



Portion 499 Parish of Field of Mars

‘A SUITABLE GROUND FOR BOWLS, CROQUET AND TENNIS’

**PROPOSED NEW REAL TENNIS COURT BUILDING
AT THE CHELTENHAM RECREATION CLUB
60-74 THE CRESCENT, CHELTENHAM NSW 2119**

**CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE PLACE
ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE
PREPARATION OF STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT**

PART B : CHARTING THE CULTURAL HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

Prepared for the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc.

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PREPARATION OF STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

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7.0 ALLAN WILLINGHAM : BRIEF CURRICULUM VITAE

4.0 HISTORY OF OWNERSHIP OF THE SUBJECT LAND AT CHELTENHAM

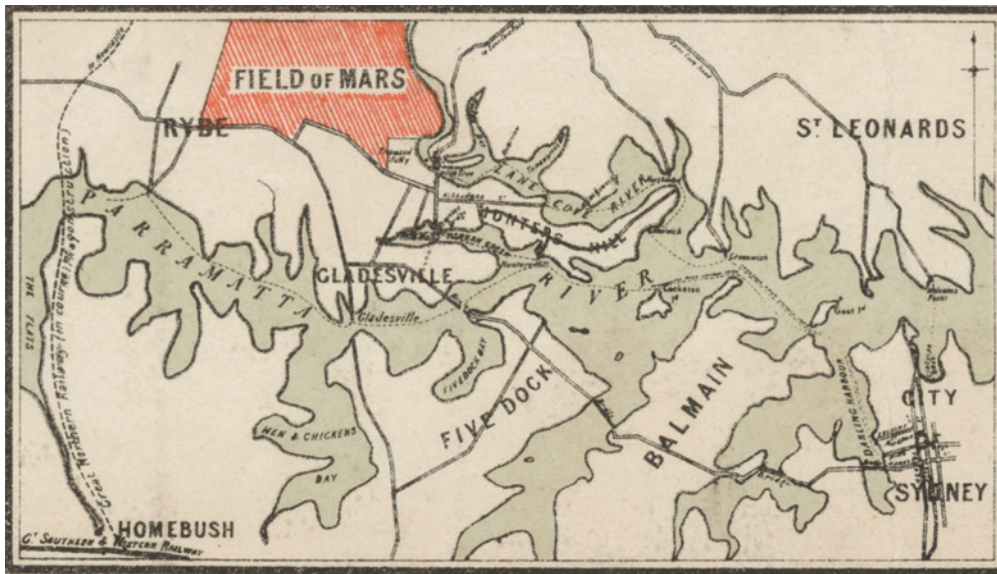


Fig. 4.1 Broad Location of the Field of Mars

[State Library of New South Wales : 'Field of Mars Subdivision' Z/M2 811.142/1885/1]

4.1 Ownership of the Site : The Field of Mars and Land Title Particulars

The subject development site at the Cheltenham Recreation Club is situated on a large parcel of land in the County of Cumberland which was originally part of the Field of Mars Common. This Common, which totalled some 5,000 acres (2,023.43 hectares) in area, was bounded to the south by the Parramatta River and to the north by Boundary Road. The origin of the term 'Field of Mars' is shrouded in some historical mist. The name was first given to this area by Governor Phillip in January 1792 and following his granting of two parcels of land to members of the Royal Corps of Marines. One official hypothesis is that it was named for Mars, the Roman God of War, and has distinct military references to the marines who 'first' settled the area. Others, with less authority, hold that the parish was named 'Marsfield' in memory of Samuel Marsden (1765-1838) the legendary chaplain, missionary and farmer in New South Wales [See Geographical Names Board of New South Wales : Reference No. 18475].

The first grants of land in the Cumberland district occurred in 1794 and thereafter prominent early settlers such as John Macarthur, John Savage and William Kent (junior), as well as a number of members of the New South Wales Corps, took up land in the region. The story of European settlement in this district is otherwise succinctly recorded in the Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group (BCHG) history chapters 'Early Settlement' and 'Small Farms to Subdivision' [bchg.org.au].

In 1874, land in the Field of Mars Common, which had originally been utilised by farmers as a place 'providing free pasture for their stock' was compulsorily resumed by the New South Wales Government for the purposes of closer settlement and residential development in the burgeoning northern suburbs of Sydney [Field of Mars Common Resumption Act (1874)]. Within a decade of the proclamation of this Act, the large tract of land in the Field of Mars Common had been subdivided into small farm holdings of between 5 and 7 acres (2.02 to 2.83 hectares) where the terrain was considered suitable for orchards and other agricultural pursuits, some heavily timbered land was reserved, and the remainder was subdivided into allotments of around 1 to 2 acres in area (0.404 to 0.81 hectares) [Fig. 4.2].

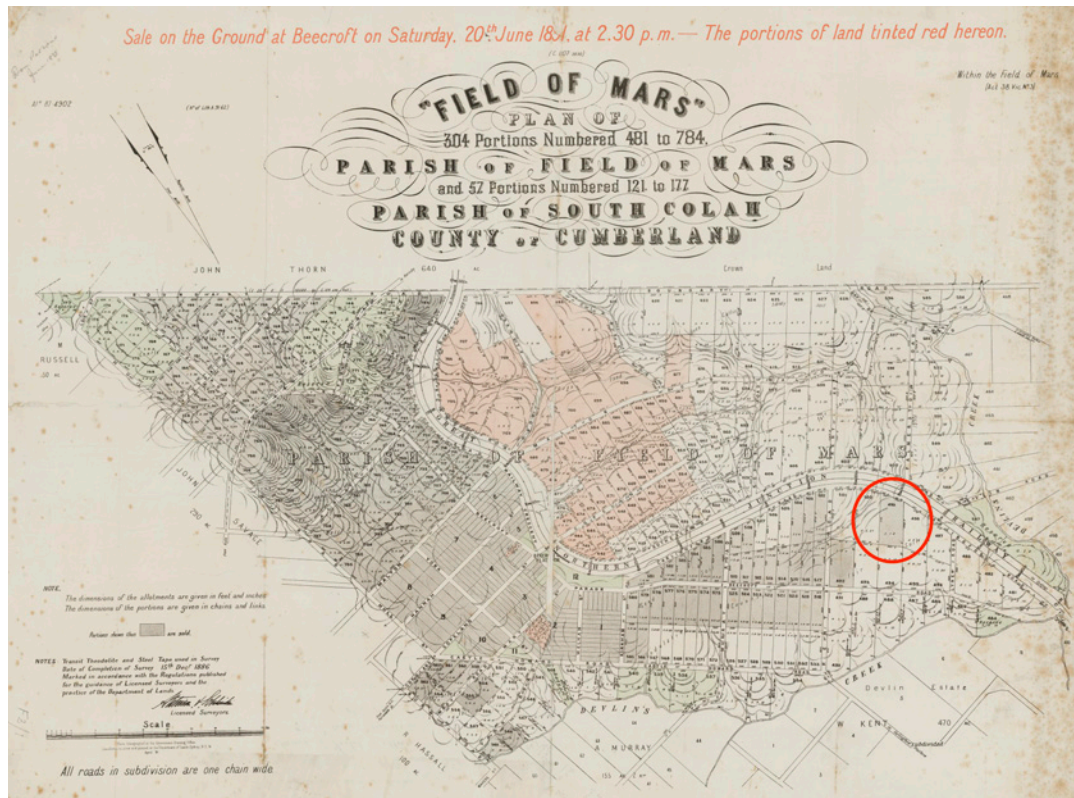


Fig. 4.2 'Field of Mars' : Parish of Field of Mars : Subdivision Plan
Survey Completed 15 December 1886 : Plan Printed April 1891

Portion 499, Shown Circled in Red, has a frontage to the Great Northern Junction Railway Reserve
[State Library of New South Wales : Map Collection Z/SP/F3]

Government Crown Land sales were conducted regularly from around late 1885 with each public auction of sites in the Parish of Field of Mars being heavily advertised in the *Government Gazette* and Sydney press. At the same time, debate about the construction of a permanent tramway from Woolwich to the Field of Mars ensued. In an irate letter to the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, published in late November 1889, 'One of the Sufferers' lamented the fact that:

Four years ago at the first sale by the Government of the Field of Mars land the purchasers were promised on the authority of Mr. Farnell, the then Minister for Lands, who stood by and heard such promise made, tramway communication with the city; and though, owing to such promise, the land brought an immense price, still nothing has as yet been done, and we have still only the promise that such work will be done.
[*Daily Telegraph*, 22 November 1889, p. 6]

The site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, 2119, is made up of a number of small parcels of land which have been created by subdivision of Portions 499 and 500 in the Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland. These small parcels have been annexed from Crown Grants 499 and 500 over an extended period, with the first five allotments out of William Chorley's subdivision of Portion 500 (Lots 1 to 5 in Deposited Plan DP 5440) [Fig. 4.4] being conveyed to William Henry Harris [II] by transfer dated 11 April 1913. W. H. Harris in turn donated the same land to the newly established Cheltenham Recreation Club on 28 June 1913 (Transfer No. A 37393) on the condition that 'it was turned into a suitable ground for bowls, croquet and tennis' [*Daily Telegraph*, 1 December 1914, p. 9]. The new Club was officially opened on 28 November 1914.

4.2 Portions 500 and 501 Parish of Field of Mars (William Chorley)

The following comprehensive search of land titles, Deposited plans and registered dealings in Crown Land Portions 499, 494, 500 and 501 in the Parish of Field of Mars, held in the New South Wales Land Registry, springs from seminal land title references found as footnotes on articles published on the Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group (BCHG). As William Henry Harris's aforementioned first donation of land to the Cheltenham Recreation Club in 1913 was land included in Portion 500 in the Parish of Field of Mars, the history of ownership and subdivision of this large parcel is established first.

On 11 November 1893, at a public auction of Crown Land at Carlingford, Portion 500 of the Parish of Mars at the Field of Mars [Fig. 4.3] was granted to William Chorley, master tailor, of Sydney, for a consideration of £128 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1129 Folio 207]. This Crown Grant was made under the provisions of the Field of Mars Common Resumption Act (1874). This near rectangular parcel of land abutted Portion 499, had a cranked frontage to Carlingford Road (later The Crescent) and measured 4 acres 2 roods and 9 perches in area (1.84 hectares).

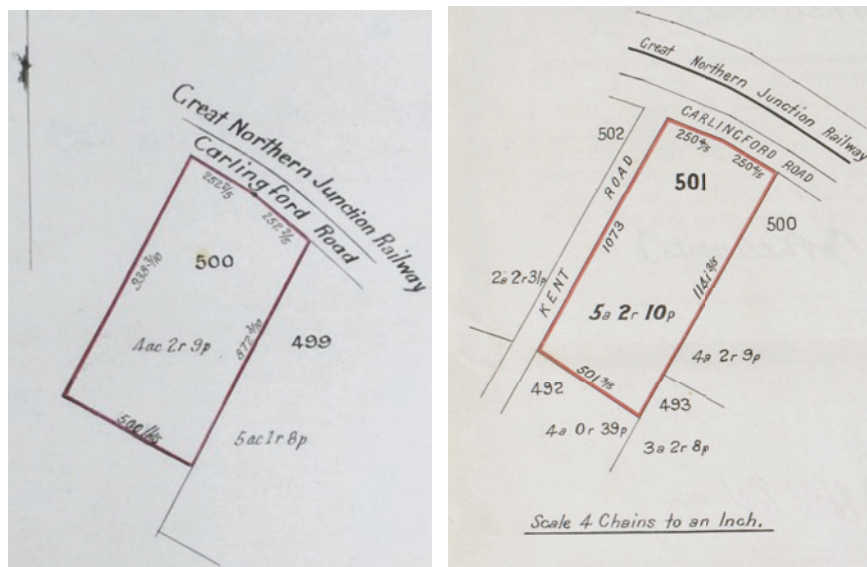


Fig. 4.3 Portions 500 and 501 Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland
Land Acquired by William Chorley in November 1893 (500) and February 1900 (501)
[NSW Certificates of Title Volume 1129/207 and 1560/106]

By transfers dated 11 April 1913, William Chorley conveyed Lots 1 to 5 in Deposited Plan DP 5440 [Fig. 4.4] to William Henry Harris (subject to building covenants and conditions) [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 2925 Folio 149], and Lots 6 and 7 in Deposited Plan 5440 to Ada Margaret Harris, wife of William Henry Harris [II] [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1129 Folio 207]. The Transfer documents for these conveyances, which will set out the consideration paid for each parcel of land, are seemingly not available on-line [Transfer No. A445555].

On 28 June 1913, William Henry Harris [II] transferred the same land, being Lots 1 to 5 in DP 5440, to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (Transfer No. A 37393) [Fig. 4.5 (a)]. On 1 August 1917, Ada Margaret Harris transferred Lots 6 and 7 in DP 5440 to Thomas Bailey Nossiter, company director, of Cheltenham (Transfer No. A332359 in Certificate of Title Volume 2362 Folio 21) [Fig. 4.5 (b)]. On the same day, Thomas Nossiter mortgaged the same land to the vendor, Ada M. Harris.

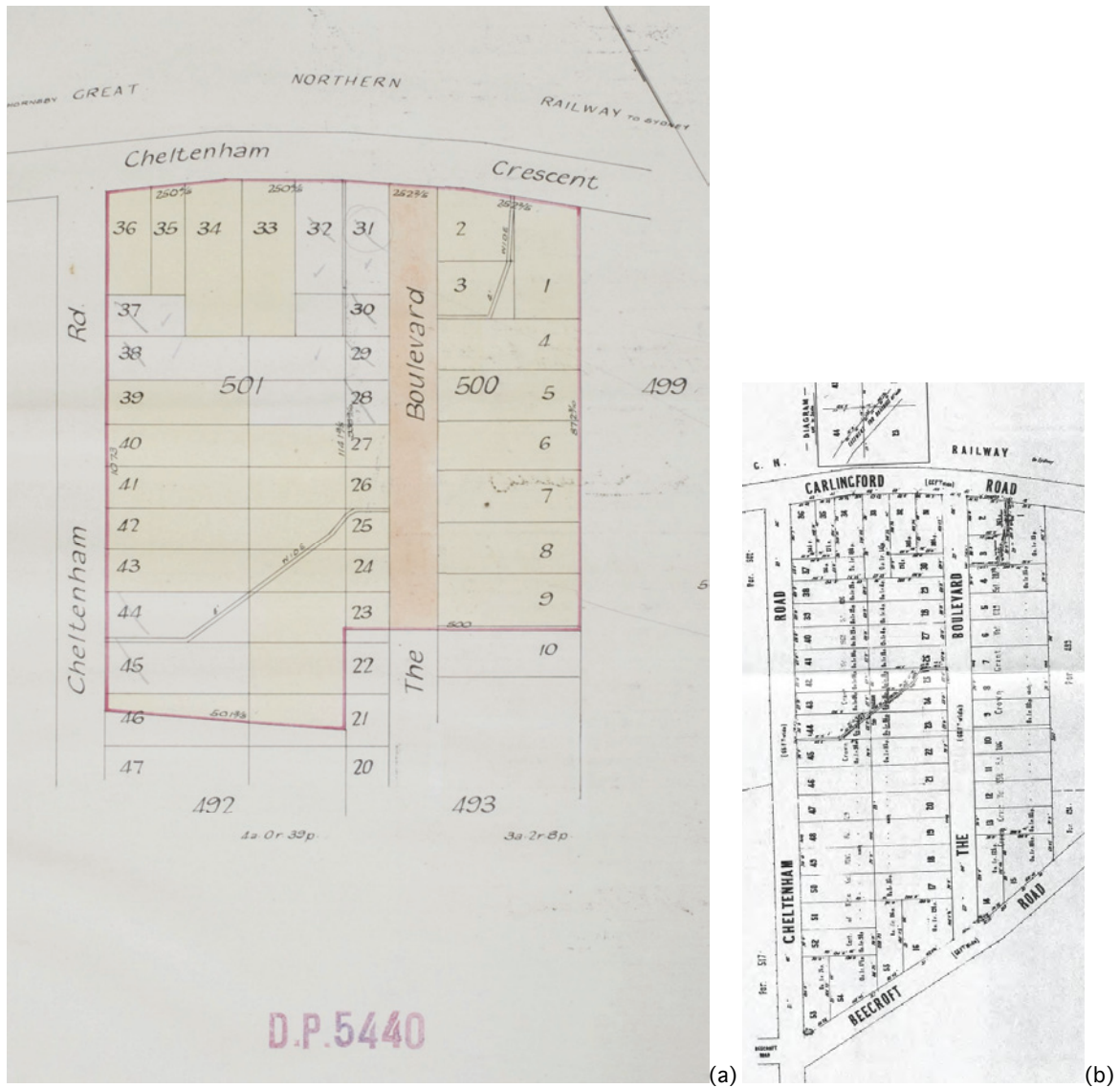


Fig. 4.4 Deposited Plan 5440 showing part of William Chorley's Subdivision of Portions 500 & 501
Allotments 1-5 of Portion 500 were acquired by William Henry Harris [II] of Edensor in April 1913
[Certificate of Title Volume 2925 Folio 149 (a) : Survey Plan DP 5440 dated 18 December 1908 (b)]

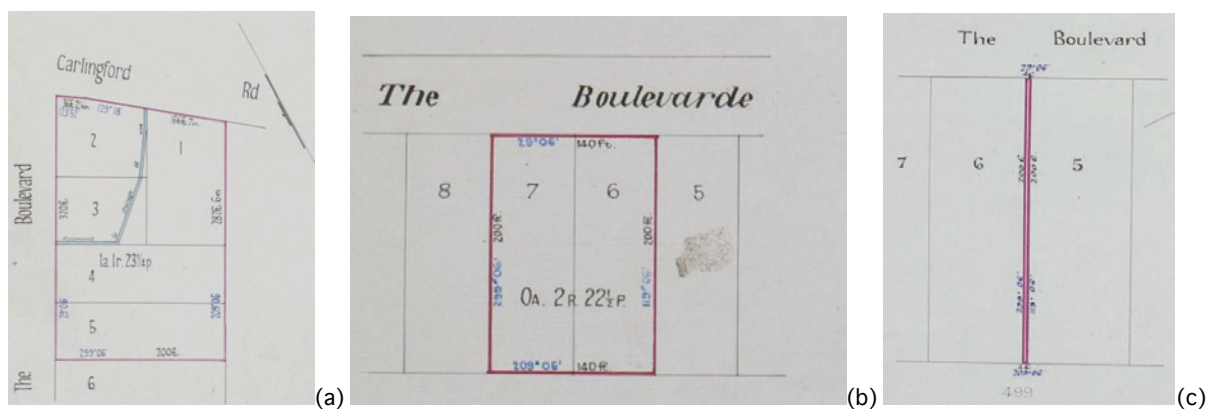


Fig. 4.5 Lots 1 to 5 (a) in Deposited Plan No. 5440 [Certificate of Title Volume 2360 Folio 178]
Plan of Lots 6 and 7 (b) [Certificate of Title Volume 2362 Folio 21]
Creation of Drainage Easement in Part of Lot 6 (c) [Certificate of Title Volume 3317 Folio 114]
[New South Wales Land Registry Services]

Part of the land in Lot 6, being a narrow drainage easement just 4 feet wide (1.219 metres) was subsequently conveyed to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited on 21 March 1922 [Fig. 4.5 (c)]. The balance of the parcel of land in Lot 7 and part of Lot 6 was conveyed by Thomas Bailey Nossiter to Bertha Adeline Vickery, spinster, of Homebush, on 8 November 1939 (later Bertha Adeline Tinkler, wife of Hector Percival Tinkler).

4.3 William Chorley’s Land Holdings at Cheltenham

New South Wales Land Registry records confirm that William Chorley acquired large tracts of land at Beecroft (later Cheltenham) in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The broad scope of these acquisitions has been charted in a definitive biography of master tailor and land speculator William Chorley (1860-1935), prepared by the Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group (BCHG) and published on their informative and comprehensive website. This biography includes several references to relevant land titles as informative and helpful footnotes.

Whilst this current investigation is largely confined to an examination of the development of Portion 499 and part of Portion 500, the land on which the Cheltenham Recreation Club is situated, it is pertinent to record that Chorley acquired Portions 492, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 514, 515, 516 in the area between Beecroft Road and the Great Northern Railway Junction Reserve between 1889 and 1899. By the turn of the century, he had effectively purchased over 80 acres (32.375 hectares) of Beecroft land in an area of bushland that was destined for suburban residential development in the early 20th century.

William Chorley built his family residence ‘Mount Pleasant’ on a large elevated site fronting Carlingford Road (later Cheltenham Crescent and The Crescent) around 1890-1891 and thereafter the family moved from their first cottage in Beecroft Road to the new two-storey timber villa. Chorley’s ‘Mount Pleasant’ was described in some detail by the BCHG as being on high land with a long view south and consisting of:

a two storey timber construction with an iron roof and verandas on three sides. The main bedroom and a library were on the ground floor and four more bedrooms on the upper floor. In 1920 alterations were made, with the front and side verandas replaced with a larger veranda and a sleep-out above. The lower walls of the extension were of sandstone. A stone wall was built around the property, with an iron top on the Cheltenham Road and The Crescent walls, and a full stone wall along The Promenade boundary for privacy. The stone came from Chorley’s quarry across the line close to Sutherland and Cobran Roads. A large garden, including a conservatory, was established when the house was built and an orchard planted with many kinds of fruit, as well as Macadamia nuts and several varieties of grapes.

The first consignment of fruit sent from the new Cheltenham station to the Sydney markets was a dozen cases of apricots and plums from the ‘Mount Pleasant’ orchard (1898). There were cows and horses in the paddocks and stables and sheds for the sulkies, buggies and four-wheelers. Maize and oats were grown for fodder. The gardener lived in quarters above a workshop and two extra gardeners were often employed. A tennis court was laid out early, and in 1920, when William retired, a bowling green and croquet lawn were laid out between the house and The Promenade. [‘William Chorley’ in Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group website]

Chorley was instrumental in having a railway platform erected on the Great Northern Junction line, close to his new residence, and having made a substantial contribution to the cost of the overhead bridge, opted somewhat nostalgically, to name the new platform ‘Cheltenham’ after his hometown in Gloucestershire [Fig. 4.6].

In the first decade of the 20th century, with a new railway platform close by, Chorley undertook extensive closer subdivision of his holdings between Beecroft Road and Cheltenham Crescent, creating several new roads to include The Boulevard, Cheltenham Road (renaming of Kent Road) and The Promenade. Real Estate Sale posters serve to record the development of his land between 1908 and 1918 [Fig. 4.7].



Fig. 4.6 'Cheltenham Station'
[Shire of Hornsby Archives]



Fig. 4.7 'Mount Pleasant Estate' Sale Posters, 1908 (a) and 1918 (b)
Inset : Location of Edensor (c) and Mount Pleasant (d)
[State Library of New South Wales]

William Chorley died on 22 April 1935 (not 1936) and the value of his estate when assessed for probate purposes tallied at £63,522. The following official records and newspaper extracts otherwise record these details as follows:

OBITUARY.

MR. W. CHORLEY.

Mr William Chorley whose death took place on Monday at Cheltenham was a pioneer of that district where he took up land about 46 years ago and named it Cheltenham after his native town in England. He was also one of the first to build a home at Palm Beach. He was associated with all local enterprises at Cheltenham and was a prominent member of the Congregational Church of which he was a generous supporter for many years. The founder and principal of the well known business of W. Chorley and Co., Ltd., he had been associated with the business life of the city for more than half a century. He was 75 years of age. He is survived by two sons and seven daughters. The funeral took place yesterday at the Northern Suburbs Cemetery. A short service was conducted at the home by the Rev. R. E. Chapman. The Cheltenham Congregational Church was crowded for the memorial service.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 April 1935, p. 10]

PROBATE OF WILL.

Mr. William Chorley, merchant tailor, late of George-street, who died on April 22, a widower, left his estate to his family, and appointed Mr. H. J. A. Chorley, his son, and the Permanent Trustee Co. executors of his will. The estate has been sworn for probate at £63,522.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 July 1935, p. 9]

‘Mount Pleasant’ was demolished by his trustees and this large residential site was then further subdivided and sold. The site of ‘Mount Pleasant’ is now 46-48 The Crescent, Cheltenham.

4.4 Crown Grant : Portion 499 Parish of Field of Mars

On 7 December 1889, at a public auction of Crown Land, Portion 499 of the Parish of Field of Mars [Fig. 4.8] was granted to Charles William Holloway of Gladesville, for a consideration of £158 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1071 Folio 79]. This Crown Grant was made under the provisions of the Field of Mars Common Resumption Act (1874). Some 30 months later, on 27 July 1892, C. W. Holloway transferred the same parcel of land (Portion 499) to Catherine Rattray, wife of George Allan Rattray of Croydon, with this transaction being officially recorded on 22 December 1892 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1071 Folio 79 : Transfer No. 205084]. Six months later, Catherine Rattray also acquired Portion 494, a triangular parcel of land abutting Portion 499 on the Beecroft Road frontage [Fig. 4.9].



Fig. 4.8 Portion 499 in the Parish of Field of Mars : Granted to Charles William Holloway in December 1889
[New South Wales Land Registry]

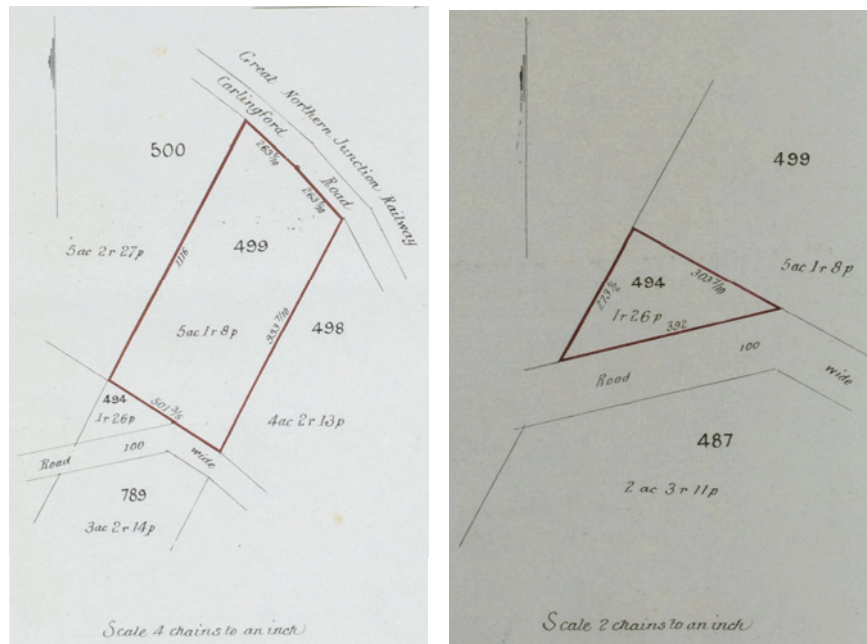


Fig. 4.9 Portions 494 and 499 Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland
Land Acquired by Catherine Rattray in July 1892 (499) and May 1893 (494)
[NSW Certificates of Title Volume 1071/79 and 1103/138]

4.4.1 Charles William Holloway (1854-1943) : Gardener and Nurseryman

Charles William Holloway was born at the village of Kintbury, West Berkshire, England, in 1854, son of Charles Holloway, carpenter, and his wife Mary Ann (née Creswick). C. W. Holloway worked as a landscape gardener in England before emigrating to New South Wales around 1882 [*Sunday Times*, 6 August 1922, p. 6]. He married Henrietta Fells at St. David's Parish Church, Surry Hills, on 22 September 1883. At the time of his purchase of Portion 499 in the Parish of Mars, Charles W. Holloway was employed as the gardener at the Gladesville Asylum and active in the Horticultural Society in Sydney [*Evening News*, 15 August 1889, p. 6]. Later, C. W. Holloway set up as a nurseryman at Manly and won a reputation as a specialist cultivator of new strains of daffodils and freesias. He died at Manly on 8 October 1943, leaving estate valued at £1,507.

4.5 Portion 494 Parish of Field of Mars

Portion 494 of the Parish of Mars [Fig. 4.9] was sold at a public auction, held at Carlingford, on 13 May 1893, with the Crown Grantee, Catherine Rattray, acquiring this small triangular allotment for a consideration of £16/10/0 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1103 Folio 138]. The land was advertised for sale in the Sydney press on 11 March 1893. Acquisition of this triangular allotment meant that the Rattrays controlled a much larger frontage to Beecroft Road than that provided on Portion 499.

4.5.1 Catherine Rattray (1848-1939) and George Allan Rattray (1844-1919)

George Allan Rattray (1844-1919), was born on 18 September 1844, son of George Rattray, an estate agent, and his wife Maria Nannette (née Allan). G. A. Rattray, evidently a bank clerk then living in Sydney, married Catherine Beames of Marrickville, in the Anglican Parish Church of St Peter at St Peters (Cook's River), on 2 April 1870 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 April 1870, p. 1].

Catherine or Kate Beames was born on 24 February 1847, eldest daughter of Robert and Mary Ann Beames, of Muswellbrook. She was baptised at the Holy Trinity Church, Sydney, on 22 February 1848. Robert Beames (1820-1864) was for many years a general storekeeper at Muswellbrook, he married Mary Ann Hartley at Sydney on 6 May 1846 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 May 1846, p. 4] and following the sale of his business to Thomas Sexton in July 1855 and the contents of his residence at Muswellbrook in January 1860 [*Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, 19 January 1860, p. 4], the Beames family moved to occupy the fine Colonial residence 'Pemberton Grange' at Parramatta [Fig. 4.10]. Robert Beames died on 16 April 1864 at his residence, 'Pemberton Grange', Parramatta [*Empire*, 20 April 1864, p. 1] and was interred in the Parramatta Cemetery.



Artist : Conrad Martens (1801-1878)

Fig. 4.10 'A country residence, New South Wales' (n.d.)
later titled 'Pemberton Grange, Parramatta River'.

[Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection : Caroline Simpson Collection : L2005/26]

Following their marriage, George and Catherine Rattray went to live in Elizabeth Street, Ashfield. They had issue five children between 1872 and 1882, of which two daughters died in infancy. By 1885, George Allan Rattray and James McKern had leased a 19,546 acre (7,910 hectares) pastoral property 'Greenbar Creek' in the Bligh District, south of Dubbo and near Obley.

Catherine and George Rattray evidently went to live at their large property in Beecroft Road, in an area later named Cheltenham, following completion of a substantial six-room brick house built on their property before 1895 and a separate 5-room cottage built in 1897 on the northern boundary of their large site. Whilst a check of relevant Shire of Hornsby rate books for this era is not possible, as the Shire was formed in 1906, it is otherwise known that their daughter, Edith Marion Rattray (born 1875) gave her address as 'living at home' and 'Beecroft' at the time of her marriage in May 1895. Edith Rattray, a twenty year-old spinster, married Alfred Edward Midson, an eighteen year-old fruit grower of Carlingford, at St David's Anglican Church, Surry Hills, on 1 May 1895 [*'Anglican Parish Registers'*, Sydney, 1818-2011 (1895)]. In the 1901 New South Wales Census, George A. Rattray is recorded as living in Beecroft Road in a household containing one male and four females.

By way of confirmation, it is also mentioned in local history sources that 'a home was built on the land by Mr & Mrs Rattray and this existed when the property was purchased in 1907 by William Henry Harris (1884-1954 [sic])' [Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group, 'Houses by Streets : Beecroft Road' and Edensor, 2015]. Recent research also reveals that by late 1907, Catherine and George Rattray initially lived in Albert Street, Burwood, having sold their property in Beecroft Road, Cheltenham, to William Henry Harris [II] (1874-1953), later to be the major player in the foundation and development of the Cheltenham Recreation Club. The development of Portions 499 and 494 by Catherine Rattray is otherwise confirmed in a press report in January 1907, which reads:

Mrs. Rattray has disposed of her fine residence and grounds at Cheltenham, the purchaser being Mr. W. H. Harris, of Edensor Park, near Liverpool, who, with his family, will be taking up his residence in the new home in a few weeks. Mrs. Rattray is going to live at Berowra.

[*Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 26 January 1907, p. 4].

The original layout of the Rattray house can be gleaned from a sketch floor plan included in the Hornsby Shire Historical Society’s publication concerning the houses of Hornsby Shire [Helen Barker, *Houses of Hornsby Shire*, Volume 2, 1998, p. 29]. This plan records that the original residence contained six principal rooms, with the kitchen and other ancilliary rooms located to the rear of the main building. The original building was evidently enhanced with a wide Victorian era perimeter verandah which was replaced in 1914-1915. This floor plan is included in Section 5.9.2 which deals with the history of William Henry Harris’s villa Edensor at Cheltenham [Fig. 5.17]. George Allan Rattray died on 29 January 1919 and both his career as a banker and his ultimate demise was noted in the Sydney press as follows:

DEATH OF MR. G. A. RATTRAY.

Mr. George Allan Rattray, who has died at Darlinghurst, was a member of one of the oldest banking families in Australasia. He joined the Union Bank at the age of 15, and served 40 years at the head office. His father, the late George Rattray, was one of Sydney's first magistrates and commercial pioneers. Deceased was 75 years of age, and leaves a widow, one son (Mr. Alan M. Rattray), and four daughters.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1919, p. 7]

Catherine Rattray survived him by twenty years, her death occurred on 28 March 1939.

4.6 Portions 494 and 499 : Subsequent Dealings

Catherine Rattray sold Portions 494 and 499, her two contiguous properties fronting Beecroft Road (formerly Parade) in Cheltenham, to William Henry Harris [II], a freeholder, of Sydney, with the transaction being dated 21 January, 1907 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1071 Folio 79 and Transfer No. 456720]. Portion 499 contained an area of 5 acres 1 rood and 8 perches (2.14 hectare) whilst the triangular allotment in Portion 494 contained an area of 1 rood 26 perches (0.17 hectare). [see Fig. 4.9]. At the time of this purchase, William Henry Harris and his wife Ada Margaret Harris (née Rilett) lived at Edensor Park, a large and highly profitable agricultural property at Cabramatta (near Liverpool). Harris and his wife named their new property at Cheltenham as Edensor after their Cabramatta seat.

The Shire of Hornsby was formed in 1906, with the three municipal Ridings, simply identified as A, B and C. In the first available Hornsby Shire Council Rate Book, for the year ending 31 December 1907, William H. Harris, gentleman, is recorded as the owner and occupier of freehold land described as Portions 494 and 499, Cumberland County, Parish of Field of Mars, otherwise Beecroft Road [Entry No. 740]. The total area of this rateable land is given as 5 acres 2 roods and 34 perches (2.31 hectares), the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) is assessed as £426, with the Improved Capital Value (ICV) listed as £1,200. The Assessed Annual Value (AAV) had been fixed at £100, without appeal. Unfortunately, there is no description of the improvements on the site at this time, however the high value of the ICV means that a substantial building [Fig. 5.17] was standing on the site at this time [Hornsby Shire Council Rate Books 1907, C Riding, Page 32, Assessment No.740]. Evidence now to hand also points to the existence of a 5-room cottage on The Crescent frontage of the site, which seemingly was built by Catherine Rattray in 1897 and let with 4 acres [1.62 hectares] of land in early 1898 [‘Beecroft—New Cottage’ in *Daily Telegraph*, 20 January 1898, p. 3].

4.6.1 Subdivision of Portion 494

W. H. Harris opted to subdivide Portion 494, the triangular allotment fronting Beecroft Road, into two unequal lots and thereafter convey the larger allotment A, with a frontage of 96 feet 9.5 inches (29.502 metres) to the Church of England Property Trust Diocese of Sydney, in accordance with Transfer No. A926800. This Transfer was registered on 17 April 1923 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 3441 Folio 231]. Harris retained the smaller triangular lot to effectively create a cranked frontage for his residence Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road.

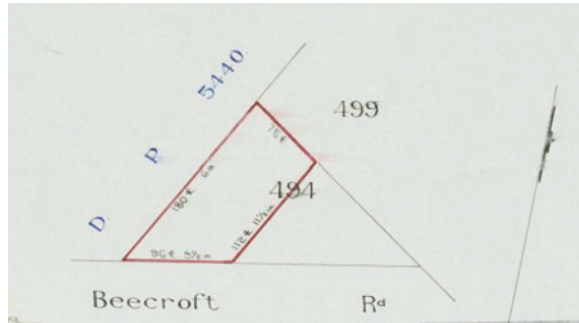


Fig. 4.11 W. H. Harris's Subdivision of Portion 494 : This is the Allotment A in Fig. 4.12 (c) below [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 3441 Folio 231]

Newspaper references confirm that William Henry Harris [II] effectively donated this land to the Church of England Property Trust to facilitate the construction of a new Anglican Church at Cheltenham. The church building was designed by Norman Hargreave Brodrick (1897-1965), architect, and was reputedly his first commission. Tenders were called in August 1923 and the foundation stone of the new church/school was laid by Mrs. Ada Margaret Harris on 1 March 1924. The function was described in the local press as follows:

Cheltenham's Church. Foundation Stone Ceremony.

The foundation stone of St. Andrew's Church of England, Cheltenham, was laid, in the presence of a large assemblage, on Saturday afternoon last. The new church is picturesquely situated on the heights of the beautiful residential town of Cheltenham, and, thanks to the generosity of Mr. W. H. Harris, and other public-spirited residents, the financial burden in connection with the building has been lightened considerably. Mr. Harris donated the land on which the church is being built, likewise the substantial stone wall surrounding it. In addition, he made a cash contribution of 25 guineas. The total cost of the building, without furnishings, will be £843. It is hoped that additions will be made to the present building in the course of time.

[*Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, Saturday 8 March 1924, p. 11]

Norman Hargreave Brodrick was born at Marrickville on 6 March 1897, only son of Robert Hargreave Brodrick (1860-1934) and his wife Emily Jane (née Maher). Robert Hargreave Brodrick was born at Macclesfield in Cheshire, England on 3 July 1860, son of a silk manufacturer. He trained as an architect in Manchester and Leeds, and came to Australia in 1882. In 1883 he joined the Sydney City Council and by 1898 he had secured the elite position of City Architect and Building Surveyor, a position he held until retirement in 1928 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1934, p. 10]. An extensive biography of Robert Hargreave Brodrick has been published on the BCHG website to reveal the nature and extent of his career as the Sydney City Architect, as well as his extra-curricular activities in both the Sydney and Cheltenham communities. The Brodrick family were closely connected to the Harris family at Cheltenham, and R. H. Brodrick was a foundation member and for many years the secretary of the Cheltenham Recreation Club.

The Brodrick family lived nearby at 'Kainga' on the corner of Mason Avenue and Beecroft Road [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 August 1928, p. 14]. Brodrick's close connection with the village of Cheltenham was noted as follows:

FUNERAL OF ARCHITECT

The funeral took place yesterday to the Church of England section of the Northern Suburbs Cemetery of Mr. Robert H. Brodrick, the architect and surveyor, who planned the Ultimo fruit and fish markets and many electricity sub-stations. He was a bowler of Cheltenham Club, and a worker for St. Andrew's Church, Cheltenham. He left a widow, a son, and four daughters.

[*Daily Telegraph*, 22 September 1934, p. 9]

Norman H. Brodrick (1897-1965) was an 'architect's pupil' in the office of Robertson and Marks, a prominent firm of Sydney architects, from 1914 until June 1918, when he enlisted in the A.I.F. and saw service in England and at Rouelles in Northern France. He married Mildred Mabel Chapman of Epping on 17 August 1932 and they had issue two children. Little is currently known of Brodrick's career as an architect in New South Wales and his endeavours are not represented in the Sydney press. However, following registration as an architect in NSW in 1923, he likely worked as the in-house architect for Tooth & Company, brewers, in George Street West, Sydney, and was therefore closely involved in brewery and hotel work ['Architects' Roll of New South Wales for 1934' in *Government Gazette* (NSW), 25 January 1934, p. 494].

4.6.2 First Subdivision of Portion 499 (August 1923)

On 1 August 1923, William Henry Harris transferred a narrow strip of land [Fig. 4.12 (a) with a frontage of 36 feet (10.972 metres) and a minimum depth of 281 feet 10 inches (85.902 metres) to the Cheltenham Recreation Club [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 3485 Folio 133 and Transfer No. C967709]. Ten years later, William Henry Harris [II] transferred another parcel of land being Lot C [Fig. 4.12 (b)] in his Edensor site subdivision, measuring 2 roods 6.75 perches (0.21 hectare), to the Cheltenham Recreation Club on 13 May 1933 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 4575 Folio 60 and Transfer No. C176050].

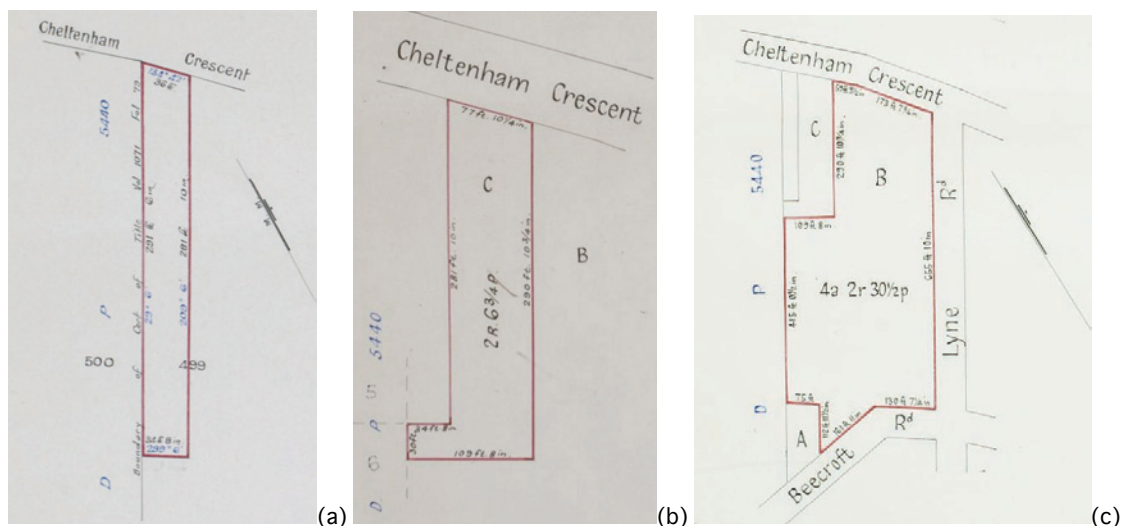


Fig. 4.12 Land Transferred to the Cheltenham Recreation Club in 1923 (a) and 1933 (b) [Certificates of Title Volume 3485 Folio 133 (a) and Volume 4575 Folio 60 (b)]
Land Retained by William Henry Harris [I]n June 1933 marked B (c)
[Certificate of Title Volume 4579 Folio 3]

W. H. Harris made further generous donations of land to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited in 1937 to facilitate expansion of their recreational facilities. On 30 September 1937 a further narrow strip of land marked as allotment I on Certificate of Title Volume 4874 Folio 12 [Fig. 4.13 (a)] was conveyed from William Henry Harris to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited. This subdivision left the site of Edensor with an area tabulated at 4 acres 2 roods and 4.25 perches (1.831 hectares) [Fig. 4.13 (b)].

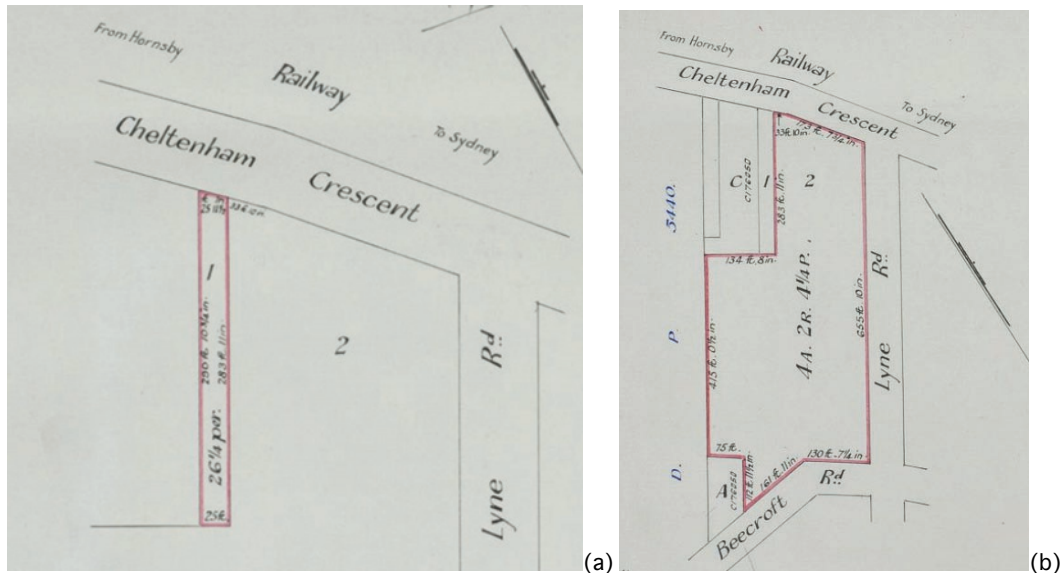


Fig. 4.13 Plan of Land (I) Further Annexed from Site of Edensor to CRC Limited (a) in 1937
Edensor : Extent of Land held by William Henry Harris [II] in September 1937 (b)
[Certificates of Title Volume 4874 Folio 12 (a) and Volume 4872 Folio 152 (b)]

During World War II, the Australian Government undertook extensive aerial photography runs over Sydney, and a record taken in 1943 shows the extent of development of the buildings and grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited as well as the layout of the buildings and site of Edensor to great effect. This photograph [Fig. 4.14] clearly shows the CRC site at the intersection of The Boulevard and The Crescent, with three tennis courts, a croquet lawn and a bowling rink (light tones) arranged each side of the original Clubhouse, with the land to the south of this building being grazing paddocks (dark tones), with a central roadway leading from The Crescent to the site of Edensor. Close examination of this photograph also reveals the existence of a small cottage/gatehouse at the northern end of the roadway leading to Edensor. Further aerial photographs were taken in 1953, 1961, 1975 and later.

In the late 1940s, the Cheltenham Recreation Club resolved to expand their sporting facilities to accommodate a Post-War increase in membership and public interest in lawn bowls, tennis and croquet. William H. Harris again came to the fore, offering to donate two additional parcels of land to the Club, and in the process creating a statutory right-of-way leading from The Crescent, through to his now much-reduced residential property Edensor. In the legal process W. H. Harris conveyed Allotments I and G to the Cheltenham Recreation Club, and then negotiated the right-of-way as follows:

No. F329625 Transfer and Grant dated 5th October 1949 from the said The Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (with the consent of the mortgagee) to William Henry Harris of Cheltenham gentleman of a right of way (as fully set out in the said Instrument) over that part of the Land within described shown by blue colour on the plan hereon.

[Certificate of Title Volume 5944 Folio 122].



Fig. 4.14 Aerial Photograph of Crown Portions 499, 494 and 500 (1943)
[SixMaps : NSW Spatial Services]

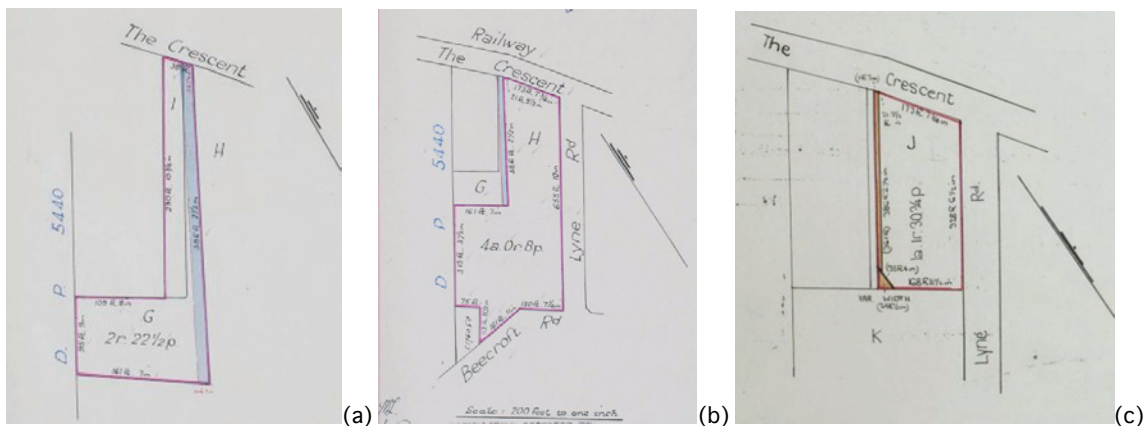


Fig. 4.15 Plan of Land I and G with ROW (blue) Conveyed to CRC in March 1949 (a)
Edensor : Land Held by William Henry Harris in March 1949 (b)
Plan of Land J conveyed to CRC in January 1952 (c)

[Certificates of Title Volume 5944 Folio 122 (a) and Volume 5944 Folio 123 (b) (29 March 1949)
and Volume 6429 Folio 185 (c) (3 January 1952)]

4.7 Consolidation of the Site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club

In 1957-1958, the CRC arranged for the right of way leading from The Crescent to the front entrance of the Edensor reserve to be accurately defined in a re-survey by Norman Stanley Macken [Fig. 4.19]. On 9 January 1963, the eleven separate parcels of land plus the right of way leading to Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, making up the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, were consolidated as one new Certificate of Title Volume 8422 Folio 153. On 29 June 1962, and prior to formal recognition of the consolidation of titles, the subject land was re-mortgaged with the City Mutual Life Assurance Society Limited. Land Titles after this date have not been searched in the course of preparing this cultural history of the Cheltenham Recreation Club. The consolidated parcel of land was formally described as follows:

THE CHELTENHAM RECREATION CLUB LIMITED, is now the proprietor of an Estate in Fee Simple, subject nevertheless to the reservations and conditions, if any contained in the Grants hereinafter referred to and also subject to such encumbrances liens and interests as are now notified hereon in That piece of land at Cheltenham in the Shire of Hornsby Parish of Field of Mars and County of Cumberland shown in the plan hereon being Lot C in plan lodged with Transfer No. A967709, Lot C in plan lodged with Transfer No. C176050, Lot 1 in plan lodged with Transfer No. c546845, Lot G in plan lodged with Transfer No. D795030, Lot J in plan lodged with Transfer No. F329624 and lots 1 to 5 inclusive and part of lot 6 in Deposited Plan No. 5440 and being also part of Portion 499 granted on 23 August 1892 by Crown Grant Volume 1071 Folio 79 and part of Portion 500 granted on 3rd May 1894 by Crown Grant Volume 1129 Folio 207.

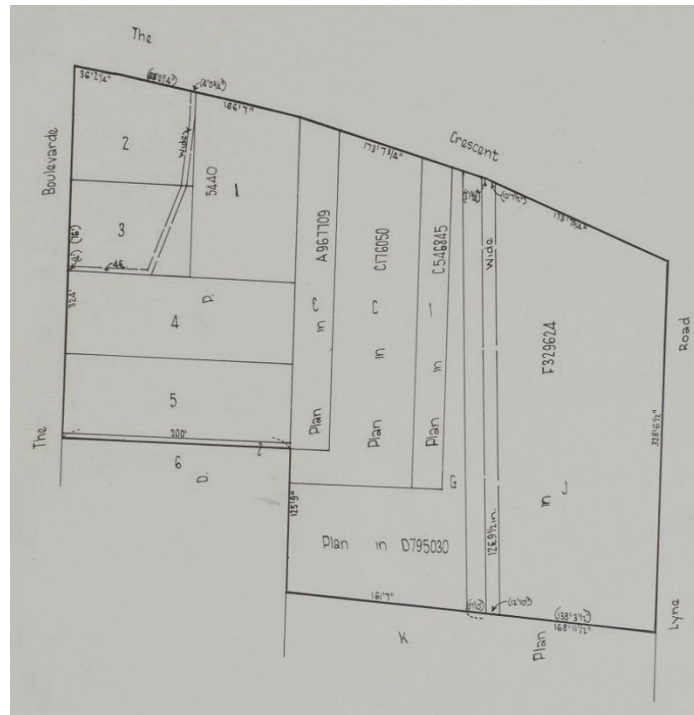


Fig. 4.16 Current Site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited
'Plan of Consolidation' dated 9 January 1963
[Certificate of Title Volume 8422 Folio 153]

4.8 Further Subdivision and Development of the Site of Edensor

William Henry Harris [II] purchased Portions 499 and 494 in the Parish of Field of Mars from Catherine Rattray, with the transaction being dated 21 January, 1907 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 1071 Folio 79 and Transfer No. 456720]. Portion 499 contained an area of 5 acres 1 rood and 8 perches (2.14 hectare) whilst the triangular allotment in Portion 494 contained an area of 1 rood 26 perches (0.17 hectare). [see Fig. 4.9]. In 1907, Harris's land at Edensor in Beecroft Road, Cheltenham, tallied at 5 acres, 2 roods and 17 perches (2.27 hectares).

In the period from 1923 to 1952, W. H. Harris donated around 3 acres (1.21 hectares) of these two Crown Portions to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, as well as the original 5 lots derived from William Chorley's tight subdivision of Portion 500 (DP 5400) in 1913. He also donated more than half of Portion 494 fronting Beecroft Road to the Church of England Property Trust Diocese of Sydney, this transfer being registered on 17 April 1923.

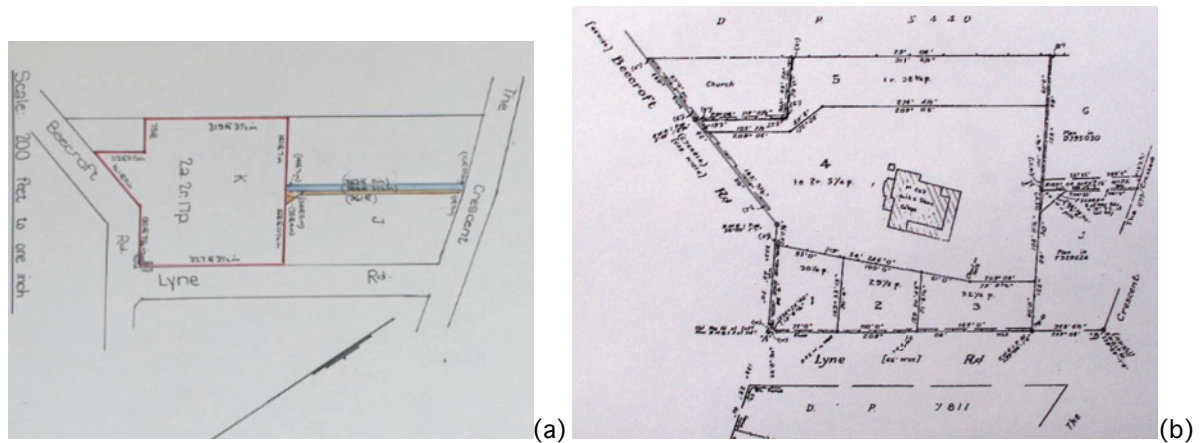


Fig. 4.17 Site of Edensor in January 1952 (a) and Subdivision in June 1962 : DP 210559 (b)
[Certificates of Title Volume 6429 Folio 215 (a) and Volume 9207 Folio 78 (b)]

Following the death of William Henry 'Bill' Harris [II] on 27 May 1953, and the granting of probate of his will, the property at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham [Fig. 4.17 (a)], was transferred to his widow, Mary Eileen (Molly) Harris (née Cooney), with the title entry being dated 23 February 1955 [Certificate of Title Volume 6429 Folio 215]. During her long tenure of Edensor, she sponsored further development of the site [Fig. 4.17 (b)]. In 1962, the 2.55 acre (1.05 hectares) site was subdivided into five separate residential allotments in accordance with an irregular allotment plan [Deposited Plan No. 210559 and Certificate of Title Volume 9207 Folio 78]. Edensor, described as being 'No. 203 brick & stone cottage' remained as allotment 4, with a reduced area of 1.5 acres-odd [0.61 hectares]. Houses were subsequently erected on allotments 1, 2, 3 fronting Lyne Road and allotment 5 to the west of Edensor. Molly Harris died on 12 December 1990 at the age of 81 years and the property in turn passed to her daughter Julie Harris Harris, who, before her death lodged a great tranche of legal documents and other artefacts relating to the Harris family with the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney [Object No. 2011/3/6].



Fig. 4.18 Site of Edensor and the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (2019)
[Drone Aerial Survey : Sydney Real Tennis Club]

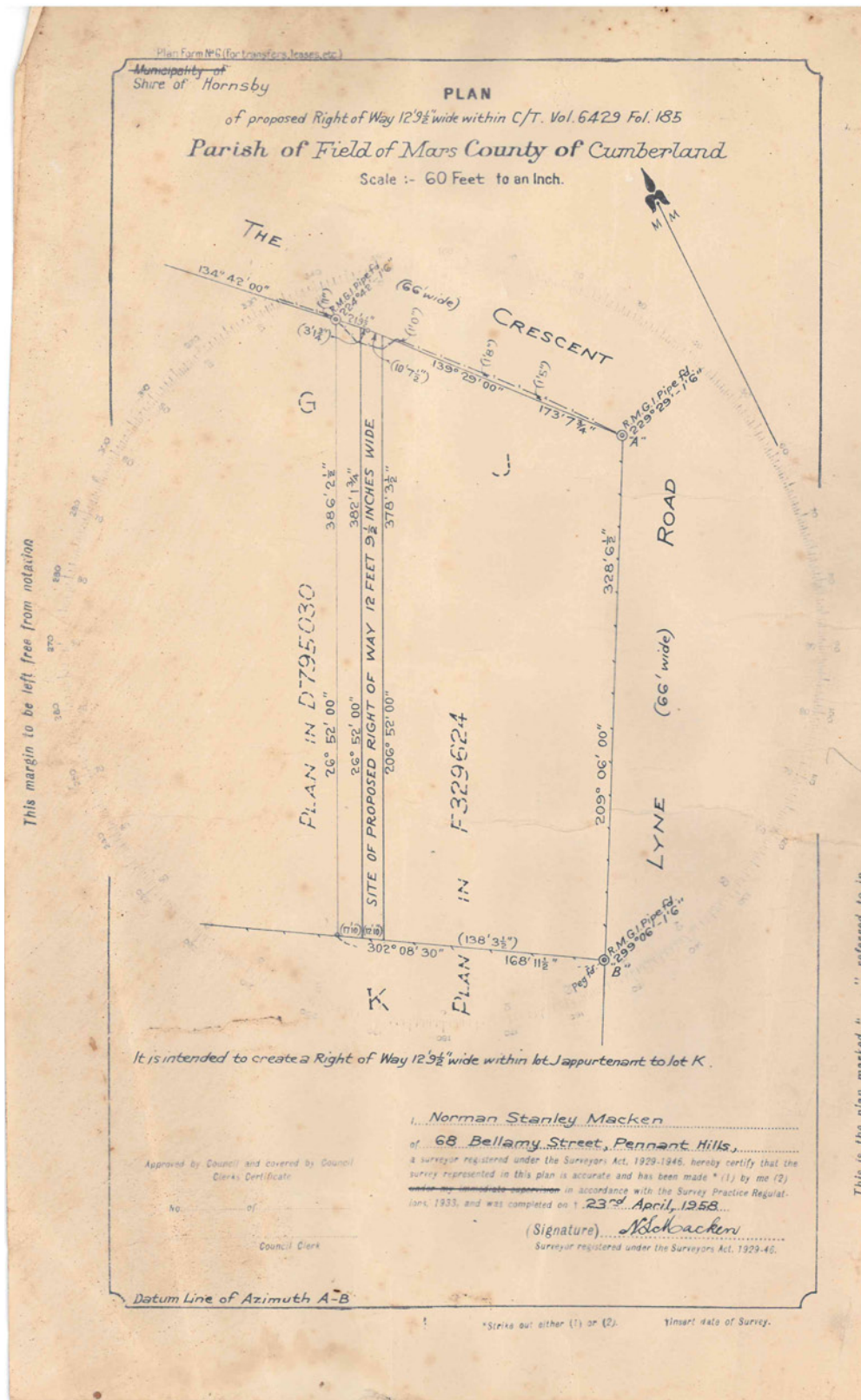


Fig. 4.19 'Plan of Proposed Right-Of-Way' dated 23 April 1958
Survey Plan prepared by Norman Stanley Macken of Pennant Hills
to Accompany Certificate of Title Volume 6429 Folio 185
[Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited Archives]

5.0 THE HARRIS FAMILIES OF PARRAMATTA, ULTIMO, AND CHELTENHAM

- 5.1 Dr. John Harris (1754-1838) : Colonial Surgeon and Early Sydney Settler
- 5.2 Last Will and Testament of Dr. John Harris (1838)
- 5.3 The Harris Family of Moneymore, County Derry, Ireland in the 18th Century
- 5.4 John Harris (1802-1846) : Merchant and Heir-at-Law to Dr. John Harris
- 5.5 William Harris (1763-1856) of Ballymoyle near Moneymore
- 5.6 John Harris (1803-1891) : Inheritor of Shanes Park, Parramatta
- 5.7 William Henry Harris [I] (1845-1893) of Livingstone House and Edensor Park
- 5.8 John Brown Bossley and Edensor Park near Liverpool
- 5.9 William Henry (Bill) Harris [II] (1874-1953) : Gentleman Farmer
 - 5.9.1 Life at Edensor Park
 - 5.9.2 Life at Edensor in Cheltenham

Whilst this cultural history and statement of heritage impact is largely concerned with the merits of the proposed development of a real tennis court on the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (CRC), it also involves further charting the social and cultural history of this long-established club and tracing the chain of ownership and initial development of the large site known as Portion 499, Parish of Field of Mars, at Cheltenham. Existing historical and genealogical research into the origins and social history of this Club has long focussed on the roles that William Henry (Bill) Harris [II] (1874-1953) and William Chorley (1860-1935) played in the foundation and development of the CRC, and this material has been reviewed in the course of preparing this detailed submission to the Shire of Hornsby.

At the outset, the well documented research undertaken by the Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group concerning William Henry Harris [II], William Chorley, their respective residences Edensor and Mount Pleasant, as well as the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, has proved to be a reliable launching pad for this current investigation.

Nevertheless, in some quarters, William Henry Harris's familial links with the pioneer Surgeon Dr. John Harris and his connections in the early European settlement at Sydney Cove are seemingly only tentatively traced. At present, the way in which W. H. Harris came to inherit a substantial legacy from the estate of his distant Irish forebear is not clearly understood. Several writers have made reference to the fact that William Henry Harris [II] of Edensor at Cheltenham was 'a kinsman of Surgeon John Harris of Ultimo' but few if any have accurately traced this link using currently available genealogical resources (Ancestry, FamilySearch), public records (NSW Archives, National Archives of Australia, National Archives of Ireland and British Newspaper Archives) and the resources of the National Library of Australia (Trove).

In the course of preparing this current investigation into the cultural and social history of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, William Henry Harris's close familial link with Dr. John Harris, the pioneer Irish surgeon, Colonial public servant and extensive landholder at Ultimo in Sydney, has been clearly established and accurately defined. In effect, this research facilitates an understanding as to how William Henry Harris [II] came to inherit property and other assets out of the estate of his pioneer forebear, Dr. John Harris of Ultimo, and use part of this substantial inheritance to the ultimate benefit of the Cheltenham Recreation Club.

William Henry Harris [II] of Edensor at Cheltenham is descended through his father William Henry Harris [I], his grandfather John Harris (1802-1846), and his great grandfather George Harris (1764-1843). George Harris of Ballymilligan, near Magherafelt, County Londonderry, Ireland, was the youngest brother of Dr. John Harris (1754-1838) Colonial Surgeon, early Sydney settler and the first owner of the Ultimo Estate on Sydney Harbour.

5.1 Dr John Harris (1754-1838) : Colonial Surgeon and Early Sydney Settler



[John Harris, Surgeon : Artist Unknown : Mitchell Library MIN 433]

The life and times of Dr. John Harris (1754-1838), a member of the New South Wales Corps (later the 102nd Regiment of Foot) who came with the Second Fleet to New South Wales, has been reliably charted by a number of eminent Australian and Irish historians, including a definitive biography prepared by Brian Hinton Fletcher and published in the first volume of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* in 1966. Nevertheless, Fletcher provides little information concerning John Harris's immediate family in Ireland, other than identifying his parents.

A recent search of Ancestry reveals that our Dr. John Harris was born at Moy McIlmurray near Moneymore, County Derry, Northern Ireland, in 1754, eldest son of John Harris (1706-1766) and his wife Ann McKee (1714-1766). They had issue a further four children who lived to adulthood, namely Robert (1756-1803), William (1763-1856), George (1764-1843) and Elizabeth (1764-?). Two brothers, William and George Harris, were to play an important role in the distribution of Dr John Harris's estate in New South Wales following his death in 1838. Brian Fletcher records that:

John Harris (1754-1838), surgeon, public servant and landholder, was born at Moneymore, County Londonderry, Ireland, a son of John and Ann Harris. He trained for the medical profession at the University of Edinburgh and for ten years was a surgeon in the navy in Indian waters. In 1789 he was appointed surgeon's mate in the New South Wales Corps, reached Port Jackson in the *Surprize* in June 1790 and was stationed at Parramatta. In December 1791, after the resignation of his superior, Dr Macaulay, who never went to the colony, Harris was promoted to his place.

At first the colony was not to his liking and his early letters home gave a gloomy picture of its condition and prospects. However, in April 1793 he accepted a 100-acre (40 ha) grant at Parramatta and bought the farm of James Ruse on which in 1798 he built the still extant Experiment Farm Cottage. Until 1800 he led a busy existence as surgeon and farmer. By the turn of the century he owned 315 acres (127 ha) of land of which 205 (83 ha) were purchased, and had acquired 431 head of stock, possessions which placed him among the foremost officer-farmers.

[B. H. Fletcher, 'Harris, John (1754-1838)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 1, 1966]

Fletcher then advances further information concerning John Harris's appointment as an administrative assistant to Governor Philip Gidley King and then being made a magistrate in September 1800, followed by details concerning his succession to the post of Naval Officer at Sydney and his attempts to curb the liquor trade in the Colony. Dr John Harris was a member of a party sent to explore the Hunter River in 1801 and in 1802:

His action, as Naval Officer, in reporting to King private conversations about the dissatisfaction of the military with supposed favours granted to the visiting French, led to his being charged in October 1802 with ungentlemanlike conduct, and six months later he faced another court martial for allegedly disclosing how two of his fellow officers had voted at a court martial over which he had presided as deputy judge advocate. On both occasions he was acquitted, but he was debarred from civil office; not until early 1804 had feelings sufficiently subsided for King to reinstate him as Naval Officer, and in June he was resworn as magistrate and controller of the police at Sydney.

[B. H. Fletcher, ‘Harris, John (1754-1838)’, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 1, 1966]

Fletcher thereafter records that Dr. John Harris, who resided in an impressive Colonial Georgian style two-storey house he built on part of his Ultimo Estate [Fig. 5.1] ‘stood out as one of the few officers to remain consistently friendly with King’ but fell out with his successor, Governor William Bligh. His antipathy to Bligh ‘brought him back into sympathy with the military officers whose cause he espoused in the Rum Rebellion’. Harris was a fervent critic of John Macarthur ‘the virtual ruler of New South Wales’ and after being re-appointed as a magistrate and the Naval Officer by Major George Johnston in January 1808, he was dismissed by the same party some two months later.

The life and career of George Johnston (1764-1823), which has been of great interest to me in another matter, and the events leading up to the arrest of Governor William Bligh in January 1808, and the subsequent military trials in London in May-June 1811, has been comprehensively charted by A. T. Yarwood in 1967 [A. T. Yarwood, ‘Johnston, George (1764-1823)’ in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, MUP, Volume 2, 1967]. My own reading of London newspaper reports of the Court Martial of Lieutenant-Colonel George Johnston held at the Chelsea Hospital between 7 May and 9 June 1811 has clearly established that Dr John Harris’s testimony did not attract widespread attention in the British press. Concerning the trials in London in 1811 and John Harris’s return to New South Wales in 1814, Fletcher succinctly records that:

On 5 April 1808 Johnston dismissed him, and soon afterwards, to get rid of him, ordered him to London to present the rebel case to the British government. Pleading sickness Harris refused to sail, and on 22 January 1809 Paterson appointed him a magistrate once more. Three months later he left for England, where in 1811 he gave evidence at Johnston’s court martial; but although loyal to his commanding officer his criticism of Bligh was moderate.

John Harris married Eliza Jones (1789-1837) at Saint Paul’s Church, Covent Garden, London, on 17 August 1813. Ten days later they boarded the East India Company convict transport General Hewitt bound for Port Jackson, arriving in convoy at a safe anchorage on 7 February 1814. Fletcher notes that prior to his return, Harris had obtained permission from the Colonial Office to become a private settler in New South Wales, and that:

He resumed control of his extensive properties but, though the rest of his life was devoted chiefly to farming and stock raising, he also took an active part in public affairs.

[B. H. Fletcher, ‘Harris, John (1754-1838)’, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 1, 1966]

Dr. John Harris was granted 34 acres (16 hectares) of land on a peninsula between Darling Harbour and Blackwattle Bay in 1803 [Fig. 5.2]. It was the first of many land grants in his real estate portfolio. One hypothesis has Harris calling this holding ‘Ultimo’ to mark his acquittal in a court case on a semantic technicality. The plaintiff had used the Latin term *ultimo*, meaning ‘last month’ instead of the correct term *instant*, meaning ‘this month’.

Harris built a substantial two-storey brick residence and a separate cottage on part of this land overlooking Cockle Bay in 1804, using convict labour [Fig. 5.1]. This fine residence became the seat of several generations of the Harris family in Sydney, to include John Harris (1802-1846) and his son William Henry Harris [I], father of William Henry Harris [II] of Edensor at Cheltenham.



Fig. 5.1 'Ultimo Place with Cockle Bay' (a) : 'Ultimo, near Sydney, N.S.W.' (b)
[State Library of New South Wales : PXC 459 Image No. 34 (a) and PXC 459 Image No. 27 (b)]



Fig. 5.2 'Plan of Sydney with Pyrmont' (1836)
Showing Dr. Harris's Estate and the Location of 'Ultimo House' and 'Ultimo Cottage'
[Sydney City Archives]

Harris received a number of land grants in Sydney and its environs and later acquired additional land on the Ultimo peninsula by private treaty to build his holding there to 233 acres [94 hectares]. His Ultimo Estate abutted land at the northern end of the promontory granted to his sometime Colonial adversary John Macarthur, and the 'Plan of Sydney with Pyrmont' drawn in 1836 [Fig. 5.2] shows that Macarthur had closely subdivided his holding on Pyrmont Bay at this time. The land held by Harris and Macarthur in the early 19th century became the present-day suburbs of Ultimo and Pyrmont.

The history of this area is otherwise charted by Michael R. Matthews in *Pymont and Ultimo : A History*, Sydney, 1982, and by Shirley Fitzgerald and Hilary Golder, in *Pymont & Ultimo : Under Seige*, Sydney, 2007. The history of the development of Pymont and the Ultimo Estate was much earlier charted in a series of articles on 'Old and New Sydney' published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in September 1882 [Fig. 5.3], and reprinted by Edward Horden & Sons [NLA 754630143]. The unknown correspondent noted that Ultimo House:

was for many years the only residence in that neighbourhood, and was generally described as being "in the bush." For many years the Ultimo estate was a white elephant to its proprietor. The land had no marketable value, and was entirely unproductive.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 September 1882, p. 4]

In the early 1830s, Harris subdivided and sold a number of small allotments fronting George Street and the road to Parramatta, but the prices realised for these 30 building lots in 1832 was very low. In 1853 the Government annexed a large parcel of land fronting Darling Harbour for use by the Sydney Railway Company. The matter of appropriate compensation for the annexation of this 14.5 acre (5.86 hectares) strip of land, and for later parcels of land resumed along the waterfront, pre-occupied the Supreme Court for several years. Dr. John Harris's descendents, including his nephew John Harris (1803-1891) of Shanes Park, Miss Margaret Harris and William Henry Harris [I], were a party to these proceedings. W. H. Harris claimed £21,381 for his 1.3 acre holding on the Darling Harbour frontage, and around 1887 he was awarded £6,000 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 September 1882, p. 4].

Dr. John Harris's character and pleasant demeanour was recorded by Jane Maria Cox (née Brooks), the wife of Edward Cox of Fernhill at Mulgoa, as she gave a succinct description of John Harris following his return to Australia in 1814:

I must not forget to mention a Dr. Harris, who made one of the pleasant society in Sydney. In the first place, all Ultimo belonged to him, and there was a good house on it when he returned to this colony from England, where he had been summoned as a witness in the Bligh business, when he had married. He was a very merry man, and sang pleasant songs. He had been in the army from his youth. He had suffered from a paralytic stroke before we knew him, but he used to walk to old St. Philip's from Ultimo House very frequently. He kept no carriage. Mrs. Harris was a fine busy woman. She had no family, but a young nephew named John Harris used to reside with them, and she liked to have young people of his own age out in large parties.

[*'Reminiscences of the First Mrs Edward Cox'* in *Truth*, Sydney, 10 July 1921, p. 16]

John and Eliza Harris took up residence at Shanes Park on the South Creek near Parramatta following their return to Sydney, the name 'Shane' being the Celtic word for 'John'. B. H. Fletcher succinctly notes that:

He served on many committees, was one of those who supported the establishment of the Bank of New South Wales and one of its first directors elected in February 1817. In 1819 he acted as surgeon to John Oxley's expedition to Bathurst where later he acquired land. In the same year he was again made a magistrate and retained the office until he died on 27 April 1838, leaving property said to be worth £150,000.

[B. H. Fletcher, 'Harris, John (1754-1838)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 1, 1966]

Whilst preparing a summary account of the history of Surgeon John Harris's properties at Parramatta and on the South Creek is tempting, of necessity, this report has to concentrate on Harris's dealings in the Ultimo Estate and the manner in which this part of his large estate portfolio was distributed amongst his beneficiaries, including W. H. Harris [II] of Edensor.

The aforementioned history of Pymont and Ultimo as published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 27 September 1882, was reprinted by Edward Horden and Sons and distributed gratis to their customers. The relevant extracts published in Issue No. 6 reads as follows:

Adjoining the Pymont estate, and comprising the balance of the point of land which is bounded by Darling Harbour on one side and Blackwattle Bay on the other, is the Ultimo estate. This was originally the property of Dr. Harris, and at one time extended from Hay-street (Haymarket) along the western side of George-street and Parramatta-street to the Blackwattle Creek (opposite St. Benedict's Church), thence by the creek to Blackwattle Bay, thence along the shores of Blackwattle and Johnstone's Bay to the point now occupied by the Colonial Sugar Company's works; thence by Union-street to the Pymont Bridge, and from there round the shores of Darling Harbour to the point of commencement at Hay-street. The total area comprised within the limits just described was 232 acres, made up of four grants to Dr. Harris and two purchases. Dr. Harris was in early life a naval surgeon, and arrived in the colony in that capacity in the second fleet. He subsequently became surgeon to the New South Wales Corps (102nd Regiment), and settled in the colony. He was the recipient of numerous grants of land near Sydney, Penrith, and elsewhere, and might have had still further favours of that kind had he chosen to accept them, for he was a useful man in the early struggling days of the colony, and was a personal friend of some of the authorities, particularly Governor King. The Rev. Dr. Fullerton, who was very intimate with Dr. Harris in his later days, and was one of the executors under his will, remembers the doctor showing him a letter from one of the Governors, in which he was offered the whole of the district now known as Woolloomooloo as a free grant; but Dr. Harris did not care to accept the offer, particularly as a free grant at that time usually carried with it an obligation to maintain a number of convicts as servants. Unfortunately, after Dr. Harris's death, some of the documents which he left, and which were of no legal

value, were lost or destroyed, and it is feared that the letter referred to is among them.

The nucleus of the Ultimo estate was a grant to Dr. Harris by Governor King, on the 31st December, 1803. The grant occupied 34 acres, bounded on the west side by the creek through Blackwattle Swamp, and described as situated "between the church lands and the grounds used as a brickfield without the town of Sydney." The grant states that this land was "to be known as the Ultimo Farm," and in that respect it differs from most of the grants of those days, as it was usual to give the "farm" the name of the grantee. The peculiarity of the name Ultimo has often given rise to much speculation. Various explanations have been given; that most generally accepted being that this block of 34 acres was the outermost grant in the Sydney district. There is, however, another explanation which is supported by the recollection of a member of Governor King's family. This gentleman states that Dr. Harris was involved in a lawsuit which he won by the inadvertent use, on the part of his opponent, of the word "ultimo" instead of "proximo." It was shortly afterwards that Governor King tendered him the grant referred to, and when asked what he would call the place he replied, "Well, I don't think I could give it a more appropriate name than 'Ultimo.'" That name was accordingly inserted in the deed.

On the 1st January, 1806, Dr. Harris received two additional grants from Governor King. The first of these was 135 acres, and extended from the former grant northward along Parramatta-street and across to Blackwattle Bay on one side, and a portion of Darling Harbour on the other, and including nearly the whole of the locality on both the eastern and western sides of Harris-street. This grant was accompanied by the condition that the grantee should "reserve a passable road, one chain wide, from Jones' and other farms, crossing Blackwattle Swamp in the most convenient place for that purpose, between the head of the bay and N.W. corner of Ultimo Farm." The second grant of the same date was nine acres, adjoining Ultimo Farm and facing the then Parramatta-road. The last grant which Dr. Harris received in that neighbourhood was from Governor Lachlan Macquarie, as late as the 8th May, 1818. It consisted of 12 acres 3 roods, "bounded on the north-west by a line commencing 10 feet south of the centre of the present Brickfield Bridge to his present Ultimo Farm." This was the block of land commencing at the

Haymarket and extending up the hill in George-street to nearly opposite Christ Church, and, with the former grants, gave Dr. Harris the whole of the western frontage to George and Parramatta streets from the Haymarket to the Blackwattle Creek, nearly opposite St. Benedict's Church. In addition to these, Dr. Harris also purchased two small grants lying between the Ultimo and Pymont estates. One of these, situated on the west side of Darling Harbour (or Cockle Bay as it is termed in the grant), and facing what is now known as Union-street, was made on the 10th December 1794, by Lieutenant-Governor Grose. The recipient was John Malone, and he obtained the land, 24 acres, subject to the condition that he would "reside on the said grant and proceed to the improvement and cultivation thereof." Malone appears to have speedily parted with his interest in the property. The original deed of grant is marked with several memoranda of transfers, some of which are illegible. One memorandum records the transfer of the land from Sergeant Sherwin to John Fitzpatrick Jefferie for 15 guineas, on the 30th September, 1800. The other purchase made by Dr. Harris was an adjoining grant of the same date and by the same Governor to William Mitchell. The land granted was 18 acres in area, was described as "laying (sic) and situated on the west side of Cockle Bay," and the grant was subject to the condition of residence and improvement. What these two purchases cost Dr. Harris there is no reliable record to show.

In the meantime, Dr. Harris commenced the erection of that large rambling building, still standing, on the southern side of Harris-street, and known as Ultimo House. This building was for many years the only residence in that neighbourhood, and was generally described as being "in the bush." For many years the Ultimo estate was a white elephant to its proprietor. The land had no marketable value, and was entirely unproductive. Taking advantage, however, of a slight improvement in the condition of the colony in 1830 and 1832, Dr. Harris placed a portion of the estate in the hands of Mr. Samuel Lyons for sale by auction. The land offered to the public in 1830 was a portion of the frontage to George and Parramatta streets, commencing at the top of the hill opposite No. 2 Police Station, and terminating at Blackwattle Creek. The first allotment sold was purchased by William Shepherd, step-father of Mr. Bull, of Glebe Point. Mr. Shepherd built upon that land the W1 eatshaf Hotel, which still stands on the hill opposite No. 2 station. The allotments had each a frontage of 66

feet with 132 feet depth, and the prices realized were very low. Mr. E. J. H. Knapp, the well-known surveyor, says:—"I find, on reference to my plans, that in 1830 my late father made the first subdivision for the first sale of part of this property for the late Dr. Harris. This subdivision embraced all his frontage to the Parramatta-road (now George-street West). It consisted of 30 allotments, each having a frontage of 66 feet by 132 feet deep. None of the prices, as shown on the plan—which has the names of all the original purchasers—exceed £2 16s. a foot, the lowest price being £1 10s. a foot. One of the last quoted I very recently surveyed, my client giving nearly £100 a foot, the houses thereon being of no value. This fact will show how enormously Ultimo has increased in value since the date of the first sale." A second sale was held in 1832, when the balance of the George-street frontages, viz., from the Wheat-sheaf to Hay-street, was disposed of. The allotments were of similar size, and realized very much about the same prices as those sold the former year.

Mr. Bull, who grew up from boyhood on the estate, says:—"It was all bush—as thickly timbered as any bush land in the vicinity of Sydney. Parramatta-street was then only a narrow road. It was a very rough road, for none of the roads were macadamised at that time. When the fence which was the street boundary of that estate was taken down the Government (there was no Corporation then) interfered to have the road made wider, and Dr. Harris then allowed the fence to go back 15 feet. Harris street was then only a track. My step-father, Mr. Shepherd, was the first to make bricks upon the estate. In 1830 and 1832 he had two brick yards there. At that time Dr. Harris lived in the cottage now occupied by Mr. Harwood in the cross street on the west side of Ultimo House. Ultimo House was the first house erected on the estate, and for a great many years it was the only house. It must be 70 years old. It was a well-worn house when I first knew it. The cottage was, I think, the second place put up there. When I first remember Ultimo House—more than 50 years ago—Sir William Manning's father, who was then Registrar of the Supreme Court, lived there. The nearest houses then were at Brickfield-hill, but when George-street frontages were sold, people began to build along that street between Haymarket and the Railway Station."

Dr. Harris died at Shane's Park, South Creek, in 1842. Under his will he devised (to quote his words) "the Ultimo Estate to my brothers, George Harris and William Harris,

for a term of their natural lives, the property to be equally divided between them, and after their decease to be equally divided between John Harris, son of my brother George, and John Harris, son of my brother William Harris, and to their heirs male bearing the name of John Harris; failing these, to such as may first be baptized John. Dr. Harris' whimsical preference for the name John was displayed in many ways. His estate at South Creek (Shane's Park), called after the Celtic form of the name John, and in his will he virtually entailed the property on those of his descendants bearing his Christian name. After the lapse of some time those having an interest in the estate agreed to cut off the entail.

After the sale referred to, the estate remained compact until 1853, when 14½ acres of the frontage to Darling Harbour were resumed under an Act of the Legislature of the colony for the purposes of the Sydney Railway Company. The circumstances of that resumption, and the result of the prolonged negotiations that ensued, are of more than ordinary interest, from the fact that compensation was then assessed upon the basis that the increased value given to the residue of the property should be deducted from the compensation to be paid for the land resumed. For instance, if the land resumed was assessed at £10,000, and the increased value given to the residue of the property was calculated at £20,000, the owner of the land would actually have to pay a levy of £10,000 for having a portion of his property forcibly taken from him. In the report of a select committee presented to Parliament on the 9th June, 1865, it was stated:—"In 1854 the value of the land taken, and of the damages to be sustained by the proprietors from the railway works, was assessed by three surveyors, in whose election the proprietors had no voice, at £101,902; and under the principle which at that time prevailed, but has since been abandoned in legislation, the supposed increased value to be given to the residue of the estate by the construction of the railway and terminus was estimated and stated at £99,133; and this sum being deducted from the former, left a balance of £2769 to be divided between the proprietors; and the railway and terminus to be constructed in satisfaction of the residue of the assessed value of the land and the damage sustained by the owners. The plans of the works intended at the time the valuation was made show that a very extensive arrangement of sheds, storehouses, and other provisions for carrying on a large traffic was in contemplation, involving, according to Mr. Whitton's estimate, an expenditure of £80,000 upon 7½ acres taken from the Harris family for the terminus. The extent of land taken, and the estimate of improved value of the residue of the estate, also afford evidence of the magnitude of the traffic intended to be provided for at the terminus. In the year 1854 the Government of the colony became purchasers, from the Sydney Railway Company, of their undertaking, and, as it appears to the committee, of the obligations attending the acquisition of its property under the circumstances stated. It appears to the committee that the Harris family, having waited many years for the construction of the terminus, in 1860 memorialized his Excellency Sir W. T. Denison, the then Governor, praying relief, upon which the Minister for Public Works informed the petitioners that 'so soon as the question of the Pitt-street tramway, which is now before Parliament, is determined, the Government will decide upon the question referred to by you.'" This report was made four years after the Pitt-street tramway (since taken up) had become an accomplished fact, and the Harris family had been kept for 11 years without compensation for the land taken from them. This committee, from whose report we have quoted, took a great deal of evidence in the matter, and eventually reported that they were "of opinion that the petitioners' case for relief has been completely made out, and therefore recommended it to the immediate and favourable consideration of the Government." After prolonged negotiations and considerable delay, the family agreed to accept £25,000 compensation, and the return of a small portion of the area which has been resumed.

Last year the Government again went on both the Ultimo and Pyrmont estates, and resumed land for public purposes, the resumptions in this instance comprising the balance of the frontage to Darling Harbour. These resumptions are almost for the very same purposes for which the land was resumed in 1854, and after nearly 30 years' delay the long-projected terminus will be commenced at Darling Harbour. The result of this delay is that the country now has to pay nearly a quarter of a million sterling more for the land required than would have to be paid when the first resumptions were made. The particulars of these latter resumptions, and the Supreme Court hearings in connection herewith, are already fresh in the public mind. The owners and leaseholders claimed nearly three-quarters of a million sterling as compensation for the loss of their interest. The claims were so greatly in excess of the valuations of Mr. J. Y. Mills, who was specially engaged by the Government

as valuator, that they carried the cases into the Supreme Court with the result that the amount of compensation was reduced nearly half a million. The following table may serve as a useful record of this interesting batch of cases, the first tried under the Amended Lands for Public Purposes Resumption Act:—

Name of claimants.	Nature of claims.	Area of land on which claim is made.	Amount of claim.	Amount of award.
John Harris, Shane's Park	tenant in fee simple	a. r. p. 4 0 7	£ 117,382	£ 30,000
T. Garrett, M.L.A.	leasehold	0 2 7	20,108	8,750
Miss Margaret Harris	tenant in tail	2 0 26	21,912	5,125
Hon. John Lucas, M.L.C.	leasehold	1 1 0	76,945	4,500
Davey and Co.	freehold	1 2 0	131,533	31,675
William Sandford	leasehold	0 1 14	13,312	6,000
John Johnson	sub-lessee	0 1 1	19,884	5,435
John M'Clerkin	leasehold	0 1 1	400	400
Malden, Hill, and Clark	leasehold	0 2 19	20,462	4,950
William Harris	tenant in fee simple	1 1 16	21,381	6,000
William Webb	freehold	0 1 26½	15,180	10,078
Thos. Garrett & G. H. Swain, trading as Swain and Co.	leasehold	...	6,841	1,300
D. and W. Robertson	leasehold	0 1 26½	37,265	3,000
Trustees of the late General Sir Edward Macarthur	freehold	3 1 6	25,605	12,000
Goodlet and Smith	freehold and leasehold	3 0 0	168,577	87,717
Mrs. Fanny Short	leasehold	...	45,151	12,700
W. W. Billyard	sub-lessee	...	1,810	989
G. F. Want	sub-lessee of Lucas	...	10,000	nil
Total		14 2 9½	753,748	230,795

The awards given in the cases of J. Harris, Sanford, Swain, and Macarthur include interest. The claims of Miss Margaret Harris and W. H. L. Harris are still unsettled, and amounts given above are the awards of the Government valuator, Mr. J. Y. Mills.

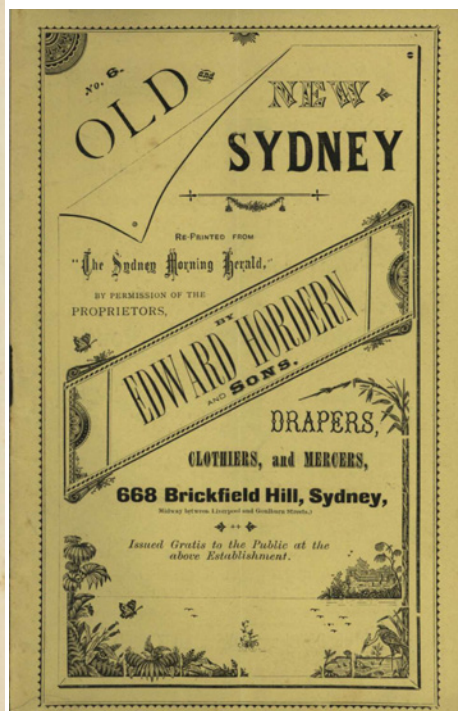


Fig. 5.3 'Old and New Sydney' No. 6 'Pyrmont and Ultimo'
Reprinted from the *Sydney Morning Herald* by Edward Horden and Sons (1883)
[National Library of Australia]

5.2 Last Will and Testament of Dr. John Harris (1838)

The last will and testament of Dr. John Harris of Shanes Park in the County of Cumberland was signed on 22 February 1838 with a further codicil signed on 7 March 1838. He died just over seven weeks later, on 27 April 1838, at Shanes Park, with the Sydney press noting that:

John Harris, Esq., formerly surgeon of the 102nd regiment of foot, commonly called the New South Wales Corps, the father of the Magistracy of the Colony, died at his seat at Shanes Park, on the South Creek, on Friday last. Dr. Harris has left property worth £150,000—the Ultimo estate belonged to him.
[*The Australian*, Tuesday 1 May, 1838, p. 2]

Surgeon John Harris's last will and testament makes interesting reading and has long been transcribed and made available on the public record. Only those parts of this document which relate directly to the Ultimo Estate and Shanes Park at Parramatta have been transcribed, to read, respectively, as follows:

I John Harris now residing in Shanes Park in the county of Cumberland and Colony of New South Wales being in good health and of sound disposing mind memory and understanding make publish and declare this to be my last Will and Testament. I give device and bequeath all my Ultimo Estate or property in adjoining the Town of Sydney to my brothers George Harris and William Harris for and during the term of their natural lives the said property to be divided equally between them by the Executor of this my Will from and after their decease I give device and bequeath the same property being equally divided to John Harris the son of my brother George Harris and unto John Harris the son of my brother William Harris and their heirs male bearing the name of John Harris and being lawfully begotten to have and to hold forever and in the case of the death of these last mentioned without issue so named as foresaid I give devise and bequeath the same property and assets to sons of any of my brothers George Harris, William Harris and Robert Harris as may first be baptised by name of John Harris and the first after being lawfully begotten bearing the Harris name in case of his death without issue bearing this name then to the next or other son in line of either of my said brothers who may be in line with their heirs of his body so named in the manner to have and to hold forever.

I give and bequeath the property on which I now reside Shanes Park to John Harris son of my brother William Harris during the term of his natural life and from and after his decease I give and bequeath the same to his eldest son bearing the name of John Harris and his heirs so baptised and being lawfully begotten to have and to hold forever. And in the case of the said John Harris dying without male issue I give and bequeath the said property to his next of kin bearing the name John Harris and being lawfully begotten and to his heirs male being so named and lawfully begotten to have and to hold forever.

His Parramatta Estate, otherwise known as 'Harris Farm' was devised to Thomas Harris (1816-1870), son of his brother William Harris (1763-1856), another 30-acre farm at Parramatta was left to Eliza Stinson or Magee, daughter of his sister Elizabeth Harris (1764-?). Land adjoining Shanes Park in the County of Cumberland was left to his three nephews, Samuel, Robert and David Harris, the sons of his brother Robert Harris (1756-1803). Jane Lindsay or Magee, another daughter of his sister Elizabeth, was bequeathed Dr. John Harris's Pitt Town farm known as 'Bardenarang'. All of these legacies were further complicated by the direction that after the decease of the original beneficiaries, the same property was to pass to their next of kin named John 'being lawfully begotten and to his heirs male being so named and lawfully begotten to have and to hold forever'. Administration of this condition in Dr. John Harris's will gainfully occupied the Sydney legal fraternity for many years to come.

5.3 The Harris Family of Moneymore, County Derry, Ireland

In more recent times, the genealogy of this branch of the Harris family, of the ancient village of Moneymore, County Derry, Ireland, has been further traced by Harris family genealogists to reveal that Dr. John Harris was the first son born to John Harris (1706-1766) and his wife Ann McKee (1714-1766). He had three brothers, Robert (1756-1803), William (1763-1856) and George (1764-1843) and a sister Elizabeth (born 1764). His parents both died at Moneymore in 1766. William and George Harris inherited an equal share of the Ultimo Estate, with the division of this land to be undertaken by Dr. John Harris's executor [Figs. 5.4 and 5.5]. Neither brother came to Australia to take physical possession of their Ultimo terrain.

George Harris, the youngest brother of Dr. Harris, died at his residence, Ballymilligan, near Magherafelt, on 23 March 1843 at the age of 79 years [*The Belfast News-Letter*, 28 March, 1843, p. 2]. His as yet undivided half-interest in the Ultimo Estate in Sydney thereafter passed to his eldest son, John Harris (1802-1846), then resident in Magherafelt with his wife and three young children. This John Harris is the grandfather of our William Henry Harris [II] of Edensor at Cheltenham.

5.4 John Harris (1802-1846) : Merchant and Heir-at-Law to Dr. John Harris

John Harris (1802-1846), was born at Moneymore, County Londonderry, Ireland, at an unknown date in 1802, only son of George Harris (1764-1843). His paternal uncle was Dr. John Harris, Colonial surgeon and early landholder in New South Wales. Before emigrating to New South Wales with his family in late 1844 to take control of his father George Harris's legacy at Ultimo, Sydney, John Harris conducted business as a merchant at Magherafelt, County Londonderry, Ireland. John Harris and Nancy Ann McKee were married at the Presbyterian Church of Ballygoney, Littlebridge, in the County of Londonderry, Ireland, on 29 July 1833. They had issue six children, George (22 September 1836), John (10 August 1838), Matthew (18 September 1841) and Margaret (13 August 1843), all born in County Londonderry, and William Henry Harris [I] (6 September 1845), born in Sydney, New South Wales. All attained adulthood in Australia, save for their only daughter Mary Ann who died, an infant, in Sydney, on 4 September 1857 ['Declaration of Nancy Ann Harris', at Sydney, dated 27 September 1867, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney].

The exact date when John Harris and family arrived at Sydney is not yet established. One commentators record that he arrived in 1842 as a banker, another holds that it was August 1844. Shipping records I have traced to date are inconclusive. The Harris family were certainly in residence either at Ultimo House or Ultimo Cottage by November 1844, as 'John Harris of Ultimo' offered a fifteen shilling reward for the return of a 'bay pony horse' which had strayed or been stolen from Ultimo [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 November 1844, p. 3].

John Harris, 'gentleman', late of Ultimo, died on 10 September 1846 at the age of 44 years and was interred at Parramatta three days later [No. 1000 in 'Register of Burials in the Parish of St John, Parramatta', 1846, p. 66]. His remains were removed to the Rookwood Necropolis in January 1875. John Harris made his last will and testament on 29 August 1846, and just twelve days before his early demise. Nancy Ann Harris, his widow and executrix, together with James Fullerton, minister of the Scots Church in Pitt Street, Sydney, Robert Harris of Shanes Park near Penrith, gentleman, and George Henry Hamilton of Liverpool Street, Sydney, druggist, as executors, applied for probate of Harris's will on 29 September 1846 [*New South Wales Government Gazette*, 29 September 1846]. Nancy Ann Harris (née McKee), 'relict of the late John Harris of Ultimo', died on 28 March 1874 at Ultimo [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April 1874, p. 7].

5.5 William Harris (1763-1856) of Ballymoyle near Moneymore

William Harris (1763-1856), the other beneficiary in his brother Dr. John Harris’s Ultimo Estate, died at his residence ‘Ballymoyle’, near Moneymore, County Londonderry, on 27 November 1856, in his 93rd year. A few days later, the Irish press reported that:

November 27, at his residence, Ballymoyle, near Moneymore, county Londonderry, William Harris, Esq., in the 93rd year of his age, deeply and deservedly regretted by his family and friends. He was the owner of an estate at Sydney, New South Wales, which descends to his eldest son, valued at £500,000 sterling.
[*The Belfast News-Letter*, Saturday 6 December 1856]

His passing also attracted the interest of the distant press, and in January 1857, the influential *Boston Post* at Boston, Massachusetts, published the same notice [*Boston Pilot*, 3 January 1857]. For the record, William Harris was born at McIlmurry, Moneymore, Londonderry, Ireland, in 1763, second son of John Harris (1706-1766) and his wife Ann Poulter McKee (1714-1766). William Harris married Jane Junk (1763-1859) at Arboe, County Tyrone, Ireland, on 19 June 1805. They had issue the eldest son John (born 10 March 1803), Nancy (born 1806), Mary Jane (born 1807), Jane (born 1808), Thomas (born 1816), Elizabeth (born 4 February 1816), Margaret (born 1820) and Matilda (born 1822).

5.6 John Harris (1803-1891) : Inheritor of Shanes Park, Parramatta

Following the death of William Harris at Ballymoyle in 1856, John Harris (1803-1891), as the eldest surviving son, inherited the majority of his father’s estate in Australia. This John Harris, a nephew of Dr. John Harris, was already long-resident in New South Wales, having emigrated to Australia in 1838. The passenger manifest for the 314 ton barque Jessie records that he sailed from Liverpool on 7 September 1837 bound for Port Jackson in New South Wales. John Harris, a cabin passenger, landed on 19 January 1838 [*Commercial Journal and Advertiser*, 20 January 1838, p. 2] to join his uncle at Shanes Park on the South Creek, near Parramatta. He likely came to Sydney on the invitation of the recently widowed former Surgeon John Harris, but their friendship was short-lived, for Dr. Harris died at Shanes Park on 27 April 1838. As set out in Section 5.2 above, Dr. John Harris generously provided for his nephew, son of his brother William, in his will, bequeathing ‘the property on which I now reside Shanes Park to John Harris son of my brother William Harris during the term of his natural life’.

John Harris also inherited his father’s half-share in the Ultimo Estate and following the subdivision, this consolidated 223.75 acre [90.5484 hectares] parcel of land was distributed between himself and the other beneficiaries, namely William Henry Harris (1845-1893), George Harris (1836-1897), John Harris (1838-1911), Margaret Harris (1843-1926) and Matthew Harris (1841-1917), all children of John and Nancy Harris of Ultimo. John Harris of Shanes Park progressively undertook the closer subdivision and development of many of the thirty-four separate blocks he acquired at the so-called Harris ‘family lottery’ in 1859 [Fig. 5.5]. Thereafter, he leased these individual sites to residential, commercial and industrial tenants for periods up to fifty years. John Harris, known in the Harris family lottery as ‘John Harris SP’, acquired a ‘sheep station at Murrumburrah and a cattle station at Callangoon’.

At the time of his death in 1891, John Harris of Shanes Park ‘had not, for over 30 years, lived on terms of intimacy with the present proprietors of the other half of the Pymont Estate, and, it is said was not very intimate with any of his relatives’ [*Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal*, 23 December 1891, p. 2].



Fig. 5.4 Plan of Subdivision of the Harris Estate at Ultimo (1859)
[NSW Land Registry : Indenture Book 62 No. 705]

John Harris of Shanes Park died tragically on the morning of 22 December 1891, when, in the process of crossing the railway line near the Harris Park Station, he was hit by the buffers of the oncoming steam train and thrown high onto the station platform. He was killed instantly. An inquest held later on the same day found that John Harris had died accidentally and that no blame could be assigned to the railway authorities [*Cumberland Mercury*, 26 December 1891, p. 1]. He died unmarried, and intestate, leading to an inevitable contest between his many relatives in Sydney for a share of his considerable estate, the value of which was the subject of much public speculation. In November 1892, the press reported on 'A Jumble of Johns':

The branches of the genealogical tree of "Harris" got considerably entangled yesterday in the Banco Court. The case before the Court arose out of the will of a Dr. John Harris, who left Shane's Park to Mr. John Harris, who died intestate, and the interpretation of the will of Dr. John Harris was the problem. There appeared to be six or seven John Harrises in addition to those mentioned and a learned counsel remarked that they were all named John in view of great expectations. There was something attaching to the name "John." When the Court or counsel mentioned a John Harris a long and involved explanation had in each instance to ensue in order to make it clear what John Harris was alluded to. To this jumble of Johns was added the puzzle as to who was to hold the estate in fee and who in tail, and so on, completed a legal maze in which the lay mind might wander for ever in hopeless bewilderment.
[*Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1892, p. 4]

John Harris's estate, which was valued at £395,610 for probate purposes, was administered by John Thomas Harris of Taree, his trustee. His land and properties at Ultimo were sold at public auctions in 1893 and 1894 in accordance with instructions from The Perpetual Trustee Company Limited. A large collection of sale brochures are held in the State Library of NSW, and the Sydney press contain many advertisements for sales at the Ultimo Estate.

5.7 William Henry Harris [I] (1845-1893) of Livingstone House, Ultimo

William Henry Harris [I] (1845-1893) was born on 6 September 1845 at Ultimo, Sydney, New South Wales, son of John Harris (1802-1846), and his wife Nancy Ann (née McKee). He was baptised at the Anglican Christ Church St Lawrence in George Street, Sydney, on 25 November 1845 [FHL Film No. 993971]. His father, John Harris, who emigrated to Sydney with his young family in 1844, specifically to take charge of his substantial entailed share in the Ultimo Estate, died on 10 September 1846, at the age of 44 years. He was interred at St John's Anglican Church burial ground at Parramatta, evidently with little fanfare. William was raised by his mother Nancy Ann Harris to adulthood, living at Ultimo House until 1874.

William Henry Harris [I] married Susan Mary Newton Clarke at the residence of her brother in Riley Street, Surry Hills, on 24 March 1870 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 April 1870, p. 1]. Susan Mary Clarke was born at Sydney on 6 July 1841, daughter of John Stephenson Clarke (1787-1850), solicitor, and his wife Mary Anne (née Parfit). Her parents were married at the Old Church, St Pancras, London, on 21 May 1828, at which time John Stephenson Clarke was practising as an attorney in Fenchurch Street, London. John Stephenson Clarke died at his residence at Cook's River, Petersham, on 7 September 1850 [*People's Advocate and New South Wales Vindicator*, 14 September 1850, p. 13]. His widow, Mary Anne Clarke, died on 19 August 1883 at her residence in Riley Street, Surry Hills [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 August 1883, p. 1].

Following the distribution (the so-called 'family lottery') of parts of the Ultimo Estate amongst several members of the Harris family, William Henry Harris [I] took possession of around ten allotments, including Block 35, a large suburban block on the east side of Harris Street, and bounded by Quarry Street, Pyrmont Street and Fig Street. In 1873, Harris, newly married, built a new residence 'Livingstone House' on this site. By June 1874, this project was nearing completion, as William Harris wrote a letter to the Mayor of Sydney at this time requesting that they undertake works to form kerb and channelling on the Harris Street frontage. No action ensued, and a month later, W. H. Harris sent a further letter, which reads:

Ultimo 11th July 1874

Sir,

I had the honor a few weeks ago of addressing to you a letter asking the Municipal Council to have the goodness to form the footway in front of the new house on the East side of Harris street Ultimo, which I am about to occupy as my residence and to lay down kerbing and guttering along the said street from Quarry street to Fig street. Having no acknowledgment of the receipt of same, and as this particular locality is very awkward and uneven, and desiring to have a decent approach to my residence, I beg to enquire if anything can be done to remedy the same.

I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Most Obedient Servant,

Wm. H. Harris

[City of Sydney Archives : 26-128-535]

Council thereafter undertook works to fill and level the crossing into Harris's site, but the assistant surveyor declined to form kerb and channelling on the Harris Street frontage, between Fig and Quarry Streets, because 'at the present time the only house along that distance' belonged to William Henry Harris [City of Sydney Archives : 26-128-535]. William Harris evidently named his new abode 'Livingstone House' in commemoration of the life of David Livingstone (1813-1873), the Scottish physician, explorer and pioneer Christian missionary who died in Africa on 1 May 1873. Livingstone's exploits reached mythic status in Britain and he became 'a posthumous national hero' in 1874. His remains were laid to rest in Westminster Abbey on 18 April 1874.

Thereafter Livingstone’s life and career was further recounted in great detail in the Australian press, reaching a climax in July 1874 and around the time when William Harris’s new residence on Block 35 at Ultimo was completed. Despite spending time in searching for an illustration of Livingstone House at Ultimo, to include a detailed search of the extensive photograph and map collection held in the City of Sydney Archives, no image of this prominent mansion-cum-residence has been located to date. As well, there are evidently no references to the construction of this villa in the Sydney press, and local history sources (Pymont and Ultimo) are seemingly silent on the architectural and cultural history of Livingstone House.

A recent search of the BDM Registry in New South Wales reveals that William Henry Harris [I] and his wife Susan Mary Newton (née Clarke) had issue seven children, firstly at Ultimo House and then at Livingstone House, between 1871 and 1882, namely the eldest daughter Ada Mary (1871 : BDM NSW 302/1871), John Stephenson (1872 : BDM NSW 2074/1872, died in infancy), William Henry (1874 : BDM NSW 337/1874), Lilly Jane (1875 : BDM NSW 2684/1875), Blanche Margaret (1877: BDM NSW 3245/1877), Georgina Victoria (1880 : BDM NSW 2926/1880) and Nina Eva Vida (1882 : BDM NSW 888/1882).

Of great interest is the fact that the second son, William Henry Harris [II], was born in 1874, not as recorded in most Beecroft-Cheltenham local history sources as ‘1882’ [See : Beecroft-Cheltenham Group and Helen Barker, *Houses of Hornsby Shire*, Volume 2, 1998, p. 28]. He was the only surviving son in the W. H. Harris family as his elder brother John Stephenson Harris died as a 37 day-old infant on 20 September 1872 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 September 1872, p. 1]. William Henry Harris [II], as the eldest surviving son, came to inherit the largest portion of his father’s considerable estate, which encompassed large parcels of industrial, commercial and residential land at Ultimo and Pymont, agricultural property at Cabramatta, a large share portfolio and other commercial investments in the affairs of Sydney’s business community.

William Henry Harris [I], long known as William Harris, died at Livingstone House in Harris Street, Ultimo, on 13 October 1893, at the age of 48 years [*Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 14 October 1893, p. 1]. He died at an early age and the cause of death has not as yet been established [See BDM NSW : Deaths 1567/1893]. Whilst W. H. Harris’s will and probate papers have not been examined in the course of preparing this biographical portrait, sufficient information can be gleaned from contemporary Sydney press reports to clearly establish how his estate was at first distributed.

WILL OF WILLIAM H. HARRIS.

How the Property is Disposed of.

The will of the late William Henry Harris, of Ultimo, sets forth that the deceased, William Henry Harris, of Livingstone House, gives and bequeaths to his wife, Susan Mary Newton Harris, all the household furniture and effects for her own use and benefit, and the sum of £250 to be paid to her for immediate use after the testator’s death, and subject to the payment of his just debts, funeral and testamentary expenses; also Livingstone House, fronting Harris-street, Ultimo, for life, and that at her death the property to go to the testator's son, William Henry Harris, and his heirs for ever.

The trustees are directed to sell the two farms at Cabramatta, and to pay the proceeds to the testator's son, W. H. Harris, who is to improve the estate at Ultimo; and the testator bequeaths all the residue of his estate, real and personal, to his brother, George Harris, his wife, Susan Mary Newton Harris, and his daughter, Ada Mary, who are to hold the same for the use of the said George Harris and the other trustees, and to act as executors; the three of them to be trustees to collect the income of the estate.

The widow is also to receive £1000 a year in weekly payments for life, free from any control, and for the maintenance of the children until the youngest child shall attain the age of 21 years. Each of the daughters is to receive annually the sum of £104 in weekly payments, and the son, W. H. Harris, the sum of £100.

At the death of the widow the estate is to be divided into parts or shares of equal value, to be distributed amongst the children then living or their lawful issue. The trustees are empowered to compound, compromise, adjust and otherwise settle all claims against the estate, and to lease such portions of the estate as they may think fit for a term not exceeding 50 years. They are to keep all the property in repair and deliver any deed of conveyance for lands sold, before the testator's death. The testator appoints his brother George Harris as executor and Ada Mary Harris as executrix.

In a codicil the testator revokes the sale of one farm of the Cabramatta property, and leaves the same to his son, W. H. Harris, and his heirs and assigns, and in all cases where testator's share or shares shall lapse or fail they shall become the property of the son. The children, before engaging to marry, are to obtain the consent and approval of the trustees. The estate is sworn at £91,445.
[*The Australian Star*, Monday 8 January 1894, p. 4]

THE LATE I MR. W. H. HARRIS.
SYDNEY, MONDAY.

Probate duty was paid today on the will of the late Mr. William Henry Harris, of Livingstone House, Ultimo, who died on October 7 last. The amount of the property was £91,448, and the duty £5048 1s. He directs that £250 be paid to his wife, and that Livingstone House go to her for life. William Henry Harris, his son, subsequently inherits the house in perpetuity. Two farms at Cabramatta are to be sold, the right being reserved to the son to retain one of them. All the residue of the estate is left to the testator's brother, George Harris, his widow, and to his daughter, as trustees and executors to collect the income, and to pay £1000 a year to Susan Mary Newton Harris, the widow, for life. Each daughter is to be paid £104 in weekly payments, and the son also is to receive an annuity. On the death of the widow the estate is to be divided into equal shares among the children.

[*Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, Tuesday 9 January 1894, p. 4]



Fig. 5.5 Site Plan and Location of 'Livingstone House' in Harris Street, corner of Fig Street, in 1903 (Red Circle)

Note : Location of William Henry Street and Ada Lane (named after children of William Henry Harris [1])

'Map of the City of Sydney 1903'

[City of Sydney Archives : A-00880475]

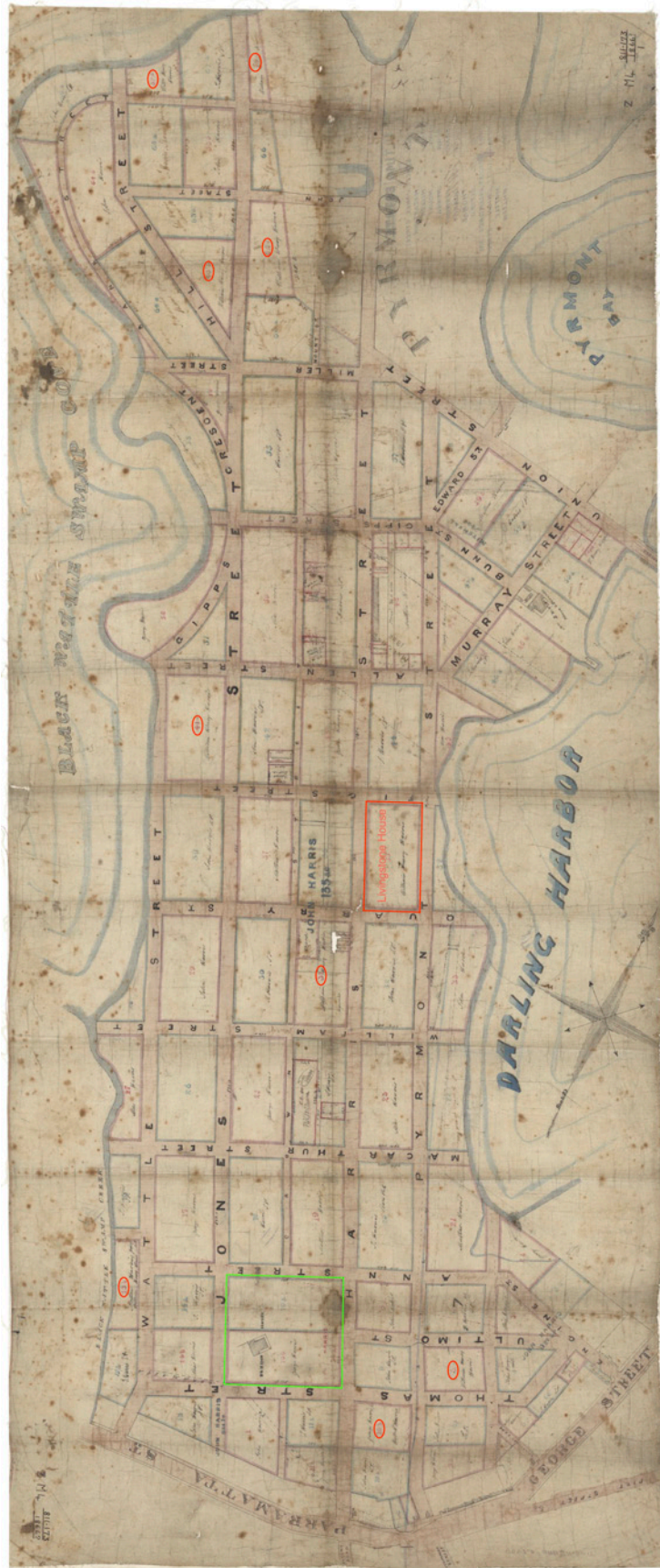


Fig. 5.6 'Plan of Subdivision of the Ultimo Estate and Harris Family Acquisitions
William Henry Harris's Blocks are shown with Red Oval, Ultimo House (green), Livingstone House (red)
[State Library of New South Wales : Z/M4 811.173/1866/1]

5.8 John Brown Bossley (1810-1872) and Edensor Park at Cabramatta

John Brown Bossley (1810-1872) was born at Edensor in Derbyshire, England and baptised on 10 October 1810 [Derbyshire, England, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812]. Bossley left the picturesque village of Edensor near Chatsworth House in Derbyshire to take up an apprenticeship with Thomas Bell, surgeon and chemist, of Norwich. He did not complete his training, choosing instead to emigrate to New South Wales, in company with his sister Mary Ann. They arrived in December 1832 aboard the immigrant clipper John Craig, and thereafter J. B. Bossley set up as a chemist and druggist in Pitt Street, Sydney. Bossley married Louisa Holdsworth at St James' Parish Church, Sydney, on 2 April 1836. They subsequently had issue eight children, six of whom survived to adulthood. Un-named twins died at birth on 20 July 1845. Louisa Holdsworth was born on 1 January 1816, evidently in the County of Berkshire, England, and came to Australia at an unknown date.

By the time of his marriage, Bossley was importing large quantities of patent drugs such as Friar's Balsam and Ching's Lozenges from the Old Country, and was otherwise dispensing his own compounded medicines in Sydney, with his 'Genuine Drugs and Groceries' being listed in prominent advertisements regularly published in the Sydney press [See *Sydney Herald*, 11 August 1836, p. 4]. Bossley also sold grocery items, provisions such as prime York hams, lards, anchovies and preserved meats in tins, as well as surgical items, perfumes, oils and mercurial ointment for farm animals. In evidence given to a hearing regarding the proposed 'Medical Practice Bill' held in June 1838, J. B. Bossley stated that he employed several apprentices, and that:

My business is extensive; about £20,000 a year : about one half consists of the sale of Drugs, the other of Groceries. Until I undertook Mr. Foss's business, I did not do anything in the Grocery business, but taking over his very large stock, it was necessary to work it off. I have a night bell, the assistant sleeps in the shop, and compounds medicine if required.

['Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Committee' published a year later in the *Commercial Journal and Advertiser*, 5 June 1839, p. 3]

Bossley sold his drug and grocery business in Pitt Street to A. R. Huntley and J. A. Edwards in October 1838 [*Commercial Journal and Advertiser*, 17 October 1838, p. 1] to concentrate on new business ventures on the Hunter River at Singleton. New South Wales Land Registry records confirm that Dr. J. B. Bossley obtained several leases and grants of Crown Land outside the Sydney region from as early as 1837, to include land at Singleton and on the Liverpool Plains. Bossley was elected to the District Council at Singleton in May 1844, as well as opening a steaming works at his mill in that township [*Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, 18 May 1844, p. 3].

Whilst NSW Land Registers have not been searched in detail in the course of preparing this current report, a search on Ancestry has identified a Memorial for J. B. Bossley's purchase of 1,773 acres of land at Cabramatta from William Sherwin on 9 and 10 October 1838 (lease and release). Bossley paid a consideration of £2,659/10/0 to Sherwin (in hand) for the property [*Register of Memorials for Land 1825-1842*, Entry for 9 October 1838]. Thereafter, J. B. Bossley named this large run Edensor Park after his birthplace in Derbyshire.

The irregularly shaped parcel of land forming the Edensor Park run was a small portion of the original 12,300 acres of land granted to Samuel Marsden and Others, as trustees for the Female Orphan Institution, on 27 May 1823. The property, later known as the Orphan School Estate, was subdivided in the late 1820s.

The 1,773 acre parcel on the Orphan School Creek and bounded by the Cowpasture Road, was sold to William Sherwin on 4 December 1827 [NSW Land Registry : Application Search Paper No. 6101].

Whilst Bossley family historians hold that John Brown Bossley built Edensor Park on his large holding at Cabramatta in 1838, it is likely that his large single-storey residence was erected in the period 1839-1841, as the first recorded mention in the Sydney press of Edensor Park, near Liverpool, is in December 1841 [*Sydney Herald*, 15 December 1841, p. 3]. A year later, J. B. Bossley's widowed mother, Helen Bossley (née Brown), was held up by three bushrangers at Edensor Park and robbed. The felons were apprehended and the ensuing Court proceedings were reported in the Sydney press in October 1842 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, on 17 October 1842, p. 2]. Bossley's original house evidently survives to the present time, and is clearly illustrated on a Bossley family Ancestry website.

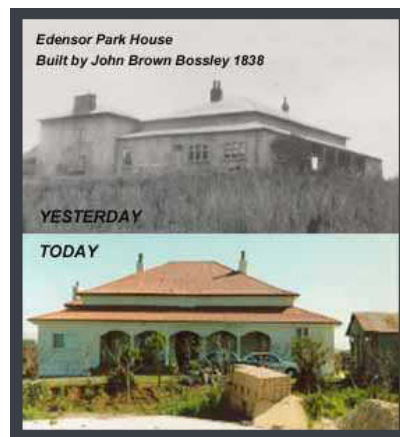


Fig. 5.7 'Edensor Park House'
[Ancestry Family Tree : 'John Brown Bossley']

J. B. Bossley was active in community affairs in the Liverpool district and served as a Justice of the Peace on the Bench of Magistrates at the Liverpool Court for many years. He owned a large brick residence with attics in Castlereagh Street, Liverpool, and used this place as his townhouse [See a full description of this house in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 November 1872, p. 7]. His pastoral property at Cabramatta was often the centre of elite equestrian activities and Bossley's colleague, George T. Rowe, operated a horse stud at Edensor Park for many years. A visit to Edensor Park was described in great detail in an article published in the *Empire* in March 1871.

About the end of the fourth mile we arrived at Edensor Park, the residence of J. B. Bossley, Esq., J.P. The house is about half-a-mile from the gates at the road side, and the approach is, without exaggeration, through one of the finest avenues in the colony. On both sides of the drive are towering trees, principally of box, rising in stately magnificence, and completely shading the wide coach drive and pathway to the house, which is situated on an eminence at the end. That a true Briton lived there, the flagstaff and proudly floating flag indicated; even if the hospitable owner had not greeted me, as he did, with a cordial grasp of the hand and a hearty welcome to Edensor Park. Mr. Bossley has been over thirty years in occupation of this fine property, and he built a family residence which he might well be proud of. After accepting an invitation to a capital luncheon, washed down by Byass's bottled stout, I had time to look about the house and grounds.

The estate is between two and three thousand acres in extent, but there is not much under cultivation, it being principally a pastoral country. Before the house, which is lofty, well ventilated, and surrounded by a wide verandah, there is sloping lawn, just planted with young trees, amongst which I was glad to notice the chestnut, seemingly thriving very well, and immediately at the sides and in front many flower and fruit trees. At the rear I was shewn a vine, which was planted by Mr. Bossley thirty years ago, and is still in full bearing.

The stem, or perhaps I should say trunk, must be about ten inches round, and its branches seem to shade almost the whole of that side of the verandah. A citron tree flourishes by the side of this vine, and also bears splendidly.

What principally attracted my attention was a beautiful sheet of water, about 300 yards from the home. It is a small artificial lake, about two acres in extent. A boat, with novel paddles, is kept in a boat-house at one end of the lake, and boating is often indulged in by the family on moonlight nights. I was then shown the live stock. In a field near the house are kept a few Leicesters and Southdowns, which were looking temptingly suitable for the knife. There was a bay draught filly in the yard, which Mr. T. Bossley is, and I think has cause to be proud of. Though quite young it is of great bone and muscle, and would have stood a good chance of a prize at last exhibition.
[*Empire*, 28 March 1871, p. 3]

Eighteen months later, on 10 September 1872, John Brown Bossley died at Edensor Park at the age of sixty-two years. The following short obituary was published in several Sydney newspapers two days later, on the same day he was interred in the Liverpool Cemetery:

Intelligence was received on Wednesday from Liverpool, of the death of another old colonist, a true specimen of the British gentleman--J. B. Bossley, Esq., J.P. He died at his residence, Edensor Park, near Liverpool, on Tuesday, at the age of sixty-two years. Mr. Bossley was widely respected for his many sterling qualities, and high sense of justice and honour. He was for many years chairman of the bench of magistrates at Liverpool; and his death will be very generally regretted. Besides his own family he leaves a large circle of relatives and friends. His funeral takes place to day.
[*Empire*, 12 September 1872, p. 2]

Tarburton Bossley (1846-1932) and Ida Bossley (1841-1914), J. B. Bossley's executor and executrix respectively, speedily obtained probate of their father's will and by the end of November 1872 they had advertised the Liverpool townhouse for sale by auction, and called tenders for the lease of Edensor Park:

TENDERS are invited for the LEASE of the EDENSOR PARK ESTATE, situated within four miles of Liverpool, three of Smithfield, and nine of Parramatta. The homestead was the residence of the late J. B. Bossley, Esq, J.P., and is a substantial brick building, with verandahs all round, and contains 8 large rooms, servants' rooms, kitchen, dairy, pantry, cellars, &c, and has every requisite for a large family. Convenient to the house are spacious stables and coach-houses, stockyards, milk bails, garden, orchard, &c.

The house is approached by an avenue half a mile long, leading from the Smithfield-road. With the house will be LET either 700 or 1800 acres of Land (as required), well grassed and watered, and divided into paddocks, the whole estate being securely fenced. The water supply by creeks, and a very large dam, has never failed in the driest seasons. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted, Tenders to be sent, before 14th December next, to, and particulars to be learnt from, Messrs. PIGOTT and TRICKETT, 129, King street, Sydney; or to T. BOSSLEY, Edensor Park.
[*Evening News*, 28 November 1872, p. 3]

The affairs of the Bossley family were further complicated when Louisa Bossley (née Holdsworth) died at Edensor Park on 10 December 1873 at the age of 67 years [*Empire*, 12 December 1873, p. 1]. The youngest son, Tarburton Bossley, as executor of his father's estate, then authorised a clearing sale of the household contents of the Edensor Park residence, as well as offering a large number of milking cows, horses, pigs, sheep, a phaeton, timber waggon and other farm equipment for sale by auction on 8 April 1874 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 March 1874, p. 8]. Thereafter, the trustees made several attempts to let the property, seemingly to no avail. In August 1875, another attempt was made to lease the property:

TO LET, for a term, EDENSOR PARK ESTATE, 3 miles from the Cabramatta Station, and 5 miles from Liverpool, with splendid homestead, consisting of 8 large rooms, with servants' rooms attached; with stables, coach-houses, yards, milking bails, and piggeries; with 1100 acres of first-rate grazing land, enclosed with fences and subdivided into paddocks, suitable for a gentleman's residence, or depot for stock; plenty of good water; there is now running on the estate about 400 head horned stock, besides horses and sheep, plainly showing what its capabilities are. For particulars apply to Alfred Barden, Esq., on the premises; or Pigott and Trickett, solicitors, King-street, Sydney.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 August 1875, p. 10]

A search of NSW Land Registry records reveals that William Henry Harris [I] of Ultimo acquired Lot 1 in the Edensor Park Estate by conveyance from Ida Bossley, on 10 September 1882 [NSW Land Registry : Application 6101]. In 1885, Harris applied to bring his land under the Torrens System and a Certificate of Title [Fig. 5.8 (a)] was issued for this 374 acre parcel of land on 14 July 1885 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 752 Folio 4].

William Harris also made an application to bring a further 1,033 acre parcel of land he owned at Edensor Park under the Torrens System in 1889 [NSW Land Registry : Application 7752], and a Certificate of Title [Fig. 5.8 (b)] was issued for this land on 17 March 1890 [NSW Certificate of Title Volume 962 Folio 21].

The aforementioned Land Titles record that following the death of William Henry Harris [I] in 1893, and the long-drawn-out settlement of his complex estate, ‘William Henry Harris of Sydney, Settler’ being William Henry Harris [II], was finally registered as proprietor of the two parcels of land (1,030 acres and 374 acres) at Edensor Park on 16 October 1903.

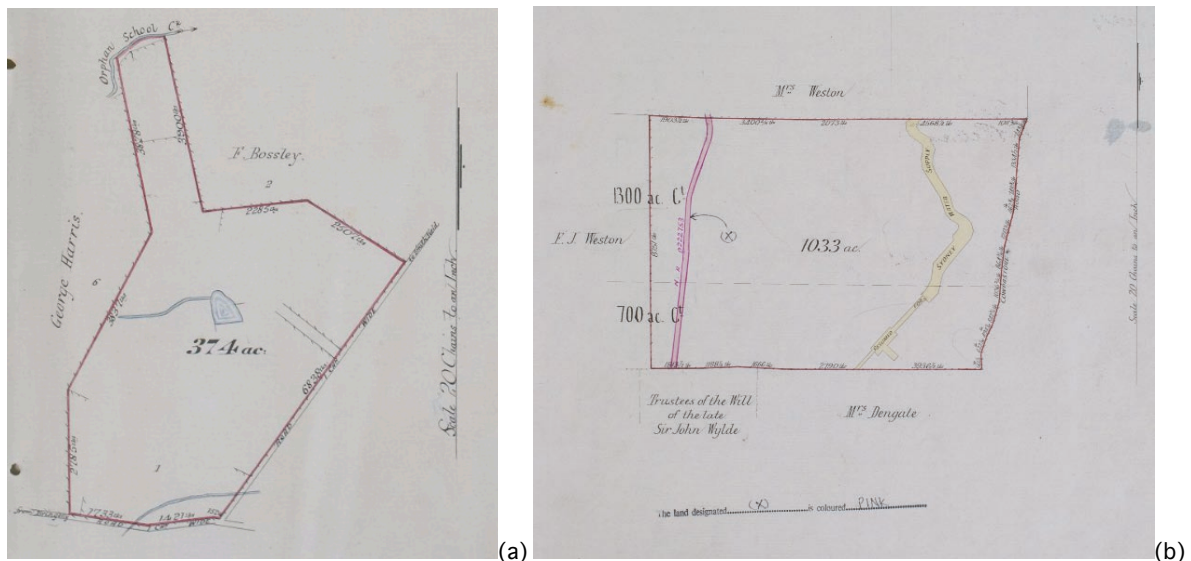


Fig. 5.8 Land at Edensor Park Registered in the name of William Henry Harris [II] in October 1903 [NSW Land Registry]

5.9 William Henry Harris [II] (1874-1953) of Edensor Park and Edensor



William Henry Harris (1874-1953)

William Henry Harris [II] (aka Junior), a key player in the foundation of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, was born at Livingstone House, in Harris Street, Ultimo, on 10 January 1874, second son and third child born to William Henry and Susan Mary Harris [BDM NSW Births : 337/1874]. His arrival was otherwise announced in the Sydney press at the end of the month, and again in late February 1874 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 1874, p. 1, and 21 February 1874, p. 6]. He grew up in some comfort in the large Harris family household at Ultimo, as his parents were well-off and employed several household staff.

Whilst it is not known where he was first educated, his elder brother Matthew Harris was educated at the short-lived Normal Institution [Fig. 5.9] and then at the Sydney Grammar School before completing a B.A. at Sydney University in 1863 [See Martha Rutledge, 'Harris, Sir Matthew (1841-1917)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, MUP, Volume 9, 1963, p. 212]. It is otherwise recorded that at least two of his younger sisters were educated at home. As an aside, the youngest member of the family, Nina Harris, went on to gain a great reputation as a racing motorist in Australia in the 1920s [See K. A. Johnson, 'Nina Eva Vida Jones (1882-1966)' in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 9, 1963, pp. 518-519].



Fig. 5.9 'Normal Institution, Hyde Park, Sydney' (1839)
[National Gallery of Australia : Accession No. 89.65]

William Henry Harris [I], who was known in the Sydney press as 'William Harris', had acquired the Cabramatta estate of J. B. Bossley in the early 1880s. As a young man, W. H. Harris [II] evidently went to work on his father's two large farms, Edensor Park and Abbotsborough at Cabramatta, where he developed cattle breeding, crop farming, dairying and property management skills. In the early 20th century, William Henry Harris [II] gave his occupation as 'farmer' but he was more than that, for with his sister Ada Mary, he managed a large real estate portfolio at Ultimo on behalf of his father's estate. As well, Harris, like his father before him, cultivated an interest in equestrian bloodstock and the affairs of the Sydney Hunt Club. Following the death of his father in October 1893, and the eventual settlement of his business affairs and probate of his will, ownership of one of these properties, Edensor Park, was finally transferred to William Henry Harris [II] in 1903 (See Section 5.8 above).

W. H. Harris attained his majority in January 1895 and later that year he married Ada Margaret Rilett (1875-1930), daughter of William Rilett (1843-1922), a permanent way railway employee, and his wife Eliza (née McCauley) [BDM NSW Marriages 5434/1895]. The Rilett family came from Lithgow and Ada Margaret Rilett was born at Bathurst late in 1875 [BDM NSW Births 7591/1875]. Eliza Rilett died on 6 January 1913 and was awarded a neat and informative obituary in the *Lithgow Mercury* four days later. Her husband William, who had worked at Lithgow, Nevertire and Lawson as a railwayman, before moving to Sydney, died more than nine years later, on 5 September 1922. Currently there is seemingly no clear reference to William Henry Harris's first marriage in the Sydney press and his wife has not been otherwise identified in local history sources consulted in the course of preparing this new cultural history of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited.

5.9.1 Life at Edensor Park

Following their marriage, William and Ada Harris went to live in the large brick homestead at Edensor Park [Fig. 5.7], the Harris family's rural seat, and from 1895 until 1906, W. H. Harris, with enormous wealth and capital assets at his disposal, led the charmed life of a young country gentleman. In 1899, W. H. Harris's dairy at Edensor Park was considered to be 'without doubt the best equipped dairy in the Liverpool district'. Having made this claim, the *Cumberland Argus* correspondent went on to explain that:

The fittings, and labour-saving devices are both numerous and comprehensive in character, and the whole plant is designed for the treatment of large quantities of milk. The cooling-room and engine-room, though both under the same roof, are separated by a brick wall. Both floors are of concrete, sloping to one corner, where there is an outlet for the escape of the water, which is used to flush them with. In the engine room are the separator, and the pasteuriser, which is death to tuberculosis germs. As Mr. Harris now sends all his milk to Sydney the pasteuriser and separator are seldom used, as the milk companies pasteurise the milk themselves. The separator revolves at the rate of 5,600 revolutions per minute, and is capable of treating 130 gallons of milk an hour. The motive power is derived from an upright boiler and Nagle engine (Parker and Watson). Besides these improvements, there are steam jets for scalding cans, buckets and dishes, and also boiling water vats. The milking-shed contains 22 bails of improved fastenings, and the floor is of concrete, sloping outwards. The Park comprises 750 acres, 20 of which are planted with white turnips, barley, oats, wheat and corn, all of which are used as cow-feed. The number of cows at present milking is 56, though last year it exceeded 100. The daily out-put of milk is 80 gallons. Mr. Harris breeds from three Jersey bulls, and has about 80 young heifers, besides dry cows, on another run of 1250 acres. [Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, 2 August 1899, p. 1]

From as early as 1897, W. H. Harris facilitated private shooting parties at Edensor Park, hunting 'gill-birds' on one occasion, and 'hares' on another [See *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 28 August 1897, p. 10]. Harris and his wife Ada also regularly hosted meets of the Sydney Hunt Club at Edensor Park, with one particular visit to Cabramatta in July 1905 being described as follows:

Hunt at Liverpool.

At the invitation of Mr. W. Harris, the genial squire of Edensor Park, the Sydney Hunt Club had a run out in this district on Saturday. About 30 members of the club attended, under the presidency of Mr. Edward Terry. A large number of people watched the hunt from neighbouring hills, and others followed in vehicles. The hunt started at noon, the course being laid from the hay-shed in Edensor Park on to the road, and thence through Mr. Harris's Abbotsborough estate, back to the starting point, a distance of about 9 1/2 miles. The course took in 32 fences, and numerous other obstacles, and some very hilly country.

The run was negotiated in good time, and without accident, though there were several 'busters', through the riders of certain horses taking more eagerly to—and over—the fences than their mounts. The trail was laid by Mrs. Since on Edgar, and Mr. J. Callinan on Willie. On their return the guests, to the number of about 90, were entertained at an excellent dinner by Mr. Harris and his good lady.

[*Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 19 July 1905, p. 4]

Just over a month later, on 26 August 1905, a further meet of the Hunt Club was described and illustrated in the *Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser* as follows:



Fig. 5.10 'THE SYDNEY HUNT CLUB'

Saturday's Meet at Edensor Park, the residence of W. H. Harris.

Top : 'A SNAPSHOT' Bottom : 'A CHECK'

[*Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 30 August 1905, p. 539]

THE MEET.

THE Sydney Hunt Club hounds met on Saturday at Edensor Park, near Liverpool, the residence of Mr. W. H. Harris, who entertained the members for the day. Trucking their horses by the 9.30 a.m. train from Redfern, members arrived at Edensor Park, about two hours later, and found that their host and hostess had made excellent arrangements for their entertainment. Mr. Harris' properly lies about five miles out of Liverpool, and is ideal hunting country, which can provide devotees of the sport with as good a long cross-country gallop as the keenest rider could desire. From the house one looks as far as the eye can reach over broad and gently undulating fields, fenced off by the familiar three-railer which hunting men like so well.

The prospects of the gallop filled horses as well as riders with enthusiasm, and the highest anticipations were fully realised. The hounds quickly picked up the scent, and streaming across the first field were closely followed by about 20 or 30 horsemen, and the many spectators who had gathered for the purpose were afforded the pleasing sight of the field flying the first two fences in a bunch, with not a horse rapping.

The house was soon left in the distance, and after negotiating a small ditch about five good jumpable three-railers were crossed in rapid succession. The pace was merry, and as the day was a warm one, there was considerable mopping of brows at the first check. With appetites whetted, the second part of the run started after a 15 minutes' breathing space, and, crossing a road double, hounds raced round some hilly slopes which afforded fine jumping fences, and gave the field a good six mile run before a second check was called near a large lake, which looked so temptingly cool to one horse that he plunged straight into it, and the field was treated to the, to them, highly amusing sight of one of their number deserting his horse in the lake and striking out bravely for the shore, which he reached safely, but very wet, only to spend 15 minutes in coaxing his horse to come out also.

The run over the same excellent class of country occupied about 30 minutes, and brought the day's sport to an end. Having partaken heartily of the refreshments afforded by the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Harris, members rode back to Liverpool, each man satisfied that he had that day ridden the finest hunter in the State.

[*Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 30 August 1905, p. 539]

A search of Sydney newspapers reveals that William and Ada Harris regularly attended pastoral and agricultural shows in New South Wales, and both were active in the affairs of the Liverpool Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Society. W. H. Harris served as vice-president of this organisation for some years in the early 1900s. In March 1906, two of their famous point-to-point horses, Willie and Edgar, won prizes at the Tenterfield Show [*Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 17 March 1906, p. 4]. The *Evening News* in Sydney had earlier commented in 1905 that:

One of the most successful equine exhibitors at shows is Mr. W. H. Harris of Edensor Park, Cabramatta, who appropriated no fewer than thirty-seven first prizes and a champion last year and twenty-nine first prizes since the beginning of the year. The latter includes nine at Gosford, eight at Penrith, five at Wollongong, and four at Castle Hill. His most pronounced winner was Shinfane, who succeeded on every occasion he was exhibited as a weight-carrying hack.

[*Evening News*, 15 March 1905, p. 2]

Harris's favourite cow, 'Maggie', also took out many prizes in the Alderney cattle class at District Shows. Harris bred both stud Jersey and Guernsey (Alderney) cattle on the lush Edensor Park terrain and he staged regular auctions of his prime dairy cattle at his Cabramatta property from around 1900. His father William Harris, before him, also sold cattle he had bred at Edensor Park in the late 1880s and early 1890s, with one clearance sale of 300 head of dairy cattle in May 1890 attracting the attention of buyers far-and-wide [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 May 1890, p. 17].

Having finally settled most of his father's complex estate, and gained legal title to his considerable legacy at Cabramatta, William Henry Harris decided to leave Edensor Park in 1906 and move back to suburban Sydney, forsaking the increasingly industrialised environs of Livingstone House at Ultimo for the Rattray property at rural Beecroft (Cheltenham). The valuable pastoral property Edensor Park at Cabramatta was sold to Mrs. Mary E. McLennan of 'Killimicat', a grazing property at Brungle, near Gundagai, with the handover of the 800-acre property taking place on 1 February 1907 [*Gundagai Independent*, 19 January 1907]. The sale was handled by a third party, Charles Ward Pye, woolbroker, of Sydney, who acquired the property on her behalf on 2 January 1907 [NSW Land Registry : Certificate of Title Volume 752 Folio 4]. In late January 1907 William Henry Harris sold a number of his show horses ('high-class hunters, buggy horses and hackneys') at a special auction sale held at Inglis & Son's Bazaar at Camperdown [*Daily Telegraph*, 15 December 1906, p. 6].

5.9.2 Life at Edensor in Cheltenham

Bill and Ada Harris, as they were referred to by their friends and family, moved to Beecroft in early 1907 to occupy the already well-established Rattray villa on Beecroft Road (Parade). They named the place 'Edensor' after their family property at Cabramatta. Harris was attracted to this site as the 5 acre-odd rural lot provided plenty of paddock space to accommodate his horses and house cattle. After taking possession in early 1907, the large site of Edensor was effectively divided into two near equal sections, with the southern part facing Beecroft Road and Lyne Road containing the large household lot. This division is easily discerned in the aerial photograph of the site taken in 1943 [Fig. 4.14]. Harris maintained the northern part as open farm paddocks fenced off from the 2.5 acre odd household lot, with a wide enclosed driveway crossing through this grassland and leading from the principal entrance on The Crescent to Edensor.

At an unknown date, William Harris built timber stables close to the Beecroft Road frontage [Fig. 4.14], complete with hay-loft, clerestory roof lighting, large sliding doors, modern brick flooring and groom's quarters. In the first years of occupation, he also created his own private bowling green close to the Lyne Road frontage. For many years Harris employed a resident groomsman to care for his horses, ponies and carriages. Harris and his first wife also employed a married couple to effectively run their household, evidently occupying a small cottage-cum-gatehouse located on The Crescent frontage and close to the northern driveway entrance to Edensor [Fig. 4.14]. In 1914, Ada Harris advertised as follows:

WANTED, A MARRIED COUPLE for two adults, cottage home, very quiet, sixteen miles from Sydney, northern suburb, near station, all city conveniences. Wife, general, all duties. Husband, milk, groom, poultry, veg. garden, lawns, use scythe, general useful. Wage 35/- . Competent only need apply. By letter. Open one week.
Mrs. W. H. HARRIS, Edensor, Cheltenham.
[*Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 28 February 1914, p. 7]

It is now clear that Bill and Ada Harris engaged their friend, local architect William Mark Nixon, to undertake major renovations and additions to the late Victorian style Rattray villa, as well as completely refresh the layout and plantings in the surrounding garden in 1914-1915. This work was undertaken by A. L. Doust, an accomplished landscape contractor and builder, under the direction of W. M. Nixon, architect. Doust had earlier been engaged by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited to layout the grounds and build a small clubhouse on land given to the CRC by W. H. Harris.

On 16 July 1921, Ada Margaret Harris's younger sister, Ethel Matthews (née Rilett) died at the Nepean Cottage Hospital, Penrith, at the age of 37 years. At this time she was living with her husband at 'Avondale' in Ridge Street, Lawson [*Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1921, p. 4]. She was interred in the Rookwood Cemetery. Ethel Rilett was born at Lithgow in 1884 [BDM NSW 21210/1884] and married William Henry Matthews at Penrith in 1901 [BDM NSW Marriages 4706/1901]. They had issue several children including Dorothy (1904), Florence May (1911) and Eric (1916). In 1923, Ada and William Harris, who had no children of their own, took Florence May and Eric Matthews into their home at Cheltenham and became their legal guardians by deed of adoption [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 March 1933, p. 10].

William Henry Harris [II] and his eldest sister Ada Mary Harris (1871-1954) were responsible for the administration of their father's exceedingly valuable estate, which included a complex portfolio of land and buildings at Ultimo and Pyrmont, and a number of long-term leasehold property arrangements with major industrial companies such as the Colonial Sugar Refinery Limited. Many of the legal documents relating to these dealings are now held in the M.A.A.S.

Bill Harris and his wife Ada led the life of country gentry at Cheltenham. They both pursued their joint interest in equestrian activities in the district as well as participating in many community and horticultural organisations. They also staged many of their own social events at Edensor. W. H. Harris, it seems, was a generous supporter of most of these community groups and often sponsored their many activities. Their genteel life together at Edensor ended when Ada Margaret Harris died at a private hospital in Sydney, on 24 February 1930 at the age of fifty-four years, and was interred in the monumental Harris family vault [Fig. 5.11] in the Rookwood Cemetery [*Daily Pictorial*, 25 February 1930, p. 7]. She died without issue. Her personal estate was valued at £980 for probate purposes.



Fig. 5.11 The Harris Family Vault in the Rookwood Cemetery (Grave No. 1722)
William Henry Harris (1893), Susan Mary Newton Harris (1921), John Stephenson Harris (1872)
Ada Margaret Harris (1930), Ada Mary Harris (1954)
[Ancestry : Find-A-Grave]

Less than three years later, William Henry Harris [II] married Alice May Carter (née Gardiner), a fifty-one year-old divorcee [BDM NSW, Marriages 1932/17271]. Alice May Gardiner (1881-1936) was born in Sydney on 31 May 1881, daughter of William Gardiner and his wife Catherine (née Monroe). She was baptised on 28 June 1881 [Family History Library Film No. 992733]. Alice M. Gardiner first married William Thomas Carter at Albury, in accordance with Presbyterian rites, on 3 December 1901. They had issue one son, William George Carter, born at Albury in 1902 [BDM NSW, Births 1902/29144]. In February 1931, her petition for divorce on the ground of constructive desertion, was granted in the Sydney Courts [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 1931, p. 5]. A decree *absolute* was pronounced by the Judge in Divorce on 29 September 1931 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 1931, p. 7].

W. H. Harris's introduction of Alice May Carter to the Edensor household in early September 1932 had terrible and unexpected repercussions, for Harris's adopted niece, Florence May Matthews, the 'girl with a limp', found it difficult to accept Alice May Carter in the place of her late aunt Ada Margaret Harris. Florence May and her brother Eric had lived with Ada and Bill Harris at Edensor since 1923 as their legally adopted children, they were educated locally, well provided for, and lived in some comfort with their caring aunt and uncle.

On 21 September 1932, and prior to the marriage of W. H. Harris and Alice May Carter, May Matthews disappeared without trace, on her way to her dressmaking class in Sydney. At first her failure to return home that evening created consternation in the Edensor household, but attracted little public interest. It was assumed that she had run away from home.

But May's disappearance soon involved the Sydney press, there was much speculation concerning her fate, William Henry Harris put up a £50 reward for information leading to her whereabouts and by mid-October her case dominated the front pages of the Sydney popular press. One such article, under the headline 'Smiled Good-bye—And Vanished' was published in the Sydney *Truth* on 16 October, to not only set out all of the background to the case, but also include photographs of May Matthews, Edensor, and her 'luxurious boudoir' at Cheltenham [Fig. 5.12]. She left home without a lot of money, her bank books, jewellery or her clothing (much of which was self-made), to effectively dispel the rumour that she had intended to seek a new life elsewhere.

A Commonwealth-wide search for her proved fruitless, and her disappearance went unexplained for months, until, on 28 February 1933, her badly decomposed body was discovered in a bushland marsh, otherwise a 'treacherous quagmire' off the Old Powder Works Road, at North Narrabeen. The Government Analyst later found no traces of poison in her skeletal remains or the surrounding ground. Attempts to connect her death with that of Francis Howard, a 76 year-old man, whose body was found dead in his bed on 14 October 1932 'within a stone's throw of the place where the girl's skeleton was discovered' went unanswered. It was otherwise noted that 'the girl's body was lying in a position of composure, just as if she had passed away in her sleep' [*Truth*, 26 March 1933, p. 16].

CHAMPION'S
PURE
MALT
VINEGAR

A "Truth" in Every Home: Nett Sales Largest in Southern Hemisphere

Truth

FORECAST—Generally fine; but showers developing later.

Young Girl Victim Of Ghastly Harbor Tragedy
(See Page 13).

No. 2232. SYDNEY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1932. (22 PAGES.) Telephone: All Departments, P.L. 304.

SMILED GOOD-BYE—AND VANISHED

GIRL'S AMAZING Disappearance FROM LUXURY HOME

Baffling Mystery Confronts Police Investigators

[FIFTY POUNDS REWARD—!]

At 9.7 a.m., on September 21, three weeks and four days ago—Florence May Matthews, favored ward of a wealthy Cheltenham resident, her uncle, boarded a city-bound electric train—and vanished utterly, in broad daylight.

The carriages which screeched to a stop in the little rural station within sight of the girl's home carried her away again into oblivion with a swiftness that was awful in its finality.

Florence Matthews, this 21-year-old apparently care-free girl, walked out of a luxurious boudoir, said "goodbye" as lightly as she had said it a thousand times before—and not a whisper has been heard of her since—not so much as a glove or a handkerchief was left behind to mark the way of her vanishing.

APPEARENTLY WITHOUT a case in the world, Florence May Matthews (left) disappeared mysteriously three weeks ago from her home at Cheltenham, and has not been heard of since. A reward of £50 has been offered by her uncle for information. The missing girl's bedroom (above) reveals the fragrance of luxury. Her painted home is on the left. Through it is the room she was last in on her disappearance. Carl Scott, of Cheltenham, has boarded a train at the station above, below and was carried along the rails that led to oblivion.

Identified believed to be perfectly "heart-whole." She looked slightly—a legacy from a childhood attack of meningitis—but she was able to camouflage this by wearing high-heeled shoes.

"Her true name is an important matter of identifying her," commented her uncle "because she made a habit of telling me when she walked. Anyone looking for it could find it."

Fig. 5.12 'Smiled Good-Bye and Vanished'
Press Article and Photographs of May Matthews, Edensor and Her Bedroom
[*Truth*, Sunday 16 October 1932, p. 1]

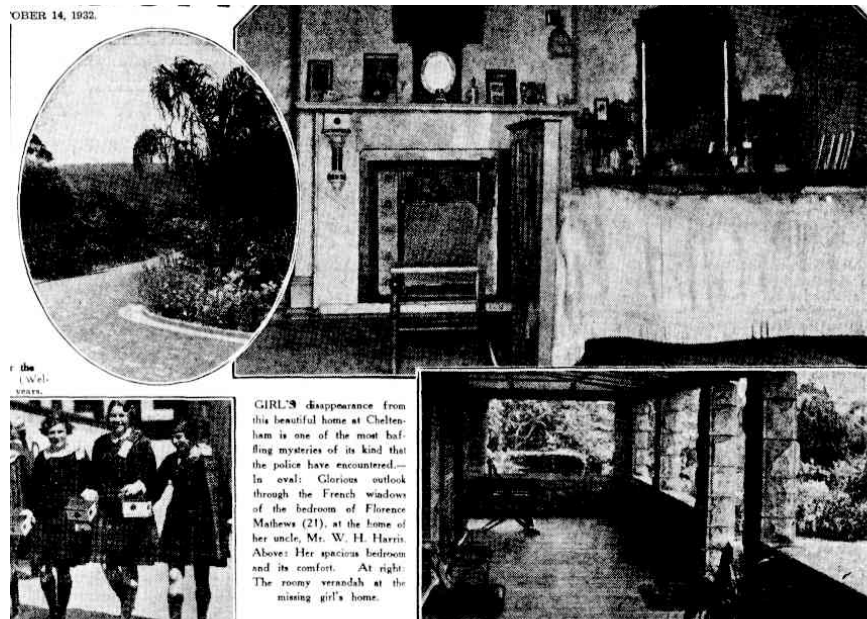


Fig. 5.13 Florence Matthews' Bedroom, the Edensor Garden, and Verandah
[*The Sun*, 14 October 1932, n.p.]

An exceedingly detailed article published in the Sydney *Sun* on the day after the discovery of May Matthew's remains, advanced a number of theories regarding her death including by snake bite. Her mysterious death was the subject of a Coronial Inquest, held on 27-28 March 1933. Of interest is the testimony both of her doctor and her father, William Henry Matthews, who deposed, respectively, as follows:

Dr. Edwin John Davis said he had treated Miss Matthews many times. She was inclined to be quiet, sometimes morose, hard to extract confidence from, and not easy to converse with. She was slightly sub-normal. It was possible her condition might produce slight melancholia.

William Henry Matthews, living at 3 Berwick-street, Guildford, said that deceased was his daughter. She was born at Glebe in 1911. She had been adopted by Mrs. Henry Harris. He last saw deceased about three years ago. When his daughter was a baby she suffered from meningitis.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 March 1933, p. 10]

The City Coroner, H. H. Farrington returned an open verdict, which was reported next day:

MAY MATTHEWS.

Open Verdict Returned.

Evidence given at the Coroner's Court did not explain conclusively how Florence May Matthews, aged 21 years, met her death in an unfrequented swamp at North Narrabeen shortly after she disappeared from her home in Beecroft-road, Cheltenham, on September 21 last year, and yesterday the City Coroner (Mr. Farrington) returned an open verdict. Sergeant Lilian Armfield said that apparently no one wished Miss Matthews harm. Miss Kent, housekeeper at the home of Mr. William Harris, whose former wife had adopted the girl, informed witness that Miss Matthews had become morose since she was told that Mr. Harris intended to marry again, and that she would have to leave her room in the front of the house. Mr. Farrington said that the police were to be congratulated on the assiduity of their investigations, but there was no direct evidence to show what had caused the girls' death.

[*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 March 1933, p. 13]

However, for Bill and Alice Harris, their married life together at Edensor proved to be short-lived, for Alice May Harris died at a private hospital in Sydney, on 9 August 1936 and was privately interred in the Presbyterian Section of the Rookwood Cemetery the following day [*Daily Telegraph*, 11 August 1936, p. 6].

Seemingly undaunted by personal tragedies, William Henry (Bill) Harris married for a third time in 1938, his bride being Mary Eileen 'Molly' Cooney (1909-1990), a spinster shop-assistant, who lived with her parents, Daniel Joseph Cooney, a labourer, and his wife Julia (née Ryan) at 19A George Street, Burwood [*Electoral Rolls*, Subdivision of Burwood, 1932, p. 19]. Daniel and Julia Cooney were married in 1901 [BDM NSW Marriages 4840/1901].

A brief genealogical search reveals that Mary Eileen Cooney is descended from Irish immigrant stock. Her father, Daniel Joseph Cooney was born at Gulgong, New South Wales, in 1872, son of Denis Cooney (1844-1906), road contractor, and his wife Mary J. McMahon [BDM NSW Births 1872/13545]. Denis Cooney, an orphan, came to Australia as a 13 year-old assisted immigrant aboard the 765 ton *Escort*, sailing from Southampton on 27 November 1857 and arriving at the Sydney Docks on 11 March 1858. He travelled with his sister Catherine, there being a total of 289 emigrants on board. The passenger manifest records that both their parents, Patrick and Margaret Cooney of Killaloe village in County Clare were deceased, and that Denis and Catherine were destined to join their sister Margaret Cooney at her residence in Macquarie Street, Sydney. Denis was listed as being illiterate and his vocation was 'farm labourer'. He evidently settled at Gulgong in the early 1860s and set up as a road contractor. In later years he also operated a small farm in the district. Denis Cooney and Mary McMahon were married at Murrurundi in the Upper Hunter region in 1869 [BDM NSW Marriages 1869/2919] and thereafter raised a large family of three sons and four daughters between 1870 and 1888. Denis Cooney, 'one of the oldest and most respected residents in the district', died at Salvation Hill near Gulgong on 2 September 1906 [*Mudgee Guardian and North Western Representative*, 6 September 1906, p. 11].

Bill and Molly Harris had issue two daughters, Julie Harris Harris, born at Charlemount Private Hospital, Potts Point, on 10 November 1942 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 November 1942, p. 16] and Susan Mary Harris, born at the Poplars Private Hospital, Epping, on 6 November 1944 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 1944, p. 24]. Notably, W. H. Harris was 68 years-old when his first daughter was born. Susan died in infancy in July 1945 and was interred in the Old Catholic Cemetery, Section 18, in the Rookwood General Cemetery, perhaps belying the Irish Catholic background of her mother. The curiously named elder daughter, Julie Harris Harris, lived most of her life as a spinster at Edensor, with her parents and for some time with cousin Eric Matthews, then with her mother after the death of her father in May 1953.

William Henry Harris [II] died in hospital on 27 May 1953, at the age of 79 years [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 May 1953, p. 16]. He was interred, privately, in the Rookwood Cemetery next day [Presbyterian Section 5G, Row 9]. Apart from two death notices published in the mainstream Sydney press [Fig. 5.14], his passing seemingly went un-noticed, and no obituary recording his many contributions to the Cheltenham and Beecroft communities, and to the Cheltenham Recreation Club, can be found to date. Nevertheless, his biography, as published on the BCHG website, can with a little fine tuning, continue to accurately portray the life and career on one William Henry Harris (1874-1953) to great effect.

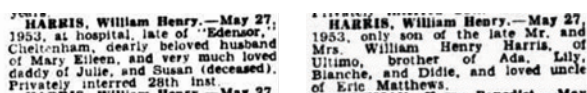


Fig. 5.14 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 May 1953]

William Henry Harris appointed his wife, Mary Eileen Harris and the Perpetual Trustee Company Limited as his executrix and executor in his last will and testament. Probate was granted on 4 August 1953 but the beneficiaries of his estate have not yet been established. The will and other probate papers have not been examined because of Covid-19 restrictions, but are otherwise held in the New South Wales Archives [NRS-13660-33-11090-Series 4_406659 (William Henry Harris)]. Historians with the BCHG record that part of his Edensor property was subdivided by Molly Harris [Fig. 4.17] and four residential lots were sold to assist with the payment of W. H. Harris's death duties in NSW.

Mary Eileen 'Molly' Harris lived at Edensor from 1938 until her death in 1990. She became patron of both the womens' croquet and bowls sections of the Cheltenham Recreation Club and was herself a keen bowler. She took a great interest in the gardens at Edensor, to carry on a tradition first established by William and Ada Margaret Harris in the early 20th century. Historians at the BCHG record that Molly Harris frequently opened the house and gardens at Edensor for charity days, including events in support of the Cheltenham Kindergarten ['Gardens in Flower for Fetes' in *Sunday Herald*, 23 September 1951, p. 19].

She died on 12 December 1990 at the age of 81 years, and was interred in the Presbyterian Section of the Rookwood General Cemetery [Zone A, Section 05G, Grave 613]. Julie Harris Harris (1942-2003) stayed at Edensor for another five years, to finally sell the property in 1995. She died on 20 December 2003 and was interred in the Presbyterian Section of the Rookwood General Cemetery, next to her mother, in one of the Harris Family plots [Zone A, Section 05G, Grave 614].



Fig. 5.15 'Sunday Afternoon Tea at the Cheltenham Recreation Club (1939)'
Eileen Mary 'Molly' and William Henry 'Bill' Harris are pictured standing on right of the table
[Cheltenham Recreation Club Archives]

William Henry Harris's great public legacy rests in the existing sporting grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, and in the fabric of the existing Clubhouse which was appropriately named in his memory in 1957. He was a generous benefactor, but did not seek the public limelight, as did two of his Ultimo uncles, John (1838-1911) and Matthew (1841-1917). Both John Harris and Matthew Harris inherited a large portfolio of land in the Ultimo Estate around 1859 and used their wealth to great advantage. John Harris lived at Bulwarra House, Ultimo, entered politics and rose through the ranks of the Sydney City Council and was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1877. He was elected mayor of Sydney on several occasions and took a leading role in community affairs. His younger brother Matthew lived at Warrane in Ultimo and also pursued a career in Sydney politics. He was knighted for services to the Sydney community in 1899. Both men are the subject of detailed biographies in Volumes 4 and 9 respectively of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

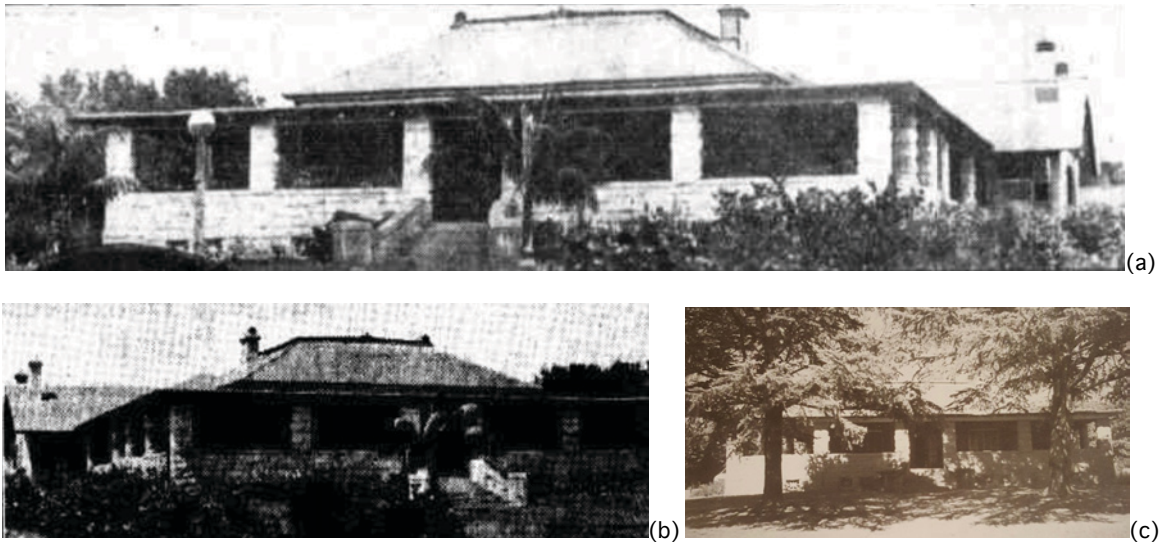


Fig. 5.16 Edensor in 1932 (a) and (b) and 1990 (c)
 [Truth, Sunday 16 October 1932, p. 1 (a) : Sun, 14 October 1932, p. 9 (b) : Helen Barker, (1998), p. 27 (c)]

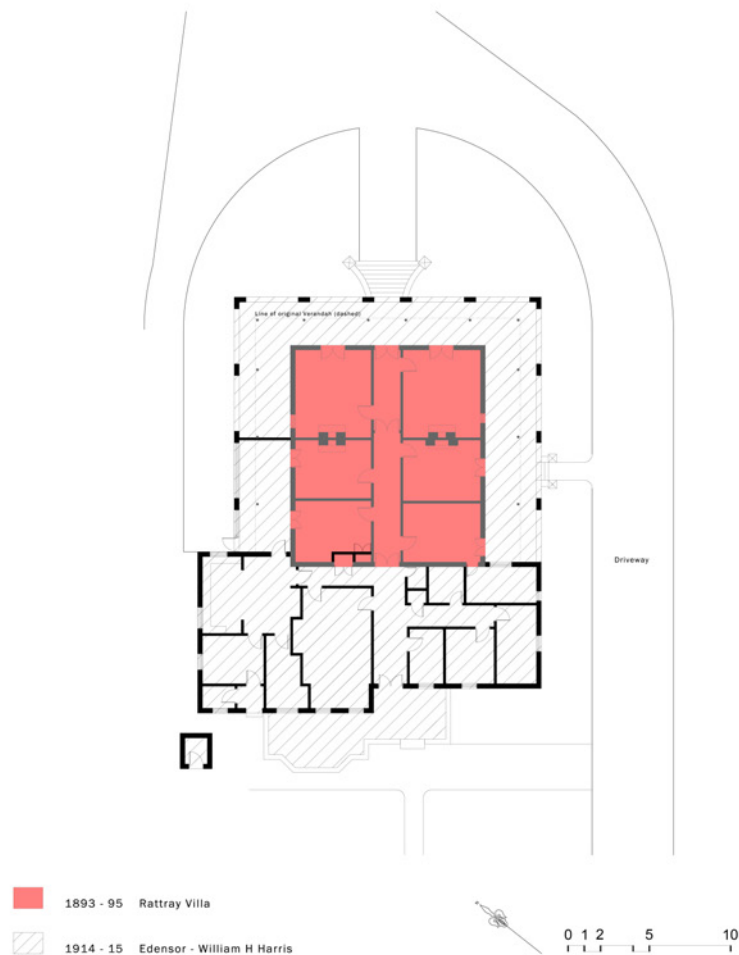


Fig. 5.17 Schematic Floor Plan : Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham 2119
 S. N. Cremona (del), Edensor Floor Plan : Reinterpretation
 Showing Alterations and Additions in 1914-1915 (2020)
 [This schematic is based on a plan in Helen Barker, *Houses of Hornsby Shire*, Volume II, (1991), p. 29]