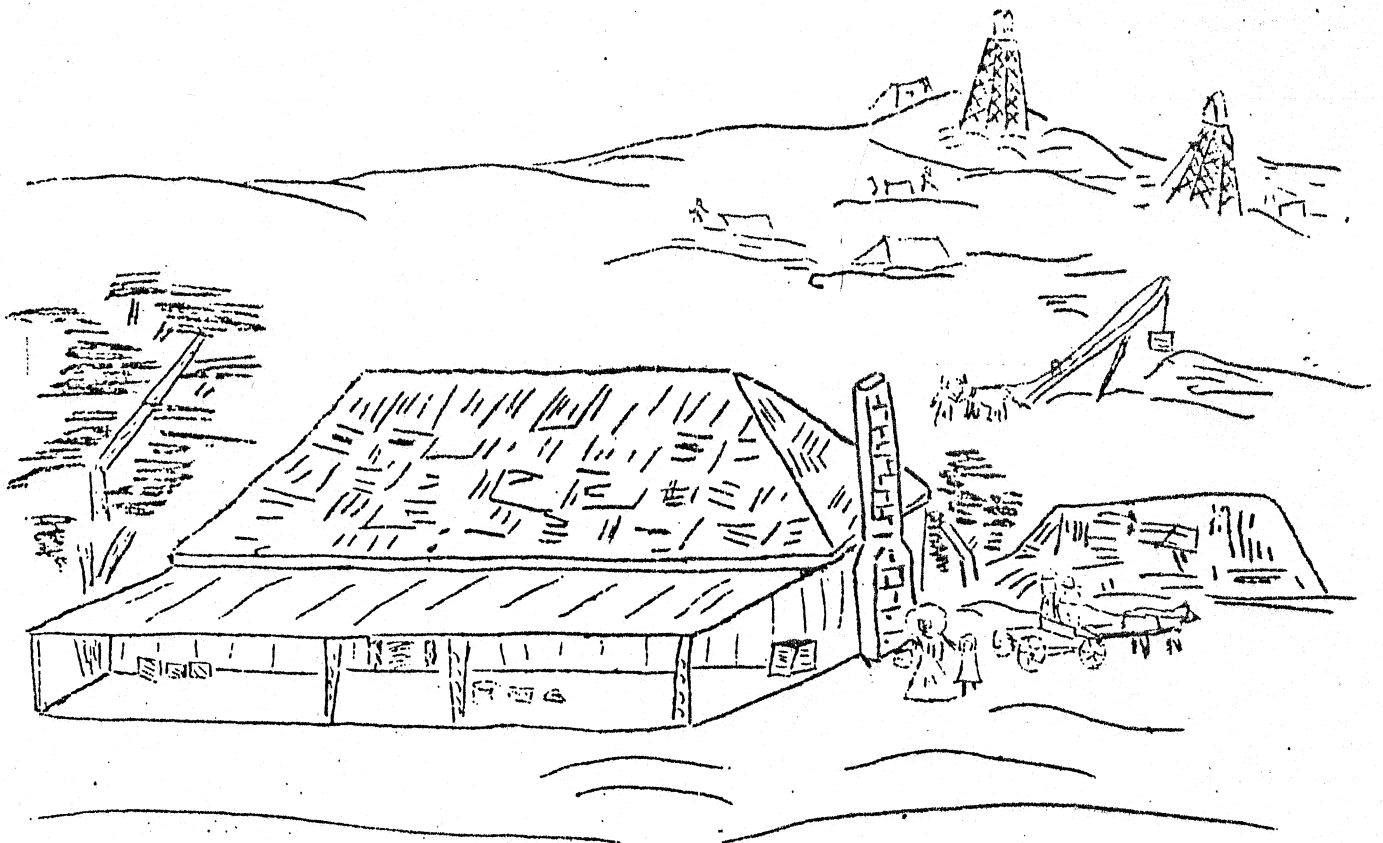


Madge Middleton Carao 250

1869

1969



"The best thing that history can give us is the enthusiasm it arouses."

GOETHE.

Published by the Carowindra Rnd District Historical Society on the occasion of the celebrations organized on Saturday, 18th October, 1969, to mark the centenary of the Proclamation of Cargo Goldfield and a hundred years of trading in the district by the T. J. Finn Family.

Price:- 20 cents.

1869

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In the preparation of this booklet we have been indebted to so many people for their help with information, that it would be impossible to acknowledge them all.

Apart from individuals, we acknowledge help from the following organizations and publications for source material.

1. The Mitchell Library - Sydney.
2. N. S. W. Department of Mines.
3. Historical Department of the P. M. G.
4. Department of Education of N. S. W.
5. Old Files of "Canowindra Star".
6. Old Files of "Bathurst Times".
7. Australian Encyclopedia.
8. Newspaper articles by William Folster.
9. 1933 Canowindra Souvenir Booklet.
10. Cargo, A Record of Its Catholic Life - Rev. Thomas Healey.

Preface

T. J. Finn and T. Galvin were not the first to open a store at Belmore. That distinction belongs to R. W. Collis who opened the first store and subsequently the first Hotel at Belmore.

However, it is because of the continued association of the Finns, not only with the business life of Canowindra, but also with almost every aspect of community life and development in the district right to the present day, one hundred years later, that The Canowindra And District Historical Society felt, when looking for an "excuse" for a celebration, that none could be more worthy of public recognition than a hundred years of unbroken service to the community by the Finn family, for the history of T. J. Finn Store and the Finn family's contribution to community life is, in part, the history of Canowindra.

The area embraced by the Canowindra And District Historical Society includes, among others, the neighbouring centre of Cargo, and knowing that 1969 was also the centenary of the Proclamation of the Cargo Goldfield, we were pleased when members of the Cargo Community wished to co-operate with us in our celebrations.

Although many questions are still unanswered in our researches on both Moorbel and Cargo districts, and although the space limitations of this booklet make it impossible to publish much of what we have learnt, we hope that the booklet will be a memento of the occasion and will record some of the history that is our heritage in this district.

Cargo And Belmore

Gold mining was the reason for an influx of people to both Belmore (now Moorbet) and Cargo districts in 1868-69. In this period of New South Wales' history, although the first flush of gold rushes of the 1850's was over, news of a new gold find would attract a rush of nomadic miners from diggings where their luck had run out to the new field.

A correspondent from Grenfell reported to the "Bathurst Times" on April, 11, 1868, that, "The reefs at Canowindra, 50 miles distant are attracting much attention."

A report from Orange to the "Bathurst Times" in October, 1868, said "Within the last few days, there has been a rush to the Davy's Plains alluvial diggings about 23 miles from Orange. The gold is traced for about eight miles, a reef has also been discovered; gold is plainly seen in the stone; about 500 people are on the ground."

In order to cater for this influx, the Orange correspondent on October 31, 1868, wrote, "Messrs. Cobb and Co's indefatigable agent here - with careful regard to public interest has placed a coach on for Cargo three times a week; viz. Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 10 a.m. and at the moderate fare of ten shillings - the return coach leaving Cargo Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday."

In the same report the correspondent adds, "Little as I know of gold diggings, I still think, before a person ventures there, especially with a hot, dry summer before us (as it promises at present) he should possess capital, patience and experience."

The predicted hot, dry summer soon became a reality so that, despite promising yields of gold, lack of water brought a lull in prospecting. In November, 1868, it was reported that, "At present the wash dirt has to be conveyed a distance of 5 miles and consequently no great amount of work is being done. However, three loads of wash dirt, a few days ago, produced nearly 33 ozs. of gold; the sinking is easy and varies from 12 to 30 feet."

Other lucky finds also lured miners to the area. In January, 1869, a slug of 27 dwts. had been found in Tin Dish Gully. In the same month it was reported that a small but exceedingly brilliant diamond had been found.

Long Gully was the first place rushed on the Cargo field but it was reported that by the drought 1868-69, Long Gully presented a very much worked - out appearance and the Alpine Reef was attracting considerable attention.

About the beginning of February, 1869, rain fell and the Cargo correspondent of the "Western Post" reported that, "The aspect of things had been completely changed following the rain, and digging was going on briskly and everyone appeared to be making more or less gold."

Following this renewed activity the Cargo gold field, upon which the township of Cargo was built, was proclaimed in the N. S. W. Government Gazette on 11th February, 1869. The proclamation was made by the Right Honourable Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, Earl of Belmore, Governor of the Colony of New South Wales.

The area proclaimed was 7 miles by 5 miles and is defined thus:-

County of Ashburnham, at Cargo. The gold field on Crown Lands within the following boundaries. Commencing at the north-western corner of portion 66-63, at Cargo, a conditional purchase of 100 acres by J. Hartigan; and bounded thence on part of the south by a line bearing west 3 miles; on the west by a line bearing north about 7 miles; on the north by a line crossing Bowen Creek, forming partly the north boundary of reserve from lease, No. 33, pastoral district of Wellington, notified 7th September, 1853, bearing east 5 miles; on the east by a line bearing south 7 miles, crossing Bowen Creek; and on the remainder of the south by a line forming partly the north boundary of reserve from lease No. 36, notified at the aforesaid date, bearing west 2 miles, crossing Cargo Creek, to the point of commencement; to be called the "Cargo Gold Field".

On current maps, 1876, is given as the date of proclamation of the Cargo Gold Field, but this is because the boundaries were later altered.

In the New South Wales Government Gazette, No. 253, Friday, 28th July, 1876, two Proclamations appear by His Excellency Sir Hercules George Robert Robinson, Governor of the Colony of New South Wales. One repeats the Proclamation of Cargo Goldfield of 11th February, 1869, as printed above, and proclaims Cargo Goldfield within slightly smaller boundaries.

Cargo Before The Gold Rush

Prior to the discovery of gold there, Cargo already had a history of some forty odd years of white man's settlement although there was no township there. Cargo Creek identified the locality as late as 1866.

The name, Cargo, is derived from an aboriginal name for the area sounding more like Ngargu.

Following the explorations of Evans and Oxley in 1815 and 1817, the whole of the countryside west of the Carobalas as far as the shepherds liked to go was, in the late 1820's, a Government cattle station under the control of Captain Raine.

The centre of this vast run was near the present Boree Cabonne.

With the establishment of runs or "Squatting" on Crown Lands, the site of Cargo was part of the old Davy's Plains Run of 64,000 acres, first taken up by William Lawson junior. Davy's Plains is said to have once had the aboriginal name of Tharrey Tuckera, but from Davy, a Welshman, who was a shepherd there, derived the name Davy's Plains.

The early settlers of Cargo were thus station hands and shepherds employed on Davy's Plains. They obtained their mail and supplies from Boree Cabonne, whence it was brought from Peisley's Inn, Orange.

John Hood, a traveller to the area in 1841 said, "Boree represented a little wooden town in 1841, being constituted of a great many huts."

Few women were in the area at first, but gradually their numbers increased, marriages and baptisms were performed by itinerant priests and ministers at Boree. As early as 1853 several Catholic Baptisms at Boree were recorded by Father Bernard Murphy who travelled from the King's Plains Mission.

One of the earliest references to Cargo is contained in a description of the Orange-Narina Road which was laid down in 1858, as a result of action from Orange to establish Orange as a major centre. It is described as follows:—"In the route from Orange you proceed to Coffy Hill Sheep Station (Mr. Barton), then following the range to Cargo Station (Mr. Lawson)

leaving Davy's Plains to the right, you have a level to Mlogong Station (Messrs. Clements), from thence to the little Bald Hill gap meeting the Wangan Road three miles from Nanima, by which you have access to Canowindra." This road, known locally as the "three-chain road" has to-day been partly incorporated into main roads, but in other parts is little more than a rough bush track.

Free settlers moved into the Cargo area in the 1860's. One of the first selectors was Mr. Curry in 1860 and another J. Hartigan came to Gum Flat in 1862. It was on Hartigan's 100 acre conditional purchase that the Cargo Goldfield was later proclaimed.

Gold

Following hard upon the heels of the gold diggers from 1868 onwards came the business people and the settlement along the creek grew into the town of Cargo - a busy thriving mining community.

Gum Flat alluvial diggings were the scene of the greatest "rushes" at Cargo. Although the population of Cargo has been variously estimated at from 5000 and 7000 at the height of the rush, there is little evidence to show for how long such numbers, many of whom were Chinese, remained.

The first school in the district was a bark hut at Gum Flat; and in 1872 the rush to Gum Flat left the earliest reefs, Long Gully, Township Gully, Graveyard Gully, Scrape Rock, Tindish Gully and Copper Gully, abandoned for a time.

By the year 1875 the following reefs had been located:- Ironclad, Adelaide, Pride of Cargo, Victim, Dalcooth, Ridge and Shine, New Chum Hill, Homeward Bound, Wreath of Roses, Lucknow, Alpine, Galatea and Prince Alfred.

In 1875 two crushing plants were working continuously to the tune of twenty-one head of stampers in the batteries.

To overcome the problem of the water needs of the township and the mines, nine dams in all were built. In Copper Gully three catchment dams were provided, one dam and a large reservoir supplying the Ironclad Company's plant, four dams in Cargo Creek itself supplying three puddling machines for the alluvial deposits on Gum Flat and in addition a dam was built in Township Gully for purely domestic purposes. The building of these dams provided work for a great number of men, since all work was done with pick and shovel and horse-drawn drays.

Shops, hotels, schools, churches, banks, blacksmiths and a flour mill, to name but a few of the buildings in Cargo that went up to serve the growing centre and Cargo was proclaimed a town on 20th March 1885. The flour mill built in 1880 by Mr. Corwell, moved to Menildra when the railway went there in 1893.

Minina fell roughly into two periods at Cargo, the first being from the late 1860's to 1879 when there was a falling off in activity largely due to the cessation of working at the Ironclad.

The second period began with the re-opening of the New Ironclad in 1885 with capital of £150,000 from London and the town saw renewed prosperity for a time, but by 1899, mining was again slack and was carried on only intermittently until about 1910.

Cargo Bank Robbery

One of the most notable events in Cargo's history was its bank robbery. On 10th June, 1893, Frank Parker Fawcett, Manager of the Australian Joint Stock Bank in Belmore Street, Cargo, was assaulted and robbed of £775 by two masked men, one wearing a pair of "sneaking slippers" that were left behind after the robbery. One of these slippers was made from hare skin, the other of sheep skin and they were sewn with black cotton.

The robbery took place while the assistant, Wilson, was absent in Orange, having gone there to play football.

The Manager was struck on the head with a stick and after a struggle was tied up with ropes, carried to his bed, blindfolded and robbed of his keep. Although Wilson had a necessary key with him in Orange, the robbers wrenched open the safe.

Later the Manager extricated himself by cutting the ropes with a knife he had in his pocket and went next door to Mr. Power's, who accompanied him to the Police Station.

"The Bathurst Daily Free Press & Mining Journal" files of 1893 have a full account of the trials which make interesting reading.

Although two brothers Stines were accused and tried three times for the robbery, firstly at Bathurst and lastly in Sydney, they were acquitted, and no connection was ever made.

The subject is one on which old - established residents of Cargo, even to-day, remain tight-lipped.

Extracts from an account of a journey to Cargo in November, 1899, on horseback give us a glimpse of the town then.

"An entertainment was going on in the hall over Mr. Bulkely's store, Messrs. Burnes and Mitchell, the former a resident and the latter from Forest Reefs, were doing good work on the bows and strings, while Mr. Mayne and Miss Powers divided honours at the piano Mrs. Powers, Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Collins and others catered splendidly.

On rising next morning, I was able to take a good square look at the town, renowned principally for its idle mines and its bank robbery. Three hotels line the streets, Mr. Collins', Mrs. Mayne's and Mr. Hamilton's, and all three licences deplore the falling-off in trade which is due to slack mining; Mr. Bulkely keeps the Cargo Post Office Store now ...

Complaint is general about the dullness of the times and the folly of a Government that rests on its "ores?"

The Progress Association with which Cargo is well equipped is doing its best to mend matters ...

The said Association has been booming away at the post officials for a long time about the apology of a place that the local post-master is cooped up in. It is a jerry-built American structure, resting on six or seven sticks that stand about four feet out of the ground and has some chuck-you-back steps leading up to it, and when you get up to it, you want to be an acrobat to stay up ...

This lovely pigeon box has four 8x10' rooms in it, one of which is the said office, a married man and family occupying the rest and, in accordance with the act, is paying £20 a year for the privilege.

Coinciding with the mining period was the era of free selection.

Selectors, some former miners or businessmen, took up small selections on the large runs of Davy's Plains and Caromodine and closer settlement brought about the development of such rural centres as Gum Flat, Avenel and Bowar Park.

Selectors were required to build houses and live on their properties, although many attempts were made to "get around" this requirement by widely practised "dummying". To quote from a letter recalling the period, "All the family took up part of the land round the waterways as they didn't think people would select where there wasn't water. Some retained their portions because they married and lived on the property, but other portions were forfeited to the Crown because they were not being lived on. They built a one-man shack and used to visit about once a week, light a fire, throw a few tea leaves about to make it seem as though someone was living there, but there were always people wanting land and it was reported if it was not being lived on".

Selectors and their wives often reared large families and schools, churches, halls and sporting grounds catered for community life.

Bowar Park. Life at Bowar Park was brisk. Mr. Dick Reid ran a butter factory. "Big Flat" was the first name for Bowar Park but it was changed when the school was built in 1876. Sports meetings were held and the racecourse was on D. J. O'Neil's property. Mr. Phil O'Connell recalls a visit to Bathurst by the Bowar Park Football Team when they went there and back on horseback in the one day.

John Seale, Dan O'Neil and Bill Regan were famous for their bullock team. They took sugar, flour, tea etc. to the outback and brought back wool.

Other pioneer names of Bowar Park were W. Green who made wines and brandy, the Healeys, Bakers, Lannons, Boles, Bohringers, Newtons, Kearneys, Frecklingtons, O'Malley's and Hagartys.

Avenel. Once boasted a school of forty pupils and a Post Office. Prominent among pioneers of Avenel were W. G. Davis, J. J. Fisher, R. Fitzgerald, J. Ward, W. Sharpe, J. Sherwood and P. and B. Malom.

Gum Flat. Some names linked with land at Gum Flat, are J. Carrey, Hendry, McKay, Middleton, Gallagher, Grannel and Curry.

Other names associated with early Cargo are Curtis, Scott, Whiley, Sherwin, Courts, Teeffy, Wall, Sharkey, Mitchell, Fields, Mayne, Hurkett, Lynn, Davidson, Mason, Hogan, Thomas, Gersbach, Clancy, Eastern, Kelly, Power and Livermore.

Despite the gradual closure of mines, Cargo continued through the years as a strong community centre for the rich farming community that surrounded it.

The high proportion of Catholic families in the district established a focal point in their church, the first one being built in 1875. This was also used as a school when the first three Sisters of St. Joseph came to Cargo in 1880.

A new Catholic Church was built in 1907 and new convent buildings were erected in 1940. The convent school was closed at the end of

1965 and pupils have since travelled by bus to Canowindra. The history of Cargo Catholic Life has been faithfully recorded in a booklet by Rev. Thomas Henry.

Before the first Catholic Church was built, Mass was held at Hartigan's place.

A bark hut next to Sullivans served as a Church for all other denominations; later a Church of England was built.

Cargo's population is to-day about 160 and it has undergone the gradual decline that has been the fate of many a once thriving centre, which failed to attract a railway and which has been affected by the decline in rural population generally and the development of motor transport.

But who knows what the future of Cargo, so rich in past history, may bring. Perhaps, in these days of renewed mining interest, modern mining methods may uncover the underground wealth that many people believe is yet untapped.

Meanwhile, Cargo, in the words of the 1899 traveller, is just resting on its "ores".

Belmore - Moorbel

Ten miles from Cargo, in 1869, at Belmore, gold mining lured not only miners but businessmen to the promising new fields. Among them was Thomas J. Finn at the age of nineteen, who came to conduct in partnership with his cousin, Thomas Galvin, a butchery.

T. J. Finn was born at Hartley on 8th July, 1850. He was one of the first students at St. Charles Seminary, Bathurst, later to become St. Stanislaus College. On leaving school, he took a position with Dalton Bros. of Orange before coming to Belmore, one and a half miles from the then small township of Canowindra. Two of the earliest of Canowindra pioneers, James Collits and John Grant had also come from Hartley, and as the Finns and Grants were related by marriage, it seems likely that the good news of prospects in the Canowindra district was passed on by these early settlers and those still back at Hartley.

According to his son, Mr. T. A. Finn, T. J. Finn, soon saw prospects also for a general store at Belmore, and leaving Thomas Galvin to run the Butchery, he began a store nearby.

In 1874, T. J. Finn moved to Canowindra and ran a general store in the historic old brick building, the first of brick in Canowindra, which had been built many years before by James Collits near where the Rural Bank now stands. In 1887 Thomas Finn built the first section of the present T. J. Finn store and lived in the attached residence. He married Maria Coady of Moongong in 1878.

Two of his brothers, John and Michael also came to Canowindra to help Thomas in the business, and another brother, Eugene, came as an agent.

Thomas and Maria Finn had fourteen children - seven sons and seven daughters, two of the latter dying in infancy. In 1920 they moved from the residence adjoining the store to their newly-built home, "Tralee", and the shop was renovated to incorporate the residence section as part of the store.

T. J. Finn died on 1st April, 1941, his wife having predeceased him by four years, and in the course of his long life, by his generous treatment of his customers, and by his services to the town in a series of public

offices, he earned the title of "the grand old man, father of Canowindra".

Two of his sons, Tom and Leo, continue to run the Canowindra store a hundred years after their father, came to Belmore.

Belmore

It is assumed that Belmore was named after Governor Belmore, who was appointed Governor of New South Wales late in 1867 and arrived in Sydney on 7th January, 1868, where he remained in office until 22nd February, 1872.

It is not known when the name, Belmore, was first used to identify the locality now known as Moorbel. There was copper mining carried out in the area before the finding of gold and in the Burford mining report, 1867 is listed as the year of the opening of Copper mines at Belmore in the Lachlan district.

B. 1869: the name had certainly been adopted as there was an application by the residents of Belmore for a Provisional School. This was refused.

Prior to the mining activity, the area now known as Moorbel, although Crown Land, was presumably used for grazing by pastoralists in the vicinity, for there was little to stop stock from straying across unfenced boundaries.

The new mining community at Belmore took the lead over Canowindra and the rivalry between the two centres as the best site for a school led to delay in establishing government aid for a provisional school.

However, before a site in Canowindra was acquired, a teacher, Mr. Hodason, conducted a school between the two centres in an old farm house rented from Alexander Ferguson on what is now part of Biddulph's flats. Looking at the site in this wet year of 1969, one can well appreciate that these premises were declared by an inspector, "totally unfitted for the purpose, being situated in a most unhealthy position. A swamp of mud and slush lies right in front of it all the winter (the whole width of the road and about 200 feet long), while for four or five months of the year the place is almost inaccessible through the boggy state of the road for half a mile on each side of it".

Mining at Belmore, as at Cargo, had its ups and downs, its slumps and its booms. Little, if any, alluvial gold was won at Belmore. "The Blue Jacket" was the principal mine throughout, one of the original prospectors at the mine being John Staines.

The first flush of mining waned in the mid 1870's.

From a list of 172 names for Canowindra in Greville's P. O. Directory of 1875-77 the following were listed as Belmore residents:- John Bidecke, Miner; Alfred W. Collis, Inn and Storekeeper; Frederick Collis, Grazier; G. W. H. Dry, Miner; Lawrence Fahy, Miner; Thomas Finn, Butcher; Mrs. Field; James Glover, Miner; Thomas Galvin, Butcher; J. C. Hiney, Storekeeper; Mrs. Hannan; William Kimble, Miner; Joseph Mills, Miner; Morby, Miner; Gregory Nicholas, Miner; J. H. Nicholas, Miner; John Pearce, Storekeeper; Robert Rue senior and Robert Rue junior, both Miners; William Rue, Miner; P. J. Ryan, Miner; John Smallman, Labourer; R. Samms, Miner; John Sharnock, Miner; John Staines, Miner; Thomas Webb, Miner and William Wesley, Miner.

Canowindra goldfield was proclaimed in 1879, but considering the activity prior to this period, one wonders if there was a previous proclamation, as in the case of Cargo.

According to one authority Mr. F. W. Smith, commonly known as "Belmore" Smith, opened a flour mill in June, 1884. This flour mill was taken over in 1903 by John H. Tee. When the railway came to Canowindra in 1910, the Belmore mill was closed and Tec's Mill opened on a new site near the railway in Canowindra.

In about 1885 the Blue Jacket Mine was re-opened by Messrs. Mylecharane and "Belmore" Smith who, it was reported, made a fortune from the gold therefrom. The ore was carted by tip-draw from the mine to the top of Robinson Street (near Biddulph's) to a five-head battery which was erected on the bank of the river, and was there crushed and treated.

The Blue Jacket continued as a rich producer until about 1900 when it was idle for a time owing to litigation pending in the Supreme Court.

In 1897. it was reported that the main shaft was 430 feet.

Other Reefs in Belmore were Hayes, The Never Sweet, The Red Jacket, Boyd and Croucher's Lease, and Hazelhurst's.

"The Blue Jacket" re-opened late in 1901 and continued working till 1905. A terrible tornado was reported in November, 14, 1902, issue of "The Canowindra Star and Woodstock Advertiser". Tremendous damage was done and at Belmore, the worst sufferers are listed:- Messrs. Seymour, Perry, A. Horsfall, J. Webb, Cridland, Green, J. Lewis and Mrs. H. Perry all had their houses wholly or partly unroofed and the flour mill roof collapsed and its verandah was unroofed.

Operations at "The Blue Jacket" were re-commenced in 1910 by Mr. Walter Murray and party and continued operating till about 1914.

Community Life. In spite of its proximity to Canowindra, the residents of Belmore developed a strong loyalty to their own community which has continued to the present. Belmore was never proclaimed as a village, but was subdivided into small 10 acre farmlets and families put their roots down and have remained throughout the years.

In 1910, the residents applied for a school for the 23 children of school age there, but, instead, a subsidised conveyance to Canowindra was provided. The subsidy was 5d. per child per day. The "conveyance", was, according to Miss Winifred Webster, who was one of the pupils, drawn by two horses, one named Bonnie, driven by Mr. John Jones.

Name Changed. Belmore changed its name to Moorbel, sometimes seen spelled Morebel and Moorbell, and there has recently been controversy about the accepted spelling and its origin.

The following history of the Moorbel Post Office provided by the Historical Office of the P. M. S.'s Department has clarified the matter and is of interest.

"In February, 1917, "residents of Belmore" petitioned the postal inspector at Parkes for a postal receiving office.

The leading signature on the petition was that of Mrs. H. A. Davis, and the names Jones and Tobin were prominent among the forty-six signatures.

Mrs. E. O. Jones, who was nominated for appointment as postmistress, gave her address as: - "Belmore, Canowindra".

The postal inspector reported that Belmore was a small village about two miles from Canowindra containing a population of about 50 adults.

Because of the existence of a place named Belmore near Sydney, some difficulty was encountered in choosing a suitable name. After a petition from residents had suggested "Belgreen", the Department of Lands pointed out that the name resembled phonetically "Belgreen" and "Bellarine" which were existing localities.

Residents then submitted the names: - Eromleb; Moorbel; Belbury; Bluebel. The postal inspector considered that the name Moorbel was the most suitable, and this was approved by the Department of Lands on the 9th July, 1917.

The Moorbel Receiving Office was established on 1st August, 1917, in charge of Mrs. Elizabeth K. Jones, a storekeeper. Her postal allowance of £1. per annum was increased to £7, three months after the office was opened."

Mrs. Jones resigned in 1927 and the office was closed.

Approval was given in November, 1947, for the establishment of a non-official post office at Moorbel in charge of Mr. Thomas Delaney, storekeeper and was opened on 1st January, 1948, with Mr. Delaney as post master. Others appointed in charge of the office were: - Mrs. Beryl C. Grimshaw, 1.11.52, Miss G. M. Thompson, 1.5.54, Miss S. J. Thompson, 1.9.57 who married and continued as Mrs. J. S. H. Fry, 5.11.66, Mrs. S. F. Thurtell, 1.2.69.

As may be imagined, it was not easy for the change of name to become immediately accepted, and in issues of "Canowindra Stars" as late as 1920, there are references to both Belmore and Moorbel, or to further confuse the matter, Moorbell. However, as Moorbel was first adopted by the Lands Department in 1917, despite contrary opinions, it would seem reasonable to accept Moorbel as the correct spelling.

In June, 1920, a Public School was opened under the name of Moorbel with an enrolment of 44 pupils.

A year later the enrolment at Moorbel had risen to 90 and Parents and Citizens reports in 17th November, 1921, "Star" were pressing for the Cranbury School building to be moved there to relieve overcrowding.

It is not known whether the building was ever moved, but if so, it would not have been in use for long as, at the beginning of 1923, St. Teresa's Catholic Church was opened at Moorbel not only for regular mass but also as a Convent School, with the Sisters travelling daily from Canowindra.

The Convent School continued to operate until March, 1961, and the Public School at Moorbel until 1965.

Church Records show that only one marriage was performed in Moorbel Church, the contracting parties having been John Smith and Ellen Wright nee Slattery. The date of the marriage was 25th August, 1927; Father P. J. McCarthy officiating. The number of baptisms performed in the church was considerable.

The community of Morebel felt the need for a hall and set about raising funds in a most determined fashion. For thirteen months they ran a Queen competition, the functions being mainly held in private homes. Mrs. Lily Thurtell (nee O'Brien) was the winning "Queen" and the crowning ceremony was carried out by "Bishop" George Grant.

The Hall was opened in 1925. In 1963 it was renovated as a Community Centre, with the spelling on the commemorative plaque, alas, Morebel.

A strong tennis club for many years played on courts near the Hall and these have only just been dismantled at the instigation of the very keen band of ladies, the "Morebel Ladies" Auxiliary, who have been so co-operative with the Historical Society in the planning of celebrations there.

Conclusion. Let no-one feel that our task of gathering the history of these centres is complete.

Members of the Historical Society would welcome any information that readers may know or discover, and corrections on any items wrongly reported.

Old documents, letters, and photographs, often regarded as "rubbish" can be precious. If you have anything, you think would be of interest, please let us know.

Can Our Visitors Help Us? You have already done so by buying this booklet. You may care to do something else:-

1. Let your friends know about our Society.
2. Make a donation to our Museum Fund.
3. If you are a citizen of this area, join the Society and help in the good work.

Many Thanks For Visiting Us!

The Canowindra And District Historical Society.

October, 1969.