

L. HAZ COOK
ALLYNBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL 1027

Compiled for the
Centenary

1869



1969

— 22nd FEBRUARY, 1969

**CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS
ALLYNBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL
FEBRUARY 22, 1969**

**CENTENARY COMMITTEE AND
PARENTS' & CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION**

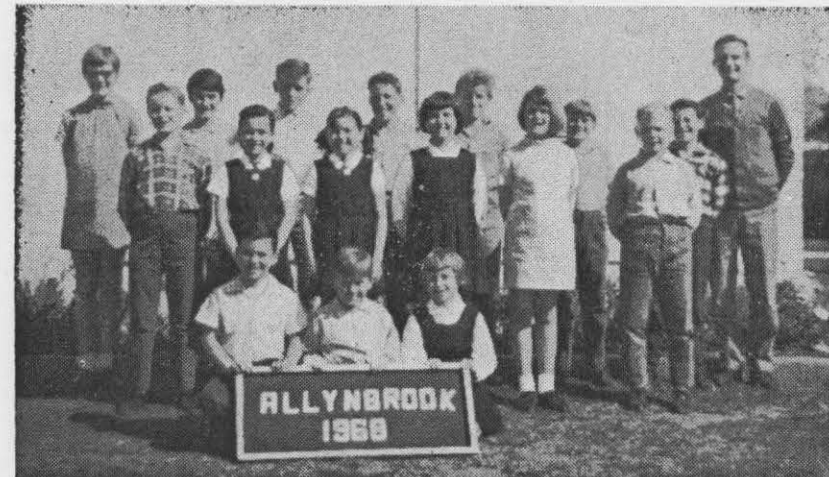
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School Counsellor: J. JANE

ALLYNBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL — 1968



Back Row (l. to r.): Noeline Packham, Sheryl Grant, Ashley Clements, Kevin Walters, Glenn Grainger, Wayne Grainger, Barry Walters, R. K. L. Godwin (T/C).
Centre (l. to r.): Alex Clements, Kathy Wells, Dianne Wells, Rose Clements, Janice Packham, Dennis Collison.
Front, Kneeling (l. to r.): Allan Walters, Darren Grainger, Nancy Clements.

FOREWORD

The centenary of a school is a highlight occasion, and since public education became a State responsibility only in 1848 few schools have had the honour to celebrate it as Allynbrook does today.

There is possibly no inspectorate in the State where there are more schools that have arrived at this historical pinnacle than this one of Maitland in which fifteen schools have now marked the memorable event.

Such a record of continuous service is deserving of recognition, and it is pleasing to me to note the interest and enthusiasm with which the local residents in each case come to the support of their teacher in organising the great day. Equally pleasing it is to see how past pupils respond to the call and come, often from very long distances, to join with their former colleagues in these celebrations.

Why do they do it? Even though they may not always realise it, I think they are doing at least two things; they are showing that the school did something for them, and they are anxious to participate in the making of history, consciously now, as in the past they did unconsciously.

So this celebration has more meaning for those who have passed through the school. With the trivialities of the daily routine in their school forgotten for the most part, they can see more clearly what the school, through its teachers, tried to do for them, and I am sure they are appreciative.

On this day we honour those teachers of a bygone era, as we also honour the pioneers of the Allynbrook area because the school was a part of their life. I hope the boys and girls will gain from this day a feeling for and a sense of the history that gives rise to the occasion, and will feel thus that they also are right now making history.

My congratulations to all those responsible for organising these celebrations.

C. H. J. HARGREAVES,
Inspector of Schools

THE EARLY HISTORY OF ALLYNBROOK COMPILED BY THE SCHOOL CHILDREN OF ALLYNBROOK THROUGH VISITS TO LIVING PIONEERS, TWO PIONEERS' HOMES, CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE LANDS DEPARTMENT. THE AUTHORITY QUOTED IN PARENTHESIS IS THE DERIVATION OF EACH FACT.

By Mr. R. M. Sheehan, Teacher-in-charge, 1943-1946

Allynbrook is a district situated on the Allyn River twenty-five miles north-west of Paterson. At present, it is a dairying district, but this occupation, as we shall see, is only comparatively recent.

In the original New South Wales survey an area of about 200 acres in a bend of the Allyn River, less than a mile by road above the present site of Allynbrook School, was reserved for village purposes. This reservation remained until 1860, when, as apparently the village never developed, the area was subdivided for sale in 1861. In November of that year it was sold in blocks varying in size from one to seventy acres. The purchasers were William Boydell, Stephen Johnson, Henry Fowler, Robert Hancock, David Lovett and William Godson. Originally the village was referred to in the survey as "Lewinsbrook" reserve, but the name was not further used.

The earliest land grantee was George Townshend, who was given 2560 acres called "Trevallyn" in October, 1826. In November of the same year a grant of 2560 acres was also given to Alexander Park. Other early grantees were J. T. Hughes, J. P. Webber, Christopher Rolleston and Alexander Seymour. The latter two grants were further up the Allyn River and in the districts now termed Halton and Ecclestone.

In 1836, Charles Boydell was one of the largest landholders in the whole district. He purchased the whole of the western bank of the river between Gresford and Allynbrook as well as some of the Eastern side of the river. He paid the then fixed price for land — five shillings per acre. This includes one block of 615 acres, purchased 22nd December, 1836 — £153-15-0. This 615 acres is the centre of the present district of Allynbrook and is now owned by a grandson of Charles Boydell. The surveyed village site of Allynbrook is on the eastern side of this property.

With Charles Boydell, i.e., in 1836, began the first settlement in the district. J. P. Webber, Alexander Spark, and George Townshend owned the country surrounding that of Charles Boydell which shall in future be termed "Caerwgyrle" — the name given it by Charles Boydell and which name the property still bears.

When all these grants were made, Government Regulation provided for the assignment of convicts for labour on farms, etc., one of the main provisions being that the landholder was to ration, clothe, and quarter whatever number of convicts were assigned to him. There is no doubt that the grantees mentioned took full advantage of this cheap labour. No monuments in the way of buildings, however, are apparent, so that one can only surmise that convict labour was used in this district. However, it is known that such labour was used a short distance away — on the Paterson River — and that a barracks was in existence there, so that we can be nearly sure that such labour was used in this district.

The oldest building in Allynbrook is the Church of England Church — St. Mary-on-Allyn. The body of the church is nearly one hundred years old. The nave section is a more recent addition. Charles Boydell's wife was a daughter of the first Church of England Bishop in New South Wales — Bishop Broughton. The church was built originally as a place of worship for this lady.

The school site was resumed in 1881, but the school was in existence prior to that date. It was on the same site, but not in the same position. The school prior to 1881, was known as "Caerwgyrle" Public School (Department of Lands Mr. W. J. Boydell).

OCCUPATIONS AND EMPLOYMENTS OF EARLY SETTLERS

The earliest occupations of the inhabitants were wheat growing, tobacco farming, viticulture, and orange culture. The aim of each farmer seemed to have been to become as nearly self-sufficient as possible.

The ground was tilled by means of a hoe. The crops were planted by hand, and reaped by hand. Wheat was harvested by means of a reaping hook. It was then threshed by using flails. Later, about 1880, a travelling threshing machine came into the district. This was looked on as a boon. Winnowing earlier was done on a windy day by lifting the flailed mass of chaff and grain into the air and allowing the chaff to blow away. When winnowed, the grain was collected, bagged, and then taken by bullock dray to Paterson or Dungog to be ground into flour and returned to the farmer. The trip from Allynbrook to Paterson, in those days, took approximately twelve days.

Tobacco growing was engaged in extensively. The leaf was grown, picked, cured and packed in hands, and realised 7d per pound. Tobacco growing has long since been abandoned. Later a tobacco factory was opened by a Mr. Buxton but was a failure.

Orange orchards were planted on practically every suitable flat spot. By 1880, much of "Caerwgrle" was under orange orchards. Gradually, many of these plus some surrounding country had been sold until in 1880 "Caerwgrle" consisted of about 615 acres. Oranges, then, were cultivated on a very extensive scale. Unfortunately, due to poor means of communication, the market was limited, and it was difficult to dispose of the very best oranges at 2d per dozen. It has been stated that Washington navel oranges are identical with an orange produced at Lewinsbrook thirty years before the production by American orange orchardists of the Washington naval orange. Oranges from the Paterson River districts (and the Allyn River and Paterson River join a few miles below Gresford) command a ready market nowadays when means of communications and transport are practicable and possible.



The first Creamery in Allynbrook, 1890, belonging to Boydell. In the shed was the district's first cream separator. Persons shown worked portions of Boydell's then extensive holding. Standing (l. to r.): Herb Collison, Lydia Collison, William Collison, Sam Furner. Sitting (l. to r.): John Sellens, George Hancock, Mick Bird, Greig Lawrie. Kneeling (l. to r.): Sam Muddle, Bert Lawrence. On Horse: R. B. Boydell.

THE HOUSEWIFE OF 1880

How times have changed! Picture the modern Allynbrook housewife! The baker calls at the door three days per week; the grocer calls for, and delivers her groceries weekly; her meat is delivered to her daily if she so desires.

In 1880 and earlier, the housewife endeavoured to augment the family income by such projects as poultry raising. The eggs therefrom were sold to a travelling dealer for 2½d or 3½d per dozen. Her fowls realised from 1/9 to 2/6 per pair. She also milked a few cows and, after skimming the cream from the milk, made butter. Any surplus butter was sold to the dealer at 6d per pound.

The arrival of the travelling dealer — an Indian — was a great day for the housewife and her family. This man carried huge stocks of print calico as well as other things. It was usual to purchase quantities of this calico which was retailed at 5d per yard for construction into articles of clothing by the housewife either by hand or by a hand-driven sewing machine — the later model stirrup-driven machine was unknown in Allynbrook in those days. It was not uncommon for this dealer to accept payment for his wares in the form of eggs or poultry or some other produce when the housewife was without money. (Mrs. E. M. Bird).

THE PIONEER'S HOME

The oldest occupied residence at Allynbrook is still standing. It is not used as a residence now, but as part of a wine making cellar. It was built of stone.

However, the usual home was made from timber slabs, split, drawn, and erected by the farmer himself. These were the walls the roof was of sheets of bark. The floor was the earth. Cooking was done over an open fire and in a camp oven. Windows were merely openings to admit the light and air — glass was unknown. The night light was a candle made by the housewife from tallow. Later pine boards were secured for flooring. Beds in the early days were constructed by the farmer, and consisted of two trestle-like constructions upon which a sheet of bark was laid. The mattress was a jute bag filled with corn husks. Of course, all feathers were preserved, and, if sufficient, and when, accumulated, these were used as mattress and pillow filling. Straw was another common bedding filling used. Blankets, for the most part, were bags sewn together.

At the time of the Stewart's Brook (Scone) gold discovery, many men rushed to the diggings, leaving the housewife to attend to the farm. They, with fortitude possessed by Australian pioneer women, carried on in the absence of their husbands, who had gone to seek their fortunes, but mostly returned empty-handed.

In about the year 1850 Allynbrook experienced perhaps its worst time. At that time a dreadful drought occurred. It was so bad that, as a letter written by Mrs. O'Shaughnessy who arrived in Australia at the time remarked, "I walked along the bed of the Hunter River." It was during this season that two of the early settlers on the Paterson River abandoned their holdings and set out to walk back to Ireland. However, on their trek, they reached Paterson and secured employment. These were not the only pioneers ruined by that season. However, "In God's good time down came the rain" and Allynbrook was saved, but many men were ruined financially and in health by that season of the early 1850's (Mrs. E. M. Bird).

VITICULTURE

From its earliest settlement Allynbrook's topography, soil and climate were considered suitable for the vine. Nearly every farm, as well as its orange orchard and other farms, had a section given over to the culture of grapes. These were attended to in the pruning and growing season by the farmer himself. When the harvest time came, we find a true community spirit prevailing. The settlers banded together and picked at each vineyard in turn. The grapes were taken to the wine distillery in huge casks to be made into wine. One of these distilleries, viz. at "Caerwgrle", still stands as a reminder of the days when Allynbrook thrived as a centre of the wine-making industry. However, the year 1943 saw the end of this industry as it was then, after nearly one hundred years, that wine manufacture ceased to be one of Allynbrook's industries. The wine is still cultivated, but viticulturalists concentrate now upon table muscats and other similar varieties. The annual Grape Pickers' Ball was an even looked forward to and spoken of during the whole year, as it marked the annual gala season of the community. (Mrs. E. M. Bird, Mr. W. J. Boydell).

THE GROWTH OF COMMUNICATIONS

When the pioneers came to Allynbrook their only communication with the outside world was by means of their bullock drays, or horseback. Paterson was the nearest settlement. From there a regular team communicated with West Maitland. The settlers in Allynbrook used to make annual trips by bullock dray to Paterson for provisions. This state of affairs prevailed until about 1870, when agricultural industry was in full swing. Bullock teamsters then extended their operations to Allynbrook. The trip, Allynbrook to Paterson, took twelve days. About the year 1881 coaches first made their appearance on the Allynbrook "run". In 1890 a three-times-weekly mail and passenger service was begun by George Fry under contract to the Postmaster General's Department. A few years later a daily mail service by coach from here to Paterson was begun. This coach, besides carrying mail, also carried passengers and bread from Gresford. Bread was delivered to the farmers at 2d a loaf. There were no bridges along the road in the coaching days. In fact, it was not until 1922-23 that the Allyn River was bridged in some places. When the river was in flood the mail was sent across in a flying-fox type of contrivance. It would then be carried on horseback, returning the same way. The year 1912 saw a further step forward in communication. In that year Paterson was linked by rail with West Maitland. Coaches still continued to link here with Paterson. In 1913 motor buses were introduced. In that year Messrs. Grey and Hancock inaugurated a motor service to West Maitland. From that day Allynbrook has maintained a daily mail and passenger service. The first telephone line was built in about 1910.

Has Allynbrook advanced? Today it is a thriving dairying Community. Table grapes are grown. There is a daily mail and passenger service. There is one business house, viz., a wine shop. Sixty years ago it boasted an hotel, two shops, and a wine shop. It had the vine, tobacco, wheat industries, a soap and eucalyptus factory, and a daily coach. Has it advanced?

MR. R. M. SHEEHAN,
Teacher-in-Charge, 1943-1946

"THERE'S A MOTLEY HOST OF MEMORIES ROUND
THAT OLD BUSH SCHOOL."

— From "The Old Bush School" by John O'Brien

HISTORY OF ALLYNBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL 1869 — 1969

PREPARED BY HELEN GIBSON, RESEARCH OFFICER
OF THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND PLANNING
NEW SOUTH WALES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
DECEMBER, 1968, FROM RECORDS HELD IN THE
MITCHELL LIBRARY AND GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES

THE FIRST SCHOOL

One of the tributaries of the Hunter River is the Allyn River. Situated at a bend in this river in a prosperous farming area is its namesake, the small town of Allynbrook. Nearby towns are Gresford and Paterson, and the much larger towns of Maitland and Singleton are only a short car journey's distance away.

Local heresay contends that a private school, possibly a church school, was opened as early as 1839. At that time the town was called Lewinsbrook. The school was situated approximately 500 yards west of the present building, most likely on a ridge on the property now owned by Mr. Steve Furner. Senior citizens maintain that at one stage the school was conducted at night by a man who also ran a part-time private school at Halton, approximately eight miles north of Allynbrook at the intersection of the Eccleston and Chad's Creek Roads. (Godwin)*

The property on which this first school was built was no doubt owned by the Boydell family which still lives in the area. In the early days this family owned most of the land from Allynbrook to Gresford, some six miles away. (Godwin).

A PROVISIONAL SCHOOL CALLED "CAERWGRLE"

Allynbrook's first public school opened on 1st February, 1869. Until 1909 the school went under the name of "Caerwgrle", the name of the estate and wine-making establishment owned by the Boydell family. In 1869 the wine manufacturing plant was situated one mile north-west of the school on the other side of the Allyn River. The name "Caerwgrle" is Welsh for "Three Little Girls". This school was called this in 1869, but by 1872 the spelling had been simplified to "Caergurle".

The school was set up under the provisions of the Public Schools Act (1866). This act represented one of the most important educational advances in the nineteenth century. The Denominational School Board and the Board of National Education, the two authorities that had controlled education in New South Wales since 1848, were both abolished. In place of each was formed the Council of Education which was destined to control education until 1880.

One type of school that the 1866 act recognised was the Provisional School. This was more or less a smaller version of a Public School. The former required an average attendance of from 15 to 24 children before State Aid could be granted, whereas the latter needed a minimum attendance of 25. By 8th September, 1879 Caergurle School had a large enough average attendance to warrant the granting of Public School status.

* The assistance given by the present Teacher-in-Charge, Mr. R. K. L. Godwin is acknowledged.

THE APPLICATION FOR STATE AID, 1869

The school which gained Provisional status in 1869 had existed several years prior to this as a private school charging tuition fees. It was sponsored by William B. Boydell, J.P., who supplied the building free of charge.

On 15th January, 1869, Boydell wrote to the Council of Education requesting that the school be granted Provisional School status. If this were granted, he knew that it would mean that the Council of Education would pay the salary of the teacher and forward school supplies free of charge.

Within a few weeks Mr. Inspector Dwyer visited the school and subsequently recommended to the Council that the school be granted Provisional status. According to Dwyer, few people in the town other than Boydell saw the value of education. Dwyer wrote:

"Previous attempts to form a school here have failed, the people being with few exceptions so utterly indifferent in the matter as to be scarcely willing to lend any assistance or make any sacrifice."

Later he said:

"The district is a very populous one, but the inhabitants are generally poor, ignorant, and notoriously dilatory as regards the education of their children. If such a beginning as this be not encouraged so as to make them slightly acquainted with the advantages of a school, it is feared that nothing better can be attempted at present."

There were reputed to be 89 children living within a radius of two miles of the school, but only about twenty were attending the school in 1869. Most were Church of England children, but there were also many Roman Catholics. The nearest Public School was at Gresford which had opened in 1868.

Eighteen parents promised to send children to the school if Provisional Status was granted. Eight of these parents could not even sign their own names.

The list included:

Henry Deards	(7)	William Boulton	(2)
James Downs	(5)	David Lovett	(2)
George Hancock	(6)	William Collison	(4)
Edwin Eveleigh	(4)	Robert Hancock	(5)
Martin Meath	(3)	John Kay	(2)
Patrick Connolly	(2)	Thomas Garland	(1)
James Smith	(4)	William Pascoe	(5)
George Eveleigh	(4)	Edmund Furner	(4)
Thomas Pascoe	(1)	Owen Frawley	(2)

(Note: The number in brackets refers to number of children).

THE OLD SCHOOL BUILDING

The first school building was a simple hut that Mr. Boydell could spare. It was built on part of the present school site; that is near the 25 foot cliff overlooking the bend in the Allyn River. According to Mr. Godwin, hollows in the ground on a ridge some 50 yards west of the present school indicate where the building stood.

The hut was anything but suitable for a school. It was a humble slab dwelling with a bark roof. The windows did not even have glass and the earthen floor was subject to dampness in rainy weather. The building consisted of two large rooms next to each other, fronted by a long verandah which had an earthen floor.

The schoolroom was 21' x 16' x 9'. The other large room (12' x 16' x 9') went under the name of a teacher's residence. At the back of this room was a tiny pantry and two makeshift little skillion rooms

(both 9' x 9') which were meant to be used as bedrooms.

A history of hardship to teachers and pupils alike can be traced while this inadequate building was in use. In 1869 Mr. Inspector Dwyer was dubious about recommending Provisional status to the school unless Mr. Boydell would guarantee to effect improvements immediately.

"The present room is a very poor one, and could only be tolerated temporarily and as a trial. There are no out-offices or furniture of any account."

The building was repaired and improved and its "temporary" use lasted until 1881.

So uncomfortable and primitive was this residence that male married teachers, generally the best available, were often deterred from accepting situations at the school. It was Mr. Inspector Jones' opinion in 1874 that not even a new kitchen built in the backyard would attract this type of teacher to the school. Sometimes teachers boarded elsewhere rather than live in the teacher's residence.

By January, 1881, the building could no longer be tolerated. The incumbent teacher, Mr. Glynn, had completely lost patience. He spoke of people

"keeping their children from School, owing to the overcrowding of the schoolroom, which is, in this hot weather, most unhealthy for the children."

He preferred to take some of the children outside under the shade of the trees to teach them.

The total enrolment in 1880 was 54 and the average attendance 30.6. This is significant when it is compared to the average attendance for 1869 (about 20).

Mr. Glynn could not quite take the teacher's residence seriously. He wrote that it

"consists of one moderate-sized room (used for kitchen, dining-room and sitting-room) and a low skillion room. The latter when I came was divided into two, but I found it absolutely necessary in order to put up a bedstead to pull down the partition. Why, the room, now is only about 12 feet long and 8 feet wide! May I add that the outer wallplate is so low, that the bedposts on one side have to stick up through the ceiling. As to the addition (lower even than the skillion) between the fireplace, and the end of the skillion-room, it is only about 5 feet in width, is without flooring, and was without a covering until I recently roofed it with galvanised iron, and certainly did not seem to me worthy to be designated a room"

Glynn left in the same year. He did not wait for the opening of the new school in August, 1882. His successor, James Simpson, had another idea. He boarded elsewhere and pulled down the partition between the schoolroom and main room to provide more accommodation for pupils. In view of the shortage of space it is not surprising to learn that in August, 1881, the local people demanded that the post office be moved from the school building. It had obviously been there for some years. After the new school opened Mr. Boydell took half of the old building to be re-erected elsewhere and teachers used what was left as a stable and shed! The end came in 1889 when the teacher reported that the building was in danger of collapsing. It was demolished. However, good wood was not to be wasted in those days, so it was later used to build a shed.

THE TEACHERS 1869 — 1882

Who were the teachers who occupied this old school?

The first was J. Mervill Unsworth, an unmarried man of 38 years. He was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, in England, and followed the Church

of England persuasion. For a while he was employed as a clerk in a mercantile house in Sydney. Although he had no teacher training he had already taught twelve months at the Caerwgrle School before it was given Provisional status.

Mr. Inspector Dwyer said of him:

"The teacher is a man of good appearance and tolerable address. Never intended for, or trained to, the teaching profession; and having adopted it only as a means of living, at a rather advanced period of life, much cannot be expected as regards attainments or efficiency. He is, however, young enough to study and seems willing to do so: he is well spoken of in the district and is, altogether, probably as promising a specimen of a Provisional School Teacher as can be found."

He was given the meagre salary of £48 per annum from 1st February, 1869. This would have been supplemented by fees paid weekly by pupils (usually from 6d to 1/- per pupil). The first requisition for school supplies to the Council of Education was dated 18th February, 1869. The materials were to be forwarded via steamer to Paterson, care of Mr. Corner.

Mr. Unsworth struggled on till the beginning of 1875, but his lack of teacher training was a serious handicap, and inspectors sent in a succession of unenthusiastic reports about his efforts. These were some of the comments:

"the methods judging by results, are very ineffective. The lesson documents are arranged with indifferent skills, and the teaching is stiff and mechanical.

Discipline empirical and barely tolerable in efficiency . . . teaching feeble and indifferently skilful."

The next teacher, Mrs. Charlotte Kelsh, refused to take up the appointment because of the school's "remoteness from Maitland and the ill condition of its attached teachers' residence." Mrs. Kelsh described herself as "an old servant of the Council's and I hold a certificate from it." The residence must have really been bad for she was no position to be particular. She had been without work for two months and was in serious financial difficulties as she was supporting a young daughter.

Miss Annie D. M. Harvey, the next teacher, proved to be a little too unorthodox for the townsfolk. She was a single woman of 34 and was described as "respectable but slightly eccentric with a Zavastiski style of hair". The letters she wrote give the impression of an intelligent, articulate woman who was full of wit and cheerful energy. An inspector called her "active, affable and intelligent with fair tact and energy". The cause of her failure at the school is probably found in her own philosophy of teaching.

"A teacher should by his own example prove the sincerity of his inculcations, but the pupil should have it in his power to say — 'Thou that sayst a man should not steal, dost thou steal'." This invitation to the pupils to question their own and the teacher's motives, quickly led to chaos in the classroom. The children of Allynbrook were rather wild in those days.

Miss Harvey was an Englishwoman. Born in London, she followed the Church of England religion, and had been educated at private schools. She had not, however, been trained as a teacher. She had resided in New South Wales for five or six years before coming to Allynbrook and had spent all this time teaching. She had taught in Sydney and eighteen months in a private school and at Goulburn as a governess to a private family for two years. The Caerwgrle school could not be opened for some months after she arrived because a flood damaged

the approaches to the school. She was dismissed after teaching there for several months.

The next teacher, John O'Shanassey, although an efficient teacher, gained the antagonism of Boydell and many local residents officially because he was taking time off without applying for leave before hand. However, there was much more in the dispute than this. Mr. Inspector Jones observed:

"that the Paterson District is marked by the existence of two rival political parties, Orangemen and Roman Catholics; and, I have also been informed that Mr. O'Shanassey has identified himself with the latter in an indiscreet and prominent manner, much to the annoyance of Mr. M. Gray and his party."

Gray had complained about the teacher's absences, especially when the teacher had taken time off from school to attend the hearing of a libel suit between Gray and O'Shanassey's landlord.

Mr. O'Shanassey was moved to another teaching post, but there is evidence that he did not leave the area at all or returned in a short time. His wife had been sewing mistress while he was teacher. Then in August, 1881, the people petitioned the Department of Public Instruction to have Mrs. O'Shanassey's post office removed from the school building and the same woman re-appointed to the position of sewing mistress, a job it was specifically stated that she had held during her husband's term as teacher.

Mr. O'Shanassey's reputation lingered after he had ceased to be teacher. Mr. Inspector Jones said:

"As the late teacher has left behind him a bad name because of his dishonest transactions and propensity for lying, it is requisite that whoever may be appointed should be staid, elderly and respectable: a certificated teacher, if practicable, and one who would be likely to regain the confidence of the parents."

Mr. William Mortin Sykes did not live up to these expectations. He was 38 when appointed to the school. His wife's name was Rachel Anne. Born in Yorkshire, England, he was an Anglican. Since the age of eighteen he had been employed as private tutor and teacher in private schools, although he had no formal teacher training. He came to New South Wales in 1876 and at first made money by selling books. Later he was employed for twelve months in private teaching.

When he opened Caerwgrle School on 21st January, 1878, it had been closed for six months because of the difficulty of getting a replacement for Mr. O'Shanassey. Inspectors found him conscientious, earnest and energetic, although his efforts were sometimes misguided.

The seeds to his undoing had obviously been laid long before he came to the school. It seemed strange that the man needed ten references to support his application for the job. When officially applying he prophesied his own downfall when speaking of the moral qualifications of a teacher. He wrote that the teacher's

"temperance should never be seen to fail, for with it fall his other qualifications."

Eventually the children began taking home tales to their parents about the teacher being intoxicated at school. It became apparent that he drank heavily in secret. Mr. Inspector Bradley pitied the man.

"He is not an habitual drunkard but cannot resist the craving for drink that at intervals seize him; and his case is a pitiable one as he is a man of gentlemanly appearance and address, and has received a liberal education."

While Sykes was still at the school, in 1879, the Council decided to make it a Public School. In 1878 the average attendance had been 28.3 and the total enrolment 43, well above the minimum requirement

for Public School status (average attendance of 25).
The first Public School Board was elected in 1880. The members were:

Herbert Harrington Brown, M.L.A., C.E.
Richard Barker Boydell, Stockholder, C.E.
Martin Gray, Farmer, C.E.
Edward McCann, Storekeeper, R.C.

James J. Glynn came to the school in 1880. He had been officially wished "God-speed" by the people of Tingha where he had been master for six years. The children gave him a purse containing twenty half-sovereigns and Mr. S. W. Moore said a few kind words:

"I have known instances, and one in particular when, although you were so ill that you ought to have been confined to your bed, still you stood manfully to your post."

He did not stay long at Caergurle, because as has already been stated, he was most dissatisfied with the buildings. His wife seems to have had the job as postmistress, as well as being the school's sewing mistress.

THE PUPILS

When the school became a Provisional School in 1869, most parents showed very little interest in the event. If it had not been for Mr. Boydell, Allynbrook, would not have had a school until many years later. This lack of parental interest in education was reflected in the low standard of mental culture of most of the pupils who attended in the 1870's. Mr. Inspector Dwyer said that they

THE GIRLS OF ALLYNBROOK PUELIC SCHOOL — 1896



Back Row (l. to r.): Miss Collins (sewing teacher), Elsie Hancock, —, Ada Muddle, Amy Garland, Cissie Sellens, Jenny Sellens, Sara Muddle, Emily Smith, Elsie Lawrence, May Lawrence.
Middle (l. to r.): Ida Soper, Mary White, Alice Muddle, Lilly Eidler, Katy Hancock, Minnie Walker, Maude Collison, Maude Garland, Amy Lawrence, Cissie Smith, Ettie Soper.
Front (and sitting) (l. to r.): Vivienne Smith, —, Julia Muddle, Cissie Hancock, Eadie Eidler, Dulcie Hancock, Daisy Walker, Adelaide Garland, Elsie Collison, Lilly Hancock, Arty Smith, Myra Eidler, Josie White, Clara Muddle.

"are passably clean, but untidy-moderately attentive, but ignorant of order."

Much later it was said of them:

"Pupils are not ambitious to do well . . . they are so diffident."

And again:

"The children are the most unresponsive I have met despite the teacher's effort to promote responsiveness."

But another inspector held these statements up to ridicule.

"It reminds one of the Delphic Oracle (Dicote Romanos Vincere posse) or, to escape from the musty classics . . . of a double-headed penny . . . Despite the teacher's efforts'

There are no means of refuting the teacher's pleas of mental incapacity objectively . . . For even 'Intelligence' tests do not test intelligence only, but the results of 'schooling' also . . . (This is proved by Gordon's experiments with gypsy and canal-boat children . . . See Prof. Dearborn) i.e. 'Badly taught' children come out badly in 'intelligence' tests."

The want of interest in schooling quite naturally affected attendance figures. Mr. Dennis Collins wrote in 1894.

"There is an absence of necessary parental co-operation except in a few families. Parents in some instances are indifferent in the ordinary way whilst others send their children merely to comply with the compulsory clauses of the Act, (Public Instruction Act, 1880) taking care not to exceed by many the required number of days."

It was common in rural areas throughout New South Wales at this time for children to be kept home to help with the house work and farm work. Indeed Allynbrook had many companions in its lack of interest in education.

There were, however, other quite genuine reasons why Allynbrook managed to average a regular absentee rate of one-third of the total enrolment last century. Epidemics were always a problem. Mr. Unsworth, the first teacher, recorded that parents had been deterred from sending their children to school because there had been seven deaths from diphtheria in a short time in the locality. Another pressing consideration was the weather. The teacher was no doubt elated on a stormy day in 1873 when Inspector Jones could not conduct his inspection because only three children turned up. The weather problem was particularly serious for Caergurle School as the following letter written by James Glynn will show:

"Some time ago I had occasion to point out to you that the majority of the children attending my school have to cross the Allyn River and that a slight fall of rain makes this river unsafe for them to cross. A thunder-storm during a night, for instance, will prevent three-fourths of the children from attending next day, whilst heavy rain for a few days leaves me almost without attendance."

It is recorded that moves to overcome this problem were made in 1898. Mr. Dennis Collins applied to the Public Works Department to have a footbridge erected over the Allyn River at St. Mary's Crossing. The Department replied that plans were going ahead for the provision of a traffic bridge. A sum of £1600 had been set aside for this work.

There seems to have been a high percentage of poor people living at Allynbrook during last century. Often parents could not pay pupil fees. Before 1880 teachers were allowed to pocket these fees as part of their salaries, but after the passing of the Public Instruction Act in 1880 teachers' salaries were increased substantially and school fees

had to be forwarded by teachers to the Department of Public Instruction. In 1894, at the height of the economic depression, seven Allynbrook parents sought exemption from paying fees on the grounds of poverty. Parents usually had to be living in desperate circumstances before the Department would agree to such a thing. What follows is a typical example of the qualifications of a successful applicant.

"The applicant was a poor labourer with eight children to provide for. The home — a wretched hut — is scantily furnished. He informed me that he was heavily in debt and that it was quite impossible for him to pay his school arrears (£5.10s)."

THE BOYS OF ALLYNBROOK — 1897



Back Row (l.to r.): —, Ernie Garland, Sid Garland, —, —, Cecil Feneley, Phil Kelly, Alex Ashard.

Middle Row (l. to r.): D. J. Collins (T/C), E. B. Smith, Jack Scobie, Reg Grant, Stanley Smith, George Sellens, —, Norman Hancock, Perce White.

Front (l. to r.): Pat White, Hostie Hancock, Cliff Smith, Arthur Muddle, Bert Smith, Landon Smith, Alex Smith, Jim Soper, Artie Smith, Reg Eidler, Syd Hancock.

Kneeling: Clarrie Walker.

A NEW SCHOOL BUILDING"

A new brick school with iron roof was completed on 26th April, 1882. Before construction work began, the site on which the old school stood, down as far as the Church of England, (1.3.30 acres) was resumed from William Boydell on 19th December, 1880.

Originally the school had one schoolroom (24' x 17'). Round about 1890 a wooden weathershed (13' x 7') was built on the land separating the north side of the school from the residence. The weathershed was not lined and had an open front.

At first the residence had two bedrooms, kitchen, dining room, drawing room and front and back verandahs. A new bedroom and bathroom were erected in 1892 to provide more accommodation for Benjamin Cox's large family. Besides his wife and himself, he was housing a grandparent and five children. A new wooden washhouse was provided in 1897.

In time the buildings suffered a normal amount of "wear and tear".

For instance in February, 1886, the Notice to Visitors " was completely destroyed by silver fish."

TERENCE ROGERS

Mr. Rogers came in 1901. He replaced Dennis Collins, a single man, who had lived with his mother and sisters for many years. By 1901 his mother was dead and his sisters had all married and left Allynbrook. That meant he was no longer eligible to live in a teacher's residence so he was transferred.

Mr. Rogers stayed at the school until 1903 and during this time the enrolment increased to over 60 and the school was raised to sixth class. This was in no small measure due to his own efforts. He was a very efficient and strict disciplinarian and had the rare distinction, for those times at least, to be praised by an inspector. Inspector Waterhouse said:

"Mr. Rogers is a hardworking, steady, conscientious teacher who has always given me satisfaction in his work. Since his appointment to Caergurle he has done good service, and has raised the school a grade."

This increased attendance entitled the school to the services of a pupil-teacher. His Name was William Michael Dorney. He was aged 17 at the time of his appointment in February, 1902. He is reputed to have boarded at the now defunct "Birds' Inn", then known as "Birds Australian Wines", approximately 1½ miles south of Allynbrook on the Gresford Road. Dorney was later killed in action while serving in the Militia during the First World War. (R.K.L.G.)

By this time (1902) there was a serious overcrowding problem in the schoolroom, so bad that there was scarcely room for teacher and blackboard at the front of the class. The pupil-teacher was forced to teach in the weathershed that dated from 1890. It was impossible to use this "classroom" on cold or wet days as it was exposed to the weather. To meet the crisis a 12' weatherboard extension to the schoolroom was built in about 1902. Dorney taught in this.

Rogers "swapped" positions with the teacher of Gresford School early in 1903. He is said to be buried at Mudgee.

WILLIAM PARKER

Next came William John Parker, a fair-headed man. While he was teacher, in 1909, he advised the Department to change the name of the school. His communication showed that he was a man with a sense of humour. He gave the following reasons why the school's name should be changed:

"That the locality is called Allynbrook.

That letters addressed 'Caergurle' are frequently miscarried, and arrive here marked by postal officials: 'Try Gosford, Try Dunggog, Try Paterson, Try Gresford'.

That the name 'Caergurle' is very frequently mis-spelled.

That I am not aware of another Public School, in the State, named Allynbrook."

On 4th February, 1915, Parker died in the hallway of the residence. His son, Fred, reported:

"My dear father contracted a chill after getting overheated in the school garden which had grown wild during the holidays, and died of pneumonia."

At the time of his death he had completed 41½ years of service with the Department and was due for long service leave. His family of five (3 boys and 2 girls ranging in age from 17 to 28 years) gathered to comfort the widow, Adelaide. The body was buried in St. Mary's Churchyard opposite the school and the St. Mary-on-Allyn Memorial Gates were erected in his memory.

There is a post-script to this sad event, provided by the next teacher, William Shuback.

"I beg to report that the teacher's residence at the school under my charge is in such an insanitary condition as to be unfit for habitation. The late teacher, Mr. Parker, died in it February last. His corpse remained in the house in an open coffin for practically three days to permit his family to arrive in-time to view it.

His belongings were immediately sold and the house was locked up and left so until I arrived. Rubbish and litter of all kinds lay strewn about. The gutters and drains are all choked up, and the smell from the interior of the house is anything but pleasant.

The grief-stricken family hurried away from the residence and none remained to clear up.

I beg to ask that something be done immediately. The house is certainly unfit to enter and as I have a family of five children I am under very heavy expense in paying accommodation."

Mr. Schuback himself applied for a move from the school in 1918. At this time he was in his middle years and had taught with the Department all his adult life. One reason he gave for wanting the transfer was that he wanted to go to a bigger centre which had better educational prospects for his family. Another was that he did not like the climate of Allynbrook.

"The climate, a very peculiar one, does not agree with me and I am compelled to ask for removal. The district lies under the eastern slopes of the Mt. Royal Range. It is subject to the influence of the sea on one side and the tablelands on the other. The climate is humid, moist and damp, with great heat, and is liable to frequent and sudden changes. These changes have a trying effect on health. Lung troubles, particularly pleurisy and pneumonia are common complaints. Since coming to the district I have developed chest and throat troubles."

IN LATER YEARS

The Parents and Citizens' Association was formed on 14th March, 1934. Initially the annual subscription was 1/6 per family. By 1953 this had risen to 5/- per family. Throughout the period of its existence the Parents and Citizens' Association has given many practical benefits to the school. A school flag was purchased in 1934. A wireless and duplicator were bought in 1948 and a movie projector and slide projector in 1952. A record player arrived in 1955 and in the same year the wireless was replaced by a better receiver. The year 1960 saw the school's first refrigerator installed. During the same year "Pictorial Social Studies" was purchased. In 1964 the "Australian Junior Encyclopaedia" was bought, and in the following year the telephone was connected to the vested residence. A S.R.A. Reading Laboratory arrived in 1964. In the following year a new Duplicator and Record Player were purchased and in 1968 the Free Milk Scheme was introduced. In the same year the first item of Fixed Playground Equipment, a Horizontal Ladder, was installed.

The buildings erected in 1881-2 (Godwin) are still in use, although considerable improvements have been made, notably the installation of electricity in 1937.

The school enrolment is no longer as big as it was in Mr. Roger's time. Then the total enrolment was over 60. In 1914 the enrolment was 47. Whereas Mr. Inspector George Dart was forced to notice in 1914 that "Too many children are kept home", by 1933 Mr. Inspector E. Lewis

could comment "good" after noting an Enrolment/Attendance ratio of 20/20. Quite an improvement from earlier figures. (Godwin). The average attendance in 1955 was 24.0 and 15.8 in 1967 (total enrolment 17). Percy Major, according to Mr. Godwin, used the present weathershed, then situated on the approximate site of the original Caergurle School, in which to teach woodwork and metalwork to the older boys. Lawrence Germon transferred to Boolymbayte in 1948, eight miles east of Bulahdelah. Mr. Poyser, an Englishman, came next, but after only a short time in office, transferred to Morisset in December, 1950. William Turnbull transferred to Gillieston in January, 1965, and William Braye to Bandon Grove in January, 1968, at which time the present teacher-in-charge commenced duty. (Godwin).

For most of the century ministers have regularly visited the school to give religious instruction. Rev. C. N. Mell (Church of England) was making regular weekly visits in 1914 and Rev. Beeman followed with two visits a year. Rev. Davison made regular weekly visits to the school between 1916 and 1918. He was also Church of England. On one occasion he commented: "children very attentive". Congregational Religious Instruction was given in 1921 by Thomas J. Harper. From this time until 1933, religious instruction was given monthly or spasmodically until the arrival of Rev. Heffernan, who paid weekly visits. From the latter part of 1934 to 1942, Rev. Blake I. Hobart gave regular instruction to pupils, often twice weekly. He was followed by Rev. F. W. Rush

ALLYNBROOK SCHOOL CHILDREN — 1932



Back Row (l. to r.): Arthur Smith, Len Garland, Frank Hudson, Howard Stuckings, Lester Keppie, Ron Smith.
 Second Row (l. to r.): Thea Boydell, Flo Wells, Edith Foster, Jean Smith, Lorna Grant Clarice Smith, Dulcie Stuckings, Jean Marr, Doris Hancock.
 Third Row (l. to r.): Mr. Wade, Melva Smith, Nellie Capararo, Edith Garland, Emily Stuckings, Joyce Hancock, Jean Bacon, Dulcie Wells, Beatrice Lawrence, Mary Marr, Ted Boydell.
 Sitting (l. to r.): Darryl Lawrence, Sylvia Smith, Norah Clements, Joyce Clements, Joyce Wade, Joyce Smith, Linda Pywell, Colin Smith and Bruce Smith.

These belong to 1932 photo



Back Row (l. to r.): Collie Smith, Eric Hancock, Noel Smith, Noel Furner, Geoff Furner, Des Furner, Boyd Dark, Nigel Dark, Bruce Smith.
 Middle (l. to r.): Nellie Capararo, Joyce Hancock, Dell Dark, Dulcie Wells, Joyce Smith, Joyce Clements, Linda Pywell, Emily Stuckings, Dora Furner, Jean Bacon.
 Front (l. to r.): Betty Jeffries, Zara Jenkins, Nora Clements, Kelly Dark, Colin Wells, Des Smith, Sylvia Smith, Betty Smith, Betty McManus, Beryl Grant.

who was at Allynbrook for some 10 years. Colin J. McLean, Congregational Minister, was a regular instructor from 1955 to 1959. Rev. Flook, Church of England Minister, visited regularly from 1961 to December, 1966, being replaced by the present Rev. M. Clarke in June, 1967. (Godwin).

What follows is some sketchy information about a few of the teachers during this century. Mr. Hammond, a married man, retired from the teaching service at the completion of his term of office at Allynbrook. Thomas Wade is reported by Mr. Godwin to have re-visited the school in 1960. He was then employed at the N.S.W. School for Blind Children.

THE NEGATIVE APPROACH — PUNISHMENT AT ALLYNBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL SINCE 1922

(By Robert K. L. Godwin)

Herewith, a few extracts and comments on the above:

On 18/8/'22 a lad received 3 strokes for "stabbing another pupil with a chisel". A few years later, 1927, numerous pupils received 1 or 2 strokes each for copying, particularly during dictation lessons.

Numerous entries appear in '29, '48 and '51 relating to persistent swearing by boys, and in '44 even some of the "innocent" 6 year-olds received "the treatment" for rather "obscene behaviour".

Stone-throwing over the years appears to have been a common past-time, and entries against such are noted.

ALLYNBROOK SCHOOL CHILDREN — 1929



Back Row (l. to r.): Easil Smith, Vince Hudson, George Wells, Jack Keppie, George Hancock, Doug Smith, Jack Grant, Bill Boydell.
 Second Row (l. to r.): Anne Garland, Merle Stuckings, Jean Bacon, Flo Wells, Edith Garland, Edith Foster, Dulcie Stuckings, Doris Smith, Bess Stuckings.
 Third Row (l. to r.): Mr. Wade (H.M.), Isabel Bacon, Howard Stuckings, Len Garland, Frank Hudson, Harry Smith, Eric Grant, Godfrey Foster, Colin Smith, Arthur Smith, Lester Keppie, Ted Boydell, Marie Bacon.
 Sitting (l. to r.): Lorna Grant, Beatrice Lawrence, Nellie Capararo, Emily Stuckings, Clarice Smith, Phyllis Wells.

These belong to 1932 photo

LIST OF PRINCIPALS

Name	Date of Appointment	
J. Mervill Unsworth	1 2 1869	6 yrs
Mrs. Charlotte Kelsh	31 3 1875	N/A
(Did not take up her appointment — school closed)		
Miss Annie D. M. Harvey	9 9 1875	
John O'Shanassey	1876	1 yr
W. Masters	9 8 1877	1 yr
William Morton Sykes	21 1 1878	2 yr
James J. Glynn	3 1880	1 yr
James Simpson	20 5 1881	2 yr
A. King	1 1883	1 yr
Harry Fry	20 5 1884	2 yr
Benjamin Cox	2 11 1886	5 yr 5 mths
Dennis J. Collins	4 7 1892	8 yr
Terence Percy Rogers	29 1 1901	2 yr
William John Parker	17 2 1903	12 yrs
William Schuback	1 4 1915	3 yr
Albert Hammond	19 2 1918	9 yrs
Thomas Wade	28 4 1927	5 yrs 7 mths
Albert Charter	13 12 1933	1 yr (5 mths)
Lancelot McManus	30 4 1935	2 yr
Neville Brennan	12 1 1937	4 yrs
Percy Major	20 12 1940	3 yr (11 mths)
Richard Sheehan	7 9 1943	2 yr
Lawrence Germon	8 1 1946	2 yrs
Mervyn Poyser	3 3 1949	1 yr
Ernest W. Bendeich	30 1 1951	1 3/4 yrs
William I. Turnbull	4 7 1954	3 1/2 yrs
William A. Bray	2 2 1965	10 1/2 yrs
Robert K. L. Godwin	30 1 1968	3 yrs

School closed 1/12/1969

ALLYNBROOK POST OFFICE HISTORY

Compiled by the Postmaster-General's Department, Public Relations Division, per Mr. K. A. Frost, District Postal Manager, Maitland
In December, 1864, "inhabitants of the Village and Neighbourhood of Lewinsbrook" petitioned the Postmaster-General for a post office.

Lewinsbrook was described as:

" situated about 7 or 8 miles from Gresford and nine from Eccleston, and the Mail Road between those two post offices passes directly through the Reserve."

Letters for residence were sent by private mail bags from Gresford by the Eccleston post boy every Saturday and delivered by people living in the neighbourhood.

The petition carried thirty-two signatures. Leading signatures were those of Captain Champain, Mrs. R. H. Fowler, E. Lovett and Joseph Brooker.

When asked to recommend a suitable person to take charge of a post office G. Champain of "Glenholme" Gresford suggested " a Mrs. Lovett and a Mrs. Fowler that a both capable of taking care of a Post Office. The latter is a widow of a School Master (?), and well educated."

POST OFFICE

The post office was opened under the name of Lewinsbrook on 1st March, 1865, in charge of Mrs. Rebecca H. Fowler.

Mrs. Fowler was the widow of a former postmaster (?) at Lostock, and lived on her property, close to the mail road. As Sureties she named G. Champain, settler and John Bush, "Church of England Teacher and Postmaster", of Gresford. Her salary was £12 per annum.

MAILS

The mails were conveyed between Eccleston and Gresford by G. Jarrett of Eccleston who held the contract for the once weekly service, by horseback, for £20 per annum.

In 1866 the same contract was held by "Hy Jarrett", and in 1867 by Jas. Kenny.

Hy Jarrett had the contract from 1868 to 1871; and it was held by W. G. Sivyver in 1872.

In 1873 the contract which was advertised as including "Gresford, Lewinsbrook and Eccleston" was still held by W. G. Sivyver of Eccleston.

H. J. Sivyver held the contract in 1875. From 15th February, 1875, the frequency was changed to twice weekly.

By 1876 the room added to Mrs. Fowler's house for use as a post office was dilapidated. The shingles had to be replaced by galvanised iron. Mrs. Fowler who advised that she only held a life interest in the property unsuccessfully asked that the Department meet the cost of the repairs, almost £6. Non-official postmasters had to provide the accommodation for the office, and the policy could not be waived. Her salary at this time was £15 per annum.

CHANGE OF NAME

Consideration was being given to changing the name of the post office to Allynbrook in August, 1879.

Apparently H. H. Brown, M.P., had suggested that the name of Lewinsbrook should be changed to Allynbrook as the former name caused inconvenience to the Lewinsbrook Station which received its letters through Gresford.

A official minute dated 9th July, 1879, said:

"Mr. Brown does not know of a suitable name unless Allynbrook."

Mrs. Fowler commented:

" . . . I do not remember letters more than twice (for Lewinsbrook Station) being sent to this office. Dr. Parkes Estate has been known as Lewinsbrook Creek for these years past. Lewinsbrook Township in which the Post Office is established as such is laid down on the map — on the Allyn River not — Brook."

Mrs. Fowler added that the inhabitants of Lewinsbrook Creek received their letters from Gresford Post Office.

The name "Lewinsbrook" was changed to "Allynbrook" on 1st November, 1879.

Mrs. Fowler resigned as postmistress on 31st March, 1880, because of her "advancing years."

Applicants for the vacant position included William J. Collinson and John Glynn. Their applications were supported by petitions.

Collinson's residence was described as being opposite the post office. Glynn's "new and well built house" was described:

"Having a frontage to the main road from Gresford to Eccleston also to the junctions of two branch roads viz to Upper Paterson and Upper Williams Rivers respectively and is little over a quarter of a mile from the present Post Office, and on the same side of the River."

Mrs. M. E. Glynn wrote from "Caergurle Public School, Allyn Brook" on 15th March and applied for appointment as postmistress. This she advised would involve the removal of the office to the School, the residence of her husband, a distance of about three-quarters of a mile lower down on the river than the site of the old post office.

Mrs. Fowler withdrew her resignation on 22nd March, but on 1st November, 1880, again resigned.

Elizabeth Ann Towns and Edward Bird, both of Allynbrook, forwarded applications for appointment as postmaster.

POST OFFICE AT SCHOOL

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Glynn was appointed postmistress on 3rd January, 1881. Her sureties were J. J. Glynn, husband, M. M. Glynn, contractor, and William White, auctioneer, all of Allynbrook. The salary was still £15 per annum.

The appointment of Mrs. Glynn resulted in a petition protesting against "having the post office removed from the township where it has been for 15 years, and where it was most conveniently situated to all parties, whereas if removed to Caergurle it is only convenient to a few and when there is a fresh in the river we cannot cross and the few at Caergurle side can go to Gresford for their mail."

As the appointment of Mrs. Glynn had been completed no further action was taken.

Leading signatures on the petition were those of Robert Hancock, freeholder, Richard B. Boydell, and Charles Lee.

Following Glynn's transfer to another school, Mrs. Glynn resigned, and recommended her assistant, Miss O'Shanassy, as her successor.

Miss Mary F. O'Shanassy was appointed postmistress on 1st June, 1881, with a salary of £15 per annum. Her sureties were William White and Michael Glynn.

TELEPHONE

Although the early records are incomplete, it is known that in 1911 a private telephone line was connected to the Allynbrook Post Office. The subscriber for this line was R. B. Boydell.

No doubt an official telephone had been connected to the office

earlier, for the sending and receiving of telegrams.

In 1911 the following figures were provided:

Articles posted	22,217	per annum
Mail received and despatched	2,808	per annum
Telegrams sent and received	561	per annum
Money Order transactions	64	per annum
Private telephone lines	one	R. B. Boydell

In 1911 switching was done at Allynbrook for four lines:

- Paterson, East Gresford, Gresford and Vacy.
- Mt. Rivers, Lostock.
- Bonnington Park, Halton, Eccleston.
- Caergurle.

A telephone exchange was installed late in 1914 or early in 1915. The earliest list of subscribers available is that which appeared in the telephone directory for December, 1914:

ALLYNBROOK

(9 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

Daily (Sundays and Holidays excepted)

7M Bogan, T., "Anns Grove"
4 Boydell, R. B.
8 Hancock, Thos. R., "Orange Grove"
7J Hopson, E., "Sevenoaks"
Eccleston Warr, J. C.

LONG SERVICE

A break occurred in the records between the 1880's and early 1900's. However, it is known that Miss O'Shanassy, whose advancing years made the work difficult, was still postmistress in 1916.

When Miss O'Shanassy commenced extended sick leave, Miss C. B. Hancock was temporarily appointed postmistress on 5th September, 1916.

It is believed that Miss O'Shanassy returned to duty on 5th November, 1916.

Miss C. B. Hancock was appointed Postmistress in June, 1920, the allowance payable at this time being £121 per annum.

The office was removed from a point one mile on the Eccleston side of the Public School to new accommodation near the School during 1922.

Miss E. D. Hancock was appointed Postmistress on 1st June, 1949.

Mrs. M. J. Litchfield succeeded Miss Hancock on 1st April, 1966. On this date the office was removed to Mrs. Litchfield's residence, a distance of approximately 500 yards.

The last weekend in May, 1977, the telephones were switched over to automatic phone. Not long afterwards the office was closed and all mail was delivered at East Gresford for roadside delivery 5 days a week.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT OF ALLYNBROOK

THE ABORIGINALS OF ALLYNBROOK AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS

Extracts from "The Earliest Inhabitants — Aboriginal Tribes of Dungog Port Stephens and Gresford" by Gordon Bennett

"Dr. McKinlay (distinguished scientist, anthropologist and medico that made Dungog his home during the best part of the first half of last century.. reported that, 'in the early 'thirties . . . there were about 250 blacks in the Valley of the Williams. Across the range, on the watershed of the Paterson, was another, and an important branch of this tribe with whom the natives of the Dungog district intermarried and Dr. McKinlay and Mr. J. W. Boydell record that these tribes married also with those of the tribes on the Gloucester watershed."

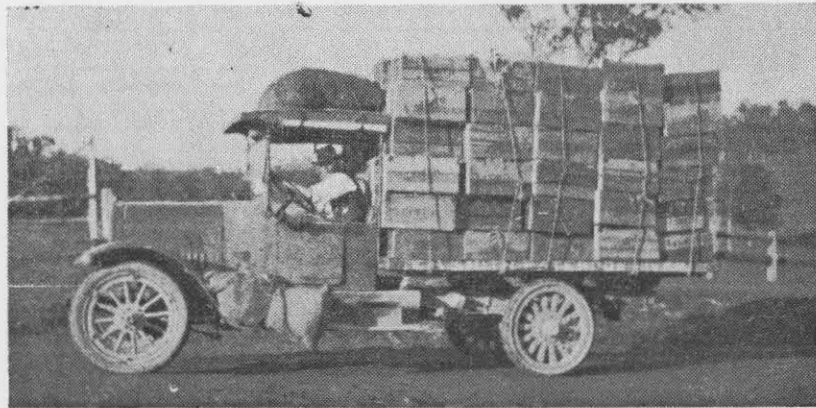
"The Geawe-gal Tribe, whose country was part of the Valley of the Hunter . . . also intermarried with those of Maitland . . . and Paterson River."

"They were always in dread of war with the Kamilaroi, a fierce and warlike tribe who followed down the headwaters of the Hunter, from the Talbragar to Nummurra Waters and even occasionally made raids as far as Jerry's Plains."

BELIEFS: "In one case recorded by Mr. Boydell, at Gresford, a blackfellow was under the belief that when passing a grave, the ghost of the man that had been buried, had magically thrown a pebble at him, and he considered that he was thereby marked for death."

BURIAL CUSTOMS: Dr. McKinlay describes, "that, at Gresford, when the grave, which was very neatly dug with the crudest of implements, was of sufficient depth, a man got into it and tried it by lying down at full length. The body, neatly tied up in bark, was carried to it by friends of the deceased. Before being lowered into the grave, the medicine man, standing at the head, spoke to the other medicine men at the foot. All articles of the deceased were buried with him, and every black present contributed something to the collection. All things were placed at the dead man's head, and the grave then filled."

"Venerables, and men of distinction, were buried with much cere-



E. B. Smith driving his solid-tired "Jefferey" Truck, transporting oranges, in 1913. Photo taken at Howard Smith's present property "Whitfield".

mony, but ordinary members of the tribe, and females, were disposed of in a perfunctory manner."

BLACKSMITH'S SHOP AND UNDERTAKER

Many years ago Mr. Bert Smith, and previously his father, operated a blacksmith's shop and undertaking business in Allynbrook.

In plying his trade, "Ye olde village smithy" would heat the steel by means of a charcoal fire and blower or hand bellows, then fashion it on the anvil, with hammer and tongs, into a multitude of such articles as bullock-bows, keys and yoke fittings, rims for wooden wheels, horse-shoes, and various parts of all manner of implements and equipment used about the farm and on the buggies, carts, sulkies and bullock trucks or waggons used in those bygone days.

For the undertaking side of the business, Bert used an impressive horse-drawn hearse which may now be seen, in all its splendour, at the Glenbawn Museum.

SAWMILLING AT ALLYNEROOK

Sawmilling has always been an interest of the Hancocks of "Orange Grove", Allynbrook.

The late Mr. T. R. Hancock started a mill at Gresford close to the old brickyard.

On the day World War I was declared the late Mr. W. Archinal loaded on to his bullock teams the steam engine from the old flour mill near Paterson wharf and took it to the late T. R. Hancocks' property at Upper Allyn. There, he, and later his two sons, Richard and Alex, managed a sawmill for many years.

In August, 1948, Alex applied to the Forestry Commission for a licence to operate a mill at Allynbrook. He began his electrically operated mill in June, 1949.

The softwoods and hardwoods that are cut and planed for the local market are brought in on modern timber jinkers. Only once in the history of this mill was a bullock team used, it was driven by Bruce Smith, of Allynbrook.

Before World War II the late Norman Joliffe conducted a sawmill on the Allynbrook Road near the present home of Mrs. A. Dark.

SOAP FACTORY

Many years ago Allynbrook had a soap factory. It was situated near the second bridge in Allynbrook.

This factory was operated by an American called King. He married one of the late George Hancock's daughters (the late T. R. Hancock's sister).

At first the premises were used as a distillery to extract eucalyptus oil from the gum leaves. Later he changed to manufacturing soap. He advertised his soap (YANKEE MAGIC) on every sliprail fence around.

Mr. King later moved to Queensland and some of his family are now living in the Maryborough district.

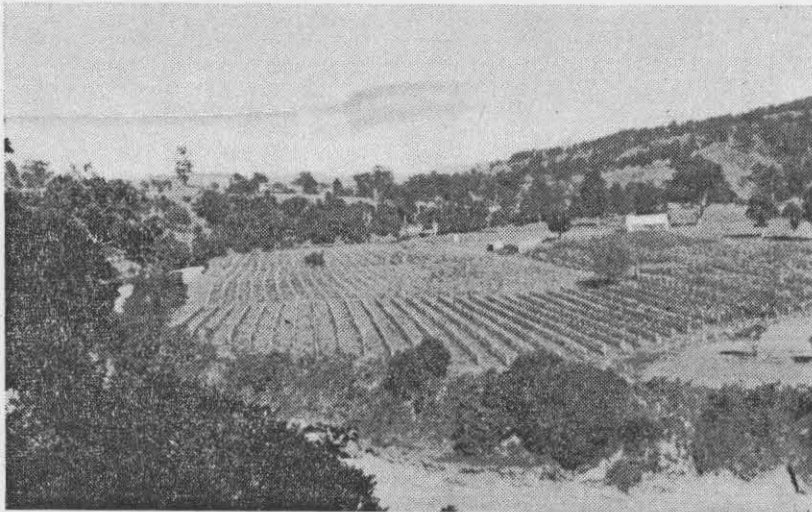
DISTRICT VINEYARDS

Allynbrook had two thriving vineyards many years ago, belonging to Smith and Boydell. The latter family had the first vineyards in the district, including all the necessary equipment — presses, casks, etc., for processing the grapes into wine. Some interesting items of this equipment may still be seen on the present Boydell property "Caergwrlle"

Edward B. Smith (Councillor, Wallarobba Shire, 1942-48) planted some five acres of grapes at the "Wheelabout" (now owned by Mr. Rex Clements), about 1926, three years after his father's death. In 1947 his brother, Howard, now at "Whitfield", Allynbrook, took control of

the black muskatells. Howard reports he obtained £2 (\$4.00) per half-case for the grapes in Newcastle at that time.

In 1952 his brother, Clifton, ran the vineyards for another two years, when Mr. Rex Clements bought the property and converted it to dairying and vealer-raising.



Vineyards of Howard Smith at "Wheelabout", 1950.

ST. MARY-ON-ALLYN CHURCH, ALLYNBROOK

This historic old church, standing near the school, was built in 1844 from stone quarried from the bank of the Allyn River opposite and carted to the site on drays, pulled by bullocks. A Mr. Green was in charge of building operations and labourers included, among others, Smiths, Hancocks and Stuckings, still well-known names of this district.

Originally, the building consisted of only the nave and sanctuary, 38' x 17', the transepts being added about 1904 by Tony Ebbeck.

Mr. Green, the original architect of this church, was also responsible for, prior to this operation, the construction of a brick barn at "Mt. Pleasant", the original Hancock property, and a stone cottage which still stands on "Whitfield", owned by Mr. Howard Smith.

Our old church, affectionally known simply as "St. Mary's", was consecrated by the first Bishop of Australia, William Grant Broughton, on 26th November, 1845. A parish communion was held to mark the centenary on Sunday, November 25, 1945.

TAXI AND BUS SERVICE: ALLYNBROOK - MAITLAND

In 1913 Messrs. Grey and Hancock originated a bus service between Allynbrook and Maitland, using a Ford seating some 12-plus persons.

Following World War I, Mr. Jules Barling, who served at that war, acquired the service which he conducted once weekly. Mr. Barling then resided in the present house of Mr. Keith Lawrence.

Roland Smith next used a Dodge car on this run.

In 1925 Mr. Charles Grant bought a new Studebaker car and provided the service for many years, running Mondays and Thursday. This service by Grant was a separate venture, so when Mr. A. C. Forster

bought out Roland Smith in 1926, Allynbrook boasted two taxi services. Forster soon replaced the aged Dodge with a big twin-ignition Nash, and plied the service Mondays and Wednesday's. He lived on the ridge south of Mr. Bert Smith's present residence. The house was later burnt, but some remains may still be seen.

It is believed Charlie Grant continued to run the service until it ceased about 1935, for, by that time, people generally owned their own private cars.

BIRD'S INN; ALSO KNOWN AS "BIRD'S AUSTRALIAN WINES"

The original owner of this wine saloon was Mr. Towns, at which time the building was some distance back from the road. Succeeding owners were McCann, Ned Bird and Pat Bird in that order.

In 1901 the present building was erected in front of the old one, and consisted of four bedrooms, a long bar and three verandahs. The front fence facing the road was then the picturesque old "Cockatoo" style. Complete with all plumbing the total cost of the establishment was some £249 (\$498).

Mr. Kevin, Inspector of Schools, then in this area, used to board there occasionally, as did other school inspectors and stone masons. While there Mr. Kevin became ill and after much persuasion consented eventually to having a doctor, who immediately insisted on an ambulance trip to hospital, but on arrival of the ambulance Kevin refused to leave. After several days of great agony he passed away.

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The Allynbrook Centenary Committee.

The children and Parents' and Citizens' Association of Allynbrook Public School.

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Inspector of Schools, Mr. C. H. J. Hargreaves, B.A.

Mr. R. M. Sheehan, Teacher-in-charge, Allynbrook 7-9-1943 — 8-1-1946.

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