
Australian Forest History Society

Newsletter No. 66
September 2015

"... to advance historical understanding of human interactions with Australian forest
and woodland environments."



The heritage-listed 1900 *Pinus radiata*
plantation at Kuitpo, South Australia

Photo Rob Robinson.

See articles on pp4-5.

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Australian Forest History Society (AFHS) Inc is A\$25 a year for Australian and New Zealand addressees or A\$15 a year for students. For other overseas addressees, it is A\$30.

These prices do not include GST as the AFHS is not registered for paying or claiming GST. **Membership expires on 30th June each year.**

Payment can be made by cheque or money order, or through Electronic Funds Transfer.

Cheques or Money Orders should be made payable to the AFHS and sent to:

Australian Forest History Society Inc.
PO Box 5128
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Electronic Funds Transfer can be paid into:

Commonwealth Savings Bank
BSB 062 911
Account No: 1010 1753

Please also return this form if you pay by EFT or send an e-mail to the Treasurer -

Fintan.OLaighin@agriculture.gov.au.

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will be published in **December 2015**, and the issue after that is planned for **April 2016**.

Input is always welcome.

Contributions can be sent to
Fintan.OLaighin@agriculture.gov.au.

2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

By Fintán Ó Laighin

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Australian Forest History Society Inc will be held in Mount Gambier, SA, on **Friday 23rd October 2015**, starting at 3:30PM. As normally happens in conference years, the AGM is being held in conjunction with our conference.

The agenda for the meeting was recently provided to members (copy below), along with proxy voting and committee nomination forms. If you didn't receive your copies and would like them, please contact me at Fintan.OLaighin@agriculture.gov.au.

As our conference starts on Wednesday 21st October, I will be leaving Canberra perhaps on the weekend beforehand. Therefore, please ensure that any forms are sent to the society's postal address in time to arrive by **Friday 16th October**.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 19th November 2014
3. Matters arising from the Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda
4. President's report
5. Audited financial report for the year to 30th June 2015 (Treasurer)
6. Set amount of annual subscription
7. Election of Office Bearers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary) and up to five Committee Members
8. Nomination of Public Officer (who may be an Office Bearer or Committee Member)
9. Appointment of Auditor for 2015-16 (who may not be an Office Bearer or Committee Member)
10. Any other business for which notice has been given:
 - (a) Newsletter production 2015-16
 - (b) Society website
 - (c) 2015 conference

Notes

1. The present committee consists of President (Sue Feary); Vice-President (Jane Lennon); Secretary (Kevin Frawley); Treasurer (Fintán Ó Laighin); Committee (Peter Evans, Leith Davis, Rob Robinson). Nominations for committee positions are called for. For members unable to attend the AGM, a nomination form is available from Fintan.OLaighin@agriculture.gov.au.
2. The Public Officer is Juliana Lazzari.
3. Members unable to attend the AGM may appoint a proxy (for a copy of the form, contact Fintan.OLaighin@agriculture.gov.au).



CONFERENCE UPDATE

By *Fintán Ó Laighin*

The 9th National Conference of the Australian Forest History Society will be held in Mount Gambier, South Australia, from Wednesday 21st to Friday 23rd October, followed by a field trip on Saturday 24th. There will also be a half day field trip on Thursday 22nd. The conference venue will be City Hall, Main Corner Complex, 1 Bay Road, Mount Gambier. Information on the conference, including how to register, is available at www.foresthistory.org.au/conferences.html.

Organisers Rob Robinson and Sue Feary have worked hard over the last few months to deliver an interesting and diverse conference which they hope everyone will enjoy. A list of conference papers and information on other conference events is below.

Speakers

Wednesday 21st October

Jennifer Gardner: "The Waite Arboretum - Science, Trees and Technology".

Sybil Jack: "Early forest management in Scotland's plantations".

Ewan McGregor: "Forestry in New Zealand's changing landscape".

Elizabeth Summerfield: "George Goyder and the innovation of Australian forestry".

Sue Feary: "Plantations and playwrights - a history of Indigenous Australians' participation in the plantation industry".

Peter Evans: "Julia Marion Harvey Hale, Sawmiller".

Elaine Davison: "A review of the early years of jarrah dieback research in Western Australia".

Robert Onfray: "Surrey Hills, the birthplace of industrial-scale eucalypt plantations in Australia".

Thursday 22nd October

Rob Robinson: "Pictorial history of South Australian forestry".

John Dargavel: "The lives of forty South Australian foresters".

Brian Gepp: "History and consequences of limited eucalypt forests in the lower South East of South Australia".

Stephen Legg: "The South Australian Press and the forest influence debate: 1830-1954".

Friday 23rd October

Mark Allen: "It's how things were; it must be true; it was on the file".

Jane Lennon: "The Planted Landscape: forest transformation in the Upper Clarence catchment, northern NSW".

Curly Humphreys: "Evolution of sawmills in east coast eucalypt forests in the 1950s".

John Taylor: "Cork oak plantation trials in Victoria".

Andre Brett: "Playing sad havoc with our forests: foresters versus railway sleeper-hewers in Victoria".

Conference Dinner, Wednesday

The conference dinner will be Wednesday evening (starting at 7PM) and will be held at the Lakes Resort Restaurant.

Field Trips - Thursday and Saturday

The half day field trip on Thursday afternoon will visit Mimosa Farm Trees (www.mimosafarmtrees.com), and the remnants of an 1877 nursery at Leg of Mutton Lake.

Saturday's field trip will be on a large comfortable coach, with the ultimate destination being Naracoorte caves to the north of Mount Gambier.

(www.environment.sa.gov.au/naracoorte). We will lunch at a winery on the way.

Friday Afternoon Forum

There will be a short forum after lunch on Friday on contemporary forestry issues in South Australia for all those who are interested. Details are still being finalised.

Friday Photographic Exhibition Launch

A special event on Friday will be the launch of a photographic exhibition, as part of the Heritage Images Archive Project that was supported by Primary Industries and Regions SA (the state government department). This will be held at the Kings Way at the Main Corner Complex at 5:30PM on Friday 23rd October 2015. There will also be some historic photographic equipment on display. John Dargavel has also provided about two dozen glass lantern slides of forestry in South Australia dating from 1900-1920. This is very exciting as many such images have been lost.

Accommodation

A block booking of accommodation for conference delegates has been made at the Lakes Resort (17 Lake Terrace West, Mount Gambier; www.lakesresort.com.au). Everyone who requested accommodation has been booked in and is expected.

115 YEARS YOUNG - THE 1900 *PINUS RADIATA* PLANTATION AT KUITPO

By Rob Robinson

When next you are meandering in the woods of Kuitpo Forest Reserve near Adelaide, you may notice a small silvicultural reserve of tall but time-weary *Pinus radiata* trees adjacent to the forest headquarters. So what? Radiata is found in abundance across the higher rainfall areas of southern Australia. It's the archetypical pine species in the region - the tree that most imagine when they think of a pine.

Planted in 1900, this plantation marks an important aspect of the development of the South Australian forestry industry, it's one of the reminders of the experimental era of silviculture, which enabled the vibrant timber industry in South Australia as we know it today. Compared with other states, South Australia was not well endowed with a good cover of native timber. As a consequence, many of the natural stands of timber were cleared soon after the arrival of settlers, and even in the early days, many building timbers were imported from interstate and overseas.



Kuitpo Forest Headquarters and its heritage listed plantation

Photo: Rob Robinson.

South Australia was one of the first Australian colonies to recognise the importance of planting trees to ensure a sustainable timber industry. They began a grand experiment during which a large number of tree species were planted to determine what grew best and where.

Radiata proved to be the clear winner due to its rapid growth rate, soil tolerance and quality timber. The significance of these Kuitpo pines was confirmed in 1999 when they achieved state heritage protection as the oldest remaining plantation of radiata pines in South Australia. Kuitpo is a great place for enjoying plantings from this heroic age of plantation forestry. Nearby are magnificent stands of Canary Island and maritime pines, while further afield can be found Ironbark and jarrah coupes - all over a century old. Their heritage protection won't make them live forever, but it ensures the trees are managed in a manner sympathetic with their significance to forestry development and aesthetics.

A 1920 WORKING PLAN OF THE FOREST OF KUITPO

The University of Adelaide established a forestry course in 1911 which became the Australian Forestry School in 1926, then moved to Canberra in 1927 under the control of the Commonwealth Forestry Bureau.

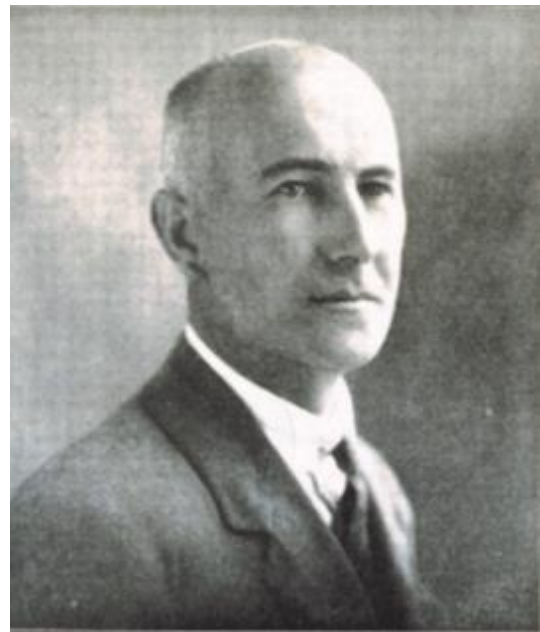
During its time at Adelaide, the course consisted of academic study with practical work in nearby forests including that of Kuitpo, some 50 kilometres south east of Adelaide.

Indeed, the entire Kuitpo Forest Reserve was placed under control of the Lecturer in Forestry, H Hugh Corbin.

Corbin commenced with the university in 1912 and, after much effort, assumed operational control of Kuitpo under the Woods & Forests Department in 1916.

The images on the following page are extracts from the 16 page Working Plan of the Forest of Kuitpo, reputedly the first of its type in Australia.

In 1925 Corbin accepted the position of Professor of Forestry at Auckland University College, and by 1926 the management of Kuitpo Forest reverted to the department.



Horace Hugh Corbin (no date).

Reference

Michael Roche, "Corbin, Horace Hugh (1879-1950)", People Australia, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University,
<http://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/corbin-horace-hugh-18273/text29873> (accessed 24th September 2015).

WORKING PLAN OF THE FOREST OF KUITPO, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 1920.

Area of the Working Circle 13,000 Acres.

INTRODUCTION.

The expectations of 1916, when the first working plan for the Forest was drafted, have been fully realised. The working plan, the first, as Sir David Hutchins said, in the Commonwealth, reduced the working of the Forest to the state of a smoothly working machine yielding the maximum of efficiency.

The plan has been recast at the end of 1920 for the purpose of acquainting those interested with the great strides made; also to give our State the advantage of the large amount of data which has been obtained, and to demonstrate the value of intensive methods of management and silvicultural experiment. This Forest is now known far and wide.

Acknowledgments are due to Mr. W. R. Murray for his excellent maps and survey work. Mr. R. G. Kappler for his great assistance with the financial portion of the forest management.

HISTORY OF THE FOREST.

The Forest of Kuitpo, South Australia, was acquired by the State in 1898, and consisted of a few acres; in 1916 it had increased to 4,719 acres, and now it is over 13,000 acres in extent, and is still increasing. The area is divided into five tracts, some separated by several miles. The policy up to 1916 had been that of clearing the indigenous forests and planting. Now our indigenous forests are worth large sums of money, due to the demonstration by the Forest of the value of these timbers in ordinary commerce. The silvicultural work done in the Forest since 1916 has been considerable, and a great deal of experimental work has been systematised. On the large commercial scale definite areas are being dealt with in each year and definite rotation fixed for each species.

Since 1916 the control of the Forest has been vested in the Lecturer in Forestry, University of Adelaide, subject to the authority of the Hon. Commissioner of Forest Lands. A comprehensive study of the Forest was made, and the working plan is the outcome. The Forest areas have mostly been "Planetabled," with a view to locating good indigenous forests and bringing them under control and management. The plantations have been carefully surveyed, and every detail in connection with them individually and their management is recorded in a new system of cards.

In addition, a considerable area has been dealt with on an experimental basis, a brief survey of which is given subsequently. This work has altered the aspect of future large scale work, giving greatly increased efficiency, resulting in a save of considerable sums of money each year. The solution of some of the silvicultural problems connected with the establishment of valuable hard-wood and soft-wood forests in this State has been achieved. The experimental and research work has been systematic, and will be extended with regard to methods and species. The scope for research in this field is very considerable, and I regret to say that with so little help and so much other work in the Forest the scientific work has and must suffer.

Inasmuch as this Forest is controlled by the Lecturer in Forestry, Adelaide University, the policy has been that of making the Forest a field laboratory for all scientific work possible in such a place. The area is invaluable from the point of view of the training of students in practical work in forestry, geology, surveying, civil engineering, botany, entomology, mycology, apiculture, and rural economy in all its various branches, as well as providing a field for research in many of these sciences.

This working plan is divided into two parts—

- (1) Descriptions of the present conditions and of the work achieved.
- (2) The development and policy of the future.

PART I.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FORESTS, LOCATION, AND SIZE.

The Forest of Kuitpo is situated in the Adelaide Hills. The Forester's Lodge is 30 miles from Adelaide by road, 12 miles to the Willunga railway station, 15 miles to Mount Barker railway station, and nine miles to MacLaren Vale railway station.

The area of the Forest is approximately as follows:—

	Approximate Areas.
Chookarloo tract	700
Tinjella tract	5,000
Mingka tract	2,400
Onkeeta tract	1,500
Echunga tract	3,000
	<hr/> 12,600

"The area when taken over by the Government in 1898 was of little value, the unimproved value being in the neighborhood of 10s. per acre at the most."—Forester Durward.

Mr. W. R. Murray, surveyor, states that the value in 1916 was on an average—

Onkeeta tract, about	30s. per acre
Chookarloo tract	40s. "
Mingka tract	25s. "

or, say, an average value of £1.46.

ROADS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

In the Forest there are numerous "roads." More of these are merely roads on paper, and are of little value actually. For some years I have been endeavoring to close up those which are of no value as thoroughfares in order that the Forest can be made safer from the point of view of fire. At the same time should a road be found necessary at any future date, it would be infinitely better to lay one out to meet the requirements of the traffic. Our Forest needs to be exploited properly, and we have about £12,000 worth of Forest produce at the least growing each year which must have proper outlets as time goes on, and the proper development of roads on a sounder system for the internal working must be dealt with, and will be constantly kept in view.

METEOROLOGY.

Since 1916 a meteorological station has been established in this Forest in the nursery. The instruments are read daily. In the Forest, in addition to the ordinary instruments, self-recording instruments are in action, and valuable data is being obtained and recorded in a volume, the graphs being pasted in on pages facing the data obtained from the other instruments.

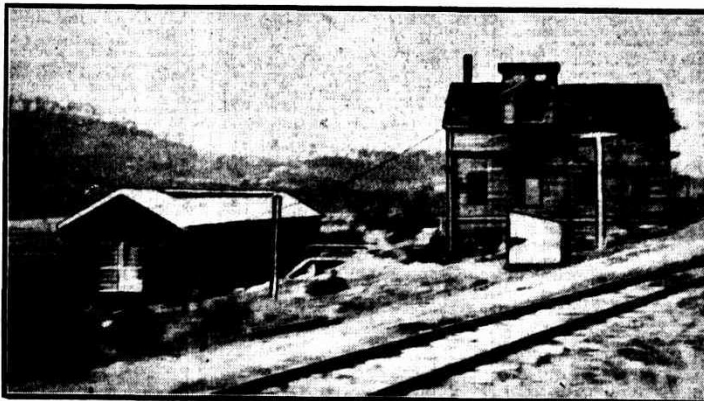
REQUEST FOR INFO - KERMANDIE EXPERIMENTAL PULP AND PAPER MILL

Amy Robertson is seeking info on the **Kermandie Experimental Pulp and Paper Mill** site at Port Huon, Tasmania.

Geeveston Archives and History Society recently opened interpretive paths and signs for the remaining concrete footings at the old Experimental Mill site, which had been slowly deteriorating under a blanket of weeds. It was constructed in 1927 and was the first place in the world to manufacture commercial quantities of paper from hardwood pulp.

Unfortunately the mill only remained open for a short while and was closed in 1930. The site is of significance in Australia's industrial heritage, and the engineers and chemists who worked there went on to be part of the development of bigger mills such as Boyer mill at New Norfolk, the Burnie mill and Victoria's Maryvale mill.

Any information or contacts could be sent to Amy at amyware@yahoo.com (please copy it to the newsletter as well).



A picture of the temporary buildings erected at Kermandie, on the Huon River, by Tasmanian Paper Pty. Ltd., for the production of paper pulp. The experimental plant was recently installed to work its full output of one ton a day, and when experience in the process has been gained and greater knowledge of the possibilities of Tasmanian timbers acquired, a larger mill is to be erected, capable of dealing with 100 tons of pulp a day.

Photograph published in The Mercury (Hobart), 3rd January 1928. Courtesy of the National Library of Australia,

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/24202865>.

FORESTRY UNITS IN WORLD WAR II

Our last issue included a short article by John Dargavel on the Forestry Units that operated in WWI and WWII. This elicited a couple of responses, one from Graham McKenzie Smith and one from Ian Bevege. John's article included a photo of the "ANZAC Forestry Units Inter-Dominion Axemen's Cup" and Graham has even supplied a photo from the 1942 competition in Dumfries.

Ian Bevege

John Dargavel has issued us a challenge to bring into the light of day the fascinating, and important, story of the contribution of the Australian Forestry Units during WW1 and WW2. I don't hazard to do this here but would like to perhaps add some stimulus to John's titillation.

John's photo of the Inter-Dominion Axemen's Cup (where is this cup now John?) brought to mind a couple of passing references to Axemen's Carnivals in the UK during WW2, in David Field's book on the New Zealand forestry companies (Field 2006). These carnivals "were staged at intervals at various centres, chopping and sawing events providing novel entertainment for visitors. One such carnival was graced by the attendance of H.R.H. Queen Mary" (p140); and at page 108, "In wood chopping and sawing held by the Canadians, at Dumfries Scotland, in Aug. 1942, Reg Grundy (11th) (*sic*, 11th Forestry Company N.Z.E. 2 N.Z.E.F.) won a standing chop, Jack Nolan (14th) won an underhand chop, and George Lodge and D.H. O'Brien won an inter-dominion sawing event for a trophy given by Spear and Jackson." For the younger generation, Spear and Jackson were a top firm of British makers of sawing equipment, amongst other machine tools. Is this S&P trophy the same one in John Dargavel's photo?

Australia, New Zealand and Canada provided forestry companies for logging and sawmilling in the UK during WW2, with operations in Scotland and England. The Canadians provided 25 companies, the New Zealanders fielded three companies (11th, 14th and 15th) and went on to carry out the same functions in Italy. Australia also raised three companies (2/1 (C/O C.R. Cole ex ACT Forest Service, then Jack Thomas ex South Australia), 2/2 (C/O A.L. Benallack ex Forests Commission Victoria) and 2/3 Coy (C/O Mervyn (Peter) Rankin ex Deputy Director South Australia Woods & Forests) R.A.E 2 A.I.F.). Personnel for these forestry units were drawn from the state forest services and the logging and sawmilling industry. They served in the UK (1940-43) and later (1944-45) in New Guinea; 2/1 Coy did a stint in the Northern Territory before heading to New Guinea. The timber tramways built and used by these Australian companies in the UK were documented by Jim Longworth (2010) and Ian Crellin (2010) in *Light Railways*.

For those wishing to delve further, Les Carron has written a useful account of the Australian Forestry Units' activities in the European and Pacific theatres (Carron

1985) while F.R. (Freddie) Moulds has devoted a whole chapter to the WW2 forestry companies in his seminal memoir on Victorian forest history (Moulds 1991). Forestry in New Guinea was organised as 1 Command Royal Australian Engineers with CO of 1 CRE¹ (NG Forests) Jim McAdam, head of forestry in New Guinea before the war. Other well known foresters who served in this unit were Bill Suttie from Queensland (OC² 1 Forestry Survey Company), and A.E. Head from Victoria (OC 2 Forestry Survey Company), Les Carron and Max Jacobs, later Principal Australian Forestry School and Director General Forestry and Timber Bureau.

1. "CRE" stands for "Commander Royal Engineers" and is a "traditional" title used for an engineer unit commanded by a Lt Colonel)
2. "OC" stands for "Officer Commanding" and the term is applied to the officer (usually a Major) in command of a company-sized unit.

References

L.T. Carron, 1985. *A History of Forestry in Australia*. Australian National University Press, 355pp.

Ian Crellin, 2010. Australian timber tramways in Britain: 1939-1945. *Light Railways* No. 215, 32.

David Field, 2006. *New Zealand Forestry Companies in Britain and Europe during the Second World War 1939-1944*. War History Branch Department of Internal affairs Wellington, 163pp.

Jim Longworth, 2010. Australian timber tramways in Britain: 1939-1945. *Light Railways* No. 212, 22-24.

Francis Robert Moulds, 1991. *The Dynamic Forest*. Lynedoch Publications Richmond VIC, 232pp.

Editor's note: In answer to Ian's question about the location of the cup, John Dargavel advises that it is held by the ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society, but that it is expected to shortly be offered to the Australian War Memorial.

Graham McKenzie Smith

John Dargavel's short article in the April newsletter was timely as it arrived while I was in Devon (UK) having just returned to my son's home after a trip to Scotland to further my research into the forestry units formed by the Australian Army.

At the request of the British Government, the Royal Australian Engineers formed two companies of experienced forestry and sawmilling workers in February 1940 and the British insisted that they be led by qualified foresters. Cyril Cole (ACT Forests) led *1 Forestry Company* which was raised in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, while Andy Benallack (Forests Commission Victoria) headed *2 For Coy*, raised in Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia. They arrived in the UK in July and moved to Northumberland where *1 For Coy* took over an existing sawmill at Chathill, while *2 For Coy* built a new sawmill at Hexham. A third company was formed from all states in April 1941 headed by Merv Rankin (SA Woods & Forests) and Cyril Cole was promoted to lead the *Forestry Group*. Jack

Thomas (also from SA) replaced Cole in *1 For Coy* which moved to Lockerbie when *3 For Coy* took over at Chathill. Soon *2 For Coy* moved to Thornhill and *3 For Coy* to Canonbie, bringing them all together in Dumfriesshire.

The Inter-Dominion Axemen's Cup that featured in John's article was donated by the Timber Supply Division of the UK Ministry of Supply and first won by the Kiwis at Cirencester in August 1941. At Dumfries in September 1942 the tables were turned.



Inter-Dominion Axemen's Championship at Dumfries
25 September 1942. *Photo: Courtesy of AWM 128419.*

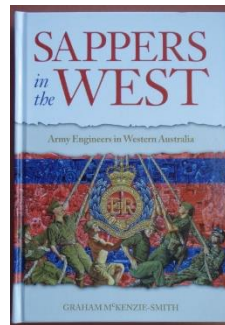
The forestry companies moved to Sussex in mid-1943 and soon left for home, taking the cup with them, so it was not contested again. On the way home the foresters were given a "ticker tape parade" through the streets of New York with the Australians carrying rifles with fixed bayonets. This was a unique occasion as the American Constitution forbids armed foreign troops to march through towns, but someone forgot to tell the foresters.

After they returned, the forestry companies were deployed to the Northern Territory and New Guinea to operate sawmills and later two forestry survey companies were formed to assess the forests of New Guinea. Also formed was a headquarters to supervise all operations, which later morphed into the PNG Forests Department. However that is another story.

Since I retired I have concentrated on military history research and have just published my fourth book which is a history of army engineer units in and from Western Australia (*Sappers in the West*). One of those units was *2 For Coy* and this has led to my current research. On my last trip to the UK, I was able to locate several of the sawmills established by the companies at Chathill, Hexham, and Thornhill, as well as their camp sites. In Scotland they mainly worked in the Queensberry Estate and other estates belonging to the Duke of Buccleuch and I was able to catch up with their Chief Forester and get copies of some harvesting records. The plan is to publish a book on the various Australian Army units that served in the UK and the forestry units will be an important part. It will also be developed as a paper for a future AFHS conference and for *Australian Forestry*. Any information that members may be able to supply would naturally be appreciated.

Editor's note: Graham can be contacted at grimwade4@inet.net.au.

Editor's note: We can't leave this topic without providing some information on Graham's book, *Sappers in the West*. For those wondering about the term "sapper", it is reported to come from the French word "saper" meaning "to dig" or "to entrench".



Graham McKenzie Smith, 2015.
Sappers in the West: Army Engineers in Western Australia. Royal Australian Engineers Association of WA. ISBN 9780646930602. 354 pp. \$45 + \$10 pp. Available from the author (contact grimwade4@inet.net.au for payment details).

In 2012 the WA Sappers of 13 Field Squadron celebrated 100 years of service. The only unit in the Australian Army created in the Kitchener Reforms of 1912 that is still serving today.

The Royal Australian Engineers of WA dedicates this history to the memory of all Sappers who have paid the supreme sacrifice in the service of the country - of which 345 were known to be West Australians. This military book is a detailed study of WA Sappers throughout all wars.

The book covers the history of the WA Sapper Units from the early colonial periods and expands with the commencement of the Great War WW1. There are sections including about the various WW1 battles where the Sappers were active and in particular history of some unusual units like the 3 Tunnelling Company and the 5 Broad Gauge Railway Operating Company.

The book has 100 pages devoted to WW2. The Vietnam War receives full mention and then follows with the achievements of the current WA Sapper units up to 2013. Consideration is also given to the RAE associations.

The detailed narrative is supported with numerous unique illustrations, unit colour patch diagrams, bios of key engineering members, glossary of terms and appendices of Commanders who led WA Sapper units.

A large book of 354 pages, hard cased, higher quality anti age paper make this an appealing presentation or gift war book.



Shoulder Patch - Forestry Companies, Royal Australian Engineers.

This was worn by all of the forestry companies, on the sleeve, just down from the shoulder.

TEACHING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FORESTRY

By John Dargavel

Once teaching forestry moved from Adelaide University to the Australian Forestry School in Canberra in 1927, the students could no longer learn from South Australia's experience with plantations directly, they had to be told about it. Boring lectures could be enlivened with slides; not powerpoints, not 35mm slides, not overhead projectors, but 3 1/4 x 3 1/4 inch glass lantern slides that were put into a "magic slide" projector and shown in a darkened room. Perhaps some of the society's ancients can remember them?

Now lantern slides are either moveable heritage or detritus from the past, depending on your point of view. And move they did, from the Forestry School to the Australian National University (ANU) and now to my desk there. There are hundreds. Five hundred in elegant wooden boxes: the Murray River forests, Wooded Hills and Eroded Valleys, Nurseries and Plantations, Eucalypt Species, and all the Rainforest Trees of W.D. Francis' book.

There are also a dozen small cardboard boxes that plates came in for the photographers. Most are from the US Forest Service, but also two of Tasmanian Forest and River Scenes and two of South Australian Pine Plantations. All the slides were catalogued in 1976, but unfortunately the catalogue has not survived, nor has a lantern, so I thought that I would never see them. This was disappointing as I am getting excited about our forthcoming conference and I wanted to look at the South Australian ones. Luckily, Clive Hilliker at ANU worked his own magic and now I have digital images of seven of them.



Kapunda Nursery. *Photo: Courtesy of Fenner School of Environment and Society, ANU.*



View over Plantation E: Pinus insignis (P. radiata) 25 years old. *Photo: Courtesy of Fenner School of Environment and Society, ANU.*



Glass lantern slides of South Australian pine plantations. *Photo: John Dargavel.*

BOLWERKSMOLEN WIND-POWERED SAWMILL

By Peter Davies

On a recent trip to the Netherlands, we visited the Bolwerksmolen, a functioning, wind-powered sawmill at Deventer. The site features a traditional Dutch windmill over a saw barn with a slipway from a lagoon below the mill for the delivery of logs and the dispatch of timber via the River Ijssel.

This remarkable complex was constructed in 1863 by the brothers Elfrink and includes three sets of vertical frame saws, cutting oak and Douglas fir. The sails of the windmill are coupled to reciprocating vertical crankshafts that connect below to each of the saw frames, which hold up to 10 blades each. Logs are anchored to a travelling carriage almost 11 metres long which is advanced incrementally by a rotating wheel attached to the drive mechanism.

It takes up to a full day to saw through the full length of a 6-metre log but the process is smooth and quiet. When the wind is not blowing electric motors provide power. The mill today is owned by the town of Deventer and operated by the National Institute Bolwerksmolen.

It is open to visitors each Tuesday and Saturday, following a full restoration completed in 2007. Sawm timber is sold to local furniture makers and carpenters for house cladding. The Bolwerksmolen provides a fascinating historical lesson in how timber was processed in the Netherlands.



Deventer Bolwerksmolen

Photo: Michiel Verbeek.

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Taken from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deventer#/media/File:Deventer_de_Bolwerksmolen_RM12467_foto7_2013-08-01_13.13.jpg

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - STRAHAN & DAVIES, SAWMILLERS

Our last newsletter included a request for information about some photos that had been passed down by a late relative. The only means of identifying them was from the name painted on the side of a truck - "Strahan & Davies, Sawmillers". Sue Feary suggested that the age of the truck dated the photos to the 1940s or 1950s, and that the snow in one photo indicated a mountainous region. She surmised that they were taken at Tanjil Bren (east of Melbourne) when Strahan & Davies owned a mill there. This request has prompted good discussion between members Peter Evans and Norm Houghton.

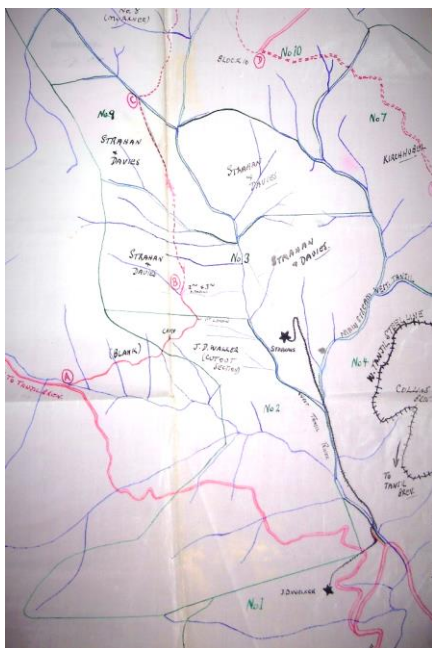
Peter Evans

Sue Feary was spot-on about the location and period, it is Tanjil Bren post-1940.

It may be a Strahan & Davies truck, but the timber is coming off a tramway built by the Forests Commission at Tanjil Bren and operated by the Tanjil Haulage company - a consortium of sawmillers on the line including Collins, Porta, Downey and Herman Kirchuubel. Les Strahan (a former Victorian forester turned sawmiller) had a mill to the west of Tanjil Bren using a separate outlet tramway.

The top left hand photo shows the gantry at the Tanjil Bren end of the Tanjil Haulage Company line. The mill shot with the tramway curving through the image (top right of the page) is definitely Kirchuubel's sawmill. The bottom photo I cannot identify - it could be Kirchuubel's mill, but I cannot say for certain.

For a history of the Tanjil Bren tramway and Kirchuubel's mill, see *Light Railways* 116.



The above FCV map shows Strahan's mill in relation to Kirchuubel's mill and the FCV West Tanjil steel tram. I have file notes for Strahan's mill, but they were "pre-laptop" days at the Public Records Office Victoria, and are unfortunately only hand-written, but can be scanned.

My guess in relation to the photo of the gantry at Tanjil Bren is that Strahan had a spare truck and he hired it to one of the millers based on the West Tanjil tram to take away a load of timber.

Norm Houghton

The following paragraphs are extracted from a book which Norm is currently preparing on West Otway sawmills.

Les Strahan and Jack Davies formed the sawmilling partnership of that name in 1939. Strahan was a qualified forester who had quit the Forests Commission of Victoria (FCV) after the 1939 bushfire to open a salvage mill at Tanjil Bren. This operation ran satisfactorily until 1952 when it was washed out by a flood and had to be abandoned.

The company then moved to the Otways, securing a log allocation in the roadless bush south of Beech Forest and gaining access to these isolated coupes at different times via Denherts Road and Phillips Track. Strahan commenced operations in the Otways in 1953 when he rented Haigh's former mill at Ferguson to convert the logs. He contracted with Washington Bros to run the mill. Strahan's 1953 allocation comprised thinnings of 30 year old bushfire regrowth mountain ash. The logs were secured by contract and it is worth noting this specification to see what would have been typical of the time for a mill of that size. The major contract was for 4750 cubic metres of ash logs with a minimum diameter of 180 cms at the head and in lengths of two, three, 4.2 and 8.5 metres.

The Ferguson mill was a stop gap measure because Strahan had in mind to place a mill at Colac East, near the existing HP sawmill. Colac was the obvious choice for a new and modern, high capacity mill as the town had labour, housing, electric power, a reliable telephone system and rail access, but the FCV balked at this proposal. Regulations stated that logs could not be carted more than 14 miles (22.4 km) from the coupe to the mill and Colac was too far from the log source. The FCV favoured Gellibrand as a sawmilling centre on geographical grounds but there were few other positives for Gellibrand. Gellibrand then had no labour, no housing, no running water, no electric power and no decent telephone or postal facilities. Connection to Colac was provided by a ramshackle narrow gauge railway and a gravel road full of bends and very long grades set against the load.

Strahan objected to this piece of bureaucratic idiocy but to no effect. The FCV suggested that Strahan build staff houses at Gellibrand to overcome the shortage of local labour but Strahan retorted that he was in the sawmilling business not a housing developer. Several other millers also put their plants at Gellibrand and the settlement became an industry focus until the early 1970s although, significantly, very few, if any, mill houses were built there. The labour force commuted from Colac, surrounding farms and Beech Forest. The millers had labour problems from the start and sought to attract workers from Colac by offering subsidized or free travel

on the morning school bus that came out from Colac to Gellibrand. Other arrangements included the workers hitching a ride on the mill timber trucks or managers' cars that also came out from Colac every morning.

Strahan capitulated and bought land at Gellibrand in 1953 for a new mill. Strahan was anxious for mains power at Gellibrand so as to run his mill by electric motors and he organised the movement to bring the power into the bush from Colac. The electricity authority required financial guarantees towards the costs so Strahan put up half the funds, a colossal £1500, and the community found the rest. Mains power was switched on at Gellibrand in March 1957 and Strahan was able to erect a mill at this time and open it in August. Strahan felt his guarantee money was wasted as he could have hooked into electric power at Colac for nothing if he had been permitted to place his main mill there.

The previous year Strahan placed a smaller mill at Colac East, near the HP mill, and used this plant for value adding a portion of the Gellibrand cut, which arrangement was permitted by the FCV. The Colac mill handled timbers for furniture, joinery and moulding.

It is worth exploring Strahan's other dealings with the FCV as well as his business philosophy and practices because they show the state of forest resource management at the time and the resultant end-game. Strahan knew the Forests Act and all the operating policies of the FCV and he was prepared to push the FCV to the limit to gain resource security for his investment. The FCV attitude to the forest resource and emerging modern technologies showed a conservative approach that, to this writer, seemed to be rooted in pre-World War I times.

The FCV had the power to issue a sawmill licence or a sawmill lease to give the sawmiller some certainty but did not do so, preferring an annual timber licence to cut a specified quantity of timber. The sawmiller was therefore put on the same basis as a firewood cutter who existed hand to mouth. This did not encourage a sawmiller to take a long term view of either the forest resource or his plant and equipment. Strahan argued that he should receive a long term allocation of logs to justify the considerable investment in plant and equipment, enjoy security of tenure and be given sufficient resources to ensure large volume production. This was to occur, but not until the Victorian Timber Industry Strategy of 1986. Strahan was 34 years ahead of his time.

Strahan's advocacy paid off and the FCV agreed to grant him an annual allocation in the West Otways of 5900 cubic metres from 1952 "subject to compliance" and further to "endeavour to provide nine further allocations each not less than the first". In other words, no timber lease for the mill but an assurance of 10 by annual allocations.

The 10 by annual allocation was still a precarious proposition as far as Strahan was concerned so in 1956 he put forward the notion of being given exclusive and perpetual logging rights subject to annual tenancy and log licence terms. Strahan was angling for up to 9400 cubic

metres annually and he felt he could harvest almost this amount from his area at Beech Forest. He modestly proposed a 15 year cutting plan on 5900 cubic metres, not the 9400 figure. The District Forester at Gellibrand assessed the figure near enough at 5760 cubic metres and recommended the quota of 5900 for 15 years from 1 January 1957. Strahan accepted this.

In mid-1958 Strahan then applied to the FCV for an enlarged area to work on a sustained yield basis with the "fundamental aim to limit the yearly cut to the estimated growth increment so that the forest would be preserved in a healthy and perpetual state". The Otway Forest Management Plan of 1991 said this in a slightly different form so, once again, Strahan was 33 years ahead of his time.

The FCV was now forced to face the reality of its past management practices and refused the proposal because of a looming shortage of timber and adverse impact on the other West Otway millers. The FCV called a meeting in Colac of all district sawmillers and told them that there was no strategic future in hardwood and to move into softwood. To Strahan, this was an FCV admission of policy failure. He wrote to the FCV charging that "the business of every sawmiller in the Otways is unsoundly based under conditions existing at the present time. We want to correct this state of affairs. Our application would involve a change in the FCV policy of cut out and get out. We would cut back (our annual quota) if we could get some form of cooperative forest management aimed at sustained yield."

Strahan commissioned A. J. Leslie, Forestry Lecturer, University of Melbourne, to examine the West Otways and propose a sustainable yield model. Leslie assessed that an area of 2800 ha could provide an economic intake for one sawmill and could be maintained in the long term, or even permanently, without affecting other millers.

The FCV went over Leslie's proposals with a fine tooth comb and while it conceded that the assessment was reasonable, the proposition was unrealistic as there was only eight years cutting left for the other millers on present allocations if Strahan was given his 2800 ha and potential 130,000 cubic metres.

There the matter rested for a couple of years as Strahan seemed satisfied with his existing allocation until, so he said, he found the FCV quality assessment of the trees was faulty and he would not get the yield he anticipated. His recovery rate in the period from 1956 to 1961 ranged from 49% to 54% yet the FCV said it should be 60%.

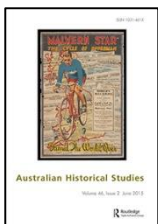
In October 1960 he wrote to his local parliamentary member blasting the FCV for its management policies, for running the forest resource on inadequate data and for not adopting sustainable yield strategies. He made the point that the FCV had been in charge of the Otway Forest for decades yet it hardly knew the real condition of the resource that was under its stewardship. It seems the prime thrust of the letter was to protect Strahan's licensed area and yearly cut.

In preparing a reply to Strahan the FCV advised the Minister for Forests in a bombshell memo in November 1960 that West Otway timber was running out and allocation cuts would be required. This was the end of any talk or pretence of sustainable yield. The FCV advised all 13 West Otway millers drawing Crown logs that their allocations would be slashed immediately by 30% to 50%. Strahan blustered and bluffed for public appearances but conceded the FCV's position and agreed to reduce his yearly cut from 5900 to 3300 cubic metres.

After this it was downhill all the way. Strahan and all bar one of the other West Otway millers voluntarily took allocation cuts. One miller refused so the FCV felt compelled to restore Strahan's allocation (although he did not ask for this favour) and gave him some certainty to 1966, subsequently extended to 1967, but brought the axe down in 1968. Strahan by then had softwood mills elsewhere in Victoria so he exited hardwood in 1970 and quit the Gellibrand mill. Eric Murnane bought the business with its reduced allocation. Murnane closed the mill immediately, dismissed the staff except for one, and directed the logs to his Elliminyt mill. The mill plant and land were sold the next year.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

With contributions by Paul Star and Fintán Ó Laighin

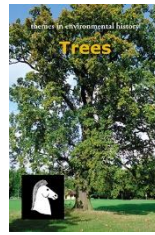


Australian Historical Studies, Vol. 46
 Issue 2, 2015. Department of History,
 University of Melbourne. ISSN 1031-
 461X (print), 1940-5049 (online).
www.tandfonline.com/loi/rahs20.

The feature article in this issue is by Tom Griffiths and is titled "Environmental History, Australian Style" (available

from the ANU's Centre for Environmental History at <http://ceh.environmentalhistory-au-nz.org/news/tom-griffiths-on-environmental-history-australian-style>).

Abstract: Australia has been a leader in the recent emergence of "the environmental humanities". One of the core disciplines of the new field is environmental history, which has developed a distinctive style in Australia since the 1970s. Understanding the continent's unusual human and natural histories has elicited a peculiarly intimate relationship to deep time, and settler Australians have been required to learn a very different ecology and to comprehend the last ice age as a human experience. An understanding of anthropogenic climate change urgently requires these longer-term historical and environmental analyses, as well as century-scale histories of science and philosophy, and studies of human and social resilience from both the ancient past and the unfolding present. This article argues that Australia, with its remarkable Indigenous inheritance, unique natural history and compressed settler revolution, offers striking parables for a world facing transformative environmental change.



Themes in Environment History 5: Trees,
 March 2015. White Horse Press,
 Cambridge. ISBN 978-1-874267-88-1.
www.whpress.co.uk/Books/Trees.html.

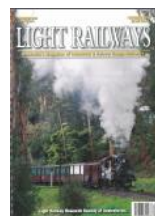
This collection comprises articles that have previously appeared in *Environment and History* or in *Environmental Values* (also published by White Horse Press).

Four of the seventeen articles relate to Australia or New Zealand: Jodi Frawley, "Campaigning for Street Trees: Sydney Botanic Gardens, 1890s to 1920s"; Phil McManus, "Histories of Forestry: Ideas, Networks and Silences"; Benedict Taylor, "Trees of Gold and Men Made Good? Grand Visions and Early Experiments in Penal Forestry in New South Wales, 1913-1938"; and Paul Star, "Tree Planting in Canterbury, New Zealand, 1850-1910". The last two of these first appeared as papers presented at the AFHS conference in Christchurch, New Zealand, in January-February 2007.



International Review of Environmental History,
 August 2015. ANU Press, Acton.
 ISSN 2205-3204 (print) / 2205-3212
 (online). 210pp.
press.anu.edu.au/titles/international-review-of-environmental-history.

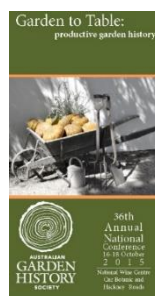
This is the first issue of this journal and is edited by the University of Waikato's James Beattie - a familiar name to AFHS members. This issue includes new material in articles about New Zealand nineteenth century forest history from Paul Star and from Mike Roche, as well as one from James himself.



Light Railways: Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways,
 October 2015. Light Railway Research
 Society of Australia. ISSN 0 727 8101.

This issue includes a "Field Report" (pp28-33) by Peter Evans on "Robbie's Sawmill, 'S' Creek Sawmill and associated tramways, Black Range, Victoria, Gauge 91mm". The report provides a condensed history of the mills (taken from Peter's forthcoming book, *Wooden Rails and Green Gold*), and accounts of the field survey that commenced in 2009. It is accompanied by photos and colour maps.

FORTHCOMING EVENT



**Australian Garden History Society,
 36th Annual National Conference -
 Adelaide, South Australia,
 15-18 October 2015.**

The theme for the conference and the symposium is "From Garden to Table" which concerns gardens and gardening, food and gastronomy, and similar topics. More information on the conference is available from the society's website at

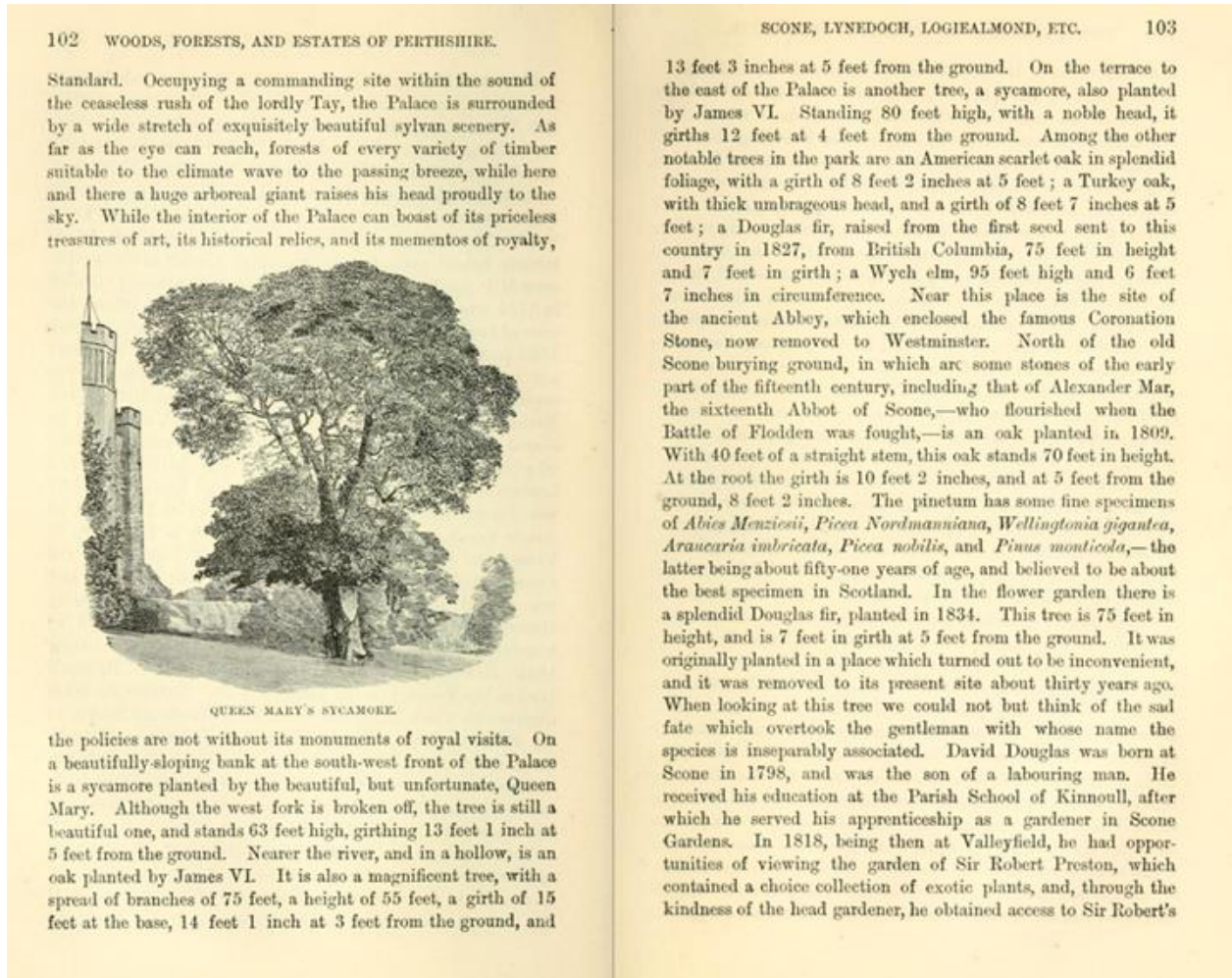
gardenhistorysociety.org.au/pages/conferences-and-tours.

QUEEN MARY'S SYCAMORE

By Sybil Jack

There is a long history of the planting of trees by distinguished people as a symbolic part of cultural life in Britain.

Below is a page from Thomas Hunter, *Woods, forests, and estates of Perthshire: with sketches of the principal families in the county* 1883 which shows a tree planted by Mary Queen of Scots (and reference to two planted by her son James VI).



SYDNEY GAZETTE AND NEW SOUTH WALES ADVERTISER, 28 JANUARY 1826 (EXTRACT)

Contributed by Sybil Jack

A GLOSSARY of the most common PRODUCTIONS in the Natural History of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land: VEGETABLES.

Red gum tree	Eucalyptus resinifera	White cedar or common bead-tree of India	Melia azedarach	Fern root	Pteris esculenta
Blue gum tree	Eucalyptus piperita	Red cedar tree	Allied to Flindersia, <i>Cunning</i>	Coal River apple tree	Achras Australis
Brown gum tree or mahogany	Eucalyptus robusta	Ditto	Cedrela toona, <i>Brown</i>	Cherry tree	Exocarpus cupressiformis
White gum tree	Eucalyptus	Light wood tree	Ceratopetalum gummiferum	Currant Shrub	Leptomeria acerba
Black-butt'd gum tree	Eucalyptus	Turpentine tree	Tristania Albicans	Pear tree	Xylmoelum pyriforme
Flooded gum tree	Eucalyptus	Rosewood tree	Trichilia glandulosa	Plum tree	Cargillia Australis
Stringy-bark tree	Eucalyptus	Black wattle tree	Acacia melanoxylon	Cape gooseberry-bush	Physalis edulis? pubescens?
Iron-bark tree	Eucalyptus	Green wattle tree	Acacia decurrens	Cape cotton-shrub	Gomphocarpus fruticosus
Box tree	Eucalyptus	Norfolk Island pine tree	Araucaria excelsa	Gigantic lily	Doryantes excelsa
Ash tree	Eucalyptus	Cypress tree	Callitris pyramidis	Waratah or tulip-tree	Telopea speciosissima
Apple tree	Metrosideros cordifolia	Sassafras tree	Cryptocarya glaucescens	Rose	Boronia serrulata
Ditto	Angophora lanceolata	Castor-oil tree	Ricinus	Fringed violet	Thysanotus junceus
Yellow gum tree of Phillip	Xanthorrhoea hastile	Tea-tree	Melaleuca linariifolia	Peculiar to Van Diemen's Land.	
Yellow resin tree of White		Currijong or native's cordage tree	Hibiscus heterophyllus	Huon River pine tree	Dacrydium
Grass tree		Cabbage palm tree	Corypha Australis	Adventure-bay pine tree	Podocarpus asplenifolia, Labil Dacrydium? Brown
She-oak tree	Beef-wood	Arborescent fern tree	Alsophila Australis and Dicksonia antarctica		
Swamp-oak tree					
Forest-oak tree					
Honey-suckle tree					

Source: National Library of Australia,
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/2185141>.