

# **William Cox, Road Builder, Biography and Diary**

## **1 . About Project Gutenberg**

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Title: Memoirs of William Cox, J.P.  
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The following is an extract of Chapters 8, 9 and 10 from

Memoirs of William Cox, J.P., Lieutenant and Paymaster of N.S.W. Corps,  
or 102nd Regiment. Late of Clarendon, Windsor.

William Brooks and Co., Printers Sydney and Brisbane.1901.

Facsimile reprint published in 1979 by the Library of Australian History.

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## **2 . About William Cox**

William Cox was responsible for the making of the road over the Blue Mountains through to Bathurst in 1814/1815, not long after the first successful crossing by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth in 1813.

Cox's memoirs were not written by him and, in the Introduction to the 1979 edition, Edna Hickson, great-great granddaughter of William Cox, states that it is likely that a grandson of Cox was responsible for the publication, if not the author. Hickson goes on to say that:

"The diary written in Chapter 9 has been transcribed from Cox's original journal, now in the Mitchell Library (C708). This is the most interesting section of the Memoir, and is the only part written by William Cox himself. Some parts of the old road can still be found, and it is possible to walk down the dreaded descent from Mount York into the Hartley Valley."

### ***1. The Australian Dictionary of Biography, by Percival Serle, has this entry:***

"COX, WILLIAM (1764-1837), pioneer, son of Robert Cox, was born at Wimborne Minster, Dorset, England, on 19 December 1764. He was educated at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School at Wimborne Minster, and afterwards went to live at Devizes. He was a landowner, served in the Wilts militia, and in July 1795 joined the regular army as an ensign. He became a lieutenant in February 1797, and in September 1798 was appointed paymaster at Cork. He was given the same position when he joined the New South Wales Corps and sailed for Sydney on 24 August 1799 on the transport *Minerva*, on which were about 160 convicts including General Holt (q.v.) and the Rev. H. Fulton (q.v.), both of whom, and indeed many of the other convicts, were really political prisoners. Cox used his influence so that the prisoners were frequently allowed up on deck to get fresh air, and Holt in his memoirs states that in consequence "the ship was the healthiest and best regulated which had ever reached the colony". It arrived in Sydney harbour on 11 January 1800. Almost immediately Cox bought a farm of 100 acres and installed Holt as its manager. Gradually considerable amounts of land were added, but Cox had incurred large liabilities and in 1803 his estate was placed in the hands of trustees. He had much money owing to him and though Cox believed that his assets were worth considerably more than the amount of his liabilities, his accounts as paymaster were involved, and he was suspended from office.

In 1807 he was ordered to go to England. He evidently succeeded in clearing himself as he was promoted captain in 1808 (Aust. Ency.), in 1811 was again in New South Wales and principal magistrate at the Hawkesbury.

"On 14 July 1814 Cox received a letter from Governor Macquarie accepting his voluntary offer to superintend the making of a road across the blue mountains from a ford on the river Nepean, Emu Plains, to a "central part of Bathurst Plains". He was given 30 labourers and a guard of eight soldiers. Work was begun on 18 July 1814 and it was finished on 14 January 1815. In April Macquarie drove his carriage across it from Sydney to Bathurst. It was not metalled, being merely a dirt track 12 feet wide, but it was nevertheless an amazing feat to have grubbed the trees, filled in holes, levelled the track, and built bridges in so short a time. There is no difficulty in believing the governor's statement that if it had been done under a contract it would have taken three years. The length of the road was 101½ miles and settlement of the land beyond the mountains began almost at once. Cox himself established a station near the junction of the Cudgegong and Macquarie rivers. He was now in prosperous circumstances and remained so until his death at Windsor on 15 March 1837. He married (1) Rebecca Upjohn and (2) Anna Blackford. There were five sons by the first marriage and three sons and a daughter by the second.

"Cox was a man of great kindliness and fine character. Holt, who had worked for him, could never speak too well of him. Only a man of real ability with a genius for managing men could have built the track across the mountains in so short a time, and it would be difficult to find an equally remarkable feat in the early history of Australia."

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### **3. Governor Lachlan Macquarie's Instructions to William Cox**

Governor Macquarie having determined on a road to Bathurst, on the plains beyond the Blue Mountains, wrote at once to William Cox, Esq., J.P., Clarndon:

(No. 43.) Government House, Sydney,  
14th July, 1814.

Sir,--

1. Having some time since determined on having a carriage road constructed from Emu Plains, on the left bank of the river Nepean, across the Blue Mountains, to that fine tract of open country to the westward of them, discovered lately by Mr. Evans, and having recently received from you a voluntary offer of your superintending and directing the working party to be employed on this very important service, I now most readily avail myself of your very liberal and handsome offer of superintending and directing the construction of this road; and do invest you with full power and authority to carry out this important design into complete effect, Government furnishing you with the necessary means to enable you to do so.

2. The number of artificers and labourers--namely, thirty--and the guard of eight soldiers you have yourself already selected, or required, shall be allowed and furnished to you forthwith for this service, and they shall be supplied with a plentiful and adequate ration of provisions whilst employed upon it.

3. Herewith you will receive a list of the number of artificers and labourers allowed for this purpose, together with a scale on the back

thereof of the weekly ration of provisions they are to receive. You will also receive herewith for your guidance copies of my letters addressed to the Deputy Commissary-General on the subject of the provisions, stores, tools, utensils, arms, ammunition, slops, and other necessaries to be furnished from his depôt for this service, all of which will be forwarded to you to the depôt established on Emu Plains forthwith, and which you will be pleased to receive and take charge of on their arrival there, placing such a guard over them as you may deem expedient, the sergeant commanding the guard of soldiers being instructed to receive all his orders from you for the guidance of himself and party, and for their distribution. You will likewise receive herewith for your information a general list, or schedule, of the provisions, stores, slops, tools, implements, and other necessaries intended to be forwarded to you from Sydney by the two separate conveyances or convoys, including one horse, two new carts (with harness), and two yokes of well-broken-in bullocks, it being my intention to send off the first convoy from Sydney to-morrow morning for Emu Plains, and the second convoy in a fortnight afterwards.

4. I am in hopes the provisions, tools, and other necessaries will arrive on the banks of the Nepean in time to enable you to commence the construction of the new intended road on Monday, the 18th inst. Entertaining the fullest confidence in your zeal, knowledge, and abilities for conducting and executing this service in the manner intended, it becomes unnecessary for me to enter into any detail on the subject, the more especially as you are already in full possession of my wishes and sentiments, as communicated to you on our late conversation on this head. Suffice it, therefore, for me to specify here a few of the principal leading points necessary to direct your more particular attention to:--

Firstly: The road is to commence at the ford (already determined on) on the river Nepean, Emu Plains, and from thence across the Blue Mountains to the Macquarie River, and a central part of Bathurst Plains, following the track laid down by Mr. Evans' map, of which I have already furnished you with a copy. But in case you should, upon further examination of the track he followed, find it advisable to make any occasional deviations therefrom, you have my full permission to do so.

Secondly: The road thus made must be at least 12 ft. wide, so as to permit two carts or other wheel earrriages to pass each other with ease. The timber in forest ground to be cut down and cleared away 20 ft. wide, grubbing up the stumps and filling up the holes, so that a four-wheel carriage or cart may pass without difficulty or danger.

Thirdly: In brush ground it is to be cut 20 ft. wide and grubbed up 12 ft. wide. Any small bridges that may be found requisite to be made must be 12 ft. wide. I conceive this to be a sufficient width for the proposed road at present; but where it can with ease and convenience be done, I should prefer the road to be made 16 ft. wide.

Fourthly: You will use your own discretion in establishing one or two more depôts for provisions, according as you may find them necessary, after you have once crossed the Blue Mountains and descended into the plain country, taking care to establish such depôts, however, in such places as affords plenty of good, wholesome water for man and beast. Whatever extra expense you may incur in constructing these depôts will be paid from the Colonial Police Fund, and also the amount of such slops, stores, or other articles as you may find it necessary to supply the working party with for their use and comfort during the time they are employed on this service.

5. I have now only to add that I shall at all times be happy to hear from you during the progress of the service you have thus been so good as to offer to see executed; and I shall most readily comply with any demands for provisions, stores, or tools you may have occasion to make during the continuance of it: having an entire confidence in your discretion and prudence, and being convinced that you will not make any demands that are not essentially requisite for promoting the present undertaking.

6. As it might prove of very great inconvenience, expense, and trouble to you personally, and greatly interrupt and disturb the working party, if the people, from motives of curiosity, were permitted to visit you or your party during the time you and they are employed on the present service, I have deemed it advisable to issue a Government and general order prohibiting such idlers from visiting you, or crossing the Nepean at Emu Plains, without a pass signed by me. I enclose you herewith some few printed copies of this order, which I request you will have posted up at proper conspicuous places, and give the necessary order to your guard and to your constable to see it strictly enforced.

I remain with regard, Sir,  
Your most obedient and humble servant,  
(Sgd.) L. MACQUARIE,  
Governor-in-Chief of N.S.W.

To WILLIAM Cox, Esq.

THE MOUNTAIN ROAD.

**4. Journal kept by Mr. W. Cox in making a road across the Blue Mountains from Emu Plains to a new country discovered by Mr. Evans to the westward.**

***(Note: References by Cox to environmental matters and to Aboriginal peoples are highlighted in the following text.)***

**1814**

July 7.

After holding conversation with his Excellency the Governor at Sydney relative to the expedition, I took leave of him this day.

July 11.

Began converting a cart into a caravan, to sleep in, as well as to take my own personal luggage, which was completed on the 16th.

July 17.

Left Clarendon at 9 a.m.; arrived at Captain Woodruff's farm at noon. The carts from Richmond arrived at 2 p.m., and at 4 the two carts and wagon arrived from Sydney with provisions, slops, tools, etc. Mustered the people, and issued bread to them.

July 18.

At daylight gave out the tools to handle and put in order. Issued half a week's provisions to the whole party. Began work at 10 a.m. to make a

pass across the Nepean River; the banks very steep on the east side. In the afternoon issued to the workmen a suit of slops, and a blanket to each man (thirty in number). In examining the slops, two pairs shoes and three pairs trousers were deficient. Gorman, who had charge, states the case had been broken open when he took it out of the Parramatta store. Wrote to his Excellency the Governor for additional bullocks and some small articles of tools. **Weather fine, clear, and frosty.**

July 19.

Tuesday. Finished the road down the right bank of the river. **The swamp oak on Emu side very hard to cut and root.** In the afternoon began our operations on Emu Plains. A complaint being made of the pork, which was issued at 6 lb. pieces, were very deficient. I examined the Commissary's return, which stated there were 53 6 lb. pieces in each cask. Counted the remaining, and found 51 left. Examined the mess book, and found 18 pieces had been issued, making 69 in all, instead of 53. Weighed the 51 pieces, and they weighed 24 lb. over 4 lb. pieces quite, with brine and salt. Ordered Gorman to issue the remainder as 4 lb. pieces until further orders.

July 20.

Sent the 'smith to Field's to make four new axes and steel two of the English ones. Gave him 20 lb. of iron and 4 lb. of steel. **Fine, dry weather.**

July 21.

The 'smith completed laying the axes, and steeled five others. Much **trouble to-day with the axes; the timber being hard**, they all turned. Kept the grindstone constantly going. Made good progress on Emu Plains; the men worked very well. **Weather clear and frosty.**

July 22.

The 'smith steeled two more axes, and made nails of one. **The working gangs removed two miles** to the south-west on Emu Plains. **Wind very high in the afternoon.** One of the fellers, W. Lonain, received a hurt in the face and shoulder through the limb of a tree falling on him. **Hard frost and clear.**

July 23.

**Hard frost and clear weather.** Sent all provisions, tools, etc., to a hut on the **left bank of the river**, which hut is fitted up to receive our provisions as they arrive from Sydney. Gave the blacksmith the tools, iron, steel, etc. Lonain, who was hurt yesterday, much better. I wrote to the Governor for two men's pit-saws, iron, and steel. Examined the ground leading from Emu Plains, and **fixed on the spot to cross the creek** at, as well as one to begin ascending the mountain. The soldiers with Gorman and Kelly all went for Emu Plains to-day.

July 24.

Examined the ground and marked the road from the creek to the First depôt (with Lewis). Gave a pound of tobacco to Field for a lot of cabbage, which I gave to the workmen. Purchased 4 cwt. 1 qr. of bran for myself, which I forwarded to the depôt, at 10s per cwt., delivered at Martin's. The workmen exerted themselves during the week, much to my satisfaction.

July 25.

Finished a crossing-place over the creek, and worked from the creek to the crossing-place where you ascend the mountain. Sent the two carpenters to the depôt to build a tent-hut, and put in order the depôt fit for the receipt of the provisions, etc. **Cloudy weather, but dry.**

July 26.

Made a complete crossing-place from the end of Emu Plains to the foot of the mountains, and began to work up them. **The ascent is steep; the soil very rough and stony; the timber chiefly ironbark.** Sent the stonemason to the depôt to build or line the chimney, as also the 'smith to put up his forge. Sent the superintendent with a man to **mark the road from the depôt through the bush to the next forest ground, a distance of about five miles.** Ordered the corporal and soldiers to prepare to remove in the morning from the bank of the river to the depôt, with a cartload of provisions, and there to remain until further orders.

July 27.

Removed the soldiers and provisions from the river to the depôt. Worked up the mountain; measured the ground from the ford in the river to the creek leading from Emu Plains to the mountain, three miles; marked the trees at the end of each mile, at the left side of the road. Removed my caravan from the river to the depôt on the mountain, a distance of five and three-quarter miles and slept there the first night.

July 28.

Went to Clarendon, and left R. Lewis in charge.

August 1.

Left Clarendon at 10 a.m., and arrived at the depôt at 2 p.m. Found the road completed to the said depôt, much to my satisfaction.

August 2.

The workmen go on with much cheerfulness, and do their work well. Gave them a quantity of cabbage as a present. After dinner I gave directions to Lewis to inform Burne he was to take the three forward fellers to fire-making. Soon after he came to me and said he would not receive any orders from Lewis, but would obey any I gave him, on which I told him I should send any orders I had to give to him by whom I pleased. He went away, but soon returned again, and said he would leave, on which I ordered the constable to receive his gun and ammunition, and he went away. Ordered him to be struck off the stores, and informed the party he was discharged from being a superintendent under me, and had nothing more to do with me or them.

August 3.

Sent the two working gangs, with their bedding, etc., two miles ahead. Heard the report of a gun and soon after **heard the chattering of natives**, on which they returned and reported the same. Gave notice to the sergeant to provide a corporal and three men to go forward and take up their quarters with the working men. The second pork cask being issued, I found it to contain 74 pieces, on which I had the third cask opened, and

the pieces counted by the sergeant and Gorman in my presence. It also contained 74 pieces. Brought the remaining provisions from Emu Plains, and had the store completed, with a lock on the door, etc. **The weather fine. Cleared the roads to the entrance to a thick brush two and a-half miles ahead.**

August 4.

Removed the depôt to seven and a-half miles forward, as also the corporal and three privates. Lewis got leave to go to Richmond and return again on Sunday next. **The men at work in a very thick, troublesome brush. A fine day, but close. The wind in the evening got round to the south.**

August 5.

**Timber both thick and heavy, with a thick, strong brush, the roots of which are very hard to grub up,** making it altogether extremely hard work.

August 6.

**Timber and scrub brush the same as yesterday,** but got through it this evening, and measured the new road and found we had completed nine miles. Marked the trees at the end of each mile. **Went forward, and found a good-sized piece of forest land, with good water,** to the right of an intended road about one and a-quarter mile ahead. The men all healthy and cheerful. Mr. Hobby joined me last evening. The people all moved forward to the end of nine miles.

August 7.

Removed to the nine miles on the road. I sent a man from last camp to the depôt to draw their rations. Wrote to his Excellency the Governor.

August 8.

**Timber and brush very heavy and thick from the ninth to tenth mile.** Thos. Kendall ill, unable to work. Mr. Hobby, with R. Lewis, went forward with John Tye about four miles, and marked the trees. **Two natives from Richmond joined us; one shot a kangaroo.**

August 9.

**Fine weather continues. Good water at seven and a-half miles to the right of the road; about eight and a-half to the left of the road; ditto at four and a-half to left. Good forest ground down in the valley at four and a-half miles to the right.** Mr. Evans came to us just before sunset.

August 10.

Mr. Evans left us for Sydney at 2 p.m. Removed forward to four and a-half miles. The workmen remain a little behind us. Kendall somewhat better, and undertook the cooking for his mess.

August 11.

Clear weather. The wind very strong from the west, made it **dangerous**

**in falling the timber, which is both heavy and thick.** Workmen removed 10½ miles. **Water to the right of road.** The 'smith set up his forge; employed in repairing tools. Mr. HobDy, with Lewis and Tye, went forward six miles and marked the road for the fellers. Gave the people a quantity of cabbage.

August 12.

Mr. Hobby went to Castlereagh. **Fine weather, with cold wind.** Gorman reported there was not any meat or sugar, and that he had only 14 lb. pieces left in store, and no sugar.

August 13.

At daylight sent Lewis to the depôt with a letter to Mrs. Cox to send me out immediately 300 lb. of beef to serve to the people in lieu of salt pork. Gave orders to the corporal to send Private Ashford to the depôt, and for Sergeant Bounds to send me Carrol in lieu of him. The former being ill and unfit for the advance party, he has not done any duty this week past. **Measured 11 miles this morning, and this evening got through the brush ground, which has given us very hard work since leaving the depôt, the timber being heavy and the brush strong.** Gave orders to all hands to **remove forward to-morrow morning to the forest ground, about half-a-mile ahead of our work.**

August 14.

**Removed to the forest ground.** Sent Lewis with a letter for the Governor, informing him we were without meat or sugar.

August 15.

**Fine morning, and, being out of the brush,** had six fellers at work. At 9 a.m. arrived a cart from Clarendon with a side of beef 386 lb., 60 cabbages, two bags of corn, etc., for the men.

August 16.

**Fire-making on the 12-mile ridge. Timber very heavy, thick, and long; extremely troublesome to get rid of.** Having no sugar, borrowed 40 lb. from Mr. Hobby, and I gave 1 lb. to each man.

August 17.

Removed forward to a hill ahead of the workmen. **Water at 11½ miles to the left; ditto 12 to the right; ditto 12½ to the left; ditto 13½ to the right. At the three first places in very small quantities; at the latter plenty, with a place fit to drive stock to water. The timber on the forest from 11½ miles to 13 very tall and thick. Measured a dead tree which we felled that was 81 ft. to the first branch, and a blood tree 15 ft. 6 in. in circumference. There is some good stringy bark timber in this forest ground.**

August 18.

**Wind very high the last two nights, and this evening stormy, but the wind blew off the rain. Measured the 13th mile this evening, and just entered a scrub with stunted timber.** Mr. Hobby returned this day. Got 2 lb. of shoemakers' thread from Clarendon, and put Headman, one of our men, to repair shoes during the week. The 'smith employed this week in



making and repairing tools and nails for the men's shoes. ***The stonemason went forward to examine a rocky ridge about three miles ahead,*** and on Monday next he will go there to work to level them.

August 19.

At 7 a.m. left the party for Clarendon. Mr. Hobby and Lewis left in charge. Stephen Parker ran a splinter in joint under his ankle; unable to work.

August 26.

At 10 a.m. arrived at Martin's, where I found the sergeant of the party, he having died the day before. Sent to Windsor to the sergeant commanding there for a coffin and party to bury him at Castlereagh, but Sergeant Ray sent for the corpse to bring it to Windsor. Wrote to the Governor for another sergeant, and sent back Corporal Harris to the depôt, there to remain until relieved. Called at the first depôt at 12; ordered a cask of pork to be opened; counted the pieces in the presence of Gorman, my son Henry, and a soldier; it contained 75 pieces. Arrived at the working party at 2 p.m. Found Mr. Hobby well. The road finished during my absence. Done well. Lewis left the party on Monday last, very ill of a sore throat.

August 27.

***Measured to the 16th mile, immediately after which the ground got very rocky, and in half-a-mile we came to a high mountain, which will cost much labour to make a road over. Got two natives, who promise to continue with us--Joe from Mulgoa and Coley from Richmond.***

August 28.

Removed, with all the people, to a little forward of the 16th mile. (Lewis returned.)

August 29.

Commenced operations on the mountain, with all the men. Continued the same on Tuesday, except with the fellers, who went forward on the next ridge. ***Had to remove an immense quantity of rock, both in going up the mountain and on the pass leading to the bluff on the west of it. Examined the high rocks well, and fixed on making a road off it from the bluff instead of winding round it. Began cutting timber and splitting stuff to frame the road on the rock to the ridge below it, about 20ft. in depth.*** The men worked extremely hard and smart to-day.

SICK LIST, MONDAY.

Sam. Davis, splinter in his hand.

Thos. Kendall, ill from bad cold.

Step. Parker, from sick list to work again.

August 31.

***All hands employed at the bridge.***

September 1.

Retained eight men to work at the bridge. Sent the rest forward road-making. Sent back Walters' bullocks to Emu, and received Myers' team.

September 3.

Augmented the men at work on the pass at the bridge to 10, both yesterday and to-day. **The road finished to Caley's heap of stones, 17¾ miles.**

September 4 (Sunday).

Removed forward to the bridge the working road gang. Removed forward to Caley's pile. **No water for stock near the bridge, nor a blade of grass. The water we get is near a mile distant, and that in a tremendous gully to the right. Went forward to Caley's pile, and from thence up the rock to Evans' cave you get a view of the country from north-west round to south-west as far as the eye can carry you. From hence the land to the west is still higher. The country to the northwards appears extremely hilly, with nothing but timber and rocks. To the east there appears much level country.** Windsor and various parts of cleared land is seen from this.

September 5.

Davis returned to labour; Kendall to cooking. Appledon ill; splinter in the foot. Set the following persons to the pass and bridge:--Two carpenters, two sawyers, two quarrymen, two cutting timber, and two labourers. 'Smith employed mending tools and making shoe-nails. Shoemaker mending and nailing shoes. The remainder of the men employed in road-making forward, under the direction of Mr. Hobby and R. Lewis. J. Tye got a week's leave on Friday last to go to Windsor. Sent a soldier on Thursday last to the Governor for blocks, augurs, and irons, etc.

September 6.

All hands employed as before. One extra man brought back to assist at the bridge and pass. Soldier returned from Sydney.

September 8.

Men at work as yesterday. **The wind has been very high and cold from the west since Sunday last, and last night it blew a perfect hurricane. Saw a few flying showers yesterday, but we got scarcely any rain, and it appears the wind will carry it away. The country about here very barren. No kangaroos to be seen. Shot one pheasant, with tail complete; shot two others without tail, It appears to be too early in the season for them, as their tails are just shooting, and others not at full length. Scarcely any small birds to be seen.**

September 9 and 10.

Workmen employed as before. The bridge rises very fast, and the quarrymen well on with the stonework.

September 11 (Sunday).

Went three miles forward to examine the road with Mr. Hobby and Lewis.

***From the bridge it continues rocky over two or three small passes to Caley's pile; from thence, at least two miles further, the mountain is nearly a solid rock. At places high broken rocks; at others, very hanging or shelving, which makes it impossible to make a level, good road. The more the road is used the better it will be.***

September 12.

No person on sick list. Continued with 10 men to get on at the bridge and pass until Thursday, when it was completed all but the hand-rails and battening the planks. Gave orders for six men to pack up and go forward in the morning, leaving to complete the bridge two sawyers and two carpenters, which they expect they will complete in three or four days. Sent forward part of our heavy luggage, and intend removing myself to-morrow. Issued a pair of strong shoes to each man. ***The bridge we have completed is 80 ft. long, 15 ft. wide at one end and 12 ft. at the other; 35 ft. of it is planked, the remainder filled up with stones. The face from the bluff end of the rock was about 20 ft. before we began to work. At the left there is a side wall cut from the solid rock. At the right, where the ground is lower, we have put up a rough stone wall about 100 ft. long, which makes the pass to the bridge quite a lane. It is steep from the top of the mountain quite to the lower end of the bridge, a distance altogether of about 400 ft. The bridge and pass have cost me the labour of 12 men for three weeks, which time they worked very hard and cheerful. It is now complete--a strong, solid bridge, and will, I have no doubt, be reckoned a good-looking one by travellers that pass through the mountain.***

September 13.

Removed forward; ***found the road completed to 21 miles. At the latter end of this the ground was completely covered with gum roots. Was obliged to turn all hands to grubbing and finishing the road,*** and with very hard labour nearly completed the 22nd mile by Saturday night.

September 15 (Sunday).

Went forward to examine the road about three miles ahead. Got on very high ground. ***The greater part of the scrub burnt here last summer, and the trees also much burnt.***

September 16.

Moved forward, ahead of ***the cleared road. Went as far as the fire-makers had finished. Shot several small new birds the last week, and also a young cockatoo, quite mottled or cuckoo colour.[A small cuckoo called Gang-gang; the head of male bird pink.] There was one old one and three young ones in company, which are the only ones we have seen of the sort.*** Ordered Angus to bring forward a load of provisions on Wednesday next. Kept a strong party at the grub hoe.

September 17 to 24.

Kept all hands at road-making, and they did a very good week's work, having completed four miles of good road this week. ***Removed on Saturday to the 26 mile, being just at the foot of a steep mountain. Examined it well, and found it too steep to ascend in a straight direction.***

September 25 (Sunday).

**Went up the mountain; examined it, and fixed on the way to make a winding road up. This is the highest mountain on the whole range we cross. From it Windsor houses, etc., are distinctly visible, as are the wheatfields, farmhouses, etc. There is a river running to the east about a mile south of this, the banks of which are so high and steep it is not possible to get down. This river empties itself into the Nepean about four miles higher up than Emu Plains.** Went forward to fix on a site for a second depôt. [Cox's River, emptying into the Wollondilly, about 20 miles above Emu Plains.] **Chose one about two miles ahead, close to a stream of excellent water. We have found much greater quantities of water these last six miles than we did before, and all very good.**

September 26.

Sent forward two sawyers and two other men to procure the necessary timber, etc., for the second depôt. Set 10 men to work making the road up the mountain. The remainder at work as usual road-making. Sent T. Randall to the Windsor Hospital, sick. P. Handrigan ill with a bad sprained ankle.

September 27.

Finished the road up the mountain this evening. Made a very good job of it (cost 10 men two days). **The ground extremely rough and rocky for about a mile between the high mountain and second depôt.**

September 28.

Worked at the road forward to the second depôt, where we removed on Thursday morning. **The rocky ground we had to pass over was very troublesome, being obliged to turn out of the road a very large quantity of stone, it being too hard to break with sledge-hammers.**

October 1.

Began on Friday to put up the building for **the second depôt. The situation is very pleasant, being on a ridge high enough in the front (which is due east) to overlook the standing timber altogether, and at the back there is a considerable quantity of ground without a tree, and a rivulet of fine spring water running through it. On this ground there is the grass tree and other coarse food, which the bullocks eat and fill themselves pretty well.** The building for the store is 17 x 12, with 3 ft. sides, gable-ended, all weatherboards, and a door on the east end. Got well on with it this evening; finished on the 8th inst. Cost me eight men, six days. **It is just 28 miles from Emu ford.** [The site of the old Weatherboard Inn, now Wentworth Falls.]

October 3.

Sick list: Handrigan, Lowe, sprained ankle. Several men have bad colds, but none laid up. Sawyers, carpenters, and 'smith are at work at the depôt. The remainder gone forward, road-making. Went forward to see the workmen. **At the 29th mile is a very handsome long reach, quite straight, which I call, from the layer of it out, "Hobby's Reach."** **Finished the road this evening to the 30th mile.** The carpenters getting well on with the depôt. Nothing left to be done but weather-boarding part of the roof. Sent Walters to the first depôt to bring forward the sergeant and Gorman to the second depôt. Gave charge of all the bullocks

to Walters, and ordered Cryer to labour for his bad management and inattention to the bullocks. **There are many large emmets, or ant-hills, in this part of the mountain. I measured one at the 26 miles, of a sugarloaf shape; it was 6 ft. high, and 20 ft. round at the bottom.** S. Parker laid up with a cold today. The blacksmith employed in steeling axes and grub hoes, and repairing tools; at other times making nails for the second depôt. At 5 p.m. my servant arrived with horses from Clarendon, and to-morrow morning at 7 o'clock intend returning there, leaving the party under the direction of Mr. Hobby and R. Lewis. Wrote to the Governor to inform him of my going, stating to him my arrangements, etc., I had made.

October 22.

Having made my arrangements, etc., at Clarendon and Mulgoa with respect to my sheep and ensuing harvest, and attended his Excellency the Governor at the muster, I **left Clarendon on Saturday afternoon in a single horse chaise**, and slept at Castlereagh.

October 23 (Sunday).

At half-past 5 this morning left Rev. Mr. Fulton's. Remained two hours at the first and second depôts to examine the stores, and make arrangements for forwarding the provisions, etc., for the people; and at 6 p.m. came up with the working party at the 39th mile, to which place the road was completed, having finished, during my absence of two weeks and four days, nine miles. Found Mr. Hobby and all the party in good health. On Monday morning Mr. H. returned in my chaise to the Nepean for a week or 10 days, and for want of grass I also sent back my saddle-horse, to Clarendon. On Sunday evening **R. Lewis returned from the end of the mountain, about 10 miles forward, having been with three men to examine the mountain that leads down to the forest ground. His report is that the descent is near half-a-mile down, and extremely sharp; that it is scarceiy possible to make a road down; and that we cannot get off the mountain to the north to make a road; that it appears to him much more difficult, now he has examined the hill, to get down than he was before aware of.**

October 24.

Set all hands to work road-making, including blacksmith, carpenter, stonemasons, etc., being extremely anxious to get forward and ascertain if we can descend the mountain to the south before we get to the end of the ridge.

Tuesday and Wednesday the men continued the same work, and getting on extremely well. Wrote to the Governor for a further supply of gunpowder, to enable us to blow up the rocks in our way; as also rope and blocks, to expedite us in building bridge and getting off the mountain.

Monday and Tuesday, **wind at east, with cold showers.**

Wednesday, **at west, blowing very high and cold.**

October 27.

**Wind at east; very cold, with rain.** All hands working only half a day.

October 28.

Removed forward to 42nd mile. **Wind south, with constant rain.** No work done, except the cobbler mending shoes. Sent the cart back to the second depôt for rations. Two other horse carts employed in bringing forward provisions from first and second depôts, which they appear to do very slowly. Heard nothing of the bullock cart belonging to Walters.

October 30 (Sunday).

**Rain until about 5 o'clock in the evening. Wind at south-west.** Blankets belonging to the men very wet and uncomfortable.

October 31.

**The weather appears to have broken up.** All hands went to work at half-past 5 a.m. The men removed to the 44th mile this day. **The high, short ridge of mountains seen from Windsor was this day observed at 43¼ miles, bearing north, 60deg. east, distant about eight miles. A table rock seen by us from the rocks near Coley's pile to our right, and from all high lands since, was observed to-day, bearing east-north-east, distant about two miles. Two parties of natives are seen on the low lands to the west. One within two miles of us; the other about six miles.**

November 1.

Fair weather. Three persons sent to examine the mountain to the left, **to find a place to make a road down to the forest ground.** Returned unsuccessful.

November 2.

**Fine morning. Thunder, with light showers.** Sent three men again to examine the descent of the mountain, and ascertained that there is no other way but from the bluff originally marked. To-morrow I intend going to survey it, as a road must be made to get off the mountain.

November 3.

At 6 this morning went forward with Lewis, Tye, and a soldier to **examine the mountain at the end of the ridge--four miles. Found it much worse than I expected. It commences with going down steep between immense large boulders, when it opens with a very steep gulley in front, and towards the left it falls off so steep that it is with much difficulty a person can get down at all. The whole front of the mountain is covered with loose rock, at least two-thirds of the way down; and on the right and left it is bounded both by steep gullies and rocks, so that we cannot, by winding short to the left, get half length sufficient to gain ground to get down without a number of circular turns both to right and left, and in that case the hill is so very steep about half-a-mile down that it is not possible to make a good road to go down and up again without going to a very great expense.** I have, therefore, made up my mind to make such a road as a cart can go down empty or with a very light load without a possibility of its being able to return with any sort of load whatever; and **such a road will also answer to drive stock down to the forest ground. After getting down this said mountain, we got into very pretty forest ground, and went as far as Blaxland's rivulet, about two miles. The grass on it is generally of a good quality--some silky; some hard, intermingled with rib grass, buttercup and thistle. Timber thin, and kangaroos--plenty. In returning back, we had to clamber up the mountain, and it completely knocked me up.** It is a very great drawback to the new country, as no produce can be brought from thence to headquarters,

except fat bullocks or sheep. The sheep also will be able to bring their fleeces up, and be shorn on the mountains, or driven to the second depôt for the purpose. In either case, waggons can fetch the wool. Gorman came forward with a cartload of provisions. From him I learnt that Walters had got some fresh Government bullocks at the first depôt, but that he could not harness them--they were so wild. Sent another man down to assist him. Also sent a man to bring up the remainder of the bullocks that are unable to work from lameness or poverty, to get them down the mountain, where there is good feed. The Government bullocks have not carried a single load of anything for me since Sunday week last. Made an agreement with Sergeant Minehan and another man for their horse and cart to remain with us until we have performed the whole of our work, and the sergeant went to the Hawkesbury for them. T. Tindall received a hurt in his arm from the fall of a tree. Removed all hands this morning to 45½ miles. Put up the forge for the blacksmith to repair all tools for the Herculean mountain. Issued to all hands a gill of spirits.

November 4.

Sent three men to examine all the ridges and gullies to the north, offering a reward if they found a better way down. All returned unsuccessful. Removed to 47 miles.

November 5.

**Wind to the east; rain and cold.** All hands employed on the road. The blacksmith made eight pikes for self-defence against the natives. **Lewis and a party took the dogs down to the forest ground. Killed a fine kangaroo; weighs about 120 lb. Examined the big mountain,** and fixed on the spot where to begin on Monday, having given up all thoughts of attempting it elsewhere. J. Manning sprained his ankle in bringing up a keg of water from the rocks below. T. Raddick ill; believe it arises from the wet weather. **There is timber here, which appears to bear all the property of the ash in its young state. It is easily transplanted, as the sprouts are like the white thorn. It grows quickly, tall and straight, bends to anything. When large it splits well, and will, I have no doubt, make: very good hoops. In its appearance it is like the black butt, but the leaves are unlike. The bark ties much better than stringy bark. In falling the timber trees it cut remarkably free, and in order to try it I cut a small one down, and quartered it, which I mean to send to Clarendon and try them for light cart or chaise shafts.**

November 6.

**Rain in morning; began to clear up about noon.** Received a letter from the Government, dated 2nd. Sent S. Davis to Sydney with a letter to the Governor at 2 p.m. to bring up powder and spirits.

November 7.

Mr. Hobby joined me this morning. At 6 a.m. went forward with 10 men to commence operations for a road down the mount. Light rain and heavy fogs.

November 8.

Employed the same hands in the same manner. **Light rain as before.** The men very wet and uncomfortable, their clothes and bedding being also wet.

November 9.

Removed to the extreme end of the mountain with the whole of the party. **The rocks here are so lofty and undermined that the men will be able to sleep dry**, and keep their little clothing dry also, which is what they have been unable to do this last fortnight. Left 12 men to finish up the road; the rest employed with myself. **Cold rain set in about, noon. Wind S.W.**

November 10.

Raining; cleared up at 9 o'clock. Got a good day's work done. Evening fine and starlight.

November 11.

**Rain commenced before daylight, and continued the whole day. Wind S. and very cold.** Sent T. Raddock to Windsor, being very ill. S. Freeman, the carpenter, laid up with a cold and swollen face. Jas. Dwyer ill; pain in side and breast. Sent two carts to the second depôt for provisions. **Sent three men with the dogs to catch kangaroos three times this week. Brought one home every day.** The bullock driver, with 11 bullocks joined me yesterday. All they have done this last fortnight has been to bring in one bag of biscuits from the first depôt to this place (43 miles). **Ordered the bullocks down the mountain to the forest ground, where I intend letting them remain to recover themselves until we remove forward towards the Fish River. One of them is quite blind. He got into the gully going down, but we got him out to-day safe.**

November 12.

**Very fine day. Wind east and cold.** Completed the road to the beginning of the large mountain, which we have to descend to the forest ground. Measured it up; it is 28 miles 50 chains. **Continued to clear away the timber and rubbish through the large rocks**, and to the beginning of the bluff end of the mountain. Two men on the sick list.

November 13.

**Went down to the forest ground; from thence on to the rivulet, and traced it to the river, about five miles down. Went one mile down the river and came back on the high lands, exploring the best ground for a road. The grass on the greater part of the land we went over to-day is good. The timber thin. The ground is hilly, but sound; some parts near the rivulet and river is rocky, but no iron stone, it being rather of a sandy soil, and very good pasture for sheep. The ground on the other side of the rivulet appears also to be equally good for feed, thinly timbered, and very hilly, with good grass clear up to the rocks. The river runs nearly east, and must, from its course, empty itself into the Nepean River.** The horse carts arrived to-day from the second depôt. They brought very small loads indeed. Ordered two of the carts to go to-morrow to the first depôt, and to return here again on Sunday next loaded. Saw the working bullocks this morning. They are improving quite fast. Mustered the whole of the tools, harness, &c.; found nearly all right. Ground the axes and put the grub hoes and picks in order to begin to-morrow. Ordered Gorman to issue 4 lbs. biscuit and 3 lbs. flour for each mess, instead of 6 lbs. each, the biscuits running short, and being also too bulky to bring so far, being 90 miles from head-quarters.

November 14.



Sick list: F. Dwyer, cold, pains in limbs; S. Freeman, cold and swelled face; S. Crook, cold, bad eyes; V. Hanragan, cold, pains in limbs; S. Walters, hurt by bullock. The extreme wet weather we had for a fortnight before we arrived here has given most of the men colds, but as they are now dry lodged, and, in addition to their large ration, **have fresh kangaroo at least three times a week**, it is to be hoped they will soon recover. So many men sick, and chiefly very useful ones, breaks in on our working party much, and **the continuous rain also prevents so much work being done as I could wish. Fine morning; at noon thunder, with rain and hail. Wind east; very cold. Steady rain all the evening.** Got on erecting the bridge at the beginning of the descent off the mountain, and blowing up the rocks that are in the line of our intended road down to the forest. Find is [sic] difficult work, and it will cost us much labour.

November 15.

Five men sick. **Sent Mr. Hobby, with Lewis and Tye, to trace a ridge that leads to the river a little below Blaxland's rivulet, it being my wish to cross the river in preference to crossing the rivulet twice. The report was favourable, but the water being too high they could not cross.** I intend going myself the first fine day I can leave the work. Got on well with our work on the mountain. **Fixed two large trees as side pieces--one 45, the other 50 ft. long.** Fine weather; wind east, thunder, no rain.

November 16.

**Dwyer and Cook returned to labour. Sullivan laid up, sick. Most beautiful morning. Thunder at noon and in the evening, with showers.** Got a very good day's work done. **The rocks cut extremely hard, and cost us much labour.** Sent Lewis and Tye back to the 37 miles to see a working bullock left there three weeks since. **Found it in so bad a state from sore feet and unable to walk that they killed it.**

November 17.

Sick list: Freeman, Walters, Sullivan. Fine day. **Worked on the front of the mountain. The ground extremely hard, and very large rocks as we dig into it. Some we blow up, but the greater part we turn out with long levers and crowbars. Kept six men cutting and blowing up rocks, two splitting posts and rails, and it is as much as the 'smith can do to keep their tools in order.**

November 18.

Hard at work on the rocks this day. **Kept our six pickaxes at work; and W. Appledon (a sailor) fixed the blocks and tackle to trees, and got a most capital purchase to turn out an immense large rock at the side of the mountain in the way of our road, which he performed well.** Two men received slight hurts in doing it by one of the purchases slipping (J. Tindall and T. Adams). **This rock would have cost me at least 51b. of powder to have blown it up.** Two carts arrived with provisions, and brought a supply of gunpowder and a keg of spirits.

November 19.

Sick list: S. Freeman, S. Walters, T. Davis, J. Finch, T. Adams, J. Tindall. Fine morning. Work as on Friday. **At 5 p.m. heavy thunder, with hail and rain, continued about two hours.** Sent the sergeant

with a two-horse cart to the second depôt to bring away Gorman and the remainder of the stores. Discharged six men, with three carts and six horses, from the mountain work, namely, J. Crowley, J. Toone, M. Bryan, S. Stanley, S. Whitney, P. Hoddrigoddy.

November 20 (Sunday).

At 7 a.m. went with Mr. Hobby, Lewis, and Tye to examine the rivulet, river, and ground as far as Blaxland's Mountain, to find out the best passage across the water, as also to mark the road to it. **After going on different ridges and examining the crossing-places, we got to the foot of the mountain at noon, where we remained an hour and refreshed. Immediately after leaving it we crossed a small swamp to look at another ridge, when my horse got stuck in a bog, and plunged until he fell.** I received no hurt, but got wet through. Pulled off my clothes, wrung them, and left them in the sun an hour, when they were tolerably dry. Crossed the lower rivulet on our return just at the junction, in doing which Mr. Hobby's horse stumbled and threw him into the water, which from the last heavy rains was quite rapid. Came from thence back on the north side of the rivulet, and crossed three miles from thence up. **The ground on this side is better for feed than any we have seen. It is extremely hilly; the timber thin; the ground perfectly sound, intermixed in places with large loose rocks, and the sort of grass fit for cattle and sheep. It is also very well watered, as stock can go to almost any part of the rivulet to drink. The crossing-places over the river are so encumbered with rock, and the access to it from the hilly ground on each side so bad, that I did not fix on a crossing-place on it, but intend having both rivulets well examined the ensuing week.** Came back at 6 p.m., completely knocked up from fatigue. Late in the evening violent gusts of wind, with three or four hours' rain.

November 21.

**Thick, misty morning. A11 hands at work on the mountain. At 10 a.m. it began to thunder and rain. About noon it increased, and continued the whole day, at times very heavy.** Only four hours work done this day. Issued to all hands yesterday afternoon a gill of spirits each.

November 22.

**Thick, moist morning.** The sick list reduced to one (S. Davis). All hands again on the mountain. **Light rain and heavy fogs during the day,** but the men continued out and did a good day's work. **Turned out a great number of very large rocks this day; blew up one. The ground as we dig discovers many more rocks than we expected.**

November 23.

**Cloudy morning, with a very cold wind, east-south-east. Cleared up at noon, and continued fine the rest of the day.** T. Cook and J. Ross sick. Sent two carts to Emu Plains, with three horses and the sergeant and two men, to bring a load of flour from Martin's. Sent Gorman with them, and he took six weeks' provisions for two of the soldiers that are to be left at the first depôt. The other soldier ordered to return here with the carts. **Sent J. Tye, with a soldier and another man, to re-mark the trees from the second rivulet to the Fish River, a distance of about 20 miles from hence, and gave him directions to return by a ridge of high land that bears, as we suppose, from within three miles of the Fish River back to Mount Blaxland, it being my wish to make the road on that line, if practicable.** They took each a week's rations with them.

November 24.

Sick: T. Cook, J. Ross, J. Finch (pains in his back and limbs from wet and cold). **Close morning, but dry weather until 5 p.m., when it mizzled, and continued so all the evening. Wind southeast, and cold. The men did a very good day's work. Turned out of the road an immense quantity of rock, which was handsomely veined, very like marble.** The bullocks having been missing since Sunday last, sent Lewis to look after them. He returned, but could not find them. **There is a handsome shrub here, very like the laylock. It grows larger, but is a pretty flower. The stems of them make good walking-sticks.**

November 25.

Sick list as yesterday. **Wet, drizzly morning. At 10 a.m. it rained so hard as to break off the men from work.** Took up a little again at 2 p.m. Turned out the men again, and continued to work until sunset. **Light rain all the afternoon. Harder rain in the evening. Wind south-south-east. quite cold.**

November 26.

Issued to all hands one pair of trousers each. **The stone on the mountain is uncommon hard, and flinty. Cuts extremely bad, and some of it will not split. We have been fortunate in turning out very large solid rocks 2 ft. thick without breaking them, and we have used but little powder this week. Light rain the whole day. Wind east-south-east; blowing very hard at times, and quite cold.** The men kept out at work the greater part of the day, but so much wet and for so long a time makes them quite cheerless. The working bullocks not having been seen these 10 days, sent Lewis again after them, and found them up a valley three miles away, east-north-east. Ordered the bullock driver to repair the harness, and be prepared to set off with a strong team to-morrow for Emu Plains, to bring us a load of provisions. Sick list as yesterday; Cook and Ross getting better. Finch much worse. **Carpenter got 100 posts split and 200 rails for fencing the road down the mountain.**

November 27 (Sunday).

**Heavy rain all night, and until 9 this morning, when it became lighter, but continued raining until 1 o'clock, when it began to clear up.** Issued one pair of shoes to each man. German arrived at 8 this morning with an account that Allen's horse was knocked up and returned to Emu Plains, and that he did not expect. the other two horses would bring more than two small casks of flour. Sent the bullock cart, with two men and five bullocks, to Emu Plains for a load of provisions, and ordered Gorman to see it safely loaded at Martin's. In this cart I sent J. Finch, who was very ill, and anxious to return to the Nepean. At 5 p.m. **J. Tye and his party returned from the Fish River. They brought some fish with them, which proved to be rock cod, weighing about 5 lb. each. They report the waters to be very high, and that it has rained constantly from Wednesday evening until a few hours since, in consequence of which they could not examine the ridge which I suppose leads towards the river, but returned the same way they went, which is by no means favourable for a road, on account of hills and valleys. During their stay at the river they caught 10 fish, and state that had the water not run so strong they would have caught as many as they pleased. Quite a fine, clear evening.**

November 28.

A clear, beautiful morning. All hands out at work at 5 o'clock. **At 5 p.m. turned cloudy, and we had a dirty evening**, but got a good day's work done. At noon the sergeant and Frost returned from Emu ford with their horses and one cart, bringing two casks of flour, of 336 lb. each. **Allen's horse got stung by something, and was left behind.** T. Adams sick; has a strong fever on him. The stonemason completed the rock a little below the bridge. It has cost us 10 blasts of powder and great labour to get rid of it.

November 29.

**A dirty morning. Got a tree 55 ft. long and 9 ft. in circumference by the men in the woods into his place as a side piece below the bridge, and joining the rock, which is the last we want for this job. Men stuck very hard picking and grubbing the rocks and forming the road. Fine evening.**

November 30.

A fine day; thunder at noon, but no rain. Men working as yesterday, and got a very good day's work done. The rock picks extremely hard. Sick list: T. Adams, P. Hanley, S. Parker, T. Watkins.

December 1.

Mr. Hobby and Lewis again examined the river to find a proper place for a bridge that can be got at from a main ridge we discovered about two miles from the valley below. They found two places and marked back the best one they can find, according to the orders they last evening received.

December 2.

Sent a soldier with letters, etc., to his Excellency the Governor. At 2 p.m. Gorman came here from Emu Plains. Reports that he left one bullock cart, with two casks of flour, at the 15-mile yesterday. Also reports that there are two Government teams at Martin's, and, the water being too high for them to cross at the ford, they refused to swim the bullocks over to come here. with the provisions without a written order from me. Sent down to the forest to get a Government horse. They searched until night, but could not find it. Directed Gorman to remain until the morning. **Fine day.** Work went on cheerily. Sick: Parker, Hanley, Watkins, and Appledon.

December 3.

At daybreak sent the men to look after the horses; returned at 10, without seeing them. Sent Gorman to Emu ford on foot, 50 miles, with written order to have the bullocks swam across the Nepean and come forward, and for him to return again as soon as he saw the carts loaded, and as far as the first depôt. At 2 p.m. Tye and the soldier returned. They report unfavourably, and say we cannot go on either of the ridges pointed out, and that we must cross the valley by Blaxland's Mountain. A fine day. Men worked extremely hard on the mountain to finish a road on the second circle, to admit my caravan to come down to-morrow. Sick list: Watkins and Appledon. Fowler, scurvy in his leg. Two men out all day to look after the horses; returned unsuccessful.

December 4 (Sunday).

About 10 o'clock last night the bullock cart arrived from Emu ford, bringing two large casks of flour and some odd tools that had been left at the first and second depôts. In the absence of Gorman, Mr. Hobby and Lewis issued the rations and delivered over the remainder of the provisions in charge of the sergeant, with a written list, and also ordered two soldiers to sleep under the rock where it is deposited. At 10 a.m. removed the caravan and cart down to the valley at the foot of the mountain. Took them down by men, the road not being finished sufficient for horses or cattle to draw on it. **At 2 p.m. removed 18 chains forward to a valley about two miles where there is water.** The bullock cart took the provisions, etc., forward. At 3 p.m. the horses were brought back by Sullivan and two others. They look very well. Gave the promised reward--half-a-pint of spirits. Mr. Hobby and myself immediately mounted and gave directions where the men are to begin to-morrow, under the charge of Watson. He is to put on six fellers, six fire-makers, and five cleaners up the road. **Went on to the river, and fixed on the spot to make the first bridge. There is a most beautiful ridge, near three miles long, that leads direct to the spot. Could not see any timber near the place fit for it.** Issued to all hands a gill of spirits each. **In the evening wind shifted to the west. At 7 it began to rain. At 8 it came on very heavy, and rained nearly all night.**

December 5.

Very cold, windy morning, with light rain in showers. Put the remainder of the men to work at the mountain, which I expect they will complete by Saturday. Wrote to Rev. M. Cartwright to send two of the gaol gang to cut and house Tindall's wheat (about three acres) at the Nepean. He has a large family, and it is his all. He could not allow himself to go in, as many others would fancy they were entitled to the same indulgence. **Went on to the fellers in the morning. The timber being thin, they got on well. Attended the gang on the mountain in the afternoon. Weather very cold. Wind west; showers of sleet and hail at 5 p.m. At 8 thunder and lightning; no rain; and a fine, clear evening.**

December 6.

Beautiful, clear morning. Brought a cask of pork and two bars of iron down the mountain to carry forward. Removed after breakfast with the caravan, horse, and bullock cart to the junction of the two rivers, about six miles. **Examined the river and rivulet up and down, and fixed on a spot over each as being less trouble and more convenient than making one bridge over the river, the obstacles to the latter being more rocks on the ground between the river and high land, and also the ascent up the hill is much steeper and worse ground for a road** Sent the bullock cart back to the mountain to bring a load of provisions to-morrow. A fine day.

December 7.

Cloudy morning; wind south. At 11 a.m the bullock cart brought four casks of flour from the mountain. **Gorman came from Emu ford, and brought a new chart from the Fish River to Bathurst Plains, with the Governor's despatches.** Brought word that the two Government carts were on the road with provisions, and that they had taken the whole from Martin's except two casks of pork. Directed the sergeant to go back to the second depôt with a two-horse cart to-morrow morning for provisions, and also to impress one of the Parramatta carts at the second depôt to bring a load on to the mountain. Showers began at noon. At 6 p.m. rained heavily, and

continued all the evening.

December 8.

**Heavy rain during the night, but a fine, clear morning.** Sent 12 men making and bringing up the road from the mountain to the river, under charge of Mr. Hobby. Left 12 men to finish the road down the mountain, under charge of R. Lewis. **J. Tye returned last evening, making the road 10 miles ahead. Finished the road this evening from the mountain to the river. Measured down the mountain to the valley to the 50th mile from the ford. Here I drop this reckoning and commence from the 50th mile to the west, and which is 5 miles 10 chains to the bridge on the east branch of a river running to the east not yet named. A fine, clear day.**

December 9.

Fine day; wind west. Afternoon hot and sultry. **All hands employed at the first bridge before breakfast. At 9 a.m. took all hands to the second bridge, and before dinner got one of the side pieces, 45 ft. long, about 100 yards down the river, and fixed it in its place** without accident. **The other side piece we got by falling a tree across the river, about 60 ft. long, and that was also fixed.** After dinner gave all hands a gill of spirits. Several of the men appear to be inclined to give in and shirk work, the greater part of whom, in my opinion, are quite as well as myself. Gave them a reproof in earnest, which I expect will make them all well by to-morrow. A cart arrived on the mountain with stores.

December 10.

**Fine day; wind west. Finished the bridge over the east branch, 22 ft. long, 13 ft. wide.** Carpenters, etc., made a good, strong job of it. The working bullocks strayed, and not found till sunset. Sick: P. Hanrigan, J. Tindall, H. Morton. Ordered six married men to go back to the mountain to finish the road down it to the valley. When done, they are to be discharged--S. Parker, J. Ross, J. Tindall, P. Hanrigan, P. Marman, and J. Watkins. Also ordered J. Wilson to go forward on Monday with nine others road-making.

December 11 (Sunday).

At 6 a.m. sent six men back to the mountain to complete the road. At 7 sent 10 men forward to encamp at Blaxland's Mountain, under Watson's charge. Set out on horseback, with Mr. Hobby and Lewis (J. Tye and a soldier having previously gone), to go as far as the Fish River to examine the ground for a road. **After passing Mount Blaxland we ascended a high ridge, and found it still continue to ascend until we got extremely high. Continued on until noon, and found the ground very unfavourable for a road, when I made up my mind to return by the route Mr. Evans laid down on his chart; but, to my great surprise, found it impracticable to make a road even for a horse. I, therefore, returned, and examined all the ridges and valleys for several miles, and got back at sunset extremely fatigued and much disappointed. The land between the river and Mount Blaxland is very favourable for grazing--a light, sound soil, and good sort of grass, thinly timbered, and well watered. This appears a tract of about 10 miles long, and probably, on the average, five miles wide, of good grazing ground. Westward it is not as good. Again, the hills to the south I have not been on; those to the north again become rocky. The hills to the west, north, and south are extremely high and difficult of access, but in many of them the feed is**

**good to the highest part.**

December 12.

Sick list: P. Heningham, J. Allen, H. Martin, and R. Hanley. **Men at work getting timber, etc., for the bridge, the greater part of which we are obliged to get down the river by the men, six of whom were in the water nearly all day. Gave these men a gill of spirits each. Got a good day's work done. At 6 p.m. a violent thunderstorm, with wind, lightning, and heavy rain, which lasted till 9 o'clock.**

December 13.

Mr. Hobby went forward to Blaxland's Mountain to superintend the 10 men ahead in roadmaking. Got on well to-day with the work at the bridge. Gave the men who worked in the water a gill of spirits.

December 14.

Yesterday afternoon a Parramatta cart and the sergeant's cart brought forward the remainder of the provisions from the mountain, leaving there two soldiers and the six men finishing the job. A fine day. Men worked well at the bridge. **The bullocks employed in drawing timber for the bridge.** Detained the Parramatta team and men, and put them on my store until further orders. Ordered the three carts that I have to be taken over the bridge at daylight, and also to get over casks of provisions, to load them on that side the river (the bridge not being finished), and to proceed with their loads to Blaxland's Mountain, under Gorman's charge, where Mr. Hobby's party is at work.

December 15.

Loaded the three carts, and sent them forward at 6 a.m. At 7 a.m. went forward myself, and came up with the party at the 10-mile, to which they had completed the road, except turning some rock out of it after you ascend the hill at Blaxland's Mountain. Returned at 10, and sent forward three men with crowbars, pickaxes, etc., to complete the road, and remain with the party ahead. J. Allen very ill; ordered him back from Mr. Hobby's party to mine. At 1 p.m. one of the party at the mountain came to report they had finished their task. Sent Lewis back to examine it, and found it completed. Gave them their discharge (six men), and sent a cart with them as far as the Nepean, to carry their bedding. **A dull, heavy day, with light rain in the afternoon.** Men worked well at the bridge and causeway to it.

December 16.

**Cloudy morning, with light rain; broke up at 2, and continued fine.**

At 7 sent two bullock carts, with provisions, etc., under Gorman's charge, to the party ahead. Sent the sergeant back to the mountain to bring forward the tools, and also the two soldiers stationed there. **At 2 p.m. finished the bridge over the west branch of the river, 45 ft. long, 14 ft. wide. It is a good, strong job. There is also a causeway on each side to the high lands, which is filled up with stone and covered with earth. One of the side pieces is an oak tree, with girth of 9 ft. at least 6 ft. above where it was fallen, and was good 50 ft. long. I never saw such a tree of that sort before.** Sent the carpenter and five men forward to join Mr. Hobby's party, and intend breaking up from here to-morrow with the soldiers and remaining party. The carpenter worked remarkably well while at this job.

December 17.

Loaded the two bullock carts, etc., at 6 a.m., and sent them forward to Mr. Hobby's camp. Sent Lewis back to find the six bullocks we had feeding in the valley near the mountain, and to bring them forward to us. At 7 a.m. broke up quarters at the bridge, and joined Mr. Hobby at 9. **Measured up the work to the 12th mile (except two small bridges left to make at 11½ miles), where we encamped. Began falling the timber with the carpenter and two other men for these small bridges.** Tasked the people for next week's work, and selected 14 men to go forward road-making, the remainder to be at my quarters. J. Allen continues very ill; the other persons much recovered. **At 6 p.m. a thunderstorm, with about an hour's rain.**

December 18.

At half-past 7 went forward on horseback to **examine the road from hence to the Fish River. Found the country very hilly and rocky in many places. There are also two other small bridges to make before we get there. Took Mr. Hobby, J. Tye, and three others with me; caught some fish, and dined on the banks of the river. Fixed on the road, except going up the hill, which must be avoided, if possible. Returned at 6 p.m. It being a clear, fine day, we had fine views to the north and west from a high hill. Saw some plains without timber to the west, but in general the whole country around is extremely hilly, and apparently fair grazing land.** Lewis brought the bullocks forward to us this day.

December 19.

At work very hard on the bridges, and got on well. The day extremely clear and hot. **At 3 p.m. had a violent thunderstorm, with small rain for about an hour. Evening fine again, though close and sultry.** Found a way to avoid the high hill we were over yesterday, and marked the ground for a road.

December 20.

At 10 ordered the sergeant to take J. Allen, who continued to get worse, back 25 miles, where there was another cart and horse to relieve him. To my surprise, he made such frivolous objections as I did not like, and when I went to know if he was getting ready, he said neither his horse or himself had shoes; but if he was ordered, he must go. I immediately ordered the Parramatta cart to return, and at 12 he set off, taking the sick man, and J. Hoddy in charge of Allen, to see him safe to the Nepean. Ordered the sergeant to be ready to set off in the morning to the first depôt to relieve Corporal Harris, who is to come here. **A hot, sultry afternoon. At 6 had heavy thunder and lightning, but no rain. Finished the woodwork of the largest bridge, and got on well with the other,** but in consequence of Kelly, our Parramatta bullock driver, going in, sent forward to Mr. Hobby to send me two labourers back this evening, to enable me to finish all here to-morrow. **A very cloudy, close evening, with lightning to the south-west; wind north all day.**

December 21.

At 6 a.m. the sergeant went off to the first depôt with written instructions for his guidance there. Finished both bridges this afternoon, and removed all hands one mile and a-half on, where there is another bridge to build. One of the bridges is 15 over, the other 10 ft.



There is a great deal of work done here by the spade, the ground being very hanging and awkward. It is now a good job.

December 22.

Heavy thunder and lightning at 10 last night. Finished the bridge this day by 3 o'clock. It is 12 ft., and well finished. Removed one mile and a-half at 3, where we are brought up again by another run of water. Set to work on a bridge, and got all the large timber in its place before dark. Thunder, with showers, from 5 till dark. Had a fish brought this evening of about 4 lb. from the river. Worked the bullocks very hard yesterday and to-day, but am still behind-hand with getting our provisions, tools, etc., forward. Wind west.

December 23.

Much thunder and lightning, with extreme heavy rain, from midnight till 3 o'clock. At 10 a.m. a Parramatta constable arrived here with the Governor's despatches dated Tuesday evening. At noon, having finished the bridge, removed about half-a-mile forward, and began another bridge. At 4 p.m. it began to thunder again, and continued until night with light showers. H. Morton received a hurt in his leg from a large log. Wrote to the Governor by the constable who brought the despatches. Bullocks brought four men from yesterday's camp to this. We are now 15½ miles. On account of the Parramatta team being sent in, we are obliged to get the timber for the last six bridges by the men.

December 24.

Thick, misty morning; cleared up at 10, and continued fine the whole day. Finished a very good bridge at 1 o'clock. Went on after dinner half-a-mile, and began another bridge. This bridge required great labour to fill it in with timber at the ends before the earth was put on, as the ground was swampy from springs. The constable set off at 6 this morning; the distance is 90 miles. Went forward this afternoon to ascertain if I could get my caravan with safety to the Fish River, and have given orders to strike tents and pack up in the morning. Sick list: H. Morton, hurt in the leg; carpenter, very bad hands. T. French returned yesterday from the Hawkesbury, and left his cart on the road, his horse having knocked up. Bullocks brought two tons from the two bridge camps.

December 25 (Sunday).

Cloudy morning, with light rain until 9 o'clock. The Christmas Day continued dull throughout, with a south wind. At 8 a.m., after serving out the rations, went forward to the Fish River, and removed the caravan and one cartload there, where I pitched my tent, leaving three bridges to make and five miles of road. It being Christmas Day, issued to the men a gill of spirits and a new shirt each. Examined the river to find the best place to cross it, and fixed on a spot about 10 chains below where Mr. Evans crossed. The timber appears to be bad and scarce about here. Cannot find any for sawing. The land on both sides of the river extremely hilly, and awkward for road-making.

December 26.

Cloudy morning, with a south wind. At 8 a.m. sent T. Frost to Clarendon for a good cart horse, to prevent delay after we cross the river. Brought four men forward to get the materials for the bridge. Also put up the forge, to repair the tools, they being much out of order. The

remainder left behind. Afternoon cold, with showers.

December 27.

Cloudy morning; wind east-south-east. Quite cold, which prevented our catching any fish during the day. At 9 a.m. crossed the river for the first time with Mr. Hobby, J. Tye, and a soldier and one man to look at the ground a few miles to the west over the hills, to ascertain the best place for a road. Went over the hills, bearing to the south of west, and found it favourable for road-making. Continued going west until we came to a valley bearing north-west, where the grass was so good that I followed it till we came to the river in about an hour. The grass in this valley was the best and thickest on the ground I have yet seen in this colony. We made the river at a spot where a small stream falls into it from north-north-east, about two miles below Evans' Mountain, to the west. During our journey this day we saw six kangaroos, a flock of 11 emus, wild ducks and pigeons, but for want of dogs killed none. At 6 p.m. returned, and reached the river quite tired.

December 28.

Cloudy, unsettled morning; Wind east-south-east, and cold. Sent two soldiers to mark some trees across the river on a ridge to the west that I saw yesterday. The two carpenters came forward this morning, having finished the last bridge on the road from the mountain to this place (10 in number). Lewis reports the men getting on well at the road, but that they will not complete it to this place before Saturday. Gave directions for a party to be ready to go on a few days' journey to-morrow by 2 p.m. with me to Campbell's River, consisting of Mr. Hobby, Lewis, Tye, Watson, and two soldiers. The distance down the river is 40 miles; in a direct line west, about 21 miles.

December 29.

A fine morning, which the birds seem most to enjoy on the banks of the river. The shrubs and flowers also are extremely fragrant. Left six men preparing materials for the bridge across the main river. The remainder at work bringing up the road. Gorman came forward this morning at 10 o'clock with the small stores, etc., and has charge here during my absence. Sent two soldiers as a guard. The party going forward are all preparing, and are to cross the river at 12 precisely. Wrote to his Excellency the Governor with the proceedings down to this period, but shall not send it away until my return from the western excursion.

1815--

January 1.

On Thursday, at noon, crossed the river, and after proceeding up the hill bent our course west as near as the land would allow. At half-past 1 made Emu Valley. We here started six kangaroos, killed two, and stopped an hour. At three and a-half got to very fine grazing ground. In 20 minutes after crossed Sidmouth Valley, a most beautiful one; then over the hills, west, until 5, when we came to a dry creek. This ground about three miles over is very fine. Steered north-north-west, and in three-quarters of an hour made a ford on the river, about seven miles due west from our crossing-place, where we remained for the night. Started a kangaroo half-a-mile before we got in,

which we killed. At half-past 4, Friday morning, started steering due west. At 6 crossed O'Connell's Plains, and at 7 stopped on a point of the river to breakfast. Saw six or eight wild turkeys, and as many kangaroos; one of the latter we killed. At 9 set off again west-north-west, about three miles; then north-north-west, soon after which, seeing Macquarie Plains, we went down to it on our right, and followed the course of the river about three miles until we came to the point where the Macquarie and Campbell's rivers unite, at 11.30, where we sat down for the day. In the afternoon of yesterday crossed Campbell's River, about three miles. Found it very good pasture for sheep and cattle. On Saturday morning, at 4.30, started again, and went about two miles up Campbell's River; then steered due east, until 11 o'clock, without halting. Here meeting with water in a creek, we stopped to refresh, and remained until 1, when my compass being out of order we made our way by the hills and sun, and arrived at our old encampment at 6.30, having been the whole length from Macquarie River up to where we are building a bridge in the day. The day was cold, with wind from east. No foot men could have performed it in the day. During these three days' travelling we passed over a great quantity of most excellent pasturage. Fine, dry, healthy hills, gravelly soil, and good grass, and so thinly timbered, that it resembled parks in England rather than a forest. There are few gullies and no swamps, but the hills passed gradually into fine valleys, some of which have fine grass in them. At Sidinouth Valley I never saw finer grass, or more on the same quantity of land in a meadow in England than there was here, and just in a fit state for mowing. The whole of the line, about 20 miles due west, would make most excellent grazing farms, with the river in front and the back on east and west line. This is the south side of the Fish River I am describing. On the north side I have not yet been, but I see there are some good farms to be had there. Ordered a bullock to be killed for the use of the people, which I had issued to them in lieu of giving them a ration of salt pork, It ran to about 12 lbs. a man. Some fish have also been caught this week, and when the men were mustered this morning they were extremely clean, and looked cheerful and hearty.

January 2.

Sent a soldier off with letters to the Governor and Commissary, and in the afternoon received letters from the Governor and Clarendon. Sent Lewis, Watson, and cart to ascertain if a better place could not be found to make a road than the high hill in our front. Returned unsuccessful. Mr. Hobby measured the road up to this place; it is 21 miles from the mountain.

January 3.

Went with Mr. Hobby up the south side of the Fish River, about four miles. The land got hilly, and falls more into gullies than lower down. It is also scrubby in places, and more timber on it, and altogether not so good as lower down. There is room for two or three good grazing farms on the front of the river from the bridge upwards. The men finished filling in the piers at each end of the bridge, and a gang of 10 men ordered to begin road-making to-morrow morning. In the afternoon went over the hill in our front, and made considerable alterations in our line of road. Got all the split logs brought in for the bridge. They are very good, heavy logs, well split. Brought some of them three miles. The cobbler finished mending the men's shoes again.

January 4.

At 8 a.m. went with Mr. Hobby, Tye, and two soldiers to Emu Valley, to mark the intended line of road from thence to Sidmouth Valley. Returned at 4.30, having marked very good ground for road-making. We also traced down the rich valley. There are about two miles of it equally good as where we cross, when it falls into a creek that goes to the Fish River about north-north-west; distance, one mile and a-half. Much disappointed at not receiving the Parramatta cart with provisions this evening. Removed the gang of 12 men forward to Emu Valley this evening, three miles. Smith employed repairing the tools, shoeing our horses, etc., as it is not my intention to put up the forge again until we arrive at Bathurst Plains. The carpenters getting on very well with the bridge over the river, as also a small one over a creek near it.

January 5.

About midnight I was taken violently ill with excruciating pains just above my left hip. In about two hours it became easier, when I got into a perspiration and slept a little. Was in considerable pain until about 9, when I again dozed, and got up at 11 considerably better. Removed three soldiers and J. Tye forward to Sidmouth Valley, about seven miles, this morning. Finished the bridge over the Fish River this evening. It is a strong and well-built one. On each end is a pier of 25 ft., which is well filled up with stone, and a very little earth over it. The span across is 25 ft. more, which is planked with split logs; and as floods will go over it, there is no earth put on top. It is altogether 75 ft. long and 16 ft. wide. There is also another small bridge 10 ft. long across a creek leading to it, which is also completed this evening, and we remove to-morrow morning.

January 6.

At 8 a.m. crossed the river over the new bridge with the caravan and two carts, as also our horses, and went as far as Sidmouth Valley. Measured the road; it is seven miles from the bridge and 28 from the mountain, which last reckoning I intend to keep until we arrive at Mount Pleasant, on Bathurst Plains. In the afternoon marked the trees for our road from the valley to the next creek, where we have a bridge to build, as also one in the valley.

January 7.

It began to thunder at daybreak, and to rain at 5.30. Continued with little intermission until 2 p.m., when it cleared up. Ordered the whole of the men forward to a creek about two miles ahead this evening, and rode up to the head of Sidmouth Valley, about two miles. Returned by the hills, which are very fine. An emu and kangaroo passed quietly along. The valley in our front to-day.

Here the diary ends abruptly.

The party consisted of 28 men and six soldiers.

Memo. for watering and feeding stock:--

1st.--Nepean River to Emu Island, both grass and water.

2nd.--Five to six miles, grass and water at first depôt (Blaxland).

3rd.--Nine and a-half miles, grass and water in a valley to the right of the road, about a quarter of a mile; entrance to it between two rocks

(The Valley).

4th.--Eleven and a-half to thirteen miles is forest land, and at 12 miles good water to the right of the road (Springwood).

5th.--Fifteen and a-half miles, water to the right, amongst the rocks, but no grass whatever.

6th.--Twenty-one miles, water to the right and coarse food for stock (20-Mile Hollow).

7th.--Twenty-eight miles, running stream and coarse grass (Wentworth Falls).

8th.--Thirty-two miles, water to the right and coarse grass.

9th.--Thirty-five miles, water to the left.

10th.--Thirty-seven and three-quarter miles, water and coarse grass to the right.

11th.--Forty and a-half miles, water and coarse grass, a large plain to right (Blackheath).

12th.--Forty-three miles, water and coarse grass to the right on a low flat. This is the last place fit for watering stock until you descend the mountain. (Mount Victoria.)

13th.--Forty-nine and a-half miles, at the bottom of the mountain water and good food, except in very dry season, when you must go to the rivulet, about a mile and a-half north-west.

14th.--At five miles west of bridges over two creeks, good watering-places, rocky bottom, with grass most of the way from the mountain; after this there are six or eight running streams before you get to the Fish River.

## CHAPTER 10.

### THE REWARD OF LABOR.

That road across the Blue Mountains, begun on July 7th, was finished on January 14th, 1815, and in April of that year Governor Macquarie drove his carriage across it from Sydney to Bathurst. It is utterly unbelievable even now, with the official records to hand. To climb the mountains was a task that had tried sorely the power of the best men, but to make a road across the mountains in six months seems absolutely impossible, and with such a small body of men, too! They had to hew their way across, through dense thickets, such as we see there to this day. They had to blast out vast rocks, bridge deep gorges, fill in great chasms, and make a carriage road across the hitherto untrodden mountains. One would have thought that such a labour would have taken a small army of skilled men several years, yet this indomitable colonist, with a small party of workers, made it in six months. When the Governor reached the river on the far side of the range, he named it after the hero who had bridged

it--the Cox River; and so it stands to this day. He also gave him a grant of land on what was called the Bathurst Plains, but it was, more correctly speaking, on the right bank of the Macquarie River. This place Mr. Cox called "Hereford."

At the same time, Governor Macquarie did one of those graceful acts which only a man of sense and keen governing instinct is capable of. He wrote Mr. Cox a letter, which was a public document, and which is still preserved in the family archives as a precious document. It sets forth clearly the services rendered to the State by William Cox, and runs as follows:--

"Government House, Sydney,  
"June 10, 1815.

"The Governor desires to communicate, for the information of the public, the result of his late tour over the Western or Blue Mountains, undertaken for the purpose of being enabled personally to appreciate the importance of the tract of country lying westward of them, which had been explored in the latter end of the year 1813 and beginning of 1814 by Mr. George William Evans, Deputy Surveyor of Lands.

"To those who know how very limited a tract of country has been hitherto occupied by the colonists of New South Wales, extending along the eastern coast to the north and south of Port Jackson only 80 miles, and westward about 40 miles to the foot of that chain of mountains in the interior which forms its western boundary, it must be a subject of astonishment and regret that amongst so large a population no one appeared within the first 25 years of the establishment of this settlement possessed of sufficient energy of mind to induce him fully to explore a passage over these mountains. But when it is considered that for the greater part of that time even this circumscribed portion of country afforded sufficient produce for the wants of the people, whilst on the other hand the whole surface of the country beyond these limits was a thick and in many places, nearly an impenetrable forest, the surprise at the want of effort to surmount such difficulties must abate very considerably.

"The records of the colony only afford two instances of any bold attempt having been made to discover the country to the westward of the Blue Mountains. The first was by Mr. Bass, and the other by Mr. Caley, and both ended in disappointment--a circumstance which will not be much wondered at by those who have lately crossed those mountains. [Governor Macquarie overlooks M. Barrilier's attempt.]

"To Gregory Blaxland and William Wentworth, Esquires, and Lieutenant Lawson, of the Royal Veteran Company, the merit is due of having effected the first passage over the most rugged and difficult part of the Blue Mountains. The Governor, being strongly impressed with the importance of the object, had, early after his arrival in this colony, formed the resolution of encouraging the attempt to find a passage to the Western country, and willingly availed himself of the facilities which the discoveries of these three gentlemen afforded him. Accordingly, on the 20th of November, 1813, he entrusted the accomplishment of this object to Mr. G. W. Evans, Deputy Surveyor of Lands, the result of whose journey was laid before the public. The favourable account given by Mr. Evans of the country he had explored induced the Governor to cause a road to be constructed for the passage and conveyance of cattle and provisions to the interior; and men of good character, from amongst a number of convicts who had volunteered their services, were selected to perform

this arduous task, on condition of being fed and clothed during the continuance of their labour, and being granted emancipation as their final reward on the completion of the work. The direction and superintendence of this great work was entrusted to William Cox, Esq., the chief magistrate at Windsor; and, to the astonishment of everyone who knows what was to be encountered, and sees what has been done, he effected its completion in six months from the time of its commencement, happily without the loss of a man or any serious accident. The Governor is at a loss to appreciate fully the services rendered by Mr. Cox to this colony in the execution of this arduous work, which promises to be of the greatest public utility, by opening a new source of wealth to the industrious and enterprising. When it is considered that Mr. Cox voluntarily relinquished the comforts of his own house and the society of his numerous family, and exposed himself to much personal fatigue, with only such temporary covering as a bark hut could afford from the inclemency of the weather, it is difficult to express the sentiments of approbation to which such privations and services are entitled. Mr. Cox having reported the road as completed on the 21st January last, the Governor, accompanied by Mrs. Macquarie and that gentleman, commenced his tour on the 25th of April over the Blue Mountains, and was joined by Sir John Jamieson at the Nepean, who accompanied him during the entire tour. The following gentlemen composed the Governor's suite:--Mr. Campbell, secretary; Captain Antill, major of brigade; Lieutenant Watts, aide-de-camp; Mr. Redfern, assistant surgeon; Mr. Oxley, Surveyor-General; Mr. Mehan, Deputy Surveyor-General; Mr. Lewin, painter and naturalist; and Mr. G. W. Evans, Deputy Surveyor of Lands, who had been sent forward for the purpose of making further discoveries, and re-joined the party on the day of arrival at Bathurst Plains. The commencement of the ascent from Emu Plains to the first depôt, and thence to a resting-place, now called Springwood, distant 12 miles from Emu ford, was through a very handsome open forest of lofty trees, and much more practicable and easy than was expected. The facility of the ascent for this distance excited surprise, and is certainly not well calculated to give the traveller a just idea of the difficulties he has afterwards to encounter. For a further distance of four miles a sudden change is perceived in the appearance of the timber and the quality of the soil, the former becoming stunted, and the latter barren and rocky. At this place the fatigues of the journey may be said to commence. Here the country became altogether mountainous and extremely rugged. Near to the 18-mile mark (it is to be observed that the measure commences from Emu ford) a pile of stones attracted attention; it is close to the line of road on the top of a rugged and abrupt ascent, and is supposed to have been placed by Mr. Caley as the extreme limit of his tour. Hence the Governor gave that part of the mountain the name of Caley's Repulse. To have penetrated so far was at that time an effort of no small difficulty. From henceforward to the 26th mile is a succession of steep and rugged hills, some of which are so abrupt as to deny a passage altogether; but at this place a considerable extensive plain is arrived at, which constitutes the summit of the Western mountains and from thence a most extensive and beautiful prospect presents itself on all sides to the eye. The town of Windsor, the River Hawkesbury, Prospect Hill, and other objects within that part of the colony now inhabited, of equal interest, are distinctly seen from hence. The majestic grandeur of the situation, combined with the various objects to be seen from this place, induced the Governor to give it the appellation of the King's Table Land. On the south-west side of the King's Table Land the mountain terminates in abrupt precipices of immense depth, at the bottom of which is seen a glen, as romantically beautiful as can be imagined, bounded on the further side by mountains of great magnitude, terminating equally abruptly as the others, and the whole thickly covered with timber. The length of this picturesque and remarkable tract of

country is about 24 miles, to which the Governor gave the name of The Prince Regent's Glen. Proceeding hence to the 33rd mile, on the top of a hill, an opening presents itself on the south-west side of The Prince Regent's Glen, from whence a view is obtained particularly beautiful and grand--mountains rising beyond mountains, with stupendous masses of rock in the foreground, here strike the eye with admiration and astonishment. The circular form in which the whole is so wonderfully disposed induced the Governor to give the name of Pitt's Amphitheatre (in honour of the late Right Honourable William Pitt) to this offset or branch from The Prince Regent's Glen. The road continues from hence, for the space of 17 miles, on the ridge of the mountain which forms one side of The Prince Regent's Glen, and then it suddenly terminates in nearly a perpendicular precipice of 676 ft. high, as ascertained by measurement. The road constructed by Mr. Cox down this rugged and tremendous descent, through all its windings, is no less than three-quarters of a mile in length, and has been executed with skill and stability, and reflects much credit on him. The labour here undergone, and the difficulties surmounted, can only be appreciated by those who view this scene. In order to perpetuate the memory of Mr. Cox's services, the Governor deemed it a tribute justly due to him to give his name to this grand and extraordinary pass; and he accordingly called it Cox's Pass. Having descended into the valley at the bottom of this pass, the retrospective view of the overhanging mountains is magnificently grand. Although the present pass is the only practicable point yet discovered for descending by, yet the mountain is much higher than those on either side of it, from whence it is distinguished at a considerable distance when approaching it from the interior, and in this point of view it has the appearance of a very high distinct hill, although it is in fact only the abrupt termination of a ridge. The Governor gave the name of Mount York to this termination of the ridge, in honour of his Royal Highness the Duke of York.

"On descending Cox's Pass the Governor was much gratified by the appearance of good pasture land and soil fit for cultivation, which was the first he had met with since the commencement of his tour. The valley at the base of Mount York he called The Vale of Clwyd, in consequence of the strong resemblance it bore to the vale of that name in North Wales. The grass in this vale is of good quality, and very abundant, and a rivulet of fine water runs along it from the eastward, which unites itself at the western extremity of the vale with another rivulet containing still more water. The junction of these two streams forms a very handsome river, now called by the Governor Cox's River, which takes its course, as has been ascertained, through The Prince Regent's Glen, and empties itself into the River Nepean, near Mulgoa; and it has been conjectured, from the nature of the country through which it passes, that it must be one of the principal causes of the floods which have occasionally been felt on the low banks of the River Hawkesbury, into which the Nepean discharges itself. The Vale of Clwyd, from the base of Mount York, extends six miles in a westerly direction, and has its termination at Cox's River. Westward of this river the country again becomes hilly, but generally open forest land, and very good pasturage. Three miles to the westward of The Vale of Clwyd, Messrs. Blaxland, Wentworth, and Lawson had formerly terminated their excursion, and when the various difficulties are considered which they had to contend with, especially until they had effected the descent of Mount York, to which place they were obliged to pass through thick brushwood, where they were under the necessity of cutting a passage for their baggage horses, the severity of which labour had seriously affected their healths, their patient endurance of such fatigue cannot fail to excite much surprise and admiration. In commemoration of their merits, three beautiful high hills, joining each other, at the end of their tour



at this place have received their names in the following order, viz., Mount Blaxland, Wentworth's Sugar Loaf, and Lawson's Sugar Loaf. A range of very lofty hills and narrow valleys alternately form the tract of country from Cox's River, for a distance of 16 miles, until the Fish River is arrived at; and the stage between these rivers is consequently very severe and oppressive on the cattle. To this range the Governor gave the name of Clarence Hilly Range.

"Proceeding from the Fish River, and at a short distance from it, a very singular and beautiful mountain attracts the attention, its summit being crowned with a large and very extraordinary-looking rock, nearly circular in form, which gives to the whole very much the appearance of a hill fort, such as are frequent in India. To this lofty hill Mr. Evans, who was the first European discoverer, gave the name Mount Evans. Passing on from hence, the country continues hilly, but affords good pasturage, gradually improving to Sidmouth Valley, which is distant from the pass of the Fish River eight miles. The land here is level, and the first met with, unencumbered with timber. It is not of very considerable extent, but abounds with a great variety of herbs and plants, such as would probably interest and gratify the scientific colonist. This beautiful little valley runs north-west and south-east, between hills of easy ascent thinly covered with timber. Leaving Sidmouth Valley, the country becomes again hilly, and in other respects resembles very much the country to the eastward of the valley for some miles. Having reached Campbell's River, distant 13 miles from Sidmouth Valley, the Governor was highly gratified by the appearance of the country, which there began to exhibit open and extensive views of gently rising grounds and fertile plains. Judging from the height of the banks and its general width, the Campbell River must be in some parts of very considerable magnitude, but the extraordinary drought which has apparently prevailed on the Western side of the mountains, equally as throughout this colony for the last three years, has reduced this river so much that it may more properly be called a chain of ponds than a running stream at the present time. [This seems very extraordinary after the exceedingly wet summer experienced by Mr. Cox.] In the reaches or pools of the Campbell River the very curious animal called the ornithorhynchus paradoxus, or water-platypus mole, is seen in great numbers. The soil is rich, and the grass is consequently luxuriant. Two miles to the southward of the line of road which crosses Campbell River there is a very rich tract of low lands which has been named Mitchell Plains. Flax was found growing here in considerable quantities. The Fish River, which forms a junction with the Campbell River a few miles to the northward of the road and bridge over the latter, has also two very fertile plains on its banks, the one called O'Connell Plains and the other Macquarie Plains, both of considerable extent, and very capable of yielding all the necessaries of life.

"At the distance of seven miles from the bridge over the Campbell River, Bathurst Plains open to the view, presenting a rich tract of champaign country of 11 miles in length, bounded on both sides by gently rising and very beautiful hills, thinly wooded. The Macquarie River, which is constituted by the junction of the Fish and Campbell rivers, takes a winding course through the plains, which can be easily traced from the high lands adjoining by the particular verdure of the trees on its banks, which are likewise the only trees throughout the extent of the plains. The level and clean surface of these plains gives them at first view the appearance of lands under cultivation. It is impossible to behold this grand scene without a feeling of admiration and surprise, whilst the silence and solitude which reign in a space of such extent and beauty as seems designed by Nature for the occupancy and comfort

of man create a degree of melancholy in the mind which may be more easily imagined than described.

"The Governor and suite arrived at these plains on Thursday, the 4th of May, and encamped on the southern or left bank of the Macquarie River, the situation being selected in consequence of its commanding a beautiful and extensive prospect for many miles in every direction around it. At this place the Governor remained a week, which time he occupied in making excursions in different directions through the adjoining country on both sides of the river.

"On Sunday, the 7th May, the Governor fixed on a site suitable for the erection of a town at some future period, to which he gave the name of Bathurst, in honour of the present Secretary of State for the Colonies. The situation of Bathurst is elevated sufficiently beyond the reach of any floods which may occur, and is at the same time so near to the river on its south bank as to derive all the advantages of its clear and beautiful stream. The mechanics and settlers, of whatever description, who may be hereafter permitted to form permanent residences to themselves at this place, will have the highly important advantages of a rich and fertile soil, with a beautiful river flowing through it for all the uses of man. The Governor must, however, add that the hopes which were at first so sanguinely entertained of this river becoming navigable to the Western sea have ended in disappointment.

"During the week that the Governor remained at Bathurst, he made daily excursions in various directions. One of these extended 22 miles in a south-west direction, and on that occasion, as well as on all others, he found the country composed chiefly of valleys and plains, separated occasionally by ranges of low hills, the soil throughout being generally fertile, and well circumstanced for the purpose of agriculture and grazing.

"The Governor here feels much pleasure in being enabled to communicate to the public that the favourable reports which he had received of the country to the west of the Blue Mountains have not been by any means exaggerated. The difficulties which present themselves in the journey from hence are certainly great and inevitable; but those persons who may be inclined to become permanent settlers there will probably content themselves with visiting this part of the country but rarely, and, of course, will have them seldom to encounter. Plenty of water and a sufficiency of grass are to be found in the mountains for the support of such cattle as may be sent over them, and the tracts of fertile soil and rich pasturage which the new country affords are fully extensive enough for any increase of population and stock which can possibly take place for many years. Within a distance of 10 miles from the site of Bathurst there is not less than 50,000 acres of land clear of timber, and fully one-half of that may be considered excellent soil, well calculated for cultivation. It is a matter of regret that in proportion as the soil improves, the timber degenerates; and it is to be remarked that everywhere to the westward of the mountains it is much inferior, both in size and quality, to that within the present colony. There is, however, a sufficiency of timber of tolerable quality within the district around Bathurst for the purposes of house-building and husbandry. The Governor has here to lament that neither coals nor limestone have yet been discovered in the Western country, articles in themselves of so much importance that the want of them must be severely felt whenever that country shall be settled.

"The road constructed by Mr. Cox and the party under him commences at Emu ford, on the left bank of the River Nepean, and is thence carried

101½ miles to the flagstaff at Bathurst. This road has been carefully measured, and each mile regularly marked on the trees growing on the left side of the road proceeding towards Bathurst. The Governor in his tour made the following stages, in which he was principally regulated by the consideration of having good pasturage for the cattle and plenty of water:

1st stage, from Emu Ford to Springwood.....	12 miles
2nd " " Jamieson's Valley..	16 "
3rd " " Blackheath .....	13 "
4th " " Cox's River .....	15 "
5th " " Fish River .....	16 "
6th " " Sidmouth Valley ....	8 "
7th " " Campbell River ....	11 "
8th " " Bathurst.....	10½ "
Total	101½ "

At all of which places the traveller may assure himself of good grass and water in abundance. On Thursday, the 11th May, the Governor and suite set out from Bathurst on their return, and arrived at Sydney on Friday, the 19th ultimo. The Governor cannot conclude this account of his tour without offering his best acknowledgments to William Cox, Esq., for the important service he has rendered to the colony in so short a period of time by opening a passage to the newly-discovered country, and at the same time assuring him that he shall have great pleasure in recommending his meritorious services on this occasion to the favourable consideration of his Majesty's Ministers.

"By command of his Excellency the Governor,  
"JOHN THOMAS CAMPBELL,  
"Secretary."

In the month of March, 1817, the Surveyor-General, John Oxley, received instructions from the Governor to explore the River Lachlan, and endeavour to discover where it emptied itself; or did it and the Macquarie River join? This river had been discovered by Deputy-Surveyor Evans four years before, and at the particular request of the Governor Mr. William Cox had visited it, and suggested that a boat be constructed, and learn whether it was navigable.

In the despatch conveying instructions to Mr. Oxley, the following paragraph occurs:--

"On your arrival at Bathurst you will find William Cox, Esq., there, and to him I beg leave to refer you for every information relative to the provisions, stores, horses for carriage, and other equipments ordered to be forwarded to the depôt on the Lachlan River for the use of the expedition, the arrangement and conveyance of all of which has been wholly entrusted to him. Mr. Cox having promised to accompany you as far as the depôt on the Lachlan River, he will be able to remove any unforeseen difficulties that may arise on your arrival there in getting the provisions and stores for the use of the expedition forwarded."

This shows what implicit confidence the Governor had in the man who constructed the road over the Blue Mountains, and who, through his long and energetic life, had also the confidence and esteem of his fellow-men.

## APPENDIX

Memoranda by William Cox concerning rewards for services to Government 1814-18. (p. 5483f. Bigge Appendix. Box 25.)

### FREE PERSONS.

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Thomas Hobby--Assistant on the expedition: 500 acres of land and 6 cows.

Richard Lewis--Chief Superintendent: 200 acres, one horse and four cows.

John Tighe--Guide: 100 acres, two cows and £5.

Samuel Ayres--Servant to Mr Cox: Two cows.

### CONVICTS.

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James Watson--Leader of road workers.

James Dwyer--Leader of the fire making.

Thomas Gorman--Charge of stores.

William Dye, Samuel Freeman (William Freeman)--Rough carpenters.

Thomas Cooke, Thomas Carpenter--Sawyers.

Robert (Samuel) Fowler--Quarryman.

James Richards--Blacksmith.

William Herdman--Shoemaker.

John Hanley (Robert Henley), Samuel Waters (Walters),  
Henry (Charles) Cryer--Bullock drivers with Govt. carts.

### LABOURERS.

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Samuel Crook (Cook), Patrick Merrian (Mernan), John Allan, Thomas Adams, John Finch, Stephen Parker, Thomas Roddocks (Roddicks), John Manning, John Tindall, James Kelly, Matt Smith, Harry Sullivan, John Ross, William Lawrence, Thomas Kendall, Samuel Davis, Henry Morton (Martin), Thomas Watkins, James McCarty, William Appledore, Patrick Hanraghan (Henringham), Stephen Hockey (Huckey), (William Ramsay, George Keen).

The names in brackets are those included in the 1814 Muster who are described as being 'at the mountains' and are indicative of the variation in the spelling of surnames at this period.

The men were selected as being accustomed to field labour and supposed to be best calculated to undergo the fatigue of hard work and sleeping on the ground. The rewards of these convicts was as follows:--

Free pardons--Robert Fowler, William Appledore and James Dwyer.

Thomas Ruddocks (Roddicks)--a ticket-of-leave.

To all the others--emancipation.

THE END