

THE RANGERS ESTATE, MOSMAN



“The Rangers”
(Mosman Local Studies Collection, Mosman Library Service)

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MOSMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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AUTHOR

The author is a Committee member of the Mosman Historical Society. She would like this history to be a living document which can be updated, expanded and any errors corrected, based on input from the community and other researchers. Please send your comments and suggestions to:

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For information about the Society and its activities, and to download this document, please visit:

www.mosmanhistoricalsociety.org.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mosman Historical Society does not have its own collection of historical materials. This is because Mosman is so well served by the Mosman Local Studies Collection held by the Mosman Library Service. The Mosman Local Studies staff provide outstanding service to anyone researching Mosman's local history. Local Studies Librarian Donna Braye has been a major source of material and advice for this document.

Online access to much of the Collection is possible through:

<https://mosman.nsw.gov.au/library/Local-Studies>

The online resources found there include a Digital Archive (Trace), Mosman Memories of Your Street, Mosman Voices (oral histories) and Mosman Faces (filmed interviews).

Clive Craven, the great grandson of Richard and Marianne Norris, provided information about the Norris family.

ABBREVIATIONS

LRS NSW Land Registry Service

SMH Sydney Morning Herald

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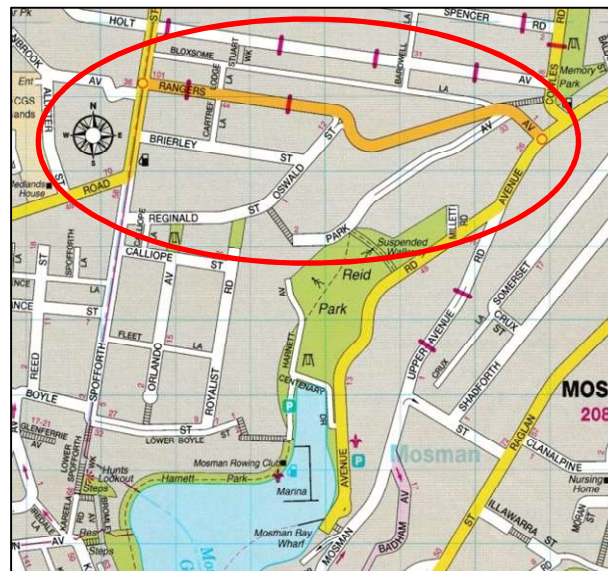
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE SCOPE OF RESEARCH

What was originally known as the Rangers Estate covered an area of 40 acres (16 hectares) in the south west part of the Sydney suburb of Mosman. There is a wide range of existing historical research covering some aspects of the area, including documents held in the Mosman Local Studies Collection at Mosman Library. This document seeks to summarise and consolidate this research and supplement it with additional information. It does not claim to be exhaustive and readers seeking more in-depth information should access the referenced source materials.

1.2 LOCATION

The Rangers Estate covered the area now bounded by Spofforth Street, Reginald Street, Park Avenue and Bloxsome Lane. It is adjacent to the suburb of Cremorne to the west.



(Gregory's Street Directory, 2023)

2. EARLY LAND GRANTS

2.1 ARCHIBALD MOSMAN

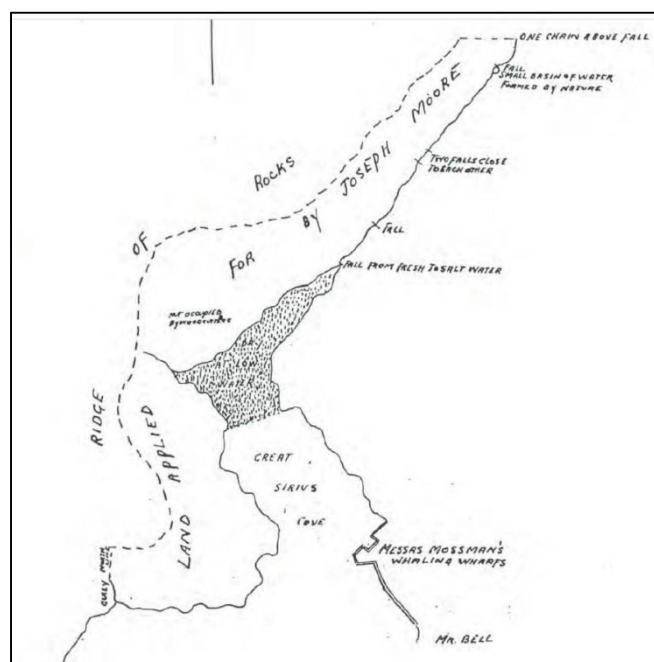
Until the 1830s the land around Mosman Bay remained undeveloped and isolated. The allocation of land commenced with the sale in 1831 of several land grants on the eastern side of the bay to Archibald Mosman, John Bell and Charles Staples, for the purpose of “erecting stores, buildings and wharves required for whaling and other mercantile establishments”.¹ Only Mosman developed his sites, and by 1838 he had purchased the adjacent parcels of land, making his total holdings 108 acres.

For only 6 years from 1832 Mosman operated a whaling station. This was not for processing whales – his whaling ships were hunting sperm whales, which were cut up and boiled at sea. He used the station to finish the boiling, to store the whale oil and to service and re-fit both his and other whaling ships, including American whalers.

The station had a wharf, two large stone warehouses (one of which, “The Barn”, remains today), two single storey barracks to house the sailors while the ships were re-fitted, and a small cottage on the wharf. Mosman built his home, later known as “The Nest” on the hill above the station.

2.2 CAPTAIN JOSEPH MOORE

Joseph Moore arrived in the colony in 1819 and was involved in the whaling industry with his brig *Woodlark*. In 1831 he applied for a grant of 50 acres on the western side of the bay, opposite Mosman’s land. This application was rejected by the Surveyor General, because it would have given him a monopoly on the water frontages.²



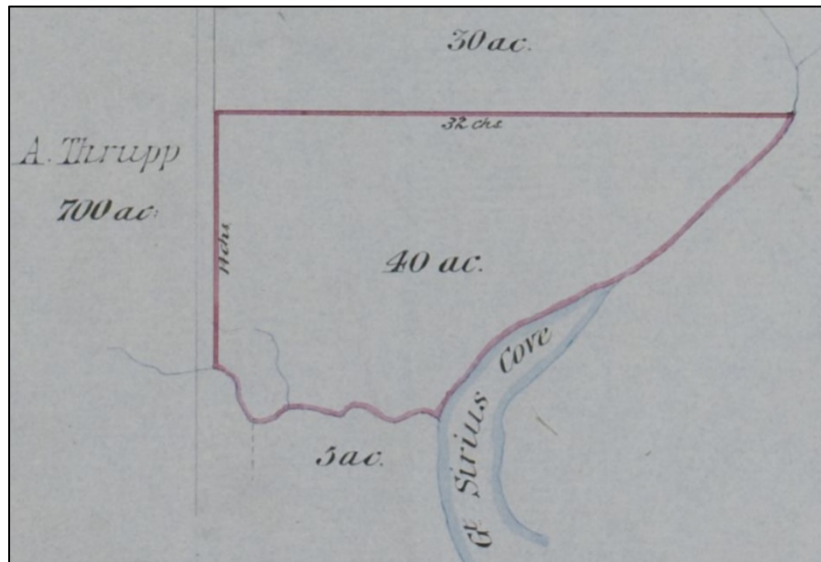
Joseph Moore's original request for 50 acres. (Hughes, p12)

¹ Neville Hughes, Historical papers dealing mainly with early land grants in Mosman, c1950s, p1.

² Hughes, p11.

In 1832 the Surveyor General refused an application by J R C Hatfield for part of the same land to grow fruit and vegetables, stating that “where he selects ... is no place for a farm, there being only barren rocks there”.³

Eventually, in April 1834, Joseph Moore paid £20 for a 40 acre grant at the head of the bay, known at that time as Great Sirius Cove.⁴ His land was bounded by the large Thrupp Estate (700 acres, later to become Cremorne) to the west, the Holt Estate (30 acres) to the north, to the south by a creek flowing into Great Sirius Cove (later known as Mosman Bay) and to the east by the bay and the creek flowing down to the bay.



(LRS, Vol 24 Fol 19)

The land remained undeveloped and Joseph Moore became insolvent in 1844.

2.3 THOMAS HILLSON

In 1834 Thomas Hillson was granted 5 acres across the creek to the south of Moore’s land.⁵ He did not develop his land. Little is known of Hillson, except that by 1838 he was the licensee of the Custom House pub in Argyle Street in the Rocks.⁶

2.4 JOHN GILBERT

In 1834 John Gilbert, a Master Mariner, obtained a grant of 16 acres to the south of Moore’s and Gilbert’s land.⁷ This land extended south to what is now Harnett Park and the end of Spofforth Street.

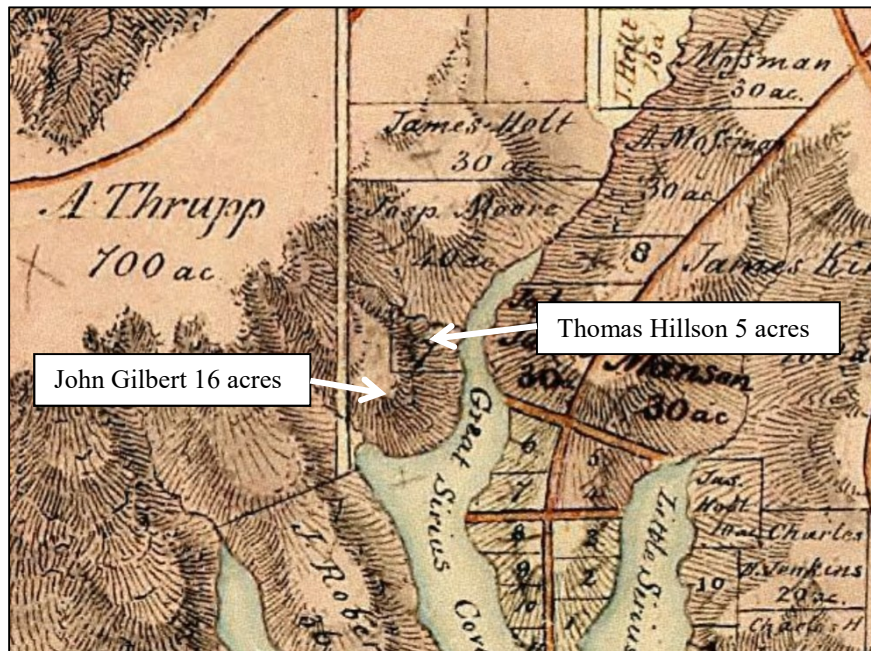
³ Hughes, p13.

⁴ NSW Land Registry Services (LRS), Vol 24 Fol 19.

⁵ LRS, Vol 2286 Fol 78.

⁶ The Sydney Monitor, 29 June 1838, p2.

⁷ LRS, Vol 2793 Fol 41.



(LRS, Willoughby Parish Map, Sheet Reference 2)

By 1845 when Gilbert purchased Hillson's 5 acres, he had built a wharf and three cottages, and had fenced and cultivated 9 acres of his land.⁸ Gilbert was of the opinion that his shoreline was perfect for a dry dock. In 1846, as he was about to depart on his ship the *Ratcliff*, he advertised his property as the Surry Dock Estate.

SURRY DOCK ESTATE.
EXTRAORDINARY NOTICE TO INTENDING PURCHASERS.
MR. STUBBS is instructed by the Proprietor to make known, that in consequence of the expected departure of **THE RATCLIFF, CAPTAIN GILBERT,** On the 12th February, The Sale of the "SURRY DOCK ESTATE," in Mossman's Bay, will take place **ON TUESDAY NEXT, THE 3RD DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1846,** At 12 o'clock precisely. **THE SURRY DOCK ESTATE,** With all Improvements, and twenty-one Acres of Land.
Note—It is confidently submitted to the judgment of persons most competent to form an opinion, fortified by those of the Officers of Her Majesty's ships "Fly," "Beagle," and the "Hazard," that the SURRY DOCK ESTATE, MOSSMAN'S BAY, Commands the only and least expensive spot **IN THE HARBOUR OF PORT JACKSON,** applicable for the purposes of **A DRY DOCK.**

⁸ Hughes, p16.

There is little or no speculation in the matter—all that is required to effect so superior and desirable a work for the shipping interests would be excavate the dock at the edge of the bank, where the water boldens from twenty-four inches to eighteen feet in depth, and a rapid fortune would be the certain result of so laudable an enterprise—it would entirely supersede the more hazardous and infinitely more expensive employment of patent slips.

Above the dock there is a very convenient quay leading to a neat cottage, remarkable for its order, cleanliness, and comfort, and full of pretty children, with ruddy faces denoting the purity of the air and the healthiness of the climate.

The road to the upper part of the Estate winds round a gentle elevation of about 200 feet above the level of the sea, passing a deep pass ravine, remarkable for its bold romantic walls, the ripple of the water-falls, and the concert of Gould's choicest birds of Australia. Here the improvements are rapidly progressing, eight or nine acres of the Estate newly enclosed, and four men are employed preparing to lay out the same into productive vineyards and gardens; added to which are two cottages, let at 2s. per week, to decent labourers and their families.

The scenery from the S.W. corner of the Estate is rich and very extensive, yielding a bird's-eye view of the restless activity and enterprise of the whole colony—vessels passing and re-passing in powerful contrast, proving that Sydney has monopolised three-fourths of the commerce of the seven colonies.

The eastern view includes the pretty residence of Oswald Bloxome, Esq., with its tasty walks and luscious vineyard.

As the Estate will positively be sold, intending buyers are respectfully informed

that the title is first-rate, and that a plan of the same may be seen at the Auction Mart, King-street. 1521

(SMH, 29 January 1846, p4)

Despite temptations such as “the concerts of Gould’s choicest birds” and promises of “a rapid fortune” from the dry dock, no buyer could be found. It was not until 1853 that it was sold, and the Sydney Dry Dock Company was formed. The government of the day approved a plan for a dock, however the company was unable to obtain the subscribers required to fund it, and the project lapsed. The company was wound up and the land sold in 1859 to Henry Stuart Russell for £1,170.⁹ Russell was at that time living in Archibald Mosman’s house on the eastern side of the bay. The following year Russell moved into “The Rangers” (see Section 3.2).

⁹ Hughes, p17.

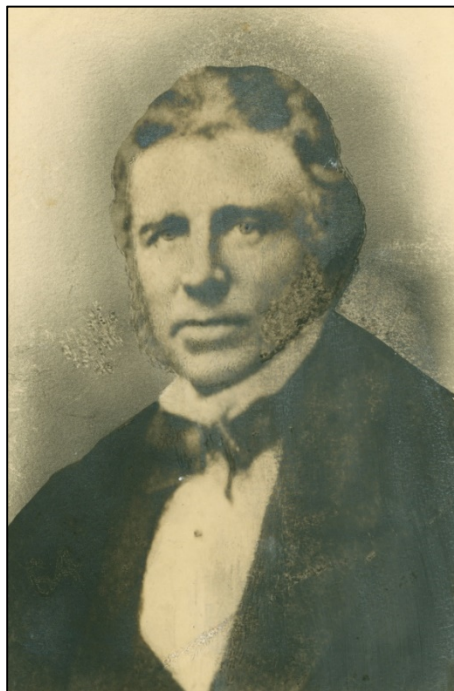
3. THE RANGERS ESTATE

3.1 OSWALD AND HENRIETTA BLOXSOME

Following Joseph Moore's insolvency, his trustees sold the Mosman Bay estate to Oswald Bloxsome for £100 in September 1845.¹⁰

Oswald Bloxsome emigrated to New South Wales from England on the barque *Florentia*, arriving in August 1838 with his wife Henrietta and son Oswald.¹¹ That same year an Act of Parliament had been passed permitting settlers to occupy land beyond the limit of settlement. Prior to that, such land had been occupied illegally by the so-called "squatters". The Act provided for the payment of a very low rent for the land occupied, and allowed for an annual licence to hold such land. This encouraged new settlers to migrate to the colony.

Soon after his arrival, Bloxsome selected 70,000 acres in the New England district, 16 miles north of what is now Glen Innes, naming it "Rangers Valley" after his family home "The Rangers" in Gloucestershire.¹² Bloxsome appointed a manager to the property, returned to Sydney, and leased Archibald Mosman's house at Mosman Bay. He became an Agent for the Church and School Estate, a government position managing Church of England land. Later he managed the Australian Loan Company and as his wealth increased he developed his "Rangers Valley" property and bought other properties in Sydney and New England.¹³



Oswald Bloxsome.
(Mosman Local Studies Collection, Mosman Library Service)

Despite previous descriptions of his land as containing only "barren rocks", the estate was extensively developed by Bloxsome. By 1846, when Gilbert was attempting to sell his land to

¹⁰ LRS, Primary Application 1124.

¹¹ Oswald Bloxsomes original diary of his voyage to NSW, National Library of Australia, MS336.

¹² *Glen Innes Examiner*, 5 May 1945, p4.

¹³ Gavin Souter, *Mosman: A History*, 1994, p55.

the south, Bloxsome had built a large house. Gilbert's advertisement at that time described it as a "pretty residence, with tasty walks and a luscious vineyard".¹⁴

It appears that Henrietta Bloxsome did not favour the use of convict labour in the construction of the house:

Mrs Bloxsome objected to having assigned labourers on the estate, as she had a curious dislike to the "system" and her sympathies extended to giving shelter and food to many a poor runaway, but she hated to have them employed about the place. Mr Bloxsome was fortunate in hearing of a number of German emigrants who had arrived in Sydney, on the way to found a separate colony for themselves. "They all went over to Mosmans" says an old resident, "where they made temporary homes on the estate, and first quarried the stone in the grounds, and built the house, which is one of the most delightfully picturesque homesteads around Sydney". In the centre of the hall is a great stone pedestal that at one time was a stand for a famous bronze statue. The walls were hung with choice works of art, in the form of a series of large sacred pictures, painted by an Italian artist, named Appiand Francesca, "Elijah and Samson", "The Slaying of the Dragon", "Daniel and the Lions" being among these. The ceilings of the hall and large dining-room are 25ft high, and cut of magnificently polished panels of rare woods. The heads of the kings of England are carved in stone, as ornaments round the dining-room ceilings. Coeur de Lion has the usual flowing locks, John his traditional sneer, while Henry VIII looks as if in the search for another wife, first to cherish, and then to slay.¹⁵

The Bloxsomes named their house and estate "The Rangers", once again reflecting the name of Oswald's childhood home in England. The architect was possibly John Frederick Hilly.¹⁶



"The Rangers"
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

¹⁴ *SMH*, 29 January 1846, p4.

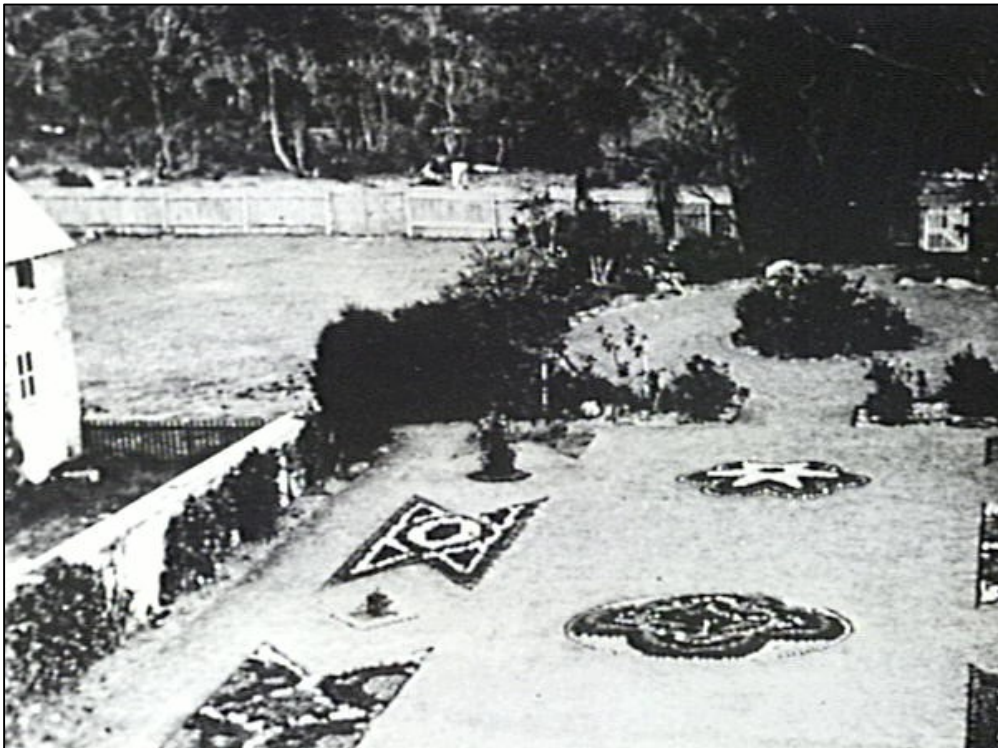
¹⁵ Mary Salmon, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 22 March 1911, p 22.

¹⁶ Souter, p55.



“The Rangers”
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

It has been claimed that the Bavarian workers also stayed on after the house was complete, to tend to the extensive gardens and vineyard. The gardeners were also “renowned for their choral singing”.¹⁷



Part of the garden at “The Rangers”.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

¹⁷ Don McLaren, *Tales of Old Mosman*, 1978, p37.



The rear of "The Rangers".
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

Access to the house was via a stone wharf built near the head of the bay, a track running north approximately along what today is Park Avenue, then up what is now Rangers Avenue. The prominent artist, Samuel Thomas Gill, painted the scene in 1860. The Rangers Estate wharf, path and house at the top of the hill can be seen on the left, with a steamer delivering picnickers to Richard Harnett's land on the right side of the bay (see Section 3.3).



Mossman's Bay near Sydney, S T Gill, 1860.
(Mosman Local Studies Collection, Mosman Library Service)

Remnants of the original track's stone supporting wall are still visible below the sloping path from Reid Park to Bolivia Bridge. In 1987 a plaque was placed at the landing place, which until Reid Park was reclaimed (see Section 5.4), was accessible by boat at high tide.



The date on this plaque should have been 1845.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)



The lower wall is part of Bloxsome's original track. The current walkway above it follows the same route.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)

The Bloxsoles entertained lavishly and many distinguished guests visited “The Rangers”, including the eminent scientist Thomas Huxley, the marine artist Oswald Brierly (see Chapter 4) and Captain Owen Stanley.

Mr Bloxsome imported most of the English birds, letting them loose in the bush around his house, and it was no uncommon thing to see thrushes, larks, bullfinches, and other small British birds sharing with Australian native birds the grain thrown on the paths and the water in the fountain basin. The curfew used to ring morning and evening from the bell tower while the Bloxsoles lived at the Rangers, and many other old English customs prevailed.¹⁸

They lived at the estate until their return to England in 1855 at which time the estate was advertised for sale. In a detailed, florid advertisement the estate was said to comprise:

...lawn, pleasure gardens, orchard, vineyard, garden and grassland; together with the very beautiful FAMILY MANSION, built entirely of cut stone in the Elizabethan style, and the extensive range of out-offices, Court and Stable Yards, Stabling, Gardeners’ Cottages, etc.¹⁹

RANGERS ESTATE, NORTH SHORE.
In the immediate vicinity of Sydney.

Comprising an area of 42½ acres, bounded by Mosman's Bay ; and laid out in Lawn, Pleasure Grounds, Orchard, Vineyard, Garden, and Grass Land ; together with the very beautiful **FAMILY MANSION**, built entirely of cut stone in the Elizabethan style, and the extensive range of Out-offices, Court and Stable Yards, Stabling, Gardeners' Cottages, &c.

MORT and CO. have been instructed by Oswald Bloxsome, Esq., in consequence of that gentleman's intended departure for England, to sell by public auction, at the Rooms, Pitt-street, at 11 o'clock, on **THURSDAY, 15th March,**

That Magnificent property **THE RANGERS ESTATE**, situate at the North Shore, about 3¼ miles from the Ferry at St. Leonard's, with an excellent carriage road to it. It comprises an area of about 42½ acres, and is bounded on the East by Mosman's Bay and the Creek forming the head of that Bay, and which almost in the driest seasons is a **RUNNING STREAM** of the purest water. On the South it is bounded by the lands of the **SYDNEY DRY DOCK COMPANY.**

¹⁸ Mary Salmon, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 22 March 1911, p 22.

¹⁹ *SMH*, 24 February 1855, p9.

Upon the Rangers Estate is the very **BEAUTIFUL FAMILY MANSION**, built entirely of cut stone in the Elizabethan style, and comprising spacious entrance-hall with corridor running at right-angles, large drawing and dining rooms, 3 principal bedrooms with dressing-room fitted with hot and cold bath, adjoining which are two water-closets, two large bedrooms in front of house extending over drawing-room and entrance-hall, and lighted by dormer windows.

(Three other similar bedrooms might be made at a very trifling cost over the principal bedrooms in the north end of the building as the flooring joists are already laid.)

Three large bedrooms for servants, plate and china room, butler's store, larder, kitchen fitted with range, hot hearth, charcoal pit, &c.

Adjoining the kitchen is a paved court-yard, opening into which is

A scullery, in which is a pump of excellent water supplied from a tank in the cellar, also large brick oven

A mangling room with ironing stove

A laundry fitted with large copper, which also supplies the bath with hot water

A shoe house, coal room, dairy, &c.

Beyond the court-yard is the stable-yard with stables, coach-house, harness-room, and workshop, at the rear of which are two additional water-closets, stone piggeries, and dung-pit.

The **CELLARS** are three in number, excavated out of the solid rock 30 feet square and arched all over with stone. The wine cellar is fitted up with stone slabbed bins, the beer cellar is quite distinct, and the other is used for dairy purposes, and fitted with stone benches.

There is an extensive **TANK** 30 feet square at the rear of the premises, which has never failed, one thunder storm being enough to fill it. Pipes have been laid on from it to the court yard. In the stable yard there is a **WELL 60 FEET DEEP** of the purest spring water, never dry—and also a **LARGE POND** for watering horses, washing carriages, &c.

. This beautiful house evinces not only the greatest good taste in the original conception, but a vigour and a steadiness in carrying out the design in every department, rarely met with in New South Wales. As a whole it is beyond doubt the most perfect **GENTLEMAN'S SEAT IN THE COLONY**.

The HALL is 42 feet long by 12 feet wide with large window of stained glass at the north end, opening into the flower garden. It is intersected by the corridor, at which point Tudor arches are thrown across, dividing it as it were into two. The ceilings are panelled in the Elizabethan style, and the northern end is groined and enriched with ornamental bosses of plaster of Paris. This end is now hung with pictures, and might merely by means of a curtain be converted into a LIBRARY or breakfast room.

THE DINING-ROOM is 31 feet long by 18 feet wide and 30 feet high. It is lighted by one large bay window 10 feet by 10 feet with stone mullions and plate glass; and the whole of the arrangements in imitation of an ancient Baronial Hall. The chimney piece is of massive carved free stone, 7 feet high, with large iron dogs for burning wood, which, with the ponderous fender, were cast in the colony, and made to correspond with the

character of the room. The ceiling is formed of flying buttresses of wood (imitation oak), with encircled spandrels supported by carved heads of stone; and the centre with bosses of plaster of Paris, coloured. AN ORIGINAL PAINTING by O. W. Brierly, Esq., Marine Artist, 18 feet x 10 feet, occupies the entire end of the dining-room—the subject H. M. S. "Rattlesnake" in a squall off the Island of Timor.

The DRAWING-ROOM is 27 feet x 18 feet, recently decorated and gilded, after the latest English style.

The mantel piece is of Italian marble, and there is a plaster cast after the antique over the door. This is a very elegant room.

THE ROOF OF THE HOUSE is composed of burnt tiles of different shapes and colours formed into patterns. The principal chimneys are of ornamented carved stone work in keeping with the character of the building.

At the eastern end of the mansion is the ROUND TOWER, access to which is had from the corridor. It is ascended by a spiral staircase which leads to the upstairs bedrooms, situate about half way up, and beyond that to the lantern at the top. The view from this tower is as fine as can be seen in the colony, extending uninterruptedly as far as the eye can reach in every direction.

The estate contains as already stated

42½ ACRES,

which may be comprised as follows:—The ornamental shrubberies and pleasure grounds, the land occupied by the house and out-offices, garden, vineyard, and a large cleared paddock, abundantly supplied with water, and enclosed for milch cows and horses.

The SHRUBBERY and PLEASURE GROUNDS occupy a considerable extent in front and at the eastern end of the house. They are tastefully planted with the choicest shrubs and ornamental trees, and there is a very pretty carriage drive, forming a handsome sweep up to the house.

The **GARDEN** consists of about 4 acres of land in the highest state of cultivation, and is stocked with every description of fruit trees.

The **VINEYARD** is in extent about half an acre, and is planted with the most choice vines, and for its size is one of the most productive in the colony.

In addition to the buildings already enumerated, there is a **GARDENER'S COTTAGE**, a very pretty stone building, and 3 **OTHER COTTAGES** on the property.

An **EXTENSIVE WHARF**, to which there is a considerable frontage, has been formed at the head of Mosman's Bay, from which there is an excellent carriage road leading to the house. A ten ton boat can discharge at this wharf at high water.

On the whole, it is impossible to find a more lovely spot in the colony than that now offered to the public. Whether viewed as a home for a family, or a gentleman's ornamental country seat, it is complete in every department connected therewith. Already steamboats ply to and fro between the City and the North Shore every ten minutes in the day, taking both horses and carriages—and a new steam company has just been formed, which will still further increase the facilities of communication with the metropolis.

* * * Mort and Co. feel bound to call the especial attention of capitalists to this sale. It affords an opportunity to **MONIED MEN** of **TASTE** at once to step into a property which would cost

years of vexation and anxiety, besides the outlay of very many thousands of pounds to bring it to its **PRESENT STATE OF PERFECTION**.

It is but rarely indeed that so extensive a property as 42½ acres in one block upon the shores of Port Jackson, is in the market—and such an opportunity may never occur again.

The **PROXIMITY** of the **SYDNEY DRY DOCK** gives a very large prospective value to the land, a **LARGE EXTENT OF WHICH MIGHT BE SOLD FOR BUILDING PURPOSES**, without at all interfering with the house and grounds.

Large **PLAN** and **VIEWS** may be inspected at the Rooms, Pitt-street, and every other information obtained.

TITLE—Unquestionable.

TERMS—25 per cent. cash deposit, 25 per cent. by 12 months' bill, with Bank interest added; residue may remain on mortgage of the property for the term of five years, at 6 per cent. interest,

(SMH, 24 February 1855, p9)

Despite its “present state of perfection” and the possibility of a dry dock nearby on Gilbert's Estate, there were no “monied men of taste” who were interested in purchasing the property. It was then advertised for lease.

The "Rangers" House and Property, North Shore.—This house is to be let for a term of years, furnished or unfurnished, together with 45 acres of land, including large garden, now in full bearing, or the whole property would be sold on liberal terms. Steamers ply every two minutes in the day between Windmill-street and the North Shore, conveying both horses and carriages, and there is no detention on either side. Apply to Mr. Bloxome, or to Messrs. Icceton and Pownall, solicitors, No. 15 Castle-reagh-street North.—Advt., "Herald."

Evening News, 2 December 1905, p2 (reprinting advertisements from 25 November 1855)

3.2 HENRY STUART AND CHARLOTTE RUSSELL

Henry Stuart Russell migrated to New South Wales in 1830 from Middlesex, England. He took up land on the Darling Downs and was a pastoralist and explorer there until 1849. He was a member of parliament for two years then returned to England for several years.²⁰

Richard Hayes Harnett Snr was a businessman who purchased many of the original land grants in Mosman, and together with his son Richard Hayes Harnett Jnr was responsible for their later subdivisions. The Harnett name features prominently in the history of Mosman. In 1859 Harnett Snr acquired all of what had originally been Archibald Mosman's 108-acre estate on the eastern side of Mosman Bay.²¹ Harnett set up picnic grounds around the waterfalls, and encouraged visitors to visit by steamer from Woolloomooloo, serviced by the remaining infrastructure at Archibald Mosman's whaling premises. Special events were held, during which liquor was available. Harnett made the first attempt at creating rudimentary road access (now lower Avenue Road) from the bay to what is now Military Road. When advertising his venue and events, Harnett had renamed Great Sirius Cove as Mosmans Bay. He also named Archibald Mosman's house "The Nest".

The following year Harnett was declared bankrupt and his large land holdings in Mosman were sold. The 108-acre estate on the eastern side of the bay was purchased for £3,000 in 1860 by Henry Stuart Russell, who was already living at "The Nest" on this land. The previous year Russell had also purchased the 21-acre Gilbert/Hillson land on the western side, following the failure of the dry dock project.

After Bloxome's failed attempt to sell the Rangers Estate in 1855, the property was advertised for lease later that year, and again in 1856. However it was not until May 1859 that Henry Stuart Russell leased the Rangers Estate, with an option to purchase which was never exercised.²² He moved from "The Nest" to the Rangers Estate in 1860 and lived there until 1866.

Russell's land purchases and the leasing of the Rangers Estate meant that he then had complete control over all the land on the eastern side of Mosman Bay to just south of what is now Mosman Wharf, and down the western side to what is now Harnett Park. He closed the picnic

²⁰ Australian Dictionary of Biography Online. <https://adb.anu.edu.au/>

²¹ Hughes, p6.

²² LRS, Primary Application 1124.

grounds and banned any access by the public to the upper foreshores of the bay.²³ Russell kept it strictly private with railings and a locked gate at the foot of Harnett's access road. One of Archibald Mosman's buildings (later a licensed premises) was given rent-free to a tenant who would warn off any intruders arriving by boat.²⁴

Despite not owning the property, Russell made major improvements to the Rangers Estate. Soon after he moved in he upgraded what had been access tracks and built a formed road from "The Rangers", down what is now Rangers Avenue, across the creek just above the waterfalls, and down to Mosman's old wharf on what is now lower Avenue Road. This was the first time the eastern and western sides of the bay had been linked by road. The rest of Avenue Road leading up to Military Road remained unformed, until it was taken over and improved by St Leonard's Council in 1888.²⁵ In 1892, the government took over Russell's access road (by then owned by Richard Harnett Jnr) and created permanent public access to the waterfront via Avenue Road.

A lodge was built by Russell near the waterfall at the entrance to the Rangers Estate:

The next house on the (Avenue) road was The Ranger's Lodge, situated near the Waterfall.²⁶

Although the lodge/cottage did not survive the estate subdivisions, it was shown on the 1889 subdivision map. That map also shows the original bridge built by Russell, allowing access across the creek.²⁷ The earlier 1886 subdivision map also showed a large "fowl house" on what had become Lot 5 three years later.



The bridge and lodge at the entrance to the Rangers Estate, 1886.
(Extract from 1886 Subdivision Plan, Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

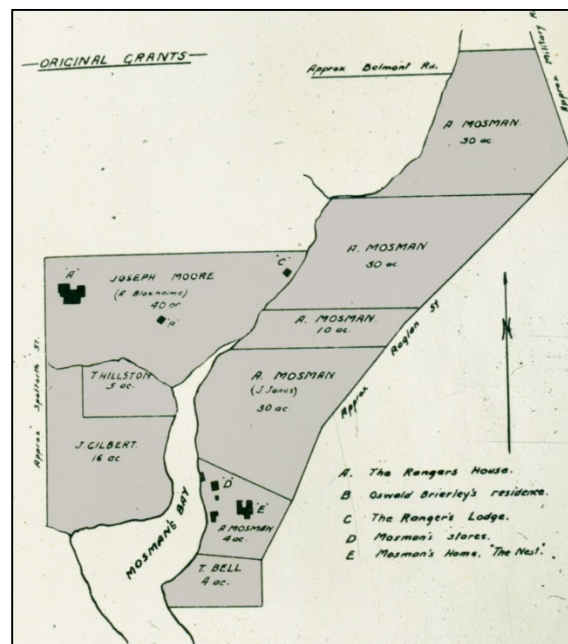
²³ Hughes, p7.

²⁴ A statement by Russell in 1884, quoted in Hughes, p19.

²⁵ *SMH*, 21 March 1890, p4.

²⁶ H Macourt, *Mosman Bay 50 years Ago*, *SMH*, 13 January 1934, p11.

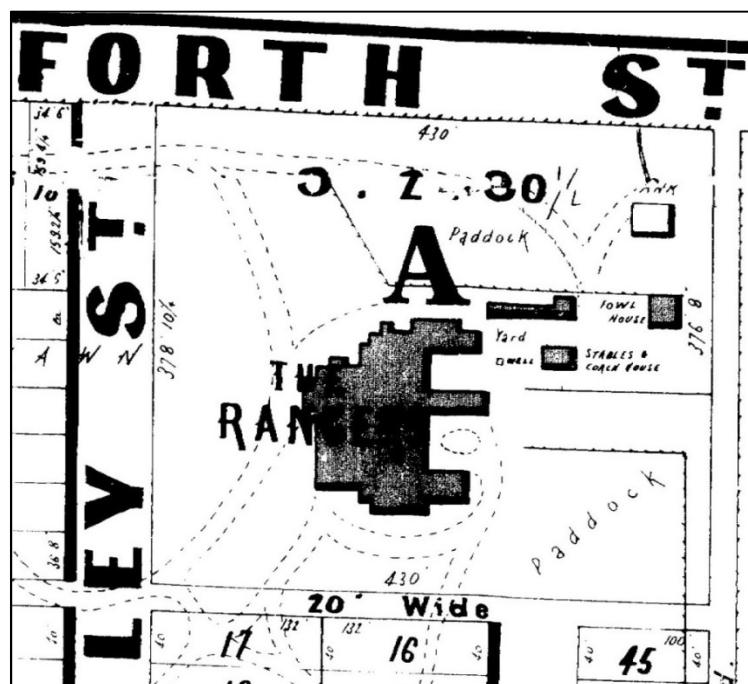
²⁷ The original bridge was replaced in 1909 when Mosman Council widened Rangers Avenue.



The land owned or leased by Henry Russell from 1860.
 (Based on a sketch from Rob Sturrock, *A Pictorial History of Mosman*, Vol 1, p17)

Also shown in the above map are the positions of “The Rangers” (A), Brierly’s cottage (B) (see Chapter 4), the Rangers Lodge (C), Archibald Mosman’s whaling buildings on the shore of the bay (D) and his house “The Nest” (E).

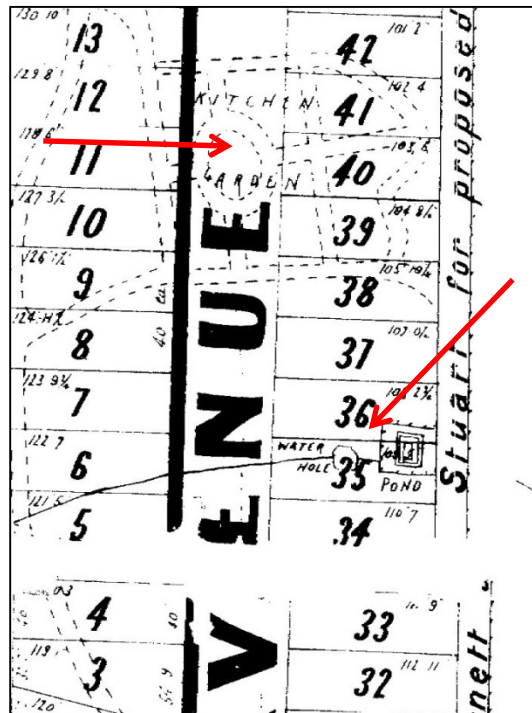
The estate subdivision map of 1886 shows the proposed building lots superimposed over the roads and features of the Rangers Estate as they existed at that time. Behind the house were paddocks, a stable and coach house, a large tank, fowl house and well, all features which would have existed during the Russells’ occupation.



(Extract from the 1886 subdivision map, Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

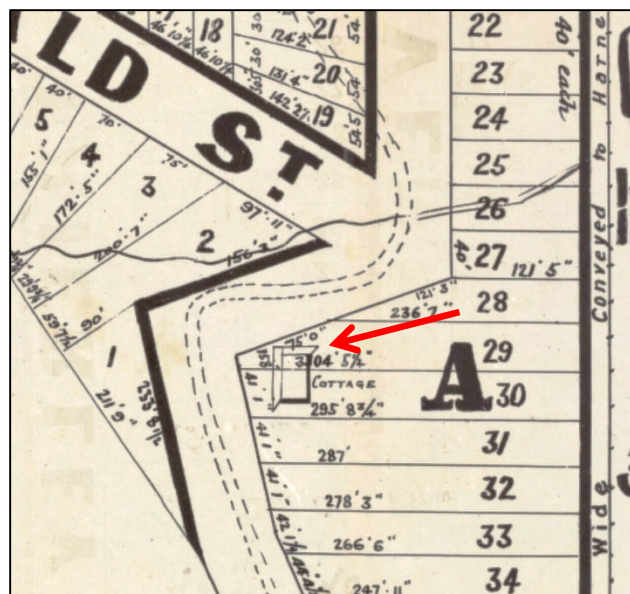
In addition to the Reginald Street creek, forming the southern boundary of the estate, three other creeks flowed through the estate. One of these had been dammed to form a pond and a waterhole, just east of the extensive kitchen garden.

A large stone swimming bath was built at the back of the house in close proximity with a perennial spring, and here, shaded by thick foliage, the family and visitors used to take a morning dip.²⁸



(Extract from the 1886 subdivision map, Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

An additional cottage was located on the bend of Rangers Avenue; this too was sacrificed during the subdivisions. The house at 37 Rangers Avenue now occupies the site.



(Extract from the 1889 subdivision map, Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

²⁸ Mary Salmon, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 22 March 1911, p 22.

Other features in the grounds included a fernery near the intersection of Reginald and Oswald Streets. A row of loose stones across the bay formed a fish trap. At high tide the fish would enter the head of the bay, only to be trapped as the tide went out.²⁹

The Russells continued to use “The Rangers” as a focal point for social activities. One of their sons recalled that on special occasions his father would hoist the Union Jack on the tower, and this was the signal for Judge Forbes (then living at “The Nest”) to fire off his two cannons.³⁰ It was said that “there was no limit to the hospitality with which visitors to “The Rangers” were treated”. There were splendid entertainments, suppers, lavish fireworks displays, pidgeon races and sailing in Russell’s yacht *Old Tom*, moored in the bay.³¹



Interior of “The Rangers”, 1860s.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

²⁹ Edward A Ancher, *Mosmans Bay: the Romance of an old Whaling Station*, 1909, p249.

³⁰ Ancher, p242.

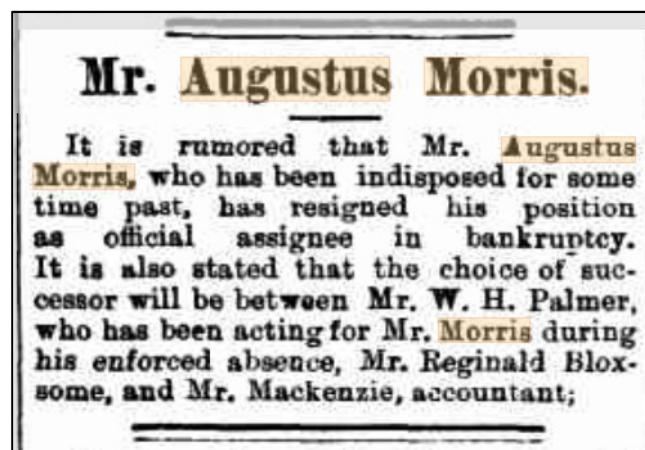
³¹ Ancher, p249.



Henry Russell's children, 1866.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

Henry Russell was declared bankrupt in 1864, although the family continued to live at "The Rangers" until 1866. Just prior to his return to England in 1888, Russell published a well-regarded book, *The Genesis of Queensland*, describing the early settlement and growth of the pastoral industry. He died in Devon, England, in 1889.

In 1866 when the Rangers Estate was brought under the Real Property Act, Henry Russell's two trustees in bankruptcy were noted in the Primary Application as Augustus Morris and John Mackenzie.³² As an interesting aside, there was a later connection between Oswald Bloxsome's grandson Reginald and the two trustees.



SMH, 13 August 1895, p6.

³² LRS, Primary Application 1124.

3.3 RICHARD HAYES HARNETT SNR

Following Richard Harnett Snr's bankruptcy in 1860 and the subsequent sale of his Mosman Bay land to Henry Russell, then Russell's bankruptcy in 1864, Harnett and his business partner Alexander Stuart re-purchased Mosman's 108 acres and Gilbert's 21 acres in 1871.³³ During that period (the late 1860s) the old whaling station had been used for a variety of noxious industries including a tallow candle factory, wool washing and a skin/hide tannery. The picnic areas were reopened by Harnett and once again Mosman Bay with its waterfalls became a popular destination. Harnett named the waterfalls after himself. When the fortifications at George and Middle Heads were built, they were advertised as an additional attraction for those wanting a pleasant walk.



The Lower Falls, with the eastern boundary fence of The Rangers. (Sturrock Vol2, p21)



Harnett's Falls, Mosman Bay, Samuel Thomas Gill, c1874.
(State Library NSW, 110335821)

Gill's painting shows the Reginald Street creek with the Rangers Estate fence and cattle on the right. One of John Gilbert's cottages is visible in the top left corner. There is a suggestion that

³³ Hughes, p7.

the artist took some “poetic licence” with this painting, although it is documented that the estate had milch cows and a dairy in one of the cellars.

In the early 1870s Harnett decided to encourage settlement in Mosman, by the introduction of a launch service between the city and the bay. This was heavily subsidised by him because:

... the regular passengers which they carried morning and evening would not total more than half a dozen people at 6d each. It was generally four passengers in the evening, including Mr Moriarty, of the Public Works Department, who resided at The Rangers; a Mrs. Cook, who owned an emporium in George-street; and the Harnett family.³⁴

3.4 EDWARD ORPEN AND LEILA MORIARTY

Edward Orpen Moriarty, an Irish engineer and surveyor, arrived in the colony with his family in the 1840s. He was born in County Kerry and studied at Trinity College, Dublin. He worked initially for the Surveyor General’s Department in New South Wales, and later became engineer-in-chief for harbours and river navigation in the Department of Works. As well as managing the construction of water supply schemes in many country towns, his other projects included the Pyrmont Bridge in 1865-6. He was prominent in Sydney society circles and after his retirement in 1888 he and his wife returned to England.

When the Russells left, Moriarty and his wife occupied “The Rangers” from 1867 until 1877.³⁵ They later lived in a large Neutral Bay mansion called “The Monastery”.³⁶ When Mrs Moriarty left for England in 1889, the *Illustrated Sydney News* lamented her absence, stating that:

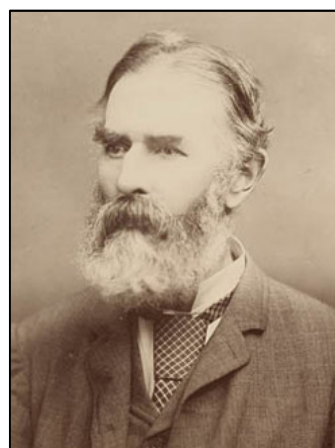
Her two beautiful homes, first The Rangers, then The Monastery, Neutral Bay, have been the “happy hunting grounds” from time unknown for all “brave youths and lovely maidens”, who could always depend upon her sympathy with Love's young dream, and hospitality under all, and any, circumstances.³⁷

One can only imagine what the youths and maidens were doing at “The Rangers”!



Mrs Moriarty

(*Illustrated Sydney News*, 14 November 1889, p29)



Edward Moriarty

(Australian Dictionary of Biography Online)

³⁴ *SMH*, 31 May 1913, p6.

³⁵ Sands Directories 1868 – 1877.

³⁶ Sands Directory 1879.

³⁷ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 14 November 1889, p29.

3.5 RICHARD HAYES HARNETT JNR

Between 1873 and 1880, Harnett Snr promoted several subdivisions of his Mosman Bay land, with very little success. He then transferred all of his holdings to his son, Richard Harnett Jnr. This gave Richard Harnett Jnr ownership of the Mosman Bay 108 acres and the Gilbert Estate, as well as the 30 acre Holt Estate to the north of the Rangers Estate. In 1880 he and Alexander Stuart purchased a narrow strip of land running across the northern edge of the Rangers Estate, for the purpose of creating road access between their Mosman Bay holdings and Spofforth Street.³⁸ This strip eventually became what is today Bloxsome Lane.

Oswald Bloxsome returned to New South Wales in 1879 to sort out his affairs and moved back into “The Rangers”. In 1883 he attempted once again to sell the Rangers Estate. There was no buyer. He continued to live in the house until 1885.³⁹ Just before his death in 1886 the estate was purchased by businessmen associated with Richard Harnett Jr (see Section 3.7). In readiness for Harnett’s ownership, many of the treasures in “The Rangers” were sold.

When, in the eighties of last century, there was a subdivision sale, all the works of art were auctioned, and the collection, which should have been kept together, found different homes. Some of the pictures were bought for Roman Catholic establishments, as they were unsuited for private houses of ordinary dimensions.⁴⁰

3.6 EDWARD BAKER BOULTON

While Oswald Bloxsome was living on the Rangers Estate for a second time during the 1880s, he played host to another prominent artist, Edward Boulton. Having arrived in the colony in 1836, Boulton was also a grazier in northern NSW although he was reputed to have been more interested in art than sheep. He was part of Sydney’s high society and hosted lavish parties and social events.⁴¹ He travelled widely doing sketches and watercolours, and exhibited in Sydney, Melbourne and London.

Boulton’s 1879 painting, held in the Royal Collection, is said to be the view from the garden of “The Rangers”. The building on the far right is on John Gilbert’s grant, the other side of the creek from the Rangers Estate. Cattle can be seen grazing on the estate.



Sydney: the town and harbour, Edward Boulton, 1879.
(The Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 917192)

³⁸ LRS, Vol 800 Fol 168.

³⁹ Sands Directories 1880 to 1886.

⁴⁰ Mary Salmon, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 22 March 1911, p 22.

⁴¹ Dictionary of Australian Artists Online.

Boulton provided another glimpse into life on the Rangers Estate in 1881. His use of the term “our own garden”, while the Bloxsoles were in residence at “The Rangers” suggests he may have had the use of Brierly’s cottage on the estate (see Chapter 4).



Sydney Harbour (across to Darling Point) from our own Garden 'The Rangers' North Shore, Edward Boulton, 1881. (National Library of Australia, PIC Drawer 2560 #R418)

3.7 EDWARD MILLETT

Richard Harnett Snr and Richard Harnett Jnr had several business partners who were closely involved in their land dealings – in addition to Alexander Stuart there were Tom Bradbury Wilkinson, James Murray and Edward Millett (after whom Millett Road to the east of the Rangers Estate is named). In August 1886 the Rangers Estate, now just over 39 acres, was purchased by the three men as tenants in common.⁴² That same year the first subdivision of the estate went to auction (see Section 5.1) and Edward Millett moved into “The Rangers”.

Edward Millett was Richard Harnett’s banker (London Bank of Australia). He lived at “The Rangers” from 1886 until 1889.⁴³ Due to the failure of the 1886 subdivision, it was redesigned and relaunched in 1889, to slightly more success (see Section 5.2). By then Harnett and his partners had formed the Rangers Estate Land Company Ltd and transferred the land to the company.

After the new roads were created and the first subdivided lot was sold in 1890, Millett moved out of “The Rangers”.

Edward Millett was the last person to live on the complete Rangers Estate.

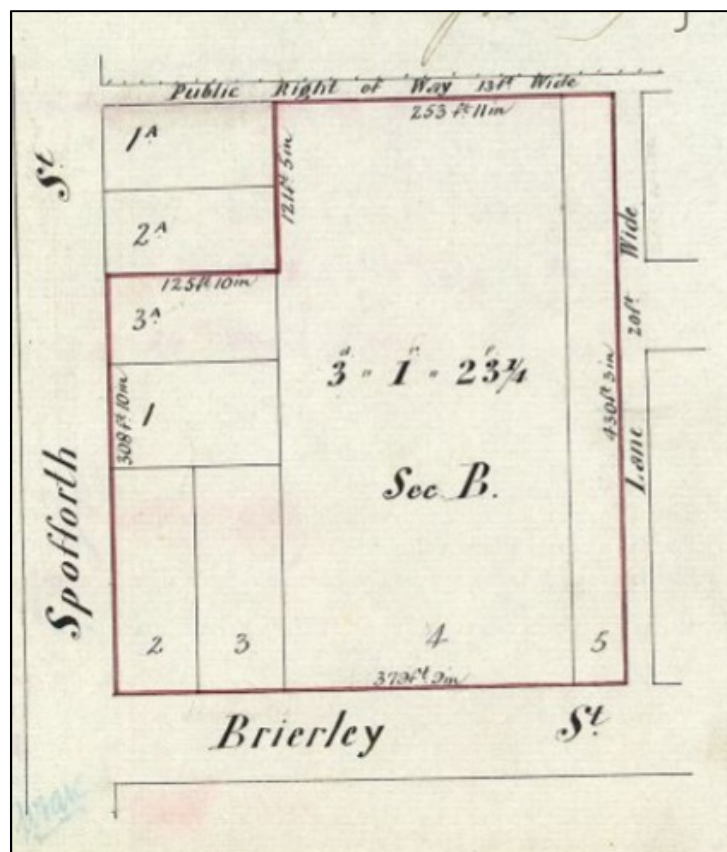
⁴² LRS, Vol 801, Fols 165, 166, 167.

⁴³ Sands Directories 1887 – 1890.

3.8 MATTHEW FENNESSY, RICHARD AUGUSTINE AND MARIANNE NORRIS

Although the estate was being subdivided and sold off during the 1890s and its magnificent grounds destroyed, the house remained intact on a site of just over two acres.

In 1891 Matthew Edward Fennessy, an Irish Barrister at Law, purchased the house site, plus four lots next to the house in Spofforth Street, from the Rangers Estate Land Company Ltd.⁴⁴ The property was mortgaged to the Bank of New South Wales. In 1893 he purchased the two lots (1A and 2A) on the north-west corner, thereby squaring up and further increasing the grounds surrounding the mansion.⁴⁵ At that time Rangers Avenue terminated at the eastern boundary of the house site.



Hennessey's land holding, 1891.
(LRS, Vol 998 Fol 34)

Matt Fennessy (a bachelor), and his sister Marianne with her family had moved into “The Rangers” in 1890.⁴⁶ Marianne's husband Richard Augustine Norris was a Sydney banker. Born in County Cork, Ireland, Richard emigrated to Melbourne where he married Marianne in 1868. In the early 1880s the family moved to Sydney to continue Richard's career with the Australian Joint Stock Bank. He became the manager of the Haymarket branch, as well as becoming the Honorary Treasurer of St Mary's Cathedral and a trustee of the New South Wales Art Gallery.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ LRS, Vol 998 Fol 34.

⁴⁵ LRS, Vol 1094 Fol 126.

⁴⁶ Sands Directory 1891. Clive Craven, 2024.

⁴⁷ Family history provided by descendant Clive Craven, 2024.

North Sydney.—Stolen, between the hours of 7 and 7-15 p.m. the 8th instant, from the residence of Richard A. Norris, Rangers Road, Mosman,—A gold cameo scarf-pin; gold scarf-pin, set with topaz; a gent.'s gold mourning ring, "In memoriam J. Norris" in black letters on it; a plain gold necklet with oval-shape combination locket and brooch, about 1½ inch long, blue enamel on it, attached; a pair of ear-rings to match, combination locket and brooch; a lady's gold ring, set with three rubies, coronet setting; two plain gold necklets or chains, one with turquoise clasp; a lady's long old-fashioned open-face gold watch, gold figures on dial. Value, about £20. Identifiable. Suspicion attached to an African black named Tony, who was in Mr. Norris' employ about three years ago, and was seen about the place on the 7th instant. He is about 25 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, stout build, old scar on one of his cheeks.

(NSW Police Gazette, 18 November 1895, p394)

A victim of the 1890s depression, Matthew Fennessy was declared bankrupt in 1897; yet another bankruptcy associated with the owners of "The Rangers". The Norris family moved to Kirribilli, and later to Stanmore.

Mr. R. A. Norris.

Mr. Richard Augustine Norris died at his residence, "Osterley," Stanmore, on New Years Day, after a prolonged and painful illness. The deceased gentleman was born in County Cork, Ireland, 71 years ago, and came out to Australia with his parents who left Ireland shortly after the termination of the Crimean War, on account of the death, at the war, of the deceased's brother, Surgeon J. J. Norris, of the 55th Regiment (Connaught Rangers). At an early age, Mr. Norris entered the service of the Bank of Victoria, but subsequently came to New South Wales, and for many years managed

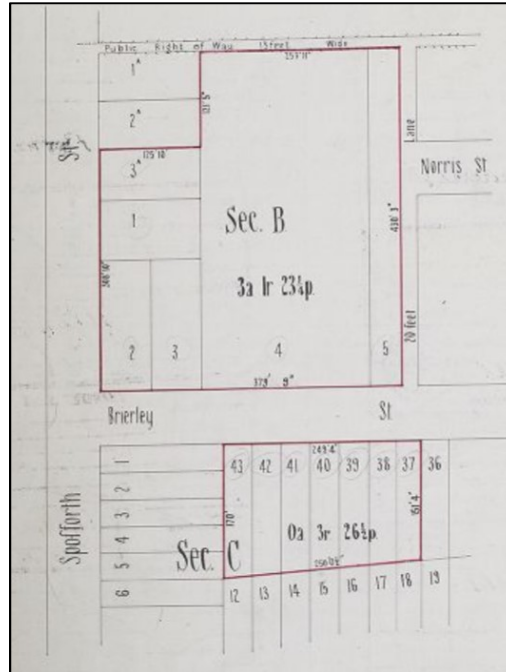
the Haymarket branch of the Australian Joint Stock Bank. The deceased was always interested in the affairs of his Church, and for a long time acted as treasurer of the building fund of St. Mary's Cathedral. He was quietly buried at the Gore Hill Ceme-

(Catholic Press, 8 January 1914, p30)

The house remained vacant for a short time, after which it was leased to a series of tenants. The Sands Directories listed:

- 1899/1900 F G Redman
- 1901/1902 C G Alford
- 1903/1906 Harry S Holt
- 1907/1910 Mrs L Hinchcliffe

In 1904 the house and its surrounding land were assigned to the mortgagee, the Bank of New South Wales. Lots 1A and 2A in the corner were sold in 1904 by the (different) joint mortgagees of those lots, exercising their power of sale. That same year the Bank purchased the seven lots on the other side of Brierley Street from the Rangers Estate Land Company. The reason for the additional purchase is not clear.



The Bank of New South Wales' land holding, 1904.
(LRS, Vol 1544 Fol 28)

A sale of the house's contents took place in 1906:

Messrs. Walter Bradley and Co. announce an attractive unreserved sale on Thursday next of household furniture, glassware, and china, &c., &c. The sale is to be held at the residence of Mr. H. S. Holt, "The Rangers," Mosman, the well-known old historic home of the late Mr. Bloxsome. Full particulars will be found in our advertising columns to-day.

(The Australian Star, 24 March 1906, p6)

The Bank eventually found buyers for their properties in 1909, when they were transferred to Laurence Herschel Harris and Thomas Spiers Kirkland, both medical practitioners and property developers.⁴⁸ The writing was on the wall for "The Rangers" and the last tenant, Mrs Hinchcliffe, moved out in 1910.

Harris and Kirkland sold off lots 37 to 43 of the earlier subdivision and in 1911 announced a new subdivision of the remaining land, including the site of the house (see Section 5.8). They were the last owners of "The Rangers" which was demolished three years later (see Chapter 6).

⁴⁸ LRS, Vol 2008 Fol 37, 38.

4. OSWALD BRIERLY AND HIS COTTAGE

Oswald Brierly (later Sir Oswald) was a marine painter and adventurer. He arrived in Sydney in 1842, after a round-the-world voyage with Benjamin Boyd. Brierly managed Boyd's Twofold Bay whaling enterprise for several years, after which he moved back to Sydney.



Oswald Brierly, aged 53, 1870.
(National Portrait Gallery, 2015.22)

As a friend of Oswald Bloxsome, Brierly was a regular guest at "The Rangers". The Bloxsoles had a keen interest in art, with Henrietta an accomplished water colourist and her husband an amateur sketcher.⁴⁹ He stayed in a small stone cottage a short distance from the house.

I recollect on one occasion the late Mr Stuart Russell showing me a building on the Rangers Estate, some little distance from the main dwelling, which he told me was where Brierly used to work at his pictures. It was only two rooms, built of stone, and, I think, of octagon shape.⁵⁰

When in 1886 the estate underwent the subdividing process a network of "streets," "roads," and "avenues" came into existence, and Brierly's cot (sic) now fronts what is known as Oswald Street. A quaint little cabin (there are only two rooms and a lean-to), partaking something of the character of a Swiss chalet, it used to be a picturesque object with its lovely garden and, in due season, with the wealth of Christmas bells that clustered about its front porch. What with the neighbouring waterfalls, the profusion of wildflowers and the great variety of bird and insect life, the place thereabouts was one

⁴⁹ Souter, p56.

⁵⁰ Edward Stack, Letter to the Editor, *SMH*, 2 May 1907, p11.

of the most enchanting and romantic spots around Sydney and an ideal retreat for an artist.⁵¹



(*The Sun*, 6 August 1923, p12)



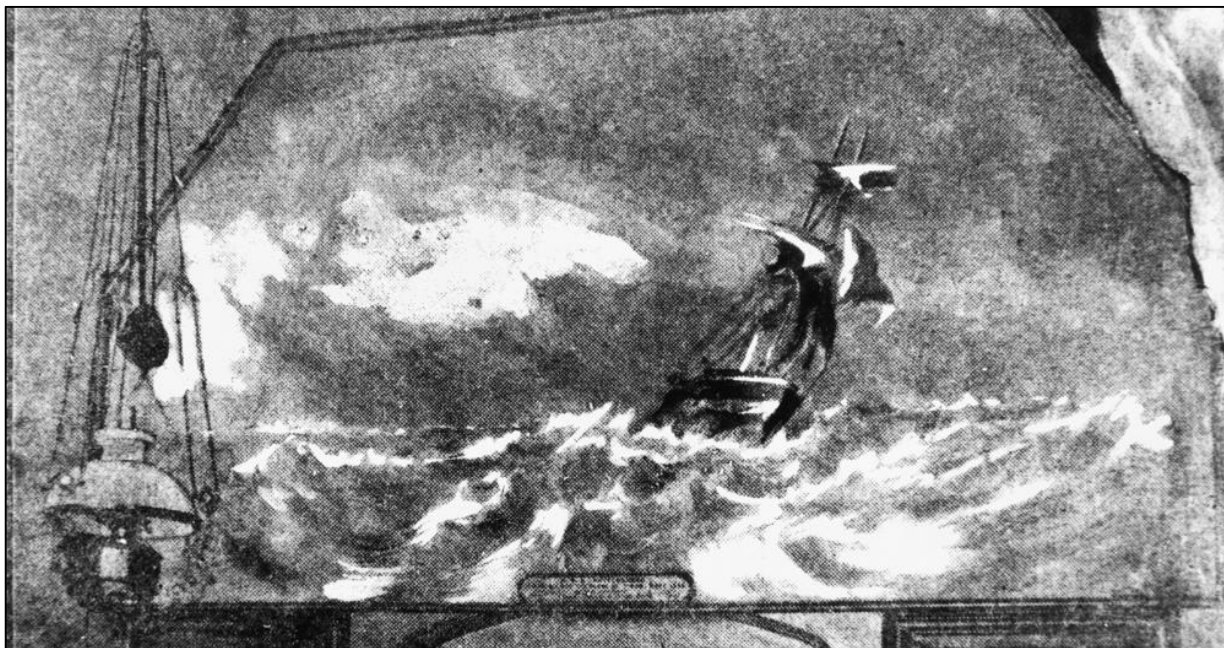
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

The comparisons to a Swiss chalet suggest that the cottage may have been built by the Bavarians who built cottages on the estate while they were quarrying stone and constructing “The Rangers”.

After meeting Captain Owen Stanley at “The Rangers” in the late 1840s, Brierly joined him on the HMS *Rattlesnake* on two surveying voyages to the Barrier Reef and New Guinea. On his return from the voyages in 1849, he painted a mural using crayon and distemper, on the dining room wall of “The Rangers”.

⁵¹ *The Sun*, 6 August 1923, p12.

The circumstances of its being painted are told by Mr Oswald Bloxome. "We were sitting round the fire one evening, when Oswald Brierly related how a terrific storm had struck the *Rattlesnake* (an old tub, considered adequate in those days, by the Imperial Government, for exploration purposes). Suddenly, he rose, and, taking a burnt stick out of the fire, he drew the scene, depicting the wonderful height of the waves, the vessel plunging into a terrific sea, almost hidden, and the sky above, almost more terrible than the waters. It was a splendid sketch of a scene never to be forgotten."⁵²



HMS *Rattlesnake* in a storm off the Island of Timor.
(John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, 1 168291)

Ever the adventurer, Brierly then went on voyages around New Zealand, Chile, Peru and Mexico and back to England. At the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853, Brierly volunteered to sail with the Allied fleets as an artist-observer. This brought him fame and royal patronages, having been praised by John Ruskin as producing "the most faithful and brilliant drawings of our Navy in the Baltic".⁵³

Brierly continued to travel extensively and in 1868 he was back in Sydney as the artist on HMS *Galatea* during Prince Alfred the Duke of Edinburgh's tour around the world. On a visit to "The Rangers", which by then was being leased by the Moriatis (see Section 3.4), he noted that his drawing of the HMS *Rattlesnake* required restoration.⁵⁴ Brierly's drawing was destroyed during the demolition of "The Rangers" (see Chapter 6). The contractor G L Cooper tried to save the wall, however a buyer could not be found. The many "restorations" the drawing had suffered had reduced its value as an artwork. However, a small copy of it by Charles Tindall is held by the Mitchell Library and fragments of the original have apparently been found in a shed in Crows Nest, Sydney.⁵⁵

⁵² Mary Salmon, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 22 March 1911, p 22.

⁵³ *The Sun*, 6 August 1923, p12.

⁵⁴ Hughes, p15.

⁵⁵ Sir Oswald Brierly, *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online*, and Hughes, p15.

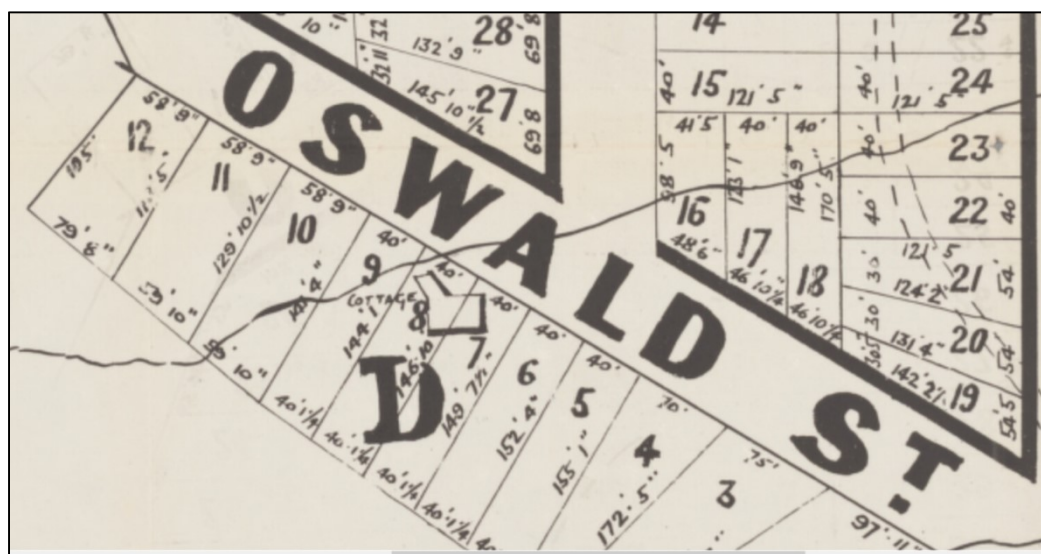
“THE RANGERS” PICTURE.

The trustees of the Public Library of New South Wales have received from Mr. R. N. Sheridan, the manager of the Bathurst-street branch of the Bank of New South Wales, a valuable addition to the art gallery of the Mitchell Library, consisting of a copy of the picture “H.M.S. Rattlesnake in a Squall off Timor,” which was painted by the late Sir Oswald Brierly, on the wall of one of the rooms at “The Rangers,” Mosman, in 1849. The original, in the course of time, will be destroyed, when the house is either altered or demolished, and as an expert reported that the fresco could not be removed without injury, Mr. Sheridan commissioned an accomplished local artist, Mr. C. E. S. Tindall, to paint a copy for preservation. The result is so faithful and artistic, that no one but an expert would be able to pronounce it other than an original. It will be hung with the other Brierly pictures in the Mitchell collection. The trustees are very thankful to Mr. Sheridan for his handsome addition to their treasures, and appreciate his patriotism in making the gift.

(Evening News, 22 September 1909, p8)

Back in England, Brierly was appointed as Queen Victoria’s Marine Painter and was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society. In 1881 he became the curator of the Painted Hall at Greenwich, and was knighted in 1885.⁵⁶ He died in 1894 aged 77. His works are hung in the National Library of Australia, the Mitchell Library, the Art Gallery of NSW and the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, as well as being held in private collections.

For many years Brierly’s cottage was a remarkable survivor of the subdivisions and demolitions associated with the Rangers Estate. A map of the 1889 subdivision shows the cottage across Lots 7 and 8.



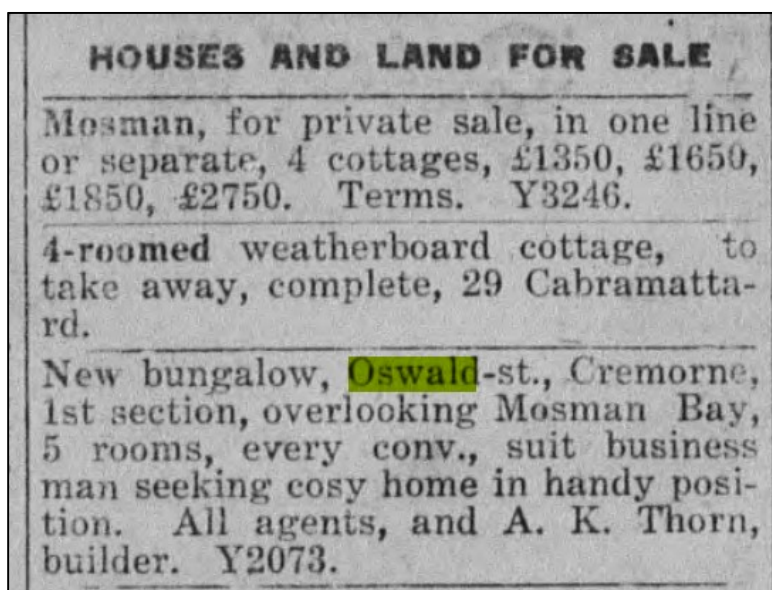
Brierly’s cottage marked on the 1889 subdivision map.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

⁵⁶ National Portrait Gallery.

In October 1892 Lots 7, 8 and 9 were purchased from the Rangers Estate Land Company by Frederick Ashwin, an artist of the City of Sydney.⁵⁷ Perhaps because of the cottage's long association with the artist Brierly, Ashwin did not demolish it. It is not known whether he ever used the cottage as a studio – he was a stained glass artist. Together with John Falconer, his company Ashwin & Falconer produced glass for prominent buildings such as Sydney Town Hall and St Judes Anglican Church in Randwick.⁵⁸

The Sands Directory first lists Oswald Street in 1892, at which time only Robert Lowrick lived in the street, in Brierly's cottage. Gradually, new houses were built, although by 1915 there were still only three new houses on the eastern side. During that time, Brierly's cottage was occupied by Robert Lowrick (1891 – 1895), Ralph Miller (1896 – 1898), Alfred Schick (1899), Mrs Lewis (1902 – 1906), and Mrs Crowley (1907 – 1912). A Mosman local historian Neville Hughes, who lived in Holt Avenue in 1912, recalls buying eggs for his mother at that time from the tenant at the cottage, who was the lamplighter.⁵⁹ Henry Raymond was recorded as living in "Stonehouse" from 1915 to 1918, presumably the cottage. After 1919 there are no more tenants recorded.

Following Frederick Ashwin's death in 1912, the three lots were transferred to his executor, Perpetual Trustees. It was not until July 1919 that they were sold to Catherine Wright, wife of Edward Wright.⁶⁰ She too held them as a speculative investment, and with no tenants the cottage fell into disrepair. Lot 9 (3 Oswald Street) was sold to a builder, Angus Thorn, in August 1922 and the house "Patonga" was built in 1923.⁶¹ This destroyed the garden setting of Brierly's cottage, although the cottage itself remained on the adjacent lots.



(The Daily, 4 January 1923)

Lot 8 (5 Oswald Street) was sold to Angus Thorn in March 1923, at which time it became clear that the cottage was to be demolished.

⁵⁷ LRS Vol 1074 Fol 71.

⁵⁸ Australian Dictionary of Biography Online, and Karla Whitmore, *Stained Glass Pioneers of Sydney*, 2015.

⁵⁹ Hughes, p18.

⁶⁰ LRS Vol 1074 Fol 71.

⁶¹ Sands Directory 1924.

The proposed demolition did not go unnoticed. In August 1923 *The Sun* newspaper published an illustrated article giving the history of Brierly and his cottage, and describing his “Swiss Cottage” in a beautiful setting.⁶²

Having demolished the cottage and built a new house on Lot 8, Angus Thorn sold it to Alice Toll, a widow of Mosman, in December 1923.⁶³ She named her house “The Lodge”, perhaps under the misapprehension that this had been the Lodge of the Rangers Estate.⁶⁴ Mrs Toll owned her property until her death in the early 1940s. Her house was later occupied by Peter Turnbull, a long-time Mosman resident, then the journalist Geraldine Doogue. It has now been demolished.⁶⁵

Lot 7 (7 Oswald Street) was purchased by Angus Thorn in December 1923, and the new house “Montema” was built in 1926.⁶⁶ Brierly’s cottage was therefore once situated across the boundary between the two houses currently at Nos 5 and 7 Oswald Street.

⁶² *The Sun*, 6 August 1923, p12.

⁶³ LRS Vol 3463 Fol 15.

⁶⁴ The Rangers Lodge was at the entrance to the estate from Avenue Road.

⁶⁵ Peter Turnbull, 2012, Oral History, Mosman Local Studies Collection, Mosman Library Service.

⁶⁶ LRS Vol 1074 Fol 71.Sands Directory 1927.

5. SUBDIVISION OF THE RANGERS ESTATE

5.1 1886 SUBDIVISION

Richard Harnett Jnr and his partners attempted to subdivide and sell the Rangers Estate in 1886. The subdivision contained 190 very small lots and curiously it created Rangers Avenue as a straight road, rather than following the road which had been built by Henry Stuart Russell to avoid rocky outcrops. It also created Bloxsome Street which almost followed the route of the path from the jetty but was shown intersecting with the new Reginald and Oswald Streets. This proposed street also faced challenges from the topography. Whether it was due to the small lots, bad timing or the awkward road layout, the subdivision was a spectacular failure. No sales were made.

RANGERS ESTATE
MOSSMAN'S BAY

1st Auction Sale on the Ground on
SATURDAY MAY 8th 1886
SALE OF HOUSE 12.30. ALLOTMENTS at 3 PM.
LUNCHEON 1.30.
TERMS
10% Deposit the Balance by
10 equal Quarterly Instalments
with 1/2% added.

ATCHISON & SCHLEICHER
Civil Engineers & Lic'd Surveyors
Formerly located upon First Pitt & Moore Sts.
Eldon Chambers 92 Pitt St.

TORRENS TITLE.
BATT, RODD & PURVES
Auctioneers

John Sands, Lith.

(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

5.2 1889 SUBDIVISION

After the failure of the first subdivision, the land was transferred to a new entity, the Rangers Estate Land Company Ltd, albeit still associated with Harnett and his partners. The land was mortgaged to the Bank of New South Wales.

A redrawn subdivision, with larger lots, was launched in 1889, this time with a little more success, although the first sale was not until August 1890.⁶⁷ The end of Rangers Avenue had been reconfigured to utilise the existing creek crossing and the road itself now followed the existing access road to the house. The grounds surrounding “The Rangers” had been cut back to allow for 6 lots between the house and Spofforth Street, and the troublesome Bloxsome Street had disappeared completely.

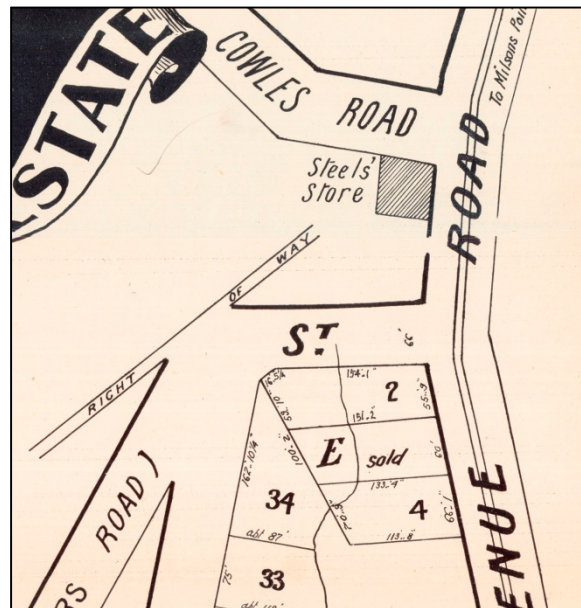


(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

⁶⁷ LRS, Vol 876 Fol 52.

5.3 STEEL'S STORE

As the Rangers Estate land was gradually subdivided and sold, a grocery store was established in the northeast corner. Janet Steel, a widow, purchased the lot on the northern corner of Rangers Avenue and Avenue Road in 1896.⁶⁸ However, it appears that the Steel family had established a store on the site some years before its purchase. In May 1893 Gavan Alston Steel was licenced to sell postage stamps at his premises in Avenue Road, Mosman.⁶⁹ The Sands Directories indicate that his grocery store was located from 1893 at 32 Avenue Road, between Rangers Avenue and what is now Cowles Road. In 1899, when he was robbed he was described as “a grocer and produce merchant”.⁷⁰



Extract from 1904 Reid Park subdivision map,
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

In 1906 Steel's Store was advertised as “the oldest established grocery in Mosman”.⁷¹ The grocery business was transferred to his son Alan Alston Steel in 1942.⁷²

The site is now covered by apartments.

5.4 REID PARK

The head of Mosman Bay, once a tidal area where fish could be trapped, and boats could dock at the wharf, was originally mostly white sand. As the subdivision and development of Mosman progressed, more and more residential areas were created. This generated additional runoff of storm water and sewage into the bay, which became a “wide expanse of mud” causing many complaints about its offensive smell.⁷³

Public pressure mounted to reclaim the area, both for improved sanitation, and to create a public recreation area. In 1890 a petition signed by 800 people was presented to the Minister

⁶⁸ LRS, Vol 1159 Fol 179.

⁶⁹ NSW Government Gazette, 6 June 1893, p4242.

⁷⁰ SMH, 8 September 1899, p7.

⁷¹ SMH, 22 December 1906, p7.

⁷² SMH, 26 February 1942, p1.

⁷³ Hughes, P83.

for Lands.⁷⁴ Nothing happened until Mosman separated from North Sydney in 1893, and the new Mosman Council made further representations to the Minister. Council agreed to contribute £700 to the scheme while the Department of Public Works funded the balance. The work was completed in 1900 and the new park was named Reid Park after the Premier of NSW, Sir George Reid.

5.5 1900 SUBDIVISION

The advertising for the auction of lots in 1900 not only shows Reid Park, but also the number of lots previously sold. The Rangers Lodge, near the end of Rangers Avenue, remains intact on the unsold Lot 6.

RANGERS ESTATE
MOSMAN'S BAY
 FOR Auction Sale on the Ground on SAT. DECEMBER 15TH 1900 AT 3 P.M.

TERMS
 10% DEPOSIT
 15% IN 3 MONTHS BALANCE
 1/4 IN HALF YEARLY INSTALMENTS AT 4% INTEREST
 EXTENDING OVER 3 YEARS TORRENS TITLE

LOCAL SKETCH
 MOSMAN'S BAY, REID PARK, NORTH SYDNEY, PORT JACKSON, CIRCULAR POINT, FARM COVE, GARDEN ISL.

ATCHISON & SCHLEICHER
 Civil Engineers & Lic'd Surveyors
 Specially Licensed under the Public Works Act
 Eldon Chambers 92 Pitt St.

RICHARDSON & WRENCH LTD
 Auctioneers.

(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

⁷⁴ SMH, 4 December 1890.

5.7 1906 SUBDIVISION

Finally, in 1906, there was the last marketing campaign and auction for the Rangers Estate subdivision, and the Reid Park subdivision. There were many remaining unsold lots.

REID PARK EST!
And
RANGERS EST!
MOSMAN

Choice Building Sites
 At the Head of Mosmans Bay

FOR AUCTION SALE, ON THE GROUND
SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH 1906.
 AT 3 O'CLOCK.

RAINE & HORNE
 AUCTIONEERS
 86 PITT ST

TERMS
 25 per cent deposit
 Balance in 5 equal yearly payments
 with interest at 5 per cent per annum
 payable half yearly
TORRENS TITLE

Labels on map include: NORRIS AVENUE, PARK AVENUE, LOWER AVENUE, RANGERS AVENUE, Brierley Estate, Reid Park, Rangers Estate, Mosmans Bay, Great Sirius Cove, New Iron Foot Bridge, Cowles Road, Steele's Store, and various lot numbers (1-41).

(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

5.8 THE END OF THE RANGERS ESTATE

The Rangers Estate Land Company Ltd struggled on until 1912, when the remaining lots were taken over by the mortgagee in possession, the Bank of New South Wales. The Bank continued to sell the lots, with the last sale being in 1923.⁷⁵

The last sale of Harris and Kirkland's subdivided lots was finalised in January 1915, while the last of the eight lots comprising the house site was sold in 1922 (see Chapter 6).

This makes 1923 the year of the complete conversion of the Rangers Estate into a housing estate.

⁷⁵ LRS, Vol 2166 Fol 143.

6. THE DEMOLITION OF "THE RANGERS"

There are several books and documents which suggest that "The Rangers" was demolished in 1912. This is incorrect; it was demolished in March 1914.

The housebreakers have at last got to work, on "The Rangers," at Mosman, and in a few days the historic house will be no more.⁷⁶

When the house and its grounds were sold to the developers Laurence Harris and Thomas Kirkland in 1909, the medical practitioners' intentions were clear. With the house site chopped into eight lots on the subdivision plan of 1911 the house faced demolition.

**RANGERS ESTATE
MOSMAN**

ADJOINING CREMORNE TRAM
FOR AUCTION SALE ON THE GROUND, AT 3 O'CLOCK
SATURDAY 25th NOVEMBER 1911

RAINE & HORNE
AUCTIONEERS. 86 PITT ST SYDNEY.

SPOFFORTH LANE ST
NORRIS ST
BRIERLEY ST

19 20 21 22 23 24
18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
45 42 41 40 39 38 37

The Rangers

TORRENS TITLE

TERMS
10 PER CENT DEPOSIT
BALANCE BY 12 EQUAL QUARTERLY
PAYMENTS WITH INTEREST AT 5%

Fisher & Nott
Licensed Surveyors under R.P. Act
86 PITT ST SYDNEY.

All dimensions subject to Deposited Plan

M26/306

(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

⁷⁶ The Sun, 27 March 1914, p9.

As was noted in the advertising, a continuation of Norris Street (previously called Rangers Avenue) had already been formed, ballasted, kerbed and guttered under the supervision of Mosman Council. This would have removed all of the features at the rear of the house, and explains why the house was last tenanted in 1910. The "commodious family mansion" was being offered in one line (eight lots), however, with minimal remaining garden this would have been an unattractive proposition.

ELEVATED SITUATION, UNINTERRUPTED VIEWS, AND ADJOINING THE NEW CREMORNE TRAMWAY.

FRONTAGES TO BRIERLEY-STREET AND NORRIS-STREET
(a continuation of the existing Norris-street, formed, ballasted, and kerbed and guttered under the supervision of the Mosman Council).

Eight of the Allotments, including

"THE RANGERS,"

THAT WELL-KNOWN AND COMMODIOUS FAMILY MANSION, WILL BE SUBMITTED IN ONE LINE, AND THE BALANCE OF THE ALLOTMENTS WILL BE OFFERED SEPARATELY.

ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING FREEHOLD ESTATES IN THIS LOCALITY.

TORRENS TITLE. THREE YEARS' TERMS.

AUCTION SALE ON THE GROUND

SATURDAY, 25th NOV., AT 3 P.M.

(SMH, 28 October 1911, p28)

In November 1911, members of the Mosman Camera Club visited the house to photograph views of the mansion from all sides, not overlooking the HMS *Rattlesnake* picture on the wall. They reported that "some very good copies were secured".⁷⁷ By 1912 the fittings in the house were being removed.

The building contains a number of spacious rooms and a haunted belfry, which is reached by a winding stair from within. The bell, which has hung in this tower since the days of Bloxsome, and was used to call labourers to work, will now be used to call worshippers to prayer, as Drs. Kirkland and Harris, who have recently become owners of the property, have presented the bell to St. Peter's Church at Neutral Bay.⁷⁸

There was a great deal of community opposition to the proposed demolition of the grand old house. A group called the Rangers Society was formed to fundraise, with the plan of purchasing the building as headquarters for the Northern Suburbs Institute.⁷⁹ The fundraising prospectus (dated 1913) is held by the State Library of NSW. A variety of fundraising events were held, some in "The Rangers" itself.

⁷⁷ Mosman Camera Club Minutes, 22 December 1911.

⁷⁸ *The Truth*, 24 November 1912, p12.

⁷⁹ *Evening News*, 28 April 1913, p9.

NORTHERN SUBURBS INSTITUTE

A grand conversatione and garden fete are to be held in that historic residence, The Rangers, Spofforth Street Mosman, tomorrow and Saturday, to be opened by Mrs P Leahy tomorrow at 8 o'clock, when there will be amusements to suit all, free concerts, numerous side shows and dancing. As it is proposed to house the above institute in The Rangers, funds are urgently required to carry out this effect, and that is the reason of holding the fete in the old home.⁸⁰

Movement to Save Historic House.

A big effort is being made by the Northern Suburbs Institute to prevent the threatened demolition of the old Mosman home known as "The Rangers." The place was to have been pulled down towards the end of last year, but the owners were prevailed upon to allow the house to stand pending the result

It is to preserve this historic home that a number of local residents have banded themselves together under the name of the Rangers' Society, of which Mr. Harry Lees is the "Chief Ranger," and the Rev. J. H. Chaseling, of St. Peter's, Neutral Bay, the treasurer. Considerable energy and enthusiasm are being infused into the movement, and if its supporters fail in the effort to raise the requisite amount of money it will certainly be for the want of a sufficiently vigorous campaign. The idea is to utilise the house as the headquarters of the Northern Suburbs Institute.

(*The Sun*, 20 April 1913, p7)

⁸⁰ *SMH*, 13 March 1913, p13.

"THE RANGERS."

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—I read an account a little while back about that valuable old residence "The Rangers." I have since then visited the place, and was much struck with its solidness, picturesque, and its wonderful preservation for 72 years' standing. It is indeed a truly educational historic building, and it is a shame that the public do not rally more enthusiastically and assist the Northern Suburbs Institute to preserve the place and prevent its demolition. I am informed by the secretary that Ald. D. D. Middleton, an old resident of Mosman, has gone so far as to put a deposit on "The Rangers" to secure it, and wishes to see someone else come forward and do likewise. I sincerely trust that others will come forward and either take a few debentures or give freely to the ladies who are, I believe, to canvass the whole of Mosman and Neutral Bay on Saturday, 10th. I am only a visitor to Sydney, but am forwarding my donation towards "The Rangers" preservation fund, and trust that many others will do likewise.—Yours, etc.

Murrumbidgee, Morpeth, July 10.

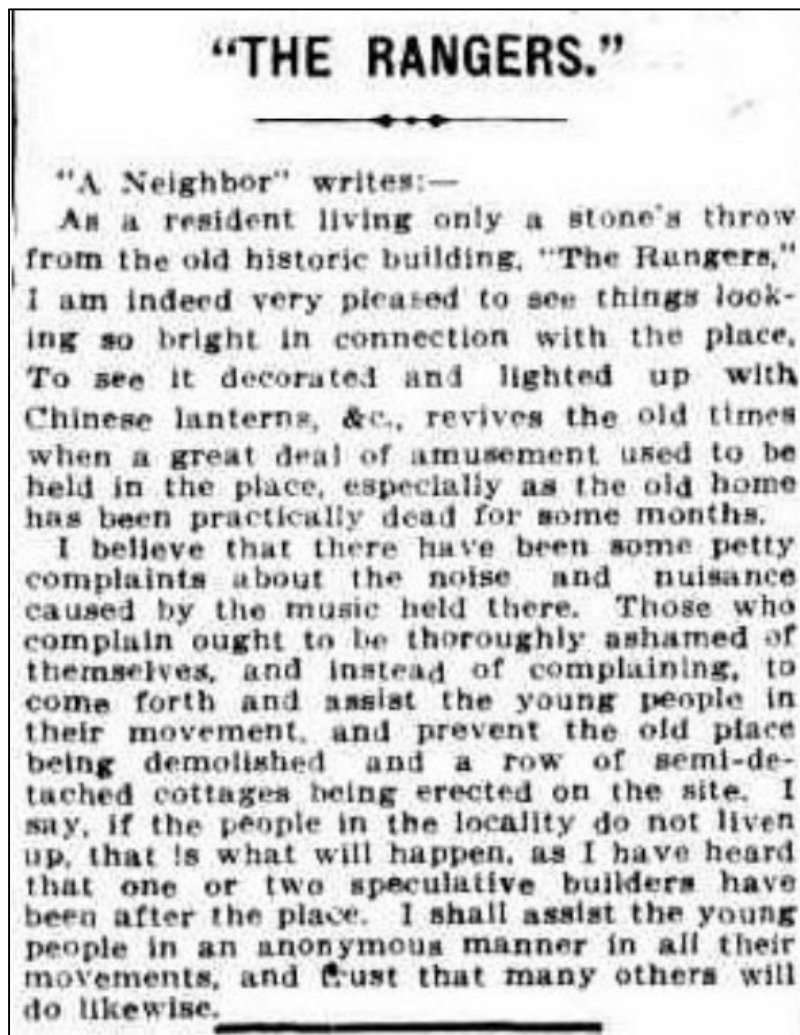
J. J. MORRISON.

(Daily Telegraph, 12 July 1913, p21)

"THE RANGERS" CONCERT.

A concert will be given at the Town Hall, Mosman, on Friday, November 14, the proceeds to be devoted to purchasing and converting the historic Rangers building, Cremorne, into a useful public institution. The concert is under the patronage of the Chief Justice and Lady Cullen, the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Mosman.

(SMH, 1 November 1913, p24)



(The Sun, 20 September 1913, p3)

However despite the best efforts of the Rangers Society, the response from the public did not meet expectations and the plan to purchase the house was abandoned. Tenders were called for the demolition, which commenced in March 1914.



"The Rangers", 1914, showing how close it was to Brierley Street.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)



"The Rangers", 1914, just prior to its demolition.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)



The roof being removed. The tiles were blue and red. (Ancher, p246)



(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

When the demolition of the house became inevitable, the contractor G L Cooper attempted to save Oswald Brierly's painting of the HMS *Rattlesnake*:

Considerable interest is being manifested in the demolition of "The Rangers" at Mosman, and many people are visiting the place to see the last of the quaint old home. Most of those who are going there are curious to know what will be the fate of Brierly's painting of HMS *Rattlesnake* on one of the walls of the dining room. The room, which is the one from which the bay window looks out, is 20ft wide, and the picture covers the full width of the end wall, from a line drawn about 10ft above the floor to the roof. It is done, however, not in oils, as is generally supposed, but in crayons and distemper. Mr G L Cooper, who is superintending the work now in progress, realises the value of the artistic treasure he has secured, and is making a great effort to save it. Most people have always thought that the wall on which the famous seascape is painted was built of solid stone, but the workmen have discovered that it is nothing more substantial than lathes and plaster. The task of removing the picture intact is therefore a very delicate one, but by staying the wall from behind Mr Cooper reckons that he can get it down without any fractures.⁸¹

⁸¹ *The Sun*, 30 March 1914, p1.



The wall with the drawing being removed. (Hughes, p118)

The 2-ton wall was removed intact, however a purchaser could not be found, and it was not accepted by the Mitchell Library, which commissioned a copy instead (see Chapter 4). Apparently this was because its many restorations had reduced its value as an artwork.⁸²

With the house gone, the developers were able to sell the group of eight lots in June 1914.⁸³ The buyer was Anna Margaretha Katherina Sibille Lind. She immediately announced an auction of "the site of the Historical Homestead".

⁸² Hughes, p15.

⁸³ LRS, Vol 2008 Fol 37.

By Order of the **PERPETUAL TRUSTEE CO. LTD.** As Agents for M^{rs} A.M.K.S. LIND

RANGERS ESTATE

8 Choice Building Blocks **MOSMAN** The Site of the HISTORICAL HOMESTEAD

Auction Sale on the Ground at 3 p.m.

SATURDAY 15TH AUGUST 1914

HARDIE & GORMAN PROPY LTD.
Auctioneers 133 Pitt St

TORRENS TITLE

TERMS 20% Deposit. Balance in 12 Quarterly Payments at 5% Interest.

NORRIS ST

BRIERLEY ST

SPOFFORTH ST Tram Line

LANE 20 FT WIDE

LOCAL SKETCH

A. V. HILLIARD
Solicitor to the Estate.
82 Pitt St Sydney

F. Cunningham & Co. Ltd., Litho, Sydney.

(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

One of her lots was sold in October 1914, and there were no sales during the war. Then in a final interesting twist to the demise of "The Rangers", in August 1920 her land was resumed by the Minister for Trade and Customs and vested in the Public Trustee under the "Trading With the Enemy Act 1914 – 1916".⁸⁴ This was revoked the following year after Lind's death. Her executors sold the remaining lots, the last one being transferred in April 1922.

The houses at Nos 25 to 31 Brierley Street are now located where the front of "The Rangers" once stood. The rear of the house was located where the houses at Nos 46 to 52 Rangers Avenue are now situated.

⁸⁴ LRS, Vol 2491 Fol 189.

One poignant memento from "The Rangers" is the large front door key to the house – now held in the collection of the Local Studies Library in Mosman.



The front door key from "The Rangers", mounted in a collection of unrelated items.
(Mosman Local Studies Library, Mosman Library Service)

7. THE STREETS AND HERITAGE OF THE RANGERS ESTATE

If “The Rangers” had survived it would have undoubtedly been of State heritage significance. Today there are no State-listed items within what was the Rangers Estate. However, there are several items of local heritage significance in some of the streets.

7.1 SPOFFORTH STREET

When Oswald Bloxsome sold his estate in 1886 to Richard Harnett Jnr’s business partners, the title deed shows a Government Road on its western boundary.⁸⁵ This government road provided access to a ferry at Cremorne Point, and had been formed by 1846.⁸⁶ The advertising material for the auction of the subdivided estate in 1886 shows it as Spofforth Street, leading to the conclusion that it was Harnett who named the street.

Frederick (Fred) Robert Spofforth (1853 – 1926) was a fast bowler who first toured England in the 1878 Australian cricket team, when Australia was victorious. He toured again in 1880, 1882 (the Ashes series), 1884 and 1886 and was at the height of his fame when Harnett purchased the Rangers Estate in 1886.⁸⁷

7.2 RANGERS AVENUE

The street was initially the access road built by Henry Stuart Russell from Avenue Road, across the creek to “The Rangers”. It curved around to avoid large rocks and to cross creeks. The section between Cartref Lane and Avenue Road was named Rangers Avenue in 1886 by Richard Harnett Jnr in his first subdivision of the Rangers Estate. By 1904 it had been renamed Norris Street after the Norris family who lived in “The Rangers” during the 1890s. In 1911 as the grounds of the mansion were subdivided, Norris Street was extended through to Spofforth Street. It reverted to the name Rangers Avenue in 1916. There is often some confusion between Rangers Avenue and Rangers Road in Cremorne. The latter was the access road to the Rangers Estate from Military Road to its western boundary.

Rangers Avenue contains four items of local heritage significance, although curiously several large Victorian houses have been overlooked.

The Electricity Substation No 208 between 59 Spofforth Street and 101 Rangers Avenue, built in 1915, is significant because it:

... has been designed to complement the environment. It demonstrates the attention to aesthetics prevalent in the area in the period and is a relic of the first phase of electricity supply in the suburb. It forms part of a fine collection of architecturally stylised substations in the Municipality. Built after electricity was connected to Mosman in 1915.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ LRS, Vol 801 Fol 165.

⁸⁶ Evidence given in 1846 to the Select Committee investigating the provision of a dry dock in Mosman Bay.

⁸⁷ Australian Dictionary of Biography.

⁸⁸ Heritage NSW, *State Heritage Inventory* and Mosman LEP Item No I255.



(Heritage NSW, 2001)

The Rangers Avenue electricity substation, now mostly obscured by uncontrolled vegetation.



(P Lofthouse, 2024)

The house at 69 Rangers Avenue is:

A rare and unusual survivor whose timber construction, generous garden and picturesque appearance would be more expected in the Dandenongs than in urban Mosman.⁸⁹

It was built in 1910 and named “Carthora”, later “Chiselhurst”.⁹⁰



(Heritage NSW, 2010)

“Carthora”, 69 Rangers Avenue. The house is now obscured from the street by high hedges



(P Lofthouse, 2024)

Heading further south down Rangers Avenue it is the divided road itself which is heritage listed. The steep, rocky areas of Mosman created problems for road builders, with many of the roads drawn on paper with no regard for the local topography. This has resulted in many pocket parks where parts of the roads could not be built at all, and other roads where the two lanes are divided. In Rangers Avenue the road itself is not divided (despite the heritage listing), however the footpaths and houses on the north side are much higher than the road level. Some front walls are built on large rocks.

Mosman's divided roads are integral to the Municipality's visual character and sense of place. Built as a utilitarian response to the steep harbourside topography, they reflect, in their fabric and construction technology, the development of Mosman's suburban structure. The large collection of these features makes Mosman instantly and uniquely recognisable.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Heritage NSW, Item I254.

⁹⁰ Sands Directories 1910, 1915, 1918.

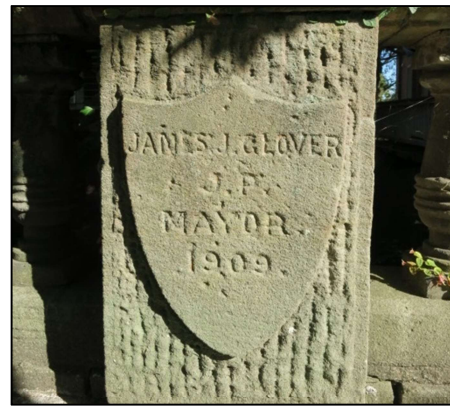
⁹¹ Heritage NSW, Item I438.



Rangers Avenue. (P Lofthouse, 2024)

Near the end of Rangers Avenue is a culvert which once had a large creek flowing under it. In 1909 Mosman Council decided to widen the Rangers Avenue/Avenue Road intersection, and built a new brick and stone culvert over the creek.⁹² Although the creek has long since been piped underground, the parapets on each side of the road remain, including the inscription to the then Mayor, James Glover. It is significant as:

An interesting and picturesque little bridge, with local historical associations. It is a relic of early Twentieth Century municipal improvements.⁹³



(P Lofthouse, 2021)

7.3 BRIERLEY STREET

Created in 1886 by Richard Harnett, the street was named after the artist Oswald Brierly. It is not known why the spelling is incorrect.

Commencing at the Spofforth Street end of the road, the first of four listed heritage items is the small block of flats at 26 Brierley Street. Remarkably intact, the “Brierwood Flats” building is:

A good representative example of the early period of residential flat buildings in Mosman.⁹⁴

⁹² Mosman Council Minutes, March 1909.

⁹³ Heritage NSW, Item I439.



“Brierwood Flats”, 26 Brierley Street.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)

Although not heritage listed, the four houses at Nos 31 to 25 are on the site of “The Rangers”.

The listed house and garden at 20 Brierley Street is “Hawlock”, built in 1912. It is:

A prime example of a California Bungalow in the manner of well-known Inter-War Sydney architect S G Thorp. Set in an attractive and historic garden, which contains plant species that are rare in the municipality.⁹⁵



“Hawlock”, 20 Brierley Street.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)

⁹⁴ Heritage NSW, Item I55.

⁹⁵ Heritage NSW, Item I54.

On the northern side of the road, on the corner of Cartref Lane, is “Cartref” at 19 Brierley Street. Cartref is “home” in Welsh. The building is:

A handsome house of most unusual asymmetrical design, pleasingly related to a small adjoining urban park which was once part of its garden.⁹⁶

Despite its Statement of Significance explicitly mentioning its “unusual asymmetrical design”, a first floor addition has destroyed its distinctive chimney and design.



(Heritage NSW, 2001)



(P Lofthouse, 2024)

“Cartref”, 19 Brierley Street.

The original garden of “Cartref” is now a pocket park, owned by Mosman Council and heritage listed.

A small yet effective park, containing a number of interesting plantings, and having an important historic, physical and aesthetic association with the adjacent distinctive house “Cartref”.⁹⁷



“Cartref” and the adjacent “Cartref Park”.

(P Lofthouse, 2024)

7.4 OSWALD STREET

It is not known whether the Oswald refers to Oswald Bloxsome or Oswald Brierly, although as there was originally both a Brierley Street (sic) and a Bloxsome Street, it could have been either. The street was named by Richard Harnett in his 1886 subdivision.

⁹⁶ Heritage NSW, Item I53.

⁹⁷ Heritage NSW, Item I336.

There are two listed heritage items in Oswald Street. At 2 Oswald Street, on the corner with Reginald Street, is:

A most interesting house whose architectural and landscape design skilfully acknowledges the bend and steep slope of Oswald Street and the presence of a creek at this location.⁹⁸

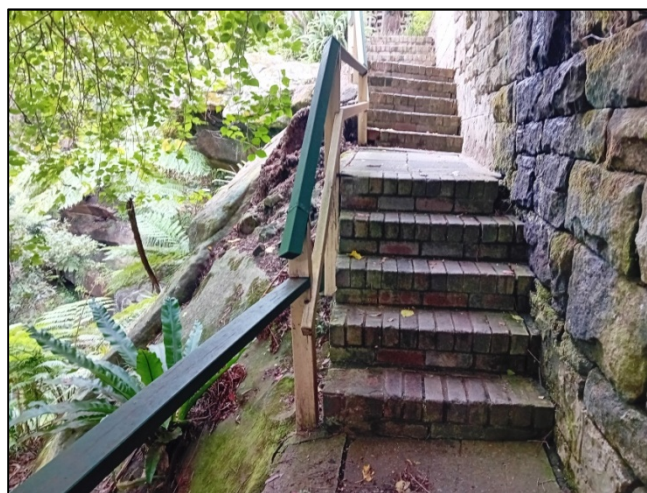


2 Oswald Street. (P Lofthouse, 2024)

Although not heritage listed, the houses at Nos 3 to 7 Oswald Street are on the site of Oswald Brierly's cottage.

At the end of Oswald Street several flights of steps lead down to Park Avenue, alongside the creek which formed the southern boundary of the Rangers Estate. The steps are heritage listed.

The pedestrian steps of Mosman are integral to the visual character and sense of the place. Built as a utilitarian response to the steep harbourside topography the large collection of steps and associated paths reflect, in their fabric and construction, the development of Mosman's suburban structure. In general they are pleasing visual features in the streetscape. They are among the features that make the suburb instantly recognisable as Mosman.⁹⁹



Steps linking Oswald Street and Park Avenue.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)

⁹⁸ Heritage NSW, Item I197.

⁹⁹ Heritage NSW, Item I421.

7.5 REGINALD STREET

Named by Richard Harnett after Oswald Bloxsome's grandson Reginald.

There is one building listed in the street – a pair of semi-detached houses at 31-33 Reginald Street.

A substantial largely intact building set on an elevated site. An unusual example of a purpose-built dual occupancy designed in the form of a single dwelling. Unlike many Mosman houses of this style, the potential for restoring the exterior of this building has not been destroyed by the painting of the face brickwork.¹⁰⁰



Semis at 31-33 Reginald Street.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)

7.6 PARK AVENUE

This road was created in 1904 by the Rangers Estate Land Company after Reid Park had been reclaimed at the head of Mosman Bay.

There is only one listed heritage building in Park Avenue. The other two items are the divided road (an actual divided road, unlike Rangers Avenue) and a set of steps.

The flats at 36A Park Avenue are:

An uncompromisingly modern and dramatically-sited building in the Postwar International Style by an interesting Sydney practitioner.¹⁰¹

Designed by H P Oser and Associates, the flats characterise the trend towards high-rise development that became evident in Mosman after World War II.

¹⁰⁰ Heritage NSW, Item I264.

¹⁰¹ Heritage NSW, Item I201.



36A Park Avenue. (P Lofthouse, 2024)



Most of Park Avenue is a divided road (one lane in each direction, one higher than the other).
(P Lofthouse, 2024)



Steps leading down from Park Avenue towards Reid Park.
(P Lofthouse, 2024)

Although they were not part of the Rangers Estate, Reid Park is listed with local heritage significance, and the Bolivia Bridge sewage aquaduct/footbridge has State heritage significance.¹⁰²

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¹⁰² Heritage NSW, Items 315 and 314.

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