



# THE PIONEER

RURAL & RESIDENTIAL  
PROPERTY

## Booral House

DENISE HAYNES - 'R & R' RURAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

Except for some temporary camps, the first structure to be built as an out station on the Australian Agricultural Company's Estate was "Booral House".

It was located at the head of navigation of the Karuah River, at a position where the river changes from salt to fresh water, and was surrounded by some of the richest farming country in the estate. The site is on rising ground on the Eastern bank of the river, giving a splendid view of the countryside. (It can be seen from the Bucketts Way as you travel north into Booral. Just after you come off the bridge look over to the hills on your right)



The house was built in 1831, as a residence for the Company's Chief Servants, the first occupant being Mr Burnett, the Superintendent of Agriculture. The bricks for the house were made just half a mile east of the homestead, adjacent to Booral Creek.

The bricks were laid on a foundation of trenches filled with large un-cemented stones, these forming a rough "damp course". Mortar and plaster were made from local materials, and lime was obtained by burning sea shells, carried by ship from Port Stephens. The old method of "tying" a house together by laying long stringers of 3 x 2" or 4 x 2" hardwood within the walls at regular intervals was used through-out the building. All walls inside and out were plastered. The original colour of the house was ochre-yellow.

The roof timbers were all rough-sawn (adze trimmed) local hardwood. The original roof itself would almost

certainly have been shingle, later slate, and finally galvanised iron.

The interior of the house was a fine tribute to the old craftsmen with their primitive equipment (by today's standards). Ceilings were all lath and plaster, and were set to give a finish that would challenge even those of today. All joinery, windows, doors, etc were of cedar. Much of the fine cedar work shows the influence of architect John Verge, who visited the house briefly.

Approximately 10 years after Booral House was completed it was noted in Edwards Parry's diary that he considered Booral House the best finished and most comfortable on the whole of the Company's Estate. The fact that it still stands proudly on the hill in Booral today is testament to our pioneer's skills.

*[ Information sourced from The Stroud Historical Society records. ]*