ALLURAN

South of my day’s circle, part of my blood’s country,
rises that tableland, high delicate outline
of bony slopes wincing under the winter,
low trees blue-leaved and olive, outcropping granite –
clean, lean, hungry country…

*South of My Days, Judith Wright*

This is the story of a valley and of the people for whom, over the centuries, it has provided sustenance and a way of life. The story centres upon a grazing property which lies within the valley and on the families who created it. Ollera Station and its valley are located in the Northern Tablelands of north-eastern New South Wales about thirty kilometres from Guyra, the locality’s service town and about fifty kilometres from Armidale, the regional centre of the New England district.

The broad, shallow, gently-rolling valley from which the property derives its name has an altitude of c.1000m, and sits just beneath the western rim of the Great Dividing Range at the point at which the New England Plateau and its watershed reach their greatest elevation. The valley is bounded by ranges on three sides; to the east by the main range, to the south by the rugged Wild Horse Range and to the north by one of the many tributary spurs which characterize the topography of the western watershed. Lower, but still rough, hilly country marks the valley’s western boundary and the point at which the plateau begins its gentle descent into the hilly landscape of the Western Slopes. A lace-work of runnels and streamlets carries the water which flows westward off the Dividing Range into the valley’s three main creeks. These belong to the network of tributary headwaters of the Gwydir River (earlier called the ‘Big’ and then the Bundarra), which itself forms part of the Murray-Darling river-system. The valley’s northern pastures are drained by Limestone Creek, while

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1 For the sake of clarity I have used ‘Alluran’ when referring to the valley as a whole, and ‘Ollera’ only for the permanent water beside which the Everetts built their head station. The terms appear in a document written by Commissioner Macdonald at some time before c.1842 and which is held in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. The *List of Stations occupied by Settlers in the District of New England*, ‘Alluran’ is the native name given for ‘Aloran’ (Tenterden) and ‘Ollera’ is used for Ollera, which was first called Wandsworth.


Sandy Creek collects the waters of the southern part of the valley. The central area is watered by George's Creek, whose 'good, sweet waters' gave Ollera its name and were the reason for the valley being chosen, in the summer of 1838-39, as the site of a squatting run.⁴

This particular and ultimately important choice came very late in the valley's history, for the landforms and landscapes of the valley and the tableland of which it is a typical part were moulded and sculpted by aeons of geological time. The district's 'low relief amplitudes and low slope gradients' are the result of ancient uplift and subsequent erosion, while its basalt and granitic soils were produced by later, probably Palaeozoic, volcanic activity.⁵ Even after the tableland took its present shape it remained isolated and free from human presence until quite late in the prehistoric period. The rugged nature of its boundary ranges made access difficult and the harshness of its winters discouraged its penetration by indigenous people until about 3,000 years BCE.⁶ Thereafter these difficult conditions probably meant that the Aborigines regularly frequented only the more hospitable western valleys of the plateau, where both water and game were more plentiful and subsistence was more easily gained.⁷

The less frequent signs of prehistoric occupation on the higher, colder and less habitable central plateau and in particular in the rugged, broken country of the eastern escarpment suggest that the district probably served as a marchland between two more benign and thus more thickly populated regions; the coastal river valleys and the western slopes.⁸ However the presence of bora rings and of marked trees on the high tableland also suggests that in the summer months the area provided a neutral venue for large gatherings of people, some of whom travelled considerable distances from their designated tribal territories to reach long-established meeting-places.⁹ Such gatherings occurred periodically for ceremonial purposes, to access and 'harvest' seasonally-abundant supplies of food, and to


⁷ R.H.W. Reece, Aborigines and Colonists: Aborigines and Colonial Society in New South Wales in the 1830s and 1840s, Sydney, 1974, p. 51
⁸ Connah, Davidson and Rowland, op. cit., pp. 128-129.
⁹ J. Scholes, 'Early Recollections of Armidale', JDAHS, Vol. 14, 1962, p. 54. As evidence of the persistence of such gatherings into the 1850s and 1860s, Scholes mentions one which occurred on the outskirts of the town of Armidale, which ended in a 'battle' between the local Aborigines and those from the Macleay River.
exchange the economic resources of particular localities.\textsuperscript{10} By this means prized resources could be distributed over long distances, travelling eastwards to the coast and westwards throughout the northern slopes and plains. Finished or ‘blank’ stone tools from Graman on the slopes near modern Inverell and from further south on the tableland at Bendemeer were exchanged for ochres from Bellbrook in the eastern Falls country; for fibres from the coastal rainforests; shells from the coastal rivers and beaches; and for quartz, quartzite and ochre from Alluran.\textsuperscript{11}

The gatherings must also have been the medium for another important though less tangible form of exchange. As with all human interaction gossip, rumour, opinion and ‘hard news’ about matters affecting the region as a whole must have been exchanged and carried by the individual horses back to their tribal territories. Disturbing stories about the appearance of strangely-pale newcomers within their territory seem to have spread rapidly throughout the region. When, in 1818, John Oxley conducted the first official exploration of the Liverpool Plains and the southern part of the Tableland, he suggested that at least a few Europeans had preceded him.\textsuperscript{12} The Aborigines avoided contact wherever possible and concealed their women when they did encounter the exploring party. In 1827 Cunningham found tangible evidence that Europeans had preceded him. On the Liverpool Plains near Bingara he found wandering cattle and the remains of a European-built hut.\textsuperscript{13}

In the two decades after 1818 the Aboriginal people who roamed the well-watered valleys between the ranges on the western fringe of the central tableland must therefore have been increasingly perturbed by the news they heard at their regular gatherings on the high plateau or at the biennial feasts of bunya-nuts to which, with their neighbours, they travelled north into the warm valleys beyond the tableland’s northern edge.\textsuperscript{14} Accounts of sightings of strangely-pale men, fearsomely armed and either mounted on or accompanied by unusual animals were becoming both more frequent and more threatening, for the strangers’ behaviour and their attitudes were changing. For over a decade the encounters were

\textsuperscript{10} Connah, Davidson and Rowland, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.127, 128,133.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 131-2, 134. For the presence of ochre at Wandsworth, near Ollera, I am indebted to Ms. Sue Hudson, an Aboriginal archeologist based in Armidale.
transitory, widely-spaced in time and in distance and appeared to pose little threat. The small parties of strangers (the explorers John Oxley in 1818 and Alan Cunningham in 1827) who passed through a particular horde’s lands were either easily avoided or, when met, were accorded the traditional courtesy the Aborigines extended to all travellers; food, water, the services of their women and rapid, safe passage through the horde’s territory.\textsuperscript{15} This time-honoured custom was essential to the survival of the tribes of the three contiguous regions, coast, tableland and western slopes. The practice encouraged harmonious tribal interaction and co-existence, enabled attendance at distant ceremonies and trading gatherings and permitted the seasonal movement of tribes to and through the tableland to exploit the resources of the coast and the hinterland.\textsuperscript{16}

However from the mid-1820s the situation for the tableland’s tribes changed rapidly for the worse. Not only were encounters becoming more frequent as more and more strangers brought their vast flocks and herds into ever more tribes’ territories, but the newcomers were no longer merely passing through. Instead they stayed permanently beside vital, often sacred creeks and billabongs, displacing the Aboriginal people and driving off the native wildlife on which they depended for food. They destroyed the \textit{Bora} rings and other ceremonial sites, cut down the carved trees which designated sacred sites and marked important burial sites, and tore apart the long, intricately fashioned standing nets into which the hunters drove the animals they stalked.\textsuperscript{17} Not only were the newcomers rendered culturally and societally unassimilable by their lack of a totem but they failed to reciprocate the traditional courtesies which the horde extended to them.\textsuperscript{18} Instead these vital customary exchange obligations were ignored and thereby dishonoured.

Inevitably and tragically, as the frontier of settlement advanced a pattern was established and repeated. After a brief period of wary acceptance of the newcomers, each displaced horde reacted against the disruption of its culture and to the loss of its essential resources. In all but a few cases, one of which was to occur at Ollera, as men from two

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  \item\textsuperscript{17} I. McBryde, \textit{Aboriginal Prehistory in New England: An Archaeological Survey of Northeastern New South Wales}, Sydney, 1974, pp. 13, 29, 30-31, 127.
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diametrically-opposed cultures and divergent mind-sets met in an atmosphere of total and understandable incomprehension, violence followed an initial, brief period of peaceful interaction.\textsuperscript{19} Then, as the hard hooves of the newcomers’ flocks and herds broke down the creek banks, fouled the waterholes and drove away the native birds and animals on which their survival depended, the Aborigines turned instead to the vulnerable sheep and upon the isolated shepherds who defended them.\textsuperscript{20} Mutual misunderstanding quickly degenerated into shared suspicion and fear as each side fought to protect its vital resources and to retain its valuable livelihood. The result was a downward spiral of increasing violence as attack incurred reprisal and preventive, often random ‘first strikes’ made by both sides upon victims who were sometimes as innocent as they were unlucky.

The speed of the frontier’s advance and its multi-directional nature must have been particularly destabilizing and disorienting to the indigenous people of the plateau they called ‘Arrabald’, for these were a people whose culture and way of life had changed very little and then only very gradually over a period of forty to sixty thousand years.\textsuperscript{21} Their protracted isolation was particularly detrimental to the Aborigines, for it rendered them highly-vulnerable to the endemic diseases which either preceded or arrived as unintended ‘baggage’ with the newcomers.\textsuperscript{22} Moreover, the Aborigines were a people who considered themselves as deriving from and indissolubly bound to their particular tribal territory, every natural feature of which possessed profound spiritual and psychological significance for those who dwelt within it.\textsuperscript{23} It was as impossible for the indigenous population to comply with the newcomers’ desire that they should ‘move on’ as it was for them to retain their long-established ways of life. Each language group, and possibly each horde within it, was restricted to its own particular territory whose boundaries were clearly demarcated and well-understood. Movement beyond the territory required careful prior negotiation. The only direction in which movement could perhaps be made was eastwards into the harsher and more rugged terrain of the tableland’s eastern ‘falls country’ where resistance continued into

\textsuperscript{19} Reece, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{20} J. Wright, \textit{Cry for the Dead}, Melbourne, 1982, pp. 5-6.
\textsuperscript{21} Campbell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 240. It is unclear whether this name referred to all of the Tableland then known as New England, in which Tilbuster was the northernmost ‘run’, or to only part thereof. Campbell states that the region north of Tilbuster was first called ‘the land of the Beardies’.
the late 1840s and early 1850s. The loose and non-hierarchic nature of Aboriginal society also decreased their ability to combine in defence of their land. Resistance was therefore usually highly localized, being conducted by each individual small horde as it met the three-pronged advance of the frontier of settlement which moved rapidly onto the tableland and along its western perimeter between 1832 and 1839.

In the decade after 1828 two inter-related elements, one climatic the other economic, had sparked the expansion of settlement beyond the Hunter Valley, which marked the northern edge of the ‘limits of settlement’. The movement beyond the designated frontier began in earnest in 1828 when a severe drought combined with over-stocking to threaten the survival of the settlers’ major capital investment, their rapidly-multiplying flocks and herds. They followed the wheel-tracks of at least one earlier squatter north-westward along the trail Henry Dangar blazed over the ranges to the fertile Liverpool Plains which had first been described by Oxley in 1818. There, in an area which extended northwards as far as the headwaters of the Peel, they formed outstations from which in the early 1830s they were replaced by the Australian Agricultural Company (hereafter A.A. Co). This capital investment group, recovering from a pressured decision to take all its one million acre grant east of the Mount Royal Range, was to play a major role in northern settlement. In September 1833 the Colonial Office allowed A.A.Co to exchange the eastern majority of the original 1828 choice for two inland sites: Liverpool Plains (249,000 acres) and Peel Valley (313,298 acres). Between 1834 and 1848 A.A.Co developed the colony’s best sheep and wool operation by co-coordinating the management of the 464,640 acres retained at Stroud-Gloucester with the Peel Estate. Although this achievement collapsed after the dismissal of Commissioner Philipp Parker King in 1849, the Company’s stock sales at Tamworth and

25 I.C. Campbell, ‘Social Backgrounds’, op. cit., p. 3
Goonoo Goonoo on the inland Peel River Estate proved to be a boon to northern settlers such as the Everett and Leslie brothers.  

From beyond the headwaters of the Peel one arm of the frontier of settlement moved rapidly northwards along the tableland’s western edge. The run-seekers followed the tracks blazed by Cunningham in 1827 and by Mitchell in 1832 until, by 1838, an attenuated string of primitive and isolated ‘stations’ stretched north through the valley of the Gwydir. In 1833-4 the rapid northward movement extended from Bendemeer and Stony Batter to Abington and Keera, reaching Clerkness at Bundarra and pausing briefly at Newstead. In 1835-7 the land-seekers moved north to Bukkulla and Byron Plains on the Macintyre near Inverell, reaching Strathbogie on the Severn in 1840. From their foothold on the eastern edge of the slopes they then turned northwards and westwards along the many creeks which ran through the fertile blacksoil country of the western slopes, forming ‘runs’ and outstations even ‘further out’.

From the squatting station ‘Waldoo’ on the Peel River near present-day Piallamore, the Cory-Dangar partners looked to the unknown high altitude country to the north and east. They travelled up onto the western edge of the tableland along the pass through the Moonbi Ranges which Edward Cory found in 1832. In the same year, Hamilton Collins Sempill followed Dangar’s earlier track over the Nundle Spur and onto the far south of the tableland. There, on Oxley’s camping place at ‘Wolcha’ (Walcha), Sempill began the ‘earliest settlement of any part of New England’ which initiated a rapid intrush of settlement. By 1833 Cory had also crossed the watershed and was established at Salisbury Waters near modern Uralla, moving soon after to the adjacent runs of Gostwyck and Terrible Vale. Henry Dangar was also in the vanguard of the flood of squatters who formed outstations on the eastern and central plateau. Having acquired a part-interest in Gostwyck in 1834, he gained full control of its vast acreage by c.1838.

Dangar was soon to be joined by the employees of other prominent Hunter Valley squatters who were seeking protection for their flocks from the decade of severe drought which began in the Valley in the mid-1830s. In 1835 Alexander Campbell claimed Guyra


\[30\] de Gunst, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
for Peter Macintyre, the Scots overseer/manager of Segenhoe, and soon after claimed Keera and later Byron Plains for himself.³¹ In the same year Henry Dumaresq founded Saumarez while in the following year, 1836, his brother William began Tilbuster, which lay on the northernmost edge of the newly-named region of New England.³² By the end of that year a tiny ‘village of slab-sided and bark-roofed huts’ had begun to form beside a fording place on a creek on the southern edge of that ‘run’.³³ From its origins as a convenient resting and staging-place for the many bullock-teams and their drivers who served the growing numbers of isolated stations there developed an embryonic commercial and administrative centre which grew into the town of Armidale.³⁴ By late-1838, most of the land lying south of a line which ran from Moree and Mungindi on the north-west slopes through Inverell to Ben Lomond on the high plateau and on to the headwaters of the Macleay River in the south-eastern escarpment was held under a system of annual licences.³⁵ Each of these huge ‘runs’ was comprised of vast tracts of ‘practically wild’ land, its boundaries settled by ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ and its tenure unreliable until 1847, when fourteen-year licences were introduced.³⁶

This was the situation when, in the summer of 1838-39, far-reaching change came to the people who roamed the valley they called something like ‘Alluran’.³⁷ By that hot, drought-afflicted mid-summer the leading edges of the frontier had already swept past the valley’s eastern and western boundaries, the high plateau and the Gwydir valley. From Falconer, near present-day Guyra and Ben Lomond which lay just to the east on the tableland’s central spine exploring parties had ranged north to Deepwater, Ranger’s Valley and Bolivia and, by 1840, would reach the plateau’s northern boundary at Tenterfield and its northwestern slopes at Stonehenge.³⁸ Alluran’s people therefore remained undisturbed until the last weeks of 1838, although it seems improbable that they remained unaware of the

³¹ J.F. Campbell, ‘Discovery’, ibid., p.264. The estate was owned by the English-based M.P. Thomas P. Macqueen
³² Ibid., p. 240.
³³ Armidale Express, Letter from H.S. Mackenzie, 23rd March, 1921.
³⁴ J Atchison, Place names of Northern New South Wales, Sydney, 2001, p.4. Despite popular belief to the contrary, Commissioner Macdonald named the future town Armidale, not Armadale.
³⁷ Cane, op. cit., p. 88.
³⁸ Atchison, op. cit., p. 148.
frequent outbreaks of inter-racial conflict which surrounded their territory.\textsuperscript{39} Although attacks and counter-attacks were reported throughout New England, the worst violence occurred in the more densely-populated, fertile valleys of the Gwydir and the Macintyre Rivers which lay just west and north-west of Alluran. Raids and reprisals were a frequent accompaniment of the frontier’s advance northward along and beyond the Gwydir.\textsuperscript{40} With the onset, in 1837, of almost a decade of drought and sky-rocketing prices for provisions, the situation on the isolated frontier deteriorated into extreme violence as both sides fought to control vital water resources and to husband their hard-won and expensive stores of food.\textsuperscript{41} Aboriginal hordes which ‘came in’ peacefully to the stations were rigorously excluded or rounded-up and brutally ‘cleared’ even before the murder of a group of peaceful ‘station blacks’ at Myall Creek in late 1838 became a colonial \textit{cause célèbre} and a governor’s nightmare.\textsuperscript{42}

It is therefore likely that the Aboriginal people of Alluran were feeling threatened by change even before Europeans reached the valley early in 1839. The increasing presence of often hostile strangers on the valley’s fringes must surely have hindered their ability to move freely through and beyond their territory in response to long-established seasonal and cyclical movement-patterns which were essential to their physical, economic, cultural and spiritual survival. In the years immediately preceding ‘first contact’ the Alluran horde’s traditional way-of-life may therefore already have begun to be changed forever. There is perhaps an indication of the subtle changes that were underway and that some ‘pre-contact’ knowledge of the whites existed. The Everett-Halhed exploring party who ‘discovered’ Alluran reported that they were guided to the ridge-top from which they were shown ‘their’ valley and its distant gleam of permanent water by one of two Aboriginal guides whom they had hired in Armidale on their way north.\textsuperscript{43} This man’s knowledge of the area and of the reliability of its

\textsuperscript{39} Although it is impossible to estimate the date exactly, it appears most unlikely, given the Everett-Halhed party’s date of departure from Sydney (Nov. 1838), the rate at which they travelled and the fact that they were nearing the end of their exploration when they ‘found’ Alluran, that they could have reached there before mid-January or early-February, 1839.

\textsuperscript{40} Reece, \textit{op.cit.}, p 28.

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 51 In these years the cost of flour rose to c. £70 per ton, and import costs increased by 50 per cent. By the early 1840, depression caused the highly-inflated prices for sheep which were current throughout the 1830s to fall by about 90 per cent.

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 33. ... for a report of ‘60-70’ Gwydir-valley Aborigines who, earlier in 1838, were ‘shot like crows’.

\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Armidale Express}, Letter from Mr. H. Mackenzie, 23\textsuperscript{rd} March, 1921; Gilbert, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 96.
waterhole suggests that some of the locality’s more-inquisitive or adventurous young men may have already been attracted ‘in’ to the newly-established village.

But let us stand with the exploring party on the ridge-top while four young Englishmen decide on the location of their future ‘run’ and begin to plan for the months and years ahead. We shall try to see the valley and its people as they were before the irrevocable changes which the newcomers introduced. The wide, shallow valley, whose altitude of from 1000 to 1200 metres guaranteed early and severe winters and a reliable rainfall, was and is characteristic of the western tableland country. Its skylines were wide and level, its topography flat to gently-rolling and its three mainly ephemeral creek-systems followed the gently-declining south-western gradient through a landscape which, to Englishmen, resembled the well-grassed park on some distant estate. John Morison, one of Armidale’s early clergymen and who spent many years in New England’s extensive parishes, later wrote that, ‘Cultivation could scarcely produce a better quality of grasses and herbage than those which are found growing naturally’. In 1818 Oxley had described the plateau in very similar terms.

Many different native grasses proliferated throughout the valley, although the squatters recorded the names of only those which were most abundant and/or which proved best-suited as fodder. These included Oat grass, Kangaroo grass (Paneda australis), Wallaby grass (Dantonia), Wild Sorghum (S.plimosa), Blue grass (Andropogon) and Star grass (Chloris). Most of these varieties grew tall, their separate clumps covering the ground sparsely but, from a distance, deceptively well. The native pastures were estimated to carry one sheep to every four acres, but they quickly grew rank and their nutrient value declined sharply in the tableland’s severe winters. In spring and summer lower-growing broad-leafed plants such as ferns, graminoid sedges, native herbs, clovers and other legumes flourished in the fertile soils around the lagoons, on the creek-banks and beside the swamps and boggy areas which were then common on the plateau. Away from the creeks, tall eucalypts dotted the open

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46 Campbell, ‘Discovery and Early Pastoral Settlement’, op. cit., p. 225.
grasslands on the valley floor while lower-growing, more stunted varieties clothed the poorer, granite and sandstone soils of the ridges.\textsuperscript{49} In one of his early diaries, John Everett described the valley as ‘open (and) not densely wooded’. While in another, which holds copies of letters written between 1838 and 1846 his description is more detailed, the changes implied in his use of the past tense are noteworthy.

‘… the open grassy park-like tracts of which so much has been said characterize the secondary ranges of granite and porphyry. The trees most usual on these tracts were box and an unnamed species of eucalypt; the grass was chiefly of that kind called the oat or forest grass, which grows in tufts at considerable distance from one another and which generally affords good pasturage.’\textsuperscript{50}

The Aboriginal people who, in every sense, belonged to the valley may have been part of a clan who called themselves the Bannbai (Bambai) whose scattered hordes inhabited the region around Guyra.\textsuperscript{51} They formed part of the linguistically and genetically linked Ainawan (Eneewin) people. Ainawan territory stretched from just beyond the Macintyre River in the north to Black Mountain in the south and from Kookabookra in the east to near Tingha in the west. From the start the tableland seemed less densely-populated than either the adjacent regions on the coast or the slopes, though recent studies indicate that Commissioner Macdonald’s 1840s estimate of c.600 indigenous people was too low.\textsuperscript{52} This belief is supported by evidence of several kinds. The frequent occurrence of rock art and other cultural artifacts in the region provide tangible clues, while explorers and early settlers made frequent references to the numerous fires which, visible at night, marked the presence of otherwise unseen Aborigines who avoided contact when possible.\textsuperscript{53} The extent to which each clan was able to mould its environment and manage its resources through the judicious use of fire may also suggest a higher population ratio than the figure posited by Belshaw. The

\textsuperscript{49} Campbell, ‘Discovery’, op. cit., p.252. Stringybarks appear to have been plentiful and ubiquitous, while Peppermint Gums, White Gums, Red Gums and Cypress Pine were common on the flats.

\textsuperscript{50} Ollera Station Records, University of New England and Regional Archives, Armidale. A103:V3053/10. [Hereafter UNERA]; Cane, op. cit., p. 22.

\textsuperscript{51} McBryde, ‘Aboriginal Prehistory’, p. 8. For much of this discussion I have relied heavily on information provided by Ms. Sue Hudson an archaeologist based in New England. The results of her study of the prehistory of the New England Aborigines are forthcoming. Unless otherwise attributed, I am indebted to her for the argument which follows.

\textsuperscript{52} Belshaw, op. cit., pp. 67, 70.


possibility that, at first contact, the indigenous population may have already been depleted by ‘imported’ diseases to which they had no immunity must also be considered. 54

Perhaps from fifty to seventy Banbai people lived in the valley of Alluran in a clan comprised of one or more loosely-related extended families. 55 As was their people’s long-established way, they would have ranged widely through their valley, moving from creek to waterhole, spending no more than a couple of nights in any particular spot and thereby causing little lasting damage to its ecology. 56 While the valley’s three main watercourses would have provided one of the major sources of sustenance for the Banbai, the chain of permanent lagoons which lay in the valley immediately to the north would have been central to their spiritual lives. These lagoons and the chain of waterholes to which the creeks retreated in dry seasons teemed with life. The many wild ducks, pelicans, and other waterbirds which dotted the surface appeared undisturbed by their ingenious, unseen hunters. Freshwater turtles and yellow-bellied perch, bream and catfish were netted while spears and hooks were used to catch the cod which lurked in the deeper, sheltered spots. Yabbies, ‘shrimps and mussels’ were dug from the banks and from the muddy shore-line. 57

The tangled vegetation on the creek-banks probably provided many of the medicinal herbs which grew ‘abundantly’ and which were gathered by the women and girls. 58 There, too they may have collected the plants from whose fibrous stems and inner bark they wove the long, evenly-patterned nets and ropes used for hunting and fishing and the dilly-bags in which foodstuffs and essential ceremonial items were stored and carried. 59 The female members of the horde also dug yams, collected edible fruits and vegetables and searched the valley’s western fringe for clumps of ‘Goolah’ or Pepper grass’ (Panicum laevinode), whose seeds they ground into a nutritious flour. 60

54 Belshaw, op. cit., p. 67, 76. He suggests a ratio of 1:21, i.e. one Aborigine to each twenty-one acres.
59 Gardner, op. cit., p. 246; ‘A Lady’ (Mrs McPherson), op. cit., p. 249.
60 Gardner, Ibid, p. 246; ‘A Lady’ (Mrs McPherson), op. cit, p. 251. While this grass grew best on the western slopes it probably also occurred patchily on the western fringes of the tableland.
The men were skilled hunters and fishers, often trapping animals by driving them into the long, panelled nets which they strung between the trees. Kangaroos, wallabies, wallaroos, bandicoots, flying foxes, quolls and goannas were hunted but the animal upon which the New England hordes depended most was the possum. Not only were possums a dietary staple but their skins, when sewn together with bone needles and kangaroo sinew, provided warm cloaks while decorative belts were made from their fur. The judicious use of fire was also employed in hunting. Mosaic burning restricted the growth of trees, scrub and undergrowth and by removing the long, dry grass encouraged the succulent regrowth which attracted the native animals and birds they hunted. In shaping their valley to their particular needs Alluran’s clans had therefore created, over countless generations, an environment as man-made as any of the eighteenth-century English ‘parks’ to which the homesick English so often likened New England’s landscape.

Until the strangers came on that summer day at the end of 1838 the lives of the Banbai of Alluran would therefore have been indistinguishable from those of other Aboriginal clans who had so far avoided contact with the Europeans. They moved within and beyond their territory in response to the demands of trade, the rhythms of traditional ceremonies and, above all, according to the dictates of the season. However, their post-contact experience proved to be remarkably different. Not only did the Aboriginal people in and of the valley escape the cycle of attack and counter-attack, reprisal and retribution which characterized the frontier’s rapid expansion, but they remained ‘almost permanently’ in their territory.

Although the experience of the Banbai at Alluran was not unique on the tableland it was very rare, sufficiently so to have attracted official commendation from the region’s first Commissioner. Undoubtedly, in each of the few cases where harmonious relations were recorded, the attitude of the particular squatter, the extent of his education and, especially, his permanent residence on site would have been largely responsible for the establishment and maintenance of peace. This was certainly so in the case of the Everett brothers of Ollera, the impact of whose origins, motives, attitudes, actions and influence form the essence of this thesis.

61 Gardner, op. cit., p. 239; Pierce, op. cit., p. 116-117; Wyndham, op. cit., p. 113.
63 ‘A Clergyman’ (Morison), op. cit., p. 27.
64 Belshaw, op. cit., p. 76.
However, once it became evident that the newcomers would treat them amiably rather than with overt hostility other crucial factors may have encouraged the Banbai to stay. The strength of the cultural ties which bound each individual horde to its particular territory was of prime importance, for every topographical and botanical feature within it held deep spiritual and psychological meaning. Access to a reliable supply of water was always as essential to Aborigines’ survival as it was to the squatters. But Oller’s reliable creek may have been more than usually important as the locality was severely affected by drought at the time of first contact. \(^{66}\) Edwin Everett is said to have told C.E. Blomfield of Boorolong that his brothers ‘would have taken Boorolong up, but there was no water in the creek for a mile above and a mile below where the head station (now) is’. \(^{67}\)

Unlike the Moredun lagoons in the valley to its immediate north, the banks of the creek near the ‘head station’ of the future ‘run’ probably held no sacred and ritual significance for its resident hordes. However in the Wandsworth area, where the prized, scarce red ochre occurs there is ‘much evidence’ of rock art and of the quartz and quartzite which was used for axe heads. \(^{68}\) As well, several important ceremonial sites were located on the valley’s eastern, north-western and southern fringes. Near Tingha in the north-western ‘falls’ country evidence remains of a bora ring and two adjacent cairns of stones. On the high plateau about twenty-five kilometres east of the valley at Ward’s Mistake several low heaps of stones form an irregular semi-circle while at Bald Rock, near Guyra, a granite overhang shelters ‘an extensive area of rock art’. At Boorolong in the valley immediately south of Alluran, two or three extensively-carved trees once marked an Aboriginal burial site. \(^{69}\) But the ceremonial site which early settlers regarded as ‘the most important on the tableland’ was located just south of Boorolong on the flattened top of Black (Black’s) Mountain. There, on the highest point in the area, ‘seventeen large cairns of stones (enclose) the largest and most important bora ground in New England’, while nearby there are the stumps of several large trees, one of which is believed to have been carved. \(^{70}\)


\(^{67}\) Cane, _op. cit._ p. 19. Although Cane does not attribute the quotation, the information probably came either from a conversation with Mr. Tom Everett who then owned Oller’s, or from the Blomfield notebook.

\(^{68}\) Information provided by Ms. Sue Hudson.


\(^{70}\) _Ibid_, p. 30.
A further, possibly decisive point remains to be considered. The 'elaborate system of sanctions and diplomacy' which ensured their territory's integrity from interlopers meant that each clan was bound in place by physical as well as cultural imperatives.\textsuperscript{71} Although his warning came a decade too late for the New England tribes, in 1847 Lang recognized the hopelessness of most Aborigines' situation. 'As the country is all parcellled out among the different tribes...each having its own well-known boundaries, a tribe which has been driven from its hunting ground by European incursion has no place to retreat to...\textsuperscript{72}'

All in all, therefore, Alluran's Banbai had little choice. Given the opportunity they \textit{had} to stay, adapting themselves where possible to new people, new experiences, new belief systems and new ways of life. Like the English newcomers, they were attempting to decant their most ancienly-vintaged 'old wine into new bottles'. In the process and from the beginning, they made an important and continuing contribution to the success of Ollera Station.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{71} J.C. Campbell, 'Settlers and Aborigines', \textit{op. cit.} p. 6
\textsuperscript{72} S. Sullivan, 'Aboriginal diet and food-gathering methods in the Richmond and Tweed River valleys, as seen in early settler records', in McBryde (ed), 'Records', \textit{op. cit.}, p. 101. J.D. Lang, p.270-71, 1847.
\textsuperscript{73} Ollera Station Records, Letters, John to Anne, 7th June, 1840; John to William, 12th January, 1841, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3052/3.
THE EVERETTS AND THE WORLD THEY KNEW.

You see, land gives you so much more than rent. It gives you position and influence and political power – to say nothing of the game.

Archbishop Grantley.¹

Oller's recorded history began in southern England in the early summer of 1838 as two young brothers made final preparations to leave their father’s small but prosperous estate in Wiltshire. George and John Everett, who were both in their early twenties, had booked passage on the Hope, a barque ‘of 377 tons burthen’ which, on 15ᵗʰ June, 1838 was to leave the port of London for the colony of New South Wales.² There they would await the arrival of a second pair of brothers, their partners and distant kinfolk William and Francis Halhed, with whom they planned to become pastoralists somewhere within or beyond the boundaries of settlement in the distant and poorly-understood colony.³

The Everett brothers’ home at Biddenden still stands a little more than a mile (c. two kms) east of Ludgershall in Wiltshire and close to the county’s border with Hampshire. Although the size of its estate was reduced somewhat in the early twentieth century, Biddenden House appears to have changed very little in the almost two hundred years which have passed since the Everett brothers planned their venture.⁴ Built in 1711-12 in the style of Kensington Palace, the elegant manor house has been described as ‘a very remarkable house, even from the point of view of English...architecture [as a whole]’.⁵

¹ A. Trollope (1867), Last Chronicle of Barset, London, 1994
² A.V. Cane, Ollera 1838-1900: A Study of a Sheep Station, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Sydney University, 1949, end papers.
³ Ibid., pp. 87-88.
⁶ V.C.H. Wiltshire, Vol XV, London, 1957., p.134. ‘In the early 19ᵗʰ century a wide pillared porch was built across the main (south) front of the house. It now forms part of a gazebo in the grounds.’
In the mid-1830s the estate comprised about 1000 acres, most of which were held in two large farms, which practised the mixed ‘sheep and corn’ farming which for centuries characterized agriculture on the chalk Downs. In the 1840s sheep were described as ‘the sheet anchor of South Wiltshire’ husbandry, for the large flocks were the main source of valuable manure for the region’s principal cereal crop, wheat which, with barley, was rotated with fodder crops of hay and later, turnips. At night the sheep were kept in folds close to the arable fields. Traditionally these had been located in the many sheltered river valleys that bisected the downs and in which were built the ‘nucleated villages and great estates’ that typified the region. Each morning shepherds drove the sheep from their folds near the arable fields and water-meadows, up to graze on to the treeless and wind-swept Downs, returning them in the evening. However, between the mid-1790s and 1815, when the pressures of a rapidly increasing population had combined with the needs of wartime to increase productivity and maintain high prices, especially for wheat, cultivation had been extended on to the Downs. The all-important sheep-folds often followed, so that, at times in the breeding cycle flocks often travelled long distances to fodder sources and shepherds ‘camped out’ overnight. However distanced and second hand their knowledge of these practices must necessarily have been, the similarities and resonances of experience must have proved invaluable to the Everett brothers in the management of both their staff and their flocks in New England.

In addition to their valuable manure, the sheep made other important contributions to the rural economy of Wessex, for their wool, fat lambs and mutton provided a secondary source of income. For centuries until c.1815 sheep had also ‘anchored’ the rural south’s only other important alternative industry, the production of woollen textiles. However the

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industry was in sharp decline in the decades after 1815 and was ‘completely gone’ by c.1840.\(^\text{11}\)

We are fortunate to have a detailed account of conditions in the district that the Everett brothers were leaving, for, although he made no mention of either the estate or its owners, in the autumn of 1826 William Cobbett almost certainly travelled the road which follows its boundary. He was near Tangley, which lies just east of Biddesden and nearing the end of an investigatory ‘ride’ from Uphusbond (Hurstbourne Tarrant) to Ludgershall when he lost his way in a ‘dell... in a country of fields, lanes and high hedges, sheltered from the wind’.\(^\text{12}\) Despite his annoyance at the delay and his amazement at the inability of a local cottager to redirect him, Cobbett was ‘delighted’ at the beauty and promise of the country through which he rode.\(^\text{13}\) He has left a vivid description of the topography and land-use in the region.

\[\ldots \text{on each...out-side of the valley(s) are downs. From the edge of the downs begin capital arable fields generally of very great dimensions, and in some places running a mile or so back into little cross valleys...After the corn-fields come the meadows, on each side, down to the brook, or river. The farm-houses, mansions, villages, and hamlets, are generally situated in that part of the arable land which comes nearest to the meadows.}\(^\text{14}\)

Between 1821-22 and late 1826 Cobbett published accounts of his many rides throughout the agricultural south-east and south of England.\(^\text{15}\) Although he was undoubtedly highly partisan in his support for the rural labourers, whose ‘friend’ and spokesman he appointed himself, the self-educated firebrand was a particularly acute and well-equipped observer. In spite of their tub-thumping nature his reports carry the unmistakable ring of truth. For thirty years until his death in 1835, this journalist, publisher and serious Hampshire farmer, who rose from plough-boy to parliamentarian, was a strident critic of successive governments’ adherence to the policies of ‘political economy’ which were undermining traditional mores and practices.\(^\text{16}\) He campaigned vociferously against the

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\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 269; 276.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 276. Original emphasis.

\(^{15}\) He undertook only two investigatory trips outside these regions. Published first in his Political Register (1802-35), the collected ‘rides’ first appeared in one volume in 1830.

\(^{16}\) Ibid. p. 291.
increasing immiseration of the labouring ‘orders’ especially those in the arable south-east and south.

On his journeys through Hampshire and Wiltshire in 1822 and 1826 Cobbett was deeply disturbed by the signs of neglect and decline in the living and working conditions of the rural ‘populace’.\textsuperscript{17} Since 1805, he had observed at first hand the impact upon a static and glutted labour force of agricultural ‘improvement’ and the more capitalistic attitudes towards farming that were associated with the change. These widespread changes had their basis in the enclosure of farmland and the consolidation of holdings, which permitted economies of scale and more rational and intensive use of the land.\textsuperscript{18} Beginning in the 1720s agrarian change was impelled, after c.1740, by the need to feed Britain’s rapidly increasing population.\textsuperscript{19} Heightened demand meant prices for agricultural produce rose unchecked from the second half of the eighteenth century until 1814. In the half-century to the outbreak of war with France, prices rose by 45 per cent, while, between mid-1795 and 1814 wartime scarcity and continually increasing demand combined with inflation to accelerate the process by 92 per cent.\textsuperscript{20} With the bankers who financed them, arable farmers and their landlords, who by the 1790s were already engaged in ‘capitalist and specialist’ farming, were lured by the windfall returns into over-production and speculative investments which extended cultivation into less reliable soils.\textsuperscript{21} This greater productivity in agriculture was achieved through innovations in technology, livestock breeding, new crops and pastures and by the adoption of more entrepreneurial attitudes and practices.\textsuperscript{22} The result was that by 1815 so great was the agricultural prosperity and expansionary activity in the cereal-growing counties of southern England that the ‘superstructure of Chalkland agriculture’ depended on ‘sky-high prices for wheat and mutton’.\textsuperscript{23} Cobbett was appalled by the resultant deterioration in the southern rural labourers’ working and living conditions as the principles of a market economy affected hiring practices and labour relations.\textsuperscript{24} Already, in 1806, he believed that

\textsuperscript{22} Deane, op. cit., pp. 45-50.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid}, p. x.
in southern rural society there were ‘but two classes of men, masters and abject dependants’. 25

By 1826, when Cobbett made his second excursion through the countryside around Ludgershall, the destitution of the southern rural population was all-but complete. All around him he observed a shocking paradox. He described a rural workforce crammed into grossly overcrowded, dilapidated and inadequate housing. No longer able to afford the wheaten bread which was their staple, they were reduced to bare subsistence on a meagre diet of the despised ‘potatoes and tea’ amidst signs of plenty; ‘old wheat-ricks’ and vast flocks of sheep. 26 For the little work they could get the labourers received very low wages. 27 He railed against the enlargement and consolidation of tenancies by ‘bull-frog’ farmers and wealthy, often absentee land-owners which had caused a marked decline in the number of smaller gentry and ‘yeoman’ farmers. 28 As a result, Cobbett reported, ‘three out of four’ farm-houses were either pulled down or falling down, further reducing both work and accommodation opportunities for rural labourers. 29

The situation in the nearby towns was no better. In ‘formerly considerable... now very miserable’ Heytesbury, which had until c.1812, been a centre of alternative employment in the traditional woollen textile industry, he encountered a group of itinerant weavers who were reduced to foraging for nuts in the nearby woods for food. In another Wiltshire cloth town, Frome, he met ‘between two and three hundred weavers, men and boys... (who)... after pawning all their things... their best clothes, their blankets and sheets; their looms; any little piece of furniture they had’ were reduced to parish relief. Whole families worked for about five shillings a week. A married man who worked for six days on the roads earned 2.6d; his wife earned 2s, while for each of their children under eight they would receive 3d. 30 Cobbett was just as scathing in his description of Biddesden’s neighbour, the ‘rotten borough’ of Ludgershall, which he regarded as...

... one of the most mean and beggarly places that man ever set his eyes on. ...The look of the place would make one swear that there never was

25 Horn, op. cit., p. 53.
28 Horn, op. cit., p. 54.
a clean shirt in it... The borough is, as to all practical purposes, as much private property as this pen is my private property.31

Cobbett’s references to both Heytesbury and Ludgershall are of particular relevance to the Everetts’ story. As we shall see, the extended family maintained a long and continuous connection with Heytesbury and the mills in the Wylye valley, while Biddesden House was the seat of Ludgershall’s resident squire, who, as magistrate and justice of the peace was the principal arbiter of government in the locality, setting its standards and regarding it as his ‘private property’.32 From 1796 to 1812 two Everett owners of Biddesden had represented the borough in parliament.33 Even after they relinquished the seat in 1812, it continued to be governed ‘in the Everett interest’ until, and even beyond, its abolition in the parliamentary reforms of 1832.34

The rural environment in which the Everett brothers grew into young manhood therefore comprised one clearly-differentiated half of an increasingly divided whole, for the ‘two nations’ which Disraeli was soon to identify were as obvious in the rural south as they were in the burgeoning new towns in the industrializing north.35 Two important elements had unified traditional rural society; economic inter-dependence and several centuries of vaguely defined but clearly understood and mutually-recognized obligations.36 However, while economic inter-dependence remained essential after the 1780s, the increasingly capitalistic and entrepreneurial attitudes adopted by many landowners and their tenant farmers meant that their responsibilities towards their rural employees were either neglected or rejected. As a result the gulf between the few ‘haves’ and the many ‘have nots’ in rural society in the arable southern counties increased greatly as farmers and landowners, the

31 Ibid, p. 270. Original emphasis.
33 Thomas Everett, sat 1796-1810 and was succeeded by his son, Joseph Hague Everett, from 1810-1812
34 VCH, ‘Wiltshire’, Vol. XV, p. 130
35 B. Disraeli, Sybil, 1845. Throughout this and the succeeding chapter references to ‘north’ and ‘south’, ‘northern and southern’ will be made in relationship to ‘Caird’s Line’. Drafted in 1851 the line ran roughly north-west/south-east across England from The Wash to the northern coast of Wales, dividing the high-wage, mainly pastoral north from the low-wage, predominantly arable south. See map, opposite p. 6.
larger of whom were increasingly non-resident, distanced themselves physically and attitudinally from the workers whose compliant deference they regarded as their right.  

The focus of the ‘Old Society’ was essentially local and personal. Power and the loyalties it attracted through the exercise of personal patronage ascended vertically through many levels of a pyramid of status. The very many who were powerless formed the broad base of the traditional social structure, while the very few who were most powerful sat at its narrow apex. At every step in the pyramid loyalties were reciprocal, entailing mutually understood but individually interpreted rights and responsibilities which were implicit upon both governor and governed. However in the second half of the eighteenth century, and especially after the late 1770s, the influence of new attitudes towards governance and the agrarian change which accompanied them were eroding the cherished customary rights which hitherto had given some dignity and quality of life to the south’s rural labourers. More and more the governing classes replaced the tenets of the traditional ‘moral economy’ with those of the new ‘political economy’. Codified by Adam Smith in the 1776, this ‘beastly Scotch feelosophy’ was refined over the next half century by David Ricardo and given further impetus by the utilitarian principles of Jeremy Bentham. As a result, although they still trumpeted their ‘rights’, many in the powerful governing oligarchy felt free to disregard the traditional paternalist responsibilities and ‘duties’ which underpinned them. This deliberate ‘abdication on the part of the governors’ was most prevalent amongst the largest and most-powerful, often aristocratic landowners who, as absentee proprietors, left the day-to-day management of their estates to specialist stewards and land agents. As well, inflation and the wartime boom in agriculture meant that many wealthy tenant farmers were similarly distanced from their workers. Some simply desired greater privacy, or wished to emulate the life-styles of their landlords, while in the war years others had taken advantage of increased

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40 P. King, ‘Customary rights and women’s earnings: the importance of gleaning to the rural labouring poor, 1750-1850’, Economic History Review, XLIV, No. 3, 1991, pp. 461-462, 465-466. Such rights included the rights of access to the common, enabling a cow, pig or poultry to be kept; fuel and windfalls to be foraged for in the woodlands; and the important right to glean after the harvest. Evans, op. cit., pp. 37-42, 219-225; Cobbett, op. cit., p. 291.
demand to lease large consolidated properties in several parishes. Those within the gentry who were more likely to have remained conscious of their responsibilities to their employees, even if only for reasons of ‘enlightened self-interest’, were squires like the Everetts, whose holdings were smaller and who maintained a permanent presence on their estates. Just as it was at this level of rural society that the call for a return to a more clearly-stated traditional system was most likely to appeal, it was with the resident country gentry that a revived and vigorously restated system was more likely to succeed.

In 1829 in the course of his attack on Malthus’ doctrines, the parliamentarian and minor intellectual Michael Sadler introduced the term ‘paternalism’ into political discourse. However only the name Sadler gave to the principles he espoused was new. Though refined and more uniformly defined in the first half of the nineteenth century, the ‘profoundly conservative and fundamentally hierarchical’ philosophy which Sadler called paternalism had been developed, internalized and practised by the English governing classes over several centuries. Nor, by 1829, was the debate new. Discussion had been underway since the 1790s when political revolution abroad coincided with economic and demographic revolution at home causing the governing oligarchs to fear social dislocation. From this time a disparate group of key intellectuals, polemists, poets and their publishers, who became the spokesmen of the landed classes and of the status quo ante, expressed increasing concern at the outcome of the all-encompassing social and economic change underway in their newly-industrializing society. Rejecting the rampant individualism of the political economists and suspicious of the materialistic commercialism which characterized the new manufacturing centres, paternalists clung to the belief that only the landed proprietors possessed both the right, the ability and above all sufficient leisure with which to govern. Within these parameters they sought to accommodate and ameliorate the social changes which were underway rather than to return to the mythical ‘Golden Age’ which they used as an example.

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43 Roberts, op.cit., pp.11,12.
44 Evans, op. cit., p. 12.
45 Lawes, op. cit., p.5.
landowners to their traditional obligations, to modify and soften the impact of ‘political economy’ rather than to overthrow it. 46

The debate began in the last quarter of the eighteenth century with two seminal works whose authors’ forceful restatement of traditional ideals of governance laid the foundations for the revival of paternalist doctrines in the nineteenth century. 47 The first, William Paley’s *Moral and Political Philosophy*, was published in 1785 and reached its twenty-eighth edition by 1814. Paley, who stressed that ‘rights’ and ‘duties’ were synonymous, influenced generations of upper-classes undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge. 48 Indeed it is possible that the latter institution’s use of Paley’s book as a text may have had a formative influence upon the Everett brothers. The impact of the second and better-known ‘classic’, Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, was perhaps even greater. First published in 1790 this profoundly influential work was consistently reprinted and read in the century thereafter.

Though it was perhaps not at the forefront of public attention, the debate continued throughout the war years. In the 1790s the youthful, then-radical poets Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were prominent contributors. However after c.1810 the increasingly conservative poets had joined Cobbett, whose long crusade began in the early 1800s. 49 Indeed, peace proved to be the catalyst for an increase in the calls for action. The onset of economic depression and persistent outbreaks of labour unrest after 1815 generated a ‘wave of writing’. Debate reached its height in the twenty years after 1827 as writers with a wide variety of special interests came together to protest. As contributors to widely-read and highly-respected journals such as *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Quarterly Review* they urged the governing oligarchs to resume their responsibilities to their subordinates. 50 The Romantic poets Southey, Coleridge and William Wordsworth joined the factory reformers, Lord Ashley, Sadler, Robert Owen and Thomas Chalmers, the medievalist

47 Roberts, *op. cit.* , p.73.
49 G. Carnall, *Robert Southey and his Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind, London, 1960.* , pp.133, 148-149. From c. 1810 Southey’s conversion was well underway and he wrote several important articles in the *Quarterly Review*.
50 Lawes, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-36; Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp.67, 68.
Kenelm Digby and other advocates of the established Church, and such advocates of the agricultural labourers' cause as Cobbett and, later, Rev. Lord Sydney Godolphin.\textsuperscript{51}

The newly-defined but centuries-old system whose revival these men proposed had three inter-dependent and closely associated elements. The ownership of landed property was of primary importance. Definitive of both status and duty, property conferred and validated the right to govern.\textsuperscript{52} While governance was to be essentially hierarchical, it was also to be both local and personal. Power was to be dispensed by the lesser country gentry, the resident squires whose roles as magistrates and Justices of the Peace were vital. Paternalism's third buttress was the Established Church, whose clergy were to supervise and regulate the behaviour of the poor, to provide assistance to those sufficiently compliant to be deemed worthy of help, and to see that the children of the poor were educated to a standard at which they would become useful and deferential workers.

Both David Roberts and J.C.D. Clark have stressed the extent to which these hitherto unnamed and uncodified ideals were accepted unselfconsciously as customary 'best practice' by all levels of pre-Victorian society. The system's value over the centuries may have lain in its very vagueness and lack of defined laws and theories which, in practice and over time, left a great deal of room for individual interpretation and application.\textsuperscript{53} Nevertheless, Roberts' analysis reveals the presence of a consistent set of assumptions, doctrines and attitudes, which though theoretically rigid, in practice still allowed much latitude in their interpretation.\textsuperscript{54} Society was seen to be organic. From 'head' to 'foot' of the body of society each individual formed part of a vital link in 'the great chain of being'.\textsuperscript{55} At every level within the body-social authority was both hierarchical and sacred, being granted by God. With property as its validation and the stern but benevolent resident squire as its archetype, governance was to be authoritarian, patriarchal and personal.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{51} Roberts, op. cit., pp. 26-27
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{53} J.C.D. Clark, English Society, 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime, Cambridge, 1985, passim; Roberts, op.cit., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{54} In the discussion on paternalism in this and the following paragraphs I am following closely the model proposed by Roberts, op. cit., pp. 1-156, passim.
\textsuperscript{55} The phrase is Southey's.
\textsuperscript{56} Roberts, op.cit., pp. 2-5.
Particular emphasis was placed on the patriarch’s duties, by attention to which he proved himself worthy of the position he occupied. Performance of these duties gave the landowner the right to unquestioned rule over interconnected units of power, which radiated outwards from family, to village, estate, and parish until the limits of his particular ‘territory’ were reached. His duty was to provide guidance to and moral supervision over the individuals within each particular unit under his control and to assist those he judged worthy of his help and charity. In return his ‘inferiors’, whatever their station, had reciprocal duties. These were to be deferential, sober and hard-working, grateful and above all, obedient.

The paternalist system survived into the late nineteenth century and was not completely superseded until, together with the predominance of the landowning classes, it was swept away by the First World War. However paternalism had two related, inherent weaknesses which led to its eventual demise. In essence, paternalist philosophies were nostalgic and backward looking. They were thus best suited to the pre- and proto-industrial agrarian society in which they originated and which was inexorably being overtaken by the capitalist individualism which accompanied industrialization. Paternalists shared several other associated attitudes. These included the paramount importance of real property, the sacred nature of authority; the need for strict discipline and close supervision of their subordinates, and the need, through the example of Christian morality and a high degree of social engineering, to guide them towards their ‘betterment’. These, however, were the theories; the ideals to which all might strive. In reality, individual landowners remained free to interpret and adapt paternalism’s principles to suit their particular purposes and circumstances. As a result in the individual paternalist’s daily life laissez-faire attitudes often predominated.

In the twenty difficult years after 1815, as debate about ‘the abdication of the governors’ reached its peak an associated and even more pressing problem came to a head. At issue was the need to reform the Old Poor Law, the roots of whose spiralling costs were

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57 As, by definition, ‘paternalism’ refers only to males, I have used the masculine pronoun throughout the discussion of the topic. Although women had important prescribed roles to play in the operation of the process, these were always subordinate and passive.
58 Roberts, op. cit, pp. 5,6.
60 Ibid., pp. 6-7, 64, 152.
both demographic and financial. From c.1760 the existing system, which had been designed to provide the poor with a basic level of subsistence in a static, proto-industrial agrarian society, came under increasing strain. By the 1790s the Old Poor Law was increasingly unable to cope both with the demands created by unprecedented population growth and with hardening and more judgemental attitudes towards assisting those in need.\(^61\) There was increasing evidence of the serious problem created by the steep rises in grain prices caused by a run of bad seasons in wartime. As a result bread, which, as the rural labourer’s staple food consumed over fifty per cent of the family’s budget, was much less affordable.\(^62\) Contemporary commentators differed sharply in their reactions to the crisis. Whereas in the mid-1790s Sir Frederick Eden praised the ‘politic’ actions of those rural employers who used deliberately shortened hirings to reduce the burden of the poor rates upon their parishes, Rev. David Davies was more sympathetically inclined.\(^63\) This Berkshire clergyman, who was perhaps closer to the problem, drew attention to the very real suffering imposed upon the southern rural labourers by the all-too-obvious decline in their living standards. Even at this early date he found that the total earnings of a labouring family were insufficient to meet the costs of their food, rent, and clothing.\(^64\) In the very bad year of 1801 Arthur Young noted that a rural labourer would be charged five times more for his food than previously, ‘...supposing he had the money to pay for it’.\(^65\)

The problem lessened somewhat during most years of the war. Nevertheless, though wages and employment opportunities in agriculture improved as manpower shortages coincided with much greater demand, wage rises still failed to match price rises.\(^66\) While wages in agriculture rose by about seventy-five per cent between 1793 and 1815, prices virtually doubled.\(^67\) Even though, by 1815, prices had fallen somewhat from their peak at the start of the decade, in that year a rural labourer in Wiltshire who was fortunate enough to find work for a full week earned enough to buy only nine loaves of bread. In 1785, with the same sum, his father could have purchased fourteen such loaves.\(^68\)

\(^{61}\) Huzel, op. cit., pp. 59,60; Horn, op. cit., p,99
\(^{62}\) Horn, op. cit., pp.774-775.
\(^{63}\) Ibid, p. 99.
\(^{64}\) Ibid, pp.31;37. Emphasis added.
\(^{65}\) Ibid, p. 47.
\(^{66}\) Holderness, op. cit., pp. 104; 125.
\(^{67}\) Horn, op. cit., p. 37.
\(^{68}\) Ibid, p. 47.
With the return to peace after a quarter century of war Britain’s governing classes could give full attention to this serious and fundamental domestic problem which contained elements of the ‘customary right of settlement’ earned by rural labourers.\textsuperscript{69} In the decade which saw the onset of economic depression and fiscal realignment, sixty years of rapid population growth also reached their peak. This spectacular growth was matched by the huge cost of providing at least a minimum of subsistence to the vast and largely immobilized pool of un- and underemployed workers who glutt ed the labour market of the arable and mixed-farming counties of the de-industrializing south. At its highest point in 1818-1819 expenditure under the Old Poor Law rose to over £8,000,000. Costs remained very high in the two decades which followed. Despite falling to £6,000,000 in 1822 because of a bumper harvest, expenditure again rose steadily from the mid-1820s, reaching £7,000,000 in 1831 and remained high into the 1840s.\textsuperscript{70}

But while overall expenditure on poor relief more than tripled between the early 1770s and 1820, the amount individual recipients received fell sharply. From the ‘barely adequate’ amount considered necessary in the mid-1790s when the dizzying rise in outlays began, \textit{per capita} expenditure in the mid-1790s fell by more than one-third. However the debate remained focused on the means by which relief was to be provided and to whom, rather than on the problem’s underlying causes which lay in the social and economic problems that were built into the south’s agrarian society. Employment opportunities failed consistently to match the needs of the ever-increasing population, with the disastrous result that while the rate of unemployment was significant, under-employment was general. As seasonal and structural features which were related to wage levels, the almost complete lack of alternative employment and to an arable monoculture, both categories were inseparable from the economy of the southern agricultural counties.\textsuperscript{71}

This was the world into which George and John Everett were born and in which their characters and their attitudes were formed. Despite Biddesden’s closeness to Ludgershall and

\textsuperscript{69} K.D.M. Snell, \textit{Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1600-1900}, Cambridge, 1985. pp. 155-156, 212-213. ‘Settlement’, and thus the right to poor relief, was determined by birth in the parish or by employment therein for a full year.


\textsuperscript{71} J.P. Huzel, ‘The Labourer and the Poor Law, 1750-1850’, G.E. Mingay (ed), \textit{Agrarian History, op. cit.}, pp. 769, 782, 784.
Tidworth, the dormitory villages which housed its workers, the ‘world’ which the Everett family and their peers inhabited was in many ways detached both mentally and physically from that of the ‘labouring orders’ upon whose service they depended. As members of the ‘greater squirearchy’, whose estates ranged in size from 1,000 acres to 6,000 or 7,000 acres, the family belonged to the upper-middle levels of the resident country gentry. This group, whose beautiful homes and parks formed atolls of comfort and privilege in a vast sea of deprivation, has been described as the ‘core’ of England’s governing oligarchy.

Although estimates of the landowning autocracy’s exact size vary, when compared to England’s total population, their numbers were very few. Gash states that in 1815 England was governed by an aristocracy and gentry which comprised only about 4000 families. Evans suggests a higher figure of between 12,000 to 13,000 families. However there is general agreement that in these years half of England’s land was held by far less than 10 per cent of its population. In Wiltshire in this period, the gentry owned over one-third (36 %) of the county’s total acreage, eighteen per cent being held by members of the upper gentry and twelve per cent by those in the lower gentry. About the same acreage was controlled by the greater, often aristocratic landowners. By 1876, Bateman calculated that estates of over 10,000 acres occupied thirty-six per cent of the land, while thirty per cent was held by owners of between 1,000 and 10,000 acres.

Because they were so few in number, and in spite of their party political differences, the governing oligarchy maintained a high level of social cohesion. This was preserved despite the fact that the ‘class’ was both hierarchical and multi-status in nature and open to the steady influx of wealthy manufacturers and businessmen who gained entry to the county gentry through the purchase of a landed estate. While the ownership of landed property was basic to the structure of traditional society, an individual’s power and the status it conferred were determined by the extent of the patronage he could dispense. This was the

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75 Evans, op. cit., p. 8.
79 Thompson, ‘Landed Society’ op. cit., pp. 3; 5; 21.
'social glue' by which class cohesion was achieved and reinforced. The judicious dispensation of patronage created interlocking networks of loyalties which ascended hierarchically through every level of the 'Old Society'. Though principally vertical, these interlaced and interacting networks also spread laterally through each level of the oligarchy. The particular landed gentleman was simultaneously the recipient of patronage from those in the network(s) above him and the patron of those from the networks below him whom he chose to favour. The resulting social structure therefore resembled...

...a vast pyramid of interlocking spiders' webs. At each level the individuals within the web had a very deep, albeit widespread...[often national and at times worldwide]... sense of community.  

At each point of intersection within and between these three-dimensional networks of loyalty and obligation sat a family or group of related families. Although patronage negotiations took place between individuals, in reality each acted as the representative of his extended family. The family was the basic unit of the 'Old Society', and the 'family enterprise' was the source of almost all business and professional finance, recruitment and assistance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In a society which lacked a fully developed and stable financial system, the family and its close associates were at once the most reliable and trustworthy focus of business activity.  

The term 'family' itself had much broader compass and more malleable meaning in this period. Although some distinction could be made between members of the immediate and extended 'blood' family and those who, as part of the 'household', lived within or were closely associated with the home, all were part of an extended 'family'. As such they were linked to the patriarch by mutually recognized loyalties and obligations of 'kinship'. Bonds of 'friendship' were even wider-ranging, running both vertically through the hierarchy of power-holders and horizontally between those of equal status and similar socio-economic 'interests'. In many cases the terms and the behaviours which accompanied them were used interchangeably. In a society in which power was held by relatively few and government at all levels was conducted at a personal level, the loyalties owed to 'family' and 'friends' were particularly

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82 Ibid, p. 31.
strong and binding. With the family as their focus, networks of kinship and friendship were the means by which influence was achieved, exerted and reinforced and through which class solidarity was sustained.

This was particularly so at the level of county society, where local government was exercised by ‘a comparatively small face-to-face group of personal acquaintances’. The cohort was characterized by a ‘strong sense of community’ and close-knit by important elements of relationship, kinship and unity of purpose and beliefs. In their upbringing, education, lifestyle and family setting, occupations and avocations, attitudes and ambitions, and in spite of party differences, in their basic political mindset, its members were remarkably similar. As was the case at each level within landed society, members of the county gentry sought to emulate the life-styles of those above them in the hierarchy and to improve or consolidate their family’s position through advantageous marriage. The extent to which these goals were achievable was limited only by desire and by the depth of their pockets.

However, despite this high level of ‘class’ solidarity, there were clear social demarcations and attitudinal differences between, and sometimes within, each level of the hierarchy. While the entry of ‘new men’ from the upper levels of the business, commercial and professional ‘orders’ had been on-going since the sixteenth century, in practice it took about three generations for a ‘new’ family to be fully accepted. It is interesting to note that the Everett brothers belonged to the fully-accepted third generation of their family at Biddenden, and thus would have felt completely secure in their position as ‘gentlemen’. However seemingly slight but none-the less telling distinctions between different levels of the oligarchy were apparent. Education was one such area, for not only the school, but also the particular college at Oxford or Cambridge or the legal ‘Inn’ to which sons were sent proclaimed one’s status within the hierarchy. The attitudes held within the country gentry also differed from those of the greater landowners. While the class’s ‘openness’ made its

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84 Perkin, op. cit., p. 51.
85 Davidoff and Hall, op. cit., p. 215.
86 Perkin, op. cit., pp. 15; 20; Mingay, ‘Gentry’ op.cit., p. 17.
87 Gash, op. cit., pp. 220-221. The Inns of Court in London were the prime source of lawyers’ training.
composition more fluid, the squirearchy's permanent residence in the countryside meant that its attitudes were highly conservative.\textsuperscript{88}

Although it is difficult to determine exactly, it is probable that the Everett brothers were born into the upper levels of this stratum of society. This conclusion can be reached if evidence other than the size of the family's estate is considered. If their status is determined by the size of their estate and the extravagance of their lifestyle, Biddesden's acreage would place the Everettts in the lowest levels of income and status in the county gentry. In 1873, such landholdings were estimated to return about £1,000 per annum.\textsuperscript{89} However Biddesden was not the Everettts' only landed possession, as by 1800 Joseph Everett also owned the 'beautifully-situated' manor of Netherton in Hampshire. The manor lay in the sheep and corn Downlands near Faccombe, eight-and-a-half miles (14 kms) north-east of Andover.\textsuperscript{90} Although it is difficult to estimate Netherton's acreage in modern terms, the estate appears to have been smaller than Biddesden.\textsuperscript{91} While in 1858 Joseph's heirs sold the estate a few years after his death, the advowson of the manor's church remained in the Everettts' gift into the late twentieth century.\textsuperscript{92} From the late 1840s the 'living' was held by the second of Joseph's three clergyman sons, Charles, who may have chosen the young Faccombe-born labourers Charles Cummings and Alfred Marsh to become part of Ollera's immigrant labour-force.\textsuperscript{93} Charles was still at Netherton when, in 1853, he became directly linked to the emigrant labourer John Phillimore, a far less fortunate member of the Everettts' assisted immigrant workforce. Although he named Ludgershall as his birthplace, Phillimore's sister 'lived with', that is was a servant in, Charles Everett's household.\textsuperscript{94}

The size of Joseph Everettts' household also conforms to that deemed necessary for the provision of a 'modest' degree of comfort. The 1851 census return records that the four Everett residents of Biddesden House employed eight servants, seven of whom worked

\textsuperscript{88} Thompson, 'Landed Society', \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 5, 20.
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 112.
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 316. The estate's size is given in a mixture of acreages and medieval land measurements such as 'messuages' and 'virgates'.
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 317.
\textsuperscript{93} Ollera Station Records, 'Everett Letters', John to Rev. Charles at Netherton, 16. 8. 1853. A103:V3052/4; Shipping Records, \textit{State Records of New South Wales}, 2153; 2458. [Hereafter, SRNSW]
indoors. At Netherhall in Cumberland in the 1840s, to maintain a house containing ‘nine best beds’ the Senhouse family, whose income was ‘barely £3,000 per year’, employed the same number of servants at a cost of £160 p.a. Then as now, of course, judgements of the income thought necessary to provide a modicum of comfort were highly subjective. It is salutary to remember that relatively few in the governing classes questioned the ability of the thousands of casualized agricultural labourers to survive on 6s.-8s. a week, (£15-£20 p.a.), in the unlikely event that such work was available. As we have seen, a family man on poor relief fared even worse, earning only 2s.6d for six days’ work on the roads.

There are other indications that the Everetts of Biddesden House possessed much greater wealth and status than is implied by their comparatively modest size of their estate. This is apparent when the details of several Everett family wills are examined. Joseph Hague Everett, the father of the Everetts of Ollera, died in mid-1853. When, after a year’s delay, probate was finally granted on his will, the sum of £30,000 was ‘resworn’. A bequest in the will of Joseph’s only surviving daughter Ann is particularly revealing. When, to the great distress of her brothers at Ollera, she died aged thirty-two in mid-1851, Ann Everett left £200 for the relief of the poor in the parish. Both the size of this bequest and the acknowledgement of paternalist duty which it demonstrates provide important insights into the Everetts’ attitudes as well as clues to their financial position. These clues are substantiated by bequests of aid to the poor made by other females who were closely related to the family at Biddesden. In 1867 Martha Everett, an aunt, left £200 ‘in stock’ for this purpose, while as late as 1884 Ann’s sister-in-law, Ellen Everett, similarly left the sum of

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96 Ollera Station Records, ‘Genealogical Material’, A103, V3052/15. A butler, groom, footman, cook, nurse, two housemaids and one kitchenmaid are listed. The ‘nurse’ was no doubt made necessary by the presence of one and possibly two invalids in the family. Joseph, the patriarch, who by 1851 was in failing health, died in 1853, while Ann the only Everett daughter died about two years before her father.
97 See above, p. 20.
This is the acreage stated in the advertisement for the estate’s sale by the Everett family in 1908. The V.C.H. Vol. XV, p. 134-135, states that in 1838 the estate’s single farm comprised c. 750 acres. Given Thomas Everett’s position as an M.P. and the never-again equalled agricultural boom which lasted until 1815, it seems likely that these would have been the years in which the estate’s expansion occurred.
99 Ollera Station Records, ‘Genealogical Material’, A103, V3052/15. p.2. ‘Proved 1st June, 1853, £25,000; resworn, £30,000, 1854’. No reason for the change is given.
£300. A letter which John Everett wrote from England to his brother Edwin at Tenterden in 1867 contains a further clue to the family’s financial status. In this letter John informed his brother that after the recent death of their Aunt Mary (Mrs Offley, née Everett) each was to receive a substantial legacy. While she had left £15,000 to her godson Edwin, John expected to receive a ‘possible’ £10,000.

Like so many members of the Wiltshire gentry with a similar background, the bulk of the Everett’s wealth probably derived from and was increased by its involvement in manufacturing and in finance. The family’s prosperity and rise to prominence began with its long involvement in the southern textile industry and grew when its members diversified into country banking. The Wiltshire ‘master clothiers’, who enjoyed their greatest prosperity in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, oversaw the production of high-quality woollen fabrics for the domestic market and for export. The expensive and fashionable ‘medleys’ they produced combined local wools with imported, preferably Spanish, merino yarns. However, from c.1740 until the end of the century, difficulties with overseas markets coincided with increasing competition from the developing textile areas in the north to cause a contraction in the southern industry. As a result, from the 1770s, the industry in Wiltshire came to be controlled by a relatively small group of larger-scaled ‘respectable’ clothiers who, through ‘factors’ or middlemen, enlarged and consolidated their businesses at the expense of other, smaller producers.

In the 1760s William Everett, a ‘wealthy Horningham clothier’, was a member of this group. This Everett forebear, who was Joseph Hague Everett’s grandfather, was the second of four recorded generations of the family to lease water-powered mills in the Wylye valley at Horningham and Heytesbury. In 1767 when protesting weavers forced Everett

103 Hopkins, op. cit., pp.25, 50, 85.
106 Everett Records Guyra, ‘Memoirs of Ollie Mackenzie Everett’, Leather-bound notebook in the possession of the Skipper Family. n.p. The notebook, a catalogue of Everett-Mackenzie family history which was compiled by Mrs Arthur Everett [nee Alice Ollera (‘Ollie’) Mackenzie], contains several items of historical interest. One of these is a genealogy which traces the Everett family of Biddesden back to the mid sixteenth century and to the brothers John (b.1550) and Nicholas Everett. This John Everett’s son, grandson and great-grandson bore his name. By the mid-seventeenth century the family was established at Tytherington, where the great-grandson (1681-1733) was identified as a clothier, whose son, William
to abandon his attempt to introduce a gig-mill to his ‘manufactory’ he became the target of one of the many periodic labour riots which beset the southern textile industry in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{107} Such ‘collective bargaining by riot’ was the obverse of paternalism.\textsuperscript{108} As one of the very few negotiating tools available to workers in a proto-industrial economy, its roots lay deep within the ‘moral economy’.\textsuperscript{109} In an increasingly competitive market this strong opposition and recurrent rioting significantly delayed the ‘respectable’ clothiers’ attempts to introduce centralized ‘manufactories’ and new, labour-saving technology to a traditionally low-paid and widely-dispersed domestic industry.\textsuperscript{110} Machinery was not widely established in the southern industry until the start of the new century, when the outbreak of the wars with France brought more than a decade of great prosperity, greatly increased demand and chronic labour shortages. By the end of the wars, however, the industry had begun its ultimate and irreversible decline.\textsuperscript{111}

The Everett family’s long involvement with country banking probably began with William Everett of Horningsham. By the 1760s his wealth was apparently already substantial, and it was in the third quarter of the eighteenth century that country banking began and flourished.\textsuperscript{112} Country banking began as a natural and essential adjunct to the operation of a successful provincial business. At a time when communications were poor and when England had begun the protracted change from her traditional silver (sterling) standard to reliance upon gold, regional producers had great difficulty in securing a regular and adequate supply of currency.\textsuperscript{113} This was particularly so for manufacturers who needed sufficient low-denomination coins to pay their workers at a time when England’s copper coinage was both scarce and much debased.\textsuperscript{114} Some solved the problem by issuing their own tokens or by making payments-in-kind (‘truck’). Many more issued Bills of Exchange

\textsuperscript{112} L.S. Pressnell, \textit{Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution}, Oxford, 1956, p.4. Burke estimated that in 1750 there were less than a dozen such banks outside London. By 1776 there were 150, \textit{op. cit.}, p.6.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 6, 12.
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 14, 15.
which, after an agreed term and often after repeated endorsements, could be discounted at an agreed rate for cash. Using the financial resources of his business as a guarantee, the particular manufacturer or industrialist met his need for cash by accepting the savings of local artisans and craftsmen.\footnote{Ibid.}

There were other important advantages available to such men as the clothier-bankers. Once the immediate needs of the business were met any excess funds could be used to expand the core business or for investment in one or more of the many agricultural or transport ‘improvements’ which were transforming and unifying England’s regions. Such schemes included the enclosure of agricultural land or the construction of the canals, river navigations and turnpikes.\footnote{Deane, op. cit., pp. 177-178.} Country bankers who acted as agents for the collection and forwarding of government taxes had a particularly lucrative advantage, as sums held temporarily could be used for their personal benefit.\footnote{Pressnell, op. cit., pp. 56, 62-63} It is therefore unsurprising that the number of country banks grew rapidly in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. While there were fewer than a dozen provincial banks in the 1750s, there were 150 by 1776, 291 by 1797 and 741 by 1810-11.\footnote{Ibid. p. 6.} Already by 1783, the Everetts were numbered among them. In that year Bailey’s \textit{British Directory} listed Horlock, Everett, Mortimer and Everett as the principals of one of Warminster’s two banks, the ‘Warminster and Wiltshire’ or ‘Old’ Bank.\footnote{V.C.H. ‘Wiltshire’, Vol. VIII, London, 1965, p. 114.} With the many other West of England clothier-bankers who trod a similar path, the Everetts’ wealth and their rise into the country gentry was almost certainly enhanced by their move into banking. Closely associated with them were the many country lawyers who were co-founders of country banking. These men worked either as ‘money scriveners’, the brokers who arranged the mortgages on their estates with which the landed oligarchy satisfied their ‘rage’ for enclosure and transport improvements, or as notaries, who drew up the mortgages. Bankers’ and lawyers’ financial security, considerable knowledge of their district and its opportunities, and possession of established, interlacing, personal and business networks (i.e. of ‘kinship’ and ‘friendship’) therefore placed them in a position of particular intimacy and advantage with the governing élite in their communities.\footnote{Pressnell, op. cit., pp. 36-38; 82.}

\footnote{For three...}
generations until the early 1860s the Everettts of Biddesden and members of the wider Everett family were active as country and metropolitan bankers and in the law.

Proof that the Everett family was both wealthy and well entrenched within Wiltshire’s governing circle appears in the generation after William. By the 1780s, three Everett brothers occupied key positions within their local economy. One, Joseph, held the partnership in the Warminster bank with an unnamed relative. He was probably the Joseph Everett, who as a 'master clothier' built the 'new [Cloth] Hall' in Salisbury.121 Another of William Everett’s sons, John Gale (Everett), continued the textile business at Heytesbury; while the third, Thomas, attained the greatest political and social prominence. Not only did this ‘eminent banker’ hold a partnership in Newnham and Co. in the City of London, he was also a government contractor and, from 1796 until his death in 1810, the Member for Ludgershall.122 With the purchase of a country estate in Wiltshire in 1786 he gained the ultimate mark of status and esteem in his society. Almost a century later the quintessential importance of this achievement was stated by Anthony Trollope in the last volume of his acute observations of life among the Wessex country gentry, The Last Chronicle of Barset (1867). In the apt quote which introduces this chapter Trollope’s ever-ambitious Archdeacon Grantley puts the case succinctly.123

Thomas Everett’s life and various ‘interests’ exemplify the interconnection and interaction of networks of influence. In his role as a London banker he acted as agent for his family’s country bank, and also for those country banks throughout Wessex with which the Warminster firm had either direct or indirect connections.124 Two strands of the country banking network which centred on ‘Everetts of London’ can be traced.125 Horlock’s simultaneous possession of a partnership in both the Warminster bank and in an important bank in Bristol reveals one of the lateral strands which ran intra-regionally between banks.126 The Everetts’ indirect involvement in the affairs of nearby Wiltshire bankers is clear from

122 Ollera Station Records, 'Genealogical Material', A103, V 3052/15. For Thomas Everett’s obituary in Gentleman’s Magazine, 8th February, 1810, p. 188.
123 Hopkins, op. cit., p. 63.
124 Pressnell, op. cit., p. 106. The relatively few country banks which had personal representation both regionally and in London were called ‘pig on pork’ bankers.
125 Ibid. p. 487. By the 1820s the London firm went by the name ‘Everett Walker’, although the date of the name change is as yet unclear.
their role as agents for the Andover bank of Sharp and Co. This connection shows the way in which different networks merged, for the Sharp family also entered banking via the textile industry.\footnote{127}

The family’s high political and social status within their community is also clear. Either Thomas or his son Joseph was probably the ‘Colonel Everett’ who, in 1798 joined ‘Mr. Dacre…[in providing]… fifty mounted fencibles’ to defend against the threat of invasion by the French.\footnote{128} Both Everetts represented Ludgershall in parliament between 1796 and 1812.\footnote{129} In so doing each matched his social success as a landed gentleman with political power and influence, and in the process attained the position which carried with it the highest level of prestige open to an untitled man.\footnote{130} In 1791 within five years of his purchase of Biddesden, Thomas Everett failed in his first attempt to win the seat of Ludgershall from a rival landowner. His success in 1796 showed not only that he was among the wealthiest members of his district, but also that he was part of an established and influential ‘friendship’ network, for both of these elements were essential to electoral success.\footnote{131} Thomas’ success would otherwise have been impossible for the timing of his entry into parliament proved him to be a man in a hurry. The disapproval which accompanied the attempts made by men who were both ‘new’ and unknown to better their social position was expressed by Henry Penruddock Wyndham. As member for Salisbury, his parliamentary career coincided exactly with those of the Everetts’. In a letter to his father he expressed his disdain for such a candidate. ‘Is it possible that any man can think himself entitled to represent a city by buying an estate and living a few years near it? A man whose very name is new in Wiltshire?’\footnote{132} It is clear that Thomas Everett’s success was due to the fact that he was ‘known’ by those who exercised power in his community.

Henry Penruddock Wyndham belonged to a long-established and well-connected landed family, his branch of which held a partnership in one of Salisbury’s banks until 1808.\footnote{133} He was also first cousin to the Wyndhams of Dinton, who were to play such an important role in the Everetts’ colonial venture, and with whom the English and Australian
members of the extended Everett families maintained close social ties throughout the nineteenth century. The link with country banking permeated every level of landed society in Wiltshire and Hampshire from the ennobled Barings to the wonderfully-named Magens Dorrien Magens. He was the banker who from 1804 until 1812, occupied, first with Thomas and later with Joseph Everett, the second of Ludgershall’s two seats in parliament. It is also fascinating to speculate upon the timing and nature of Thomas’ activities as a government contractor. At a time when it was both ethically and legally acceptable to make use of ‘inside’ information, it needs no great leap of the ‘historical imagination’ to connect his privileged position as both parliamentarian and banker with the (possible) opportunity to satisfy both the government’s wartime needs for supplies and those of his extended family’s textile business.

Thomas Everett confirmed his gentlemanly status and consolidated the position of his family through the education of his heir, Joseph Hague Everett. Little is (as yet) known about the education and career of Thomas’ second son, William, who may have followed his father into the London bank, which by the 1820s was called ‘Everetts’. Each of Thomas’ two daughters seems to have made a ‘good’ marriage. Joseph, the heir, was born in London c.1777, and educated at Wandsworth School. In 1795 he gained simultaneous admission to the Inner Temple in London and also to Cambridge from which he graduated in 1799. While such dual admissions were not uncommon, each entailed the outlay of considerable expense, first for tuition and later for setting-up in practice. However the young man more than justified his family’s investment. When, in 1802, he married Margaret Cook ‘the daughter and co-heiress of General Cook… [at]… St. Mary-le-Bone Parish Church’, the

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134 Ibid. p. 196. V.C.H. ‘Wiltshire’, Vol. IV, p. 372. In the 1860s, for example, John Everett of Heytesbury, a cousin of the Biddenden family became Master of a newly-united Hunt, one component of which had been led for many years by William Wyndham of Dinton. Ollera Station Records, Diary of William Everett, 1838, UNERA, A103:V3052/15


136 Everett Records Guyra. ‘Memoirs of Ollie Mackenzie Everett’, n.p. Joseph’s name provides yet another probable member of the Everett’s ‘kinship’ network, as he was named after his godfather, a partner with Thomas in the London bank.

137 Pressnell, op. cit., p. 487.


139 Perkin, op. cit., p.43. .
young lawyer from the Inner Temple no doubt secured his family’s social acceptance and increased their financial position.  

Until his father’s death and his inheritance of Biddesden in 1810, Joseph Hague Everett and his family lived in London, where two sons, Thomas (b.1803) and Henry (b.1806) and a third, Charles, were born. Between 1811 and 1822 the baptisms of eight more children were recorded in the local Parish Register. Of the ten children who have been positively identified, seven males and one female survived into and beyond the mid-nineteenth century and are mentioned in the Ollera records. Each of the seven brothers, four in England and three in New England, would make an active contribution to the success of the ‘family enterprise’ in Australia.

The careers chosen by, or for, each of the brothers who remained in England rendered them ideally suited to their involvement in the family enterprise at Ollera. Thomas, the eldest, and his brother Charles graduated from Cambridge after which with their younger brother and fellow clergyman, Edward, they occupied various parishes in and around their home county. Henry, the second or third son, entered the Inns of Court. As a successful London lawyer, he oversaw the family’s business and possibly its banking activities. Although William’s name does not appear in the 1851 census, the second of the brothers born at Biddesden remained there, no doubt having responsibility for the management of the estate. Each of these men made a significant contribution to Ollera’s success. Henry Everett became his Australian brothers’ London agent until about 1858, when John assumed that responsibility after his decision to remain permanently in England. The contribution made by Thomas, Charles and William was perhaps even more critical for it is highly likely that it was they who, for more than a decade, identified and recruited the core of Ollera’s workforce, the agricultural labourers whom the Everetts in New England assisted to emigrate.

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140 Ollera Station Records, ‘Genealogical Information’, n.p. UNERA, A103: V3052/15
141 Ibid., As the parish records for Ludgershall contain no record of Joseph Hague and Margaret Cook Everetts’ first three sons, Charles, Thomas and Henry, the three were probably born in London, prior to the family’s move to Biddesden, where they were living when their fourth child, George, was born in 1811.  
142 Ibid., ‘Genealogical Records’, A103: 302/25. The parish records show that eight Everett children were baptized in these years: George (1811), William(1813), Edward (1814), John (1816), Charlotte (1817), Ann (1818), Emma (1820) and Edwin (1822). Seven of these are confirmed in the Genealogical Record Folder held at Ollera.  
Until her early death in 1851 their sister Ann also played a key, albeit passive, role in the family and in its Australian enterprise. After, and possibly even before, the death of her mother Margaret early in 1837, Ann, the family’s only surviving female member, became the locus of security in a time of widespread social and economic change. As her father’s housekeeper and mistress of Biddesden House, Ann had gained access to the only position which offered a degree of authority and general respect to an unmarried woman of her class. Somewhat counter-intuitively, Ann may have found her single status to be doubly beneficial. While her position as her father’s, and later her brother’s housekeeper meant that she was accorded the respect due to a married woman, her spinsterhood would have given her greater independence than a contemporary husband would have permitted. In a society whose closest relationships were those between siblings, Ann, the unmarried and thus ‘sainted’ (i.e. ‘unsullied’) sister, was therefore in many ways the emotional lynch-pin which held the close but widely-separated Everett family together. This is evident in the deep affection which permeates the letters she wrote to and received from her brothers in New England and in their deep grief at her early death. It is just as clear that Ann Everett took her position and its duties of household supervision very seriously. Despite the long months and thousands of miles which separated her from her brothers in Australia, they sought her advice on the management of the first of the immigrant families which served them. So secure was she in her position that this servant family continued to regard her with deference and to accept her intervention with some grace.

The distaff side of the Everett family may hold the answer to an intriguing and (so far) unanswered problem, for it is possible that a strand in the Biddesden-Ollera web was woven by the family of Ann’s mother. Although ‘evidence’ for such a connection is as yet tenuous and highly circumstantial it may have been through Margaret Cook Everett that the connection with the Halhed family was made. Although by then nothing was known about the brothers who, until c.1844, were the Everetts’ partners at Ollera, they were described to Cane in 1949 as ‘evidently relations’. Two letters contained in the Ollera Papers may

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144 ibid. Margaret Everett died, aged 56 in March, 1837.
148 Cane, op. cit., p.15.
point to an answer. The link is with service in India. Captain William Cook was serving there when he sent the letters to his brother in England; the first in 1768, the second in 1772. Nathaniel Brassey Halhed (1751-1830) served in India at the same time as William Cook. Employed as a ‘writer’ with the East India Company from the early 1770s until 1785, Halhed was chosen by Governor Warren Hastings to translate important legal documents from Sanskrit. Among other notable ‘firsts’, the widely-respected Orientalist and ‘pioneer of modern philology’, devised the first English-‘Bengali’ grammar. Evidence of a possible relationship also appears in Commodore Hamilton’s account of his visit to Ollera in 1843. In it he refers to a family relationship between the Everetts and the Halheds.

However banking and propinquity provide other possible and more predictable sources of the Everetts’ connection with the Halhed family, which had long been established in Oxfordshire. In the mid-eighteenth century Halhed’s father, a prominent banker, was a long-serving director of the Bank of England. Halhed himself served as the member for Lymington in Hampshire between 1790 and 1795, leaving parliament as Thomas Everett entered. Because of their families’ shared ‘interests’ and experiences it is therefore very likely that these members of the Wessex gentry either knew or knew of each other. To the extent that such relationships can be separated the bond may therefore have been one of ‘friendship’ rather than one of ‘kinship’.

By birth, education, and milieu therefore, the Everett brothers and their siblings would have been conscious of their innate superiority and of their inalienable ‘rights’ and status as gentlemen, and also, as we shall see, of their attendant responsibilities. As younger sons in a large and close family which owned an entailed estate they would also

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149 Ollera Station Records, ‘Two letters from Capt. William Cook in India to his brother Jack, dated 8th Apr.1768 and 30th Jan.1772’, A103: V3052/3; V3052/4. A third letter which is held at Ollera provides further evidence of the likely link. Written by William Pierce Williams to ‘My dear Cook’ and dated ‘Astrakhan, May ye 31st, 1807’ the letter is a fascinating account of a hazardous journey through this exotic and plague-affected region. Though otherwise unrelated to the research its retention among the Everett papers points both to its importance to Margaret Cook Everett and, more generally, to the breadth and depth of the contemporary English gentleman’s interests and avocations.


151 Cane, op.cit., p. 53.

152 Burke’s Gentry, op.cit., pp. 925-926.

have been acutely aware of the need to make their own way in their world. The goal of all men in their position was to amass a ‘competence’ which would enable them to maintain their status as ‘gentlemen’. This could best be achieved by entering one of the ‘respectable’ professions which preserved gentility. Such professions included the clergy, the armed services, the law and medicine, while the upper levels of commerce were becoming increasingly acceptable.\textsuperscript{154} The aim upon entry to such a profession was always to accrue sufficient capital to announce one’s true gentility through the purchase of a landed estate to which one could retire and pursue one’s amateur interests. Other indications were a university education in the classics and the highly-valued leisure to pursue one’s avocations.\textsuperscript{155} Fundamentally, however, the ownership of land gave access to power which, at every level of society, was exerted through the intricate networks of patronage and clientage which permeated the ruling oligarchy.\textsuperscript{156}

By the 1830s this goal was increasingly difficult to achieve, as several factors combined to increase competition for a finite or, in the case of the regular armed services a reduced, number of places in the ‘respectable’ professions.\textsuperscript{157} The third quarter of the eighteenth century was marked by a succession of good seasons. Bumper harvests meant lower prices and a general improvement in dietary and health standards. These elements combined to permit people to marry earlier and to produce more and healthier children who were thus better equipped to survive the hazardous years of infancy.\textsuperscript{158} As a result in the century after 1750, the population of England and Wales rose rapidly and continuously. From almost six million in 1751, the population of the two countries reached nine million in 1801, and seventeen million by 1851.\textsuperscript{159}

George and John Everett were born into the decade of greatest population growth, while Edwin arrived as it ended. Between 1811 and 1821 two million people were added to the population of England and Wales. At the decade’s mid-point in 1815 total numbers had already reached eleven million. By 1836, when the Everetts were young adults, a further four

\textsuperscript{154} Mingay, ‘Gentry’, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 114.
\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 155, 163.
\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 15-16.
\textsuperscript{157} Almost four decades of peace after 1815 gave few opportunities for enlistment in the regular armed forces.
million people had been added. One result of the remarkable increase in population was that most gentry families were much larger, with many more young males surviving into adulthood. Each had to be provided with sufficient education and ‘seed money’ to maintain his social status in an increasingly crowded and competitive environment. However, not only were there more gentry younger sons seeking ‘respectable’ places but they faced increasing competition from scions of the emerging middle classes. This heightened the real or perceived financial pressures on many gentry families in the agricultural south of England in the difficult decades after 1815.

The notebook-journals kept by John Everett and his brother William contain several inferences that, by the mid-1830s, Joseph Hague Everett and his younger sons were feeling less confident about the future. Joseph had already gone to considerable expense, first in the education of two elder sons and later a younger son for the clergy and another in the law, and then in establishing each in his profession. Furthermore, though John Everett probably did not complete his tertiary education, in 1833 he spent time at Edinburgh University and later obtained a reference to support an application to Oxford. Nor did Joseph Hague Everett stop there. A few years later, when three of his younger sons left England for Australia, he settled £1,000 on each of them. Undoubtedly, Joseph would have considered his money well spent, as each of these widely-read and classically-educated men earnestly embraced the value-system which came to be identified as ‘Victorian’.

This ‘new morality’ was a reaction against the perceived laxity of the Regency period. Although the ethos originated with influential Dissenting elements in the emerging

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162 Perkin, op. cit., p. 44.
163 Davidoff and Hall, op. cit., pp. 81-83, 106; Perkin, pp. 286-287.
165 Everett Records Guyra, Personal examination of original letter and reference in the possession of the Skipper family.
166 Perkin, op. cit., p. 43. This may have been the accepted sum within upper-gentry families for there are remarkable similarities with the arrangements made by Squire Ralph Sneyd in 1798-1800. Perkin notes that Sneyd gave £1,000 to each of his six younger sons, two of whom entered the Church, two the Army, one the Navy and one the East India Company.
167 Davidoff and Hall, op. cit., pp. 198-216. Ollera Station Records, Diary and Notebook of John Everett, A103: V3053/10. The number of books which the brothers brought with them to Australia testifies to the breadth of their education. Their titles show the brothers’ wide-ranging interests. See Appendix B.
middle classes its appeal to many like-minded Tory-Evangelists and other paternalist thinkers hastened its penetration of the upper and later the lower levels of British society. In the process the middle classes achieved their ever-increasing predominance in the nineteenth century world. The ‘new morality’ which they espoused promoted a high-minded earnestness and attention to the duties of one’s particular station in life. The ‘cult of domesticity’ which it engendered was expressed in the separation of the man’s ‘inner’, domestic, and thus private, life in the home from his ‘outer’, male and therefore public, life in the world. 169 Because of its origins among Dissenting middle-classes businessmen the ‘new morality’ had close ties to the principles of political economy and Benthamite utilitarianism. Nevertheless its attitudes and way of life dovetailed neatly with the beliefs of those in the country gentry who deplored and sought to modify the excesses of the new manufacturing towns in the industrializing north. Through a return to serious religion and the development of a new moral resolve paternalist thinkers hoped to foster benevolence in the governing classes and to bring about a spiritual revival. 170 In 1846 the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine stated the case clearly to its readers. Patriarchal government was defined as ‘care and kindness carried out in all relations of society’. 171

The debate about these ideals reached its height in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, its ideals being disseminated by three widely-read and highly-influential Tory journals; the Quarterly Review, Blackwood’s Edinburgh Journal and Frazer’s Magazine. 172 Each of the ‘big three’ had close associations with the Lake poets, Southey, Coleridge and Wordsworth. Robert Southey had been converted to a highly conservative political viewpoint by the economic crisis of 1810. He was strongly opposed to developments in the new, northern manufacturing towns, believing that government should be both local and privately administered, its morality ensured by its close association with the Established Church. 173 A consistent contributor to the Quarterly Review in the 1820s, Southey saw the Church as central to the formation of a new, or a renewed, society. 174 It is possible that his ideals had a strong influence upon the life and attitudes of Edwin Everett, the youngest and

170 Roberts, op. cit., pp. 43-44, 60.
171 Ibid., pp. 71-72.
172 Ibid., p. 65.
174 Roberts, op. cit., p. 52.
last of the three brothers who founded Ollera. It is clear that each of the brothers was a committed paternalist, and the *Quarterly Review* appears among the many books that John and George brought with them to Australia.¹⁷⁵ However Edwin, who settled permanently on the property, showed in his management-style that he was, on occasion, the most benevolent of the trio. It is clear that he strove to realize Southey’s dream of the ideal patriarch, who would ‘promote the welfare and happiness of those who are in any way dependent on him’.¹⁷⁶ Though evidence for Southey’s influence is circumstantial, there is a direct link between Edwin and the poet. In the early 1860s and after his brothers’ permanent return to England, Edwin was joined at Ollera-Tenterden by his life-long friend and valet-companion, Edward Arnold Hill, who was the poet’s grandson. Edward Hill, who had been a long-serving employee of the Duke of Wellington, was both highly-cultured and well educated, as his meticulously written and exquisitely illustrated account of his voyage to Australia in 1861 makes clear. He lived at Tenterden until his death in 1912 and was buried in Ollera’s graveyard.¹⁷⁷ Ollera’s story and Wellington’s are linked by two other men, each of whom lived the last forty years of their lives at the station and who lie near Hill in its graveyard. Both William Crew, ‘the Old Corporal’, and George Thorpe fought at Waterloo, the latter serving as the Iron Duke’s batman.¹⁷⁸

With the ‘sudden and unexpected’ end of the wars with France, several important elements had combined to cause a downturn in the English economy. The downturn initiated more than three decades of ‘stagflation’ which was characterized by a sequence of brief periods of recovery and equally short, sharp depressions.¹⁷⁹ Initially an inescapable consequence of the return to more normal peacetime conditions, Britain’s economic malaise was prolonged and exacerbated by governmental delays in returning her monetary system to the gold standard. When this was finally accomplished in 1821-22 it brought about the first severe depression of the 1820s.¹⁸⁰ Some important sectors of England’s already ‘over-

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¹⁷⁵ See Appendix A: List of Books…, below.
¹⁷⁷ Ollera Station Records, *op. cit.*, ‘Diary of E.A. Hill, written on board the Commodore Perry…’. A103: V3053/20. For the information about Hill’s relationship to Southey and about his death and burial see the footnote to the Archive’s Summary of the contents of the Ollera Records.
¹⁷⁸ Personal visit to Ollera Cemetery, November, 2004.
¹⁷⁹ Evans, *op. cit.*, p.181-182
manned and over-capitalized' agricultural industry, which remained the biggest single employer of labour until the mid-nineteenth century, were badly affected. Very good seasons in the final years of the war had caused a dramatic fall in cereal prices, a situation which was followed by the disastrously poor harvest of 1816. The return of an estimated 300,000 demobilized ex-servicemen to an already glutted labour market made bad matters worse, as many of the returned men were fit only for the low-skilled work which characterized the south’s proto-industrial economy. The cereal-growing counties in the south-east and south suffered most. Bumper harvests in 1813 and 1815 had caused a rapid fall in grain and wool prices to a level well below their wartime peak. By 1822, a year of sharp depression and very real hardship in the arable south, wheat realized only forty per cent of its value in the peak year of 1813. The returns from sheep were no better. Late that year Cobbett reported that, ‘in a few years’, profits at the no longer thriving sheep-fair at Weyhill, near Biddesden had fallen by seventy-five per cent from the previous norm of £300,000. In 1826 he found that at Weyhill and Appleshaw Fairs prime Dorsetshire ewes, which had brought 55s to 72s. in 1812, and 50s in the better conditions of 1825, sold for 25s in 1826, while prime Southdown lambs brought only 6s-7s.each.

By the early 1820s therefore, most southern landlords were forced to ease the financial pressures on their tenant-farmers who were experiencing great difficulty in meeting the rapidly-rising costs of poor relief. Faced with rates which more than doubled between 1824 and 1834, many smaller farmers and those speculators who had over-invested in the wartime boom years were forced to abandon their leases. Tithes were remitted and hitherto highly-profitable rents, some of which, by 1812, had risen to five times their level in 1790, fell generally by ten to twenty per cent as landlords struggled to retain good tenant-farmers. These men relied on their wheat crops to cover their rents, which had largely been

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182 E.J. Evans, op. cit., p. 181.
185 Cobbett, op.cit., pp. 28;29.
187 Ibid., op. cit., pp. 73-74. In Suffolk in 1824 poor rates already amounted to £124.10. 4½d.
determined by high wartime prices. There were short-lived rises in grain prices in the mid-1820s and again after 1837, but, between 1815 and the mid-1850s, the market for produce in arable agriculture was either static or trending downwards, despite frequent governmental intervention to protect their main power base, the ‘landed interest’. In 1835 cereal prices reached their ‘nadir’, while even the best arable farmers made losses between 1816 and 1821 and again from 1849 to 1852. Even after the mid-1850s when ‘high farming’ improved profitability in agriculture, cereals and wool no longer led the market. The impact of rural recession and stagnation was greatest upon those entrepreneurial landowners in the arable southern counties who had borrowed heavily in the ‘good’ inflationary years to finance expensive ‘improvements’ to their properties on clay soils and in marginal areas such as the Downs where costly enclosure had extended cereal cultivation onto ‘waste’ pastures.

Peace also brought problems for English manufacturers who faced increased competition at home and abroad as European products returned to the market. In the post-war years the textile industry in Wiltshire entered its terminal phase. The industry’s prosperity was greatest in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A period of contraction in the 1730s initiated a long, slow decline which lasted until the early 1800s. In these years the industry was rationalized into larger-scale units to which wealthy clothiers attempted to introduce a number of improved technologies. Although eventually successful, their attempts met with stubborn resistance from their workers who met the threat to their employment with machine-breaking and other traditional forms of protest. Despite both the consequent backwardness in methods of production and some decline in quality as a result of the difficulties imposed by the importation of a necessary raw material in wartime, production boomed after 1802 under the stimulus of governmental demands and the absence of foreign competition. Entrepreneurial manufacturers flourished and many substantial fortunes were made. For example, in 1801 the Clark brothers of Trowbridge began their mill with £500 borrowed from an uncle. By 1815 hard work and shrewd management had

190 Mingay, op. cit., pp. 15-16, 110; Cobbett, op. cit., p. 234.
192 Evans, op. cit., p. 136.
194 Bentley, op. cit., p. 56.
increased their business’ worth to £10,929. However the increased prosperity created by the long wars disguised a long-term and fundamental threat to the southern industry’s survival. Increasingly in these years its financial base was eroded. Funds which had previously been invested in the south’s textiles were either attracted away by the greater returns offered by the boom in agriculture or by the “rage” for canal and road building, or were diverted into the developing ‘manufactories’ in England’s north.

In the difficult post-war years the southern textile industry therefore faced problems on several fronts. In the second half of the eighteenth century England’s textile production was increasingly attracted away from its traditional base in the south-eastern and southern counties. Climatic advantages, the proximity of cheap and abundant sources of power (first water, later coal), transport improvements and the development of a national market combined with a cluster of innovative techniques which favoured increasing mechanization had seen the focus of the textile industry shift to the newly-urbanizing and -industrializing north. Finance for the southern industry became even harder to obtain as southern investors’ funds followed the move to the north. The glutted labour market in the south was a constant problem. From at least the 1760s attempts to introduce new technology to the industry in the south were forcefully resisted by an over-supplied labour market desperately trying to retain traditional work practices. These men were prepared to accept very low wages to perpetuate a relatively low-skilled domestic industry upon whose alternative employment they depended for subsistence. In some respects therefore, the southern textile industry can be seen to have been an early victim of Romain’s interesting ‘hypothesis of the retarding lead’, whose adverse effects would begin to be felt more generally by British industries in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Changes in taste and fashion also played a part in the southern textile industry’s rapid decline as the lighter, ‘easier-care’ cotton materials produced in the north were widely preferred to the south’s fine woollen broadcloths. Sharp declines in demand meant that the production of these expensive fabrics was sharply reduced and that the wages paid to those

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201 VCH, Wiltshire, Vol. IV, pp. 153-160. In the 1760s, William Everett, a forebear of George and John, tried unsuccessfully to introduce a gig-mill to his business in the Wylye valley.
who were fortunate enough to find work in the industry also fell. In the mid-1820s Cobbett reported that like most of the mills in the textile towns, those around Heytesbury which were still operating were reduced to ‘a quarter’ of their previous output.203 The supply of raw materials was also a problem. In the 1820s the Spanish merino yarns which Wessex clothiers blended with local wools to produce their high-quality ‘medley’ fabrics for the domestic and overseas markets became increasingly expensive and scarce.204 The quality of the local fleeces also declined sharply in these years as a result of agricultural improvement to pastures and fodder crops and of changes in sheep breeds to meet the increased market for meat. By the late 1820s the falling wool prices meant that those clothiers who still survived concentrated on the production of coarse, low-quality fabrics, a move which further hastened their industry’s demise.205

The serious problems which afflicted agriculture and the textile industry in the south and west of England in the decades after 1815 produced anxiety and a general feeling of malaise within its governing classes. This is apparent in the severity with which they reacted to the outbreak of the ‘Swing’ protests in late 1830. To the country gentry and their tenant farmers the sequence of rural protests which flashed, east to west, across southern England in the second half of November seemed to signal organized agrarian rebellion. They were mistaken, however. The ‘riots’ were primarily local in their origin and in their focus and traditional and ritualized in their methodology. Their purpose was economic; appeals for significant wage rises accompanied demands for increased security of employment. Their widespread nature and the rapidity with which the disturbances spread reflected the desperate state to which the rural populace had been reduced by capitalistic agricultural practices. The pauperized rural workers employed the only tool they had left, ‘collective bargaining by riot’.206 They protested in their traditional manner; by sending threatening letters to carefully-targeted officials and employers; by destroying agricultural machinery, particularly the despised threshing machines which reduced vital winter employment, and by setting fire

204 Bettey, ‘Rural Life’, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
206 Kent and Townsend, op.cit., p. 5 The term is Hobbsawm’s.
to ricks and outbuildings. Only the scale of the outbreak was new. Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries scarcity and high bread prices caused by bad seasons and poor harvests had seen food riots and other outbreaks of rural protest. Very bad seasons saw overt rural protest sweep through East Anglia in 1816-17, and recur in Wessex in the 1820s. Cobbett reported that ricks were alight near Salisbury in 1822 and again at Burghclere in Hampshire in 1826. When, after heavy rains caused successive harvest failures in 1828 and 1829, another harsh winter began early, the seemingly ‘normal’ and amicably settled protests which began in Kent ignited a conflagration.

With mixed farming as their sole source of employment and cereals as their staple, the chalklands of Wiltshire and Hampshire experienced the ‘Swing’ protests at their most intense. The composition of the ‘mobs’ also made them particularly frightening to those who feared or anticipated an attack. Threats of attack by young, single ‘hotheads’ would have been relatively easy to contain and to suppress because the ‘respectable’ members of the labouring population would neither have been actively involved nor tacitly approving of such action. However, because the ‘Swing’ crowds were made up of men of a different calibre, the threat they posed went deeper and was potentially more dangerous, a fact which cannot have escaped the landed oligarchy and may have caused their draconian reaction. The protesting crowds, which ‘represented a cross-section of its community’ were polite, well-disciplined and remarkably restrained. A feature of the ‘Swing’ crowds was that they were led by and mainly contained mature respectable men. Many were craftsmen or the most-highly skilled labourers who had never before broken the law. This was evident in the degree of local support given at the trial of George Carter from Tangle, a few miles east of Biddesden. However, in spite of the general support he received from his community’s clergyman, this ‘worthy, hard-working man [who was] never in trouble’ was transported to Australia merely for being part of a protesting crowd.

The harshness with which Swing ‘rioters’ were punished shows the depth of the land-owners’ anxiety and concern about the immediate and longer-term future. Considering

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208 Kent and Townsend, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-134.
209 Cobbett, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32, 265.
211 Kent and Townsend, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
212 Ibid, p. 13. Carter was supported, albeit unsuccessfully, by the local landowner, the rector, and church wardens, the overseer of the poor, freeholders and by over 100 parishioners.
the extent of the disorder which surrounded them the Everetts at Biddesden must certainly have felt quite apprehensive, even though they do not seem to have been directly threatened. No doubt the lack of alternative employment in the parish and the family’s ownership of several ‘tied’ cottages in Ludgershall deterred protest in their ‘close’ parish.\textsuperscript{213} However trouble had already come close in 1822, when local and national resentment ran high at the harsh injustice involved in the hanging of a young member of a poaching gang which had shot a gamekeeper on the estate of Thomas Assheton-Smith of South Tidworth and again when looms were attacked at Warminster.\textsuperscript{214} But in 1830 Biddesden was surrounded by outbreaks of disorder and rumour ran wild.\textsuperscript{215} The protest at Tangleys came particularly close as did an arson attack on one of Assheton-Smith’s farmhouses at South Tidworth. Only a little further away, crowds gathered to hear Cobbett speak at Highclere and at Andover.\textsuperscript{216} Again at Andover, factories producing agricultural implements were attacked in the town and machines were broken on farms at nearby Foxcot.\textsuperscript{217} Only a few miles in the other direction threshing machines were destroyed at Vernham’s Dean while, near Hungerford, personal threats were made against an absent but reputedly liberal parliamentarian.\textsuperscript{218} At the height of the disturbances Assheton-Smith, the member for Andover, reported to Wellington that he was finding great difficulty in raising a yeomanry sufficient for the defence of the district.\textsuperscript{219}

However unnecessary hindsight proves them to have been, by the 1830s Joseph Hague Everett probably harboured more directly personal concerns about the future prosperity of his immediate and extended family. As we have seen, the family’s fortunes depended first on the woollen textile industry and later upon country banking. Between 1825-6 and 1831 the family’s involvement in each of these industries came under serious threat. Before 1844, when the government began its long reconstruction of Britain’s financial and credit institutions, the maximum of six partners who owned each private bank in the regional and metropolitan network were fully responsible for the debts incurred by their

\textsuperscript{213} Everett Records Guyra: Letter, John Everett to Arthur Everett, 8\textsuperscript{th} May, 1894, when the proposed sale of ‘all the cottage property in Ludgershall’ is mentioned.

\textsuperscript{214} Hopkins, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 97-102, 110; Cobbett, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 30.

\textsuperscript{215} Kent and Townsend, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 121, for the alarm shown by Mary Russell Mitford.

\textsuperscript{216} Hopkins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 179.

\textsuperscript{217} Kent and Townsend, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 35-36. Hopkins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 187

\textsuperscript{218} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 37, 33.

\textsuperscript{219} Hopkins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 186.
establishment. Given the difficulty the country banks had in holding or swiftly obtaining an adequate supply of cash or gold, recurrent downturns in the local or national economy often resulted in ‘runs’ on a bank or banks. Unless such shortfalls were remedied swiftly, the problem could soon affect other banks in the network. In the decades between the 1780s and 1850 England’s economy and its banking network experienced regular cycles of ‘boom’ and ‘bust’ at intervals of about ten years. The Everetts’ banking network weathered several financial crises. They survived the Bank of England’s suspension of payments in 1797, and the political and labour disruption which brought about the financial crisis of 1810 by which many Wessex clothier-bankers were hard hit in 1811-12, and also that of 1816. However their luck ran out in the crash of December 1825. Despite desperate attempts to save it, Everetts of London joined the many important metropolitan and regional banks which were bankrupted when the South American trade ‘bubble’ by which the government had attempted to bolster a sagging economy burst. As panic spread the contagion, ‘Everetts’ and its twenty correspondent banks were bankrupted. It is difficult to know how severely the Everett family’s finances were affected in the short-term, and indeed which branch of the family was involved in the London catastrophe. Certainly both Joseph’s son and his uncle resumed banking activities until the 1860s at least. Nevertheless, the events of 1825-26 must have generated great anxiety in Joseph Hague Everett.

Although the worst of Swing’s dangers were past, by 1831 the Everett families faced problems on yet another front. With many of its competitors in the failing industry their long-established business in Heytesbury, which was by then reduced to the production of cheap, second-grade cloth, was increasingly unprofitable. On 13th June, 1831 the connection was broken when the Salisbury Journal reported that the firm of Francis and Everett, Heytesbury had declared bankruptcy. Despite a brief respite in 1837, agriculture, whose profits had declined sharply from their wartime peak, presented further problems for Biddesden’s owner. Faced with the low prices which made leases difficult to gain and retain in the cereal-growing southern counties Joseph Everett tried unsuccessfully to sell two of

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220 Pressnell, op. cit., p. 236.
221 Ibid, pp. 269-470, 487.
Biddesden’s farms. It therefore seems unsurprising that, with his younger sons, he would have been considering radical means by which to ensure their social and economic futures. They would have been even more worried by the second half of 1838 when, in the Journal in which he sent the news to his distant brothers, William Everett reported the bad news that two of the estate’s farms ‘were either for sale or to let’.

These important ‘push’ factors in the Everett family’s decision that, over four years, three younger sons should emigrate to New South Wales were matched by at least two convincing ‘pull’ factors. The first ‘pull’ was created by the boom in good-quality wool which, by the mid-1830s, was reaching its height in the distant colony and which was attracting heavy investment and a flood of eager upper-class emigrants from Britain. The second, more particular ‘pull’ lay within the Everetts’ kinship and friendship network(s) and probably centred upon the successful example set by George Wyndham. In 1829 this scion of a wealthy and politically influential Wiltshire family had left the extensive manor of Dinton, near Salisbury, to establish an Australian estate at Dalwood in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales. The longstanding ‘friendship’ ties between the Everett and Wyndham families in Wiltshire provide clear evidence of the brothers’ membership of the influential network of gentry-settlers from Wiltshire and Hampshire which focused on the Hunter Valley and New England and which reached as far the Western Districts of the future Victoria. As Robin Haines has shown, these ‘family and friendship’ networks provided a conduit for the passage of information between established and intending settlers which was perhaps even more influential and decisive than the generally accepted ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors.

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In the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century many young men whose families belonged to the Wiltshire Wyndhams’ network of ‘kin’ and ‘friends’ emigrated to New South Wales, where the strands coalesced about George Wyndham of Dalwood in the Upper Hunter Valley. Three sons of George Wyndham’s deceased sister, Letitia Wyndham Codrington, were included in the group. Charles Codrington arrived in New South Wales in 1849, and was followed a year later by his brother William, while John, the youngest brother immigrated more than two decades later.231 Both Charles and John Codrington became neighbours and close associates of the Everetts in New England. From 1849 until 1860 Charles Codrington held Ben Lomond (later Llangothlin), the ‘run’ which formed Ollera’s north-eastern boundary. John Codrington, the youngest brother, was employed by the Everetts and in the early 1880s became overseer of Stockbridge which, like Tangle, was a major subsidiary station on Ollera.232

Matthew Henry and Charles William Marsh were another pair of brothers who were members of the far-reaching Wyndham network. As prominent ‘gentlemen squatters’ in New England they made major contributions to the character and social tone of the developing district. These sons of the Dean of Salisbury Cathedral were close associates of the Everett family in Wiltshire and in New England, Charles Marsh having been a school-mate of William Everett of Biddesden.233 Upon his arrival in New South Wales in September, 1840, Matthew Henry Marsh took up the leases on two New England ‘runs’. He acquired Salisbury Court near Uralla in 1840 and, by c.1842 he had installed his brother, Charles as manager of Boorolong, the ‘run’ on Ollera-Tenterden’s southern boundary.234 By the later 1840s Charles Marsh became lessee of Guyra, the high-plateau ‘run’ which formed the eastern boundaries

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233 Ollera Station Records, Letter, John to Ann, 8th June, 1843, UNERA, A103: V3052/3; Cane, op.cit., p. 40.
234 Ollera Station Records., Letters of John Everett, 1838-1867, UNERA, A103:V3052/3; V3053/4 ...various dates.
of both Ollera and Boorolong. Little wonder that John Everett felt justified in writing home about his location in ‘the best part of New England’.  

However not all the prospective gentlemen squatters in the Wyndham’s colonial network met with success. Among those upon whom the Everett brothers reported were ‘young Lawrence’ who, in the mid-1850s, preferred to seek unsuccessfully for his fortune among ‘bad company’ on the goldfields rather than learning the ropes as an apprentice squatter on Ollera. They also reported with qualified disapproval of Henry Bouverie, the unreformed young remittance man whose father, they felt, had banished too young a man to the antipodes. Failure to mend his ways had led to the cessation of Bouverie’s payments from home. These young men were but two of the many relatives, friends and ‘friends of friends’ for whom, throughout the century, members of their family in England regularly sought the Everetts’ assistance.

James Mackenzie presents perhaps the clearest example of an individual who showed the extent to which networks in England and Australia intertwined and interacted. Mackenzie came to Ollera in 1856 and was the station’s resident manager from 1858 until his death in 1887. Born into the Hampshire gentry and ‘an old school friend of Edwin Everett’s’, he was related both to Governor FitzRoy, in whose service he emigrated to New South Wales, and to the Mackenzies of Cliffordale, George Wyndham’s neighbours in the Hunter Valley. Mackenzie had two links with the Wyndhams of Dalwood. One was through his brother’s marriage to George Wyndham’s daughter, Weeta. The other was forged by the lengthy colonial pastoral ‘apprenticeship’ he served under George Wyndham at Dalwood. In c.1856, after a brief but unsuccessful hunt for gold at Rocky River, Mackenzie accepted a contract to manage Ollera during John Everett’s proposed two-year absence in England. When ‘rheumatism’ forced the newly-married Everett to abandon his plans to return to Ollera Mackenzie settled permanently at Ollera. With his marriage in the early 1860s to Anna

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237 Ollera Station Records, Letter John to Ann, 17th July, 1841, UNERA, A103: V3052/3  
238 Ibid, A103: V2259, Entry for 1854-55, Store account for Lawrence.  
Maria Clerk, a daughter of E. G. Clerk of Clerkness, the squattage on Tenterden’s (and the plateau’s) western boundary, the Mackenzies added yet another strand to the colonial network, reinforcing it in the next generation through the marriage of a daughter, Alice Ollera (‘Ollie’) Mackenzie to Arthur, John Everett’s second son. 242 Mackenzie’s diligent attention to detail and prudent management, which was conducted in close, albeit distant, consultation with John Everett, permitted Ollera to take full advantage of the prosperous 1860s and 1870s and to survive the severe drought and unfavourable land legislation which characterized the 1880s. His early death in late 1887 at the onset of more than a decade of politico-legal, economic and labour problems for the squatters, served to worsen the station’s situation. 243

From 1839 George Wyndham strengthened the connection when he took up Bukkulla and later several other ‘runs’ beyond the northern boundaries of settlement. Faced with the immediate problem of severe drought and overstocking in the Hunter and with the future needs of a quiver-full of ‘shepherd’ sons, in the early 1840s the Wyndham family trekked north with their flocks via Ollera to the Richmond River on the far north coast. However this ‘run’ was soon relinquished and the Wyndhams returned to the Macintyre River on the tableland’s western edge. Lying a few miles north-west of Ollera-Tenterden, Bukkulla and Nullamana proved to be profitable acquisitions. 244 By the mid-1850s ‘Squire’ Wyndham’s holdings marched with Ollera-Tenterden’s. In the later 1840s he acquired New Valley which, by the early 1850s, had come under Everett control. When, in 1856, Wyndham sold his interest in New Valley to take up Ben Lomond/Llangothlin in Ollera’s immediate north-east, the brothers bought the difficult holding. 245

Although, as we shall see, the relationship with at least one second-generation Wyndham came under strain in the difficult years at the end of the century, the Everett brothers’ life-long friendship with George Wyndham remained close, cordial and highly beneficial. While George Wyndham was by no means the most powerful of the colonial dignitaries to whom the Everetts carried letters of introduction, as the owner of a prosperous, established estate, Wyndham’s support guaranteed the newly-arrived brothers’ acceptance

243 Ibid; Cane, op. cit., p. 87.
244 Wright, op. cit. pp. 1-2, 69; Ollera Station Records, Letter, John to Anne, 13th September, 1840, UNERA, A103;V3052/3.
into the close-knit world of the Hunter River 'gentleman settlers'. Furthermore, Wyndham's
counsel probably determined the direction in which they sought territory in the high country
'beyond the boundaries of location' and provided invaluable first-hand advice on the
establishment of their 'run' and on the recruitment, the capacities and the management of
their colonial and Aboriginal workers. 246 With his aid they began the task of transferring
Old England's time-honoured paternalist management system to their extensive, unspoiled
claim on the frontier of settlement in a 'New' England.

of John Everett, 1838-46, UNE RA , A103;V3053/17; A. Wood, Dawn in the Valley: The Story of Settlement
in the Hunter River Valley to 1833, Sydney, 1972, p.192
John Everett’s Sketch of a Storm-damaged Ship sighted during the Hope’s passage through the Southern Ocean during the brothers’ voyage to Australia in 1838. This was one of only two vessels which were sighted during the four-months’-long non-stop passage.

*Everett Records Guyra*, Loose-leaved sketch interleaved within the Diary of John Everett, 1838; See also, *UNERA*, A103:V3053/16