

## ***Inglebrae* Guest House Wilberforce** **Cathy McHardy April 2022**

Henry Buttsworth arrived as a convict aboard the transport ship *Guildford* in January 1812 and was assigned to Sarah, the youngest daughter of Thomas Rose, whom he married in November 1813. Henry and Sarah married in November 1813 and in 1828 they acquired about 115 acres on the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River at Wilberforce. On this site a steam-powered sandstone grain mill building, timber wharf and two-storey brick dwelling were constructed by the mid 1830s.

Stylistically similar to several other Hawkesbury dwellings of the era including Stannix Park, Ebenezer; Caddie Park, Cattai; Rocky Hall, North Wilberforce, *Inglebrae* was constructed in the colonial vernacular style with a jerkin-head or half-hipped roof with an attic window set into each gable end.

Following the death of Henry Buttsworth in 1853, the property remained in the Buttsworth family until purchased in 1902 by James Hancock of East Kurrajong. In 1913, the site was again up for sale and the new owner was Amos Turnbull. In February 1915, tenders were called for the demolition of the mill buildings, however the wharf and residence remained on the site. It is possible that the name *Inglebrae* was bestowed during the ownership of Amos Turnbull as he had owned another property of the same name in Scone, New South Wales.

By 1919 Thomas H Thompson was living in *Inglebrae*. He advertised for the purchase of a rowing boat about 18 feet in length probably for use in their forthcoming business venture. In 1923 their home became a guest house operated by his wife Ada May Marsden (nee Buttsworth) whom he had married at Ashfield in 1922.

*Inglebrae* was well publicised in Sydney newspapers as the Hawkesbury's latest holiday resort unsurpassed for comfort and cuisine with liberal supply of cream, milk, eggs, fruit, etc. Recreational activities included tennis, boating, riding and driving. During the 1920s and 1930s Hawkesbury guesthouses in the Kurrajong and Comleroy area as well as several riverbank locations were popular holiday destinations for Sydney-siders who journeyed to the district by train.

Perhaps the location failed to attract the expected volume of patronage, as after only two years in operation the guesthouse was leased to a Mrs Greentree and the following year to a Mrs Long. Over the decade 1926 to 1936, the proprietors changed several times including Mr and Mrs Chamberlain who had previously operated a similar facility in Manly as well as Mr and Mrs Sidney Cooper and Mrs Fensmere who had installed an electric water pump to supply a more reliable water supply. Miss May welcomed the final guests in 1940.

The *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* of 13 June 1941 lamented the destruction of the historic Buttsworth home known as *Inglebrae* which stood on the northern bank of Buttsworth Creek for over 100 years pleading that the building should be preserved, "not rolled over in march of progress and lost to the people forever". Sadly, the cause was lost and the colonial residence was but a memory by July that year.