

ORBOST & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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NEWSLETTER

AUGUST, 2008

'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday, April 13, 1955:

First Saw Mill Plant At Orbost

Now a flourishing and expanding industry in this area is that of sawmilling, which, besides providing employment for a large number of workers, contributes in no small measure to the prosperity of the town and district.

The first saw mill plant at Orbost was set up early in 1876, when the Richardsons who were one of the earliest families to settle in the Orbost district arrived from Ballarat. The parents and four sons, brought with them their sawmill plant, which was the very first in the district. The family settled at Tabbara, on the Brodribb River,

Richardson's Saw Mill at Tabbara



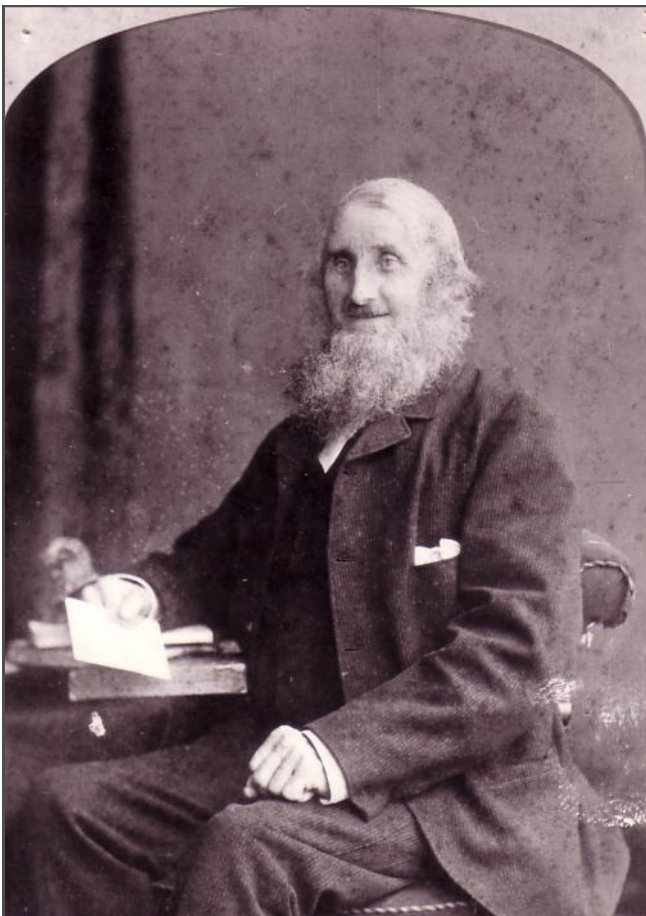
in the midst of very good timber, which they cut to build their home there.



Richardson Home at Tabbara

They were also carpenters, and the first sawn timber used in Orbost was from their mill. Several places were built by them, amongst them being a building used for the first school and situated in what is now the main street, near Herbert's store.

Mr Samuel Richardson and sons also selected land at the same time, several hundreds of acres at what was then known as Pumpkin Point, but now is Bete Bolong South.



Samuel Richardson 1821-1892

A man the name of McKidd selected about the same time.

When selected, the land was a dense jungle with enormous trees and scrub, where wild pigs, wombats, native bears and smaller animals of the bandicoot tribe, lived in a paradise. Also there was a huge morass, with small floating islands where water-fowl, wild duck and swans abounded and lived in peace. The swampy morass has since been drained and made use of.



Richardsons Sawmill, Tabbara - 1886

It took many years to clear the land of its huge trees and scrub, ferns, creepers, etc.

The land was divided into five farms (one each for the five brothers), four of which have changed hands; the fifth of 180 acres, still remains and is divided into two farms owned by the sons of Mr Mark Richardson, and which is the only original selection that has never been sold or changed hands in the Orbost district as far as is known. The late Mr Mark Richardson joined the family in 1879 and rode a draught horse all the way from Ballarat to do so.



Tabbara Jetty

There are still descendants of Mr Samuel Richardson attending the Orbost State School. Glenn, who is a great-grand child, and the children of Mrs Doug Russell, junr, who are great, great grandchildren their grandmother (Mrs. Berkin) being a daughter, and who lived in Bete Bolong for a number of years and who is still living at the great age of 99 years. She is the last generation of Richardsons.— Contributed.

Giant Logs From the Orbost District

Said to be the longest logs ever taken from East Gippsland forests, three special vehicles were needed to transport three giants, the longest measuring 120 feet, from the McKenzie River to Traralgon, on Monday last.

The other two measured 114 and 100 ft.

At the butt end the logs measured 14, 15 and 11 inches respectively and all were yellow stringy bark. They were felled by Mr. R. H. Hammond at the watershed in the McKenzie River district.

Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting them to the highway for loading and it was necessary to snig them over the winding bush track. The last of the logs was taken out of the forest on Monday morning.

Three timber jinkers were used to transport the huge logs on their long journey to Traralgon,

which commenced from the McKenzie River at 6 a.m. Monday morning, passing through Orbost about 1½ hours later. Bairnsdale was reached at 2.30 p.m. and Sale at 4 p.m.

Mobile police and C.R.B. officials escorted the convey on its journey and the trip was made without incident.

Two logs are for use at Traralgon, it has been stated, for two-way telephone transmission by the S.E.C.. The other will go to Mount Worth 14 miles from Warragul.

Mr. J. de Piazza, of Orbost, was in charge of the transport of the logs.



Joe De Piazza's Truck, Main Street, Bairnsdale - with Pole 110 feet long



Joe De Piazza's Trucks Carting Poles to Traralgon - passing through Bairnsdale