

**THE CULTURE & CULTURAL VALUES
OF THE
WELLINGTON RANGE**

PART 2

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MT WELLINGTON MANAGEMENT PLAN

CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.1 Post Contact – Tasmanian Period

The cultural resources of the Mt Wellington Range relate to the aboriginal and Tasmanian periods of occupancy and access. These are described in social historical and archaeological terms.

Understanding the Mountain and its People

The topography of the Wellington Range dictated the settlement patterns of the 19th and early 20th Centuries. By dividing these into social and regional zones, an understanding of these communities, each with a distinct ‘personality’ and ecology can be had.

Zones

The slopes and their interaction between community and other users may be defined in distinct zones. These may be further subdivided for management purposes.

1 Mountain Park Zone.

Communities:

Hobartians, Ferntree, Neika, Lenah Valley- and visitors.

Uses:

Residential and small-scale commercial and private timber-gatherers.

City of Hobart water catchment, walking tracks.

2. Southern Zone

Communities:

Longley- Mountain River area; Crabtree.

Uses:

Small farmers for saw-milling, firewood, fruit-growing.

3. Northern Zone

Communities:

Glen Dhu, Collinsvale, Collins Cap.

Uses:

Sawmilling, hunting, fruit-growing, charcoal-burning

Mountain-based tourism, walking tracks.

4. North-western Zone.**Communities:**

Lachlan, Mt Lloyd.

Uses:

Sawmilling, hunting, hop-poles.

5. Western Region.**Communities:**

Jeffrey's Track.

Uses:

Cattle droving, social interaction.

THE MOUNT WELLINGTON RANGE

To the north and south of the Mountain Park, communities made utilitarian use of the Range. Apart from Collinsvale, these areas did not develop tourism or formalised recreational interest in the Range. Structures remaining in these locations are usually related to resource extraction, particularly sawmills. Charcoal pits or kilns, and saw pits may also be expected. Oral reports suggest the remains of shepherd's or hermit's huts may also be occasionally found.

Significance

The Mt Wellington Range acted as a traditional resource for industries based in nearby communities, and in serving the building needs of Hobart. Extensive use of the timber resource of the Mt Wellington Range was made, with large scale and many small scale timber mills.

The mills above Mountain River and Crabtree to the south of Mt Wellington, and Collinsvale to the north, also produced timber for box cases to supply the fruit industry. In the Lachlan Valley, the Crown reserve supplied bush poles for the hop fields. Collinsvale also supplied charcoal for hop drying to hop-growers of the Lachlan area and beyond.

The Mt Wellington Range acted as a series of catchment areas for the five communities whose municipalities relied on mountain water; a function that still exists. The original Lachlan River scheme still supplies New Norfolk, and helps reduce the cost of water to the town.

The lack of formal recreational evidence in these areas should not be construed as complete lack of use by local communities for this purpose. Oral evidence suggests that walks, picnics and horse-riding were traditional.

Forest-shaped Communities.

The dominant feature, common to all zones, was the lengthy utilisation of the timber resources on the northern, southern and eastern flanks of the Wellington Range. The forests provided employment, whether sawing timber for homes or scantling, or shipping, or for boxes to carry fruit to the markets on the Mainland or overseas.

Evidence.

Evidence on the timber mills was drawn from oral knowledge, and Forestry Commission records. However the recent rapid turnover in the Commission staff and in the mills has resulted in a rapidly dwindling number of people with experience of the period. Field visits to verify these locations is essential, bearing in mind the continual movement of mills through a working forest.

Social Inter-linking.

The mountain communities were also inter-connected socially. Lads from Collinsvale occasionally walked up onto Collins Bonnet, crossing over the pinnacle (weather permitting) to hunt, and for social events at Mountain River.

4.3 MOUNTAIN PARK

Description (see Report No 1)

Although covered in Report No 1, additional data and points of cultural significance are added.

Significance

This areas has been extensively listed and physically described in prior studies; however, these have not attempted to analyse ruins or existing structures (huts etc) in terms of their social functions. This significance is especially relevant to an understanding of the cultural interaction between the residents of Hobart and Tasmania, and of visitors to the Mountain Park.

FEATURES - HUMAN AND PHYSICAL

Tracks, Camps and Roads

A network of tracks criss-crossed the mountain. These were expanded as interest in the mountain grew. Some tracks were probably opened by timber cutters. Correspondence of the Hobart City Council indicates that timber gathering for firewood was an approved activity even within the Park.

With the advent of the Mountain Park, the HCC were under continued pressure to upgrade existing tracks and introduce new ones. These were mainly to benefit the visitors to the new Mt Wellington Hotel.¹

In the 1930's, the impact of the Depression resulted in the new road to the Pinnacle. Additionally, a well- graded tramway for carting timber to aid the unemployed was laid on an existing pathway. The tracks attracted a range of the social spectrum. An angry critic from Melbourne, and a friend of the Mayor of Hobart, complained of the impact of the 'temporary' tramway which had been used to bring firewood to The Springs.

As a devoted admirer of Tasmania and a confirmed lover of Hobart, I have only been in Australia 5 years and four of these holidays have been spent on Mt Wellington - Hobart's most notable asset on visitors on whom so much depends. On the plane of the Springs there is only one real pathway (Excluding the ascent from Ferntree and the ascent to the pinnacle). It is a path of singular beauty of which I never tire. I must say was, for it has been left in such a state that it is not now used... the path is now a lumber rail-track, deserted, unsightly and difficult to walk along. The railway occupies more than half the length of the path which is the only access to the Organ Pipes. I know it is a scheme to relieve the unemployed.....what I earnestly plead is a little more work for them of restoring the path to its former beauty...I do not mean merely removing the sleepers and rails.....I mean a real path such as it was, almost the only one of its kind that

¹ Aves, 1957

I know in Australia, and more like the admirable paths which the municipalities of Switzerland so well in their mountain resorts.

When you have a place second to none, it cannot be the policy of a capital city to ruin the one path on this high level, which contributes so much to the Springs.²

Camps for these works existed; although archaeological excavation of these is required, oral interviews of surviving men who worked on the road is also essential and urgent.

Additional tracks have been cut, and maintained by the groups who have also erected huts, particularly the Hobart Walking Club.

Convicts and Labourers

Although the first structures were built for the benefit of the Hobart colonial establishment, the men used in the construction were convicts. Later, when the Mountain Road was built in the 1930's, unemployed men camped along its length during construction.

Six convicts and an overseer were used to build the Ice Houses in the 1850's. (Thwaites, 1934) In 1886, prisoners from the Hobart Gaol were housed on a timber Stockade when working on track and road construction.

The Huts

The first structure erected appears to be a shelter erected for Jane Franklin for her 1837 trek to the Pinnacle.

First New Occupants.

The mountain became home to an unknown number of squatters who camped on the mountain face. A painting of Simpkinson de Wesselow in 1846 depicts a sod hut with bee hives located in the Cascades area.³ An 1858 report on the 'Wellington Hamlets' refers to the flanks above Cascades being home to the working class of Hobart:

...extending from the upper end of Macquarie Street towards Mt Wellington, (which) is densely inhabited by the labouring population, many of whom are sturdy, industrious men and fathers of large families.⁴

'Old Woods', the original hermit and guide of The Springs and his wife were becoming frail in 1876.⁵

² Hobart Tracks- PWD 24/6, 24/1/1927, TSA

³ Angus, P 127

⁴ Mercury 10/2/1858, p2 c 7, TSA

⁵ Mercury 9/10 1876, p 2 c 3, TSA

Later Huts

Existing habitable huts are in a line of similar structures erected as dwellings for occasional rather than continued use from the 1880's. The first hut was thought to be erected in 1888, on the site of saw pits in the vicinity of Junction Cabin. (Permanent structures on the mountain are another study.) The boom period for construction was from 1890 to World War 1; this coincided with the growth in leisure and tourism. The Falls Hut and Clematis Hut were featured regularly in newspapers and promotional guides. Some preliminary evidence suggests the names of some of the men who built these huts. (This requires further research for confirmation.)

A 1906 tourist guide book explained;

The Huts are the work of young fellows who spend their weekends in the bush, and they have spared no pains in making their temporary dwelling places pleasing to the vision, and also comfortable to inhabit. The tenements are built of timber and bark, and beautified with ferns and shrubs, and are placed picturesquely on the banks of running streams, in groves of the tall man-ferns, which grow in luxuriant profusion.⁶

The significance of this adaptation of the local environment may be more significant than first appears, as a new generation of Tasmanians built in local material holiday retreats amongst the once forbidding forests that threatened first arrivals.

Clubs and Hermits.

Use of huts needs to be distinguished between those used by groups of friends as retreats, and those used as homes. Some were related; Danny Griffiths was a Hobart hairdresser who built and eventually lived in Lone Cabin. Other male hairdressers built Blue Bell Hut. Many huts in the Cascade Brewery Reserve were built by employees. These included the Old Log Cabin, c 1890, and the Grass Tree Hut, built by Cascade Cordial Factory employees.⁷

Many of the cabins had unofficial 'owners', who maintained them, and passed on 'ownership' to like-minded friends.

Guides, Caretakers and Leasees

The lives of the first residents on the mountain are poorly documented, from Old Woods and his wife who chatted to the guests and made cups of tea for the visitors, to Gadd, Pitman and Richardson and other rangers of the new Park, to Lucy Pitman, and her brother who leased The Springs Hotel for many years. Lucy had served as a nurse on Salonika, before returning to Hobart and the Springs.

⁶ Davies, 1972

⁷ Davies, Pers Comm, 1994, and Davies, 1972

With the drop in trade after the road was extended to the Pinnacle in 1939, the Pitmans leased Hotel Arthur at Port Arthur.⁸

Most of the early guides - such as Woods, Gadd, Richardson and Pitman snr - were in fact first employed by the Waterworks Committee to stop contamination and blockage of the water ducts and pipelines. Increasingly they became unpaid guides and rangers. Once the first rangers were appointed - usually selected from these men - a rivalry was established between the two functions.

The Mountain Park and Springs Hotel

From the first cottage built c 1860, to Gadd's residence, and later Hotel, The Springs site has several layers of history.

Construction of an hotel at The Springs was a logical extension of increased visitor usage of The Springs locality by bush-walkers and sightseers over the preceding 50 years.

Construction of the first Springs Hotel involved a complex commercial transaction not yet fully understood, but included the developers - led by active chairman of the Tasmanian Tourist Association, and state senator, Hon Henry Dobson - having State Government backing for the reservation of a Park, and permission for both an aerial tramway, and the hotel. All three were approved by State Parliament, and only the aerial tramway was not implemented. Dobson, a small 'L' liberal, was well acquainted with The Springs; photos in January 1902 show a Garden party at The Springs organised by Mr and Mrs Dobson. Guests viewed the river from the shelter and grassy terraces, while they listened to a brass band.⁹

In correspondence, Dobson indicated he '... applied for a National Park, chiefly because I desired to erect at The Springs a boarding house and restaurant for the 10,000 tourists and citizens who annually find their way up the mountain.....' Other correspondence indicates the aerial tramway designed to stop at the hotel was central to his proposed tourist operation.¹⁰

Unpredictable weather conditions, and the advent of World War I contributed to the commercial failure of the hotel, and its purchase and subsequent leasing by the Hobart City Council.

The commercial operation at The Springs was designed to operate within the frame-work of Mt Wellington as a water reserve; Dobson faced strong opposition to his original proposal on these grounds. Sanitation was also to prove an ongoing problem at The Springs site.

⁸ Pers Comm, D. Shields, niece of Lucy Pitman, 1994

⁹ Tas Mail. 25/1/1902, p 22-23, TSA

¹⁰ Dobson- Premier, 20/6/1906, Tasmanian Tourist Association, Mt Wellington Hotel Co Ltd, NS 328/2, TSA

The Springs Hotel, designed by noted Hobart architect, Alan Walker, underwent numerous alterations before its destruction by the 1967 bushfires.

Furthur Research. The original legislation, the first to formally reserve a park in Tasmania, free from shooters, deserves further investigation. Research into the tracks, huts and the groups and individuals which used them is recommended.

Issues in the management of the original Mountain Park appear to be cover recurrent themes, and are worthy of further research.

4.4 NORTHERN REGION

The three communities on the northern edge of the Wellington Range are Glenorchy, Collinsvale and Lachlan.

4.4.1. GLENORCHY

Significance

During the 19thC the fertile plains of Glenorchy were divided into farms. Glenorchy also became an industrial centre, with tanning, soap and brickworks plus lime works.

The foothills which form part of the Wellington Range were predominantly mudstone type, and less attractive for farming, and the timber less suitable for milling. However 4 sawmills have been identified in the area. Limestone deposits were located in the hills.

To date, little evidence exists of a strong interaction between the community and the Range. The foothills provide timber and small farming opportunities until recent years. In addition, lime quarries were exploited, and the water catchment feature of the Range was valued.

Description

Several sites are identified in the Glenorchy Water Reserve /Wildlife Sanctuary Management Plan.

Others exist within this area. see below. Historic sites listed in the study include

- i) a wooden pipeline from Merton/Humphrey's Creek to the Tolosa Reservoir;
- ii) building foundations in a cleared area on an angle of land between Humphrey's and Merton Rivulets.
- iii) a cleared area with large pine trees on the Humphrey's Rivulet east of Merton Rivulet- the remains of a farm.
- iv) several quarry sites in the limestone slopes on the southern side of the Limekiln Reservoir.¹¹

¹¹ 1988, p 5

Sites Inspected.

Humphrey/ Merton Rivulet;

Site 1 Home.

The remains of farm buildings foundations. Features include cement rendered, rubble stone boundary fence, with steel pipes connecting the stone posts. Ruins include house foundations, two sets of steps. Remnant exotic garden species, including pine trees, (many reseeded), purple lilac, agapanthus, (near main steps), bulbs, cotoneaster. A water hydrant exists along the old easement. Style and features suggest c1950.

Site 2

Higher up the road. At first appearance a dwelling, but unusual building features suggest industrial usage. The foundations are unusually high as is the design of west wall and nearby separate foundation. Nearby are long lengths of 3/4" pipe, plus cast iron elbow and other fittings. The lengths of pipe appears to lead to group of foundations set below the main ruins. Style and features suggest c1940 ?

Site 3

Tram-line. From the impassable log bridge over Merton Rivulet, the easy gradient of the track, and extensive road works, suggest original use as a tramway. Appears to peter out after 1 km approx.

Site 4

(Not located) Foundation/ rubble reported above this track.¹²

Further sites (not visited)

Limekiln Quarries. see above

Cottage ruins. A further ruin exists near the Knight's Creek entrance to the reserve.

iii) 'The Temple'. Erected c1970 by a latter day hermit, Victor ??, a European migrant. Consisted of a series of stone structures, including two cottages, walls and out-buildings were built on the side of Mt Arthur. A narrow foot track leads from the end of a rough 4WD track.

The main cottage consisted of stone walls, of 2 storeys, with frame and corrugated iron roof. The complex covered an area of 70-80 sq metres. All materials were carried in. Known to some (anonymous) bushwalkers as 'Xanadu.' Burnt in mysterious circumstances when the occupant refused to leave when ordered by Glenorchy Council staff. Exotic plants, including a pine tree surround the complex. A 'Visitors Book' was kept.¹³ The

¹² Pers. Comm, Tolosa Park staff

¹³ .Bill Waller, Roy Davies, Pers. Comm, 1994

site seems to be in the tradition of the hermits retreat once common on Mt Wellington. Unless invasive, the plants should stay as part of the character while further study is made.

Merton, West Glenorchy.

The area on the plain, and flanking onto the foothills was once known as Merton. The name derived from faming property, *Mertonvale* which was owned by Alfred Sawyer.¹⁴ The name was applied also to Merton Creek and the later Merton Reservoir.

Sawyer owned the farm, orchards and a lime kiln.¹⁵

The Sawyers also owned *Grantleigh* and were well known and liked for their generosity. The areas included a church and school. Church services began there in 1906, in a weather- board school house built by Sawyer. Alfred Sawyer, known as Tosh, was crippled from a carriage injury. Near his house was a small area where all the churches combined for picnic. The Sawyers schoolhouse was a small wooden building far up Tolosa St and school was opened there in 1906.¹⁶

Industries.

Lime-works. At the turn of the century, the Merton Lime Company buildings were a feature of the upper end of valley. These are probably the lime works operated by Alfred Sawyer. The name Merton is derived from a property of that name, once part of the nearby estate of G. T. Hull of *Tolosa*. Although many lime works were small, the Merton Lime Co was a large scale production, and in 1902 was selling through agents C E Knight from Victoria Dock on the Hobart wharves.¹⁷

Location of the lime works was probably the site of the current reservoir in Limekiln Gully. Several historic quarries on the limestone slopes on the southern side of Limekiln reservoir exist. ¹⁸ (This may explain the problem with water quality in this reservoir.)

Tracks and Retreats.

Glenorchy is distinctive in not having a tradition of mountain tracks or recreation common to the Hobart face of Mt Wellington. Apart from the aesthetics of the mountain backdrop, this is probably due to the nature of the local community, which lacked the urban elite of Hobart who, from the time of Jane Franklin to the 20thC walking clubs, initiated exploration and the construction of tracks and huts on the mountain. Instead, Glenorchy grew from a rural to an industry based community.

¹⁴ see map Buckingham 42/43. Nomenclature Board ref 'Merton', 1994

¹⁵ Alexander, P. 124-5

¹⁶ *ibid*, P 125

¹⁷ POD, Glenorchy, 1902, P. 544

¹⁸ 1988, P5

The cool rainforests of Mt Wellington were also a retreat from hot summers for Hobartians; the dry sclerophyll forest with a mudstone base above Glenorchy was not conducive to cool walks.

Historically, the only tracks which appear to have been implemented by the Glenorchy Council was the Collins Bonnet track from Collinsvale. No other records of involvement with tourist tracks survive.

4.4.2 COLLINSVALE.

Significance

Community characteristics.

Although settled initially by some Irish and English families when the area was known as Sorell Creek, the settlement's character was re-shaped by the arrival in the 1870's of Danish and German migrants when the village was known as Bismark. These families operated sawmills on the timbered slopes of the Wellington Range. Their building skills gave Collinsvale a special character; but many buildings were destroyed by recent fires. Some others survive, but some of these have been altered.

Many of the German families adopted the Seventh Day Adventist faith, while the Danes opted for Methodism. Given the dominance of Anglo-Celtic culture in Tasmania, this immigrant community offers a unique contrast.

Hostility between the German and Danish/Anglo community during World War I resulted in the name change to Collinsvale in 1915. This conflict is only now being talked about.

Their activity and impact on the range offers a contrast with the predominantly British community which settled on the southern flank of the range near Mountain River.

The Collinsvale (Bismark) Community and the Wellington Range.

While small fruit, apples and pears became the cash crops for the district, the Range was used for timber, the fur trade and tourism.

Although predominantly a farming community, a number of saw-mills were operated on the foothills of the Wellington Range from around 1900 until the 1950's. Mills operated on private and crown land, but all mills worked crown leases. Mill owners made use of tram lines to haul logs to the mill, and in some cases, to send sawn timber to the nearest road-way for collection by truck. These need to be investigated in more detail for location, longevity and markets.

Edwardian Era Tourism.

Before World War I a small scale tourist industry began; by the 1920's three guest houses catered for visitors. The attractions - apart from the mountain air - were two natural reserves, Myrtle Forest and

the Fairy Glen which were set aside in 1912. However, the area was known earlier, as the 1908 Handbook of Tasmania described;

Fairy Glen, a romantic beauty spot on the Sorell Creek, which, devastated by bushfires some years back, is gradually regaining its old beauty.¹⁹

(These reserves are now within the Wellington Park.) Bush-walkers also used the Myrtle Forest to walk to Collins Bonnet, known to the locals as 'Boars Back.' Locals helped cut this track.

Guest Houses & Nature Tourism, c1913

As noted in the tracks section below, Dobson described the various walks available around Bismark. In 1913 a specially-built guest house, the *Hilltop* (extant) was erected to cater for visitors who were attracted to the walks at Myrtle Forest and Fairy Glen in the foothills of the Wellington Range. *The Mercury* reported on 'Bismark as Tourist Resort' when the Consul of Denmark opened Andersons boarding house who was doing their part to attract tourists to Tasmania. Also present was Henry Dobson, from the Tasmanian Tourist Association, who referred to the 'fine city and healthy surroundings.' Builder Zehetty, and stonemason Rodgers were congratulated.

The paper reported that Fairy Glen and Myrtle Forest which had been 'lately secured by Tourist Association as a reserve, were two of the finest beauty spots of Tasmania.' Improved roads made motoring easy.²⁰

Visitors were arriving in increasing numbers.

Boarding houses are still being taxed to their utmost capacity, and tourists are still arriving in large numbers by cabs, brakes and motors, and expression of admiration of the beauty spots and mountain scenery are being heard on all sides. This district is now one of the leading tourist and health resorts being so near the capital and so easy of access.²¹

There were three guest houses at Collinsvale; *Hillwood* (Kingston), the *Bungalow* (Appeldorfs), and C. Scaupp. Mrs Appeldorf, Gwen Pridmore's mother, ran the *Bungalow*. Guests included friends, as well as paying customers such as the Tibbs family, and Charles Davies from *The Mercury*, and E. T. Emmett, founder of the Hobart Walking Club, Director of the Tourist Department, and adventurous bushwalkers.

¹⁹ 1908 Handbook of Tasmania

²⁰ *The Mercury* 5/2/13, p 2

²¹ (Merc 25/3/13 p3)

The Tibbs from Bellerive were keen bushwalkers, and regularly headed in to the Collins Bonnet area. The girls sketched native flora.²² Gwen loved to take the guests unto Myrtle Forest, 'after all this was my forest, and you felt like a part owner, and enjoyed showing it off.'²³

Triebel's Cottage.

'Just past the reserve' of the Myrtle Forest was the small cottage of a Mr Triebel, who welcomed visitors.²⁴ The 'Oldest resident just past reserve, is Mr Triebel, pleased to see Warden and party in small but comfortable and scrupulously clean hut' where he lived alone, this 'hardy old settler of 72 years of age.'²⁵

Tracks and Reserves

Ernest Darko helped cut the track through Myrtle Forest to the pinnacle of Mt Wellington.²⁶

Some were private tracks. 'In those days there were many bush tracks connecting the houses, and everyone used them without worrying about whose property they were on.'²⁷

Myrtle Forest - Boar's Back (Collins Bonnet) -Pinnacle Track

In March 1914, sawmiller Ernest Darko wrote to Henry Dobson, chairman of the Tasmanian Tourist Association, suggesting the benefits of a track from the newly reserved Myrtle Forest to Collins Bonnet via the "Boar's Back." (This name is still given to the Bonnet by Collinsvale residents, and the nomenclature reflects in itself a contrasting set of values.) Darko's proposal included a sketch map. Dobson sent the letter to the Public Works Department - responsible for the new tourist tracks throughout the state - endorsing the proposal, adding details of recent excursions to the district by a 'group of ladies.' The two letters give a vivid idea of both the forest, and the beginnings of an early tourist movement.

I have gone and inspected senery (sic) beyond Myrtle Forest right up to the mountain which is known locally as the Boar's Back. The senery I am sure you will find the best that could be found. I have seen most of the beauty spots in Tasmania, but this is beautiful, and then (there) is the mountain which can be climbed very easy. no rubbish on top, inly full of small flowers and from the top can be seen the Huon, Derwent Lighthouse, Macquarie Plains and Hamilton and lakes districts. This in feel sure would be a very valuable asset to the Tourist Association with but little expense.

²² Pridmore, Pers Comm, 1994

²³ (ibid, p 40)

²⁴ .see photo in Pridmore, p 54

²⁵ (Merc 27/3/1913 P 6)

²⁶ Pridmore, p59

²⁷ (ibid, p. 70)

The track to the summit fit for foot traffic for ladies to travel would be put through for about two shillings chain, as I believe the best and cheapest would be by day work. Just at present I could get the mill hands as the mill is closed for a few weeks.

I am sending (a) rough sketch as near as I can the shortest and best rout to the mountain. The track is one mass of scenery right through, from grass trees, waratah, and numerous other shrubs. The grade is good- gradual, even. A horse could be taken if a track was made good enough up to the plains; from there it is not far to the pinnacle, the beauty of which will long be remembered.

yours truly,

Ernest A Darko

Bismark²⁸

The sketch map in colour pencil, follows Sorell Creek to the Falls to the end of the (then) road. A 'good place for a shelter shed' is noted. The track to Collins Bonnet via the 'Boars Back' is estimated at 2 1/2 miles. The immediate suggestion rejected at the time by PWD engineer, but within a year was being constructed.²⁹

Dobson forwarded the letter to the Minister for Lands, endorsing the proposal:

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter from Mr Ernest Darko, addressed to myself, suggesting that a track should be cut from Myrtle Forest, near Bismark, up Sorell Creek to the top of that splendid mountain which is known as Collins Bonnet, in the vicinity of New Norfolk, and is the Huon Belle of the Sleeping Beauty of the Huon district.

I may state that Bismark is a most favourite tourist resort, because the air is invigorating, and there are many interesting spots to visit. Quite recently some ladies stayed at Bismark for the night, and the following day ascended Mt Faulkner, over-looking the Derwent, from where they got magnificent views and a large variety of berries. They made another trip to Bismark and the following day ascended Collin's Cap, and visited the Fall, about 100 ft high, in that locality. The favourite beauty spot is the Fairy Glen, which is a magnificent piece of fern scenery in the bed of the Sorell Creek; then above the Glen, about a mile and a half, is the Myrtle Forest spoken of by Mr Darko. It is also in the Sorell Creek, but instead of the ferns growing among sassafras, as is naturally the case, the large trees are myrtles, and it certainly forms one of the most striking and beautiful pieces of bush scenery that I have ever seen, There is a magnificent view from the top of Collins Bonnet, and I believe hundreds of people would go to the top of this mountain if the track were cut. Then there is very good fishing in the Sorell Creek, and numbers of walks which are full of beauty and variety.

I only mention these facts to show that Bismark is a favourite health and pleasure resort, and must become more so if its beauty spots are developed. I trust, under the circumstances, that you will be able to apply a small portion of the track vote to cut the

²⁸ Ernest A Darko to Henry Dobson, 16/7/1914

²⁹ (PWD 24/6, Track 'B' -9/129-19, July-Aug, 1914)

track suggested by Mr Darko. It would of course be desirable to make the track fit for horses, if you can afford the expense of doing this.³⁰

Although initially rejected, by 1915 the track cutting was in progress, with the support of E. T. Emmett, Director of Tourism. H. Fehlberg was constructing the track to a width of 6 ft. Man-ferns were cut and used as steps in the steepest sections. The path wasn't only used by bush-walkers; Harry Smith aged 84 remembers these steps when travelling up the track in the 1920's when possum hunting on the plateau. However, a track probably existed even before this.³¹

The track specification for late November 1915 directed that, "work commences 20 chains beginning of the rack and extends to the foot of the mountain.' Steps were to be cut 18 inches apart; split man-ferns 2 feet long were to be placed in them for a distance of 75 chains. From the end of the track to the foot of the mountain, Fehlberg was to '.... Cut and erect guide pots 4 inches in diameter and 7 ft long, posts to be places 2 chains apart and to be at least 5 ft above surface level... upright and firm.

Note. No man ferns to be taken from side of track or within 2 chains from side of track.'³²

In 1930 Emmett wrote to the Glenorchy Council over the neglect of the track.

On 2 March I walked from Collinsvale to the top of Collins Bonnet with a party from the Hobart Walking Club, and Noticed there were a good many trees across the track..(suggests clearing the track before next summer season for visitors as well as local people.)

No funds were available for clearance.³³

Track maintenance was and still is a problem. In 1977 the HWC re-cut the Collins Bonnet track from the Big Bend; photos exist of this work which involved removing trees and scrub.³⁴

Other Walking Tour

A Splendid Walking Tour 1918. A Guidebook to 'Beautiful Tasmania' recommended what appears to be a fairly exhausting walking tour. This 'Splendid Walking Tour' was to be 'undertaken from Berriedale, through Glenlusk to Molesworth, and thence to New Norfolk about 11 miles. Pedestrians can then walk up the Lachlan River to Crabtree and join the Road, 6 miles from Huonville, and 17 from Hobart.'¹

³⁰ Henry Dobson to the Minister for Lands, 31/7/1914

³¹ MacFie, Personal Comm, Nov 1994

³² PWD 24/5, Glenorchy

³³ ibid, Myrtle Forest to Boars Back Track M

³⁴ Bill Waller, Pers Comm, 1994

Nature Reserves, Collins Bonnet

Myrtle Forest

A small community lived around the Myrtle Forest road. Families included the Appeldorfs, Carlsens and Fehlbergs. As a child, Fred Fehlberg grew up under the shadow of Collins Cap. He recalled ‘... the horses struggling up the hills on frosty mornings with a heavy load of logs on the dray. The poor old things would scratch and sometimes fall on their knees. I’d have the reins in one hand and the other hand on the brake. Soon as ever they fell I’d fetch the brake on.’

I felt sorry also for the horses that had to haul the logs to the timber mills. It was pretty bad when a log rolled or hit a root and sent the horses flying. Once, one of them ills had to shut for a while until the horse’s cuts healed properly.³⁵

Fred Fehlberg recalled;

‘My father built the road into Myrtle Forest and finished one of the roads up to the Cap. It was done with gelignite. There were no bulldozers in those days; only picks, shovels and about 7 men.’³⁶

With increased interest from tourists, the ‘tourist road’ to Myrtle Forest was improved by the Glenorchy Council. Concern was shown that timber was taken from ‘what is understood to be a reserve.’³⁷

Collinsvale Saw Mills

The sawmills at Collinsvale and nearby Collins Cap were on private and Crown land. Some private mills like Fehlbergs, ran tramlines into Crown reserves. These mills are documented by Pridmore.

Due to time restraints, the exact location of pre-World War I mills have not been identified. Records for post-1948 mills were located, and their location verified.

Location

A number of sawmill sites are located on the slopes of the Wellington Range. Mechanised milling appears to have come late to the Collinsvale area, indicating that the first generation families must have relied on split or hand-sawn timber for their first homes and churches.

Gwen Pridmore recorded information about mills from the recollections of Ernie and Ted Cox, and Harry Smith from which the following information is extracted.³⁸

³⁵ anon, Collinsvale School, 1977.

³⁶ Fehlberg, op cit, p. 19

³⁷ Merc 27/3 / 1913, p6

³⁸ Pridmore, 1986

Sawmill registrations with the Forestry Commission (1948-51) survive in State Archives. Some of these indicate the location of mills, including some within the vicinity of Collins Cap.

Time constraints prevented field location of these sites.

Pre-World War I Mills

Brandstater's Mill, Collins Cap.

About 1910, Emanuel Brandstater and his brother Albert built a 'large sawmill at Collins Cap, financed by Jones and Co.'. A former resident recalled a large boiler being hauled all the way from Hobart by a steam traction engine.

It was a mighty load for those narrow precipitous roads.... I must give my father credit for doing a mammoth job in getting this boiler, weighing many tons, off the wagon and setting it up level in a place carved out of the hillside. Added to this was a large steam engine set up near the boiler. The huge flywheel, cylinder and other heavy machinery was hauled some 19 miles from Hobart by a team of Clydesdale horses, six magnificent draught stallions (?). They belonged to Fred Eiszele and were the pride of Molesworth.

.... the boiler was set in a brick and concrete foundation with the large horizontal engine mounted on a concrete base nearby. As a boy I was awed by this huge engine with its great flywheel, which carried the piston over the centres.The large vertical frame saw for breaking down the massive logs was set up on a log formation cut into shape with a squaring axe. This was an axe with a blade 12 inches or more wide, with a straight edge on one side so that a good craftsman could square a log almost as if it were planed. They were sold for right hand and left hand cutters, and were commonly used for cutting railway sleepers, or ties.

The main ripping bench next to the breakdown was designed to rip the flitches which came off the breakdown into specified sizes of timber. Other smaller benches were set up with spindles, belts and saws, and the whole area below the bench was filled with machinery. The sawdust was carried away in large bins on rails running out beyond the mill where it was dumped.³⁹

There was a problem with the mill's site; a complete lack of close water. The only supply was down in the valley.

.... We had to carry it. This we did in four-gallon kerosene tins dangling from a wire on each end of a yoke on our shoulders, Chinese fashion. We had to climb a long steep bush track, climaxed by a ladder to the top of the boiler.... we had scores and scores of trips. Later father discovered the use of the hydraulic ram, which used the power of the steam to force the water up a two inch pipe to the boiler and also supply our living quarters with water. To accommodate the workmen, huts were built, then a house where some of our family lived during the working week.⁴⁰

³⁹ Brandstater, 1979, P. 19

⁴⁰ *ibid*, P 20

On leaving school and going to work at the new mill at Collin's Cap, (we) learned to handle the machinery, drive the log hauler, and deploy the logs in the bush with a thousand yards of steel cable and large pulley blocks.

We had great difficulty in getting paid (and) in the end the mill team was forced to disband.⁴¹

Shortly after the mill was moved to Mill Road and was there for;

... some years. Logs were brought down from Springdale on a jinker with iron wheels drawn by horses. Brandstater sold out to Watsons who in turn sold later to Teddy Devine.⁴²

Darko's Mill, Fairy Glen

Brothers Mervyn and Neil Darko built homes and operated a mill around 1900. (?)⁴³

They later moved the mill to the end of Mt Hull Road. 'It was right up the mountainside, and they had a tramline with a trolley on a winch system to get the timber from the mill down to the place where it was loaded on to the lorry.' A photo of a large crate which carried the timber down the steep slope to the lorry survives.⁴⁴

Darko's Mill, Collinsvale Village.

Rheinie Darko built a mill on his own property, next to the old recreation ground.⁴⁵ The old mill was left and 'the old one left and is still rusting in the bush at the end of Mt Hull Road.'⁴⁶ Will Darko broke his leg at Darko's mill, and suffered a limp for the rest of his life, taking over the mail run as alternative employment.⁴⁷

Nelson's Mill, Collins Cap.

The second mill in the area, according to Gwen Pridmore, used a Hornsby steam engine. Brothers Walter, Harry and Charlie Nelson operated the mill for many years at Collins Cap. Ernest Darko worked there for many years on the saw bench, and from this timber built his home.⁴⁸ His son Otto, aged 15, worked on the saw-bench for the next owner, Watson, and also in other sawmills round the district.

⁴¹ Pridmore, P. 58

⁴² *ibid*, p. 46

⁴³ Pridmore, P. 59

⁴⁴ see Pridmore, p. 67

⁴⁵ Pridmore, p. 59

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ Pridmore p.51

⁴⁸ *ibid*

Fehlberg's Mill, Rocky Tom, Valley Road.

The third mill was operated by Harry Fehlberg and sons, worked by a twin-cylinder Linter engine. As the timber was cut out, the mill was moved further and further up the slopes of Rocky Tom. As the slopes became steeper, a tramline was put in to bring the timber out. Worked by a winch, the operation was dangerous on frosty mornings. One morning it took off, and overshot the mark, landing in the mill shed and doing much damage.' The wagon was later smashed to pieces on the valley floor, after running away, with the two men jumping clear. The mill was moved to another location.⁴⁹

Later Fehlberg and Totenhoffer went into partnership; the former with engine, the latter with timber at Myrtle Forest.⁵⁰

Totenhoffer's Sawmill, Collins Cap.

Gottlieb and Maria Tottenhoffer, who arrived from Germany in 1870, took up land in the shadow of Collins Cap. Here they farmed, and set up a sawmill.

Post WWI Saw MillsBerry's Sawmill, Collinsvale

Established by Harry Berry, a returned soldier, in 1920.⁵¹ He used an Eclipse steam engine. (Berry had been working at Jones sawmill at Esperance.)

The Eclipse was sold to Rheine Darko (who operated the mill in Collinsvale village), and brought a Marshal steam engine, and was probably the last steam engine to operate in Collinsvale.⁵²

From then on, mills were driven by diesel tractors.

Berry moved the mill a lot, from Myrtle Forest to Mt Hull Rd, and others localities, before putting the mill on his own place. He used a lorry to cart the sawn timber. 'Logs for cutting were brought up into the mill from the various forests where timber was still available'.

Bacon's Sawmill, Collins Cap.

Joe Bacon reached his mill by a Dodge car with no hood which carried the mill hands to work from Collinsvale.⁵³ 'Snowy' Geeves worked there.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Pridmore, p 46-7

⁵⁰ ibid

⁵¹ ibid, P 74

⁵² Pridmore, p 47

⁵³ Pridmore p. 47

⁵⁴ ibid, p. 77

After World War II, mills like Bacons moved further into the mountains as timber became harder to get, but were finally closed.

Over in the Lachlan, Cecil Oakley recalled hearing Bacons mill operating from the mill at Gum Top Ridge.

Post-WWII Saw Mills.

Registration documents held by State Archives indicate the following mills were active.

Hobbs and Darko, Mt Hull, Collinsvale

New mill registered in 1951⁵⁵ was 1 & 3/4 miles on the Mt Hull Rd, and supplied case timber and southern Tasmania markets. The mill was to operate continuously, employed the two owners and used a tractor power bench to produce 2,000 (Super/Ft) weekly.

Chas H. Berry (& King in partnership), Collinsvale.

This mill⁵⁶ was located in the Water Catchment Area⁵⁷. First registered 13/8/1948. Operating until at least November 1951. Crown land lease EFP 410. Two men producing 1,500 five to seven foot sawn palings weekly, with a saw bench driven by a Fordson tractor.

Edward Thos (Ted) Cox, AM Reynolds location, Collins Cap.

Registered in the name of Cox and Nobbs⁵⁸. Private lease⁵⁹. Mill life, 12 months, producing 2,000 su ft weekly. Breast bench driven by lorry engine. For general timber market in southern Tasmania.

Leonard Neil Rabe, Sorell Creek, Collinsvale.

Mill⁶⁰ located on 25.3. acres of James Staple's land⁶¹; 12 month life, worked seasonally, producing 2,000 su ft weekly, with 2 men on a lorry engine and beast bench. Supplying general timber for southern Tasmania.

Box Mills

Small mills made case timber for shipping apples and blackcurrants to Melbourne. Some unidentified locations appear to have been within the Range boundary.

⁵⁵ R 10566, Mill No 345, Cert 532, 26/4/51, FC 19/2, TSA

⁵⁶ Mill no. 334, Cert 470, 22/11/1951, FC 19/1 & 19/2, TSA

⁵⁷ see registration map

⁵⁸ Mill no. 47, cert 349, 5/8/1948. FC 19/1, TSA

⁵⁹ see registration and map

⁶⁰ Mill no. 147, cert 379, 14/7/1948. FC 19/1, TSA

⁶¹ see registration and map

The boxes held 12 pounds of fruit; two were nailed together for ease of handling. Bernie and Ted Cox, Harry Berry jnr and Roy Smith were typical box mill operators.⁶²

Related Industries

Furnace timber

Waste wood from the mills was taken by lorry to the furnaces of Jones and Turners jam factories in Hobart. Up to 6 lorries carted furnace wood to Hobart.⁶³

Charcoal kilns.

The charcoal was used as a fuel (by blacksmiths) and for filters in purifying water, and even as medicine both internal and external.⁶⁴ The biggest demand came from the hop industry where the charcoal was used in the drying process.⁶⁵

‘When we moved to the end of Valley road, I was intrigued by some grotesque objects sitting in the fields, with whiffs of steamy smoke coming from them. They were shaped like a gabled mound, mostly about eight feet high, and ten feet long and covered with turf. . I discovered they were charcoal kilns made by August Fehlberg. (*Another German migrant*), He would cover a pile of logs with turf, leaving a hole to start the fire on top of the logs. Once the fire was going he would close the hole in and in two or three weeks, when there was no longer misty smoke coming from the kiln, the charcoal would be ready.’

Timber Artefacts

Buildings.

As indicated.

Post and rail fences.

Alf King was the last of the bushmen with skills, and erected many miles of P & R fences in recent years.⁶⁶

Walking Sticks

Peter Carlsen, a Danish immigrant, was a farmer and wood-turner who made his own furniture and specialised in walking sticks which were sold in Hobart. A steam engine drove the lathe he used.⁶⁷ (Carlsen worked at Port Arthur, manly in the Model Prison. However, his wood-turning talents were

⁶² Pridmore, p 47-8

⁶³ *ibid*, P. 48

⁶⁴ Pridmore p. 57

⁶⁵ Pers Comm, H Smith, 1994

⁶⁶ Alexander, p. 72

⁶⁷ *ibid* p. 69

put to use by the commandant.⁶⁸ (Objects thought to be made by him are in the Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston.)

4.4.3 LACHLAN

Significance

Community Characteristics.

Without a published local history, the evolution and characteristics of settlement are yet to be explored. From oral evidence, the 19thC settlement pattern was of English families such as the Jeffereys and Nicholsons acquiring grants in the valley, and employing assigned prisoners, many of whom became tenant farmers. A tradition of Irish settlement also exists.

In the late 1800s, German immigrants, including the grandparents of author Peter Conrad, moved into the Lachlan Valley.⁶⁹ Other families, like the Oakleys, with bush skills, had moved from Tea Tree near Richmond where the father worked as a ploughman on the new hop-fields.

At the end of the valley, a small farming community dependent on small-fruits was located near Swamp Gum Hill.⁷⁰ The settlers here appear to have been predominantly Irish.

Lachlan Saw Mills

Compared to Collinsvale, a smaller number of sawmills seem to have operated at the Lachlan. (Larger mills operated in the Mt Lloyd and Uxbridge districts to the north.) In recent years, this may have been due to a severe fire of 1934 which destroyed timber reserves in the area.⁷¹

Milling was an industry which newer settlers, denied the more fertile farms in the Lachlan Valley, could use (with very hard work) to become more affluent.

The availability of large scale machinery post 1950, particularly the larger bulldozer and trucks, resulted in a major change in the sawmilling industry. Instead of the mill being near the source of timber in the bush, roads could be widened, and logs carted to mills in more central locations. The mill sites on Gum Top and Frying Pan Hills are the last of the traditional type of mill.

Location of these mills in difficult terrain may have been due to the effects of the 1934 bushfire, which made surviving timber valuable, no matter how remote.

⁶⁸ CSD 10/8/114, 25.10/1875, TSA

⁶⁹ Conrad, 1988. P. 219

⁷⁰ Evans, Pers Comm, 1994

⁷¹ Rich, Pers Comm, 1994

Recollections of the man who operated the mills is also the end of an era.

From a community point of view, mills provided employment, and independence for the small scale millers, prior to the recent concentration of ownership.

Sawmilling Sites.

At least two mills operated within the reserve. They were located on the Gum Top and Frying Pan Hills. One was operational pre-WW II.

Vere McGuire and Cecil Oakley worked mills in both locations.

Oakley's Mill

Cecil Oakley, the main sawmill proprietor in the Lachlan post-War, operated Oakley's Mill on the Lachlan Road, close to New Norfolk, from 1953 to 1973. Prior to that he worked smaller mills on private holdings. As a young man he worked on Price's Mill, Gum Top Ridge in the late 1930's.

During the 1960's he held timber leases on Mt Charles from where logs were carted to the mill. Mr Oakley lost his Lachlan Road mill twice; once in 1962, and again in 1967, when his home and possessions -including photographs- were destroyed in the 1967 bushfires. He rebuilt the mill, selling out in 1973. The mill went through several owners, but still operates as Derwent Valley Sawmills.

Frying Pan Hill Sawmill

Vere McGuire, who operated the Frying Pan Hill Sawmill, began milling with his father, Walter in the Moogara district pre-War, using horses to drag logs to these mills. He erected a mill in the Victoria Valley, and also worked for Jim Hall at Derwent Bridge.⁷²

Pre-WWII Mills.

Gum Top Ridge, Price Bros.

Operational before and after World War II.

Cecil Oakley, retired mill operator, indicated that he worked at a mill in this area in 1937-9, operated by the Price Brothers. (Access to Gum Top is via the track through his two 25 acre blocks.) There were two Price brothers, plus himself as feller, using a crosscut saw and axe, a splitter who worked two draught horses dragging logs to the mill, plus two bench men. The mill was powered by a diesel engine. During the week the men slept in two split slab huts near the mill. The horses were stabled in a bark-covered structure.⁷³

⁷² Pers Comm, Vere McGuire, 1994

⁷³ Oakley, Pers Comm, 1994

Post War Timber Mills and Leases.

K. E. Price, 'Gum Top, Lachlan.

This mill⁷⁴ was operating on crown land, 'weather permitting', with a mill life of 15 years in 1948. (A year later this was reduced to 18 months.) Production of 3,000 su ft of scantling and boards for the local and general market, with two men operating a 'Crude oil engine, outrigger petrol tram /log hauler, vertical frame and breast bench.'

The drums of two log haulers are located below the road, inside the access gate.⁷⁵

Oakley's Mill. Cecil Edward Oakley.

A small mill⁷⁶ operated on John Townsend's property, with two men operating a breast bench initially driven by a (Buick) car engine. Mr Oakley indicated that the engine didn't operate well, and he purchased a Fordson tractor. The mill produced timber for the general market. 'No cases.' The mill was moved to the final site on the Lachlan Road shortly after this.

R. E. Clark, Lachlan Road.

Mill⁷⁷ with electric breast bench and frame saw, two men producing 10,000 su ft weekly for local and southern Tasmania, 75% for the general market and 25% cases.

Derwent Robertson, "Bush, Lachlan."

A seasonal mill⁷⁸, which according to Cecil Oakley produced only every so often. 30 hp Fordson tractor, breast bench.

McGuire's Mill, Frying Pan Hills, 1965.

Two sites inspected by the consultants. Not registered in the 1948-50 period, but operated post 1965-72; records not yet available.

Former sawmiller, Vere McGuire, ran the mill with his brother Irwin (dec), using a diesel bull-dozer engine. This drove two cutting down saws and a breast bench. The mill was 60 ft in overall length, with all machinery under the one roof. Timber up to 24 ft long was cut. Following a fire which destroyed the large mill, a smaller mill was erected further up the hill, but ran for only 12 months.

⁷⁴ Registration 1948-49. FC 19/1, 8/3/48, Mill No. 259, map, and 28/1/49, TSA

⁷⁵ Nicholson, Pers Comm, 1994

⁷⁶ Mill no 145, FC 19/1, 8/4/(?) 1948, and map, and 18/8/49, TSA

⁷⁷ FC19/1, 17/1/49, TSA

⁷⁸ FC 19/1, and, 1949, map, TSA

(The machinery was then moved to a private lease - Townshends, now Gilberts.) Vere was told of a much earlier mill operating in this area, but cannot add further details.

4.5 SOUTHERN REGION

The two communities on the southern shoulder of the Wellington Range are Mountain River and Crabtree.

4.5.1 MOUNTAIN RIVER

Significance

Community Characteristics.

A district which has experienced changes in settlement patterns over the last 10 -20 years, moving from an orchard/ mixed farming and milling farming community to a hobby farm and commuter's small holdings.

The districts was settled c 1850 by a number of families, many former convicts. The dominant family was those of Charles Oates, who established an intensive sawmilling business. A former convict, he established orchards, and built a water-powered sawmill on Mountain River, using a race and water down upstream, and a wooden tramway which delivered timber to the main road. He purchased extensive holdings in the district. 'At the time of his death he owned thousands of acres of land in the vicinity of Grove, and extended through Mountain River, up to the rich grazing tracts on the shoulders of Sleeping Beauty.'⁷⁹

Until the 1960's, the slopes of the Range were used for an intensive milling operations, particularly along the southern slopes of Sleeping Beauty.

The water-powered mill was probably the mill installed by James Lucas, described in 1867 as the 'saw mill' proprietor of Mountain River.⁸⁰ All other residents- including Charles Oates, are farmers. (Although the address of 6 settlers is given as "Mountain River", the name wasn't in use formally until the turn of the century.)

With the advent of steam, the heavily timbered slopes became the base for large sawmills.

Mountain River was considered a prime spot for trout fishing and featured in scenic newspaper photographs before World War I.

The slopes were used for hunting possum for their skins.

⁷⁹ Oates, 1993; COT, 1900

⁸⁰ McPhails, p 155

The community relied on the streams for water; a small Council-administered water scheme was constructed c 1950 and still serves part of the valley.

Pre World War II Sawmills

Albert Hogan.

Case/general mill located on Sleeping Beauty, operated by a stationary Hornsby oil engine.

Situated to the right of Sleeping Beauty, on a 'level' slope. Logs lowered to the mill by a double acting winch and tramway. (see photos) The logs were lowered on a trolley to the mill below, the empty trolley being towed up by the returning weight. At the top of the line a horse was used to tow the steel cable to the felled log then hauled to the rail head by an engine at the mill. A braking system controlled the speed of the descent, but with much screaming from the brake belts. (see photos). The sound could be heard down in Mountain River.⁸¹

The double acting cable is similar to the method of delivering coal to the wharf from the mine head at the Coal Mines, Tasman Peninsula c 1850.

The mill equipment was W. A. Page of Crabtree, removed to another mill site.

Charlie Palmer.

Mill producing building timber.

Post-World War II Sawmills

Hubert George Schmidt.

Private mill⁸² at Mountain River located on land of Stevenson's. A 27 hp Studebaker engine with ripping and docking benches. Timber was cut from various leases and brought to the mill on the main road at Mountain River. (see map)

C & R Oates.

Mill⁸³ located at the "Foot of Sleeping Beauty in Mountain River" on crown land. A 14 hp steam-driven Canadian breaking down, breast and docker. Used also to produce cases, coffins and scantling.

The mill worked from three different 'stands' located along a relatively level section of the lease.

⁸¹ Oates, 1994

⁸² FC 19/1, 31/7/1948, Mill no 49

⁸³ FC 19/1, 1/3/ 1948, Mill No 236

In 1949, this crown lease was assumed by M. Pritchard when the mill was located on the ' NW corner and extreme W boundary of old EFP by C & R Oates top end of Mountain River.' Equipment consisted of portable steam engine, saw benches and petrol log hauler. The mill⁸⁴ produced case timber and weatherboards 50-50.

The machinery lay for many years on the Sleeping Beauty, but was removed for restoration and use at the Bush Mill, Port Arthur.⁸⁵

Albert W. Raethel.⁸⁶

Mill located on private property in Mountain River. A steam 6 hp engine with breast and docking bench producing 100% case timber. (see map) Timber carted from crown and private sources.

By 1949 Raethel was using a 22 hp Howard tractor.

Charles E. Oates⁸⁷

On private 100 acre block of C E Oates. 25 hp Vauxhall tractor, 'structure over plant.'

Garnet .T Schmidt⁸⁸

Located on SW corner of 50 acre block of L K F Krause, Mountain River. Case mill using 26 hp Nash car motor. 80% cases, 20% junk timber.

Reg Brown and Ron Wright⁸⁹

Reginald Brown and his brother-in-law, Ronald Wright' in 1950. Located on TE Oates block, (100/18, 16-2-7 acres). A Fordson tractor.

William John (Jack) Oates & Earnest Allen Cordwell.⁹⁰

Located on private block of CF and Don Oates, Mountain River. Block 123/24, 69-1-34 acres. The mill used the Studebaker previously worked by Hubert Schmidt.

⁸⁴ FC 19/1, 9/2/49, 19/2, 19/2/51, Mill no 236

⁸⁵ Oates, 1994

⁸⁶FC 9/3/48, Mill 265

⁸⁷ FC 19/1, 8/12/49, Mill no. 354

⁸⁸FC 19/1, 7.7.49

⁸⁹ FC19/2, 21/8/50, Mill no 330

⁹⁰ FC 19/2, 1/7/50, mill no 398

4.5.2 CRABTREE

Significance

Community Characteristics.

Harsher climate and more remote, the district had not experienced the rapid change of resettlement undergone by Mountain River. A stronger community spirit seems to survive. The southern access to Jeffries Track passes through Crabtree. Increased and unsupervised use of the track is putting strain on the community and needs to be seen as a management issue.

Timber gathering for firewood was a traditional use of the Range. Continued use will allow a reduction in bushfire fuel, and also allow legitimate use of a traditional use which will only occur illegally otherwise.

Post-War Sawmills

Claude Oates⁹¹

Road side of New Denison Road, Denison Falls, then moved to Russell River. Producing 6,00 su ft weekly for local case mills. McCormick-Deering 22 hp tractor, breast and docking bench.

George Lovell⁹²

A tractor driven mill located on M. Pritchard's EFP 649 holding on crown land. A new mill.

4.6 THE WESTERN WELLINGTONS

The western section of the Wellington range is the least traversed.⁹³ Timber extraction, as noted was a major intrusion in the post war period. The other major feature is the Jeffrey's Track.

4.5.1 Jefferey's Track

Significance

Skirting the rear of the Wellington Ranges, the track connects the Huon Valley with New Norfolk and the Derwent Valley. Re-opening the track is debated periodically. However, the track has long-term cultural importance at a local level, as the route was used by New Norfolk residents to send stock to Huon markets. Families migrated in both directions and intermarried. The link was used in the early

⁹¹ FC 19/1, 25/2/48, Mill no 515

⁹² FC 19/2, 10/10/51, Mill no 589

⁹³ (see Chapman, 1934)

1980's by a teacher who lived at Crabtree on the Huon side but was a teacher at New Norfolk, and travelled the route daily on a motor bike.⁹⁴

Description

The name Jefferey's Track appears a label of recent years. Until the 1966 introduction of Tasmaps, the name given on earlier maps was Huon or Crabtree Track. When the track was cut is uncertain, and is not shown on Woodward's 1848 survey map.⁹⁵

In 1912 the poor state of the track was preventing Townsend, a Lachlan resident, from moving his cattle to market at Huonville. Track work was contracted to bushmen from the Huon side, even though administered by the New Norfolk council. James Cannell snr of Huonville, was widening the track in 1912, but badly underestimated the extent of the work. He complained;

.... there is some very large trees across the track; I am going to use a little powder as soon as I get them cut off to large to handle. There is several people wanting the track cleared so they can get cattle to Huonville Sale.⁹⁶

By April, Cannell had nearly finished slabbing on the plains near Mr Townsend on the New Norfolk end of the track.

Cannell sent a voucher seeking wages.

I thought the one I sent before got mislaid. Be kind enough to send us our cheques, we will soon be finished and got no money to pay for rations. I have not measured our track. I think the work we have done will be near 9 miles than 4 miles which I thought was about the distance when we started.⁹⁷

In February 1916, another contract for New Norfolk-Huon Track was let to D. Mitchell and Archie Wakefield, both of Grove /Mountain River area on the Huon side. Their contract required clearing trees and repairing culverts, for which they were paid 20 pounds10 shillings.⁹⁸

In 1920, W & G Townsend of Hillcrest, Lachlan, had a stock run and complained to the Huon Council they '..... cannot get stock out there due to very bad state of track, due to fallen trees.'⁹⁹

As a young man in the 1920's, C. Oakley recalls seeing mobs of over 100 cattle being driven by stockmen and their dogs down the 'Huon track' as the Lachlan residents call it.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ A. Downie, personal communication, 1994

⁹⁵ Muddle, 1983

⁹⁶ *ibid*, 30/3/12

⁹⁷ PWD 24/9 New Norfolk . Huon -New Norfolk Track

⁹⁸ *ibid*, 15/2/16

⁹⁹ (PWD 24/6 Huon. Huon -New Norfolk 22/6-14- TRACK 'H', 19/5/20 . TSA)

¹⁰⁰ Oakley, Pers Comm, 1994

A recent proposal to develop a paper pulp mill at Port Huon, the Jeffries Track was mooted as access for log trucks from the Derwent Valley.

¹ Beautiful Tasmania- A Guide to Tasmania 1918. TL.