



Bowral



Mittagong



Berrima



Moss Vale

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

ABN 29 362 616 937

NEWSLETTER

No 585 September 2025



From the President's Desk

August's General Meeting had Berrima Goal as the focus of our afternoon. We were taken to the early days of this place of punishment with the launch of

Linda Emery's latest book 'Reminiscences of Gaol Life at Berrima' which shares memories of the son of one the Gaol's better-known Governors, William Small. A hard, cruel man or one simply bound by the rules of the time? That is for the reader to decide. See photo on page 2.

Then we had Philip Morton's literary offering, 'By the River at Berrima' which shows the prison in a more lenient light. Gone is the strict discipline of the penal system with its accent on rules and punishment and instead we see the relaxed, almost holiday atmosphere of a WWI internment camp for German mariners. How they entertained themselves during the years of separation from families! Philip's book complements our museum's 'Prisoners in Arcady' exhibition.

Then Jonathan Thompson of Blue Sox shared the company's ideas for developing the empty goal buildings into a luxury hotel and wellbeing centre. This project has stirred the emotions of many in the neighborhood since it was first mooted so this presentation was well appreciated.

Israel 'Izzy' Chapman's story is of a former convict turned policeman. Did he really come over from the Dark Side or was he merely a wolf in shepherd's clothing. Hero or zero? Frank Mitchell lifts the lid on 'Izzy' and his alleged links to treachery, beatings, corruption and violence in late 1820s policing, in his presentation at our next General Meeting. See page 3.

As if that is not enough, we have one of our Society's early presidents parachuting from a burning plane over Germany. Doug Cull then had to endure the rest of the WWII years in a POW camp. Much later in life Doug became renowned as an innovative farmer out Fitzroy Falls way. Thank you, Doug for doing so much for our Society in its infancy. See page 5.

Page 3 tells us of William Chalker/Charker who was one of the earliest settlers in Mittagong while over the page you will be introduced to a history of the Moule family. Both being hard working families of the land.

A copy of the book of the Moule family history can be found in our library.

Time now for calm and sitting in the Moss Vale Civic Centre's atrium on the hour you will be caressed by the delicious chimes of Dr Alan Wise's grandfather clock as they resonate around that space. Page 4.

Stuart Handley

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS 2025

SEPTEMBER 2025: Thursday 25 September at 2:00pm, Civic Centre, Moss Vale
Frank Mitchell will give a talk on Israel 'Izzy' Chapman, 'Prince of Thieves'. Izzy was a convict granted a conditional pardon who joined the Sydney police force and became known as NSW's first detective.

OCTOBER 2025: Thursday 23 October at 2:00pm, Civic Centre, Moss Vale
'Tallong through the years in pictures' presented by Janet Black
AFTERNOON TEA is served following the speaker



Moore Memorable Musings



A FREE-FOR-ALL

We are bombarded by so many 'free' words today, it's hard to decide what to eat, what to avoid and

how to behave. I'm afraid no one gets off scot-free.

For instance, my bride is avoiding gluten-free foods which gives her a trouble-free lifestyle. We have both been on various fat-free, or carb-free diets in the past. In fact, we were on two guilt-free diets, mainly because one didn't give us enough food!

I would rather opt for the Carefree Diet which includes a Friand or two between meals.

Unfortunately, this doesn't make you entirely waist-free.

As a freelance writer living a foot-loose and fancy-free life in a rent-free, smoke-free and dust-free house we like to call home, sometimes we relax with a preserve-free drink in hand, originally bought duty-free at the airport.

Shopping with such freedom makes life even more complicated. In the supermarket I notice free-range eggs

in one aisle where elsewhere there are sugar-free, hormone-free and dairy-free products.

It's worse in the washing up area where there are soap-free, germ-free and even hands-free liquids.

I've never felt so free in my life!

Our garden is at present weed-free. My bride reminded me, 'feel free to plant those freesias any time soon, remember they were the freebies Freida Eyre gave us.' I recalled at that time I felt like a freeloader.

In the city some roads are marked toll-free but are never traffic-free or noise-free.

Driving home I'm reminded we are using lead-free petrol in an emission-free car which makes the air we breathe pollution-free. We pass asbestos-free towns which certainly gives us an assured and worry-free journey.

Back home we turn on the free-to-air TV to watch ad-free programs that are never quite violence-free, using those sound-free earphones.

Despite all this free-falling life, it is beginning to turn us into fun-free walking zombies and far less freewheeling.

Bruce Moore

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

That time again!!

Renewals due from 1 October

A Renewal Form was provided with the September newsletter.

We are happy to receive payment by cash, cheque or credit card, OR funds can be deposited to our bank account, details of which are shown on the Renewal Form.

NOTE: If depositing funds to our bank account, please ensure that your initial and surname are used as reference and **PLEASE RETURN YOUR FILLED-IN RENEWAL FORM AND BANK RECEIPT BY MAIL OR EMAIL**, as this helps us keep track of the many payments.

BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM

1a Marketplace cnr Bryan St, Berrima

OPEN: FRIDAY to SUNDAY

10.00am to 3.00pm

throughout the year including school and public holiday periods. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day.

Groups welcome at other times by arrangement. Ph John 0434 623 402

Museum: Phone 4877 1130 or email bdmuseum@bigpond.com

Managed and operated by members of our Society who volunteer their time and expertise.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The Society's **Family History Group** meets on the first Wednesday each month, at 1pm.

Convenor: Denise Mackey.

The Society's **DNA Interest Group** meets at the archives on the third Thursday each month at 1pm.

Convenor: Robyne McKinnon

Our new address and PO Box

The location of the Society's archives: Civic Centre 68 Elizabeth St Moss Vale

New Postal address:
PO Box 188 Moss Vale NSW 2577



Book Launch at August General Meeting: Linda Emery with *Reminiscences of Gaol Life at Berrima* and Philip Morton with *By the River at Berrima: German mariners interned at Berrima in WWI*. Photo: Robyne McKinnon

Intriguing talk at September meeting

Thursday 24 September 2:00pm, Moss Vale Civic Centre

ISRAEL 'IZZY' CHAPMAN, 'PRINCE OF BULLIES'

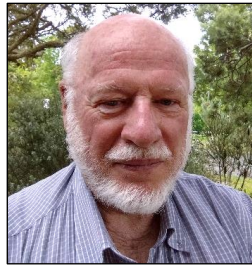
A talk by Frank Mitchell

Frank specialises in using the National Library's Trove website for historical research and runs a 'Trove Users Group' for our members. Frank's past employment includes working on the Snowy Mountains Hydro and Shoalhaven schemes. For the past seven years Frank has been one of our researchers, handling a variety of public queries including one from the police force that led to research into the diverging career paths in the early 1800s of two brothers, Izzy and Noel Chapman.

Izzy was a convict granted a conditional pardon who joined the Sydney Police and later became known as NSW's first detective. Yet, an entry in the 'Domestic Intelligence' column in *The Sydney Monitor* of 19 January 1831 illustrates Izzy's real character.

The entry refers firstly to a bushranger Webber, the companion of Walmsley, who had both recently been captured by Mounted Police. It notes that the two bushrangers do justice to the valour of the Mounted Police, but then they speak very disparagingly of the constables in all quarters. "But what can be expected from a set of men, who, when their character is too far gone to get employment elsewhere, fly to the police offices of the Colony for employment? There are some good men even among the constabulary; but, generally speaking, a more ferocious, cowardly, sneaking, treacherous, lying race than they, is not to be found in any country. Their courage lies in beating and picking the pockets of poor drunken creatures . . . but bushrangers they never can find. The prince of these bullies was Izzy Chapman. Of all humbugs, he was certainly the chief." (*nla.news-article32074834*)

If the name Chapman rings a bell, it may be because a story, compiled by BDHS members Frank Mitchell and Ros Dale, was provided in the December 2019 issue (523) of this newsletter. It was a history of the two brothers, Izzy and Noel Chapman. Noel served at Berrima in the 1840s as Chief Constable, while Izzy's career was far more controversial. If you wish, you may read the article prior to the talk. Copies of all our newsletters back to February 2009 are provided on our website to read or download. Otherwise, just come along to the talk to be intrigued and enthralled by Frank's telling of the Izzy story.



A recent acquisition by the museum

A sword that belonged to William Chalker/Charker, who had served as Principal Overseer of Stock at the Cow Pastures (Camden) from 1817-1823, has been donated to our Berrima District Museum and is now on display in a cabinet in the Williams Gallery.



The donor is Jeremy Rice who is descended from William Chalker/Charker (1774-1823) through his father's maternal line. His father Kevin Rice (1932-2011) inherited the sword from his maternal grandmother, Anne Frances Chalker (1875-1958).

Our district has early historical connections to the family. This was briefly outlined in an article about the demise of the Chalker/Charker Society that was provided in this newsletter in June 2024 (Issue 571).

To recap, this family society mainly consisted of descendants of William Charker, also known as Chalker, who at the age of 25 years was convicted of burglary in 1801 and sentenced to seven years transportation. He sailed to Port Jackson on the *Coromandel*. In 1808, he formed a liaison with Elizabeth Shackle soon after she arrived on the *Speke*. She had been transported to Australia for seven years, after being convicted of theft at Bridport Somerset, in 1808.

William and Elizabeth had eight children before he died at the age of 48 years in 1823. Elizabeth had one more child after Williams's death.

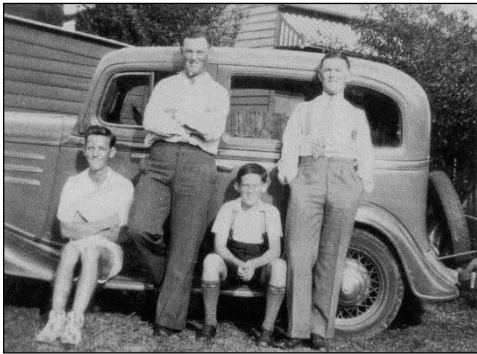
In *A History of the Berrima District*, James Jervis states that "probably the earliest settler at Mittagong was William Charker (or Chalker) who received a permit to graze cattle on the Mittagong Range in May 1821. Charker had been Principal Overseer of Government Stock and lived at Camden".

He received an order for 200 acres in January 1823 for his services as Principal Overseer. He took up this land at [Lower] Mittagong where his stock had been de-pasturing since 1821 but died in February 1823. After his death his widow Elizabeth, who apparently remarried, applied for the grant to be measured.

A family history book worth a look

The BDHS archives recently received two copies from the author of a family history book about the Moule family, titled *A Sum of Money: Moule Family History* by Estelle Moule, being her husband's family history.

It provides the Australian history of four brothers: Leslie, Sydney, Bruce and Alfred Moule (*seen here in 1932*). They were born in the early years of the 20th century. Their ancestors had settled on the south coast and Southern Highlands of NSW mainly round Wildes Meadow and Jamberoo.



The history begins in 1812 when the convict, William Prior, arrived in the penal colony of NSW. Later, in the 1830s and 1850s, other family members arrived as free settlers. The history has five family groupings: Prior/Swan, Tate, Mumberson, Moule and Smith.

There are connections to the local dairying industry, Syd starting work in 1941 with Dairy Farmers Co-op Milk Co Ltd (incorporating Camden Vale Milk Co Ltd).



Camden Vale 'boys' 1933

There is also a PDF file available from the author which contains scanned copies of the original source documents and short biographies of the brothers.

The book's layout is similar to a quality magazine, being lavishly illustrated while still providing detailed historical information. It will be of interest to anyone with immediate family connections and also worth a look by those BDHS members who have an interest in how a family history is researched, documented and written. A copy is in our Library.

Grandfather clock now at Moss Vale

With the recently completed move to Moss Vale of our archives and the impending renovation of the Mittagong building, it is fortuitous that an ideal space was found in the atrium of the Moss Vale Civic Centre for our wonderful Grandfather Clock and where its history panels could also be mounted with it.

The Clock was donated to the Society in mid-2022 by the granddaughters of a Dr Allen Wise who had practised locally from 1934 until 1954. It had been presented to him on retirement by the citizens of Moss Vale. The clock was installed in the upstairs foyer of our archives at Mittagong and by the end of 2022, after some minor mechanical problems, it was ticking away happily thanks to the skill of clock restorer Peter Donnan.

There being no memorial elsewhere to the doctor, it was decided to make a feature of the clock and its history. Two other doctors who were in the same practice, Dr Alcorn and Dr Gurney, already had public memorials dedicated to them: the Alcorn Memorial Clock in Moss Vale (erected 1938) and the Gurney Memorial pillars at the Gullies Reserve, Bundanoon (erected 1958). The clock in our upstairs foyer thus became a memorial to Dr Wise in a public place.

It was given context by the installation of framed history panels about all three Moss Vale doctors mounted on either side of the Clock.



Conservation Officer, Denise Mackey, who organised the clock's restoration and move, says it is pleasing that the installation has "come back home" to Moss Vale. The chimes are now heard by a wider range of people including children visiting the WSC library in the Civic Centre, who are enthralled by the clock.

Douglas Owen Cull (1910- 2002)

Former BDHS President and Vice-President

One wintry Sunday back in July, John Schweers and Phil Morton were on duty at our Museum in Berrima. They were kept busy as it was school holidays and more visitors than usual rolled up in the morning, including Melissa Lawrence who lives at Canyonleigh. After looking through the museum with her teenage son, she asked whether we had any information on Doug Cull, a former member of our Society, who was her mother's uncle, thus Melissa's great-uncle.

We showed Melissa a copy of our *BDHS Celebrating 50 Years* book which has numerous entries listed in the Index for Doug Cull, dating back to the Society's early days in the 1960s. The entries included that he had owned the *Ulster Park* property at Fitzroy Falls and became a member of the BDHS Management Committee in 1965. Melissa purchased a copy of the book and when asked did she have photographs and biographical information about his early life that she could share with our Society, to add to our collection, she said she did and would be happy to share them.

The biography and photos she provided will follow here, after a summary of Doug Cull's period with the Society taken from our *Celebrating 50 Years* book.

The Berrima District Historical Society held its first meeting in the CWA Rooms at Moss Vale on 21 July 1960. Office bearers and a Management Committee were elected. From its inception, the BDHS had the support of many local people and, to raise funds, morning teas were held and group tours organised to beautiful local homes and gardens. These included *Ulster Park* owned by Douglas Cull at Fitzroy Falls, *Throsby Park* owned by Del Throsby at Moss Vale, and *Hillview* owned by Edwin Klein at Sutton Forest.

Doug Cull joined the Society in the early 1960s, was elected as mentioned above to the Management Committee in 1965 and following that became an inaugural member of the Museum Sub-Committee that was formed in January 1968 to set up and run the Society's museum, then housed at *Courthope* in Berrima. The other Sub-Committee members were Jack Parry, Edwin Klein, Queenie Moore, Evelyn and Harold Wood-Davies and Mrs Marshall.

Doug Cull went on to serve as BDHS President from 1971 to 1979 and again in 1987-1988. He was Vice-President in 1980, 1981 and 1993.

In March 1973, during his presidency, the Society's monthly general meeting was held at *Ulster Park*, with 63 people in attendance.

In January 2000 a luncheon was held to mark the Society's 40th anniversary. Several past Presidents attended, including Doug Cull, the longest serving President. At the time Doug was celebrating his 90th birthday, so the day was a double celebration.

President Linda Emery spoke at the function, stating that: "The Society has come a long way since the early days when members met in private homes and stored archival collections and items in their spare rooms. Thanks to the efforts of that hard-working band, in the year 2000 we are in very good shape."

Douglas Cull biography by his great-niece

Born in 1910, Douglas Owen Cull grew up in Ashfield, Sydney, the oldest of seven children. He attended Newington College and later Hawkesbury Agricultural College. Mr Cull's grandfather, Fred Cull, moved from Stafford in the UK to Australia in 1882 and a year later, he and his father George established a leather merchant business, Geo Cull & Son. An astute entrepreneur, Fred Cull took over the business in 1888 and successfully grew the business as boot manufacturers, importers and leather and grindery agents. Fred Cull secured a contract to manufacture leather military boots for WWI soldiers, known as Cull Boots.

Doug's parents, Fred and Ada Cull, were generous philanthropists, making donations to educational institutions including Newington College, and donating the chapel at Wesley College, Sydney University. Fred Cull was a founder of the War Memorial Hospital in Waverley, Sydney.

A WWII veteran, Doug Cull was a Flight Lieutenant on his first operational flight in September 1943 when the Halifax bomber he and his 6-man crew were flying in was picked up and held by searchlights and the aircraft consequently shot and set on fire.

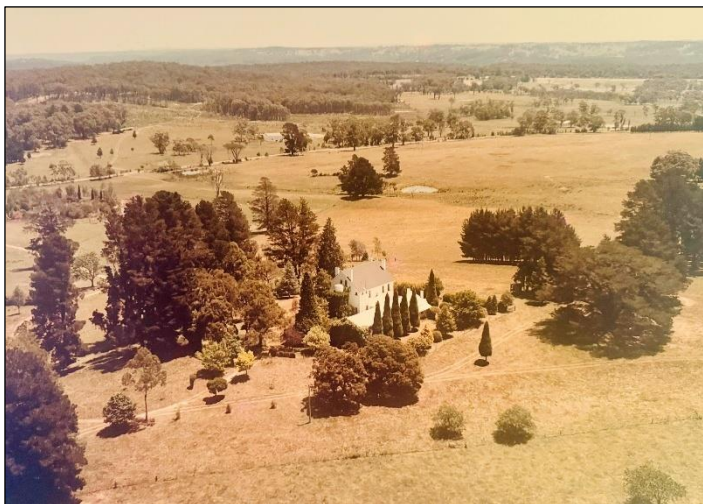


Doug's position in the aircraft, which was flying over Germany enroute to Hanover, was rear gunner. The visibility was almost nil from the rear turret when the pilot ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft, which was at 16,000 feet. Attempting to jump from the burning aircraft, Doug got his foot caught and had to untie his boot to free himself and parachute down to the ground at around 10pm.

He was found unwounded in a paddock by a German farmer before being captured by German soldiers. Four crew members survived while the pilot and navigator were killed. Doug was a POW at Stalag Luft 111 until liberated by Allied Armies. Interrogated by local military and the SS, Doug refused to provide any more information than the requisite name, rank and serial number. His parents were initially advised in November that year that he was missing, believed killed in action. Imagine the relief when they were later informed of his survival and safe return to the UK. Doug's only recollection of the experience, which he shared in an ex-POW publication, is very much in his no-nonsense style:

"Rear gunner in Halifax en route to Hanover on 22 September 1943. On crossing the Dutch coast, we were held by searchlights and were soon in deep trouble. Finally the captain advised us to abandon ship. On tumbling out however, I was to hang head downwards with my left flying boot firmly caught in the turret above. But suddenly I came free to fall till feeling the thud of terra firma. 5 out of 7 made it to the ground with 2 of us sent to Stalag Luft III."

After a decade or more spent farming on his property Cannick Chase on the Liverpool Plains in northern NSW, Doug moved to the Southern Highlands and bought *Ulster Park* at Fitzroy Falls in 1959. He remained there until a year before he died in 2002 at the age of 92 years.

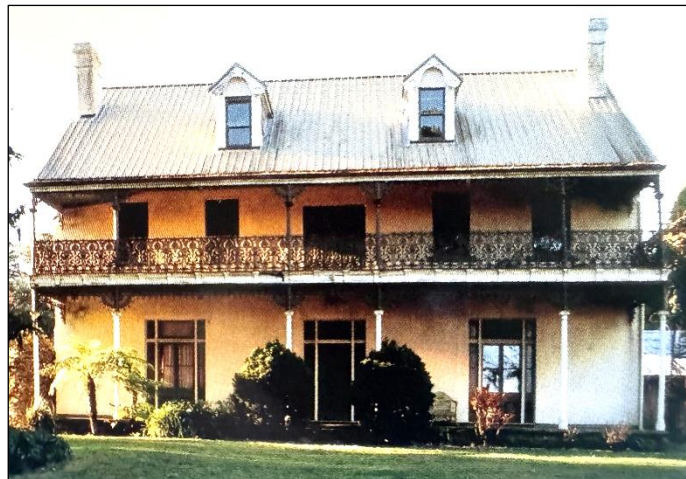


During his 42 years at *Ulster Park*, Doug Cull planted hundreds of trees, many which still stand majestically today, bred cattle and sheep, and leased land to local potato growers.

Doug's father, Fred, had owned several properties across NSW, including Premier Station on the Liverpool Plains in the 1930s when it was about 16,000 acres and 90 per cent black soil plain, ideal for growing lucerne. Other family properties included Stafford at Gunnedah and Woodbine Park near

Crookwell. The Culls also carried out husbandry – maintaining and fattening quality sheep and cattle and building up a flock of merinos. Doug was passionate about conserving rare cattle breeds, including British Whites, which he grazed at the *Ulster Park* property.

Doug travelled extensively to Europe, Russia, South Africa, Iceland and beyond. He travelled to Russia in 1955 as a member of the first tourist party to go to Russia after the restriction on tourist visits were eased. Doug conducted many presentations about his travels during events held by the Berrima District Historical Society.



Ulster Park was built in 1883 by Sydney businessman Peter Hart, who was born in Ulster, Northern Ireland. Originally 730 acres, the property featured a two-storey house, built of stone with cedar woodwork, comprising eighteen rooms, including a beautiful large ballroom, extensive attic forming a third storey, and a cellar below the bathroom floor. Water used to be pumped from an underground well in the garden. When Peter Hart purchased the land, there were four families squatting on it – the Paynes, Ritchies, Staggs and Lawlers. Those who remained on the land were charged 26 pence/week.

Ulster Park had quite a name as a place of great hospitality and entertainment. It even served as a guest house in the 1920s after it was sold by the Hart family.

Peter Hart had installed a concrete cricket pitch in the back paddock and, in 1885, invited a team of cricketers from Sydney to play a local team.

Following the cricket game, players were invited to an elaborate dinner party in the ballroom followed by dancing until daybreak. In 1885, Peter Hart gave the land on which Emmanuel Church in Fitzroy Falls stands, free of debt with a donation to help start the building. Now a private home, the church building stands as a monument to his generosity.

In a similar manner to Mr Hart, Doug Cull hosted an array of events at *Ulster Park* including a winter music concert in July 1973 on behalf of the Berrima Art Society. Held in the ballroom, the audience included young and old and artwork by local artists decorated the walls. Guests enjoyed mulled wine following the concert.

In 1990, NSW Premier Nick Greiner made an official visit to the Southern Highlands, which included a fundraising function at *Ulster Park*, organised by the local branches of the Liberal Party.

More about Doug Cull from the BDHS archives

In 1997 the last of the BDHS's tours to *Ulster Park* took place, with quite a crowd attending, as seen in the photo below from the *Ulster Park* building file.



The book *Echoes through the Mist, a history of the Avoca District*, first published in 1988 by the Avoca Bicentenary Committee, includes entries written by various locals describing their properties and experiences. A revised version of the *Echoes* book was published by the BDHS in 2013 and copies are still available for purchase. The entry in it written by Doug Cull about *Ulster Park* is provided here:

'Ulster Park since 1960' by Doug Cull

"Passing along the road near Fitzroy Falls one day towards the end of 1959, my attention was caught by a stretch of open country looking for a good owner. Yes, I was informed, the property was on the market, though it was in a very run-down condition. Next day, on looking up to the house and trees from the big dam, I said to myself "someone could make a nice place of this.

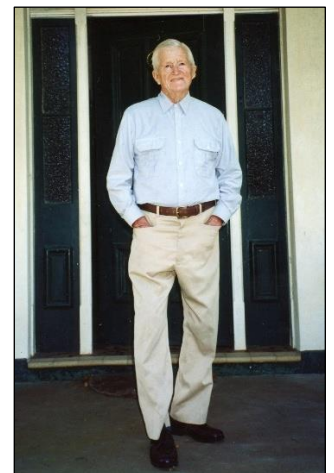
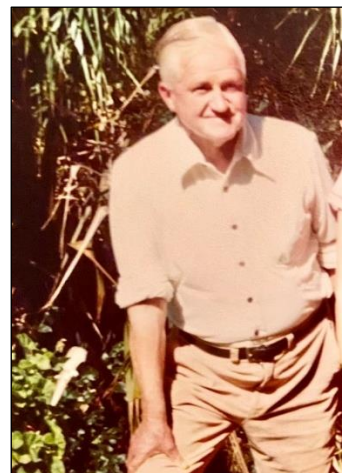
On becoming the owner of *Ulster Park* I would be facing very different conditions to what had been my experience in Northern NSW, between Coolah and Gunnedah, where we had run, without fertilizer, sheep and cattle topped off on oats and grazing lucerne. Here at Fitzroy Falls, with double the

rainfall, wheat would be out, though potatoes were an option as a cash crop and a means to land improvement. I bought cattle, and cautiously some sheep, and found that both did well, thanks to drenches and veterinary facilities once not available.

Stock also did better through the spreading of superphosphate, which of course is not the only factor in the fine art of pasture improvement. If progress was slow, it was subsequently to see both rabbits and blackberries disappear, and to watch the planted pine trees grow.

Circumstances are a factor in achievement, but I remembered being told that the land is like most things – one received according to what is put in. In this locality, although we may not receive the spectacular returns occasionally enjoyed in a wide brown land, our environmental conditions make for a measure of stability, which allows endless opportunities through experience and innovation to get closer to standards long maintained in older economics, to the better of all concerned.

For me, *Ulster Park* has not been easy, but there have been compensations. The place now has a grip on me, and I would not like to live elsewhere."



The Society thanks Melissa Lawrence (seen above here as a girl being held by Doug) for providing the Cull family biography and the photographs of *Ulster Park* and Douglas Cull, her great-uncle.

Compiled by Philip Morton

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

PO Box 188 Moss Vale NSW 2577 ☎ Telephone (02) 4872 2169

email: bdhsarchives@gmail.com ☎ web: www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au

ARCHIVES: Wingecarribee Shire Council, Civic Centre 68 Elizabeth Street Moss Vale

OPEN: Mondays, Tuesdays 10am-4pm and Saturdays 10am-1pm. Closed Public Holidays.
Library collection contains reference books, journals and a general collection.

MUSEUM: Marketplace, Berrima. Tel: 02 4877 1130. Email: bdmuseum@bigpond.com

AT PRESENT, OPEN: 10.00am to 3.00pm, Fridays to Sundays.

This includes during school and public holiday periods.

MEMBERSHIP: Any person wanting to join the Society may do so at any stage during the year by completing a form and paying the appropriate fee. Joining Fee \$10.00 – Single \$25.00 – Family \$35.00.

AFFILIATIONS: Royal Australian Historical Society, Museums Australia Inc and NSW Association of Family History Societies.

If undelivered return to:

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

PO Box 188

MOSS VALE NSW 2577

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

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BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

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