

<i>Month & Year of Topic</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Written & Spoken Presenters</i>
May 1997	Silvesters Castle	Betty Goodger Laurie Meakins Mr. G. Tamplin Alec Leach

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SILVESTER'S PASTRE

① ATHEY HERITAGE GROUP

23-5:97

PREPARED BY : BETTY BOODGER

MEETING OF THE OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP
HELD ON THE 23rd MAY, 1997 IN THE BAND HALL

TOPIC " SYLVESTER AND HIS CASTLE"

SUBJECTS_ _PAPERS BY Mrs Betty Goodger
Mr. Laurie Meakins
Mr Alec Leach
A reminiscence 1990 George Tamplin

SILVESTER'S CASTLE

Notes prepared for Oatley Heritage Group, meeting Friday, 23 May, 1997
by B. Goodger

WRITTEN SOURCES

STORIES

1939 Oatley Castle : Reminder of the War Days
IN THE PROPELLOR 18 May 1939 page 7 column 5

This article is unsigned, gives only approximate dates and does not name the "eccentric, wealthy owner". It does locate the "Castle", "facing the junction of the George's and Woronora Rivers and overlooking Como Bridge". The article says ; "Soon to be demolished to make way for less romantic modern bungalows" so presumably the walls were still standing in 1939. The article says the stone was quarried on site and that the "timber roof members" came from an old theatre (not named) and transported to Oatley; the plans for building were altered continually with portions of the building being demolished and reconstructed. The author claims that the owner wanted to build a fort to combat the Germans, who presumably were to invade Australia via Georges River (during the 1914-1918 War.) He claims there was a small weatherboard room built in the quarry, with access via a plank, to give the owner privacy and security. He concludes "The War ended long before the building was 'under way' but for over six years after the War, the work was carried on. (This would mean building was going on in 1924.) He comments that swagmen used the Castle, so damage was taking place.

1979 Oatley: The Working man's paradise, by Elaine Howard. Oatley, Lions Club of Oatley, 1979 pp 20 Photo, 21

On the point above Neverfail Bay a large stone mansion was built for Mr. Silvester of Silvester Smallgoods, but this was later abandoned and proved a good playground for a generation of Oatley children. Over the years as the stones gradually disappeared the legends about Silvester's Castle blossomed with wildflower profusion. To some Silvester was a spy who built his fortress like some castle on the Rhine to aid the Kaiser; to others he was a philanthropist preparing to shelter all the people of Oatley when the invasion came. Are these memories relics of the childrens' games? Such memories are still vivid now and very real to those who remember childhood days when Oatley boys and girls scrambled on the crumbling turret high above the glistening river and the lattice girders of the railway bridge.

1981 Oatley in Early Days, by D.J.Hatton Monograph 9, Hurstville Historical Society 1981

p. 23 has a reference to "the big rock below below Sylvester's (sic) Castle", as a good spot for fishing.

24.

SYLVESTER'S CASTLE

Another interesting event at Gungah Bay was the building of Sylvester's Castle in Yarran Road, at the

25.

corner of Southern Street. Mr. Sylvester of the well-known small goods shops in Sydney, was going to have his home built in a beautiful position, with commanding views of the river. The stone was cut by stonemasons on the site but as the property was so far away from where they lived, stonemasons did not stay for long. To get to the job they would have to take the train to Como and walk back across the bridge to Sylvesters. The work therefore proceeded erratically. Mr. Sylvester was considered to be an eccentric and there were many theories about the purpose of the house, such as an asylum for the mental or as a spy's lookout in case an enemy force came up Georges River and landed troops to take Sydney from the rear. The building never reached roof height as parts were built, demolished and re-erected to a different plan. Beneath there were tunnels and cellars and water tanks built like rooms. To the children of Oatley, the castle was a marvellous playground, for there were so many exciting nooks and crannies to explore. The stone was cut from the centre to form a quarry and the castle built around this. In this quarry was a weatherboard cottage, built on concrete piles, the only access by a plank across the ten feet drop of the quarry. This cottage contained papers and photos, a table and a red cedar chair. The children would swing around on this, for the door of the cottage was not locked, and Mr. Sylvester was only there when the stonemasons were working. In the mid-1920s, the inevitable happened, for one Saturday afternoon, a fire destroyed the wooden cottage, and the firemen and all the children of the district were in attendance. The project was now abandoned, the Castle fell into disrepair, and the stones were scattered to the winds, some to reappear as foundations of houses and neat stone fences within the vicinity.

N.B. Should be Silvester

BO
Z

1984 Oatley Writes... A Souvenir publication of Oatley's 150th Anniversary 1833-1983.
p 38

SILVESTER'S CASTLE

Until recently, at the end of Yarran Road – the point of land between Neverfail Bay and Gungah Bay – were the remains of "Silvester's Castle". There are many rumours about this building, but one of the most persistent is that Mr. Silvester was on remittance from his family – the Silvester smallgoods people. There were those who believed that Silvester's ideas were "different" from most people's. In any case, during World War I, Silvester formed the opinion that the Germans would come up the Georges River and attack Oatley, so he began to build a castle with turrets, armouries, dungeons and so forth. The castle was never completed and in fact what there was of it seems to have been poorly constructed. Now that the castle has gone, there are many stone fences in the vicinity.

p57 par. 8 Reminiscences of Meryl Rosk in 1928.

"After Sunday School we would walk to near Como Bridge to Silvester's Castle, which also held fascination for us with its dungeons."

p 46 Photo no date Shows a view of the Railway Bridge through a doorway.

1996 Pictorial Memories St George, Rockdale, Kogarah, Hurstville. Crows Nest, Kingsclear Books, 1996 pp 74-75

In Oatley, at a point of land at the end of Yarran Road between Neverfail Bay and Gungah Bay, Silvester's Castle was built. Stories

abounded about the building including a version that Silvester was a remittance man separated from his family, the Silvesters of smallgoods fame. However, Silvester, during World War I, believed the Germans might invade and sail up the Georges River to attack Oatley. To defend the area he planned a castle with turrets, armouries and dungeons. The castle, poorly constructed, was never completed and subsequently many of the stones ended up in the front fences of homes in the area.

No date Map of municipality of Hurstville showing historical places including historical notes. Produced for Hurstville Municipal Council in association with the Historical Society. Item 60

Photocopy herewith

From:

"Oatley: the
Working Man's
Paradise"

By:

Elaine Howard



"Mr. Ron Holmes at Silvester's Castle in the 1940's."

1990 Reminiscences of Oatley c.1928-1990, by George Tamplin
 From a copy in RAHS Library MF991.1/OAT pp 18-23 (Photocopy herewith)

Mr Tamplin remembers walls two storeys high in 1935, was told a fire destroyed buildings in 1917 and the ruins vandalised after 1945.

"The Castle was surrounded with a beautiful stone wall which was extracted from the sand stone on the property. The sand stone wall ran down the steep sandy rocky hill to the George's River, a length of about 600 to 800 feet about 2 feet wide and beautifully made."

FACTS

So much for the stories. Now for some facts.

THE MAN

Henry Crawford Silvester was the son of William and Ann Silvester. He died on 27 November 1935. (BDM Index Death 1935 no 19795)

His death was reported in the SMH 28 November 1935 P 10 col. 1

DEATHS

Nov. 27, 1935 at a private hospital, Darlinghurst, Henry Crawford Silvester of Silvester Bros Ltd aged 73 years

An obituary appeared in the same issue (SMH 28-11-35 p 16 col. f)

OBITUARY

HENRY CRAWFORD SILVESTER

The death took place yesterday of Mr Henry Crawford Silvester, one of the founders of the firm of Silvester Bros Ltd, small goods manufacturers, of Regent Street, Redfern. Mr Silvester was 71 years of age and had been ill for six months. He was born in Kent and was one of the youngest of a large family. He lost his father at an early age, and as a youth, worked his passage to New Zealand, where he joined his brother, William, at Lake Wanaka. After a few years in N.Z., he came to Sydney about 1890, and with his brother, established the firm of Silvester Bros. The business was successful from the outset and branches were established at the Central Railway Station and in the Strand Arcade. His brother, William, died in 1927. Mr Henry Crawford Silvester was a bachelor and is survived by one sister in Sydney, his other surviving brothers and sisters living abroad.

Note his age is given as 71, not 73 as in the death notice.

A report of his funeral appears in SMH 29 November 1935 p 8 col.e

"The funeral of Mr. Henry Crawford Silvester took place yesterday at the

Church of England Cemetery, Woronora.

The chief mourners were Mrs E.E. Silvester (sister-in-law) and Mr A.Randall (brother-in-law) Silvester Bros were represented by Messrs V.H. Silvester, S.E.Blake, K.E.Silvester and K.W.Silvester (directors), K.T.English (secretary), R. Granger ... and L.Silvester. Others present included (representatives of other firms)... Mesdames V.H.Silvester and others.

(The SMH microfilm was so unclear that I am not sure of some of the initials.)

This should dispel the story that Silvester was a German, settle the spelling of the name as SILVESTER, not Sylvester, and cast doubt on the assumption that he was a remittance man.

SILVESTER'S WILL

The Probate Index 1929-1938 shows two reference numbers, 213734 and 221490, gives the date of death as 27 November 1935, his residence as Sydney, with a note, Pendente lite, the Latin phrase for "law suit is pending." Mr Arthur Ellis, of Hurstville Historical Society kindly made available a photocopy of the will for me to examine.

WILL 221490 Arthur Randall of Epping, brother-in-law, small goodsman, and Sydney Stansell Blake, accountant, were appointed as his trustees.

He left his estate to be shared equally between his brothers and sisters :

George Silvester, Grays Inn, pilot
Edward Silvester South Africa
Kate Silvester South Africa
Ellen Rendell wife of Arthur Rendell. (sic)

Should anyone die before him, their share was to go to their children.

There was a provision that disposal of his assets was not to embarrass or prejudice Silvester Bros.

The will was drawn 9 December 1927. He died in 1935. Probate was granted to Arthur Randall and Sydney Stansell Blake 24 May 1937.

His estate realised £80,338.

I doubt that he was a remittance man with such assets.

HIS PLACE OF RESIDENCE

From 1907 to 1921 he lived at "Nymboida", a house on the east side of Rosa Street, between Neville and Frederick Streets. (Sands Directories of Sydney)

In 1921 the Hurstville Council Rate Books have an address for rates to be sent to William Bates at 55 St David's Road, Haberfield. Wm Bates and his wife attended Silvester's funeral, so he must have been a friend or business associate.

I could not find him in Sands Directory from 1922 to 1924, but in 1924, the rate notices were sent to his accountant, S. E. Blake.

From 1925 to 1928, he lived at 14 Ada Street, Oatley.

Sometimes Sands Directory has J. Silvester, not H. Silvester, but the Electoral Rolls prove he lived in Ada Street.

I could not find him in 1929, but in 1930 he moved to 29 Turner Avenue, Haberfield where he was still living in 1933, the last Sands Directory published. He died in 1935.

PROFESSION

The Electoral Rolls from 1909 to 1928, show Henry Crawford Silvester as a butcher from 1909 to 1922 living at Rosa Street, and until 1928, as retired and living at 14 Ada Street, Oatley.

Deeds in the Land Titles Office, when he bought land in Yarran Road, show Provision Merchant.

LAND HELD IN OATLEY

While H.C.Silvester was living in Oatley, he bought several blocks of land across the railway line, in that part of Oatley which is in the Municipality of Hurstville.

Rate Notices issued in December 1923 show his holdings :

Valuation No	Street	Section	Lot	Unimproved Capital Value
1131	Llewellyn Street	30/7		£10
1132	"	30/6		£10
2329	Southern Street	29/1-3		£544
2334	"	29/9		£180
2330	"	29/4		£165
2563	Waratah Street	27/16		£10
2564	"	27/15		£10
2565	"	27/14		£10
2566	"	27/13		£10
2567	"	27/12		£10
2569	"	27/11		£10
2570	"	27/10		£10
2597	"	31/6,7,8		£50
2765	Yarran Road	32/17-23		£50
2784	"	32/1-10		£363
2790	"	32/16-22		\$231
2793	"	32/26		

He paid a total amount of £ 36/6/9 in rates that year.

See Deposit Plan DP5510 which shows Henry Crawford Silvester's holdings. Section 27 Waratah Street is not shown on this map. See also photocopy of a subdivision map of the Oatley Estate, with lots marked. (From the collection in "Gladwyn")

This estate was originally part of the 300 acres granted to James Oatley on 31 August 1833. It then passed to Charles Cecil Griffiths on 21 March 1884. He sold it as Oatley's Estate Co Ltd

PERTINENT LAND

It is the three lots in Section 29 Lots 1,2 and 3 that concern our search, for it is on these lots that the stone buildings, known as Silvester's Castle stood.

An area of 1 acre 2 roods was purchased by Herman Philip Henry Jasper Goth. This was Lots 1 and 2 of Section 29. He left it to his widow and sister. It was then sold to Henry Crawford Silvester, gentleman, on 9 December 1912. (Certificate of Title Reg. Book 1980 Folio 135)

I have not sighted the title deed for Lot 3 section 29 but was told by Mr Arthur Ellis that it was purchased in 1909.

This Lot 3 now has a house whose address is No 5, Southern Street, and the owner provided vital information.

Lot 1 Section 29 is on the corner of Southern Street and Yarran Road and Lots 2 and 3 in Southern Street, the land running down to Georges River.

The dimensions of Lots 1, 2 and 3 varied. Each had a frontage of 66 feet, but the length, running down to the water line, was approximately 627 feet for Lot 1, 547 feet for Lot 2 and 415 feet for Lot 3.

The 1912-1914 Valuation Book shows that Lots 1 and 2 (billed together) had a weatherboard house of five rooms on it and was therefore rated more highly. Lot 3 shows a value for land only, with no building. In the period 1912-1914, Silvester paid rates of £3/6/8 for Lot 1 on an UCV of £200, rates of £1/10/0 for Lot 2 with an UCV of £90 and rates of £2/0/0 for Lot 3 with an UCV of £120.

In 1920-1922 Lots 1 and 2 had an UCV of £264 and an ICV of £600, where Lot 3 had a value of £132 for land only.

The Valuation Lists for 1926 show for Lots 1,2 and 3, an improvement of "stone walls, etc". No improvements are shown on his other holdings in Southern Street, Lots 4 and 9 of Section 29.

This is the only written evidence I have found for the existence of the Castle. Unfortunately this does not help in establishing the date that Silvester began his building.

I do have a report of the state of building in 1928, supplied by Mr Laurie Meakin of 5, Southern Street, Oatley, i.e Lot 3.

Mr Meakin has provided a map and states that the main building, with a tower was "approximately 50 feet from Southern Street and on the Yarran Road boundary. It was of a 2-storey construction with an additional cellar constructed mainly of fine stone. However some concrete interior columns were used and at the southern end on top of the building, was a concrete water tank.

The other main buildings were about 120 feet down Southern Street and approximately 50 feet from the street and another near the north-western corner of the block.

These buildings both lacked roofs, however most of the walls were still in reasonable condition. They were both single storey. Both had been badly gutted by fire."

FIRE

Everyone remembers the effects of a fire on the ruins. However, no one knows when it happens. Mr George Tamplin states 1917; Dr Hatton was told "the mid-1920"s. There is an index to the local newspapers at "Gladwyn", for the St George Call from 1904-1979 and The Propellor for 1911-1942. No fire in the area is reported. There is a gap in the indexes of the SMH for the period.

I cannot therefore find any record of the fire which destroyed the Castle.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Mrs Snor of Waratah Street, Oatley presented an album of photographs of Silvester's Castle taken 24 March 1927 to the Hurstville Historical Society, who have deposited it with "Gladwyn". Their reference is Neg. 3 Film MN and others, and show the Castle with cellar, another building and some walls, with doorways but no roof.

A copy of Neg. 3 Film MN is included.

CONCLUSION

I have presented, as promised, the written records I found on Silvester's Castle. Henry Crawford Silvester has been identified and something of his life revealed. The position of his "Castle" has been established, but I am sure you will agree, there is so much more we would like to know that must remain mere speculation.

B. GOODGER
2nd May 1997

REFERENCES

I gratefully acknowledge help given generously by Mrs Noela Davis, Mr Laurie Meakin per Mr and Mrs Norm Butters, Mrs Cath Shaw for searches in Land Titles Office, Dr Joan Hatton of Hurstville Historical Society, Mr Arthur Ellis of Kogarah Historical Society for access to documents collected during his research on Silvester's Castle and the staff at "Gladwyn".

There are no papers on Henry Crawford Silvester or the Silvester business held in the Mitchell Library or listed in Manuscripts in Australian Libraries or the Australian Historic Records Register.

ADDENDUM

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL NOT STRICTLY RELEVANT TO THE CASTLE
THE BUSINESS

SILVESTER BROS Provision Merchants, Poulterers, Pork Butchers, etc and
Small goods manufacturers 71 Regent St Redfern

This advertisement appeared year after year in Sands Directory. Other addresses in the City and suburbs appear but this was the main building. It was demolished about February 1997. (per Arthur Ellis)

WILLIAM SILVESTER

According to Henry's obituary, William was his older brother. I did not find a death notice in NSW in 1927 that corresponded. William C Silvester died in 1927 at Burwood (15107), but his parents were Frederick and Susan, not William and Ann as Henry.

In the Probate Index for 1927, I found William Craggs Silvester, who died at Homebush 27 September 1927 No 148973. I have not sighted this will, so cannot be sure if he is the same man whose death was reported, or that he is Henry's older brother.

OTHER SILVESTERS

Mrs E.E. Silvester, Henry's sister-in-law, was Elizabeth Ellen of 7 Culdees Road, Enfield. Her son, Eric William, student, lived with her. (Electoral Roll 1934 Parkes - Croydon Park 5539 and 5540) Eric William must be 21 to be on the Electoral Roll, and is probably the Director, whose initials I could not be sure of from an indistinct microfilm of the SMH - K.? W.

The Director, V.H. Silvester was Vernon Henry Silvester, director, of "Sunnyside", York Street, Belmore. (Electoral Roll 1934 Electorate of Lang Subdivision of Belmore 6079)

He married Annie May Eleanor Philpot of Canterbury in 1913. They had two children, Norman L. born 1914 at Burwood and Margaret E. born 1917 at Burwood (BDM Register)

I have not established any relationship between the following Silvesters listed in Sands Directory for 1933 :

Alfred Charles Silvester 18 The Mall, Hurstville manufacturer (Electoral Roll Division of Barton subdivision of Kogarah 14494)

Horace Edward Silvester 33 Forbes Street, Ashbury (Electoral Roll Parkes subdivision Ashbury but which gives his address as Croydon Park)
motor mechanic

NOTES ON OTHER LAND HELD BY H.C.SILVESTER

It is interesting to note that in the 1912 Rate Books, Silvester's name is incorrectly given as H.C.Sylvester of Rosa Street, Oatley and is corrected by the 1917 voume.

Regarding Lots 1, 2-10 of Section 32, in Yarran Road, a note against Lot 1 states,

"This land is unapproachable, being on a slope, the value being more than 2034/2035", which are the other lots. Photocopy herewith.
From Rate Book 1912-14

Regarding Lot 4 of Section 29, in Southern Street, it was purchased by H.C.Silvester on 7 May 1921 for £180.
Hurstville Transfer Book 1921 photocopy herewith

Regarding Lot 9 of Section 29 in Southern Street, Lots 6 and 7 of Section 30 in Llewellyn Street and Lots 67 and 68 of Section 31 in Waratah Street and Lots 1-10, 16-22 and 26 of Section 32 in Yarran Road, these were sold after H.C Silvester's death, by his executors, S.S.Blake and A. Randall on 31 March 1938.
Certificate of Title Vol. 2354 Folio 172 . Photocopy herewith

page 16

MAN'S MIND SOUND

JUDGMENT ON £80,000 WILL

WHEN Henry Crauford Silvester made his will, he was of sound mind, said Mr. Justice Nicholas, in the Probate Court to-day.

The scheme of the will was perfectly rational, and there was strong evidence that it was made by a competent testator, said the Judge, in admitting the will to probate.

Mr. Justice Nicholas's reserved judgment was in the application by Arthur Randall and Henry Stansell Blake, executors, for the admitting to probate of Silvester's £80,000 estate. Defendant in the action was Vernon Henry Silvester, nephew, who lodged a caveat against the estate alleging testamentary incapacity by Silvester when he made his will.

Dealing with lunacy proceedings before Sir John Harvey some years ago, the judge said he should still hold that Silvester's answers, read in the light of Sir John Harvey's comment, furnished the strongest indication of Silvester's testamentary capacity.

The children of Silvester's then deceased brothers and sisters, with a few exceptions, were unknown to him personally, and he might well have thought himself justified in excluding the children of his deceased brother, William Craig Silvester, on the two grounds that his brother was well-to-do and that he had initiated proceedings in lunacy against the testator, which the son, the present defendant, had continued.

"It is clear that he had no general education and that, even after he left the business, he read no books. His recreation was physical exercise, usually without any definite plan," said the judge.

"He never married and he never attempted to attain the social position or to enjoy the comforts commensurate with his wealth.

Eccentric Habits

There was no doubt that the behavior of Silvester was abnormal and eccentric, and that in 1928, he appeared to be older than his 64 years.

"I think the testator's carelessness in money matters, as instanced by his neglect to bank large cheques, while living in extreme discomfort, and his neglect to complete building or drainage schemes which he had begun, were both instances of the same mental condition.

"He never accustomed himself to the handling of money and he would not brace his mind to the mental effort necessary for decisions or action.

"Sir John Harvey had refused, however to make any order in the lunacy proceedings, holding that Silvester was sufficiently protected by Mr. [Name] of the executors, and

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT OF **HURSTVILLE** WARD OR RIDING **PEAKHURST** VALUATION NO. **3946**

LESSOR'S NAME: **SILVESTER, HENRY CRAWFORD** ADDRESS: **ROSA ST. OATLEY**
(to S.S. Black 170th Street St. Syd)

COUNTY: **SOUTHERN** TOWN OR VILLAGE: **GUNGAH BAY**

STREET: **STONE WALLS ET** SIDE: **S**

DATE VALUE TAKEN EFFECT IN VALUATION YEAR	PARTITION	SEC.	LOT	AREA OR DIMENSIONS	VALUES			REMARKS
					UNIMPROVED	IMPROVED	ROADSIDE VALUE	
1.7.26		29	1/2	198' x 620' COR 3 370'	653	950	47	

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT OF **HURSTVILLE** WARD OR RIDING **PEAKHURST** VALUATION NO. **3947**

LESSOR'S NAME: **SILVESTER, HENRY CRAWFORD** ADDRESS: **ROSA ST. OATLEY**
(to S.S. Black 170th Street St. Syd)

COUNTY: **SOUTHERN** TOWN OR VILLAGE: **GUNGAH BAY**

STREET: **SOUTHERN** SIDE: **S**

ROAD NO. TO TITLE NO. **2181** P.P. **37** P.P. **5510**

DATE VALUE TAKEN EFFECT IN VALUATION YEAR	PARTITION	SEC.	LOT	AREA OR DIMENSIONS	VALUES			REMARKS
					UNIMPROVED	IMPROVED	ROADSIDE VALUE	
1.7.26		29	4	66' x 370' 330'	198	198	10	

1926 is 1st on Microfiche

4
KHURST.

JUSH.

3951
DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. VALUATION LIST
VALUATION DISTRICT OF HURSTVILLE WARD OF PEAKHURST
OWNER'S NAME: SIMPSTER, HENRY CRAWFORD
ADDRESS: C/S.S. BLAKE, 2-CREAGH-ST SYDNEY

COUNTY: SOUTHERN SIDE TOWN OR VILLAGE: GUNGAH BAY

MAP NO. 5510

DATE VALUE LAST EFFECT IN VALUATION BILL	SECTION	LOT	AREA	IMPROVEMENTS	VALUATION	UNASSESSED VALUE	REMARKS
1.7.26	29	9	1/8 x 230' 0' M.D.	270	270	14	

3939
KTDAL.

BH RESUB

3952
DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. VALUATION LIST
VALUATION DISTRICT OF HURSTVILLE WARD OF PEAKHURST
OWNER'S NAME: COOK, SYDNEY
ADDRESS: 111 MI ST, OATLEY

COUNTY: SOUTHERN SIDE TOWN OR VILLAGE: GUNGAH BAY

MAP NO. 5

DATE VALUE LAST EFFECT IN VALUATION BILL	SECTION	LOT	AREA	IMPROVEMENTS	VALUATION	UNASSESSED VALUE	REMARKS
1.7.26	29	10	55' x 200' 160' ST	✓ 240	240	12	HERE LLEWELLYN ST & END OF ST

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT OF **MURSTVILLE** WARD OF **PEAKHURST** TOWN OF **GUNGAH BAY**

OWNER'S NAME: **STUART, ALEXANDER** VALUATION NO: **3950**

STREET: **SOUTHERN** SIDE: **S** LOCALITY: **RIVERVIEW**

DATE VALUED FOR EFFECT IN VALUATION YEAR	SECTION	POS.	LOT	AREA BY DIMENSIONS	UNIMPROVED VALUE	IMPROVED VALUE	TOTAL VALUE	REMARKS
1.7.26		29	6	66' x 300' 280'	198	500	32	

VALUATION DISTRICT OF **ELLBURN**

DATE VALUED FOR EFFECT IN VALUATION YEAR: **1.7.26**

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT OF **MURSTVILLE** WARD OF **PEAKHURST** TOWN OF **GUNGAH BAY**

OWNER'S NAME: **STUART, ALEXANDER** VALUATION NO: **3950**

STREET: **SOUTHERN** SIDE: **S** LOCALITY: **GUNGAH BAY**

ADDRESS: **448 MARRICKVILLE RD, MARRICKVILLE**

DATE VALUED FOR EFFECT IN VALUATION YEAR	SECTION	POS.	LOT	AREA BY DIMENSIONS	UNIMPROVED VALUE	IMPROVED VALUE	TOTAL VALUE	REMARKS
1.7.26		29	7/8	132' x 280' 200'	396	396	20	

VALUATION DISTRICT OF **ELLBURN**

DATE VALUED FOR EFFECT IN VALUATION YEAR: **1.7.26**

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT BY **MURSTVILLE** WARD OR RIDING **PEAKHURST** VALUATION NO. **3948**

FOSTER, GEORGE 345 MARRICKVILLE RD, MARRICKVILLE

LESSOR'S NAME

COUNTY PARISH TOWN OR VILLAGE

ROAD NO. } 2181 TO TITLE NO. } 38 S.P. } 5510 OTHER }
 NATURE OF IMPROVEMENTS } **STEPS & PATHWAY** LOCALITY NO. } **GUNGAH BAY**
 STREET **SOUTHERN** SIDE

DATE VALUED THIS STREET IN VALUATION YEAR	SECTION	SEC.	LOT	AREA BY DIMENSIONS	UNIMPROVED	IMPROVED	ASSESSED AMOUNT	REMARKS
1.7.26		29	5	66' x 330' 300'	198	225	12	

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT BY **MURSTVILLE** WARD OR RIDING **PEAKHURST** VALUATION NO. **3948**

THE...

LESSOR'S NAME

COUNTY

ROAD NO. } TO TITLE NO. }
 NATURE OF IMPROVEMENTS } LOCALITY NO. }
 STREET }
 DATE VALUED THIS STREET IN VALUATION YEAR

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT BY **MURSTVILLE** WARD OR RIDING **PEAKHURST** VALUATION NO. **3949**

HUBBY, ALLAN LLOYD VICTORIA ST, KOGARAH

LESSOR'S NAME

COUNTY PARISH TOWN OR VILLAGE

ROAD NO. } TO TITLE NO. } S.P. } 5510 OTHER }
 NATURE OF IMPROVEMENTS } **CTQE** LOCALITY NO. } **GUNGAH BAY**
 STREET **SOUTHERN** SIDE

DATE VALUED THIS STREET IN VALUATION YEAR	SECTION	SEC.	LOT	AREA BY DIMENSIONS	UNIMPROVED	IMPROVED	ASSESSED AMOUNT	REMARKS
1.7.26		29	6	66' x 300' 280'	198	500	32	

DEPARTMENT OF THE VALUER GENERAL, N.S.W. - VALUATION LIST

VALUATION DISTRICT BY **MURSTVILLE** WARD OR RIDING **PEAKHURST** VALUATION NO. **3949**

ELBOURNE

LESSOR'S NAME

COUNTY

ROAD NO. } TO TITLE NO. }
 NATURE OF IMPROVEMENTS } LOCALITY NO. }
 STREET }
 DATE VALUED THIS STREET IN VALUATION YEAR

CERTIFICATE OF TITLE.

41199

(0.) **Free South Wales.**

A

[App. No. 7347 (as to part)]

[Reference to last certificate]

[Vol. 1765 Folio 194]



REGISTER BOOK,

1980 135

VOL. 1765 FOLIO 194

58 207

CANCELLED

W

Herman Philip Henry James Griffith of Marlborough

Transferred under instrument of transfer from Carter's Estate Company Limited

No 529168 is

now the proprietor of an Estate in Fee Simple,

subject nevertheless to the reservations and conditions, if any, contained in the Grant hereinafter referred to, and also subject to such

encumbrances, liens, and interests as are notified hereon, in *Three* piece of land situated *at Carter*

in the *Municipality of Newcastle*, Parish of *St George* and County of *Queensland*

containing *Five acre two roods twenty eight perches* or thereabouts.

as shown on the Plan, hereon, and therein edged red, being *Lot 1 and 2 of Section 29 on urban subdivision*

in the Localities Office Sydney No 5510 part of three hundred acres (portion 29

of Parish) originally granted to James Carter by Deed of Gift dated the thirty first day of

August one thousand eight hundred and thirty three and also part of thirty seven acres twenty

seven perches originally granted to Charles Cecil Griffiths by Crown Grant dated the twenty

seventh day of March one thousand eight hundred and eighty four registered in the Land

Titles Office Sydney Volume 701 folio 38 which said grants are decreed on the parties

except the said Charles Griffiths deposited in the Department of Lands

Title Deed to Lots 1 + 2 of section 29, Southern Street

111 10 21201 11111111

No. 692544 NOTICE of the ... Proof has been furnished
 to me of the ... of the ... Sileen Beermara Croft
Gordon Livingstone Nalley
 at Sydney on the 14th of February 1912
 produced and entered 9th December 1912
 at 12 hrs 12 o'clock in the open noon.
McKinnon
 REGISTRAR GENERAL



No. 692545 TRANSFER dated 3rd December 1912
 from the said Elizabeth & Jean Croft and Sileen
Beermara Nalley to Henry Crawford
Beermara Nalley of Cattery Bankman
 of the land within described
 produced and entered 9th December 1912
 at 12 hrs 12 o'clock in the open noon.
McKinnon
 REGISTRAR GENERAL



NO. 615667 APPLICATION BY TRANSMISSION
 SYDNEY STANSELL BLAKE of Sydney, Chartered Accountant (Aust) and
 ARTHUR RANDALL of Epping, Smallgoodsman, are now the registered
 proprietors as Joint Tenants of the land within described in pursuance
 of the above application. Produced 13th. January 1938 and entered 31st.
 March 1938 at 12 o'clock noon.

W. McKinnon



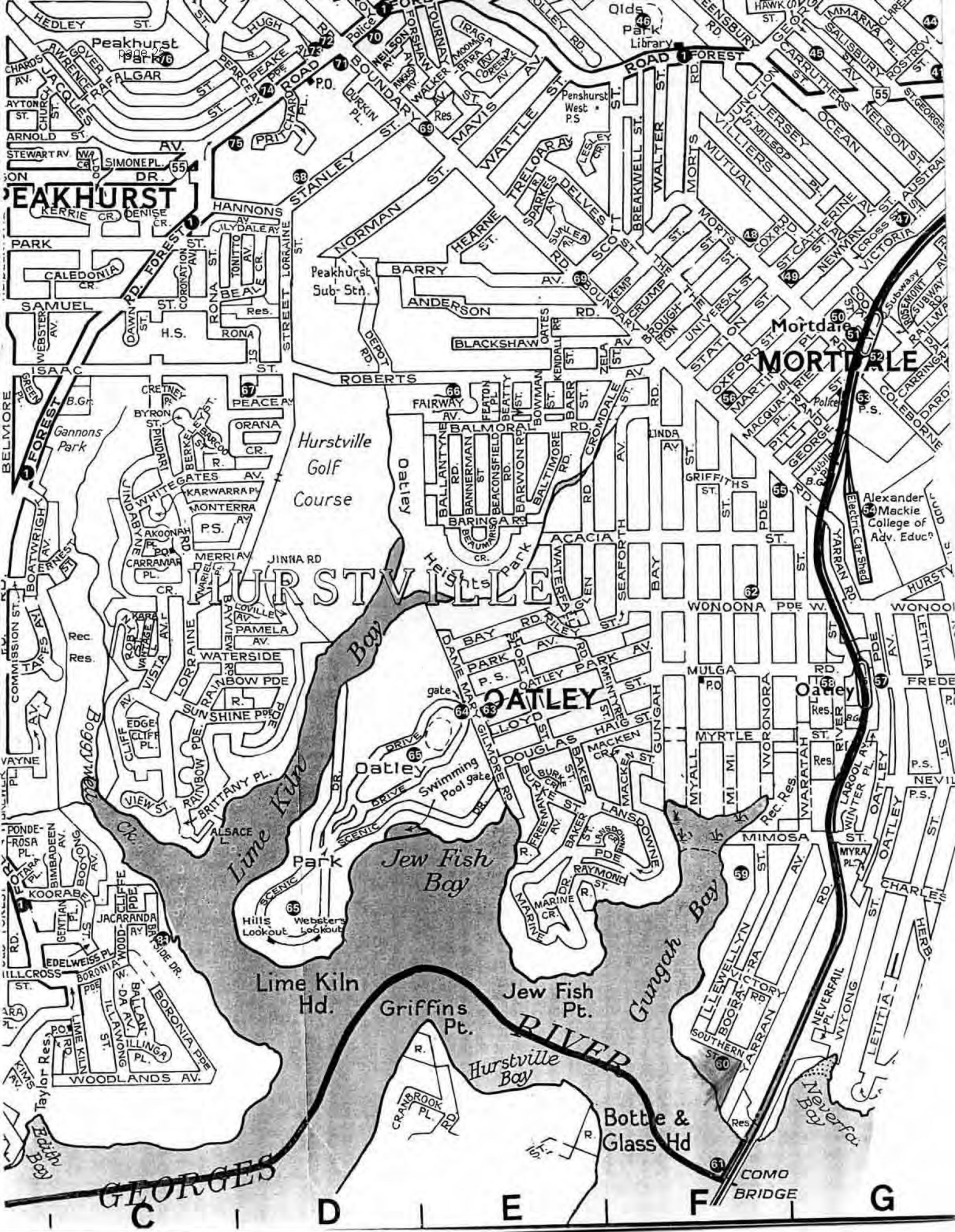
Registrar General.

NO. 615668 CAVEAT dated 13th. January 1938
 by the Registrar General. Produced 13th. January 1938 and entered 31st.
 March 1938 at 12 o'clock noon.

W. McKinnon



Registrar General.



Mortdale
MORTDALE

Hurstville
HURSTVILLE

Oatley
OATLEY

GEORGES

RIVER

COMO
BRIDGE

Hurstville
Golf Course

Lime Kiln
Hd.

Griffins Pt.

Jew Fish Pt.

Bottle &
Glass Hd

Neverfail
Bay

Alexander
Mackie
College of
Adv. Educ.

Hurstville
Park

Jew Fish
Bay

Gungah
Bay

Hurstville
Bay

CRANROOK
PL.

PEAKHURST

CALEDONIA
CR.

SAMUEL
ST.

ISAAC
ST.

FOREST
RD.

BOATWRIGHT
AV.

COMMISSION
ST.

TAFFS
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VAYNE
PL.

PONDE-
ROSA
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BIMBARDEEN
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KOOR-
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EDELWEISS
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LIME KILN
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Taylor Res.

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Oatley Castle

In Oatley is another Historical Road Yarren Road. Yarren Road is related in the section of district to Minosa Street Oatley. Yarren Road rounds off Minosa Street at the Railway Road Tunnel Bridge to the left follows the railway line, but veering right with an upward grade because of the contour of the land. Yarren road was bush track road ending at the top of a hill over looking the George's River.

I don't know the origin of the name Yarren but there is three in the District Road Map Book

at the top of the hill Yarren Road was a fascinating Castle was built there.

The only way I can describe the Castle at Oatley was when I travelled on the Pleasure ship Collaroy (1990). The Collaroy ship travelled from Sydney to the Hawkesbury River along the coast of New South Wales. The Captain of the Collaroy ship gave a description of places and scenery along the New South Wales coast. At a certain section of the land was this Stone Castle. I could not keep my eyes off it my mind was going to back to the Castle in Yarren Road Oatley. The Castle that I seen was almost identical and similar in Stone Work construction to the one that has disappeared from Yarren Road Oatley.

I climb up the wall two stories high to the top of Oatley Castle in the early ^{part} of my life (about 1935). The view from the four sides on the top of the Castle was scenic beauty. Looking East the view was taken up with the view of Como Bridge. The obstruction

of distant view was the surrounding hills only the George's River under the Como rail Bridge the Main View.

Looking West you could see a distance of 50 miles or more the horizon and the Blue Sky blending together in some part of the Blue Mountains.

Looking North to Sydney direction you would see plainly the Arch of the Sydney Harbour Bridge silhouetted by the back ground and sky.

Looking South you could see the similar scenery and probably Wollongong in the distance. You also see looking down the bushy terrain the George's River and the Woronora River immerse together as one large river, the Georges River with there back ground of Mangrove Trees on the foreshores.

The Castle was burnt by a fire in 1917 year.

I can remember my Aunty and me starting from Minera Street walking through the bush to Catty Castle (about 1928 year). This became a routine adventure Sunday afternoon (about 1/2 mile there and back)

The Castle was surrounded with a beautiful and Stone Wall which was extracted from the sand stone rock on the property, the Sand Stone Wall ran down the steep sandy rocky hill to the George's River a length about 600 feet to 800 feet about 2 feet wide and beautifully made.

The only way into the Castle was climbing

over the pushed over sand stone wall. The sand stone was about 2 feet by 2 feet and 6 feet in length beautifully cut.

Inside the property was a Mote or Canal cement lined surrounding the castle full of water. They tell me there were two wooden planks spanning the Mote.

Exploring the castle some of it in a 'isray of damage there was evidence of a large cellar with stone steps leading down into the grey sandy floor. The castle was two stories high built out of sand stone rock about 2 foot wide 1 foot high and 2 feet long all cemented together. The sand and sand stone rock all came out of the property for building the same. The cement floor or ceiling of the cellar had been busted in revealing iron bars reinforcement rods, this I can remember quite well.

There were lots of section that is stone walls not finished and grey sand floors about feet by 12 feet or more in length and width. Each section had something in them which I will list one, two, three and so on any order of preference.

The first section contained piles of old lion bone handle steel knives, forks, spoons these were in a old vance stage of rust. I could not find anything there.

The second section contained huge pieces of white broken cutlery some burnt and mixed up in the grey sand, but one might find anything there too.

The third section cast iron cooking boilers cast iron pots, cast iron pans, tin plates all in advanced stages of rust some broken and mixed up with the wet grey sand.

The fourth section was rusty kerosene tins round washing tubs almost unrecognizable because of the open air and damp saturation.

The fifth section was a very large pile of plain glass maybe windows material because it was evenly stacked against the stone wall and even it to size about 2 feet by 3 feet, but some of it was getting broken.

The six section that was the one we were interested in was slate tiles. These piece of slate were about 18 inches by about 30 inches, but some of it was getting broken. My Aunty took a piece of the slate to Penshurst school, because that is all the school children had to write on slates in those days.

There was other sections there with various bits and pieces all mixed up with the broken fern growing there.

There was a beautiful Lemon Tree growing in the grounds of the castle with large Lisbon Lemons on the tree. We always gathered a few and took them home to eat with salt or sugar. A Peach Tree was also growing there with large Green Peach on it and other fruit trees also. We nearly always gathered a handkerchief full of Mushrooms.

After examining and wandering about the deserted property with bracken fern growth appearing in the sand. We always went down a bush track to see Como Railway Bridge and sometime

a Steam Train dragging a load of Coal Trucks.

I can remember a Historical Railway Siding special constructed not very far from the Sydney end of Como Bridge. This siding I will describe later. The purpose of the railway siding was 3 to 4 rail trucks shunted there full of provisions. The provisions were for the Castle the only way the enormous amounts of goods could be carried. Three or four trucks load with material what a gigantic project the Castle may be built over a number of years. As the trucks became empty there may be fresh one taking their place. This was a simple idea for transport point of view. The transport of materials to the Castle I don't know how it was done. It was only a short distance about 200 yards to the Castle.

I have named the sections in the Castle and what they contained. They must have arrived in the railway trucks. Also food, cement and re-enforcement iron bars and possible every thing you could think about.

The Oatley Castle at the end of Yerrin Road could have been more spectacular in construction location and view in the World.

In further investigation and information by a close relative I believe the fire was started in the Castle in 1917 the weather warm a hot.

I think the Hurstville Fire Brigade attended the fire with horse drawn wagon. I heard the Fire Men stopped for 3 or 4 days, they had to camp close by because of the distance and location.

The Fire Men I heard were frightened

by the Lusk noise. The bush noise may be a night bird Owl or Mopoke with there weird noise they make in the night there were plenty of them in those days. In the daytime you would encounter Bush Lizards, Blue tongue Lizards and snakes all kinds of biting and stinging insects.

Another great fear was a sudden explosion any time day or night as there must have been gun powder for blasting the rocks.

The Fire Men abandon the fire and Castle I believe it was a light 3 weeks later.

I don't know the year that it was started may be about 1900. They tell me there was a room full to the top with old newspapers may be about the War of 1914 to 1918 in Europe.

After the War 1939 to 1946 the Old Castle piece by piece it was getting vandelezied by kids and people and disappearing until it was all gone.

In 1990 I travelled in a Motor Car along tarred road, Warren Road to the spot where the Oatley Castle was situated.

The Oatley Castle completely disappeared I think I can see some relic of stone work, but beautiful houses are built there now. Some of the stone work in Oatley may have come from the Castle.

It was a very great historical shame that is what happen to the Castle in Oatley.

The railway siding for the Castle gone, the railway line over the Old Como Bridge gone all because of progress.

"SILVESTERS CASTLE" DISCUSSION

Friday, 23 May, 1997.

- Nancy Hirt: Our house is all standing on stone from Silvester Castle. My Dad used to push a barrow up every day. We had a heck of a day doing that until all the stones were brought down. Dad paid \$5 for the block in about 1928. He was in the navy.
- Voice: Was the castle built during the war - 1917?
- Nancy: During the war! There were several severe fires, there was no hope of putting them out. The water was on Silvester land. We used to catch huge tadpoles in the water. It was 8 mths after that we built a Hudson Ready Built home there.
- (Sam Pavey had previously stated there was a spring on the land.)
- Russ G: Ann, is spring still there?
- Ann Meakins: No.
- Russ G.: Would you like to say something?
- Ann M.: Walls are very visible on the block. I can look at the wall straight out of my front door. Side fences are the same. Number 1 goes right through to Yarran Road. We have found slate and broken glass around. If anyone would like to come and have a look, we can make a day.
- (Interjections)
- Russ G: Anymore on the subject?
- Voice: There seems to be some query about the spelling of SILVESTER. I always regarded it as having a "Y". In family conversations we talked about Pork Fritz and German Sausage and because of the war (WW2) it seemed to be renamed Pork sausage and Devon. (Discussion earlier ascertained that "I" was the correct spelling although some people remember the shop name being "SYLVESTERS SMALLGOODS" etc.)
- Same Voice: Going back to Silvester Bros. - I seem to remember there being a factory at the Argyle Cut. Does anyone know?
- Ray Stevens: I remember one being at Surry Hills.
- Nola Davis: When we used to go by train to work, there were hoardings with adverts on them. How was it spelt then?
- (Interjections by several)
- Voice: My grandfather used to work at ? and my Dad used to say that it was spelt "SYLVESTER".
- Russ G.: It IS spelt with an "I" so that's correct.
- Voice: It could have been a trade name.
- Russ G.: Anymore?
- Glenn Stevens: Would it be an idea to record the names of the first people to build on the Silvester land after his death?
- Ann M.: We built at No.3. We were the first.
- Glenn S.: That was after the war (WW2). No others built on No.1 before that?
- Ann M.: Yes, not till after the war.
- Voice: Alfie Hawkins parents lived on the opposite side. Bouchiers were in the next section. The house is still standing.

- Male V.: Are we talking about the one and the same. They are not an overseas company?
- Russ G.: No. They are the same, William and Henry 1935!

SILVESTER AND HIS CASTLE

HIS ADA STREET RESIDENCE

BY: Alec Leach

Presented to The Oatley Heritage Group Friday 23 May 1997

"Oatley, The Working Mans Paradise," by Elaine Howard and "Oatley In The Early Days", by Dr. D. J. Hatton have both touched on the subject of Silvester's Castle at the corner of Yarran Road and Southern Street. Joan Hatton detailed the structure of the building, the fire in the mid twenties and how the stones disappeared over the years. She also touched on an interesting point that he was an eccentric man.

This eccentricity can be born out by two of our local citizens, Ray Stevens and Jim Nicholson who lived in Ada Street when Mr. Silvester was in residence at number fourteen. Both gentlemen tell similar stories of Mr. Silvester buying large quantities of goods at auction and having the items stored on his adjacent blocks of ground. Telephone booths were the first item both men could recall, hand basins, old wooden cable drums, you name it he would have them stored in Ada Street. A treasure trove for children of the street to explore.

Ray recalls an old Sea Chest housed on the front verandah of Silvester's house. This intrigued Ray over the years, eventually he plucked up the courage went in one day and opened it. Inside he found old English journals describing the forthcoming journey that Lieutenant Cook was about to undertake to the Southern Continent. Interesting reading, yet the historical value meant nothing to Ray. He was more worried at the time about encountering the caretaker who always seemed to sense when the lads of the street were raiding the locust tree or hunting through anything they shouldn't be doing. This was all happening in the mid nineteen thirties.

His house had the familiar "Silvester Castle" sandstone foundation and fence. It is pleasing to see the present owners Lois and Jim Vickery have maintained the house in its original state.

Tom and Jessie Booth acquired the block of ground number 12 which was part of the old Silvester property. When they were clearing the ground in the early Nineteen Fifties in preparation to build their house, the old shed down the back had some useless papers in it. They together with anything else were promptly burnt. If only those ashes could talk today.

Ray also recalls rails being laid from Ada Street down into the property to remove the years of accumulated treasures after everything was auctioned. The ground was too soft for trucks to remove the goods, everything was hauled up to the road by trolley.

The residence at number 14 lay idle for years after Mr. Silvester moved to a family retreat especially catering for his extreme eccentricity before passing away. Two women, the wife of one of Oatley's prominent butchers, Mark Buttle and his daughter Lettie, bought the property and rented it for many years before the Vickerys became part of our community.

Alec Leach
23/5/97

Sylvester's castle

When our family came to Oatley in 1928 I was 7 years of age.

We had purchased a block of land at the foot of Southern St, together with a weekenders which then became our home.

At the top of Southern St, & the corner of Yarran Road on the southern or river side of Southern St, was situated what was known as Sylvester's castle.

This consisted of a block of land with a frontage of approx. ~~300~~²⁰⁰ ft. to Southern St, & running back to Georges River.

The "castle" which occupied the land was not one, but at least three stone & concrete constructions which at that time were in various stages of disrepair.

A tremendous amount of work had been expended on the estate, obviously over many years, with all the stone quarried on the site & superbly cut, I believe, by Italian stone masons prior to World War 1.

Very extensive walls had been constructed, mostly from the beautifully cut stone. Some of the piers were huge, I remember some at least 10ft. long x 2ft. square & the whole perimeter of the land had been fenced in stone except on the river boundary.

The quality of the work on the top end of the block was superb, however it deteriorated somewhat towards the river.

On the north western corner of the estate a lot of concrete had been used in the

construction of the walls using sandstone aggregate & steel reinforcing. Many of these walls were still standing and in good condition, though others had collapsed.

Of the buildings on the estate only "the tower" was in good condition. This was situated approx. 50ft. from Southern St., & on the Yarran Road boundary. It was of a 2 Storey construction with an additional cellar constructed mainly of fine stone. However, some concrete interior columns were used & at the southern end on the top of the building was a concrete water tank.

The other main buildings were about 120ft down Southern St., & approx. 50ft. from the street & another near the north western corner of the block.

These buildings both lacked roofs, however most of the walls were still in reasonable condition. They were both single storey. Both had been badly gutted by fire.

Over the following years much desecration & vandalism & outright stealing of the stonework occurred.

Also of course the "Castle" was a great attraction for us kids as a playground & venue for games & we would frequently climb to the top storey & play on the parapet.

About March 1943 I bought one of the blocks, the estate having been subdivided, & in 1947 we built our home there. Then about 1949 Mr. & Mrs. Swan bought the Yarran Road side block & built on it.

Shortly after the whole area had been occupied.

Though nothing remains above ground of the original buildings many of the lower sections of the walls remain visible.

During excavation & site work & gardening on our blocks we would frequently expose many signs of the original occupation.

Provided by Laurie Meakins

1997

Compare to
Betty Goodger's
talk.

SILVESTERS "CASTLE"

AS PER MEMORY. L.V. MERKINS IN 1928
MANY WALLS & FOOTINGS REMAIN
BUT NO BUILDINGS.

N

GEORGE'S RIVER



APPROX 570 FT

APPROX 400 FT
CONCRETE WALL

CUT STONE WALL

CUT STONE WALL

STONE ORIGINAL TOWER.

SUNKEN QUARRY

FOOTING

CUT STONE

STONE SINGLE STOREY

STONE SINGLE STOREY

FINE STONE WALL

YARRAN Rd.

SOUTHERN SE

APPROX 200 FT

BOORRAN AVE