manager of the Darlington vineyards. The manager's house was in the present Owen Road and after the vineyards closed down and the land subdivided, Mrs. Curlewis lived there. About this time, the mud-brick walls were veneered with modern bricks and plaster and some of these walls are about 3 feet thick. Today, it is the home of H.F. Henderson.

I make no apologies for the frequent mention of Location and lot numbers, for although quite boring to some, it allows interested persons to look at their rate notices and learn that they are headed "lot so and so, part of such and such". "Such and such" being my secret code for the original grant or location number and from that and this article, they may learn who started the whole business.

Part 6

Came the time when the growing village of Darlington began to feel the need for a school and in May 1912 this project was realised when Mr. V.K. Jones offered the use of portion of Leithdale for such a purpose to the Education Department and on this day, Miss Hogan became teacher for 10 pupils.

By October 1913, the Education Department had acquired some land and erected a school house and the school was transferred there and opened on that date. The school was situated on the present school site.

Continuing along on this vein, this month's issue of Darlington history is given over entirely to the school's early days - a record of what happened and when. This should be of much interest to many present day residents and bring back memories to those who attended the school then and later.

The following information is taken mainly from extracts of the *Head Teacher's Daily Journal* which dates from the day the school first opened.

Through the co-operation of the present headmaster, Mr. John Smith, this journal was unearthed and from it, much valuable information was obtained. Had it followed the fate of so many Govt. Departments and Shire records, most of this would have been lost forever. Makes you think, doesn't it?

On opening this weather-worn book that began with the opening of the school and continued on through the years, John Smith and I read with great interest. It stated that on Dec. 4th 1913, two pine trees were planted and that on Dec. 12th two more (presented by Mr. Frank Gibson) were planted. Frank Gibson lived in Amherst Ave., next to the school.

The entry for Dec. 18th gave evidence of the great day of the year when prizes would be given and there would be no more school until after the holidays. The children cried with glee and some parents just cried. So on this day (or was it evening?) all the school assembled at the Congregational Church Hall in Amherst Avenue. By now there were 24 to 26 pupils on the roll. The terse official entry says nothing of the excited children and proud parents.

The following year, on April 20th 1914, it was mentioned that Miss Faith Maslin commenced as a probationer and that on June 19th it was Arbor Day and that every child planted a tree in the presence of 60 parents and friends. Mr. Cockshott gave an address to the children.

On further perusal what greatly impressed me was the spirit or atmosphere surrounding the school in its early days and that Darlington must have been then a closely knitted community judging by the parental interest taken in the school and the scholars generally.

In May 1915 it was stated that there were 44 pupils on the roll. On Dec. 14th 1915, an annual picnic took place between 3 and 6 p.m. at "Leithdale" at the invitation of V.K. Jones. The following year on Feb. 14th Miss Constance N. Gibson commenced duties as a probationer. And on March 17th the children attended classes for the greater part of the week in a new shed as the noise of the men working on the new addition to the school was distracting.

On May 24th 1916, being Empire Day, it was celebrated by special lessons on the Empire. Mr. Victor addressed the children. The flag was saluted. Patriotic songs were sung and at noon classes were dismissed.

On July 21st it was stated that a school library had been opened at the beginning of the previous month. Many children subscribed books and each brought a penny towards funds. There were then 40 second-hand books in good condition and the money to hand was 2/1014 ... First, the acorn then the oak.

By December, the fruit season was near, so was the Xmas Spirit. This was made manifest when on Dec. 22nd, Mrs Kipling of "Leithdale" donated a basket of pears for the children. On Feb. 16th 1917, Mrs. Kipling sent a basket of figs and on March 2ⁿ Mrs. Victor sent a basket of grapes. On the 8th all the school walked to the "Glen" where Mrs. Victor showed and explained the process of preparing currants. In the afternoon, Mrs. Victor returned the visit by driving to the school with grapes and apples. On March 16th Mrs. Kipling sent a basket of large pears and it was stated - "two for each child". Then on April 3rd the children went to the Darlington Vineyard and cellars (the present lesser hall). They found that wine-making had finished for

the season, but they were shown the huge vats, the barrels and crushers and rubber tubes etc. (so said the entry). On August 14th, the children paid a visit to Mrs. Geyer's orchard, which was on the corner of Leithdale Road and Lukin Avenue and later taken over by Lyons. The children saw the pruning and were given some loquats by Mr. Geyer. Also Mrs. Victor sent a basket of oranges to the school.

August 24th was Arbor Day and it was mentioned that Mrs. Kipling sent oranges to the school and at the end of the year it was stated on Dec. 7th that the children decided to forego their prizes that year and the money (£1) had been sent to the Y.M.C.A. towards their Trench Comforts Fund. However their self-denial did not go entirely unrewarded because on Dec. 18th the school visiting day, about 40 visitors, mostly parents gathered at the school and witnessed the handing out of three prizes - one donated by Mr. and Mrs. Cockshott for the best all-round girl of the year which was won by Joan Fischer. The second, donated by Mr. H. Pearson, (of the Modern School) for the best boy, was presented to Gordon Sibree (or Sibrell?) - (The Head's writing was no better than my own). While the third, donated by Mrs. G.G. Martin was won by Nancy Martin.

On May 20th 1918, Lieut. Eric Sandover paid a visit to the school in the afternoon and related some of his experiences at the Front in France.

On June 5th - the King's Birthday, it was a holiday and all the children and parents assembled at the school for the unveiling of the Darlington Honour Board. Patriotic songs were sung and the ceremony was performed by the Hon. H.P. Colebatch M.L.C. Colonial Secretary and Minister for Education. There were some 150 visitors present. Then on Nov. 8th word was received at school that morning of the Peace being signed. "Days rejoicing".

On Dec. 20th there were two prizes donated by Messrs. Cockshott and Geyer for the best in the school and playground ... Frank Heulin 1st and Joan Fischer 2nd.

On Feb. 19th 1919, Miss Hogan, who had served long and well, left on sick leave and apparently did not return and her place was taken over by Wm. Cook who only lasted three months before being transferred to Marrinup and Mrs. K. Lander became the head teacher.

Part 7

At the beginning of 1919 Mrs. K. Lander was appointed Head Mistress of the Darlington School. At the end of 1920 Mrs. Lander recorded with pleasure that Joan Fischer had won an entrance to the Modern School.

In October 1921, the school was treated to a lecture on a very interesting little creature by Mrs. Sewell, who showed the children, through a microscope, the antennae, biting jaws and legs of the white ant.

On Jan. 15th 1923, Mr. J. Allbrick took over the school from Mrs. Lander, with Miss V. Brown of the Norseman school, as assistant. He remained for 15 months until his place was taken over by Mr. Hugh King. And my friend John Smith informed me that a few days previously he had spoken with Mr. King and that he is enjoying good health in the salubrity of South Perth.

By 1924, the school found need for more room and on Feb. 25th, the Head Master, Mr. King, wrote that excavations for the new classrooms had started and that the average attendance was 84 to 98.

On July 7th, the tennis court was finished and marked out.

Although Darlington is looked upon as a healthy place, entries in the Head Master's Journal showed little evidence during the winter and spring months of this supposition because on May 20th 1929, Mr. L.B. Humphry, who was relieving Head Master King for six months, stated that many families were affected by measles and chicken pox. Absent from school, he stated, were two Curlewis children; Harris (1); Lindsay (2); Chapman (2); Leake (2) and others still absent were Stirling (2); Cowper (1); Bovell (1); Monger (1); White (1); and Crieg (1)

On May 22nd there were 22 absent. On June 4th there were 20 sick and that Warburton (1); Arkells (3); Burge (1); Prater (1) had developed measles. Then on Aug. 2nd the entry tersely stated "Relinquished duties as relieving H.T. after 6 months to Hugh H. King, signed L.B. Humphrey".

In Sept. 1930, mumps and chicken pox prevalent ... So much for sickness!

In 1931 the depression was well spread over the world. Many felt helpless and hopeless; others did all they could to help those less fortunate than themselves, and in Aug. 1931 a school concert was held in aid of unemployment relief. The nett takings were £10.9.9. Also relief work was being carried out at the school grounds. A retaining wall was being built and it was stated that efforts would be made to have the enclosed space levelled for a playing area.

On Sept. 26th a school ball was held in the local hall (previously the Darlington Vineyard cellar, or winery - if you insist - "the Lesser Hall"). Half the proceeds went to the P and C and half to the unemployment relief fund. In Dec, in the same hall, a public farewell was given to Mr. King who was being transferred to Denmark (not Lisa Mapp's Denmark!).

At the school opening in Feb. 1932 Mr. L.B. Humphrey returned and assumed the role of Head Master. On Feb. 10th, there was a dangerous bush fire, which started at Boya and came up to the south side of the school. The journal stated: "School in danger at 2.15 p.m. Boys very tired. School dismissed."

On March 1st, Mr. Hugo Fischer presented the school with a football and in April the laconic remark "Chicken pox prevalent".

On July 10th 1933, another laconic remark in the journal, but one in which I (a new comer to Darlington) found much personal interest. The name of an old scribbling friend of mine was mentioned, when the Head Master wrote: "Mr. Paul Buddee appointed monitor. His first appointment."

On further perusal of the Head Teacher's Journal, I became aware of several things that would not make an historian's work any easier. I noticed quite a lot that appertained to school routine which would not be of much interest to anyone else. The fact that various assistant teachers were absent at various times due to illness; or that the Head Teacher was also absent for one reason or another would become tedious with repetition. Other entries appertaining to the odd (sometimes, very odd) parents' complaints, or references to certain pupils' serious misdemeanours, while perhaps of great interest to a newspaper journalist, must be (and usually is) shunned as the plague by an historian. But mainly, as the years progressed, I found a distinct change developing, no doubt due to the fact that the school was growing larger (from

10 pupils to the present day 170) and the personal touch was becoming more obscure. As mentioned previously, the personal gifts of fruit to the school and the personal interest taken in other ways by these people slowly faded from print and its place taken by an impersonal body known as the Parents and Teachers Association, but no doubt with equal interest and effort as the former. More of this later. There was less and less mention of individual names and so forth. I then found that for a pupil to have his or her name mentioned it became necessary to:

- (a) Arrive at school after roll call.
- (b) To contract Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox, Diphtheria, Polio or Whooping Cough.
- (c) To break a leg, arm or digit or some other injury in the playground.
- (d) To commit a misdemeanour, such as a little surreptitious "borrowing" from another's bag or purse; transcribing or uttering a few four letter words, or playing the wag consistently. Of course, as usual, the really good rarely got a mention other than that they had gone to Midland for scholarship exams, but little mention, as far as I could see, of the results. There were many mentions of Dr. Stang's visits to the school as Government Medical Officer. On one occasion, it was noticed that on May 2nd 1934, Pat Hort was sent home with instructions not to return without glasses. It was twelve weeks before she returned. Obtaining suitable glasses seemed a difficult process.

On Aug.13 , I noticed that John Neville assumed duties as a Monitor - his first appointment I mention this because John, like Paul Buddee, is a good friend of mine. He now lives in Sydney.

October 12, 15 letters, written by the children, were sent to a school in Darlington, England. A nice thought! It could still be fostered.

In 1935, the year commenced with 71 pupils. Later in the year Diphtheria raised its ugly head in the district. This was good because it admitted several names to perpetuity, but bad because of its seriousness and danger. Sterling Mills (or Wills) and Melva Prater were sent home and four Abbots, two Haeters, and one Oxley arrived at school, only to be turned away as they had not been present at the swab taking on the 15th.

Eric Lauffer achieved a place on this honour roll by falling off the swing and breaking his arm.

On November 4th, 81 children and fifteen parents attended a zoo picnic and on November 18th, the school sports were carried out under the auspices of the Parents and Citizens Association (Hereafter part of the first part and designed as the P. and C). You will be pleased to know that the Red Faction won and that Bill Mofflin and Elise Abbott received a cup (whether each or half each has not been mentioned).

More next month when further names recorded on the Historical Honour Roll will be revealed.

Part 8

Continuing on from last month with the history of the Darlington school with the emphasis still on (what I choose to call) "Historical Honour Roll" the list is opened

with the Webb family whose credentials for that honour were based on the fact that the family was enveloped in a haze of Whooping Cough, made manifest by a cacophony of raspings, splutterings and what resembled elephantine mating calls. Anonymity obscured a number of eligible people with the terse entry - "Many away with Whooping Cough".

The year of 1936 opened with the entry on Feb. 3rd that Miss Darcy, a Monitor, had been transferred to Subiaco and that she was to be replaced by Miss Gillies - who did not arrive. As a point of fact, Miss Gillies, for reasons best known to herself, NEVER did arrive. The attendance in February was marred by the absence of four Hort children who were attending a Seventh Day Adventist fortnight's camp at South Perth.

On March 11th, the P. & C. voted £8 towards the cost of a wireless set (something Miss Hogan never thought of) and the Headmaster promised to arrange finance for the balance.

In June, the Misses Bovell and White spent the morning in the Junior room on observation work. They were not zoologists. They were Kindergarten teachers.

In September, Whooping cough blared out again and the Aulds, Abbots, Tomlinsons, Mountains, Hickings, Gees, Fischers, Bishops and Wills suffered the consequences, but no doubt will be cheered to find that they thereby made the H.H. Roll.

On Nov. 25th, the Headmaster, Mr. Humphrey, was absent from 9.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. As it was not a routine absence, we will mention the reason. Mrs. Humphrey was bitten by a spider. She became very ill and was taken to the doctor.

On Dec. 22nd the P. & C. gave a "Break-up" Tea Party in the hall. No further details as Mr. Humphrey was not given to verbosity in his reports.

On Arbor Day in July 1936, the children helped plant 27 pine trees on the recreation grounds. Which these are, I do not know: Possibly along Pine Terrace. Perhaps some resident was one of those children and will let me know. Most of those pines between the reserve and the railway(?) line were there at least as early as 1905.

On Nov. 22nd the annual Children's Ball was held in the local hall (or at least, on the previous Saturday night). Children free, Adults 1/-, and the proceeds amounted to £5.12.0 which the H.T. referred to as "very satisfactory".

The year of 1938. The H.T., Mr. Humphrey wrote that it was his 7th year. Apparently the Education Dept. finally discovered where he was and in March he was transferred - but to where Mr. H. did not disclose in the Journal. But he did mention that Miss Bell would be replaced by Miss Mofflin; also, that Brian Tomlinson and Audrey Andrews obtained the R.S.L. Scholarship - one to Wesley, and the other to the Methodist Ladies College.

March 16, The P. & C. earmarked £6 of its funds towards the purchase of a projector for visual education (no talkies!).

At times there was mention of vandalism at the school during week-ends and it was suspected by picnickers from other parts, but one such vandal was a local and was caught in the act (at least not caught, but seen to actually break one of the windows). The report stated: "Another window smashed by a kookaburra which persists in flying head-on at the glass." Apparently the "other Kooky" he saw reflected in the glass annoyed him as much as he annoyed the Master.

When Mr. Humphrey was transferred in March, Mr. G.E. McKenna took over, but the latter, much to the chagrin of this biographer, was a reticent as so many present locals, for in December he wrote: "School closed for Christmas vacation." No mention of parties, prize-giving and such.

In 1940 the year seemed to stress winter ills, and three more families qualified for the H.H.R. when Measles excluded them from school, to wit - Lenegan, Lyons and Phillips, plus nineteen who remained anonymous.

In October, J. Lenegan and ? Robinson went to Midland for the Scholarship exam. Hope they made it.

In December the school had another picnic at the Zoo.

The years of 1941 and 2 did not reveal much except that the local botanists will be pleased to learn that on Arbor Day some wattle trees were planted, and that on March 18th of 1942, the Congregational Church in Amherst Avenue was taken over as a class room and that there were now 80 odd pupils on the roll (for the benefit of purists and teachers the adjective "odd" qualifies 80 and not pupils).

In June, Donald Walters qualified for the H.H.R. when his neck swelled with Mumps, as did F. Thurkle and G. Owen, who arrived at 3 p.m. and were marked absent. Rex Walker chose Chicken Pox (or it chose him) while Wm. Phillips broke his arm and Barbara fell on the tennis court and broke her wrist. David McDonald, an individualist, chose Scarlet Fever.

For fear of boredom the H.H.R. has been partly closed, and now a pupil has to have a real good reason before making the grade.

In July of 1943, Mrs. Down and the Railway Dept. caused a small furor in the school activities and was forced to make the school open at 9.30, instead of 9 o'clock. Mrs. Down came by train and it didn't arrive until 9.30 - or a little earlier if the rails were dry. Mrs. Jowett, also a commuter, clinched the school change.

John Gare and Rae Read made the grade by arriving after Roll Call and many others whose names, except by special dispensation, I refuse to name - even if only for the reason that outsiders might get a picture of Masters and Mistresses sitting in school all day twiddling their thumbs while erstwhile pupils stay home to enjoy the heterogeneous list of winter ills.

June 7, 1946 earns a place as on that day the ordinary school programme was suspended in the afternoon to celebrate Victory Day held in the hall. The children listened to a broadcast and medals were handed to them by Mr. J.T. Clarke J.P. The children sang songs, gave a display of rhythm, Folk-dancing and P.T. They then enjoyed a High Tea given by the P. & C.

This, they had certainly earned because previously, in February 97 tins of food for the "Food for Britain Appeal" had been sent to Perth by carrier.

At the end of the year, the Head Teacher relinquished his position after 8 years' service. At the beginning of the next year the new Head wrote: "Took charge of this school to-day. 70 children appeared but no Assistants. Wire to Education Dept. for Assistant."

So wrote the new Headmaster - a "faceless" man who for twelve months carried on without revealing his identity. I would be indebted to any of his former pupils who would reveal to me the secret (1946).

Let us end this school history on a bright and the illuminating fact that on March 17th, the P. & C. decided to purchase a "Talkie" projector for use in the school, and on Oct. 25th of that year of 1949, a meeting was held by the Projector Committee at Mr. Gare's house to discuss a contract with M.G.M. for films suitable for public exhibition - one programme a fortnight.