

**THE BUILDERS OF SHOALHAVEN
1840s - 1890s**

VOLUME 1 OF 2: PART 1

**CULTURAL INFLUENCES AND VECTORS
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOMESTIC
ARCHITECTURAL IDEAS 1840s - 1870s**

**A SOCIAL HISTORY AND
CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY**

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The following thesis is submitted as part of the requirements for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Environmental Design of the University of Canberra.

The Builders of Shoalhaven 1840s-1890s: a social history and cultural geography

Roger Stewart Hobbs

2005

ABSTRACT

According to architect Robin Boyd (1952 rev. ed. 1968), 'the Australian country house took its pattern, not directly from the English countryside, but second-hand from the Australian city' in the nineteenth century. This thesis explores the introduction of domestic architectural ideas in the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA) from the 1840s to the 1890s, and concludes that Boyd's premise, including his five principal plan types, applied in general, subject to regional geographical parameters.

The Illawarra and South Coast districts dominated New South Wales dairy farming by the 1860s. The transfer of architectural ideas to the Shoalhaven LGA was facilitated by steam shipping lines from 1855, as the dominant vector, which provided access to the Sydney markets. Architectural development began with a masonry construction boom during the 1860s and 1870s, followed by a timber construction boom in the 1880s and 1890s. In the Ulladulla District development was influenced by local stonemasons and Sydney architects from the 1860s-1870s, as well as regional developments in the Illawarra, which also influenced Kangaroo Valley in the 1870s. The Nowra Area, the administrative and commercial focus of the Shoalhaven District from 1870, was where architectural developments in timber and masonry were greatest, influenced by regional developments, Sydney architects and carpenters and builders of German origin and training. A local architectural grammar and style began to develop in the 1880s and 1890s, assisted by the railway, which arrived at Bomaderry near Nowra in 1893. However, the depression and drought of the 1890s resulted in a hiatus in construction, exacerbated by the First World War 1914-1918, in common with the rest of New South Wales.

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In the 1970s these societies commissioned sketches of historic buildings, to be used in the *Historic Shoalhaven* calendars. These were published for the years 1980 to 1983, and included the work of John Sharman as well as a small number of sketches by Eric Thomson. These sketches have been critical in documenting many buildings which underwent detail changes in subsequent years.

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INTRODUCTION

Subject

The Builders of Shoalhaven 1840s-1890s: a social history and cultural geography

The most important task for European settlers or colonially born Australians during the nineteenth century was building or finding a place to live. As architect Robin Boyd (1952) pointed out in *Australia's Home*, a population of just over eight million had built nearly two million houses by the middle of the twentieth century¹. Houses were significant components in the cultural landscapes of Australia, documenting the introduction and evolution of domestic architectural ideas in response to social, cultural and geographical parameters.

In New South Wales during the nineteenth century the introduction of domestic architectural ideas, and the development of designs for houses and dwellings, were dependent on landowners, the development of towns and villages and the movement of migrant groups, builders and tradesmen. Pattern books were potentially important sources of ideas, with architects increasingly influential as the century progressed. The development of domestic architectural ideas was also driven by, and dependent on, processes such as the evolution of traditional building forms and construction and the growth of settlements and rural economies based primarily on agriculture and pastoralism. The introduction of architectural ideas was promoted by new road networks, shipping lines and railways.

However, in most rural areas of New South Wales there is little surviving evidence or information about local building industries during the nineteenth century. Whilst we may know the name of the owner or designer of surviving houses and villas of architectural significance, the names of the builders and other tradesmen are generally unknown. The reference to 'builders' in the title of this thesis therefore encapsulates all those involved in the building industry - architects, owners, tradesmen and contractors - who contributed to the introduction of architectural ideas and the development of domestic architecture and vernacular housing in the Shoalhaven Local Government Area.

The period from the 1840s to the 1890s was chosen for the following reasons:

- the transportation of convicts to New South Wales had ceased by the end of the 1840s;
- the period from the 1840s-1890s featured rapid economic development and population growth in all sectors;
- the arrival of the railway in 1893 at Bomaderry, across the Shoalhaven River from Nowra, ended the relative isolation of the Shoalhaven District from Sydney; and
- the financial disaster of the 1890s and the droughts of the 1890s and early 1900s caused a hiatus in development across New South Wales.

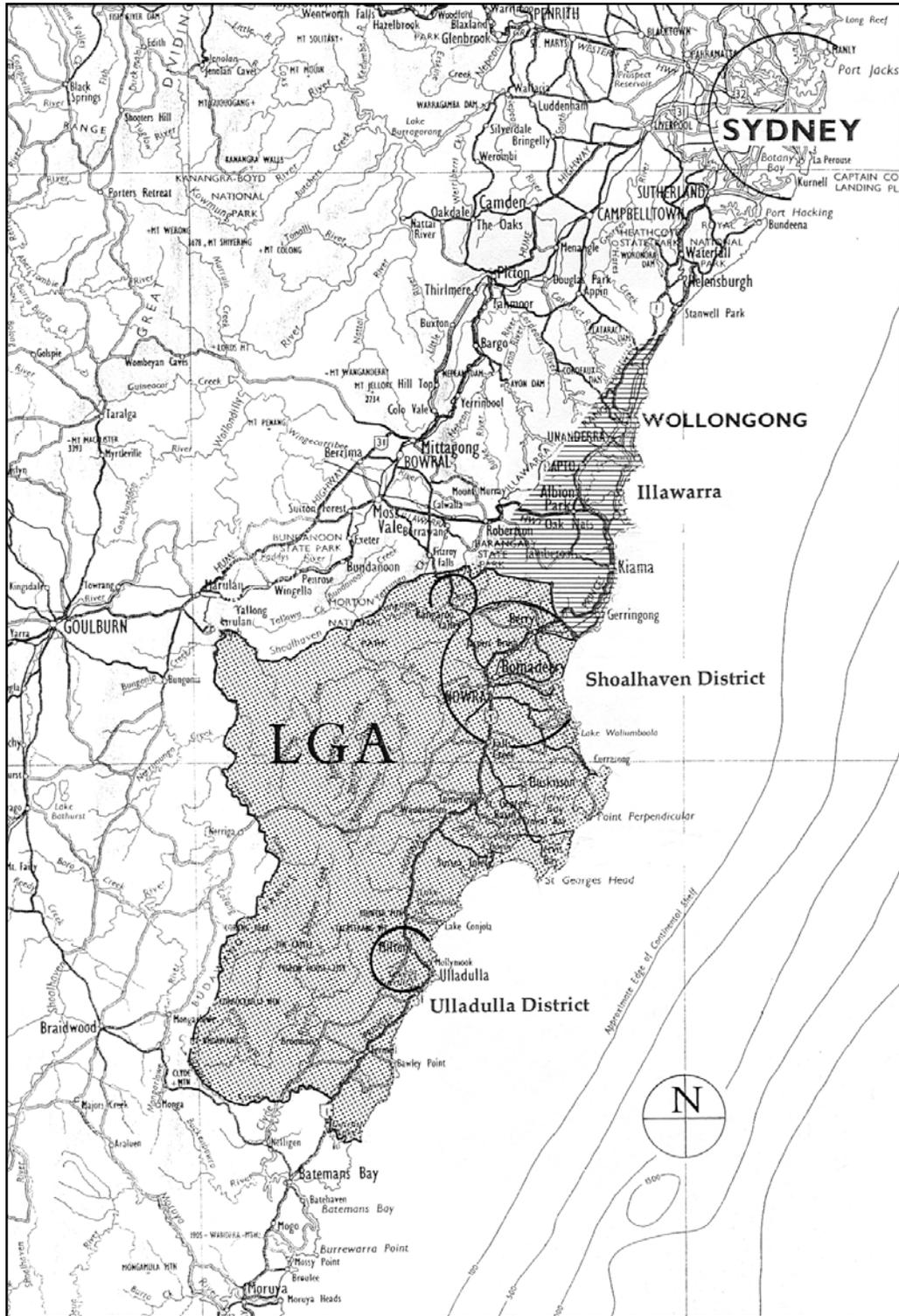
Background

The use of particular housing types and architectural styles in the expanding rural and urban areas of New South Wales during the nineteenth century was a function of geographical, social and cultural parameters. Regional

variations stemmed from differences in the availability of materials, varying climatic regimes, the relative wealth of landowners, the strength of local economies and the cultural and social preferences of landowners and particular cultural groups. Dominant factors in the introduction, and acceptance, of new architectural ideas were potentially the distance from Sydney as the focus of architectural fashion; the type of land use and tenure; and the relative development of towns and villages. The Shoalhaven, Kangaroo Valley and Ulladulla districts in the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA), only a short sailing time away from Sydney, were isolated in an almost 'end of the line' geographical location in the nineteenth century, with little or no access to Sydney or to the hinterland by road.

The City of Shoalhaven (Shoalhaven LGA) comprising the Shoalhaven, Kangaroo Valley and Ulladulla districts, is part of a coastal corridor between Kiama and Bateman's Bay, within the Illawarra and South Coast districts. This corridor is defined to the west by the coastal expression of the Great Dividing Range. The sedimentary geological sequences of the Sydney Basin, that is deep sandstone deposits including extensive coal measures and shales, are reflected in the Illawarra Range and extend south towards Pigeon House Mountain, at the southern end of the Shoalhaven LGA. Weathering of the sandstones in the Illawarra and South Coast districts has in general produced poor soils, although mitigated in places by riverine and estuarine deposits. In contrast, a 'monzonite' intrusion (an acid plutonic rock) at Ulladulla weathered to produce exceptionally fertile soils similar to those in the Kiama district in the Illawarra².

Each district in the Illawarra and South Coast districts developed its own patterns of settlement during the nineteenth century, based on the degree of



Source: R Hobbs 2004

Shoalhaven Local Government
Area

isolation, natural resources and land tenure. The urban centres which developed were serviced almost entirely by sea from Sydney until the 1890s and early 1900s. Road networks were poorly developed until the introduction of the motor vehicle in the 1920s, with railways improving contact with Sydney in the 1890s. Ulladulla would remain reliant on sea transport until the 1920s, since the South Coast railway terminated at Bomaderry near Nowra.

The *Shoalhaven City Council Heritage Study* (Freeman 1995-1997) suggested that during the nineteenth century the development of domestic architecture in the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA) reflected the general pattern found elsewhere in the rural areas of New South Wales, including the use of materials. More specifically:

- early to mid-nineteenth century dwelling types were based on the one-room deep, primitive plan, replaced by the four-roomed cottage from the 1850s;
- the rapid erection of large rural residences from the 1860s was an indicator of the social and political maturity of rural communities;
- regional influences had impacted on the development, design and construction of farmhouses and rural residences. These influences potentially included the cultural backgrounds of landowners and (English, Scottish and Irish) and migrant groups (German); and
- regional development was in response to rapid expansion of dairy farming and increased immigration to New South Wales in the 1850s.

In addition, the transfer of ideas was both stimulated and constrained by:

- land tenure and agricultural potential; and
- the growth of private and government towns and villages, coupled with increasing commerce, local government and public works from the 1860s.

Domestic architectural characteristics were demonstrated by Roger Hobbs in the *Shoalhaven City Council Heritage Study* (Freeman 1995-1997). Vernacular housing forms included slab timber cottages, weatherboard four-roomed cottages and gabled Edwardian cottages of the early 1900s. However, it was not possible to identify specific traits in the development of domestic architecture or vernacular housing types in the Shoalhaven LGA during the nineteenth century, which might stem from the introduction of new ideas or the conscious modification of colonial practice. This was a consequence of the limited funding and thematic nature of heritage studies, which do not allow the dynamics of settlement and its impact on the development of a building industry or the introduction of architectural ideas to be fully elaborated in context with social, cultural and geographical parameters. Rather, buildings are related to the thematic history with little or no discussion of the dynamics of the building industry. The concept for this thesis stemmed from the author's perception of the need to understand the dynamics of the development of the building industry or industries in the Shoalhaven LGA during the nineteenth century. An overriding factor was also the degree to which local historical societies had developed an understanding of their own district to the exclusion of others, despite the obvious connections. Such a regional study would allow the historical relationships and architectural differences and similarities between the Shoalhaven, Kangaroo Valley and Ulladulla districts to be expressed in an integrated manner as well as individually.

Objectives

In view of the foregoing discussion, the objectives of the thesis are to:

- explore the social history and cultural geography of the Shoalhaven LGA;
- identify vectors which facilitated the introduction of architectural ideas;
- understand the development of the building industry and the relative roles of architects, carpenter-builders and mason-builders; and
- celebrate the role of the house in the introduction and evolution of domestic architectural ideas in the Shoalhaven LGA, using houses and architectural styles as markers in the cultural landscape.

The term 'vector' has been adopted to describe mechanisms, such as shipping lines and railways, which, promoted economic and population growth, and potentially the introduction of new domestic architectural ideas.

Methodology

The general, architectural model against which domestic architectural developments in the Shoalhaven LGA have been compared was set out by architect Robin Boyd in *Australia's Home* (1952 rev. ed. 1968). Boyd stated that during the nineteenth century:

1. Through all the subsequent minor variations of plan and major variations of style, following the adoption of the English rural

cottage, the Australian urban house remained, essentially, in the European sense, a country house;

2. The Australian country house took its pattern, not directly from the English countryside, but second-hand from the Australian city; and
3. The four-roomed cottage or bungalow would continue in use longer in rural districts, [like its predecessor the one-room deep, primitive-plan dwelling]³.

Premises 2 to 3 are explored in this thesis in demonstrating whether the introduction and evolution of housing types and use of architectural styles in the Shoalhaven LGA followed the general pattern in New South Wales from the 1840s-1890s. Premises 2 and 3 comprise the major part of the discussion, since it is not the purpose of this thesis to investigate the architectural development of dwellings and residences under premise 1, rather to consider the dissemination of those ideas. Boyd identified five principal plan types: the primitive plan (one-room deep); the bungalow (referred to as the four-roomed cottage); the asymmetrical front of the 1850s and later; the L-shaped plan, which appeared in the 1870s; and the triple-front of the 1890s. The term 'primitive' could be considered perjorative, but is retained for continuity of terminology.

Architectural styles are identified using *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture* (Apperley, Irving and Reynolds 1989), now widely accepted as the authoritative guide. Apperley et al (1989) described the period c. 1800 to c. 1840 as 'Old Colonial' and the period c. 1840 to c. 1890, the period covered by this thesis, as 'Victorian'. However, this differentiation is somewhat artificial, relating more to historical events, such as Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), than to distinct changes in architectural style in

Australia's rural areas. However, in order to be consistent, the broad definition of architectural styles employed by Apperley et al (1989), such as Georgian, Regency, Italianate, Tudor, Rustic Gothic, Carpenter Gothic and Queen Anne, have been used.

The majority of houses and dwellings erected during the nineteenth century in New South Wales, outside Sydney, were in timber, with few early examples surviving in either the inland pastoral districts or the coastal districts. In contrast, masonry houses, and other masonry buildings, such as manses, rectories, hotels and commercial buildings, have generally survived or were considered important enough to record in paintings, etchings or photographs from the 1850s. Consequently, this group of structures, many designed by master builders, amateur architects or Sydney architects, potentially includes evidence of the introduction of new architectural ideas and their impact on vernacular housing forms and local architectural ideas.

Urban dwellings, farmhouses, rural residences and villas, and other types of houses, such as manses, rectories, and secular, domestic scale commercial buildings such as hotels and inns, comprise the largest part of the surviving nineteenth century masonry building stock in the Shoalhaven LGA. These masonry building types, weatherboard cottages and notable, two-storey weatherboard houses, are used to illustrate the introduction of architectural ideas and the evolution of vernacular housing forms.

Where particular houses have been researched in some detail and are known by name, they are identified as, for example, 'Numba House', to differentiate between a dwelling and its contextual property, where the same name was used. Houses are discussed with respect to Boyd's premises and principal

plan types, and architectural developments in New South Wales. Individual houses are illustrated with isometric sketches, although service blocks may be omitted. A summary, comparative analysis, including planning and architectural styles, is included in the conclusions at Chapter 13.

The *Shoalhaven City Council Heritage Study* (1995-1997) comprised three components; a thematic history, an inventory of places of historic, aesthetic, scientific and social significance and a conservation policy. The thematic history and inventory provided a starting point for research into the architectural and social history of the Shoalhaven LGA, as well as its cultural geography. To construct a literary model for the thesis the research program required:

1. identification of the geographical framework, based on the historical geography and patterns of settlement in New South Wales;
2. development of a comparative architectural framework;
3. identification of architects, builders and tradesmen potentially active in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, Ulladulla and Kangaroo Valley districts; and
4. records of key properties, houses and dwellings in the Illawarra and in the Shoalhaven, Ulladulla and Kangaroo Valley districts.

Components 1-4 are discussed in detail in the remainder of the introduction as the basis of the literary model. Research outcomes for components 3 and 4 were developed into a community resource and provided as attached appendices for further elaboration through community involvement. This facilitated analysis and the development of an appropriate literary model.

Historical Geography and Patterns of Settlement

Authors such as Norton (1989)⁴ and Anderson and Gale (1992)⁵ have dealt effectively with the broad concepts of cultural landscapes and cultural geography as background to this thesis.

The broad social, industrial and geographical issues affecting development in New South Wales during the Victorian period (1837-1901) included the convict based nature of colonial society until the 1840s and the social and industrial revolutions in Britain. In *The Georgian Triumph 1700-1830*, Reed (1983) explores the impact of enclosure on rural populations, the visual impact of new agricultural and architectural practices and the construction of canals and railways, which, in conjunction with the growth of industrial centres, would secularise the face of Britain. In *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848* (1962 reprinted 1999) and *The Age of Capital 1848-1875* (1975 reprinted 1989), Hobsawm writes authoritatively about the impact of the social and industrial revolutions in Europe, and demonstrates the industrial dominance of Britain and the re-instatement of the political *status-quo* in Europe, which led to European agricultural workers moving to New South Wales from the 1840s, swelling the numbers of migrants from England, Scotland and Ireland.

Hughes (2003), in *The Fatal Shore*, discusses the history of the transportation of convicts to Australia from 1787-1868. In New South Wales this story was directly linked with European settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788 and colonial administration. According to Linsky (1972), colonial administration, after the European 'primate-city' model, centralised administration and focussed transport and communication in order to control both settlement and society⁶.

In exploring the role of Australia's working horses and bullocks, Kennedy (1992) discusses the 'primate-city' status of Sydney and the pattern of transport which had evolved by 1830, and which remained in place until the 1860s, when railways and steamships began to cause major changes. Land transport operated in three overlapping zones: the core was the urban area of Sydney; the intermediate zone extended some 50-60 kilometres, and included the most intensive agricultural areas; and the third zone extended over 150 kilometres into the interior. Kennedy argues that the ability of the system to cope with the rapid growth of the colony was a vital element in the colony's ability to maintain the thrust of pastoralism⁷. The work of Bach (1976)⁸ and Broeze (1993)⁹ is important in detailing Australia's maritime history and its critical importance, not only in immigration and trade within the British Empire, but in linking centres of settlement along Australia's coastlines in the nineteenth century. Broeze refers to colonial Australia as an 'archipelago', with islands of settlement separated by relatively uninhabited land.

In his authoritative work, *The Squatting Age in Australia 1835-1847*, Roberts (1935 reprinted 1975) illustrates the land tenure of the pastoral districts of New South Wales, following expansion beyond the boundaries of the Nineteen Counties, as well as the Nineteen Counties. Proclaimed in 1829, the Nineteen Counties were, according to Roberts, the legal basis for settlement until 1835. Roberts shows that in the Illawarra and South Coast Districts, the best agricultural land was granted by 1835. The land tenure system, initially based on land grants, progressed through squatting leases in the 1830s to the Free Selection Act in 1861, and the 1894 Amendment, which allowed selectors to acquire Conditional Purchases for the purpose of erecting homesteads.

Colonial self-government was considered and implemented in New South Wales coincident with the discovery of gold in 1851. Local government followed under the Municipalities Acts of 1858 and 1867. The context for settlement in Australia, in particular land tenure and colonial government, has been exhaustively documented by many authors. Crowley (1974 reprinted 1980) co-authored and edited *A New History of Australia*, which clearly sets out the growth of pastoralism and land tenure systems in their political context in each colony, building on Roberts (1935 reprinted 1975). In *Demographic Change in South East NSW from 1861-1991* Birtles (1990) details population changes after the 1861 Land Act. Birtles notes the impact of the 'Nineteen Counties' from 1829, as the settled districts, partitioned into Counties and parishes after the British model, the survey and gazettal of government towns, such as Goulburn, by the 1830s, village reserves within each Parish and the establishment of a colonial economic base and administrative framework by the late 1830s (Wollongong, Kiama and Ulladulla were established by the 1830s). In particular Birtles notes the growth of ports in the coastal districts of New South Wales, including Nelligen, Moruya and Merimbula in the 1860s.

In *An Historical Geography of NSW to 1901*, Jeans (1972) clearly articulates the historical geography of New South Wales set out above, as well as the importance of German and Chinese migrants to the rural community from the 1850s, following the gold rushes. Jeans also defines the historical context of the Shoalhaven LGA in terms of the 'Dairy Revolution [industrialisation]', which began in the 1880s in the Illawarra, and shows how the number of South Coast dairy farmers increased rapidly in the 1850s and 1860s. Of particular relevance to this thesis is *Practical Dairying for Australia* (Dowling 1893), which sets out the history of dairy farming in New South Wales in the

context of the size of holdings and the state of the industry. Dowling clearly identifies the Illawarra and South Coast districts as the dominant dairy farming region in New South Wales by the 1860s, and provides critical information about the industry and its farms and farmers.

The Illawarra and South Coast districts were used for intensive agriculture and cattle, and to a lesser extent sheep, before the growth of dairy farming in the 1850s. The pastoral districts of New South Wales have been the subject of regional studies, which, apart from differences in the scale and intensity of land use, comprise a valuable, comparative resource. The Illawarra and South Coast districts have been studied to a lesser degree as pastoral landscapes or for their historical geography. The degree to which particular migrant and cultural groups impacted on the historical geography of New South Wales has been studied to some degree and has also been dealt with separately in historical terms.

Regional Studies

In *The Homestead: A Riverina Anthology*, Freeman (1982) discusses the development of the cultural landscapes of the Riverina district. Freeman documents the development of homesteads in the context of squatting until 1860, followed by aspects of homestead and community life and the architectural and material influences potentially affecting homestead design. Each of the selected homesteads is then discussed in the context of its own district within the Riverina. Freeman, in analysing homesteads and their associated complex of buildings, including woolshed and shearers quarters, demonstrates the importance of social history and cultural geography in understanding the evolution of traditional building forms and the

introduction of architectural ideas. In *Yancannia Creek*, Shaw (1987) presents the social history of the Yancannia Creek district of New South Wales and to a lesser extent its cultural geography, in documenting her family history. Shaw's study of Yancannia Creek, in the Western Pastoral Districts of New South Wales, is one of the few studies dealing with pastoralism at a regional level and complements Freeman's authoritative study.

Roger Hobbs (in Freeman 1997) has documented dairy farming properties in the Ulladulla and Kangaroo Valley districts in Stage 1 of *The Shoalhaven Dairy Industry*. In this study, Hobbs links the Shoalhaven LGA dairy farming industry to dairy farming in the Illawarra, the industrialisation which began in the 1880s at Kiama and the importance of the South Coast Railway, which enabled the production of milk for Sydney, from 1893, in the Shoalhaven District. The thematic history in the *City of Wollongong Heritage Study*, (McDonald McPhee 1991), provides an appropriate geographical context for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven districts. Although farmhouses and residences are not recorded in architectural detail in Stage 1 of *The Shoalhaven Dairy Industry*, the site plans and historical information enable comparison with examples in the Illawarra. In addition, the study shows how the development of the region was reflected in the historical geography of New South Wales and the thematic history of the *Shoalhaven City Council Heritage Study* (1995-1997).

The Book of Shoalhaven, as it was and as it is, published in connection with the 'Back to Shoalhaven Week', in Nowra in 1926, includes economic, social, historic and cultural information relevant to an understanding of the social history and cultural geography of the Shoalhaven District.

Migrant and Cultural Groups

In *Early Illawarra: people, houses, life* Henderson and Henderson (1983) analyse the population of the Illawarra Police District, including the Shoalhaven District north of the Shoalhaven River, to 1841. Their discussion of population associated with early land grants is critical in understanding the strength of particular cultural groups, in particular the Scottish and Irish (Celtic) communities and their influence on early development in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven districts. Broeze (1993), in *Mr Brooks and the Australia Trade*, shows that some 85% of the migrants to New South Wales in the 1850s were of Celtic origin. Authors such as Campbell (1990), in *Irish-Australian Studies*, have shown how the social structure of rural Irish communities was re-established in some areas of New South Wales, in the first half of the nineteenth century, through kinship [and religion]. This pattern was reflected less in the distribution and activities of Scottish settlers.

In 1838 William McArthur brought six wine-growers from the Duchy of Nassau, Hessen. Perhaps Germany's most celebrated wine district, the Duchy included the 'Rheingau' area on the north bank of the River Rhine. Subsequent arrivals in Australia came for religious, political or economic reasons, cultural traditions often being displayed in the arrangement of their settlements and in the construction of their buildings.

The first German, Lutheran migrants arrived in South Australia in 1838, after their rejection of the Prussian State's religious enforcement. Some 700 Lutherans moved for religious reasons, but increasingly in the 1840s and 1850s rural poverty, crop failure and industrial unemployment encouraged greater numbers to leave. In 1850, the first German settlement was

established in Victoria, near Melbourne, by William Westgarth. Regional studies of German settlement at Hahndorf, South Australia, by Young (1977, 1986)¹⁰ and at Westgarthtown, Victoria, by the Heritage Council of Victoria (1998)¹¹ are therefore particularly relevant to this thesis.

As early as 1839, Wilhelm Kirchner, born in Frankfurt, near the Rheingau area, came to Armidale in New South Wales. By 1848 Kirchner had published *Australien und seine Vortheile fur Auswanderung* in Germany and had begun to arrange emigration through the Hamburg shipping firm of J. C. Goddefroy and Sons, his agents in Hamburg. Kirchner's first migrants went to the Hunter Valley. Wilhelm Kirchner was appointed Consul in 1851 for both Prussia (Confederation of German States) and the City of Hamburg, and was naturalised in 1852. From 1848, professional immigrants had begun to leave for political reasons, while the gradual unification of the country under Prussian rule and the Industrial Revolution led to increasing migration in the second half of the century. By 1862 the Austro-Hungarian Empire had also opened a consulate in Sydney, with Honorary Consuls appointed in the other capitals¹².

Two authors, Ferry (1999) in *Colonial Armidale* and Hargraves (2003) in *Inducements and Agents: German, North European and Scandinavian Recruitment to Tasmania, 1855-1887*, have demonstrated the success of Kirchner in promoting German migrants in the 1850s and 1860s in south-east Australia. However, neither comes to terms with the background against which migration took place or why particular migrants chose to leave. These and other authors enable the mechanisms and processes influencing German migration to be understood, although there is no mention of the German community in the Shoalhaven District or of the Illawarra.

Comparative Architectural Framework

Rather than being a copy of provincial British society, Australian colonial society was increasingly founded on its own institutions as the nineteenth century progressed, with the adaptation of specific European cultural predispositions, including architecture and cultural traits.

Architectural ideas can be transferred directly or by slow diffusion, the latter resulting in a lag between the first appearance in fashionable society and later appearances in more remote communities. In this respect it is necessary to look at a hierarchy of comparative information, which relates to architectural development in Britain, New South Wales and Sydney. The assumption underlying the research is that architectural styles and vernacular forms would reflect practice in areas not dedicated to dairy farming, such as the pastoral [wool] industry, given the conformist nature of Victorian society in New South Wales, including vernacular forms and construction generally. It is of interest to note that in the twentieth century, dairy farmers in the Shoalhaven LGA referred to their places of residence as 'farmhouses'. However, in the nineteenth century, large farmhouses and rural residences were referred to generically as 'homesteads' in the local and regional press of the day and in the *Town and Country Journal*, first published in 1870.

Architectural History

Britain and Ireland

British (English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh) architectural history has been the subject of considerable study in Europe and has also been dealt with at some length by Australian architectural historians. In order to understand the

Georgian style employed in colonial New South Wales it is necessary to understand its context in Georgian Britain during the early years of settlement to 1830. The dominance of Celtic migrants in the Illawarra and South Coast districts also suggested that traditional Scottish and Irish housing should be explored to understand other cultural traits which might emerge.

Authors such as Brunskill (1971, 1981 and 1997)¹³ have documented the vernacular architecture of Britain and illustrated the development of architectural standards and traditional housing forms, including the double-pile house. Specific references consulted, amongst many others, included: *A Bibliography on Vernacular Architecture* (de Zouche Hall 1972); *(Classic Irish Houses of the Middle Size* (Craig 1976); *Buildings of Ireland* (Rowan 1979); *British and Irish Architectural History: a bibliography and guide* (Kamen 1981); *Built in Britain* (Darley 1983); *A Guide to the Georgian Buildings of Britain and Ireland* (Cruickshank 1985); *Houses and History* (Barley 1986); and *The Scottish Home* (edit Carruthers c.1996).

Australia

In 1848, Joseph Fowles published *Sydney in 1848*, a pictorial album of the flourishing 'Metropolis of Australia'. Forty copper engravings were made of the 'principal streets, public buildings, churches and chapels etc'. Reprinted in 1878 and then in 1962, the book showed a Sydney that has almost disappeared¹⁴. Although the streets survive, few of the buildings remain.

The dilemma facing architectural historians is that not all buildings, and even fewer original design drawings or contracts, have survived. The State Library of New South Wales holds the major research collections in that state, which include letters, notebooks, architectural drawings, artworks and photographs.

It is therefore not surprising that there is a large degree of convergence by architectural historians, who draw on the same archival sources as well as the work of previous authors. Architectural histories serve two purposes: to provide a record of buildings over time (and the losses) and to develop dialogue on the origins and use of different architectural styles and building types, as well as the societies that engendered them. Authors whose work set new standards, and successfully added to the cultural *milieu*, are discussed below.

In 1952, architect Robin Boyd's book, *Australia's Home*, provided a synopsis of domestic urban architecture in Australia, one which is still relevant. Boyd's successors have produced complementary books, such as *Architecture in Australia* (Freeland 1968), *Victorian Heritage: Ornamental Cast Iron in Architecture* (Robertson 1974) and *The History and Design of the Australian House* (Irving et al 1985). John Archer (1987), in *Building a Nation*, illustrated the broad pattern of nineteenth century housing development and the evolution and introduction of vernacular ideas across Australia. Studies specific to New South Wales include *The Architecture of Victorian Sydney* (Herman 1956), *The Architectural Character of Glebe* (Smith and Smith 1973), *Early Colonial Houses of NSW* (Roxburgh 1978), *Gothick Taste in the Colony of NSW* (Kerr and Broadbent 1980), *The Homestead: A Riverina Anthology* (Freeman 1982), *Carpenter Decoration on small Victorian houses* (Blackmore 1983) and *The Australian Colonial House: architecture and society in NSW 1788-1842* (Broadbent 1997).

Kerr and Broadbent (1980), Freeman (1982), Irving et al (1985) and Broadbent (1997) are considered particularly relevant to this thesis for their discussion of the influence of pattern books during the nineteenth century. Books

particularly noted included *An Encyclopedia of Cottage, farm and Villa Architecture* (Loudon 1833 and 1844) and *A Catalogue of Modern Books of Architecture* (Taylor c. 1800), which held classical works by British, Italian and French architects, as well as others by successful British architects, and pattern books by less well known architects such as *Sketches for Country Houses, Villas and Rural Dwellings* (Plaw 1800). Many of these texts were available in Sydney, and Taylor's 'Architectural Library' also held books for carpenters, bricklayers and workmen in general. In America, *Villas and Cottages* (Vaux 1864) and *The Architecture of Country Houses* (Downing 1850) built on Loudon's books and influenced the spread of ideas based on the domestic Gothic styles of architecture. Articles in the *Town and Country Journal* suggest that by the 1870s, American pattern books, such as *The Village Builder* (Bicknell c. 1870), were also available in Australia and potentially influenced the prevailing architectural ideas by the promotion of both Bicknell's and Loudon's designs. *Mr Loudon's England* (Gloag 1970), published in England, is directly relevant to our understanding of the success of Loudon's books in the nineteenth century.

Broadbent (1997) set new standards in our understanding of colonial society and the role and development of the house in urban and rural New South Wales to the 1840s. Freeman (1982) also set new standards in our understanding of the role and evolution of homesteads in Australia's pastoral districts in the second half of the nineteenth century. The majority of large houses associated with rural properties in the Shoalhaven LGA were erected in the 1860s and 1870s, and were often rural villas as much as they were homesteads, erected for their social values. In this respect the evolution of homestead design presented by Freeman (1982) is clearly relevant to this

thesis, as is the work of Broadbent (1980, 1997) in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

In *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Apperley, Irving and Reynolds (1989) establish a broad framework for the identification of architectural styles from 1788 to the present. This work is now widely accepted as a guide to architectural styles in Australia, in particular New South Wales.

Vernacular Building Concepts

The term 'vernacular' implies common usage in the study of language. Common usage is also a characteristic of traditional housing and construction that it is related to the social and economic needs of a community. The *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, edited by Oliver (1997), identifies gabled, slab timber forms, wattle and daub and the traditional stud-framed weatherboard house in Queensland, with its expressed stud-frames, as examples of vernacular construction in Australia. The *Encyclopedia* also identifies a number of approaches to the study of vernacular architecture. Only the geographical approach, which considers the distribution of vernacular housing types, is considered relevant to this thesis¹⁵.

In the *Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture*, Brunskill (1971) documents the broad patterns of vernacular housing and construction in Britain based on regional geography and geology. For the purpose of his study Brunskill assumed that builders made attempts to create buildings which were pleasant to look at: that is examples of 'architecture' as opposed to just building. Historically therefore, 'architecture' will have been designed

by an architect or someone trained as a mason or surveyor to follow national or even international standards. Brunskill considered that the real interpretation of 'vernacular' came from structures in which the function of buildings was the dominant factor and in which tradition was the guiding factor in construction. However, in provincial areas 'architecture' could retain vernacular components in terms of the use of local materials [and construction], while over time architectural features could become part of vernacular idiom, resulting in an architectural/vernacular continuum¹⁶.

Mercer (1975), in *English Vernacular Houses*, provides a complementary perspective of vernacular housing in Britain from the late eighteenth century, and concluded that vernacular houses belonged to a type which was common in a given area at a given time. The identification of vernacular housing types, in Mercer's view, was very much a question of relative numbers¹⁷.

It was anticipated that Brunskill's and Mercer's complementary axioms would relate to most areas of New South Wales during the nineteenth century. Mercer's axiom is difficult to apply where few examples have survived, while the question of how large an 'area' should be requires careful consideration. The evolution of vernacular housing forms is an important aspect of Brunskill's architectural/vernacular continuum. New domestic architectural ideas did not influence the evolution of vernacular housing forms in New South Wales quickly during the nineteenth century. This was because the accepted housing forms and construction techniques continued to meet the needs of most people in what was an essentially rural society. Although slab construction was used throughout the nineteenth century, stud-framed weatherboard construction and attributes of the Georgian style increasingly became components of vernacular housing forms. This was a function of the

social expectations of communities, resulting in the addition of architectural features to the existing repertoire of construction techniques and cultural standards. In a paper first published in 1983 architectural historian Kenneth Frampton outlined a theory of 'Critical Regionalism', which is considered relevant to this evolutionary process. In his theory, Frampton suggested that ' a regional strategy of resistance [to new ideas-on the part of the local community, designers and builders] could mediate the impact of universal civilisation [fashionable architectural ideas]with elements derived indirectly from the peculiarities [vernacular forms] of a particular place^{18'}. Frampton's 'regional strategy of resistance' can be equated with the conservative nature of many rural communities, adding to our understanding of Brunskill's architectural/vernacular continuum.

While Sydney was the focus of colonial society and architectural fashions, the majority of houses and other small secular buildings erected during the nineteenth century in the outlying districts of New South Wales were vernacular in their form and execution. From 1788, traditional British building techniques and structural forms adopted by the growing colony became widespread in their use. Many authors, such as Brunskill (1971, 1981 and 1997)¹⁹, have discussed the vernacular buildings of Britain and their construction and provided valuable insights into regional patterns and the skills of migrant masons and carpenters and colonial building techniques.

In *The Open Air Museum: the cultural landscape of New South Wales*, Jeans and Spearrit (1980) illustrate the impact of available materials on construction techniques and vernacular forms by 1901. The walls of buildings were dominated by timber construction, with lesser areas of [rubble-]stone, brick and corrugated galvanised iron. Jeans and Spearrit conclude that the

Illawarra and South Coast districts were dominated by houses with timber walls [and therefore construction].

Vernacular slab cottages and bush huts in the Illawarra and South Coast districts were described in *An Emigrant Mechanic* (Harris 1847) and painted by artists such as von Guerard (1863)²⁰. These cottages were typically one room deep, of gabled form, with a separate timber chimney at one end, and met both Brunskill's and Mercer's axioms. Many featured simple skillion verandahs at the front. The *Illawarra Regional Heritage Study Review* (Perumal Murphy Wu 1993-1994) and the *Shoalhaven City Heritage Study* (Freeman 1995-1997) suggest that vernacular construction and vernacular housing forms during the nineteenth century, in the context of Brunskill and Mercer's axioms included slab, stud-framed weatherboard and rubble-stone construction and the one-room deep cottage on the primitive plan and four-roomed cottages, generally with separate service wings. Roofs were either gabled or hipped (in the Georgian manner) and skillion verandahs were a common feature.

German migrants from the Rhine Valley played an important role in both the agricultural and building industries in the Shoalhaven LGA. Regional studies of German settlement at Hahndorf, South Australia, by Young (1977, 1986)²¹ and at Westgarthtown, Victoria, by the Heritage Council of Victoria (1998)²² are therefore particularly relevant to this thesis for their documentation of traditional German building techniques, including *fachework*, and traditional cottage forms.

Architects, builders and tradesmen and key properties, houses and dwellings.

Important nineteenth century architects have been written about extensively. In 1954 Morton Herman wrote *The Early Australian Architects and their Work*, recognising the contribution of colonial architects to Australia's cultural environment. Reynolds (1972) has defined the contribution of Colonial Architects to the building industry and architectural profession in New South Wales²³. Tanner (1981) has provided a synopsis of prominent architects²⁴, while Freeland (1971) has documented the growth of the architectural profession in Australia, and its key practitioners²⁵. In *Servant & Master, Building and Running the Grand Houses of Sydney 1788-1850*, Dyster (1989) has provided one of the few detailed descriptions of the role of the building trades in the construction of Sydney's early grand houses. However, most of this material relates to Sydney and Melbourne with little written about the engineers and surveyors who contributed to regional development as architects or clerks of works from the 1850s, or the role of amateur architects, master-builders and tradesmen.

There are many discrete sources of information in the archives and in secondary sources, but these add little to our understanding of the dynamics of the building industries in the Shoalhaven LGA. In this respect, newspapers, such as the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Illawarra Mercury* (from 1855) and *The Shoalhaven News* (from 1867), comprise major sources of information about the building industry and the movement and work of architects, builders and tradesmen. Immigration and Insolvency records held by State Records of NSW and the State Library of NSW collections are invaluable in documenting individual houses and architects and the origins and work practices of

builders and tradesmen. The *Shoalhaven City Council Heritage Study* (1995-1997), *The Book of Shoalhaven, as it was and as it is*, published in connection with the 'Back to Shoalhaven Week', in Nowra in 1926, and the records of local historical societies, in addition to family histories and monographs have provided important information about builders and tradesmen and key properties, houses and dwellings.

Literary Model

Critical events in the settlement of the Illawarra and South Coast districts include the establishment of private towns and villages, the disastrous flooding and heavy rains of the 1860s and 1870s and the shift from mixed farming to dairy farming by the 1860s. Although the Kangaroo Valley and Ulladulla districts and the extensive coastal plains of the Shoalhaven District developed interactively, they retained distinct identities determined by patterns of land tenure, cultural groups, trade, industry and transport and communication.

The literary model is based on the historical geography, architectural framework and analysis of key properties and recorded buildings in each of the three districts. The discussion is presented in three parts to allow the relationships between defining events, historical phases and geographical processes to be examined and their impact on the development of domestic architectural ideas, and with it, traditional/vernacular housing types in each district to be illustrated where possible.

Part 1: Geographical and architectural context c. 1810-c. 1840.

Chapter 1 Questions of Style

Sydney as the focus of colonial society and architectural fashion.

Chapter 2 1820s-1830s The Settled Districts

Chapter 3 1820s-1850s Domestic Architecture

The development of colonial archetypes for houses, rural residences and villas is discussed in the context of Sydney and the Settled Districts of New South Wales.

Part 2: Cultural influences and vectors in the development of domestic architectural ideas 1840s-1890s.

Migration and Industrialisation

Chapter 4 1840s-1850s A Free Society

Chapter 5 1850s-1860s Population Growth

Chapter 6 1850s-1860s Local Building Industries

A Masonry Construction Boom

Chapter 7 1860s-1870s Farmhouses and Rural Residences

Chapter 8 1860s-1870s Urban Growth and Public Buildings

A Timber Construction Boom

Chapter 9 c. 1870-c. 1890 Ulladulla and Kangaroo Valley Districts

Chapter 10 c. 1870-c. 1892 The Berry Estate

Chapter 11 1870s-c. 1892 The Nowra Area

Part 3: Hiatus and Conclusion

Chapter 12 1890s Hiatus

Chapter 13 Conclusion

Introduction Endnotes

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