

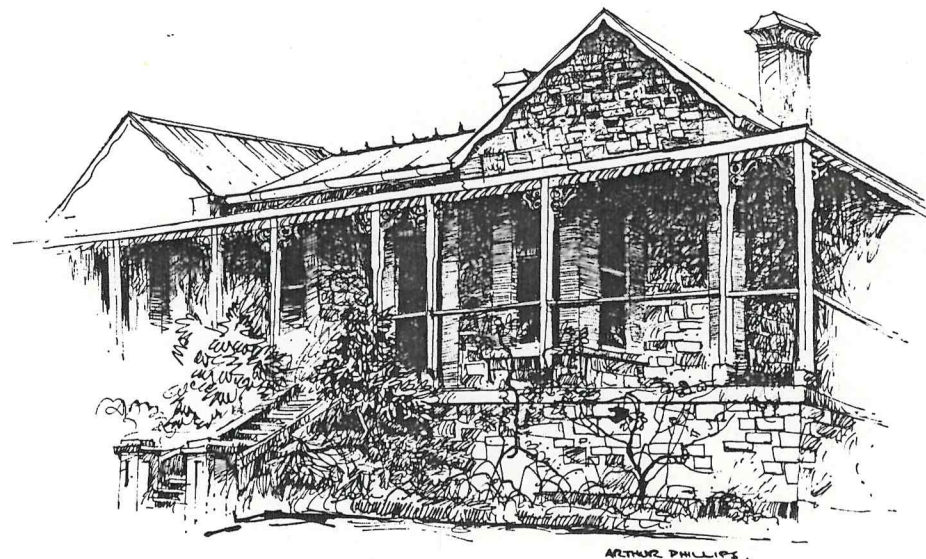
BLEAK HOUSE, CLARE

In Charles Dickens' novel *Bleak House*, Esther Summerson describes her first sight of a cottage built for her by her guardian. He had named the cottage Bleak House. "We went on by a pretty little orchard, where the cherries were nestling among the green leaves, and the shadows of the apple trees were sporting on the grass, to the house itself,—a cottage, quite a rustic cottage of doll's rooms; but such a lovely place, so tranquil and beautiful, with such a rich and smiling country spread around it . . ."

In 1874 when William Loose Beare built his charming house in Agnes Street, he called it Bleak House. Possibly ensuing owners considered this a forbidding name for it bore three other titles, Sunnyside, Ava Weanah, and Weroona.

John Christison of the Enterprise Brewery married Diana Hope of Wolta Wolta. They purchased Bleak House in 1911 and, after her husband's death, Mrs Diana Christison, M.B.E., lived there until 1947. In 1962 the dwelling was bought by Mr and Mrs G. V. Tilbrook who gave it back its original romantic name of Bleak House.

From 1960 to 1965 Mr Tilbrook was the editor of that remarkable country newspaper, the *Northern Argus*. This was first published in 1869 and since 1871 has been issued from the same building in the main street as it is today. Through all the ensuing years the *Northern Argus* has been published each week by the Tilbrook family and indeed, for a twenty year period in the nineteenth century, the paper came out twice a week. During this period there have been six editors; the business is currently owned by I.T., D.T., and G.T. Tilbrook.



Title: Colonists
Copper and Corn

COLONISTS, COPPER AND CORN

- Clare, 1850

required to make it comfortable; even as a remote country inn. There is good building stone produced in a quarry opposite the inn, on land belonging to Nolan. The soil, which in some parts here is black loam, is well adapted to cultivation of all sorts, and, in favourable seasons, for the growth of potatoes. Land was in request, being readily bought up on every occasion. The water is excellent. Near Clare are the Emu Plains, and the mine 'of that ilk'; but we were informed that it was, or was to be, abandoned as hopeless; and an individual standing by added, 'because it cannot afford a penn'orth of copper, or any other available product'. This gave us for an instant a disagreeable twinge, as we have some shares in it.

From Clare to Penwortham,¹² the survey increases the beauty at every step. The wood assumes an appearance of consequence, and the white and red gum-trees are seen of a fine large size, and of handsome forms, interspersed occasionally with the shea-oak. The hills are now beautifully timbered on each side, and the road the whole way along is romantically pleasing. About four miles from Clare is 'Woodlands', the residence of Mr J. Jacob,¹³ who has a good house and garden, which is reached by a turning on the right of the road towards Penwortham, along a diamond flat, and up an opening in the range. Mr Jacob has also a considerable farm on the opposite slopes of the Penwortham road, where a large quantity of corn appears to be raised. In two more miles we reached Penwortham, the prettiest village we have seen on our route, and decidedly there is in it the prettiest and best-planned little parsonage house we have ever seen in this colony, well and substantially executed. We are bound to compliment the incumbent, Mr Bagshaw,¹⁴ by adding that he was his own architect. He accompanied us to view the new church building close by, also, we understood of his own design. It was not in a very forward state, but delays had arisen from circumstances beyond control. The site originally intended was on land belonging to

¹² Clare-Penwortham, five miles.

¹³ John Jacob (1816-1910), pastoralist. 'Woodlands', Penwortham. Built a stone house, roofed with palings. See: *Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia*, R. Cockburn, vol. I, pp. 138-9.

¹⁴ Rev. John Charles Bagshaw, MA (1818-). Later he went to New Zealand.

CLARE, PENWORTHAM, WATERVALE, AUBURN, ETC., TO GAWLER TOWN

the late Mr Horrocks,¹⁵ whose affairs unfortunately being in the deep pit of Chancery, no title could be made, and the situation was abandoned. Mr and Mrs A. Horrocks¹⁶ reside here in what we thought a very rural looking spot. At Penwortham the fine stately growth of timber is remarkable, and the trees attain a size not often seen in any of these northern districts, of which we consider Clare, Penwortham, and their vicinity the gems. Even the shea-oak is more flourishing here than elsewhere, at any considerable distance, and the wood is finely distributed on the hills. This village at present does not appear to contain more than a few houses, with a scanty and scattered population, to which, however, that of Watervale from its proximity may be added as affording a congregation for the little church, which we understood could accommodate 150 persons. There is an inn in the village, formerly kept by Bleechmore,¹⁷ now by Stuart. We did not avail ourselves of it, but undoubtedly were not prepossessed by its outside. We saw the cattle in this neighbourhood looking in excellent condition, and the land, as at Clare, was in request, purchased being looked for continually. Having congratulated our reverend friend on his recent marriage, and having partaken of his wine and bride-cake, we left 'Penwortham the Pretty', as our friend Hailes¹⁸ would call it, for Watervale, the country continuing to be of a very pleasing character.

¹⁵ St Mark's, Penwortham, is the oldest church north of Gawler. Founded by John Ainsworth Horrocks (1818-46), who gave the land. Designed by the Government Architect, Mr Stuckey. Cost £351. When the church was opened there were only six seats, and the windows were of calico. The bell-turret and porch were added 1855. By 1931 the parsonage was in ruins. Originally built in 1850, at a cost of £558. A Government Grant of £150 was given towards both buildings. See: *Adelaide Church Guardian*, December 1931; p. 11.

John Ainsworth Horrocks (1818-46), pioneer and explorer, 'Hope Farm', Penwortham. See: *John Ainsworth Horrocks, Pioneer Settler and Explorer*, G. C. Morphet; *The Story of the Flinders Ranges*, H. Mincham; *Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia*, R. Cockburn, vol. II, pp. 14-5.

¹⁶ Arthur Ainsworth Horrocks (1819-72), pastoralist. See: *Representative Men of South Australia*, G. E. Loyau, p. 135.

¹⁷ Henry J. Bleechmore, victualler and postmaster, Watervale.

¹⁸ Nathaniel Hailes (1802-79), auctioneer, author of *Timothy Short's Journal of Passing Events*, under the pen-name of Timothy Short. See: *Notable Men of South Australia*, G. E. Loyau, p. 204; *The Press in South Australia, 1836-50*, G. H. Pitt.

tant hills on the south-western horizon appeared to part, and a broad expanse of sea, illusive in the highest degree, seemed to flow between them, the hills forming the headlands or promontories on each side, and standing out boldly into the water. After a while the two headlands disappeared, and the space heretofore occupied by them became an expanse of water; while the central hill arose in complete isolation, forming an island. This illusion remained till we had turned considerably north-west round other hills. On the plain crossing from the river was a large drove of horses—more than a hundred, as we counted, of all colours—grazing, or trying to graze, and all belonging, we understood, to Mr Chambers.⁵ Joining the proper Clare road, we crossed Robinson's Range to his station on the Hill River, which here, like the others we had seen, consisted merely of a few water-holes. A ridge which we noticed was called 'The Camel's Hump'. At this station, Mr Robinson⁶ had about 1500 sheep. The country now rapidly improved in appearance: the ranges and the lower hills were clothed with wood, chiefly peppermint, gum, and casuarina (shea-oak), and here and there were some really fine trees. The landscape continued to undulate agreeably, while we traversed some beautiful glades and more woodland scenery of the same character, till we arrived at a descent overlooking Mr Gleeson's⁷ farm; and thence skirting the base of the hills, on one of which appeared the half-finished structure of a Gothic church, we stopped in the village of Clare. On this road, as on others, we noticed the very frequent occurrence of whirlwinds throwing up and twirling round their (sometimes) dense columns of dust. We mention them here, because at various distances, sometimes very great, and often in several directions, on other roads or well-beaten tracks, we could see the same curious effects of the hot and cold currents of air in a number of places at once.

⁵ ? John Chambers.

⁶ William Robinson (1814-89), pioneer pastoralist, Hill River Station. Head station 20 miles north-north-east of Clare, on Hill and Broughton Rivers. See: *Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia*, R. Cockburn, vol. II, pp. 256-7.

⁷ Edward Burton Gleeson (c.1802-70), pioneer pastoralist, special Magistrate and postmaster. Laid out the township of Clare. Homestead, 'Inchquin'. See: *Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia*, R. Cockburn, vol. I, pp. 86-7; *The Village of Beaumont*, J. B. Cleland, R.G.S.S.A., vol. I.

1870 ✕ Clare,⁸ in Stanley County, and in the Hundred of Clare, is a village laid out chiefly on land belonging to Mr Gleeson, and to whom it is indebted for its foundation. In addition to the buildings which form the village, which altogether contains not less than fifty tenements and a population of more than two-hundred persons. Mr Gleeson is the chief proprietor here, and holds 540 acres of land. He had planted a garden with fruit trees and vines, which would have been productive but for the nature of the season. He is chiefly a grower of hay, and does not raise more wheat than is necessary for his own family consumption. Clare is situated on the little River Hutt, which is just now no better than a blind creek, as the landlord of the Clare inn termed it. This river and the Hill, as we observed, rise from the ranges beyond Robinson's, run west, then turn north, and empty themselves into the Broughton. Clare has an Episcopal Church,⁹ the one we mentioned on the hill, near the village from the Burra, in course of erection; the design is Gothic, and the edifice will perhaps contain two hundred persons; but it is not far advanced, and there seems a want of funds, or energy, or something to complete it. There are several Roman Catholic families in the place, chiefly Irish; but Mr Gleeson stated that his countrymen did not predominate among the population. We did not question Nolan,¹⁰ our host, as to his tenets, but we found the well-known, and among the Romanists well-respected *Garden of the Soul* in our bedroom. There is a Roman Catholic Chapel in the village, and a cottage is used by the Wesleyans for their worship. There are likewise good police-barracks and a Local Court. Mr Gleeson is postmaster as well as Magistrate. The village supports a store called the Waterloo Store, and two others, and of course a blacksmith, a shoemaker, and a tailor. This quiet and rather rural spot has two inns, one at each end of the village. The nearest to Penwortham, kept by Dodson,¹¹ is probably the better. The Clare Inn, at the entrance from the Burra, is kept by Nolan, it is undergoing very considerable alterations and improvements, which it

⁸ Clare, 86 miles north of Adelaide, named after County Clare, Ireland.

⁹ St Barnabas, 1851. The first stone was laid by the donor of the land on which it was built, E. B. Gleeson (c.1802-70).

¹⁰ Mortimer Nolan.

¹¹ Joseph Dodgson.



FILM 30 BLEAK HOUSE, 28 AGNES ST
NO 6 NORTH EAST CORNER

CLARE
31-1-79



FILM 30
No 5

BLEAK HOUSE, 28 AGNES ST
FROM EAST

CLARE
31-1-79



FILM 30
NO 5

BLEAK HOUSE, 28 AGNES ST
FROM EAST

CLARE
31-1-79



FILM 30
NO 6

BLEAK HOUSE, 28 AGNES ST
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