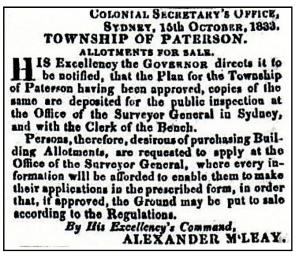


# **VALMA PATFIELD**

Published by
Paterson Historical Society Inc.

## THE PATERSON ORANGE

Paterson and the river flowing through it belong to the early history of the Lower Hunter region. It was named after Lt. William Paterson, leader of an expedition which surveyed the area in 1801. The Aborigines called it "Yimmang" and it was known to the earliest settlers in the Hunter as the "Cedar Arm" because of the amount of cedar felled in the area. To others it was simply Paterson's River. As early as 1811 when a survey expedition came up the river there was a small settlement called "Old Banks" consisting of a few small farms established near present day Tocal where convict gangs cut and floated the logs down the river. Due to flooding this settlement was soon moved a few kilometers to the north, and the first land grants were allocated in 1821. In 1833 the town was surveyed and a notice subsequently appeared in the Sydney Gazette advertising land for sale. European influence quickly spread and the town of Paterson became one of the earliest settled areas on the Australian mainland. A further subdivision in 1840 formed the southern part of the village and in 1885 Paterson was proclaimed a town.



Sydney Gazette 17 October, 1833

In the early 1830's the land owners grew cotton and tobacco, the soil also sustained citrus and this is possibly when the Paterson Orange began. Like many other oranges, it could have originated in the region between southeast China and northwest India, oranges having been cultivated in southern China for several thousand years. Although the Romans knew both sweet and sour oranges, there is little evidence that they ever cultivated them. The sweet orange was introduced into the Mediterranean basin around 1450. This was a result of its spread by Arab traders from China across the Middle East to Spain and than introduced to the Ligurian Coast, in northern Italy, by Genoese traders. The Portuguese were responsible for bringing better types from China to Europe and it is from these, that todays superior varieties have been bred. The Portuguese also introduced the sweet orange to Brazil. Orange trees were bought in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on the way to Australia by the First Fleet and were wanted within the first few days of settlement. It was noted soon afterwards that the plants "were taken root and establishing themselves in our New World"

Paterson Oranges are synonymous with the history of Paterson. Paterson Oranges are an old style sweet orange with many seeds, they were well suited to the rich soils of the river flats and former rainforests in the steep gullies and on the slopes of the Paterson and Allyn Valleys. Paterson Oranges were initially transported by river boat to Maitland and Newcastle and then by steamer to Sydney. With the opening of the rail through Paterson on the 14 August 1911 they were able to reach a much wider customer base and sold in the Hunter Valley and railed throughout Northern NSW. Many small farmers were able to earn much of their income from Paterson River Oranges.

Henry Dangar came to New South Wales in 1821. Shortly after his arrival he was engaged by the Government as Assistant Surveyor under Oxley and continued in the service until 1827, when he returned to England. About two years later he entered the service of the Australian Agricultural Company, and again returned to the colony where he found that the suitability of soil in the Paterson district ideal for growing fruit trees, and citrus orchards began to dominate in new areas of development and the valley was recognized as one of the best citrus producers in NSW. In June 1833, he left the company's employ and settled on the land.<sup>1</sup>

Commercially the Paterson orange was proving a great success and nearly all properties had an orchard. Some with mixed fruit but principally citrus.

John Herring Boughton who had been granted two thousand acres of surveyed land on 12 October, 1822, wisely selected his acres in the Parish of Durham with the Paterson River as one of his boundaries. He named his property *Tillimby* and was one of the early orchardists. In October 1853 two members of the Society of Friends visited the district and lodged at *Tillimby*. They noted "his garden was most fragrant with the blossoms of orange trees, which promised an abundant crop of fruit. The trees are 20 to 30 years growth and are about 20ft high, bushy and yielding flowers and fruit even on the ground. The produce is often great. One tree in an adjoining garden produced nearly 200 doz (2,400) in one season - £6 worth, but this was an uncommon crop, the trees having been well manured"<sup>2</sup>

George Townshend had his property *Trevallyn* up for sale in 1857 and the advertisement for the sale stated: 2,710 acres, 25 miles from Morpeth and Maitland, 14 from the town of Paterson, and the head of the navigation of the River Paterson, and 2½ miles from Gresford Post Office and Church, bounded on two sides by the rivers Paterson and Allyn. On the property is a good brick house of 16 rooms, with brick kitchen and offices, a number of substantial farm buildings, numerous paddocks with substantial fences, and orchard of fifteen to twenty acres, the greater part of the trees in bearing.<sup>3</sup>

Annandale Built by Police Magistrate, Major Edward Johnstone about 1839 and was advertised in the Maitland Mercury 12.9.1868 to Johnstone had died in 1850. It was a substantial home located in the township of Paterson and boasted an orangery of 70 trees, in full bearing and a vineyard.



Annandale House
Photo - Jack Sullivan

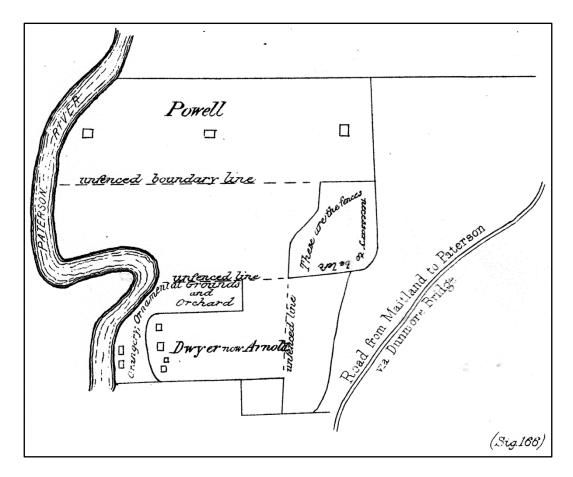
Confidence in the growing of oranges in the district as a commercial venture continued as the Paterson correspondent in the *Maitland Mercury* of 14 July 1870 writes:

"We notice that several parties are planting orange trees very extensively in different parts of the district and many of our vineyards are being extensively enlarged."

The same correspondent for the *Maitland Mercury* wrote again a month later, on 11 August, 1870:

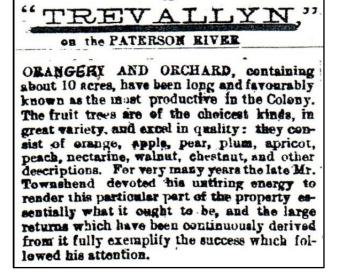
## SPLENDID ORANGES.

We were shown last week a dray load of the most splendid oranges that we have ever seen produced in this district, several were measured, and found some of them as much as thirteen and fourteen inches in circumference, and we believe the entire load would average twelve inches in circumference. The skin was not thick, and the inside was a most delicious sweetness, in fact a finer lot of oranges we have never seen in the colony. They were of the common sort of orange, entirely free from blight, and were grown by Mr James Towns, of Orange Grove, near Caergwrle, on the Paterson River. We believe Mr. Towns has over forty trees of this description of orange in full bearing, and estimates that he will grow over three thousand dozen, and all present large appearance. Mr. Towns intends to plant largely of the orange tribe on his farm, and has already young trees and old trees, over two hundred in number, planted out. We referred last season to some splendid oranges from this same place. We believe the upper part of the district is peculiarly adapted to the growth and production of the orange. W.B. Boydell, Esq of Caergwrle, has some splendid trees on his estate, and travellers on the Continent of Europe who have seen the orange trees at Caergwrle state they have never seen larger trees that presented a finer aspect, in all their travels through the orange countries of Europe, than the trees at Caergwrle.



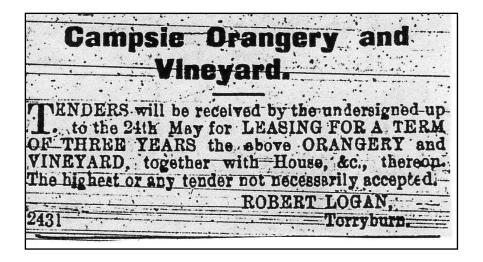
Map of W.M.Arnold's Orangery, Ornamental grounds and Orchard at *Stradbroke*Map - Paterson Historical Society

A Paterson Correspondent wrote for the Maitland Mercury 14 September, 1876. We are glad to notice of exportation of Oranges not withstanding the exceedingly dry weather of last season, that the orange crop generally is pretty good in most principal orangeries of the district, and are now being exported in large quantities every week to the Maitland and Sydney markets. Some thousands of dozens are sent by drays and steamers weekly.

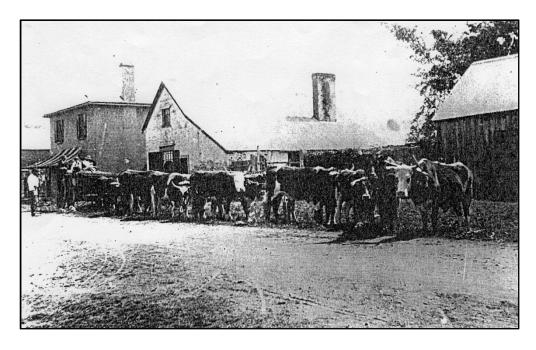


Trevallyn owned by George Townshend

Maitland Mercury 29 August, 1877



Maitland Mercury 22 April, 1882 Campsie was one of Robert Logan's properties in the valley



Bullock Teams loaded with oranges outside *Royal Oak Hotel* Paterson c.1883 Photo - Paterson Historical Society

For weeks, when the oranges were in season, dray loads would pass through Paterson, principally from *Trevallyn*, *Caergwrle*, and *Lewinsbrook* – sometimes 6 and 7 loads a day on consignment to New Zealand.

# **PATERSON**

ORANGES: We notice that this crop is coming into market again. One consignment (a wagon load) sent per *Daisy* and forwarded to Bourke and Wilcannia, made a good price, clearing we believe over £50. In Maitland recently oranges have sold at 1d a dozen. The growers should profit by comparing the two markets.

The Town and Country Journal 1 July, 1885

#### **PATERSON**

Through some unaccounted reason, most of very fine orangeries in the district are fast disappearing, trees that looked healthy and well a short time ago are now dying out. The crop for the ensuring season will be a very small on compared to last year.

Maitland Mercury 22 March, 1890

Mr Ernest Wilson was born in Paterson, son of Frederick Wilson who owned the Paterson Hotel, a keen cricketer and life member of Paterson School of Arts, and Mr. William Keppie, son of Peter Keppie of Paterson were auctioneers in Paterson and bought crops of oranges from the citrus growers in the Paterson Valley at their business in King Street, Paterson. They had rooms in both Paterson and Maitland and were well known to most families in the valley.

Maitland Mercury 4 December, 1890

#### **PATERSON**

The orange trees, which may be counted by the thousand within two or three miles of Vacy, are looking very well after the rain although as far as my observations extend, the crop will not be as great as it promised to be when the trees were in blossom

Maitland Mercury 26 February, 1891.

An article in the *Maitland Mercury* on 2 October 1893 described one of the problems faced by orchardists in the district:

# Disease in Orange Trees.

Paterson District.

Mal de Gomaa disease which in 1893 destroyed trees in many of the Orchards in the Paterson area affected Clevedonn, Lewinsbrook & Brisbane Grove, the main cause is to the want of drainage, which permits of the accumulation of stagnant water round the roots of the trees, thereby destroying the fine fibrous roots and preventing the proper assimilation of plant food by the trees, which either directly or indirectly causes a fermentation of the sap forming gum which exudes the bark of the tree generally at or near the surface of the ground. It may also be caused by other causes, one of which is a blow from a hoe whilst chipping round the tree or a blow from a harrow or other implement used to cultivate the land. But in this case it was a flood which created most of the problem and most of the trees died.

Fortunately after the seasons changed the trees overcome the problems and many orchards recovered well.  $^4$ 

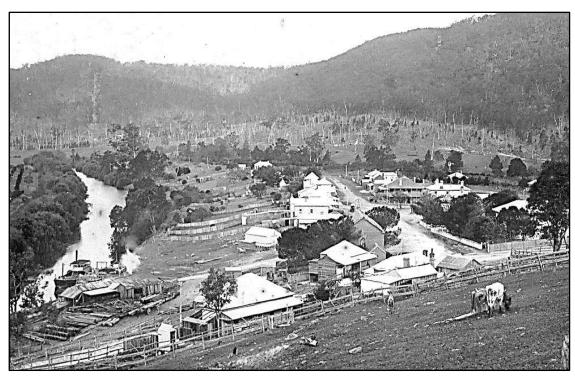


Paterson Wharf - Orange Cases c. 1900 Photo - National Library of Australia.

During the drought in 1902 John Tucker erected a windmill on his 'magnificent orchard' *Brisbane Grove*. He and his brother William Tucker formed one of the nicest properties in the district. They were located directly opposite the town of Paterson, and the entire holding comprised over 500 acres - all freehold. The orchard is planted on the low ridge of alluvial soil, running along the bank of the river, which separates the farm from the town. There are about 500 trees in it altogether. The best of them are citrus fruits. These trees range in age from six to sixteen years, and are healthy, flourishing, and well developed. So productive of an excellent crop has the season been that some of the trees have had their limbs broken by the weight of the fruit upon them. In several instances supports have been placed under the limbs, to save them from breaking. In 1904 most of the Paterson people depended on Maize growing and fruit culture. Now dairying has to a great extent supplanted the former, and the general good of the district. The soil and climate of Paterson must be well suited for the growth of fruits. There are numerous orchards throughout the district. The orange is grown extensively, and also the lemon.

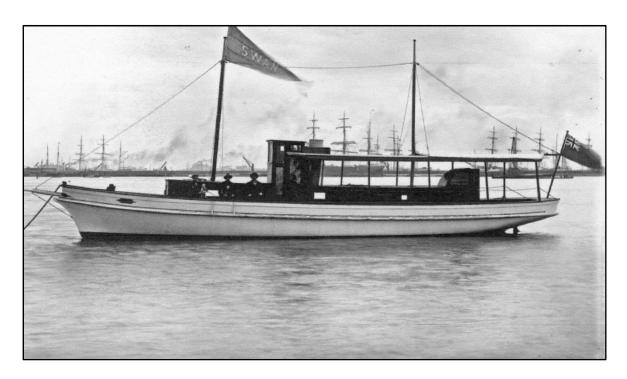
In the immediate neighborhood of Paterson town ship, the Messrs. Tucker brothers have fine orchards, at Big Creek, Messrs. J. Boyce, F. Eyb, J. Merchant, are the principal ones concerned, among many others, in the industry. Mr. Parish, who has about 300 trees, told me that he has taken as much as 100doz of oranges off one tree, in his orchard. From that same tree this season he expects to pull fully 150doz of fruit. His oldest tree has been standing 40 years, and he has about 100 that have been planted two years

The orchard of Mr. C. Robinson at Martins Creek in 1904 contained six acres, and about 500 trees, citrus varieties, and nearly all bearing. His brother Mr. W Robinson also goes in for fruit growing.<sup>5</sup>



Paterson Village c. 1905 Photo – R. Simpson, Bolwarra

A popular day trip from Newcastle in the early 1900s was to board a boat for a cruise up the river to Paterson, lunch at the hotel and then a visit to one of the orchards close by. The news article in the *Maitland Mercury* 20 January 1906 mentions such a trip on board the beautiful *SS Swan* and lunch at Mr. Alfred Wilson's Court House Hotel. The hotel was built by his father Frederick Wilson in 1875, and, being close to the Paterson Wharf, was a popular meeting place for visitors.



S.S.Swan

Photo - Newcastle Maritime Museum

## **NORTH COAST RAILWAY**

## Maitland - Paterson Section.

A train, comprising engine and carriage, was run on the first section of the North Coast Railway from Maitland to Paterson on Saturday afternoon, when 40 or 50 members of the engineering institute from Newcastle, and friends, travelled over the line for the purpose of making an inspection of the new railway bridge over the Paterson River.<sup>6</sup>

The Paterson Railway was officially opened on 30 October, 1911 this made the transport of Paterson oranges possible to various parts of Australia and New Zealand.



Picking oranges at Sivyer's orchard at Eccleston in early 1900s.

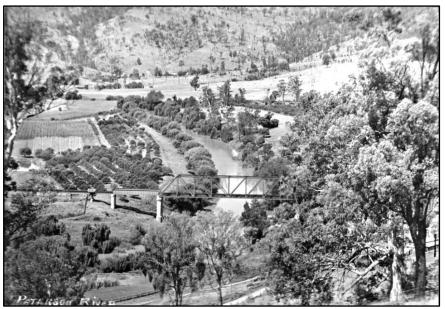


Photo - Paterson Historical Society

*Brisbane Grove* orange orchard owned by John Tucker located directly opposite the township of Paterson 1915

Photo - Paterson Historical Society

#### THE PATERSON SEEDLING ORANGE

Our Correspondent wrote:

The Paterson River district is noted for its production of choice oranges, which grow to perfection on the alluvial flats of that beautiful tributary of the Hunter. The ancestry of these oranges is quite remarkable dating back to the time when convict ships brought their unhappy freights to these shores. These vessels used to call at the Canary, Madeira, or St. Michael Islands, and the Paterson seedlings of today goes back to the St. Michaels seedling, co-named from the island where these were picked up on the voyage out to Australia. These seedlings were brought out and supplied to the settlers on the old grants along the Paterson River. The seeds of these trees have been planted again and again through succeeding generations, and today they stand foremost in the rank of citrus fruits in Australia. The Washington Navel is the only orange that can equal or excel this fine fruit. This variety does very well in the Paterson district.

Nearby the whole of the Paterson River oranges are selected seedlings grown on seedling stocks. Most of the growers prefer this tree to the one grown on lemon stock, and it is largely the result of their work in the fine quality of oranges produced that many orchardists in other districts are beginning to turn their attention more to the orange stock. One of the best orchards in the district is that of Mr. John Tucker, which adjoins the town of Paterson. It is only a few months since almost the whole orchard was feet deep in flood water, but the trees look none the worse today. This grower is an ardent believer in thorough cultivation, and goes over the whole of the orchard trees three times a year with an Australian plough, especially designed for working up to a foot of the trees. A spring tooth cultivator is used between the ploughing, which are only a few inches deep. All his orange trees rise about 5 feet above the surface before the first branch takes off, and this system Mr. Tucker advocates both for ease with which the plough can be taken under the trees and the spray pump used. The trees look very healthy.

The Sydney Morning Herald 17 November, 1913

## **Paterson Oranges.**

The orange and mandarin crops on the Paterson River this season were heavy. Some of the Emperor mandarin trees belonging to Mr. William Tucker yielded 14 bushel cases per tree. Mr. Tucker fumigated his trees, as well as sprayed them.

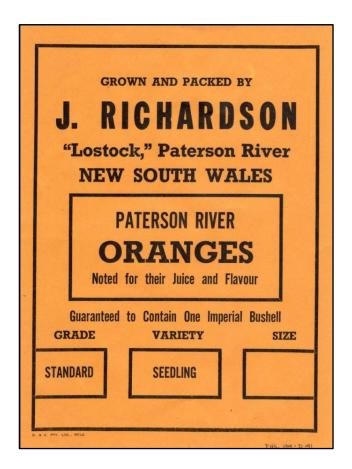
*The Farmers and Settlers* 30 July 1915

## PATERSON RIVER ORANGES.

Wilson and Keppie Report:- At our sale on Tuesday we sold on account of Mr. George Cowley, of *Carraboola*, Upper Paterson, one load of oranges containing 1530 dozen. These were sold loose in two lots, both being purchased by Mr. Frank Auckett for the total sum of £79/0/7, this being a record for one load in this market. Although rather mixed, the sample would be classed as medium size, but of excellent quality, and just the typical pale yellow, thin skinned orange for which the Paterson River is noted. Although values were not as at our previous sale, the market was a clear one right through. On the whole the quality of the oranges was excellent, and high prices that have been ruling for some time will compensate the growers for the light crops this season. We had large consignments from each well known growers as the following:-

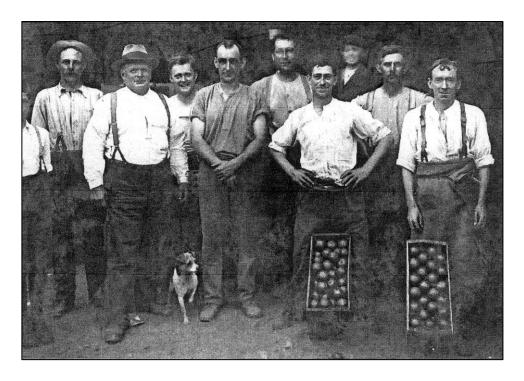
Messrs Elder Bros, J. W. Merchant, H. L. Jarrett, F. Eyb, T. Warr, J. Jupp, C. Hudson, J. Robinson, D. Parish, and Jas Parish, and it would be difficult to find a better lot of oranges in any market in the State.

Maitland Daily Mercury 27 September, 1919



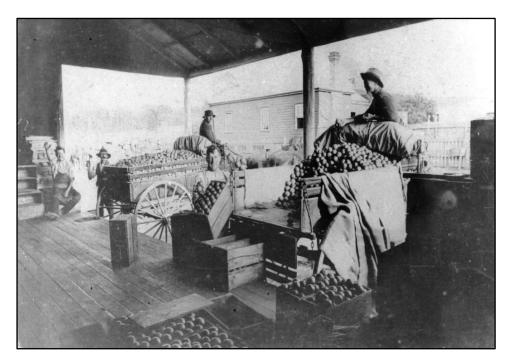
John Richardson Packing Label - c. 1922

Paterson Historical Society



Frank Auckett photographed with his staff, at Paterson Packing Shed in 1922.

Left to Right - Laurie Marquet, George Sales, Ern Hopson, Len Graham, Bill Wells, Frank Auckett, Jerry Phillips, Bill Menger, George Marquet, Sam Adlam
Photo - Paterson Historical Society.



Frank Auckett's Orange Packing Shed opposite Paterson Railway Station 1922

Drivers – Laurie Darr & Tony Hudson Others – Left to Right - Len Graham – Dick Auckett – Frank Auckett



Bingleburra Orange Orchard - 1922 Photo - Paterson Historical Society

ON THE LAND.
PATERSON RIVER
PROFITABLE ORANGE SEASON

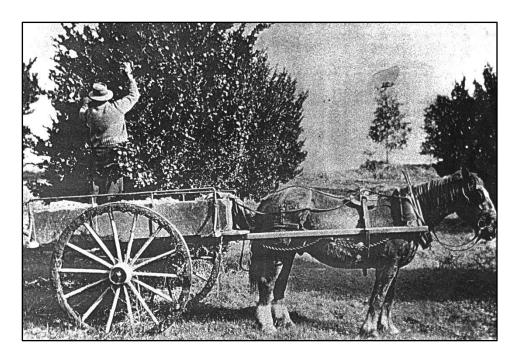
Paterson River orchardists have generally had a profitable season for oranges, the crop being fairly heavy and the fruit of extra good quality. There is a remarkably prolific second crop of oranges which promises to keep the district fruit on the market until Christmas. The bulk of the fruit is drawn considerable distances from the railway, and is conveyed in bulk in motor waggons. Although the Paterson River growers have not yet organised a co-operative packing shed as in other citrus districts, they have their fruit packed and marketed through one channel. Mr. Frank Auckett receives consignments arriving by motors at his packing shed near the railway station. The fruit is graded direct from the waggons, and although no technical pack is used it is arranged that it opens up well.

There are five grades, and about 800 cases weekly are being despatched. There is a wide demand for these oranges, consignments being made to the north and north-west, the north coast, and to Newcastle and Maitland. Growers receive full sale price less a regular deduction per case to cover packing and marketing expenses. The fruit from most of the orchards is very clean and of good marketable size. The ancestry of the Paterson River orange goes back to the earliest days of settlement on the Hunter and its tributaries, when grants were made to approved settlers. It is said that some of the immigrants who eventually settled on the Paterson brought out seeds from Madeira obtained from Madeira oranges, the sailing vessels generally making calls at the islands on their voyages round the Cape. These they planted along the rivers, and many of the present-day trees are from the old stock. Great numbers of motorists travel to Paterson during the weekend to enjoy the sylvan beauty of the riverside and to purchase baskets or bags of the famous oranges, noted for their thin skins, full flesh, and excellent flavour.<sup>7</sup>

Not only was this a delicious orange but one "which is less hampered by disesase than of the fruit grown closer to the coast"<sup>8</sup>

#### PATERSON.

The position of Orange growers on a whole, the last crop of citrus fruit was light, and growers are now having an anxious time regarding the next crop. It will not be long before the trees are blooming and a good fall of rain will be required to set the fruit. Recently we were shown a beautiful sample of the real Paterson River seedling orange, grown by well known orchardist, Mr. D. J. Parish, of *Hilldale*. These were extra choice quality, being large with a clear yellow thin skin, juicy and very sweet.<sup>9</sup>



Bill Keppie at *Brisbane Grove –* 1928 Photo – Bill Keppie Collection

## ONE OF THE BEST IN THE DISTRICT.

Wilson and Keppie have received instructions from Mr. John D. Tucker, (*Brisbane Grove*) to sell by auction at their rooms, Paterson, November 20, at half-past two.

THAT WELL KNOWN AND FAVOURABLY SITUATED ORCHARD, containing about 13 acres, more or less, the most of which is under Trees in full bearing. This property is situated in the town of Paterson. It has an extensive frontage to the Paterson River and is also within minutes of the Railway Station. The soil is rich alluvial, and the whole of it can be irrigated. The orchard is also adjacent to the Queens Wharf Reserve where thousands of people come for recreation and create a steady and profitable market.

*Maitland Mercury* 20 October 1928



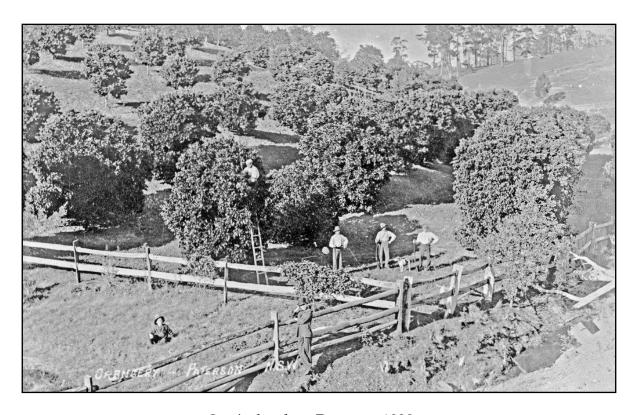
The height of John Tucker's *Brisbane Grove* orchard fence was extended with rows of wire to stop camels from visiting circus troupes eating the fruit. Tucker sold his orchard in 1928

Photo - Paterson Historical Society



Lewinsbrook Orange Orchard at Paterson 1928

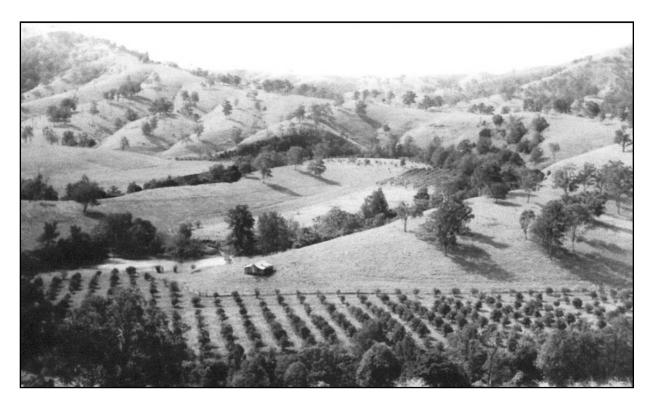
Photo - Paterson Historical Society.



Lewinsbrook at Paterson 1928 Photo – Paterson Historical Society



Dalkeith Eccleston / Allyn River
Photo - Paterson Historical Society



Yellow Rock at Carrabolla 1929 Photo - Paterson Historical Society

## **PATERSON**

**ORANGE CROP** 

Paterson's Busy Time

Market Rates

This week has been the busiest experienced by the Paterson Packing House in handling of oranges since 1927, a total 2200 cases having been handled from Monday until this morning. The normal quantity is 500 cases a day but on Tuesday 1150 cases were brought in and this caused congestion for the remainder of the week. However, the work was picked up and only 130 cases will be carried over to next week. The oranges came from the Paterson, Allyn and Upper Williams rivers. There is a good demand for the oranges going 112 to 124 to a case and these are bringing 5/6 to 7/6 and cases of 140 to 168 are selling at 4/- to 5/-.

Maitland Daily Mercury 22 October 1938



Map of *Bingleburra Estate* Gresford when it was subdivided and put up for auction on 7 October 1938 following the passing of J K Mackay the previous year. Lot 7, which appears to be the biggest lot in the subdivision at 20 acres, is given prominence in the advertisement as containing the Bingleburra Orange Grove.

During Mabs Keppie Land Army years in 1942 she was required to visit Sydney to obtain anti-glare glasses. It was on this visit she saw signs on Central Station, Sydney advertising: "FAMOUS PATERSON ORANGE HAS ARRIVED"<sup>10</sup>

Mabs Keppie recalled that during her time in Paterson in the Land Army she was asked 'Can you milk a cow?' As she was a country girl reared on the land at Woodburn, she said 'Yes I can' and was then assigned to a sheep station.

# Man and Boy to Pack Citrus Crop.

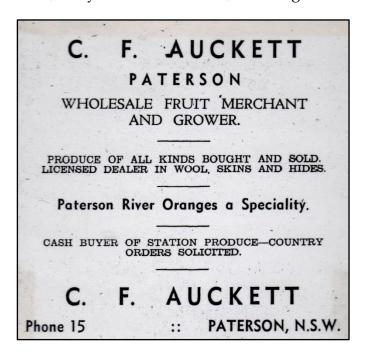
Shortage of man power may cause a serious loss to citrus growers on the Paterson, Allyn and Williams Rivers, according to the proprietor of a packing shed at Paterson through which much of the crop is marketed.

It was stated that a normal staff of four men and a boy had been reduced to one man and a boy, who had to handle a main crop which was heavier than for several years. The depleted staff could pack only about 500 cases a week, whereas it was estimated that about four times this number would be required to cope with the fruit to be marketed in July, August and September.

"Unless we can get more help in collecting and marketing the fruit" said the packer" a big part of the crop will go to waste".

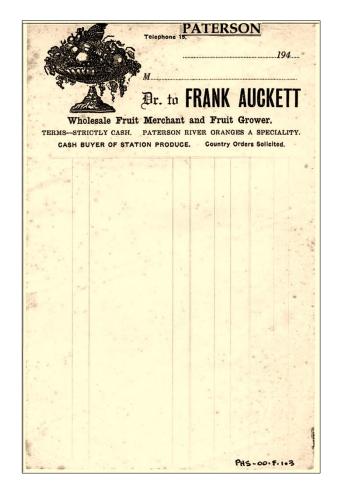
Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, 3 July, 1943

In 1949 Paterson District Agricultural and Horticultural Association celebrated its first three day show. The showground was built for the purpose of judging local produce, cattle, horses, dairy and other exhibits, and ring events.



Advertisement out of Paterson Show Program,1949

Paterson Historical Society.



Frank Auckett Sales Docket, 1949.

Paterson Historical Society.



Lewinsbrook, Gresford 1949

Photo - Bill Keppie Collection.



Bill Keppie at Keith Corner's Orchard 1961

Photo - Bill Keppie Collection



Keith Corner's orange orchard 1963. A load of freshly picked fruit heading for the packers shed at Tucker Park. Corner's orchard was situated close to the river at Paterson.

Photo - Paterson Historical Society.

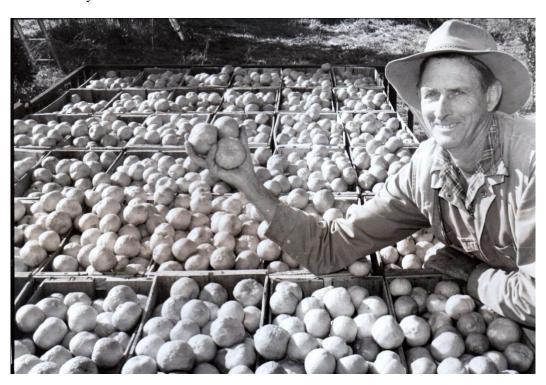
# Old Orange Town Basks in Sun, Fresh Air.

Written by P.A. HASLAM

The importance of the name Paterson was first emphasized to me when I was a small boy about to run and errand for an aunt ."Be sure" she enjoined me, "to ask for Paterson oranges, don't take any others." So, for many years afterwards I always related oranges to the township of Paterson. This was a memory kept strongly by another boyhood recollection of the days when the "fruitos" (those un-licensed, independent retailers of agricultural products) would hawk their goods through suburban streets. "Best Paterson Oranges big and juicyonly a bob a bucket." They would cry out, hoping to entice the family head (female) to invest in cheap but healthy food for her brood.

Maitland Mercury 23 May, 1974

Percy Haslam died in 1987 and his large body of work is to be found at the University of Newcastle

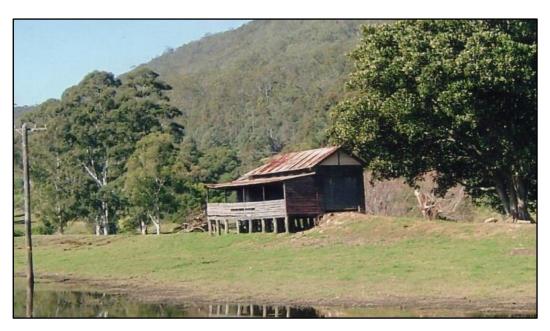


Bill Keppie at George Richards' Orchard 1987

Photo - Bill Keppie Collection

An Article written by Len Graham who worked at Paterson spoke in regards to Frank Auckett establishing a wholesale orange business in Paterson involving 30 local growers.

"In 1916 Paterson was an extensive citrus gowing district. Paterson River oranges were known throughout the state for their special quality and flavor and were always readily sought after by business people and private at times three to five shillings a case was big money, the overhead charges were low and diseases unknown. The late Mr Frank Auckett decided to establise a wholesale business with the oranges as a background, he approached some 30 growers of his intention and they readily agreed to sell him their crop, and he asked me to join him in this venture, we tried to comtact business people with fruit shops from Maitland to the Queensland border, (Wallagara) and north west to Gunnedah, Narrabri, Moree and Gundiwindi. The fruit became well known for its great flavor and each week during the season a truck of fruit was sent from Paterson railway to most of the towns on the above lines as stated. We started to pack oranges in the auction shed of the late Mr Wilson and Mr Keppie. They were graded by hand which was a very slow job, and in 1917 we had a packing shed built near the Railway Station and a hand grader was purchased and the business continued to grow and the orange growers were satisfied with the return and a larger petrol motor grader was installed and later a electric motor took over. The staff increased to 6 and the business went on for 40 years and was widely known throughout the states. Although the oranges were not grown in Paterson itself the Paterson River extended 40 miles to Carrabolla with growers at Gresford, Lostock, Mount Rivers, Bingleburra, Allynbrook, Halton, Eccleston and others, in the early times each grower brought his fruit by horse drawn wagons and one grower and his neighbours would have a bullock team to bring the oranges from Carrabolla and this would take 3 days for a trip to Paterson, there were no bridges and all the river crossings were very stony and rough. The quantity for the season 1530 thousand cases".



Keith Corner's packing shed at Tucker Park, Paterson Photo - Val Anderson 2012



Mabs Keppie and Judy Benbow at Richards' Orchard 1987

Photo - Paterson Historical Society



Bill Keppie at George Richards' Orchard at *Tillimby* 1987.



Old and new way of picking Bill Keppie holding ladder and John Priestley in the Cherry Picker at *Tillimby* 1987

Photos - Bill Keppie Collection

# Interview with Bill Keppie by Val Anderson 16 July 2011

Bingleburra was one of the highest fruit yeilding orange orchards in the late 1900's – 1960's growing in the Paterson Valley. As shown in 1920's Paterson Courthouse Museum archives photographs of Bingleburra orange trees were planted in steep terrain well suited for citrus growing conditions.

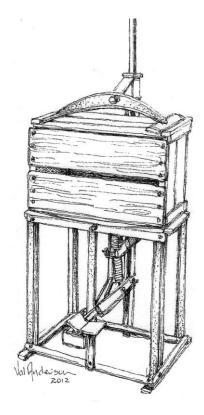
Bill Keppie worked on Bingleburra in the 1960's with Laurie Darr for Fred Myles. Due to the steep contours of the various orchards, the fruit when harvested would be placed on a boxed slide/sled and pulled by two drought horses down to ground level – the quanity on the slide/sled equvilent to 15 fruit boxes.

First job of the day was to collect the horses from the yard at the Homestead.

In the early days the fruit would be loaded onto waggonettes and later onto a Dodge utility. If the season was plentiful, surplus fruit would be stored in staddle-type situation and then shovelled onto a truck usually by Aucketts of Paterson.

Bingleburra was lime stone country. One section in the left hand Orchard was heavy gravel and good soil was needed to fill the holes when planting young trees.

Laurie Darr would make his own picking ladders 20 foot long saplings taken from the local bush. The saplings were soaked in the dam and cut down the centre with the hand saw. The rungs were made of spotted gums. In time Laurie bought 3"x2" oregon timber runners from Penders of Maitland.



# The Packing Case Press.

This press was used on Threlfro's orchard *Brisband Grove* Paterson. For many years the citrus fruit was packed in wooden boxes prior to the introduction of cardboard cartons. The fruit was graded and then hand packed into wooden boxes which was than placed on the shelf of the press for the lid to be nailed on. The fruit was packed so the top layer was slightly higher than the top of the box thus requiring the wooden lid to be pressed on the edges for the operator to nail the sides of the lid to the box. The lever lowering the two arms was operated by a foot pedal. When the lid was nailed down the operator using the foot pedal released the arms and the boxed fruit was ready to be taken to the market.

Sketch - Courtesy Val Anderson

At an interview with John Priestley, he told the author, the timber for the boxes was cut at Jim Jordon's timber mill at Duns Creek



Orange Grader donated by Pam and Peter Sivyer to Paterson Historical Society in 2006, now stored in the Hearse Shed in Paterson.





Paterson Oranges were an important industry in the Paterson Valley for many years and this grader operated in Keith Corner's fruit packing shed next to Tucker Park Paterson.

Photo - Val Patfield 2015.



Left: John Priestley spraying citrus trees at *Tillimby* Paterson.

Below: John and Stan Priestley at *Tillimby* Paterson

Photos - John Priestley

The Priestley family has owned *Tillimby* since 1924 when it was purchased by George Priestley. The orange grove was well establised at the time and over the years has had many new plantings so that today there are none of the original trees left.

John and Dorothy Priestley have been farmers for over 40 years continuing the family citrus growing on the orchard. The orchard now boasts 6000 citrus trees grown under conditions set down by Biological Farmers Association. The Paterson District was mostly citrus farms until the 1940's when farmers made a conversion to dairying.



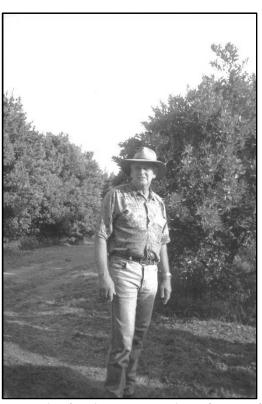
At an interview with John he told me "that in the 1940's there was a glut of Oranges in the district and Frank Auckett tried to manufacture orange juice from their produce, but stainless steel was unavailable because of the war effort."



A avenue of Paterson Orange trees planted by Mrs Job at *Rosemount* Hinton 1960s

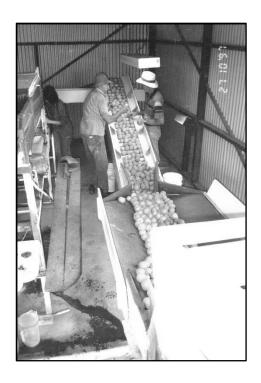
Photo - Paterson Historical Society





John Priestley photographed with oranges trees ready for harvest and in front of and a avenue of trees bare after harvesting at *Tillimby 1998*.

Photos - John Priestley







Photographs show the grading of citrus and packaging today on John and Dorothy Priestley's property, *Tillimby* 2015.

Photos - John Priestley

In 1994, 20 years since its formation, the Paterson Historical Society planted a Paterson River Orange seedling in the grounds of the Paterson Courthouse Museum in memory of Life Member, Stan Fry. The seedling was propagrated by Val Anderson in 1990 from seed taken from George Joliffe's old original Paterson River Orange at *Carabolla*. The seedling was planted by Barbara Frazer (nee Fry) Cameron Archer (President) and Gordon Frazer.

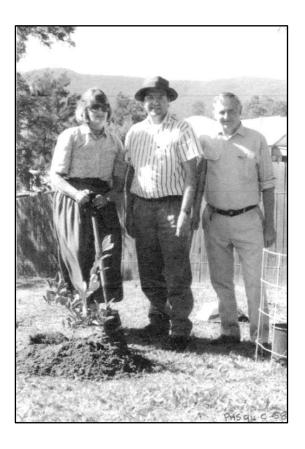


Photo - Paterson Historical Society.

In 1999 the orange tree bore fruit and, in a letter to Cameron Archer, Val Anderson wrote:

"GREAT EXCITEMENT! The Paterson Orange Tree in the Museum Grounds has produced fruit – ONE ONLY ORANGE – but nevertheless it has fulfilled it's purpose! Bill Keppie knew it was there all the time – hidden towards the railway fence oh, and last weekend it fell to the ground I will have it at the next meeting"

The only commercial orchard left in the Paterson Valley would be *Tillimby* otherwise, sadly, there is little visual evidence to indicate how important the orange orchards were to Paterson economy, particularly in the Upper Valley. More advanced thornless varieties, competition for the good land for dairy farming and aging of trees saw the eventual demise of the Paterson oranges.

#### **INDEX**

Adlam, S, 12,
Allyn River, 13, 19,
Annandale, 3
Anderson, Val, 23, 25, 27, 30
Arnold, William, 4
Archer, Cameron, 27, 30
Auckett, Dick, 12,
Auckett, Frank, 11, 12, 19, 20, 23

Benbow, Judy, 24, Bingleburra, 13, 18, 25, Boughton, John Herring, 2, Boydell, William, 3 Boyle, J, 7, Brisbane Grove, 6, 7, 9,14, 15,

Caergwrle, 5,
Cann, James,
Campsie, 5,
Carrabolla, 17,
Clevedon, 6
Corner, Keith, 21, 26
Cowley, George, 11,

Daisy, 5,
Dalkeith, 16,
Dangar, Henry, 2
Darr, Larry, 12, 25,
Duns Creek, 2
Ecclestone, 16,
Edler Bros, 11,
Eyb, F, 7,11,

Frazer, Barbara, 30 Frazer, Gordon, 30 Fry, Stan, 30 Graham, Len, 12, 23 Haslam, Percy, 22, Hartley, Dulcie, Hilldale, 14, Hopson,E,12, Hudson, C, 11, Hudson, Tony,12

Jarrett, H. 11 Johnstone, Major Edward, 3 Jolliffe, George, 30 Jordon, Jim, 25 Jupp, J. 11 Jupp, William,

Keppie, Bill, 14, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25 Keppie, Mabs, 19, 24 Keppie, Peter, 23 Keppie, William, 6, 14

Lewinsbrook, 5, 6, 15, 16, 20 Logan, Robert, 5 Lostock, 11

Menger, Bill, 12 Mackay, J.K. 1, 18 Maldi Gome, 6 Marquet, George, 12 Marquet, L, 7,1 Myles, Fred, 25

Parish, D.J. 11, 14

Parish, Jas, 11
Paterson Wharf, 7
Paterson, William, 1
Penders, 25
Phillips, J. 12
Priestley, Dorothy, 27, 29
Priestley, John, 27, 28, 29
Priestley, Stan, 27

Richards, George, 22, 24, Richardson, John, 11, Robinson, C, 7, Robinson, W,7, Royal Oak Hotel, 5,

Sales, G, 12, Simpson, R, 8, Sivyer. Pam, 26, Sivyer, Peter, 26, Stradbroke, 4 Sullivan, Jack, 3, S. S. Swan, 8,

Tillimby, 24,27,28,29
Torryburn, 5,
Town, James, 3
Townshend, George, 2, 4
Trevallyn, 5,
Tucker, John, 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 18,
Tucker Park, 21,
Tucker, William, 7, 9,

Warr, T, 11, Wells, B, 12, Williams River, 19, Wilson,, Ernest, 6, 11,14, Wilson, F, 8, Wilson, P, 8,

Yellow Rock, 17

# **REFERENCES**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Armidale Chronicle 18 October 1922 <sup>2</sup> John Herring Boughton of Tillimby 1793-1854 – Dulcie Hartley

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Maitland Mercury and Hunter Advertiser, 11 July 1857

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Maitland Mercury, 2 October 1893

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Australian Town and Country Journal, 20 July 1904

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Singleton Argus, 22 March, 1910

Singleton Argus, 22 March, 1910
 Sydney Morning Herald, 17 September 1924
 Sydney Morning Herald, 19 January 1925
 The Maitland Weekly, 3 September 1927
 Mabs Keppie Land Army Days