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THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS OF AGRICULTURE IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

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8. PROBLEMS OF MARKETING AND PRICES IN THE EARLY AGRICULTURE OF NEW SOUTH WALES. (CIRCA 1803-1821.)

Introduction to the General Problem: The Commissariat: The System of Store Receipts: The Problem of the "Sufficient Price": The Public Market: Fluctuations in Prices: Food Gluts and Scarcities: The Problem of a Fluctuating Demand: The Effect of Imports upon the Local Agriculture: Monopoly and the Controls against it: The Distillation of Alcohol as one means of increasing the Internal Consumption of Grain: Conclusions.

PROBLEM.

Too often agriculture is considered only from the production viewpoint and it is overlooked that it is of little use a farmer producing if there is no market for the results of his labours, or nearly as bad, if the prices returned to him are insufficient to make his industry profitable. Men will seldom work for the pleasure of labour alone—there must be a "sufficient price" for the articles of such labour. The problem of such markets and prices, as exemplified in the Macquarie period, is constantly recurring in agriculture and is as much a present-day problem as it was more than one hundred years ago. But in the early stages of the New South Wales Colony these considerations of markets, profits, fluctuating production and a "sufficient price," were of a unique significance, for in the simple primitive economy of the times, the pendulum of prosperity for the settlers was extremely sensitive to any and every change in the demand for the basic commodities of meat and grain, and on every swing in the weather, which altered the state of the pastures and the prospects of the harvest, and thus the supply of foodstuffs for the settlement. "So long," says Wentworth (1) speaking of the early New South Wales of his day, "as the necessities of Government were greater than the means of the colonists to administer to them, the productive powers of this settlement developed themselves with a degree of rapidity which furnishes the surest criterion of its fertility and importance. But from the moment this impulse was checked, from the instant the supply exceeded the demand, the Colony may be said to have continued stationary with respect of its agriculture; producing in favourable seasons, somewhat more than enough grain for its consumption but in unfavourable ones, whether arising from drought or flood, falling so greatly deficient in its supply, that recourse has been invariably had to India in order to guarantee its inhabitants from the horrors of famine, which have so often stared them in the face; and to which but for such salutary precaution, the majority of them must have long ago fallen victims."

† 97717—2

Atkinson (2) in 1826, looking back on the previous twenty years of settlement and considering the similar distresses of his own day, was forced to conclude, also, that "irregularity and uncertainty of the market have much retarded the improvement of agriculture," and that "the alternative plenty and scarcity that have existed from the first settlement of the colony . . . is an evil to the greater part of the community though sometimes an advantage to the few possessed of means of hoarding in time of plenty against the return of scarcity." Bigge (3), likewise, had ample evidence before him to include uncertainty of the market as one of the "great causes that (had) operated unfavourably to the agriculture of New South Wales," and which he listed as comprising, "the uncertainty of the demand for produce, together with the difficulties in obtaining access to the government stores, and the expense and risk of cultivation, either as arising from the climate, the frequent varieties of the soil, or from the carelessness and unskilfulness of the convict servants." Any reading of the contemporary literature of the period 1788 right up to 1842 makes it plain that a fluctuating and uncertain market for agricultural produce was one of the principal problems of the New South Wales settlement, and that the vagaries of an uncertain climate and the disposition of its agriculture made anything but a fluctuating production and in consequence demand well-nigh impossible.

New South Wales was largely a closed economy for the first thirty-odd years of settlement. Isolated from external markets for its produce, the farming community subsisted on the beneficence of government, and on the prices fixed by government for the entry of grain and meat into its stores depended its prosperity. Outside the market provided by government there was a public market, but in both demand and prices were capricious. The Colony was hemmed in by archaic navigation laws which frustrated all attempts at local enterprise in favour of the monopolistic East India Company, and was forgotten by the Lords of Whitehall occupied with wars and a post-war reconstruction at home, and concerned only in keeping expenditure in the convict depot of New South Wales at the lowest levels. A bountiful harvest, a good season in the Colony, meant a surplus which quite often could not be sold and was in consequence largely wasted. Every such failure of the stores to take up the surplus meant the obliteration of the hopes of the hard-working and opportunities for engrossers, profiteers and traders, the middlemen who alone could grow rich in such circumstances from a general distress of the settlers. The effects were a profound discouragement to agriculture which existed to at least 1842. And, continually recurring, there were the droughts, the floods, the invasions of "caterpillars," the pests, the grass and stubble fires which means scarcity, panic and a flight to all corners for food. It was never possible to so adjust reserves and purchases that they satisfied exactly the demands and the deficiencies. Too much would fill the stores and granaries of government, leaving then so much less that could be purchased from local suppliers. The first setback to an expanding agriculture occurred in 1803, and successive setbacks recurred throughout the period of primitive farming settlement.

This inability of the local government to guarantee a firm and regular market for all goods produced, was throughout recognised by many of the settlers as a cause of economic distress. Suggestions for its correction were probably as constantly debated, but it seems that the problem was never fully realised by those in authority and the administration was incapable of assessing the consequences. The plea to Macquarie by the pathetic little community at Windsor in 1812, is the first recorded diagnosis of this malaise of agriculture. Agriculture could only prosper in Macquarie times, as it can only prosper now, if able to export its surpluses, or, alternatively, there is a sufficiently high level of internal consumption to take up the surpluses which occur in bountiful years, over and above the lesser production of the more normal average and bad years. Neither the Windsor farmers nor Bigge much later could see beyond the use of grain in the distillation of alcohol as a means of enlarging the internal demands, for exports were largely impossible, though considered. Even when later in the Colony's development, the war in Europe being over, a cargo of flour was in 1819 exported to the Cape of Good Hope in a "colonial built vessel," it was a failure. "The season of the year in which the voyage was commenced was unfavourable, and from the resultant delay and difficulty that occurred in procuring a return cargo, the profits of the speculation were not such as to encourage a repetition of it" (*). When, in due course, the population increased, these setbacks had left their mark, and were evidenced in a lagging agriculture which could not keep up with the new demands. And, in consequence, just as in 1788 the Colony subsisted only on foodstuffs brought from abroad, so in 1842 it was still depending on imports for its survival. The colony never forgot the troubles of its agriculture in the bad years of Macquarie times.

One staple alone, and this was wool, saved the settlement from a miserable failure. It alone, after an early testing period, provided an expanding and inexhaustible market. It alone was safe from the weevils and the smuts, the drake and the rusts. It could be stored. It did not deteriorate. In the main and as apart from the wool-growing, the progress of agriculture was a series of halts and starts, gluts and scarcities, no continuing peaceful prosperity.

THE COMMISSARIAT.

The Commissariat was a very important department in the early settlement. The whole population, free and convict, was in the last resort dependent upon it. It was the main, the only purchaser in bulk of home-grown commodities. On the prices paid rested the financial position of the farmers, and since it was the mainspring of all governmental expenditure, ultimately the general trade and finances of the Colony. In fact, "the internal trade of New South Wales (was) put in motion by the demand of government for the two great articles of produce, wheat and meat, consumed by the convicts and the individuals composing the civil establishment, to whom rations (were) allowed" (5). Commissary receipts were for many years the chief medium of exchange, just as commissary purchases were the chief source of

prosperity. It supported half the population by feeding the other half. Some idea of its importance may be gathered from the fact that, whilst the estimate of expenditure in the Colony for the year ending 24th December, 1821, amounted to £189,008, the item alone of rations for the troops, civil officers and convicts absorbed £143,370 of the total (⁶). The Deputy Commissary-General, the highest store official in the Colony, was attached to the Army, his chief, the Commissary-General of Army Stores in England. His salary was higher in proportion than that of the civil officials, and his position in regard to the Governor equivocal. Macquarie looked upon himself as supreme in this department as in others. Men like Commissary Allan and Commissary Drennan, sent from England with no previous Colonial experience, thought that their first allegiance was to their chiefs at home. There was, in consequence, continual friction (⁷).

In ordinary seasons the stores were opened in February of each year for the receipt of grain, just as soon as the harvest had been gathered and thrashed out (⁸). For years the store at Sydney was kept open each day whilst the delivery period continued, but, in 1815, the period of opening was reduced to one day per week. The reasons given were that "In consequence of the great inconvenience arising from the stores at Sydney being constantly kept open for the reception of wheat from individuals on account of the Public Service, His Excellency hereby orders and directs that only one day in each week shall be appropriated for that purpose. The public are, therefore, to take notice that no wheat will be received at His Majesty's stores at Sydney after 19th April but what shall be offered every Thursday" (⁹). Sometimes the opening of the stores would be delayed because of previous imports and purchases still providing a sufficient reserve, and this meant distress to the settlers. The purchases were made at a price fixed beforehand by the Governor, and the quantities purchased depended on the particular requirements of the moment. Sometimes, again, the whole of a settler's produce would be taken, but, at other times, a predetermined amount only, based perhaps on the number of acres in cultivation the preceding year. Not all the settlers were able to tender for meat. Largely the supplies in bulk were obtained from the graziers. As meat, if fresh, could not be long kept, the stores were open for the receipt of supplies at staggered intervals. Tenders would be called for at fixed prices and the stores closed once the requisite demand was met. The stores were not always able to take all the produce of grain and meat at times available, and this was the cause of great hardship to the settlers.

The stores in the Macquarie period were at Sydney, Parramatta, Windsor and Liverpool, and in 1819 another was added at Emu Plains, to afford temporary benefit to "an individual whose herds of cattle were grazing in the neighbourhood," and to supply a party of convicts employed to open the road from the "Cow Pastures to the Cookbundoon Hills" (¹⁰). Convict labourers were employed at the stores to receive and deposit the grain and meat delivered, and to turn over and clean the grain. The settlers had sometimes to battle with these assistants in gaining admission to

the stores for their produce, and quite often to bribe them to produce an early turn "amidst the numerous competitors for that benefit on one and the same day" ⁽¹¹⁾. The convict labourers—who else in the early settlement were not—were given to drink. They were inefficient and corrupt. There were repeated dismissals and punishments for intoxication. For a price, a settler could attempt to conceal the bad quality or dirty condition of his grain by procuring through the assistance of the labourers the addition to it of grain of good quality on the same floor. It was at the Sydney Store that such bribery and corruption were most rampant ⁽¹²⁾. Attempt was made to enforce all sorts of regulations. In 1810, it was ordered that, "whenever animal food or grain of any kind is received into His Majesty's Stores, either at Sydney or at any of the dependent settlements, the Commissary, his Deputy or a storekeeper, is to call upon a constable or a non-commissioned officer belonging to the corps or detachment to be present at the receipt of such meat or grain and to certify the quantity and quality of each article to be received . . ." ⁽¹³⁾. The storekeepers were warned against receiving any person on the victualling list or discharging anybody from the list without the prior approval of the Governor, but the falsifying of returns was always difficult to check. Occasionally offenders were detected. In December, 1812, Walter Shutt, late a clerk in the Government store at Parramatta, was convicted, "it having been discovered that highly improper and fraudulent practices have for some time prevailed in that store in the mode of issuing provisions and of receiving animal food into it; and that great partiality has been shown in both cases, in consequence whereof the convicts of the lower description victualled by the Crown, have received an inferior sort of meat whilst the best had been set aside and distributed to the upper classes" ⁽¹⁴⁾. In 1814, Brodie, a subordinate officer of the Commissariat Department at Sydney, was convicted of misappropriation, and the Governor was constrained to order that "no private goods of any kind—merchandise or stores—will be permitted to be deposited in any of His Majesty's stores" ⁽¹⁵⁾. Records were bad, the problem of administration indeed difficult. This was only to be expected, for the Commissaries themselves were often incapable. Bigge found that a considerable cause of trouble to the settlers was the loss of time as well as the risk to their property experienced in deposits at the store, this "augmenting the expenses and the disappointments of agricultural exertion in New South Wales" ⁽¹⁶⁾. The effects were serious.

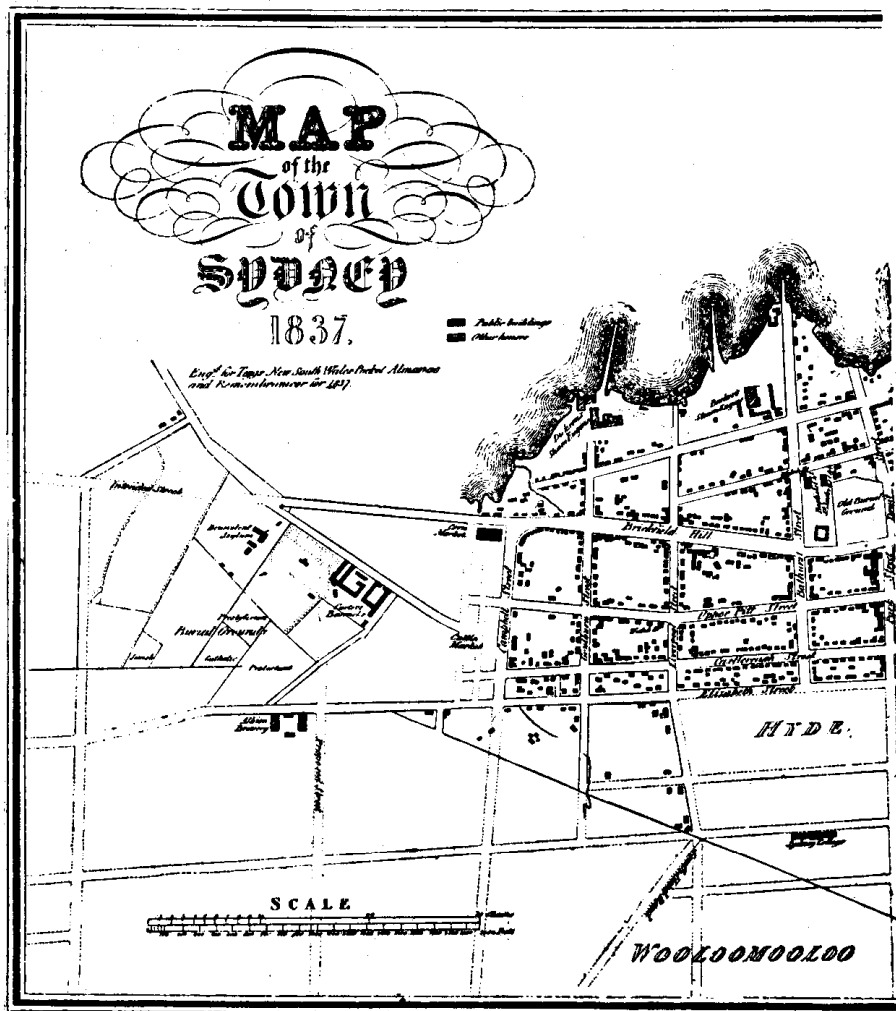
"From the anxiety of the poorer classes of settlers to bring their produce to the store at the earliest opportunity, and not infrequently to conceal their names from the inquiries of creditors," Bigge wrote in his report ⁽¹⁷⁾, "it became very difficult to make any regulations by which embarrassment could be prevented at the first period appointed for receiving grain. It generally happened that the grain produced by this class of settlers was in worse condition than that of others, and that it was to be screened before it could be received into store, and thence arose fresh delays, fraud in the admixture of grain and bribery of the subordinate officers to conceal it. From bad weather or accident, a settler

might be delayed, and the store disappointed, and it would then depend upon the humanity or consideration of the officer in charge whether the turn of such a person should be lost, or reserved for a future day. The distances of the principal grain districts, from the principal receiving store at Sydney and the state of the roads until a later period, might and have frequently caused these disappointments, both to the settlers and the store. To the former, there was no remedy, but that of resorting to the public houses in Sydney, where there are graneries for temporary deposit together with great temptations to dispose of the grain at a heavy loss; and to the latter no other expedient than that of purchasing grain from those who kept it in deposit and within reach of the King's Store."

A state of uncertainty, in fact, always prevailed in the working of the Department. Thefts were frequent, followed by arrests, trials and even executions⁽¹⁵⁾. Forgeries of receipts were less frequent than might have been expected, but frequent enough. Accusations of misappropriation were also a usual channel for malice, as Assistant Commissary Broughton found when he tried to carry through some reforms in Van Diemen's Land in the teeth of the local gentry⁽¹⁶⁾.

The clerks in the Commissariat Department were generally convicts, ex-convicts and ticket of leave men. Their pay ranged from 1s. 6d. to 5s. per day and lodging money, together with an allowance of a full ration, or "that which is otherwise termed the ration and a half," with a weekly allowance of spirits. At all the centres which Bigge visited in the course of his investigations, complaints were made to him of the misconduct of these clerks, though they were more pointed at Hobart and Launceston than elsewhere⁽¹⁷⁾. Not unnaturally the book-keeping was most often variable and slipshod, the disposal of stores negligent, and government was often defrauded. The storehouses, with their loose systems, constituted a veritable invitation to dishonesty and corruption, not alone in foodstuffs but in other items as well. The Commissariat was the main spending agency since upon it depended the feeding and clothing of the convicts employed upon Government work, as well as the costs of such superintendence and materials as were required. The Commissary sometimes obtained tools and other materials by requisition direct on the Treasury in England, sometimes by purchase locally in Sydney through warrants issued by the Governor, whilst occasionally the purchases were made direct by the Chief Engineer with the sanction of the Governor and defrayed from the Police Fund⁽¹⁸⁾. Leakages of tools occurred also, and it was later recommended that they should all be stamped with a broad arrow to deter convicts from stealing and others from receiving them—something, however, scarcely applicable to foodstuffs. There were "saws of different kinds, nails of the strongest description and planes; iron of all dimensions; bricklayers' tools; pitch, tar, resin; the common sorts of paint, and canvas," and strangely enough "an indulgence prevailed . . . of allowing the convict workmen, who had occasional liberty to work for themselves and to use the government tools"⁽¹⁹⁾. If thefts of grain and meat were common in the actual storehouses it would

seem they were even more common in the Engineer's Department, where, notwithstanding Major Druitt's "great personal activity," there were numerous and repeated offences of plunder and robbery, which, despite frequent detection and severe punishment, could not be stopped. It all made planned administration very difficult. The stores in the early settlement must have been, when busy, centres of feverish activity, but, apparently, in quieter times places to while away a few hours in gossip. One Order by the Governor in this regard is amusing. In it he had to warn off all visitors to the stores because he had learned, so he said, that "a number of persons of various descriptions (had) got into the



"DICKSON'S STEAM ENGINE"—SYDNEY'S FIRST POWER-DRIVEN WHEAT MILL.

In the above map, the site of "Dickson's Steam Engine" is shown to be at the foot of Goulburn Street, close to the waterfront at Cockle Bay. The following extract is taken from the "Sydney Gazette" of 17th June, 1815, which commented on the installation of the new machine which, if not the original, was one of the first steam engines to arrive in the Colony:

"The steam engine erected by Mr. Dickson below the burial ground in Cockle Bay is the same which that gentleman worked at his manufactory in Maid-lane, Southwark, shortly previous to his embarking on the ship "Earl Spencer" which conveyed him to these shores last twelvemonth Receiving every necessary assistance in his views from His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Dickson made choice of perhaps the only site in the colony that could have promised a successful issue to his undertaking; and here his judgment has eminently distinguished itself. The range he occupies is at the back of the Brickfield Hill, and adjoins the grounds of Ultimo, the seat of John Harris, Esq., up to the road near the Sydney turnpike, that was formerly washed by the tides, but which are now excluded by a dam extending across the inlet. The election of a spot, commanding a water conveyance of grain, timber and firewood, was in all respects essential to the end of cheapness and utility; and a reservoir of fresh water was less to be dispensed with, because that salt water would by no means answer the purpose of a steam engine, as the granulation of salt itself in the boiler would be inevitable, and thence destroy the operation of the engine. By a simple embankment, therefore, is the end obtained; and by channels introduced through the neighbouring swamps the race is supplied on the one side, and with this simple partition is the tide kept out; so that at flood it is pleasant to contemplate the effect of human skill, in dividing the two adverse species of the same element by so slender a barrier. From this reservoir, which may be termed a sheet of fresh water, the engine supplies itself by means of a pump which forms part of the machinery, in such exact proportions as flies off the steam; and the whole business of setting the engine in motion, and keeping it at work, will be managed by a youth, when sufficiently accustomed to its mechanical operation, which is at present confined to the process of wheat and corn grinding, but it is intended to embrace in its various utilities the pulverisation of tanner's bark, sawyer's wood and other advantageous branches."

(By courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.)

habit of resorting to the principal stores and granaries of government to pass their otherwise unemployed time in lounging there, whereby the duties of the officers, storekeepers and clerks of the Commissariat Department are much obstructed" (23).

The Commissary, through the stores, also carried out certain other functions. It was customary to issue cattle from the government herds in barter for horses required for the use of the government, accompanied by an Order from the Governor to the Commissary to receive cattle at the government stores at the usual prices ruling for meat supplies. These transactions were concluded between the Chief Engineer in the colony and those whose horses were required by Government (24). Seldom, if ever, was any valuation made of the horses or of the cattle exchanged. An Order for the delivery of a particular number of cattle would be given by the Governor upon the Superintendent of the government herds, and it depended in a great measure upon his selection and the accuracy of his judgment as to the weight of the cattle, whether the terms of purchase would be advantageous to the Crown or to the persons making the exchange. There was, of course, a big risk in this, and Bigge later suggested that all horses should be paid for from the public fund upon a valuation made by two persons, one for the Crown, one for the settler (25). Complaint was made that this exchange of cattle for horses resulted in interference with the overall supplies of meat, and dislocation in the turn of supply, so that cattle which the Commissariat was bound to accept at any time on demand would be prior received.

Another function of the Commissariat Department was to provide an agency whereby in respect of cattle, implements, or other goods or services supplied, the settlers were to pay their debts. In 1815, Commissary Palmer received instructions to proceed against those who had incurred debts to Government⁽²⁶⁾. The original books, however, in which the accounts of these debts had been recorded, were found to be "not distinctly kept," and many persons disputed them. "Confessions" were, nevertheless, obtained in the same year to the amount of £549 18s. 9d., and much expense was incurred in commencing action for recovery. Commissary Allan, finding that these expenses would probably be more than the actual debts themselves, abandoned proceedings in September, 1816⁽²⁷⁾. The whole of the debts considered as provable but not "confessed," according to Palmer, amounted to £4,429 9s. od. but, of the men who had incurred these debts, many were dead or had left the Colony in 1819. But regularly, throughout the early years of settlement, warnings were issued in the *Gazette* that legal proceedings would be taken against those failing to repay debts due to the Government. The advertisements were something after this pattern: "And all persons from whom debts are due to the Government for cattle issued from the public herds; or for any other account whatever, are required to exchange the same before the 15th February next, by putting wheat or animal food into His Majesty's Store, or by such other mode as they may be agreed for, in failure of which the Acting Commissary has received Directions to take legal measures to enforce the payment"⁽²⁸⁾.

Some detail has been here given of the actual working and organisation of the Commissariat Department in order to make clear the almost overwhelming personal responsibility which rested upon the Governor and his immediate subordinates in actually carrying on the bare functions of administration. The storehouses were too small for the purposes required; the public markets were, in 1819, in "absolute ruin," and it is probably to the simple explanation that there was too much to do in too short a time that we must look for an explanation why both these striking deficiencies were not corrected and some better provision made for both the storage and marketing of perishables.

THE SYSTEM OF STORE RECEIPTS.

Except for short periods, the method of payment adopted for the supplies of wheat and meat received at the stores at the different stations, was generally in the form of store receipts issued by the storekeepers for the quantities purchased. These receipts were made out as orders drawn by the storekeepers upon the Deputy Commissary General to pay to the payee or bearer the value of the quantity of meat or wheat delivered at a given rate per pound or bushel. Generally it was the custom to receive grain by the bushel of 56 lb. and issue it as rations by the pound⁽²⁹⁾. The wheat, however, grown in New South Wales in different districts, varied widely in weight, sometimes exceeding and sometimes being less than 56 lb. The wheat of Van Diemen's Land always weighed much heavier than that of New South Wales and generally as much as 63 lb. The rate of loss charged on the issue of wheat

by the Commissary appears to have varied at different periods from temporary circumstances that affected the grain in the store. Bigge later recommended that the whole of the wheat should be received by the pound, both "with a view to perspicuity in the accounts of the Commissariat Department, as well as to afford encouragement to the settlers to improve the quality of their grain" ⁽³⁰⁾. This recommendation was, however, not given effect. In the later Colony, the receipts, based then on measured bushel or scale weights, were made negotiable and were required to be presented for payment each quarter in order to be consolidated by bills on the English Treasury. This mode of payment was uniformly in operation during the early part of Macquarie's administration, whilst Broughton was the Commissary. However, in June, 1813, on the arrival of Commissary Allan from England it was changed. It had been objected to by the Treasury and by the Auditors of Public Accounts ⁽³¹⁾. Allan issued his own notes in payment for supplies, but Macquarie found that Allan's personal and public transactions had become confused together, and in 1815 forced Allan to revise his financial system, to call in his own notes of hand and to revert to the original system of store receipts ⁽³²⁾. From 1815 to 1819 the store receipts were the normal method of payment, but with the arrival of Drennan as Commissary in 1819, a more serious disagreement arose with the Governor. Macquarie was prejudiced against officers sent to him from England and on the whole was justified in some resentment. He much preferred to choose his own men on the spot and viewed innovations forced on his administration with suspicion. Frederick Drennan arrived in Sydney in January, 1819, to relieve Allan. Under a "more recent but verbal communication to him of the objections raised by the Treasury," he cancelled the store receipt system and reverted again to the system of issuing his own personal notes ⁽³³⁾. Macquarie disapproved of this system as did Sorrel, Lt. Governor of Van Diemen's Land ⁽³⁴⁾. It was not long before Macquarie was forced to appoint a board of investigation into Drennan's administration. It found that Drennan had been extremely negligent. Redeemed receipts were not cancelled, but left lying around for months where they could have been stolen and misrepresented. The key of his office with its chests of dollars and tubs of halfpennies, was left with a convict messenger who drank. Promissory Note forms were kept in an unlocked cupboard, and an ex-convict authorised to sign them because Drennan had broken his arm. A series of thefts and forgeries had occurred as a consequence. Macquarie observed that Drennan was totally unfit for the performance of the duties so entrusted to him, "and that he had grossly misrepresented his instructions from England" ⁽³⁵⁾. In September, 1820, the store receipts system was again brought into operation.

One objection to the receipts was the great difficulty experienced in inducing the holders to bring them in for consolidation within a given period, more especially in Van Diemen's Land, where "communication between the settlers and the town was not frequent, and was sometimes hazardous" ⁽³⁶⁾. The store receipts were frequently detained by the holders, until occasion

might require them to be changed, either by the merchants or by the Commissary himself, for bills or dollars. A supply of dollars had been received from Madras in 1813 and they were then put into circulation. To raise their current value in the Colony and prevent their export, the centre had been cut from each dollar which was stamped and circulated at a value of 1s. 3d., and the remaining part of the dollar at 5s. ⁽³⁷⁾. Dollars to the value of £10,000 were cut in this manner, and continued to circulate in the Colony along with dollars which had not been tampered with. The coins were always negotiable with the Commissary, and were exchanged at their nominal value for bills upon the Treasury. When Allan's notes were withdrawn in 1815, it was conceived that the store receipts would supply their place ⁽³⁸⁾. In some respects and for the making of large purchases they did, but for the accommodation of the poorer settlers they were quite inadequate. To exchange them they were compelled to go to Sydney where they could only obtain for them a bill upon the Treasury or goods from the stores of retailers. To these persons, the store receipts were acceptable at all times, because, dealing in imports and in large sums, the receipts were easily convertible into personal Promissory Notes of the Commissary, which often times were interlocked with his other personal accounts and made the early Colonial currency confused. From the point of view of Government, however, the issue of store receipts did provide a certain degree of check upon public expenditure, although with limitations. The store receipts were by Macquarie's order subjected to examination by a local committee officially appointed ⁽³⁹⁾. After being compared with the cheque books from which they were taken, the originals were cancelled. But as the cancelled receipts constituted an essential voucher in the hands of the Commissary, it became necessary for him to provide himself with some new document to transmit to England for auditing purposes. Pay lists were therefore provided, signed with the names of the persons who received payment for the articles furnished. But if it happened that the store receipts were detained by the holders beyond the regular period for consolidation into bills or for examination by the Local Committee, the Commissary was obliged to take credits into his accounts unsupported by any voucher for the amount of the outstanding store receipts. On the other hand, the system of making payments by the introduction of a metal currency would not have been without danger in New South Wales for it would have tended to multiply vouchers in the offices of the Commissary, and moreover have multiplied immeasurably the temptations to theft, which it would have been almost impossible to control.

In general, the Colony got along during its early years with a currency compounded of grain, rum, store receipts, Commissariat Notes, Private Promissory Notes, augmented in 1814 by a token currency of mutilated dollars and, following the establishment of the Bank of New South Wales in 1817, by bank notes and metal tokens ⁽⁴⁰⁾. The reversion to store receipts

in August, 1820, for purchases of grain and meat by the Commissary, was highly favourable to the stabilisation of the currency and to the interests of the small farmer, for it enabled the Bank to make its own notes interchangeable at all times or nearly so with bills upon the British Treasury (⁴¹). The notes of the Bank afforded a convenient circulating medium for the internal transactions of the Colony, and enabled the poorer classes of settlers who received store receipts in payment for their grain and meat to break the amount of them, and to preserve a portion of that amount for the supply of their future wants as they occurred. To a certain extent it made it possible for the small farmer to be independent of the trader and so it did something to preserve his security. It is, however, symptomatic of the Home Government's outlook that the charter of the Bank of New South Wales did not receive Royal sanction until many years afterwards. Its provisions did not meet with Lord Bathurst's approval, and its only legal standing rested upon the authority of the Governor.

THE PUBLIC MARKETS.

As apart from the Commissariat Department and its tenders for grain and meat, there were markets at most of the settlements where the farmer might sell his produce. The dealings of the Commissariat were confined to wheat, maize and meat, but at the markets opportunity was provided to sell for whatever they might bring not only these, but in addition, poultry, eggs, vegetables of all kinds, barley, oats, butter, grass, hay and in fact, anything else for which there might be a demand. Naturally enough the Sydney market was by far the most important of these selling places. On 4th March, 1809, new markets had been established in "Market Square" on the present site of Market-street (⁴²). They were opened by Foveaux as Lieutenant Governor. There was "a tolerably good supply of all kinds of marketable commodities which sold at the following average prices: beef and mutton 15d. and pork 1s. 5d. per lb., fowls 4s. to 5s. a couple, potatoes 9s. to 10s. per 100 lb., wheat 11s. 6d. per bushel." The occasion had been marked by a dispute which had "produced a storm of words between two of the market women which had resulted in an athletic determination." In the issue of the *Gazette* of 6th October, 1810, there is a mention of the actual naming of the Market Square and the Market Wharf. Apparently, the market was established on the level ground of the present Market-street elevation. It was an enclosure of palings with old sheds inside disguised as stalls. Here were booths to be rented by vendors of produce, pens for stock, a house for the market-keeper, the standard scales, weights and measures. Over the hill at the foot of the street which ended at Cockle Bay, was a wharf for the landing of the produce brought by boat down the Parramatta River (⁴³).

It is interesting to note the regulations drawn up by a Bench of Magistrates in April, 1809, for the management of the markets. (S.G., 16th April, 1809):—

“1. That the market shall be held at the established place on every Tuesday and Saturday, and begin at sunrise.

“2. That no kind of butcher’s meat shall be sold by the joint or by hand, but by weight—Penalty, forfeiture of same.

“3. That potatoes and all other articles usually sold by the hundredweight, shall weigh 112 lbs. as in England . . .

“4. Any person purchasing articles at the market shall not expose the same for market on that day till the market is over, or at noon . . .

“5. Every person is forbidden to purchase on market days either vegetables, eggs, fruit, potatoes, maize, barley or oats at any other place than at the market, until the market is over at noon; nor before the market hours . . . For the second offence the offender will be indicted for forestalling . . .

“6. No person, having articles of consumption (as before described) to dispose of, shall be permitted to sell or barter the same on their way to Sydney by land or water on market days; nor when at Sydney, at any other place than at the market place . . .

“7. Any person bringing to Sydney grain on any day of the week, market days excepted, may lodge the same in such place as he may think proper, giving notice to the clerk . . .

“8. No landholder or other person can sell their grain in any boat, carriage, or waggon within three miles of Sydney; but must proceed to that place, and comply with the regulations thereof . . .

“ . . . Scales, weights and measures will be furnished the Clerk of the Market; from which all other scales, weights and measures used at the market are to be adjusted . . .”

The market so established was not in Macquarie times an expense to Government, for it paid for itself by tolls and dues (“). Procedure was to advertise in the *Gazette* for applications from “persons of respectable character who can keep exact accounts,” and to let the charge of the markets to the highest bidder, the usual term being one year. Following the resignation of Matthew John Gibbons early in 1814, so that he might “return to his native country,” there was one such advertisement. The tolls of the Sydney market had been established by a public order of Macquarie, issued on 20th October, 1810 (45). A clerk of the market was appointed, who as well as an assistant were sworn in as constables, and were given the power of settling and arranging all questions tending to the order and regularity of the market. Ordinances made it compulsory that all articles brought to market should be lodged in the market house or store, and that the clerk should take an account of the quantity and prices at which they were sold. Part of this regulation was subsequently dispensed with, because of the ruinous state of the buildings, but the goods were brought within the paling fence that surrounded the market,

and were made subject to the payment of the same duty as if they had been stored in the market house. It appeared later to Commissioner Bigge that the duties, "especially as long as the consideration for which they were imposed had ceased to exist . . . exceed a just measure of convenience to the public, or of remuneration to the Government" (46). These tolls that were allowed at the Sydney Market amounted to 3d. for every bushel of wheat or barley, 2d. for every bushel of maize or oats, and 3d. per hundredweight of potatoes. The sum of 1s. 4d. per week was charged for the hiring of a stall erected in the market place, and 8d. for the liberty of selling goods on any market day (47).

Spoilation of perishables did occur, and the market must have been held under all manner of difficulties. There was little protection of articles brought to market and exposed for sale, either from the effects of rain, the sun or dust and wind. The Commissioner in 1819 found the buildings in a state of "absolute ruin" (48). He found this difficult to understand, thought it a "subject of regret" that the accommodation of a good and enlarged market-house had not been provided at an earlier period, and recommended to the Governor the erection of a "commodious building . . . together with a strong fence for the reception of cattle brought for sale" (49). It is surprising that Macquarie should have neglected giving attention to the markets, for it cannot be pretended that towards the end of his administration there was anything to prevent his doing so. But in this matter, as in so many others, the Governor seemed to overlook essentials for the facade of surface appearances—and perhaps the fact that the market was surrounded by a paling fence was sufficient to hide the real state of its interior from his view.

The market was quite an important place in the internal economy of the settlement (50). The Clerk of the Market was furnished with stamped weights and scales, by which he was empowered to regulate and adjust all sales made in the market, and had a further power to inspect, whenever he might think proper, the weights and scales that were elsewhere used in the town of Sydney. Among his other duties was one to make a weekly report to the magistrates of the quantity and price of wheat sold on every market day, to enable them to determine the price of bread. This was a very important measure, a device to ensure some control over the price of probably the most important element in the diet of the majority, which had been invented and was being similarly used in England. In consequence it explains in some degree the constant fear in the early community of profiteering and malpractice rigging the market prices of wheat, and thus the price of bread.

The tolls of the market, as it has been seen, were at least from 1814 onwards let by auction. Such a measure, thought Bigge in 1819, had been more profitable in that shape than would have been the case had the Clerk of the Market been given a salary, and a weekly account of the tolls had been kept (51). The clerk had other privileges, also. Not only was he allowed to reside in the market-place, but he was further given, like so many others—probably in place of an increase in wages and in order to encourage

his exertions—a license for the sale of spirits (⁵²). This latter appeared to Bigge to be “an accommodation very prejudicial to the purposes of his appointment or to the faithful execution of his duties.” Surprisingly, although at Hobart Town “a market house of simple construction and solid materials (had) been erected . . . it was very little resorted to in the year 1820” (⁵³).

As an appendix to this study, there is shown a detail of movements in prices, as taken from the *Gazette* for the years, 1808-1823. The fluctuations are extraordinary, ranging in the case of wheat from maximums of 30s. or more per bushel in September, 1809; May, 1810; October, 1810; November, 1810; December, 1810; in the early Colony, to similar prices in September, 1817, at a later period; with minimums of less than 9s. per bushel in February, 1812; October, 1812; January, 1813; February, 1813; January, 1817; February, 1817; January, 1818; April, 1818; December, 1818; January, 1819; November, 1819, with possibly the lowest figure in all these years being 6s. 9¾d. in February, 1823. There is a similar movement in the price of butter from 7s. 6d. per lb. before dairying got under weigh properly, to possibly a minimum of 2s. per lb., in November, 1817. There were corresponding, though not nearly as wide, fluctuations in the case of other commodities. It is sufficient to note that these price fluctuations followed alterations in the ordinary cycle of variations in supply and demand, the supply being regulated by such factors as the area of cleared land actually under cultivation and the extent of production, the incidence of droughts, floods and other seasonal influences, and, in the later state of the Colony's development, by the extent of imports from Tasmania and South America; demand depending upon the size and, that most difficult of all things to assess, the purchasing power of a changing population. Quality, also, must have always had a great deal to do with variations in price, for in no article of produce could there have been any such standard as “fair average quality.” In the accounts of the market sales there are constant references to these differences in quality. Thus, from the *Gazette* of 25th June, 1809: “The prices demanded for wheat at yesterday's sale were very various owing to the difference in quality, one salesman demanding 25s. per bushel, and another only 10s. So wonderful a disparity it is almost impossible to account for, however, the samples might differ in appearance, but certain it is the cheapest found the quicker sale. Both kinds being weighed a bushel of 25s. lot weighed 62 lb. weight; a bushel of 10s. lot not more than 46 lb. . . . This mode of calculation cannot justly be defended, when we consider the cleanness of the grain, some of which is brought to market without having even gone through a sieve at all, weavel-eaten and in a shameful state of filth, produced by the neglect of an article invaluable to the community at such a crisis as the present . . . The little attention paid to the preservation of grain, added to the slovenly method of preparing it for market, is a serious evil, which ought as much as possible to be discouraged.” The slipshod manner in which grain was sometimes forwarded to market meant that it was contaminated with the seeds and debris of all kinds of weeds. The bread made from

such grain could hardly have been anything but unpalatable. There is a reference to a condition more serious in the *Gazette* of 17th November, 1810 issue: "Some very serious complaints have been made through the week of the bad quality of bread made at several bake-houses in Sydney owing to the imperfect manner in which the wheat previous to grinding has been cleaned of the drake, or grass seed that sometimes grows among it. The persons affected have all been attacked in the same way—a violent headache, dimness of sight, trembling of the joints, extreme drowsiness and occasional vomiting."

But, in general, the ordinary law of supply and demand regulated the trade of the markets. The brief accounts given of the sales are very little different from the market reports which nowadays appear in the daily papers. A few examples may perhaps better explain the atmosphere of the public market than lengthy description: "This day's market was the worst supplied with vegetables experienced for a long time. Some few potatoes for table use were sold at 20s. per cwt. and others for seed at 22s. owing to the great scarcity that prevails, this being the seed time and the last crop nearly expended." (*S.G.*, 8th September, 1810); "Two bushels of new wheat brought from George's River were this morning brought to market, and sold for 30s. per bushel—a very fair sample. A quantity of barley was offered at 10s. but found no buyers and remains in the market-store for sale." (*S.G.*, 17th November, 1810); "This day's market exhibited a more pleasant appearance than it had afforded at many months past—a tolerable supply of good new wheat at 18s. per bushel, only, at which price it found plenty of buyers." (*S.G.*, 1st December, 1810); "The seasonable rains during the past week have been general and acceptable—the inconvenience of travelling, however, produced a scarcity of wheat at this morning's market; some of the present year's produce was nevertheless bought, which sold at a good price. Vegetables were still scarce, owing to the long succession of dry weather. New potatoes were sold at 16s. per cwt., maize as high as 16s. per bushel." (*S.G.*, 23rd November, 1811); "In consequence of the late rains the market was tolerably supplied with vegetables of many kinds and some fair samples of wheat sold as low as 11s. to 12s. per bushel." (*S.G.*, 7th December, 1811); "The market was this day abundantly stocked with all the various kinds of vegetables in season. Potatoes, which a few weeks ago sold as high as 24s., were now reduced to 7s. per cwt., and the finest peaches, which were indeed delicious to the eye, sold at 8d. per dozen." (*S.G.*, 4th January, 1812); "*Advertisement, 98 George Street*:—The following articles newly imported are now selling wholesale and retail . . . Beef in tierces 5d. per lb., pork in tierces 7d. per lb. . . soap, candles, glass, textiles, rice, frying pans, locks, paper, etc. . . ." (*S.G.*, 13th February, 1813); "The average price of wheat was £1 4s. 4½d.—nearly 800 bushels were sold and one load returned for want of buyers." (*S.G.*, 14th February, 1814); "The market was yesterday pretty well supplied with the vegetables of the season. Peas were plentiful, and sold at 15d. a peck; there were some Windsor beans which were very fine; but only one cart-load of colonial potatoes

for which 12s. per cwt. was refused, and they were taken away again, the owner determining not to sell them under 15s." (*S.G.*, 16th October, 1819); "Wheat 9s. 9¾d. per bushel—very little wheat in market and that neither clean nor good. Plenty of fruit and vegetables . . ." (*S.G.*, 3rd February, 1821); "At yesterday's market (bread 5¾d., wheat 10s. per bushel; maize 3s. 9d. per bushel; potatoes 6s. 6d. per cwt.); there was a good supply of excellent grain, but owing to the recent arrivals from Valparaiso and Hobart Town, the sale was remarkably dull." (*S.G.*, 9th June, 1821); "*Advertisement*: Fine Derwent wheat to be sold in any quantity, on board the brig *Nereus*; or at Mr. Robert Campbell's stores, No. 8 Bligh Street, at two dollars per bushel." (*S.G.*, 28th June, 1822).

To the man of small means, not in receipt of Government rations, the public market at Sydney was the only place where he could buy his requirements, if indeed he was sufficiently independent not to be tied to some storekeeper or other. His standard of living, at least in foodstuffs, depended upon a free and open market. Rigging of the market was throughout the early years of settlement a danger to be mortally feared. This fear provides an explanation of the constantly repeated orders of Government, and recurring articles in the *Gazette* on engrossing, profiteering and monopoly, in the early years of settlement up to 1821, a key to an understanding of the controversies of the 1820's, and an indication of the reasons for the later protests by Wentworth and others against the extortionate prices charged by millers and bakers for flour and bread. An indication of the attitude of Government and the community may be gathered from this brief mention in the *Gazette*, of issue 9th June, 1821: "An instance of forestalling came under the cognizance of the Superintendent of Police yesterday forenoon. The case was simply this: A man possessing a ticket-of-leave, purchased in the market a pair of ducks, for which he gave 4s. 6d. and immediately sold the same for 6s. As this is a transaction utterly repugnant to the Government and General orders on that head, and likewise at variance with common honesty, and unfortunately practised pretty generally in all our markets, the magistrate considered it necessary to visit the present case with a punishment somewhat proportionate to the magnitude of the offence, and thereby cancelled the individual's ticket-of-leave, and ordered him into barracks."

WANT AND PLENTY—FLUCTUATING PRODUCTION AND FLUCTUATING PRICES.

Perhaps the best explanation of the extraordinary instability of the internal market for supplies of home-grown produce in early New South Wales, is to consider in detail the movement of a cycle within a matter of months from a stage of exuberant abundance to a despairing shortage. In such a cycle, there are to be seen the effects of such fluctuations upon the position of the farmer, and the reactions of an officialdom hardly realising what it is dealing with. By trial and error there emerges eventually the need for definitely determining beforehand a sufficient price for agricultural produce for upon such a price depends the very

lifeblood of agricultural maintenance. To be seen, also, is the emergence of the fear of monopoly, of engrossing tactics by dealers in the food necessities indispensable for the well-being of every member of the small early community. A sufficiently illustrative period is the cycle from the bountiful harvest of 1812 to the beginnings of the great drought, 1814 to 1816.

In 1810 and for a considerable time afterwards, an appreciable scarcity of wheat had prevailed in the Colony as a consequence of the severe flood of 1808. To relieve the pressure of the scarcity the Governor had been obliged to import wheat from Bengal and this wheat continued to be supplied during 1811⁽⁵⁴⁾. The harvest of 1812 was quite a good one, as the contemporary *Gazette* records the circumstances⁽⁵⁵⁾: "The accounts of the harvest are equally favourable in all the settlements of the territory. The work of reaping has almost everywhere subsided, and the nimble flail succeeds. The grain is, it may be said without exception, very fine and full; smut, blight and other diseases that are incidental to this valuable grain have been less observable than in any former season, and the crops are in general said to be uncommonly productive." Because there remained a carry-over from 1811 importations, not all the harvest could be taken by Government. The stores were opened in the January (1812), only to those persons who had grown wheat the year before, the prices being fixed at 10s. into the store at Sydney, 9s. at Windsor.

The reasons given for temporarily curtailing purchases were stated⁽⁵⁶⁾: "As there is now a very considerable quantity of wheat remaining on hand in the Public Stores of the last year's produce for which cause it is impossible to receive immediately the whole of the surplus wheat which the settlers may have to dispose of; and in order that every cultivator may equally benefit from this order His Excellency is pleased to direct that the storekeepers do not receive more than 30 bushels until further orders are issued on that head." The troubles of the colonists were, nevertheless, thought to be over⁽⁵⁷⁾: "Divine Providence (has) happily blest us with a most abundant Harvest such as will enable us to supply the Expenditure of the Colony without recourse to the assistance of any other Country." Macquarie was equally sanguine over the prospects⁽⁵⁸⁾: "It is a great satisfaction to me to find that the late harvest has been so abundant as to do away with every apprehension of scarcity and that we shall thereby be free of the necessity of resorting to foreign markets for supplies." Limited quantities of grain continued to be taken into the stores in the early part of the year, and, in the following May, the Stores were again officially declared to be open for the reception of 1,000 bushels of wheat. In order to again equalize the advantages of the Store, the magistrates were instructed to obtain information relative to the number of acres each settler had cultivated the year before and the quantity of wheat they might still have in their possession, so that "such relief might be afforded them as they may be entitled to . . . then due notice will be given of the quantity each person is entitled to put into the public store"⁽⁵⁹⁾. The decision reached subsequently, and following these inquiries, was that three bushels would be accepted from each settler for each acre of land cultivated the year

before⁽⁶⁰⁾. The stores remained open the rest of the year (1812), and large purchases were in addition made from the "executors of an individual at Windsor . . . and (from) . . . two merchants in Sydney towards the latter end of it"⁽⁶¹⁾.

In December there is a *Gazette* notice that, on 19/12/1812, a good deal of new wheat sold at prices varying from 6s. to 10s. a bushel—"a difference occasioned by an inferiority produced by the blight"⁽⁶²⁾. The general position at the end of 1812 was then that not only was the quantity of wheat remaining in store considerable, but it was so spoiled by weevil infestation that it was not thought prudent, quite understandably, either to increase the bulk supplies or to mix the old weevil-eaten wheat with the new wheat of the November, 1812-January, 1813, harvest. It was under these circumstances that Commissary Broughton from a "wish to conform to the directions given to the Governor to lower the expenses of the Colony as well as to afford an inducement to such of the settlers as were in debt to the Government to repay advances made to them either in grain or cattle," came to publish his order of 19/12/1812, stating that wheat would be received in the following new year from those only who would be paying debts due to government, and that for such wheat the price would be 10s. per bushel at Sydney, and 9s. a bushel at Windsor, the deduction being made to defray cost of freight from Windsor to Sydney⁽⁶³⁾. In the same order, which precipitated the crisis of the following year, Broughton stated that no further purchases would be made until the end of the year 1813, and that if in the meantime any deficiencies should occur, not more than 8s. per bushel would be paid at Sydney and not more than 7s. per bushel at Windsor. The decision made had far-reaching consequences, but there seems no question that Broughton, though differing with Macquarie on the reduction in price from 10s. to 8s. per bushel to be paid for the new wheat, had conscientiously advised the temporary stoppage of further supplies. The stores were shut from the latter end of December, 1812, and were not opened again until the 1st April, 1813⁽⁶⁴⁾.

The harvest of November and December (1812), was so abundant that Blaxland later told Bigge that it had been nearly equal to two years' consumption⁽⁶⁵⁾. The settlers had been induced to use great exertions in their cultivation from some encouragements held out to them, but Blaxland could not remember just what the encouragements had been. The closure of the stores in the face of this luxurious harvest was calamitous. The farmers finding themselves excluded at short notice from their best and ordinary market, and when for only the second time in years, the harvest had been favourable, found themselves unable to sell it anywhere. Early in 1813, there was a small flood on the Hawkesbury, and whilst this destroyed some of the surplus, largely the rest was wasted. It is a cruel picture as recorded. Cox in his evidence to Commissioner Bigge in 1820, stated that he perfectly recollected a man whom he had seen in Windsor unable to find anybody who would accept from him a half a bushel of wheat in exchange for a pound of sugar. Finding no one who would accept it from him, he had thrown it away. Cox had ridden round the



"GRANTHAM."

The picture above shows the courtyard of the historic old house, "Grantham," which used to stand at Potts Point. With its romantic history shrouded within its walls, it stood on grounds which formed part of a grant of eleven acres made in 1822 to John Wylde (a Judge Advocate, who was afterwards knighted). The title deed describes the grant as extending "from the projecting rock to the other side of Port Jackson." This rock has now disappeared, and was on the site on which the Woolloomooloo Bay wharves now stand.

A stout-hearted ironmonger, one Caleb Wilson, built the first house in 1835, which, under the name of "Caleb Castle" passed into the hands of Mr. F. Parbury, who renamed the residence "Granthamville."

Subdivision of the property was first made in 1853 by explorer-lawyer-politician Henry Dangar, who in 1861 willed the house to his son, H. C. Dangar. Edmund Blackett, who was later to build the University and St. Andrew's Cathedral, was then commissioned to rebuild the house in the style of Norman architecture, and upon completion of the rebuilding, it was renamed "Grantham," though it soon became popularly known as "Dangar Castle." Of the old building, only the tower and kitchen quarters remained after the renovation.

In 1917 the ageing house was acquired by a Mrs. Parry Long who leased it to be run as a fashionable boarding-house. In 1936 the house changed hands again, and one year later it met an inglorious end in face of the need for wider streets and more buildings, when it was offered at auction for demolition and removal. The land was later auctioned as sites for the erection of residential flats.

In some pictures of old Sydney, "Granthamville" is to be seen as the only house on the Point. After it had been rebuilt and renamed "Grantham," we are told that the house with its battlemented walls "situated in charming grounds and surrounded by an old-fashioned high stone wall, presented a fine picture, reminiscent of an old English country home."

(Reference to this property and its associations with early Sydney are to be found in the following newspapers: Sydney Sun, 25.4.1918; Sydney Morning Herald, 11.1.1937, 16.1.37, and the Daily Telegraph, 9.3.1947.)

(By courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.)

districts of the Hawkesbury, and on the farms of nine settlers out of ten, swine were feeding on the wheat stacks. Cox had been one of the fortunate ones for he had sold the whole of the wheat which he had, amounting to 500 bushels, at from 10s. to 15s. a bushel, to the store and Mr. Blaxcell⁽⁶⁶⁾. The wheat had no price to the farmers or to anybody else, and so in desperation the grain was fed to swine, cattle, even dogs, or it was just neglected. Very few of those who were indebted to Government tendered their grain in payment, and such was its general depreciation that it became valueless.

In January, 1813, when the decisions of Government were known, a memorial was addressed to the Governor by the inhabitants of Sydney, Windsor, Parramatta and Liverpool⁽⁶⁷⁾. Subscribers to the petition were 134 residents of Sydney, 52 of Windsor, 66 of Parramatta and 74 of Liverpool. The petition, after stating that with the roads built, the new towns erected on the banks of the Hawkesbury above flood level, and the great abundance of provisions, both animal and vegetable, rendering future doubts of a sufficiency of supplies unnecessary, included a lament that, such had hitherto been the limitations of the Governor's power, as to preclude the possibility of a market being found for "surplus grain and other articles of export." The petition stated, further, that this was leading to "distressing embarrassments" because, from the want of a staple export commodity, the colonists were unable to "procure such articles of import as were absolutely indispensable to civilised life." This plea for assistance was accompanied by a second address from the inhabitants of Windsor, fifty-two farmers on the Hawkesbury⁽⁶⁸⁾. Many men, it was stated in the memorial, had after an arduous labour of twenty years brought their lands into such a state of fertility, that the produce of the country in grain and other productions was so ample as to cause a "great surplus over and above what was required for the support of the population." The surplus for want of a market was "being wasted or destroyed and was left subject to be totally lost by the floods which affected the most fertile parts of the Colony." Losses so sustained rendered the "agriculturalist unable to cultivate his land for the succeeding season." It was suggested to the Governor that His Majesty's Government should permit the distillation of the surplus grain by a Company, in which the agriculturalist could subscribe portion of his capital and draw profits. By these means the cultivator would have a "vent for that article in the raising of which many of us have spent the best part of our lives and which we now see spoiling in our haggards." It was requested that the Governor receive into the stores "all the surplus wheat of a superior quality at a price not less than 8s. sterling per bushel, which (was to be) kiln dried, ground and packed in casks made out of wood, and that such wheat together with animal food that might be salted down and packed in like manner, should be sent to England for the use of His Majesty's Navy or other purpose."

In the following August (1813), the inevitable shortage developed. There was now not sufficient wheat to carry over to the next harvest⁽⁶⁹⁾. Supplies to government had been so small and the waste of

grain by the settlers so enormous that on the arrival of Commissary Allan in the Colony, and upon an inspection of the state of the stores, a serious scarcity was at once evident. The store price was raised from eight shillings to twelve shillings per bushel but great difficulties were experienced in obtaining any supplies whatever⁽⁷⁰⁾. Macquarie could not understand why, considering "the labour of the husbandmen (had been so) bountifully rewarded by the redundant harvest of the last year," there should be then a present fear of scarcity⁽⁷¹⁾. "By a strange perversion of the Blessings of Providence," so he wrote, "that very redundance is now become the actual cause of the scarcity that is now apprehended. On the most moderate calculation of the produce of the 1812 harvest, it was much more than equal to the supply of twice the number of inhabitants for the entire year, and had it been wisely and frugally husbanded might have been a sufficient store to have relieved the Colony from those miseries to which it has been so often affected by the floods of the rivers." Since the harvest time, it had been represented to the Governor that there had been "a most shameful waste and destruction of grain of last year" among the settlers. Not contenting themselves with a more liberal use of it in their families and for the increase of their own personal comforts, which would have been both reasonable and commendable, they had rashly and improvidently thrown it to their horses, cows and even to dogs and pigs, thus criminally committing waste and "spurning as it were at the Blessing Providence had thrown in their way."

Thus, in a little more than six months there had been this transformation from plenty to famine conditions. The Governor had delivered his homilies and now emergency measures had to be taken to avert as far as possible the famine which "seem(ed) to overhang this country as a severe just scourge for its profuse and criminal destruction of the plenty which the last season had produced" ⁽⁷²⁾. Therefore, orders were promulgated that no wheat was to be fed to dogs, pigs or cattle of any description until the next harvest was secured. The settlers were to cover their stacks of grain with thatching, to guard against damage by the weather. Moreover, the better to effectually guard against the destruction of grain in stacks, by vermin and insects, the farmers were recommended to get it quickly thrashed out, cleaned and safely stored. The settlers who had many pigs, were to "lose no time in killing them and curing the flesh, by which means the consumption of grain would be much reduced, and such a supply would form a valuable reserve when it would be required." It was hoped that "all persons would see the necessity of destroying those useless and unnecessary dogs that were abounding in the country to a shameful degree and were consuming much of the grain which men alone should be using in a time of scarcity." Householders and inhabitants of every description, possessed of even the smallest portions of land, were earnestly solicited to consider seriously the prospect now before them, and to turn their attention speedily to the planting of potatoes to as great a degree as possible, and to throw turnip seed and French beans into their gardens, all of which would be available later. And at a time when famine was

approaching, it might be worthwhile to preserve the cabbage stalks which would send up a succession of shoots for the table. Furthermore, until the next harvest, all servants and other persons having government men off the store, were to issue but half the rations in wheat, the other half to be in maize. All were strictly enjoined to put their servants on a reasonable allowance of bread, and not to give them more than was necessary for their consumption.

But, even so, supplies were simply not available. The wheat had been irretrievably lost, or something which officialdom was never sure about, it was being hoarded for still higher prices than those ruling. In the public market, wheat which on 24th July, 1813, previously had been 12s. $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per bushel, jumped to £1 3s. 4d. on 21st August, 1813 ⁽⁷³⁾. And then the drought came in full earnest.

In August, "the dry times were proving very destructive to the herds and flocks" ⁽⁷⁴⁾. From the want of grass the ewes were unable to suckle their lambs, and there had been excessive losses as the result, whilst "many cattle had perished in the mud on the exhausted borders of their usual watering places." This poverty of the flocks and herds was in part due to the large numbers of animals herded together on overstocked commons and fields, for, it must be realised that at this stage of the Colony's development, while the stock numbers in the country were considerable, the acreage cleared was still limited. Stinging, devastating hot winds were soon blasting the crops. William Cox had cultivated 250 acres of wheat with the hoe. In the latter part of October or early part of November, 1813, "it was all cut off by blight in one day." Two hundred acres of it were burnt, and the remainder did not pay for cutting. The experiences were very similar to those of the year which followed, when "an amazing quantity of stock . . . were suffering." Cox then lost 800 out of 1,000 lamb drop ⁽⁷⁵⁾.

Macquarie, in September, 1813, was castigating "the improvident conduct of several of the settlers and landowners . . . who by setting fire to and thereby totally destroying the old grass . . . before any prospect of change in the weather could have warranted expectations of a fresh growth springing up to supply its place, had resulted in the unfortunate consequences that great numbers of cattle had already died from actual want of food and from contracted disease which would probably terminate fatally" ⁽⁷⁶⁾. The prospects of the Colony as a whole were alarming. Attention was therefore called to these distressing facts, and all landowners were strictly advised that no one was to burn off his grass until such time as "the much-desired change in the weather should take place." If any person during the present season, (1813), or any subsequent one, "was to set fire to any other person's land than his own . . . or so to set fire to his own that the flames were to spread to other lands, then he would be most rigorously prosecuted and punished according to the law in such cases." The effects of the drought had never been felt so severely as in this September, and "it was terrible to think that the grass had been burnt." Wheat was sold at 19s. $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. at the public market on 16th October, 1813 ⁽⁷⁷⁾.

In the following January (1814), the distress in general and particularly that suffered by the "middle and lower classes" because of the long continued drought, which had alike injured the livestock and rendered the harvest less productive than normal, induced the Governor to rescind his order of 11th December, 1813, (reducing the store price of grain), and to restore the price to be paid at the stores of the Commissary to 10s. at Sydney and Parramatta and 9s. at Windsor ⁽⁷⁸⁾. But the Governor, while giving with the one hand, was letting it be known that he was doing so only as an inducement to the settlers, so that they would enter into the cultivation and improvement of their farms "with unremitting industry." He was not pledging himself to the continuance of these prices in seasons when the crops should be more abundant. Rains fell in the January (1814), and, as the *Gazette* records the fact, "the later crops of maize become once again the children of promise, the garden elevates its decaying head, and the pasture assumes verdure that invites, regales and promises abundance to our drooping flocks" ⁽⁷⁹⁾. In February the price of wheat was high in the public market at 24s. 4½d. per bushel; nearly 800 bushels were sold; only one lot was returned from a want of buyers ⁽⁸⁰⁾. But lest all should be sold, the Governor had to warn the settlers to be careful in retaining from present consumption "a competent quantity of wheat and other grain for sowing their lands in the ensuing season" ⁽⁸¹⁾.

In the early part of 1814, the store price of wheat rose as high as 15s., but the supplies were inadequate ⁽⁸²⁾. Scarcity continued and the markets were "menacing." Government thought it was being held to ransom by the hoarders. Fears were held that the position would be just as bad as it had been after the 1806 flood, when wheat had risen in price to 80s. for a bushel weighing not more than 40 to 46 lb., and bread of the coarsest kind had been sold at the rate of 2s. per lb. ⁽⁸³⁾. "Stout able-bodied mechanics had then been glad to work for their bare provisions," and "how many poor families then fared cannot be remembered without sensible regret." At that time, and immediately following the disaster, vessels had been immediately sent for supplies by Government to Bengal and China, but, unfortunately, the vessels that had been despatched had been lost on the forward journey, and no auxiliary help was received until long after the following harvest. Grain was now (early 1814) being ordered from Batavia and Bengal, but until this arrived things would be very serious. If the settlers refused to supply the stores at a reasonable price, thought the *Gazette* ⁽⁸⁴⁾, the labouring orders, who were the chief consumers, would resort to the substitution of another kind of food in its place, and thus by a diminishing consumption there would be less wheat to sell and so prices would be deflated permanently. For instance, so it was pointed out, they might eat potatoes now abundant, or vegetables refreshed by the rains of the previous month. What use would it be for the settlers to hang on to their stocks if the stacks of wheat could be lost in a short while by a flood? It was to be hoped that former disasters would have warned everybody of the danger, and that everyone

possessed of grain would be careful of its preservation by placing it beyond flood levels.

At the price of 9s. per bushel (Windsor) or 10s. per bushel (Sydney), or at the even higher prices that were in desperation for a time offered there was even so, an apparent reluctance on the part of the settlers possessing grain to supply the stores. Exactly what the real position actually was there are now no means of knowing—not even Macquarie or his subordinates were certain. All that was evident was drought on every side, a deficiency of store reserves of grain, that had to be corrected if government was to maintain its rations and the people were not to starve. There were stacks of wheat on farms at the Hawkesbury, which the settlers were too lazy to thrash out or else were holding as hoarders in hopes of even better prices. Yet, while the position was so critical, there was this deliberate tempting of fortune, for might not a flood come any day and sweep all this wheat away? The crisis was serious and tempers were short. Macquarie wrote an order commanding farmers to bring in their wheat on pain of having their debts due to Government called in. This was distributed to the Chaplains to be read from the pulpit. The Rev. Samuel Marsden refused to read it. There was a first-class row between the two men, undignified recriminations on both sides, and thereafter the division between Marsden and Macquarie became a gulf unbridgeable^(84A). All that could be done was to threaten and cajole. There was this present scarcity, and to the Governor, advantage was, at all events on surface appearances, being taken of it, "Notwithstanding the repeated Favours and Indulgences received from the Government"⁽⁸⁵⁾. Perhaps it was that tenders were being withheld until the last moment so that as much as possible could be sold privately or on the open market, or in the hope that the Commissary prices would be further increased. Not only were the ordinary settlers withholding supplies, so it was thought, but those also who were in debt to Government. That in particular riled Macquarie. He threatened that they would be "sued." Even the "opulent . . . owing their success to Government . . . in originally granting them their land, stock, provisions and government men" were no better. The Governor was "disappointed in almost every instance," and he warned that unless he should find in the future conduct of the settlers of the colony more promptitude in coming forward to supply the stores with grain at reasonable prices, so discharging the debts due to the Crown, he would be compelled to resort and entirely to trust to foreign markets for government requirements which, in any case, he could do at half the price now paid. He would be reluctant to do this, so he informed his small community, and the experience of the next harvest would be the last chance for the settlers to redeem themselves. And, as he most often closed his announcements of this kind addressed to the farming community, he again recommended to the lower class of settlers to "adopt habits of industry" and "to give sedulous attention to the cultivation of their farms . . . so as to provide a sufficient quantity of grain . . . not only for the consumption of their own families but to enable them to supply the Government with this article at a reasonable price."

"Of all the settlers in the Colony," so he stormed in his long announcement in the *Gazette*, "he was able to praise only one who had fulfilled his promises to Government, and that was Thomas Gilberthorpe, of Pitt Town, whom he would make it his business to duly reward, and for the rest he was both disappointed and vexed." The Governor was nonplussed, and, as was his custom in such situations, he had his say.

In April, 1814, some salted meat was obtained from Norfolk Island. "Therefore no fresh meat would be purchased by the stores after the 31st May until the whole of this meat was consumed" ⁽⁸⁶⁾. The meat must have lasted for months, for in the following August tenders were again being called for 2,000 to 4,000 lb. of meat ⁽⁸⁷⁾. It was always thus, an importation cutting the ground from the feet of the farmers, closing the store market, and dislocating the internal price structure, which if it made things costly at times, at all events enabled the farmer to make good his losses of other years. In July, maize and wheat were received from abroad. By the brig *Spring*, 3,000 bushels of wheat arrived from Port Dalrymple, and notice was given that no further supplies of maize would be required during the season. If those who had tendered for such supplies did not deliver within ten days, the tenders would be considered "null and void" ⁽⁸⁸⁾. Furthermore "in consequence of the supplies of wheat hourly expected from India, as also from the quantities now remaining in His Majesty's store (Sydney) and in Van Diemen's Land, no further purchases will be made nor any more received into His Majesty's Magazine until further notice" ⁽⁸⁹⁾. The only exception would be in respect of payments in kind "on account of debts due to the Crown."

The price of wheat sold at the public market, however, continued high. It was 21s. 1d. per bushel on 3rd September, 1814 ⁽⁹⁰⁾. The prospects were poor and the approaching harvest unpromising. In October, 1814, the wheat fields "were in a universal state of langour," whilst the grazing stock were "hourly falling off from the poverty of the pastures" ⁽⁹¹⁾. At the half-yearly fair at Parramatta "the cattle exhibited for sale were generally poor owing to the long drought and brought low prices."

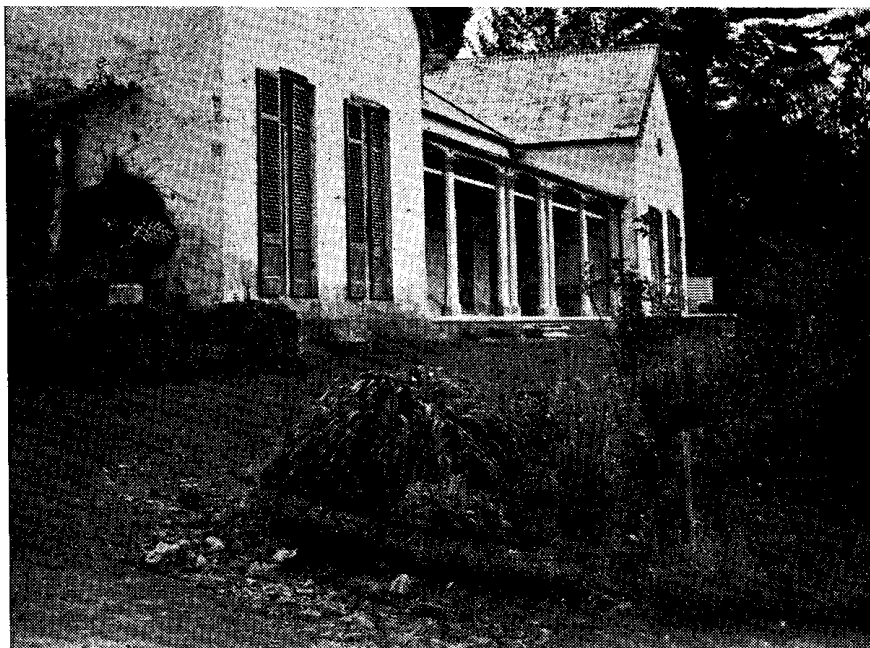
In November, 1814, there was an appreciable fall of rain and further importations of grain arrived from India. The rain was almost continuous for almost a fortnight, but it was far too late for the harvest. The importations knocked the bottom from the market. Grain which had been selling at a price of nearly 40s. currency per bushel, fell to about 8s. per bushel, and on 5th November, 1814, grain which had reached 14s. currency was that morning sold for only 8s. ⁽⁹²⁾.

The prospects for the season then approaching were then that either no market would be provided for the local produce or what remained of it, and supplies would continue to be obtained from abroad, or else government would support the local industry to keep it on its feet. With Macquarie was the last word. Notwithstanding the imports from Calcutta and Van Diemen's Land, he and his advisors probably thought it more certain to trust to the

local supplies. There are now no means of knowing just what supplies he had on hand as the harvest came to be gathered. Macquarie never failed in such moments in his sense of the dramatic. The destinies of the Colony were in his hands and he knew it. He could always be depended upon for a good display of the theatricals—the Governor magnanimous, the settlers ungrateful—it was so as the year 1814 came to a close. In November, he declared that “in consideration of the long continuance of the late drought . . . and with a view to compensate in some degree for the disappointment and loss which the middle and lower class of settlers (who are notwithstanding the principal cultivators) will necessarily sustain from the deficiencies of their present crops,” the Government was prepared to pay for such wheat as might be required during the present season at the rate of 10s. per bushel, Sydney, 9s. at Windsor. It was the earnest wish of the Governor, so his secretary informed the settlers, “as far as (was) consistent with his public duty and the interests of the Crown, to stimulate and encourage the exertions of the industrious settlers . . . by holding out to them all reasonable advantage”⁽⁸³⁾. From his minute inquiries, it appeared to him that as the settlers could not bring their grain to market at the price he had previously fixed (8s. and 7s.) and then altered, he was prepared to continue the prices of wheat for the present and following (1815-1816) harvests, at 10s. and 9s. The price was evidence of his “liberality” and he trusted that this would induce the settlers to bring their grain into store as soon as possible. With the promise of prices being guaranteed for the next season, it was hoped that they would be induced to cultivate to the extent their farms would allow, and thus preclude the necessity for further imports.

Further rains came in December and the country freshened. The flocks and herds picked up. It was just such an opportunity for George Howe, of the *Gazette*, whose imagination was given to soar with each change of the weather. “With so vast an increase of cattle as the last few years,” he wrote in the *Gazette* at the time, “who would be surprised to learn that in a favourable season an unusual quantity of butter would be produced?”⁽⁸⁴⁾. If Ireland could export butter at 8d. per pound, why should it be that the price of the local butter should continue at 5s. per pound? A change was to be expected. The picture so presented is altogether fascinating. In the matter of successive months, a prosperous season gives visions of a colony self-sufficient in foodstuffs and resting upon the basis of a contented peasantry. Providence is then blessing the little community. Then a few months later, famine and desperate flight to India for grain. The farmers are ungrateful; they have spurned the gifts of nature; Government is being menaced. Comes a fresh and prospects of a further bountiful harvest. The immediate problems of government are for the moment solved; the Governor is all forgiving and George Howe, of the *Gazette*, grows lyrical over the prospects not alone of a sufficiency of the bare essentials of meat and grain, but of butter also for the tables of everybody.

It is sufficient, at all events, to perceive from this sketch of the years 1812 to 1814, which ushered in the great drought, 1814-1816, the problems which successively thwarted any hope of long-term planning, either by Government or by the farming community. Things in those days changed almost overnight. Subsistence and administration were both on a hand-to-mouth basis. Alterations of gluts and scarcities beggared many of the farmers, but it had always been so. In 1804, the harvest had been so abundant and the surplus of grain so considerable that no sale



"GLENMORE HOUSE.

"Glenmore House," which one may see just off the Mulgoa Road, Penrith, is a link with the old colonial days. The original building was erected by William Cox, one-time paymaster of the New South Wales Corps, for his son, Henry, during the year 1825. John James Riley acquired the property in 1854 and it was then that the side wings were added, the old rooms enlarged and the top storey built. The name of John James Riley figures prominently in the history of the early colony. He was the first Captain of the Volunteer Corps at Penrith, the first Mayor of Penrith, and throughout his lifetime a man extremely interested in public affairs. He left a diary, full of historical interest and value, which serves, among other things, to refute the allegations that "Glenmore" was erected and maintained by convict labour. It shows that the hands employed by Riley at "Glenmore" were not convicts; in fact, a free and happy atmosphere existed at the lovely old homestead, with its high rooms, fascinating attics and well-stocked wine cellars. The bars on the windows of the cellars were put there to keep the hands away from the commodities there stored, and not, as has been mistakenly assumed, to keep the convicts within the cellars. In 1922 the historic homestead passed into the hands of Dr. D. Hattersley of Penrith, and was later to become the club house for the Glenmore Golf Links.

The coat of arms, which can be seen in the above photograph on the gable wall of the right wing, is that of the Riley, and not of the Cox, household.

(Cf. Sydney Morning Herald, 7th March, 1931.)

(By courtesy of the Mitchell Library.)

could be had for more than half the crop. "During the greater part of the following year wheat sold at prices scarcely sufficient to cover the cost of reaping, threshing and carrying it to market; pigs and other stock were fed upon it; and these two years of such extraordinary abundance involved the whole agricultural body in the greatest distress; grain was their only property, and it was of so little value that it was invariably rejected by their (the settlers) creditors in payment of their debts" (⁹⁵). That this description by Wentworth is no exaggeration is supported by the evidence later given by William Cox to Commissioner Bigge (⁹⁶). From 1800 to 1806, he said, the lands near the Hawkesbury were not flooded and the crops were very favourable. To the absence of bad seasons and floods on the Hawkesbury he attributed the super-abundance of wheat. In 1804, he himself had sold wheat for as low as 3s. 6d. per bushel, and in 1806, after a flood on the Hawkesbury, for as much as £3. The consequences inevitably were that in seasons of abundance the wheat "was wasted and neglected in the most shocking manner: scarcely any person would give it house room." So it was in 1804, and again nine years afterwards in 1813. Cox thought that if the harvest of the year 1805 had proved equally as abundant as the year 1804, "the majority of the settlers must have abandoned their farms and sought for other employment." But the great flood of 1806, "fortunately for the agricultural interests," intervened to prevent the impending desertion. Perhaps to the great drought of 1814 to 1816, in the economic philosophy of the day, might also have been traced the salvation of the farmers after the prosperous harvest of 1812-13. It does seem an extraordinary position that, whilst in a sense the droughts and floods ruined the hopes of a continuing successful agriculture in early New South Wales, and no doubt did bankrupt numbers of the settlers, it should have been thought that they preserved the solvency of those who were lucky enough, or unlucky enough, to have remained on their farms.

COMMISSARY PRICES—THE PROBLEMS OF THE "SUFFICIENT" PRICE.

It has been seen that the price of produce at the Commissariat stores was a matter for the Governor's determination. Prior to December, 1812, the price had little fluctuated from 10s. a bushel for wheat and a lesser price at the out-station store at Windsor, to cover the cost of freight to Sydney. The internal price was on the whole an artificial one. It is possible that at times it would have cost less in sterling to have maintained the population by importing direct from abroad, but, had such imports been made a regular practice of Government, the results would inevitably have been the collapse of the local agriculture. But that was never Macquarie's idea. The Governor was nearly always accustomed to preface his public notices to the settlers with an introductory expression of his benevolence. The wording varied somewhat, but it was much after the pattern of "His Excellency the Governor, anxious to promote the interests of the settlers" and there is little doubting that this was his real intention. His was the idea that "with (such) assistance from Government and the

steady exertion and industry on the part of the settlers themselves, the Governor is fully convinced that they may very shortly become as happy, thriving and prosperous a people as any other throughout His Majesty's extensive foreign dominions" (⁸⁷). In a way he seemed to think that the settlers were extremely fortunate to be on their farms in New South Wales, under the protection and guidance of Government. The majority had forfeited all their rights to civil privileges by misbehaviours and criminal follies at home, and here they were now comfortably settled on their own holdings, possessing both land and other property. By exertion and industry what was to prevent their becoming prosperous? The trouble was that in his wishful thinking he could see no further than the externals. He judged his settlers by their clothes, their houses—bark shanties as they were most often—the tidiness and orderliness of their farms. He never understood the country and knew nothing of farming. His vision was the flourishing town of Sydney, embellished with all the emblems of civilised life that he could bestow upon it, a grateful population, an obedient convict class and a community of small farmers on the outskirts supplying the essential food supplies for the support of the town. The trouble was that affairs of agriculture just did not conform to such a convenient pattern.

He was inclined to believe that in the fixing of internal prices, as in most other things, he was entitled to exercise an arbitrary prerogative. But in reality it was more than that—it was the essential protective device for the struggling agriculture. Broughton's lowering of the price to be paid for wheat in December, 1812, as in all other reductions of Commissary prices, was in part meant as an economy in governmental expenditure. It was a temporary opportunist solution to the ever-present dilemma—expansion, development and the interests of the settlement, on the one hand; rising expenditure with the risk of sharp notes from the Treasury, on the other. But at the price of 8s. and 7s. per bushel, agriculture could scarcely pay. Had Government competed with every vagary of the public market, always in a state of fluctuation, there could only have been chaos, but it was essential that whatever figure was decided upon should be "sufficient" to pay a profit to the grower, based not on the particular circumstances of one year, but related to the returns of average years. In fact, the reduction of 1812 was just not that. It was no less than an effort to capitalise to the advantage of Government upon a singularly successful harvest. So it is important to note that whilst Macquarie in November, 1813, looked upon his restoration of the price for grain from 8s. to 10s. as evidence of his "liberality," the magistrates in February, 1814, were to declare that "it is the unanimous opinion of the meeting that wheat and maize cannot in general be grown in this part of the Colony, so as to leave a reasonable and fair profit to the grower, at a less selling price than 10s. per bushel for wheat and 5s. a bushel for maize to be delivered at Sydney" (⁸⁸). There are no means of telling what these calculations were based upon. There was on the Bench a majority of those interested in the selling and production of grain and meat—Ellis Bent, Marsden, Riley, Wentworth, Cox, Lord, Broughton and two others not as well known,

Thomas Moore and James Mitcham. But their opinions now seem sound enough, when compared with Oxley's 1820 calculations of the small enough returns made to the settler on a little farm in the cultivation of grain, as based upon the sale, not of part, but of the whole of his produce at such prices ⁽⁹⁹⁾.

From 1814 onwards, the prices of the Commissariat were removed from the field of sentiment into that of the investigations of the magistrates, and thereafter Macquarie was largely guided by their advice.

The guarantee of the Governor in November, 1814, to keep the stores open for wheat at the higher figure of 10s. a bushel for that and the following season, and his requests for increased cultivation, did have some effect in stabilising the shaken agriculture. Whereas the quantity of land cultivated in wheat in 1814 amounted to 8,631 acres, it had increased to 13,228 acres in 1816 ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. From then on, although fluctuations in the public market prices were incessant, the store price continued at the 1814 levels until July, 1820, when there again developed an acute shortage of wheat in the Colony, that had not been anticipated, and, additionally, a great increase in consumption. Purchases of wheat then imported from Van Diemen's Land were made at 11s. and 12s. a bushel ⁽¹⁰¹⁾. But the price of wheat otherwise did not rise again to 15s., or fall to 8s., during the remaining years of Macquarie's administration.

The settlers were more independent in the matter of their maize. During these same years, from 1810 to 1820, the store price of maize fluctuated between 3s. and 7s. As it was a grain of more general usefulness, and, moreover, could be kept more easily than wheat without deteriorating, the settlers "had not been disposed to submit to any depression of price below that which the market afforded" ⁽¹⁰²⁾. The purchases of grain by Government were most often in small quantities, except in 1815 and 1816, when the droughts had ruined the wheat crops.

The store price of meat varied between 7d. a lb. in the early period and 5d. a lb. towards the latter end of Macquarie's administration. In January, 1817, it was reduced from 7d. to 6d. and the Governor explained the reasons why: "His Excellency (having) received instructions that every possible retrenchment (is) to be made in the general expense of the Colony . . . deems it advisable to reduce the price of animal food to 6d. per lb. having in view the present circumstances of the Colony and the increase in the herds and flocks" ⁽¹⁰³⁾. In December, 1818, it was finally reduced to 5d., and again it is the expense motive for the reduction: "The rapidly increasing expenses of the Colony of New South Wales and its dependencies when taken into consideration with the instructions received by His Excellency from His Majesty's Ministers on the subject of retrenchment, rendering it absolutely necessary that the most prompt and effectual measures should be adopted . . . on and after the 1st January, 1819, the price of animal food (is) to be 5d. per lb. and no more" ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾.

Mostly the supplies were by tender and the names of those successful were published in the *Gazette*. Fears had been expressed to the Governor in 1813, that the system of obtaining supplies by open tender was having an effect in excluding "the middling and lower classes of settlers and breeders of stock from the benefit arising therefrom, owing to their inability (to supply) so large a quantity as (might be) required for the weekly consumption at the respective settlements" (¹⁰⁵). The Governor explained that his intention had never been to exclude anybody from the benefits of the store. From then on the system of supplies was based upon open lists maintained by the storekeepers at the various out-settlements and on which were entered the names of those who were actually breeders of stock and who wished to supply Government. Each was then given a proportion of the total quantity required for the weekly consumption at the various posts "without preference or partiality." The storekeepers were obliged to forward their lists to the Commissary each month for submission to the Governor. Although the lists were opened to all, both large farmer and small farmer, it is the graziers who for the most part supplied the stores—men such as Redfern, Cox, Blaxland, Brooks, Throsby, Sir John Jamison, William Broughton, Macarthur, who were all capable of tendering for 5,000 to 6,000 lb. when the smaller settlers were struggling to supply a tenth of these quantities (¹⁰⁶). In the later settlement it is Samuel Terry with 30,000 lb., William Emmett 12,000 lb., R. B. Hazard 10,000 lb., and again Sir John Jamison with 8,000 lb. (January, 1820) (¹⁰⁷). It was really in the nature of largesse of government to deal with the smaller suppliers, for their estimations and tenders caused no end of trouble. The cattle were herded together in small paddocks; there were injuries; the cattle broke away; endless delay; and in general the stock were never prime. Letters were, in fact, written to the *Gazette* dealing with the weaknesses of enclosing cattle in small yards at night, because of the injury done to the younger animals, and advocating the railing in of paddocks of several acres (¹⁰⁸). It was only the man of broad acres equipped with the necessary labour who could conveniently handle large stock.

Occasionally supplies were also obtained from the public herds and, towards the year 1820, from slaughter of the "wild cattle" at the Cow Pastures—such as could be "reclaimed" (¹⁰⁹). Government controlled stations of its herds at the Cow Pastures, Rooty Hill, Emu Plains and Bathurst. There was a Principal Superintendent of Cattle, David Johnston, who received a salary of £100 per year from the Police Fund. In addition, there were three principal overseers at the several stations, each receiving a salary of £50 per annum, plus horses and a forage allowance. At Rooty Hill and the Cow Pastures, considerable expense had been incurred in enclosing stockyards for the cattle and building houses for the superintendents, all of which had been defrayed from the Police Fund. Seventy-five convicts were employed as stockmen and labourers at the different stations, and a clerk at the principal one in 1820 (¹¹⁰). The cattle and horses bred at the different stations supplied the Government works with draft cattle, and the sheep were used either for the supply of the Governor's table or

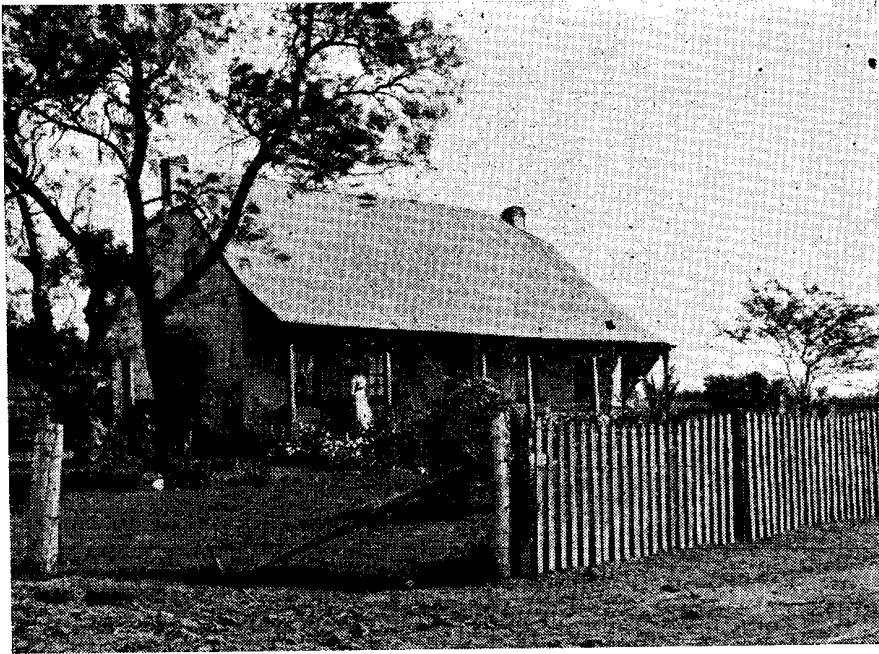
for the improvement of the land enclosed and adjacent to the Government houses at Sydney and Parramatta. The wool of the sheep was sent to the factory at Parramatta where it was used in making cloths and blankets for the convicts. Some other expenditure had been incurred in the purchase of houses "of a good description" and in the employment of skilful herdsmen for the pursuit of "wild cattle." When this meat was used, a notice would appear cancelling all further supplies for the time being, such as the one of 7th January, 1815: ". . . . no fresh meat will be received at Sydney or Parramatta from this date until 1st April, there being a sufficient number of fat oxen, belonging to Government to supply the stores till that time—and notice is hereby given that the ration of meat till that period is to consist of half fresh and the other half of salt beef or pork" ⁽¹¹¹⁾.

The Government herds were, of course, subject to a heavy plundering. No property was safe, least of all the cattle roaming in the bush whether belonging to Government or anybody else. This plundering was almost a business at certain times. In April, 1814, "a new disclosure was reported to have taken place of cattle stealing to some considerable extent, with this lamentable addition to the report that among the persons already hinted at are several whose circumstances were by no means as to suggest a plea of poverty, were even such a plea admissible" ⁽¹¹²⁾. There were prosecutions, even executions and exiles to Newcastle for life, for such thefts. Evidence called in 1814 for the prosecution of persons accused and convicted of plundering the Government herds "rendered it doubtful whether folly or fearless audacity were more manifest cattle had been in some instances bartered for a considerable time before they were taken from the herd so that the purchasers were appraised of their size and condition and real value" ⁽¹¹³⁾.

Before the building of the slaughter house at Cockle Bay in 1815, "graziers and others (with) cattle to slaughter for Government stores (had been) exposed to the enormous expense attending their being slaughtered by private butchers" ⁽¹¹⁴⁾. And just what these butchers were like may be guessed at from a letter to the *Gazette*, as late as January, 1821, from "Eyewitness" when he described how he had seen 18 cattle to be butchered marched into a yard, and then hamstrung or "haughed with a scythe," and finally "raised by bulldogs on their bleeding stumps" ⁽¹¹⁵⁾. It was notorious also, that many of the trading butchers who were operating in the early period were in the habit of purchasing large quantities of stock from individuals and making a convenience of the King's Stores by selecting the prime stock for the public market and selling the refuse to Government. The storekeepers were, in 1812, enjoined "to act with every caution to these persons and as regards the quality of the meat to conduct themselves with the strictest impartiality towards everyone" ⁽¹¹⁶⁾. Meat was a variable more than one hundred years ago, and the quality of the refuse is a matter for the imagination.

The Government herds and the wild cattle furnished 451 head of "wild cattle" between 1st December, 1819, and 11th November, 1820, and from 31st August, 1819, to 11th November, 1829, 688

head of "horned cattle," which with 83 sheep slaughtered at the different stations yielded 237,229 lb. of meat of a total value of £4,942 5s. 5d. at the Government fixed price of 5d. per lb. (¹¹⁷). The fact that they were kept "afforded very seasonable supplies of meat to the Government Stores at Sydney," when no tenders were made by the inhabitants because of lack of condition of their cattle. Such a source of alternative supply had also the effect



OLD HOMESTEAD, GOVERNMENT STOCK FARM, ROOTY HILL.

At Rooty Hill, between Prospect and Blacktown, was the Government Stock Farm, which, for the grazing of the Government's horned cattle was next in importance to the farm at Camden. In a lengthy list, which was prepared by Governor Macquarie, of the buildings and works erected during his regime between January, 1810, and November, 1821, we find the following entry:—

"At Rooty Hill."

"1. A brick house, built of two stories high, for the residence and accommodation of the superintendent and principal overseer of the Government Stock at the station, reserving one room for the use of the Governor when occasionally there, with kitchen, stables and other necessary out-offices and kitchen garden enclosed."

The brick-built house shown in the picture above differs from that which Macquarie saw in only one respect, viz., the shingle roof of his day has been replaced by one of galvanised iron.

On Saturday, April 5, and Sunday 6th, 1822, an ex-naval man settler, together with his large family, rested at the house while en route from Sydney to Bathurst. Mrs. Hawkins, the settler's wife, wrote to her sister in England to say of the homestead: "I could have been contented to have remained there for ever—the house was good, and the land around like a fine wooded park in England." The house continued to be inhabited during the 'thirties of this century.

*(Cf. Journal and proceedings of Parramatta and district—
Historical Society: Vol. 3; "Home, 1.6.35."*

By courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.)

of "preventing combinations to compel the Government to raise the price of meat by withholding supplies" (¹¹⁸). They were again useful, in passing, in affording a means of assisting settlers on their arrival, as also for the purpose of providing draft cattle for public works. The herds were "long viewed with jealousy by the settlers on account of the interference they occasioned with their disposal of meat" (¹¹⁹).

The store price for meat was in fact low considering the costs of bringing the cattle to Sydney, the insufficiency of feed in the more settled parts of the country, and, in the period before 1815, the cumulative charges of slaughtering and delivery. Blaxland told Bigge in 1820, that he was convinced that he could not afford with profit to sell meat to the butcher at a lesser price than 8d. per lb., but that he would be prepared to sell it to the stores at 7d. per lb., because of the ready mode of payment, and "if the present difficulties were done away with" (¹²⁰). There is no specific reference in the Transcripts of Evidence to what these difficulties were, but the facts are that an increase in the price of meat was not recommended by the Commissioner, and remained at the fixed rate of 5d. per lb. into the administration of the succeeding Governor, although Bigge rather vaguely admitted in his report that "the price of 5d. per lb. at which meat had been supplied to the Government in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (had been) lower in proportion than the price of grain" (¹²¹). By 1820, however, stock in the Colony were multiplying at a rapidity which made self-sufficiency in supplies of meat more or less assured.

The mere fact that the Government store market for grain continued to expand in the years of Macquarie's administration makes it clear that store prices for meat and grain were not the major factors in affecting the impetus to agriculture, and it is a fact that they were never the chief causes of complaint. Agricultural expansion did take place notwithstanding all the trials and tribulations with which the early farming was surrounded, even though a step or two behind the increasing demands of a growing population. Whereas in 1814, the total purchases by Government had been 24,258 bushels, they had grown to 54,895 bushels in 1819, whilst in 1817-1819, the demand for Government and for the public market so exceeded the local production that considerable purchases had to be made from Van Diemen's Land (¹²²). Indeed, such was the increase in consumption in 1820, at the close of the Macquarie period, in both Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales, that a "few speculations had been entered into for the importation of wheat from Valparaiso," and from the 1820's until 1842, this question of South American wheats and other imported grains, in competition against the locally produced articles, occupies the scenes of controversy in regard to continued agricultural embarrassment.

All in all, it is possible that at the prices which were fixed farming would just about have paid, if the settlers had been able to sell all their produce and if, for instance, they had been able to weather earlier storms and had retained any semblance of solvency. Had the grain at any period of the Colony's early

history been purchased by competitive contract at 10s., 8s., or even less per bushel, the settlers must of necessity have submitted to it, or have taken the chance of obtaining less favourable terms on the variable and frequently glutted public market at Sydney. The Government control over the prices which it paid was, however, lopsided. It provided a one-way traffic only. What should have been done was to provide a Commissariat Store to sell merchandise and other goods at regulated prices, as an auxiliary offshoot of the purchasing department. In this way some economic stability could have been obtained, and attempt made to regulate the prices paid for produce in accordance with variations in the cost index of available merchandise. But, as it was, the pressure of fixed prices for produce was maintained over the heads of the small farmers on their limited acreages, whilst the profiteers, store-keepers and dealers were allowed to charge what they liked for the goods which they sold—the tea, sugar, tobacco, clothing and the many other articles which all required, as apart from the bare essentials of meat and grain. The larger farmer-graziers were never as much affected by the fixed store prices, for, not only were they able singly or in combination, to import direct from abroad, but their command over labour, their capital and their many other trading interests enabled them to use their lands and resources to the best advantage, since they were not dependent like the majority of the smaller settlers upon gaining access for their goods to the Stores of the Commissary.

One of the major troubles of the small farmers was this almost total dependence upon government, associated as it was with an unbalanced agriculture resting almost entirely upon the cultivation of grain. Until much later in the Colony's development this was changed, nothing could stop their bankruptcy. Notwithstanding all the attempts at control, monopoly did establish itself, not only in the field of trade but also in the very storehouses of the Commissary, because of the necessity forced on government to buy from non-producers—whether publicans, shrewd merchants or traders in times of scarcity.

THE THREAT OF MONOPOLY.

So far as it rested in his power, Macquarie did attempt to equalise the advantages of store purchases between the settlers, both rich and poor. To some extent the administrative difficulties encountered loosened the controls desired, and more importantly the precipitate purchases that had to be made in times of scarcity did benefit the traders and hoarders, against whom in fact the controls were designed. There is no doubt that the threat of monopoly was always in the forefront of the mind of the Governor, for in the instructions given him prior to his assuming the administration of the Colony, there is a specific reference that he was to prevent monopoly control. The Governors before him had been broken by the ring; Macquarie was in a different circumstance for his official authority was unquestioned. Macquarie, on his arrival, was careful to assure the Government that every care would be taken to prevent the officers of his own regiment "from resorting to any low or unmilitary occupation, either mercantile

or agricultural for additional means of support," for as he said, "I am sorry to add that such has been too frequently the case with the officers of the 102nd regiment"⁽¹²³⁾. To the best of his ability he did try throughout his long administration to control its every manifestation for, as he some time later was forced to conclude, "no country in the world has been so advantageous to adventurers as New South Wales"⁽¹²⁴⁾. His sympathies were all with the emancipists and struggling farmers, not with those possessing greater assets.

The over-production in good seasons, the under-production in bad seasons did provide a constant fear of engrossing. The settlers on the whole were men possessing little if any credit, and this was particularly true of the large bulk of the grain growers. Without credit, the actual producer was scarcely able in any event to play the market, to withhold supplies for anticipated rise in price. The trouble was that, being without resources to draw upon, there was always a pressing urgency for them to sell their produce just as soon as it was harvested and in a condition to be marketed. If they could not sell to the stores there was no alternative but for them to sell somewhere else, if able to do so—perhaps to merchants and traders or to publicans from whom they had obtained a prior credit. In any event, the produce was almost always sold at a lower than the ruling or market price, and in any such bargain the settler was inevitably the loser. The capacity of the public market was always small and easily glutted; it could never cope with a general supply from the grain areas, should the stores be shut. Settlers were ruined by their creditors, for, whilst the produce of their labours had usually to be disposed of at depressed prices, their debts no doubt were most often incurred at high interest rates and prices. Throughout the early Colony, there may be noted the panic attempts by the impoverished to escape their creditors—"the vulturine merchants," "hungry shopkeepers" and "sharks", in the jargon of the day.

In times of shortages, the stores were forced to buy from those with supplies readily available, irrespective of the origin of the produce, whether the seller was in fact the producer or not, and it was administratively impossible to differentiate between produce forwarded by a "landlord" with some hold over a producer, and the produce delivered by the tenant or lessee himself. Thus, the door against monopoly was never fully closed, and through this channel the hoarders did enter into the profitable field of the Commissariat. It was so in April, 1815, when the effect of continued drought was laying a dead hand over the prostrate Colony. Suppliers were a matter of urgency. The *Gazette* notice of the time stated that "His Excellency is pleased to order that from the present date, that that part of the Government and general orders of 26th November last, which prohibited the purchasing of grain for the Government stores from any other persons than the farmers or cultivators shall be rescinded; and notice is now given that wheat will be indiscriminately received at the Government stores for the present season from all persons who may have it to dispose of, provided only that it is the produce of the Colony and not imported from abroad"⁽¹²⁵⁾.

Macquarie constantly exercised a personal oversight over the tenders for grain and meat, in so far as he was able. His order, published November, 1814, directing that all the tenders that were made to the officers of the Commissariat Department at the different stations should be finally submitted to himself for approval, is evidence of the personal responsibility which he felt fell upon him, and which he owed to all those under his charge. For some time afterwards the order was complied with and the quantities that each person tendered were published in the *Gazette*. Moreover, the position of the Governor was always made perfectly clear, and in fact had been demonstrated even prior to Macquarie's arrival. Thus, on 5th August, 1809, following a serious flood on the Hawkesbury, Grose had published an order of warning⁽¹²⁶⁾. In it he said that "To deter any inhabitant of the Colony from attempting a monopoly of grain, or any other species of provision, with a view to selling again at an exorbitant advance, the Lieutenant-Governor is determined most strictly to enforce the several laws enacted for the protection of the people from the extortion of forestallers, ingrossers or regrators; and he pledges himself to the public, that the most unremitting vigilance in the detection, and the most rigorous measures for the punishment of crimes of so detestable a nature will be exercised by every branch of the executive authority." Macquarie issued similarly repeated warnings. In September, 1810: "His Excellency the Governor publicly declares that it is a high offence against the public to commit any practices to enhance the price of merchandise coming to market, particularly the necessities of life, for the purpose of enriching any individual, and it is further declared that (1) the spreading of any rumours whatsoever to enhance the price of victuals or other necessaries; (2) or with intent to induce the dealers in such victuals not to bring them to market for sale; (3) or the endeavouring to enhance the price of victuals by persuading the dealers therein to abstain from selling the same; (4) or the engrossing or getting into possession large quantities of wheat, corn or other victuals, by purchase, with intent to resell the same for an unreasonable profit, and thereby enhance the price; (5) or the buying of large quantities of corn or wheat or other victuals, then growing by forehand bargains with intent to prevent the same from being brought to market; (6) or the buying of any corn or other victuals in any market and selling it again in the same market or within four miles thereof; (7) or the buying or contracting for any corn, victuals or other necessaries coming on the way to market; (8) or the dissuading any persons from bringing their goods or provisions there, or persuading them to enhance the price when there, are practices highly illegal and detrimental to the community at large, and amenable to severe punishment"⁽¹²⁷⁾. There were many others, and they had a general application both to the practices at the public market and the stores also.

The expedients that were tried and recommended to ensure to every class of the settlers a fair and proportionate share in public purchases were many. Thus in January, 1811, the Governor, in order to extend the benefit of the stores at Windsor "without preference or partiality to the settlers," directed that no person

should be allowed to put more than three bushels into the store for every acre, that may have been cultivated the year before ⁽¹²⁸⁾. This was a blanket ordinance, and it was open to anybody to forward any surplus held to the stores in Sydney, for the stores at Parramatta were full and the Windsor stores had but a limited capacity. Sometimes, again, no differential quantity would be fixed. It would be the same for each settler, no matter what the extent of his cultivation. Thus, after the plentiful harvest of 1812, as it was impossible to receive immediately the whole of the surplus wheat which the settlers had then in hand, an order of January, 1812, directed the storekeepers not to receive from any settler more than 30 bushels until further notice ⁽¹²⁹⁾. At such times, moreover, Government could afford to be choosy and storekeepers would be warned not to receive any wheat that was otherwise than "free from smut and drake and every way storeable." A further expedient was to leave it to the discretion of the magistrates to apportion a fair distribution. The magistrates would be instructed "to obtain information as to the number of acres each settler cultivated last year and the quantity of wheat they now have in their possession, that such relief may be afforded them as they may be entitled to" ⁽¹³⁰⁾. On the whole some justice was done, and the Governor did his best to see that this justice was made manifest to all.

Loopholes had to be closed everywhere, even at the port of Sydney ⁽¹³¹⁾. Port regulations were promulgated which fixed landing wharves for the many different classes of colonial vessels and their several cargoes. Vessels laden with fish were exempted from unloading at the main produce wharf at Cockle Bay, adjacent to the Commissary Store, and were allowed to land their catches at the Hospital Wharf. If laden with grain from the Hawkesbury, Parramatta or elsewhere, they could unload at the Hospital Wharf if destined for the Government stores, or if the cargoes were consigned to individuals, direct into other stores on the harbour foreshores. But in case grain were to be unloaded in Sydney Cove, under the pretext of its being put into the Government stores, or into the stores of individuals to whom it might belong, and it was found afterwards that it had been carried off from the wharf to any other store than that of the actual importing owner, then the regulations stated that it would be liable to seizure. All bakers and other persons were cautioned in the same orders, against buying grain otherwise than at the storehouses of direct importers, for they would be prosecuted, if detected, as forestallers and regrators of the market. It was very necessary to effect such controls for they alone could protect the small community from abuse. The mere fact that they were propounded shows that attempts at a playing of the markets was at times practised.

A rumour, perhaps a well-meant suggestion, was considered dangerous in any time of scarcity. Cox told Commissioner Bigge, as it is recorded in the Transcripts of Evidence, that he "perfectly recollected Mr. Marsden (in 1813) going round the district of Richmond and telling the settlers that if they took care of their wheat and kept it, it would soon fetch a high price, and when I

understood what he was doing, I told him that I thought he had no right to interfere in the district, that he was very wrong in talking about so high a price for that it would have the effect of doubling its price and which it did almost immediately . . . I did not warn the Governor . . . Mr. Broughton had the uncontrolled management of the store and the ear of the Governor and I did not venture to give advice" ⁽¹⁸²⁾. This was in the early part of 1813, after the proclamation by Broughton that the stores would not be opened until the end of 1813. The outlook was hopeless for the settlers, and, as it has been seen, the wheat was being squandered. Certainly someone needed to give encouragement and advice to the farmers with wheat spoiling on their hands, so that they would conserve it for a later market. It is a fact that no such lead was given by Government. Therefore, it cannot be laid to Marsden's discredit that he did give such an indication of hope to the settlers. It is probable that he had no intention that his advice to the settlers was to be interpreted in any sense that they should hoard to take advantage of a shortage of the future, so that they might extort the high prices which all produce would then bring. Marsden did not have any personal axe to grind. The fact that wheat jumped in price soon after his visit to the grain areas was not the result of his counsel, but the inevitable effect of the damage that had already taken place by a precipitate and general wastage. The trouble really was that the small farmers of the period could not be trusted to do or think of anything for themselves. Ex-convicts in the main they were totally and unreservedly, with few exceptions, wholly dependent on Government—mere children in experience, whom it was necessary to guide and protect in even the smallest details. It was foolhardy for the Governor to hope that by the mere placing of these men on their farms, that thereafter they could be left to their own resources. That was only half a policy. It had to be carried further, and their every activity and reaction anticipated and planned ahead.

There was, however, always this fear of monopoly and extortion by hoarders, and although no proof can be offered, it seems safe to assume, judging from the repeated references to the matter in the *Sydney Gazette*, that the fears were well justified. Perhaps the feelings of Government and the better elements in the small community can be best illustrated from a generous quotation from the *Gazette* (issue 23/8/1817) dealing with the matter:

"The price of grain which governs that of all other articles of the first necessity, appears to be increasing with a rapidity much more than proportionate to the emergencies of the times. From the extensive losses . . . in our last maize crop every disadvantage was to be expected, as this grain affords the best substitute for wheat, when the latter is scarce and dear. This dependence being for the present year unfortunately removed, the . . . potato was the next most desirable object of attention . . . and the result has proved extensively beneficial. The middle of . . . November may be safely calculated upon as the commencement of harvesting, but as the prices abate but little until the middle of December we have to look forward, unless auxiliary supplies

should in the meantime be received to about . . . three months of inconveniency arising from the scarcity of grain, *whether feigned or real*; and during this period the productions of the garden will afford essential relief, though they may in all probability be of higher price to those that have to purchase them than . . . in a season of abundance: for when the aid of substitutes is from necessity called in, their consumption becomes more general, and they must consequently be expected to increase in value as in demand, and it is not impossible that even the vegetation of the garden may be brought sparingly to market, so long as the withholding may appear to answer ends which require not to be explained: for it is asserted of the Dutch, that when they formerly supplied Europe with the rich spices of the East, it was their policy to destroy vast quantities in the places where they grew, rather than overstock the market . . .

“. . . It is to be hoped that . . . our gardeners, a little less illiberally disposed (than the man who admires the Dutch) will do their utmost to keep our markets well supplied, and this will be productive to them of two considerable gains: first, the sums arising from their meritorious industry: and secondly, the esteem and thanks of their fellow colonists. As *monopolies* are frequently regarded as unfavourable to the general interests of society, we know of none that is looked upon with less countenance than a monopoly of the common necessaries of life, when practised with a design to raise them to a greater price than the consumer can afford to pay, because . . . the operation of the practice . . . presses with the severest weight upon the poor, who are not prepared to meet the exigency, and pine in want under the duration . . . we must be at present aware that there is in the Colony a great quantity of rice; that there are pease and other pulses that are even now but little sought after, although it must be known that a family would save considerably by their frequent use. Whether the present advance in the price of wheat proceeds from a prevalent apprehension of eventual scarcity, or from the calculation of persons capable of forming rational estimates, is not easy to determine; but in any event it affords room to speculation, which sometimes leads avarice into disappointment, as well as debasement, for we have here more than once instanced, that persons who could not content themselves with even a considerable excess upon a reasonable price for their grain, have from unexpected causes had to repent of their mismanagement and been obliged to put up with one-half, or perhaps one-quarter of the price they had rejected. If, however, an actual scarcity be at all to be apprehended, the rise of price, which is as natural as any effect can be to its cause, only steps in as a prevention to an improvident use of the article, and drives the bulk of the population to the necessity of substituting in its place such things as are less difficult to procure, which substitution would not generally have taken place, but for the rise of price limiting its consumption, and thereby extending its moderate use throughout the whole continuance of a scarcity . . . (preventing) a temporary scarcity from (developing into) a condition of famine against the horrors of which human foresight cannot endeavour sufficiently to guard . . .

“It has been known, that, in order to reproduce upon the sale of wheat by a *monopolist*, he has sent his own carts into a market, laden for the purpose of having it brought in by a stationed friend, at an enormous price; and thus, by practising imposition on the scale of average prices, from which the baking estimate was to be deduced, the fraud became generally injurious to society, and dreadfully afflicting to the poorer orders. The British Legislature . . . has in its wisdom enacted laws peculiarly adapted to the repression of offences falling under the denomination of regrating and forestalling, the detection and exposure of which is at all times a common duty. If persons, possessed of large quantities of wheat persist in driving, by excessive price, the Public to have recourse to the substitution of cheaper articles of food, what must in time become of their hordes. It unfortunately happens at the same time, that where characteristic avarice combines with opulence, the eventual disappointment will be but little felt, however badly relished. In the course of three months or thereabouts, our coming harvest will replenish our barns, and then the man who has large quantities of the former growth to look at, will also have to contemplate in wrath upon the folly of his calculation; while by a determined opposition to excessive prices, let everyone that has the means attend to the care of his garden; let him counsel his poor neighbours in the best manner of living cheaply . . . and thus, by the assistance of Providence contributed to our own exertions, we may shortly find that there is less cause for apprehension than interested persons would have us believe there is.”

Perhaps to such presumably well grounded fears may be traced the fact that even penalties were sometimes threatened in the event of tenderers failing to fulfil their contracts with the store. In 1816, it was announced that “Persons desirous of furnishing supplies for the use of (H.M.) Magazines . . . are required to send in to this office . . . Tenders of the quantities they are willing to supply at the present store price, and such persons are hereby informed that in default of the fulfilment of same, the persons so failing will subject themselves to a penalty of £50 sterling each”⁽¹³⁸⁾. And again, there is the resort to further threats: “And notice is hereby given that in the event of the quantity of wheat that may be offered falling short of what is required for the use of the stores in the Colony which still remain open for the reception of grain, the remainder will be furnished from Van Diemen’s Land in which case no person will have an opportunity of turning wheat into these stores who shall not have sent in Tenders agreeably to this notice.” Commissary Allan by then had been three years in the Colony. It is quite easy to imagine such a man with considerable difficulties on his hands recommending to the Governor that, in order to bring the local farmers and hoarders down to earth, so to speak, the Government should import grain from abroad, so lowering the local prices of grain and at the same time solving the difficulties of the Commissariat. At all events it would, in shortsighted fashion, have been the too easy way out of a temporary embarrassment. The threats were, of course, quite useless. The penalties threatened could

never have been enforced. Government did import wheat whenever it could from Van Diemen's Land in the latter years, but the difficulty was that supplies were sometimes not available the very moment when they were required. It was never a simple case of just turning a tap. It is patently obvious to see that a middle course of policy was in Macquarie times a problem of the first magnitude, how to prevent monopoly and hoarding and embarrassment to the Commissariat, on the one hand, and thus to control internal price levels; on the other, how to so regulate prices and purchases as to provide a continuing market and encouragement to the local agriculture.

In the main, monopoly of the Commissariat purchases to the benefit of the few was prevented. So serious was this considered that it was the practice for a considerable time not only to publish advertisements in the *Gazette* but also to send round hand-bills to the different districts giving notice that the stores were open for the reception of grain and that those who wished to supply were required to send in tenders (¹³⁴). A subsequent notice would be given to prepare the settlers, and the stores would be kept open until they were filled. In the execution of their duties certain discretionary powers were exercised by the subordinate officers of the Commissariat at the different stations, and a further control by the Chief Officer at Sydney. The Commissary was in certain cases required by the Governor to refer to the general muster books whenever there might be reason to believe that the person tendering was not actually a farmer, or that the supplies which were tendered had been purchased, not grown. If such should be found the instructions to the Commissary were that he was to reject such supplies and the tenderer was to be penalised by being struck off the lists for the remainder of the season. In many cases, however, it was impossible for them to comply with his instructions, for the simple reason that the entries in the muster books were "delusive and not to be depended upon." For instance, Broughton informed Bigge that this was particularly so in regard to livestock holdings and that at least one-twelfth deduction was necessary in all these estimates (¹³⁵). In Van Diemen's Land similar difficulties arose (¹³⁶). Here the Lieutenant-Governor also "frequently exercised his own discretion in erasing names or in correcting the quantities tendered." Sorrell, too, experienced some difficulties with his Commissary. For a time D. C. G. Hull, "Acting in obedience to the orders of the head of his department . . . officially refused to submit to the (Lieutenant-Governor) the tender list for the supplies of wheat." Subsequently, however, "orders . . . were transmitted for his regular observance of that very salutary practice." Sorrell indeed, must have taken his responsibility very seriously, for he not infrequently refused to accept tenders from those "whose characters were notorious for excess or immorality," and gave preference to others who had voluntarily come forward with supplies in times of scarcity (¹³⁷). They were considered to have a special claim upon the return of more favourable seasons.

There was, however, a great danger inherent in any preferential treatment or in the acceptance of produce from persons where the particulars were not openly advertised in the *Gazette*. For

instance, it was admitted to Bigge by Hull, the Commissariat Officer at Hobart, that he considered "casual admissions" to the store to constitute part of the "fair patronage of his office" (138). But even considering this fact that preference was at times shown, apparently for a price, Bigge could find only one instance of malpractice at Hobart, and only one other at Sydney, which had occurred in the time of Broughton, although there were many names in the store books that "excited much suspicion in his mind." His total summing up must have been particularly gratifying to the Governor. In it he said that "it is only justice to say that every exertion has been made on the part of Governor Macquarie since the year 1813 to prevent a monopoly of the only market that was offered" (139). Considering the tangle of the unwieldy department and the material with which the Governor was obliged to work, this was a real compliment, though Bigge could hardly have meant it as such, having in view the relations between the two men.

CONCLUSIONS.

Drawing together the threads of the preceding narrative, it is at once clear that both Government and the farming community were subjected to continual irritations and embarrassments in these matters of supplies, a fluctuating production and a fluctuating demand. The problems of marketing and prices were almost insuperable, without something being done to conserve supplies in the good years and to boost up the internal consumption in all years. For reasons that have been previously touched upon and which will be later more fully considered, exports of food-stuffs were largely impracticable, since there were no suitable markets offering nor any guarantee of a continuous and reliable production. The effect of gluts was then waste and the perpetuation of the cycle to a following scarcity. This fact stands out clearly and was not unappreciated by Government. As early as 1809, it had been so stated in the *Gazette*: "Experience has shown that no man can reckon upon a stack within reach of flood; exposed to which many are suffered to lie almost the year round, from the hope of its becoming dearer before the following harvest, supposing which even to be the case, and no other accident happens, the body of the grain is frequently eaten away by vermin, and thus, not only the grower, but the public becomes deprived of perhaps one-fourth or more of the produce of the ground." (*S.G.*, 24th December, 1809.) If the floods and the vermin did not destroy the surplus grain, it was of course, just fed to stock or left to rot.

One considerable difficulty which the Governor did have to contend with was the problem of knowing what his commitments would be from day to day, and this was particularly true of the years 1815-1821, when, after the cessation of the Napoleonic wars, large-scale transportation was resumed and there was an influx of free settlers. Population under such conditions was not a fixed and known quantity. It varied with each convict ship that arrived, and with each movement of convicts from one station to another, or transfers between the establishments at the

Sydney station for reasons of "local convenience and special demands for labour" (¹⁴⁰). Any attempt at forward planning was likely to be upset by such factors. The mere distribution of foodstuffs, again, as apart from quality variations, required great care if breakdowns were not to occur, and to do it all there was not a body of trained officials but convicts and ex-convicts under a few Commissariat officers, whom Bigge later thought should be replaced by native born youths and free people, both as storekeepers and clerks, for the convicts were so unreliable (¹⁴¹). Another difficulty was the problem of storing foodstuffs. The wheaten grain, dirty, so often unsieved and infested with weevils was of the poorest quality for prolonged storage in view of its condition. The risk of vermin destruction meant that the grain required to be stored loose and to be constantly handled, and, thus, that no packing down in tanks or improvised silos was possible. The greater the quantity of grain held in the stores, moreover, the greater were the expenses of Government in keeping it, and expenses on any basis of calculation were considerable enough. Throughout his administration, Macquarie was constantly beset by this question of expenditure, receiving many curt notes from his superiors in London to reduce his spending. And since the Commissariat was the largest item in his budget, it was naturally in its direction that he had to turn to carry out his orders. When Gipps, some years later (1839), faced with not dissimilar problems, purchased large quantities of wheat at a cheaper than ruling price and stored it in huge bottle-shaped excavations which he cut in the solid sandstone rock of Cockatoo Island, his experiment met with the coldest of receptions from Lord Stanley, and he was ordered to confine himself to the legitimate functions of government (¹⁴²). This still does not explain why Macquarie did not make any serious attempt to enlarge his storehouses and even at the expense which this would have entailed, bought more of the grain that was available in the good years. But throughout, the Governor and the Commissaries under him seemed wedded to the idea not to make such insurances for the future. It seems that they never did learn from experience, apparently believing that each time of scarcity would be the last, and that, provided the particular shortage of the moment could be overcome, there would be no need to worry about recurrences. Granted all the objections that might have been raised in the increased expenses, possible losses in storage both by weevils and thefts and the uncertainty of the future commitments of the stores—it still seems an extraordinary thing that such a policy of additional storage and increased purchases at suitable times was not proceeded with, without worrying about other plans.

Macquarie, however, had long held his own ideas of how to raise the internal consumption level of grain and so encourage future agricultural development, without—and this was an important point—committing government to increased expenditure. There can be no doubting that he realised the dilemma in which he was placed—on the one hand, expansion of agriculture requiring the settling of ever increasing numbers of would-be peasant farmers; on the other, a contracted and non-expanding demand

and lack of markets for the produce and perishables. Even in good years wheat could at times be imported more cheaply from Van Diemen's Land or even India, than it could be grown in New South Wales, and the fact was that this was not because of any excessive profits accruing to the local farmers. Oxley's calculations had been that a man with 50 acres could make, if everything was in his favour and he could sell all his produce, something like a maximum of £60 per year, and this was, indeed, little enough, considering that seldom if ever did everything turn out well for the farmers⁽¹⁴³⁾. To bring more land into cultivation would then, on the surface, have defeated its purpose by creating a surplus, and it was these surpluses which had plagued the Colony from its earliest days. It was, thus, that throughout his administration Macquarie consistently advocated as the solution of these surpluses, and as providing the necessary stimulus to agriculture, a policy of local distillation of spirits. Such a policy would provide a market for grain, persuade farmers to expand their sowings and ensure that in times of scarcity there would be enough grain available for bread. It all looked so easy.

A T. W. Plummer, a colonial theorist in England, it is interesting to note, had written to the Governor even before his departure for the Colony, suggesting such a scheme⁽¹⁴⁴⁾. Plummer's idea was that a Company should be formed in the Colony with a local monopoly over the distillation of spirits. Under the terms of the monopoly, Government was to retain the right to suspend distillation in times of scarcity and divert the Company's six months' reserve of wheat to the public benefit. A high excise duty could be collected on the spirit for purposes of revenue, and its price would still be cheaper than the imported article. Money, instead of leaving the Colony, would be kept in it; there would be an insurance against scarcity: revenue would be maintained and, moreover, the spirit traffic regulated. Macquarie seems to have accepted the plan in its entirety and urged it upon the Home Government. It has been seen that this was just the very scheme which was suggested by the farmers at Windsor in 1813, and concerning which in his reply, Macquarie made reference that he had so taken up the matter with the Home Government. It was to require, however, recommendations from Bigge and a book by Wentworth to change the opposition of Lord Bathurst, and Macquarie had left the Colony before his panacea was put to the test.

It is easy to understand the reasons for the opposition to this scheme which, on the surface, may well have led to an increase in the consumption of spirits within the Colony. At none of the settlements, except Newcastle, or at least in none of the towns, had it been practicable to prevent the sale of liquor to the convicts whenever they could afford to purchase it. It was admitted by Wentworth, then Police Magistrate at Sydney, that the desire for liquor was the principal incentive to crime amongst the convicts and that the greatest and only chance for their improvement was to be found in a total prohibition of drink to them⁽¹⁴⁵⁾. This was, however, an impossibility. The convicts as a class carried no uniform dress or distinguishing mark. Mechanics and tradesmen were allowed to live in the towns and were not required to

appear in convict dress except on their first arrival. The dress, however, of these men being that of the ordinary free citizen, the only indication that could have been given of their condition or of the frequency of their resort to hotels, would have been by a personal policing of the regulations by the Superintendent of Convicts and his overseers, for they alone could have known who were convicts and who were not. Thus for years, the repeated requests of the Governor were refused because of these real fears that the liquor business, once released to a monopoly, would prove impossible to later control. And, indeed, in the Colony there was no real unanimity on the question. Macarthur, when asked by Bigge for his views, replied that "the establishment of a distillation from grain in this Colony with its present unfortunate population, would, I fear, be an exceedingly dangerous undertaking . . . besides it appears to me that there is no probability of our soon producing more grain unless respectable settlers be introduced than will be required for bread and other indispensable uses"⁽¹⁴⁶⁾. William Cox, on the other hand, informed the Commissioner that he had "always thought that a distillery would be beneficial to the agricultural interests . . . and that the best place for its location . . . would be the Hawkesbury"⁽¹⁴⁷⁾. Attempts, indeed, had been made to establish breweries. For instance, Gregory Blaxland had built one in 1811 or 1812 at his Brush Farm near Parramatta, which he carried on with apparently considerable success for some time until "the beer became bad and he lost his custom"⁽¹⁴⁸⁾. There was a "very great demand as long as he brewed it good . . . 3s. to the Trade and something more per gallon retail to individuals." Blaxland himself did not think that a brewery would answer on a large scale for as he said "I have tried it and found fermentation too quick"⁽¹⁴⁹⁾.

The two things that no doubt caused Lord Bathurst to alter his previous decision and to sanction colonial distillation were Wentworth's book on New South Wales and the recommendations of his Commissioner. Wentworth thought the solution of agricultural malaise in the Colony could only come through such means, and in the long pages of his argument emphasises it over and over again⁽¹⁵⁰⁾. Summarized, his conclusions were that "of all the steps that could be taken for the relief of the Colony, none certainly would prove of such immediate expediency as the creation of distilleries, and the imposition of so high a duty on the importation of spirits from abroad, as would amount to a prohibition." For example, considering that the average annual consumption of spirits within the Colony could be estimated at £10,000 per annum, this would have amounted in the previous fifteen years to £150,000. If to this were added the £100,000 or more which it could be calculated Government had spent on the importation of corn, flour, rice and other grains from abroad, there would be a total of £250,000, all of which had been spent outside the Colony. Had this been spent internally, then "the application of so large a sum to the immediate encouragement of agriculture would have imparted life and vigour into the whole community and would have effectually prevented the increasing poverty of the settlers . . . the continual and amazing fluctuations which

(had) taken place in the price of corn had been a death-blow to the success of every effort that had been directed to this most important object." He considered that "to the perfect success of every enterprize of a manual nature, it is essential that the price of provisions in general but of corn in particular should be reduced to such a price as to afford a fair profit to the grower and at the same time it should not be subject to any such extraordinary increase as to superinduce a proportionate rise in the price of labour." Therefore, to keep the value of corn as a just mean, it was necessary that the growth of it should be encouraged to a pitch far beyond the sphere of the ordinary demand. This could be effected in one of two ways, by first augmenting the internal consumption by artificial means, such as through distilleries and breweries, or by promoting a free export trade. But, because the Colony was then unable from the smallness of its resources and its remoteness from Europe—the great market for the surplus corn of other countries—to compete with its grain, it followed that, in order to promote an expanding agriculture, and, thus, a "constant abundance of corn indispensable" as the very basis of such a trade, there was only one alternative and that to increase internal consumption. Of the means to do this the erection of distilleries was "the most easy and the most efficacious."

The conclusions reached by Wentworth were those which finally Bigge endorsed for not dissimilar reasons ⁽¹⁵¹⁾. He also thought that the extensive purchases of grain by Government in 1814, 1815 and 1816, from India and later on from Van Diemen's Land, had discouraged the local agriculture, and that Government might well have done more to take the surplus wheat in good years from the local farmers. Too much wheat was in fact being grown at certain seasons for the limited capacity of the stores, but, without positive encouragement, the settlers were unable at this early period to turn their attention to the production of goods other than those that solely depended upon the demands of Government. The period of war had not been favourable for exports, and, moreover, the unfairness of the maritime regulations had rendered traffic between Great Britain and New South Wales virtually impossible. But, even so, two other things were necessary for a successful export trade. There was, first, "Capital," and, then, "Personal exertion and perseverance" but, these were at a discount within the Colony. All that the Commissioner could say on this point was that "without meaning to discredit the exertions of a few of the settlers in New South Wales, no enterprize was to be expected that required a combination of these," and that "from the very slow process that has been made in the growth and production of fine wool, I am inclined to doubt whether such experiments if conducted by individuals might not by this failure have led to the discouragement of all future imports." He strongly recommended local distillation, and, rather reluctantly perhaps, Bathurst gave his approval. In its final form this was that distillation of spirits would be authorized in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land during such periods only as the price of wheat on the Sydney market did not exceed 10s. per bushel ⁽¹⁵²⁾. It took effect in August, 1822, but, as succeeding essays in this study will attempt to show, it did not solve the difficulties of the local agriculture.

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APPENDIX.

A Schedule showing the Movement of Prices for Produce as prepared from Sydney Gazettes for the Years, 1808-1823 inclusive.

The prices are those fetched by produce when sold at the Public Markets.
 Note: Customarily a weekly market report appears in each issue of the Gazette, the details being provided by the Superintendent of the Markets.
 This Schedule is an abstraction from these reports.

Date.	Wheat. Bushel.	Maize. Bushel.	Potatoes. Cwt.	Barley. Bushel.	Beef and Mutton. Lb.	Pork. Lb.	Bread. Loaf.	Oats. Bushel.	Miscellaneous.
1808—									
15-8-1808	10/- to 12/-.	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
1809—									
5-3-1809	11/6	...	9/- to 10/- per 100 lb.	...	1/3	1/5	...	...	.....
9-4-1809	12/- to 15/-.	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
21-5-1809	12/- to 20/-.	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
11-6-1809	16/- to 23/-.	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
9-7-1809	17/-	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
13-8-1809	27/6	16/-	.....	...	1/3	1/2	...	...	.....
3-9-1809	28/6	12/-	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
17-9-1809	32/-	14/-	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
10-12-1809	23/6	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
17-12-1809	14/-	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
24-12-1809	15/6	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
1810—									
7-1-1810	23/-	17/-	per cwt. 7/6	14/-	1/6	...	...	...	.....
14-1-1810	25/5	...	.....	...	1/6	...	...	...	.....
21-1-1810	13/2½	...	7/6	10/-	...	...	...	7/6	.....
24-2-1810	17/7½	10/-	13/6	10/-	1/6	...	...	...	.....
10-3-1810	19/6	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
14-4-1810	23/-	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
12-5-1810	30/-	...	.....	...	...	...	8½d.	...	.....
16-6-1810	23/3	5/6	11/6	...	1/6	...	...	...	.....
23-6-1810	28/8	...	12/-	...	...	...	11d.	...	.....
14-7-1810	25/9	...	15/-	...	...	...	11d.	...	.....
21-7-1810	25/9	...	.....	...	...	...	*11d.	...	.....
8-9-1810	26/4	...	.....	...	...	...	†12½d.	...	.....
6-10-1810	31/8½	...	.....	...	...	...	†5½d.	...	.....
3-11-1810	32/7	...	.....	...	...	...	*12½d.	...	.....
17-11-1810	35/-	...	.....	...	...	...	*12½d.	...	.....
24-11-1810	33/1½	...	.....	...	...	...	12½d.	...	.....
1-12-1810	33/7	...	.....	...	...	...	12½d.	...	.....
8-12-1810	18/11½	...	.....	...	...	...	9½d.	...	.....
15-12-1810	14/7½	...	.....	...	...	...	8d.	...	.....
1811—									
12-1-1811	16/-	...	.....	...	...	...	8d.	...	.....
26-1-1811	14-4	...	.....	...	...	...	8d.	...	.....
9-3-1811	14/4½	...	.....	...	...	...	8d.	...	.....
6-4-1811	15/2	...	.....	...	...	...	8d.	...	.....
6-7-1811	18/1¼	...	.....	...	...	...	8½d.	...	.....
16-11-1811	17/2½	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
7-12-1811	12/9½	...	.....	...	...	...	7d.	...	.....
1812—									
4-1-1812	10/0½	...	.....	...	...	...	7d.	...	.....
11-1-1812	10/2½	...	.....	...	...	...	6d.	...	.....
1-2-1812	8/9	...	.....	...	...	...	5d.	...	.....
2-2-1812	9/7½	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
3-2-1812	10/10¼	6/-	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
8-1812	9/6¼	...	.....	...	...	...	5d.	...	.....
9-1812	9/9	...	.....	...	...	...	5d.	...	.....
10-1812	7/11	...	.....	...	...	...	5d.	...	.....
1813—									
9-1-1813	8/9	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
16-1-1813	7/1	...	.....	...	...	...	4½d.	...	.....
6-2-1813	5/9½	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
29-5-1813	8/0½	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	Butter, 5/6 per lb.
31-7-1813	13/11	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
21-8-1813	23/4	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
25-9-1813	16/8¼	...	.....	...	...	...	10d.	...	.....
30-10-1813	20/10½	...	.....	...	...	...	11½d.	...	.....
18-12-1813	13/8	...	.....	...	...	...	8½d.	...	.....

* Wheaten.

† Indian Corn.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Wheat. Bushel.	Maize. Bushel.	Potatoes. Cwt.	Barley. Bushel.	Beef and Mutton. Lb.	Pork. Lb.	Bread. Loaf.	Oats. Bushel.	Miscellaneous.
1814—									
1-1-1814	16/0 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
14-2-1814	24/4 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
16-4-1814	...	...	.....	...	...	...	13 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
3-9-1814	21/1	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	Butter 7/- lb.
24-12-1814	10/3 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	Butter 5/6 lb.
1815—									
30-6-1815	17/5 $\frac{1}{2}$	7/6	19/-	...	...	...	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	6/-	Butter 7/- lb. Fowls 6/- pr. Eggs 3/- doz.
7-7-1815	17/7 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
19-8-1815	19/10 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	*1/- †10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
3-9-1815	21/8 $\frac{1}{2}$ 23/-	8/- to 9/6.	21/- to 22/-	...	...	...	*1/1	...	Fowls 7/- to 9/- pair.
9-12-1815	15/6	8/6	10/-	7/-	...	...	†11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. *10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. †9d.	...	Butter 7/- lb. Fowls 8/6 pair. Butter 6/6 lb.
23-12-1815	16/3 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
1816—									
6-1-1816	19/5	...	.....	...	...	...	*12 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. †11d.	...	.....
6-7-1816	19/1 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 20/1.	...	.....	...	...	...	*11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. †10d.	...	.....
9-11-1816	20/7	...	.....	...	...	...	*12d. †10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
1-12-1816	9/11 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	*7d. †6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	Butter 2/6 lb.
1817—									
25-1-1817	8/11 $\frac{1}{2}$	4/- to 4/6.	3/-	...	...	...	*6d. †5d.	...	Butter 2/6 lb. Fowls 2/6 pair. Eggs 1/3 doz.
15-2-1817	7/3 $\frac{1}{2}$	3/-	2/6	3/6	...	...	*5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. †4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	Butter 2/3 lb. Fowls 2/3 pair. Eggs 1/3 doz.
15-3-1817	11/1	7/-	.....	...	...	...	*7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. †6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
23-8-1817	23/4 $\frac{1}{2}$	14/-	15/-	...	...	...	9d.	...	Butter 2/9 lb. Fowls 2/6 pair. Eggs 1/6 doz.
13/9/1817	31/0 $\frac{1}{2}$	13/6	18/6	...	...	...	9d.	...	Butter 3/- lb.
27-9-1817	26/-	.....	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
8-11-1817	23/7 $\frac{1}{2}$	17/-	8/-	...	...	...	11d.	...	Butter 2/3 lb. Fowls 3/6 pair. Eggs 1/3 doz.
22-11-1817	10/0 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	5/6	...	...	6d.	...	Fowls 4/- pair. Eggs 1/3 doz.
1818—									
17-1-1818	8/8 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	*6d. †5d.	...	.....
7-3-1818	8/2	...	.....	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
25-4-1818	8/11 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
10-10-1818	9/9 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	Butter 2/9 lb.
19-12-1818	7/1 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	Fowls 4/- pair. Eggs 2/- doz.
1819—									
9-1-1819	6/11 $\frac{1}{2}$	5/3	6/-	5/-	...	...	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	Butter 2/3 lb. Fowls 3/- pair. Eggs 2/- doz.
27-3-1819	9/-	7/-	.....	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
27-11-1819	8/5	4/10	7/-	4/3	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	Butter 2/3 lb. Fowls 3/9 pair. Eggs 1/6 doz.
18-12-1819	7/4	...	.....	...	...	...	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
25-12-1819	7/10 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
1820—									
21-10-1820	15/-	5/3	.....	...	...	...	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	Eggs 1/- doz.
18-11-1820	10/3	...	.....	...	...	...	6d.	...	.....
1821—									
6-1-1821	8/3 $\frac{1}{2}$	6/3	.....	5/-	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	4/-	.....
3-2-1821	9/9 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
5-5-1821	10/3 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	6d.	...	.....
9-6-1821	10/-	3/9	6/6	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
1822—									
11-1-1822	8/5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5/6	.....	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....
28-6-1822	9/4 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	...	...	.....
1823—									
20-2-1823	6/9 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	.....	...	...	...	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	.....

* Wheaten.

‡ Household.