After Carr’s death in 1854, the property — 5,340 acres, or 2,163 ha, from Kioloa almost to Bawley Point — was purchased by Yates and Evans for £5,874.¹ The Evans family dominated the local scene till at least 1910.² A simplified Evans family tree is given on page 25. It shows only those who owned the land, or who lived and worked in the area. Many other family members would have lived at Murramarang House as children. (See also Table 1, Chapter 2.) I have used I, II, etc., to separate people with the same given names.

We start with John Evans I (1820–1901), and his brother Evan Evans I (1804–1863). They had come separately from Cornwall, England, and were two of nine children of David and Constance Evans. They were farming at Shellharbour when Evan I, in partnership with William Yates, bought Murramarang. Yates withdrew from the partnership in August 1857, being paid £2,803 10s for his half-share. When Evan I died in 1863, the property was left to friends Andrew Thompson and David Warden, brother John Evans I, son Evan Robert Evans II, and son-in-law Wm Hindmarsh. The bequest to the two friends and three relatives appears to have been drawn up without subdividing the land.

Andrew Thompson died in 1867, and three of the legatees (Evan Evans II, Warden and Hindmarsh) sold to the fourth (John Evans I) in September 1870, for £4,500. John I controlled the whole property till he retired in 1900, leaving John II to manage it. But after a disagreement, John II left and took up a property of his own (‘Danesbank’, near Milton). John I died in 1901, leaving the Murramarang property as a whole to trustees for his four sons Evan III, John II, William, and David. The sons had other properties of their own, so the homestead appears

¹ Registrar General, Sydney, No. 912, Book 34.
to have been empty till 1906, when an indenture (legal agreement) was signed, sharing the property out as shown in Map 1 and Table 1. At this time, John Evans II already owned another small block of 40 acres at Bawley Point, north of block A and east of the Bawley–Kioloa road.

In the 1906 indenture, block E (see Map 1) was referred to as ‘The Kioloa Block’; block D, which in later years was called ‘Bundle’, was referred to as ‘The Bullock Paddock Block’; and blocks B and C together were referred to as ‘The Homestead Block’. Block A is often referred to as ‘Willinga’. The block or blocks attached to Murramarang House have traditionally been known simply as ‘Murramarang’, but the name has wider meanings since the declaration of Murramarang National Park in April 1973.

Robert Ritchie, who married Jane, eldest daughter of Evan Robert Evans I, was at Murramarang in the 1850s, and appears to have been active in running the property. The *Illawarra Mercury*, 1 April 1858, reported:

> Mr Ritchie of Murramarang has gone through with springing heifers, we understand on his way to Dapto. He is the most spirited proprietor in the district in the efforts he has made to improve stock and improve the general mode of farming.

A few months later (9 July 1858) the *Mercury* reported: ‘Mr Ritchie has leased 11000 acres of Crown Land between Burrill Lake and Murramarang.’

Between 1910 and 1917, the various separate Evans properties in the area were sold, and the long period of Evans ownership came to an end. But some of the family continued in the area for many years. Perhaps best known in recent years was Neil Evans (1912–1992). Neil grew up in the Milton district. He came to Murramarang briefly in 1928 to shift cattle recently scarred by bush fires. He returned in 1934 to shear sheep for Billy Orr, and stayed on to do some ploughing for him.
When Orr enlisted at the outbreak of war in 1939, Neil leased Murramarang and farmed it till 1946. Later, after Joy London’s uncle (Hum Moore) died in 1966, Neil managed the Kioloa property. He continued there for some time after the property was given to The Australian National University in 1975.

Neil’s elder brother Windsor came to the area in 1939. He took over the mail run from Termeil to Kioloa from his cousin Frank after he retired in 1944. Windsor had been born at Willinga, a small settlement on the north side of Willinga Lake.

Frank, Alf and Abe Evans also lived in the district. Frank and Alf were sons of Evan Robert III. Mrs Lily Veitch (née Walker) recalled that when the Walker family stayed at Murramarang House for three months around 1910 waiting
for their own house to be built, Alf was running the property, with help from Frank, and both lived there with their wives. Their mother, Mrs Evan Evans, was also living there. Alf had taken over after his father’s sudden death in 1906. Mrs Evan Evans was a local midwife.

I am not sure where Abe Evans fits in the family tree. Perhaps he was ‘Albert’, one of the sons of William Edwards Evans. George Moore recalled that one of the Evanses, probably Abe, lived near the mouth of Butler’s Creek in the 1920s, and they boarded some of the mill workers. Mrs Olive Baxter (née Hapgood) said Abe Evans lived in a house behind the Kioloa shop, and grew vegetables.

The Evanses were resourceful and hard-working. Neil, with only primary schooling to start him off, could ‘turn his hand to anything’, as my mother would have put it. At various times he was a shearer, ploughman, bullocky, builder (including bridges), mail contractor (Milton to Brooman), fencer, log cutter, commercial traveller (machinery representative for Dangar Geddyce and Malloch), and property manager. His father was an excellent horseman, and his grandfather bred horses for the coaches between Nowra and Moruya. But in spite of their doggedness and industry, the Evanses left little physical imprint on the landscape. One gets the impression they realised early that Murramarang was not a prime property, so that massive clearing would not have been justified. Neil claimed the land was ‘too acid’. A reporter for *Town and Country Journal* (see page 30) was not impressed with it in 1870. Charlie Stephens recalled that Alf Evans was pleased about the sale of the 860-acre Kioloa block to Walker in 1910: ‘Murramarang wasn’t much of a farm. They [the Evanses] were a bit up against it for money, and I think they were delighted they could sell part of it.’
Figure 10: John Evans II, c. 1900.
Source: The Edith and Joy London Foundation of The Australian National University.
There are no detailed accounts of life at Murramarang from 1854 to the 1880s or 1890s, when sawmilling started. It must have been a hard, lonely life. Distance from markets was a major problem. A trip to Ulladulla, which now takes less than half an hour in any weather, took eight hours or more by dray or wagon, if you could get there at all.

An inventory prepared in 1863, after the death of Evan Evans I, gives some idea of the property at the time. The total number of livestock was 531, of which 108 were ‘milkers’ and another 74 were ‘dry cows’. The contents of house and outbuildings seem spartan:

**Dining Room.** 1 piano (very much out of order), music stool, sofa, 2 iron easy chairs, 6 horsehair bottom’d chairs, 2 small tables, 1 dining table, sundry chimney ornaments, pair decanters, plated cruet stand, glass [mirror?], 5 pictures, small clock, finder [?], oil cloth.

**Lobby.** 1 large stone water filter, kettle.

**Bedroom No. 1.** Iron bedstead (double), chest [of] drawers, cheval glass, dressing table, 3 chairs (old), night commode, wash stand, toilet set.

**Bedroom No. 2.** 2 iron bedsteads (single), 1 hair mattress, toilet glass, toilet table, wash stand, toilet set.

**Bedroom No. 3.** 1 iron bedstead (single), table, washstand, clothes horse.

**Kitchen.** 4 chairs (old), small table, sofa (old), fender, safe, table, large safe, sundry pots and pans, 1 flour mill.

**Dairy.** 1 barrel churn (about 28 gallons), water tub, empty butter kegs, 120 milk dishes, butter tray.

**Barn.** Threshing machine complete 1 horsepower (in good order), 1 winnowing machine (out of order).

**Outhouses and Premises.** 1 vice, 1 grindstone, 1 large iron boiler (about 30 gallons), 1 chain, 4 bullock chains, 1 large bullock dray (good), one spring cart with outrigger [used for harnessing an extra horse to one side of the cart’s usual single horse], 1 whale boat.
In the early 1900s, the Evanses had a reputation for making excellent cheese. Mrs Lily Veitch remembered staying at Murramarang around 1910:

They had about 70 cows, and made cheese in the little shed beside the house, on the south side. Alf [Evans] took the cheeses to Ulladulla to catch the boat. He used a spring cart to transport them — big twelve pound blocks. The road through the swamp oaks was so bad that on one trip the cart’s axle broke and Mr Evans and the cheeses landed in the bog. Alf wasn’t a very big man, and he had a bad temper — especially to the Walker children — but on the whole he put up with their pranks pretty well.

Mrs N. Guy told me the Guy family had a memory of peacocks at Murramarang. Others recall some old quince and mulberry trees about 200 metres north of Murramarang House.

Initially, the route to Ulladulla was almost certainly across the mouths of Willinga, Meroo, Termeil, Tabourie and Burrill Lakes. This road, really a dray track, appears to have been put in by Stephen before 1837 (see Chapter 2). It was probably continued south over Durras Mountain early in this period. Farming on Durras Mountain had started in the 1860s according to a survey plan of
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Portion 3, Parish of Kioloa. This plan shows a fenced area around Durras Trig. Station, and a house about 100 metres south of the Trig. Station. James Smart appears to have been the earliest settler; in addition to Portion 3 and the smaller Portion 2, he had Portions 4–8 surveyed by Callaghan in 1879.

There was no settlement at Termeil till around 1880. Brooman was settled earlier. Portion 1, Parish of Albert, was bought by Edward Lord 23 September 1839 for £320, and Portion 2 was initially promised to Samuel Lenox Adair on or before 23 February 1838. It was granted to Lord on 14 December 1840. At this time, the name was spelt ‘Burrooman’. There was a road direct from Murramarang to Brooman, as indicated on early parish maps. This would have been the route taken by the Rees Jones family in the 1840s (see Chapter 2).

The following mention of Murramarang comes from a most unlikely source. A German named Hermann Lau spent around four years in the colony, in the period 1854–1859, the last year being at Ulladulla. On returning to Germany he wrote a book, which was found recently in a library in Hamburg by a German language scholar from Sydney University. Lau had ridden from Ulladulla to Broulee, probably in 1858 or 1859, to catch a boat to Sydney. He stayed overnight at ‘a white castle-like building which I recognised as Murrymoreng station’. He was made doubly welcome when it was found he could repair a piano for the lady of the house! He did not mention names, or discuss the property. On leaving, his way south was over what he called ‘Murrymoreng Mountain’, but from the context it was probably Durras Mountain. In the bush south of the mountain, and doubtful about the track, he was very surprised and relieved to meet people he knew. They directed him on to MacMillan’s, probably at South Durras.

A travelling reporter for the Town and Country Journal rode south from Ulladulla through Murramarang in 1870. He made a good story of the dangers, claiming he ‘had been repeatedly cautioned not to cross these creeks [lakes?] alone, as one of them had drowned three persons at three different times, who had been accustomed to cross them for years; another was very deep, and another was full of quicksands’. He crossed Burrill and Tabourie lakes, then ‘I got away into the ranges, and, stumbling on a selector’s [hut], had to take a bush track to recover the road … I met the dray track on the margin of the Meroo’. This dray track

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3 Lands Department, ref. no. 957–787. Plan of 324 acres on the Murramarang Mountain … Applied for as a Conditional Purchase … by John Spurgin. Survey by Henry Evans, 10 June 1867. The block was apparently sold to James Smart in 1864.

4 Hermann Lau also recorded his observations of the Aboriginal population and their demise in the wake of white settlement: ‘became aware of the largest tribe of Aborigines he had yet seen. The Aborigines in general were being rapidly decimated by internecine war, the white man’s liquor and various diseases’ (Goulding and Waters, 2005) (A.G. and S.F.).

5 Lau, H. Four Years in Australia (in German), 1860. Relevant part kindly translated by A. McAndrew.

6 Town and Country Journal, 26 November 1870.
would be the ‘road’ referred to above, and is the most direct reference to its location and use that I have seen. His horse would not cross Meroo Lake, but he found this no problem as the lake was closed at its mouth.

Another patch of good land appears, and Mr Evans’s long white house and outbuildings are seen across the open country … 1000 acres are fenced, and the work is going on, but the grass is not first class, either in quantity or quality. 130 cows enter the bail daily, and the average make-up of butter is 400lb a week.

Figure 12: Windsor Evans felling a tree, 1952.
Source: The Edith and Joy London Foundation of The Australian National University.
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The reporter’s route south from Murramarang was probably over Durras Mountain, where he found ‘a deserted farm’ and the presence of some of Mr Evans’s cows. He mentioned hearing of caves in the area; we take this up again in Chapter 7.

After visiting Nelligen, the reporter ‘swam the mare at the stern of the boat the distance across (quarter of a mile) … to Batemans Bay’, whence he continued south. He mentioned a mailman, who apparently made a regular trip from Ulladulla to Batemans Bay via Murramarang and Durras.

Place names either made a first appearance, or their spelling was stabilised in this period. ‘Murramarang’ had appeared with many earlier spellings, including Munna Neworang. Its origin is thought to be Aboriginal, with the meaning ‘one who is always laughing’, but this meaning is from a district near Dubbo.7/8 ‘Kioloa’ had appeared on surveyor Larmer’s maps as early as 1843,9 though it was spelt ‘Kiola’ in the Ulladulla and Milton Times during the 1890s, perhaps a deliberate attempt to bring the spelling into line with the pronunciation. This word also is attributed to the Aborigines, with a meaning of ‘plenty water’ (or ‘native bears’, according to another source!). ‘Bawley Point’ appears for the first time in the early 1890s, soon after the mill started. Its origin is uncertain. Clark claims it is from an Aboriginal word meaning ‘brown snake’,10 but I think this unlikely, as brown snakes are very uncommon so close to the coast. Alternatives are ‘a fishing smack peculiar to Essex and Kentish coasts’ (Oxford Dictionary), or a corruption of ‘bald’ or ‘baldy’, referring to its bare appearance. It is spelt ‘Bally Point’ on the Electoral Rolls for 1894–1900. ‘Willinga’ appears on early maps, and some usages of the word on the maps and in the local paper in the 1890s suggest ‘Willinga’ might have been regarded as a separate settlement, or the name might have included the present Bawley Point. ‘Termeil’ was noted by surveyor Florance in 1828, although with a slightly different spelling, so Neil Evans’s story of the name having been made up from ‘terminus’ (of the logging tramline) and ‘oatmeal’ (grown there as a crop) remains just a good story.

The start of sawmilling in the 1880s and 1890s (see Chapter 4) brought many more people to the area, and must have broken the barriers of loneliness for those living at Murramarang. It would also have provided a useful local market, and more extensive roads. The increased population also saw the beginnings of regular deliveries of stores from Milton or Ulladulla,11 and so less dependence on irregular shipping for these essentials. Blackburns, general storekeepers in Milton for at least a century from 1870, were the main suppliers of outlying

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7  Mitchell Library, Sydney, Reel No 2329: Aboriginal Names.
8  Murramarang may also mean ‘place of beauty’ (A.G. and S.F.).
9  Archives Office of NSW, Maps 3257, 3258.
areas. Schools, newspapers, mail and even the telephone appeared. The Evans era saw a transition from the isolation of the first settlers in the area to the beginnings of a more modern way of life.
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