TIMELINES

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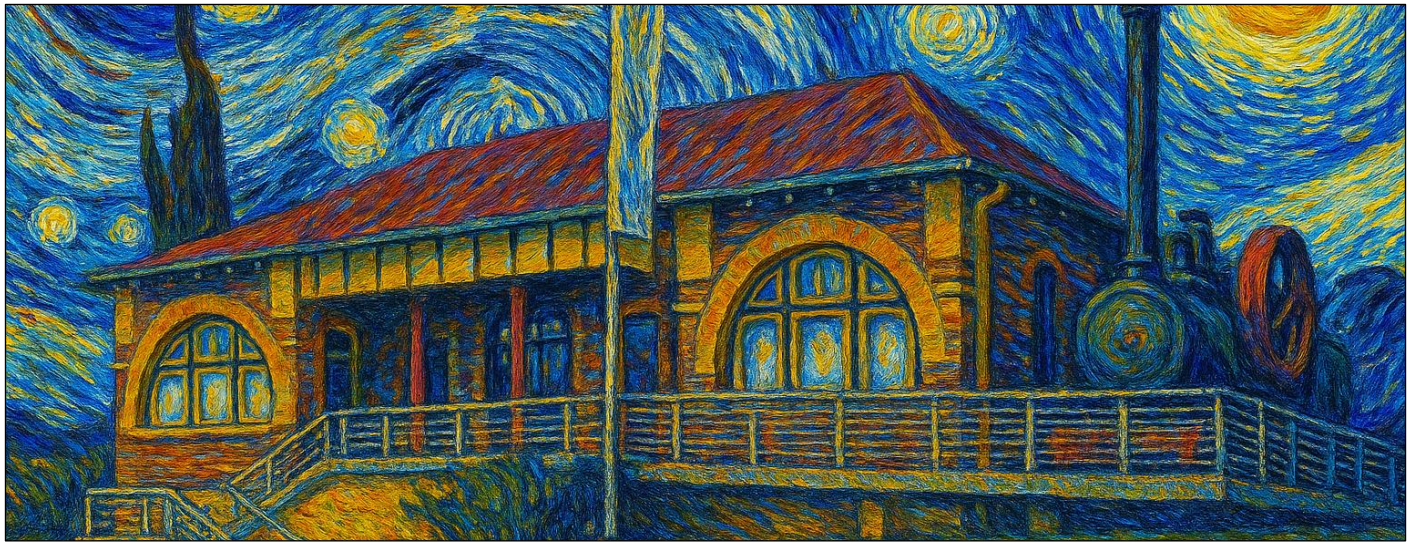


Welcome

Here is the latest edition of *Timelines*, the newsletter of the Murwillumbah Historical Society.

In this issue Robert and Trish Budd write about the work of Charles Brady, a pioneer of Australian sericulture. Sadly, his work was not crowned with success, but as the Budds observe: 'Along the banks of the ephemeral creeks and in the rainforests of North Tumbulgum mulberry trees grow wild. The spirit of Charles Brady lives on through his trees.' (You too can raise silkworms according to the Brady method. Read his ten articles on 'Practical Silk Culture' in the *Australian Town and Country Journal* from 7 September to 23 November 1872.)

Henry James is now a regular contributor. He introduces Charles Hugh Fawcett, pastoralist, botanist, public servant, and politician. The article in this *Timelines* focuses on his work as a botanist. Future articles will deal with his life and work in the wider community.

'The Back Page ...' has an item arising from a letter of enquiry - with an equine turn.

Enjoy your reading!

Murwillumbah Historical Society

Something new!

How to research your family history

An exciting new opportunity for you from the Murwillumbah Historical Society. Starting from 30 June 2025 the Society is offering one to one training on how to research your family history. Only $5 per session for 2 hours per week on a Monday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. Not only will you receive training, but you will also have time to begin your own research about your family with guided assistance, and written materials for future reference. Be quick! There are only 3 places available at each session.

Please contact:
secretary@murwillumbahhistoricalsociety.org.au
or
phone (02)6670 2273.

WE WANT TO COPY YOUR OLD PHOTOS!

If you have come into possession of any old family or historic photos, please lend them to us to copy! Please contact the museum on (02) 6670 2493 by email at trm@tweed.nsw.gov.au

Charles Brady - Tweed Silk Pioneer

Robert and Trish Budd write about life story marked by high hopes and great expectations...

Brady Place street sign, North Tumbulgum.
Image provided by the authors.

Why is a cul-de-sac in North Tumbulgum named Brady Place? You may be surprised to learn that in 1904 Brady's Point, Middle Harbour, Sydney was believed to be named after the same person, Charles Brady. Who is Brady and what is his story?

Charles Brady was born in Deptford, England in 1819, a younger brother to Sir Antonio Brady of London. Sir Brady was an English naturalist, social reformer, and British Admiralty official.

Like so many young Englishmen at the time, Charles responded to the lure of adventure and assisted passage to the other side of the world. He dedicated much of his life to developing a silk industry in Australia at great personal cost to himself. His efforts to introduce the industry in Australia cost him all his wealth, his family, and denied him of a place in Australia's history.

By mid-1800 colonisers made efforts to introduce, acclimatise, and domesticate useful or ornamental birds, fish, insects, vegetables, and other exotic species in various countries across the globe. This work was done through Acclimatisation Societies. The Australian societies began in 1861 as volunteer organisations. In Sydney the Acclimatisation Society was led by Dr George Bennett at the Australian Museum and Charles Moore the director of Sydney's Botanic Garden.

The societies became less active in the 1870s. Many of the introduced species simply failed to thrive and disappeared without a trace. Others are being successfully farmed today throughout Australia. Unfortunately, rabbits, foxes, sparrows, starlings, and blackberries are still here, causing problems for the environment and native animals.

Charles Brady was active in Acclimatisation Societies in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne. By 1862 he imported silkworms and varieties of mulberry to Sydney. He had a passion for scientific research and developed his knowledge to the point where he was considered one of the world's leading experts on sericulture, the farming of silkworms through to the cocoon stage, also called raw silk. 'He probably knows more about silkworms than any man alive' claimed Mr W S Campbell F.L.S. of the Department of Agriculture 1895.

Silkworms at North Tumbulgum.
Image courtesy of Trish Budd.

Sericulture involves breeding disease-resistant insects and growing and harvesting mulberry leaves to feed the silkworms. Today, China and India are the largest producers of raw silk. The global sericulture market is over $250 billion. By comparison in 2025, the Australian wool market is $3.6 billion, and the cotton market is $2-$3 billion.

In the 1800s Italy and France had well-established silk industries. Many people in the colony thought the Australian climate well suited to establishing a silk industry ensuring an early interest in sericulture. Some thought that sericulture could be second only to the wool industry. News of disease in French silkworms threatened the European silk industry in 1865 further fuelling interest in developing the industry in Australia, peaking in the decade 1870-1879.

Two people who were the driving force of sericulture in Australia were Charles Brady and Sarah Bladen Niell of Cowra. Brady's efforts at North Tumbulgum became important in the rise and fall of sericulture in Australia.

An unnamed *Queenslander* correspondent writing about the sugar and silk industries on the Tweed River in 1878 wrote: 'This gentleman's power struck me as being far greater than that of the magician or necromancer: he can call animal life into existence at his pleasure.'

Brady had demonstrated that he could breed disease-free silkworms and made advances in controlling the timing of egg hatching, either prolonging or advancing the process. His knowledge, coupled with the unique advantage of being in the southern hemisphere, enabled eggs to make the long journey to Europe before hatching. He was in a great position to export disease-free silkworms to Europe.

Initially, in Sydney, Brady was convinced not to export silkworms but rather to use them to develop sericulture in Australia. However, having self-funded his research and finding no market in Australia, lack of income led him into bankruptcy by 1869.

In 1871 the NSW government rejected 30 to 2 a motion to grant Brady £2,000 ($600,000 in 2025) to establish a silk industry in New South Wales.

Despite a lack of support by the government, public interest in establishing a silk industry in Australia was still high and two years later Brady was granted a lease of land on the Rous River in North Tumbulgum. The first permanent European settlement in the Tweed Valley was at this site at the confluence of the Tweed and Rous Rivers, known then as Tweed Junction. The location was convenient for shipping people and goods by river around the growing settlement. The purpose of Brady's grant was to develop a sericulture industry. Brady named his property "Antony", perhaps a nod to his older brother Antonio.

Brady quickly became an active member of the Tweed community. As President of the Tweed River Progress Association, he was something of a visionary applying his ideas and skills to working for the people on such issues as postal and telegraphic requirements for the district; he drafted several proposals including legal changes to prevent land monopolies; a connection between the Tweed and Brisbane by train; and the building of roads to connect Murwillumbah to Tweed Heads via Tumbulgum. He proposed dredging the Tweed River to improve navigation, protested against building breakwaters at Byron Bay, and recommended the Tweed be made a separate district as opposed to the existing combined Tweed Lismore district.

Charles Brady was considered a gentleman, intelligent, clever in politics and just. He was also an activist, placing him at the centre of many a political debate. It was not long after he came to the Tweed 'social war broke out between Antony and Kynumboon [*sic*]'. Communications between the two camps were exchanged in the form of heated letters to the editor of newspapers across the country. These letters included name-calling, claims of wrongdoing and extraordinary steps taken to discredit each side of the argument.

'Mr Bray says that we of the Junction "privately sent in a petition;" this is exactly what he did and what we did not do. On no occasion has any petition or communication gone from me or my friends to the Government but such as had been authorised by public meeting duly convened. So much for Mr Bray's accuracy.'

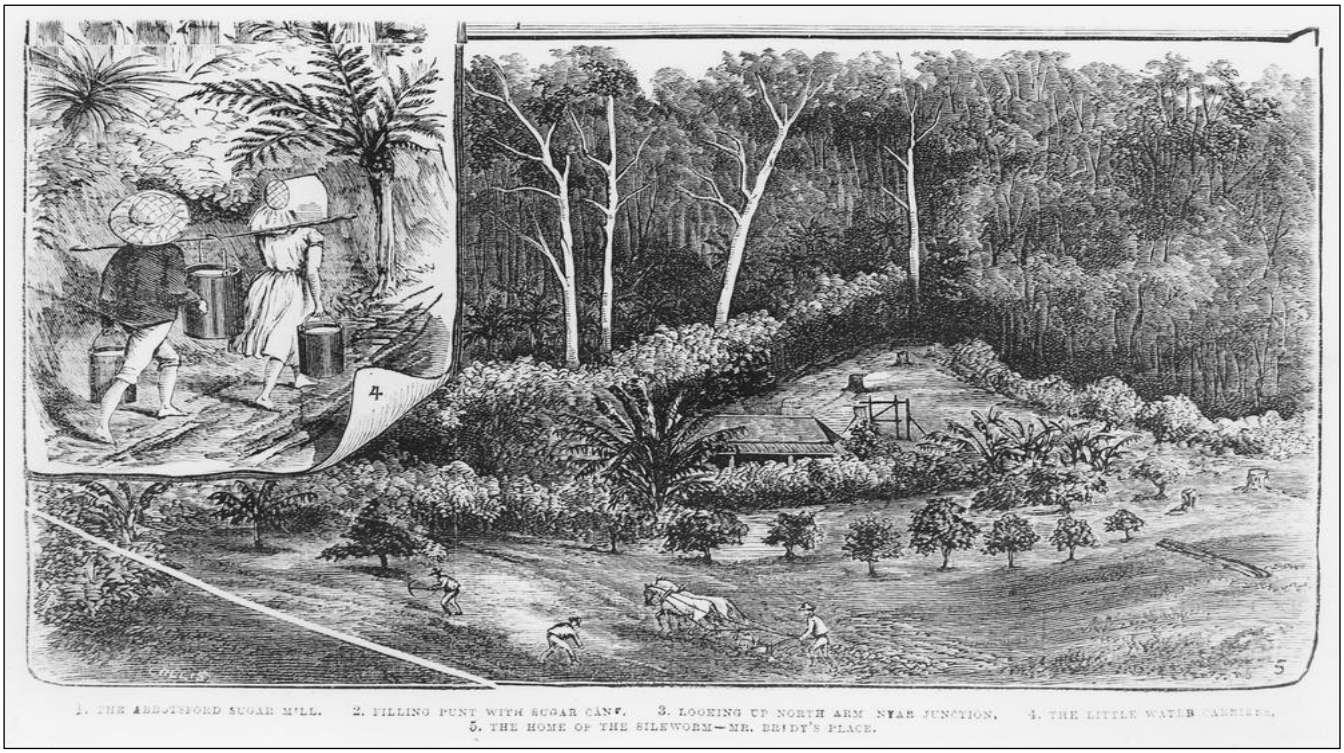
Brady was a prolific writer. Besides the many letters to the editor on various topics, his letters were read at public meetings, and he wrote a few publications on sericulture, his writing style being verbose.

Tweed River farmers struggled to access markets. After Queensland introduced tariffs on New South Wales produce, selectors turned their attention to crops that would not spoil during a lengthy ocean

passage to Sydney. Brady advocated for growing arrowroot as a food crop. Conditions were ideal and the crops did very well, some might say too well. Unlike the arrowroot farmers in Pimpama Queensland, the Tweed farmers had no access to mills for processing the tubers into flour and the experiment was declared a failure however, across the border it was a success.

'Mr Brady has I hear, contracted with a number of the farmers hereabouts for their arrowroot, and if he succeeds with the manufacture of the article it will be of vast benefit to the whole district, and the two industries of sugar-making and arrowroot ought to drive the Tweed many steps on the road to prosperity. 15 acres. Some excellent pineapples are grown, and a small vineyard has lately been farmed. Mr. Brady is certainly carrying out great improvements on his farm in the way of fruit culture. His homestead block consists of 100 acres, and he has other lands elsewhere in the district.

A small extent of cane this season will be enlarged up to 20 acres for next year; but according to Mr Brady's statement it is by silkworms that he makes his living and is enabled, to improve his ground. I found him, however, extremely reticent with regard to the financial side of the industry, and also concerning the quantity of eggs produced, for it is these, and not silk, that bring in the returns. Mr Brady says he has offered to give instructions in silkworm breeding, which he asserts pays well, but people appear to be indifferent



The image numbered '5' is titled ''The home of the silkworm – Mr. Brady's place'. Image '4' is 'The little water carriers'. Originally published in the Australian Town and Country Journal*, 26 November 1881, page 1032, with the title 'The border country – Views in the Tweed River district, New South Wales'.*

Image source: John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland.

The following article in the Sydney Mail, 1885 provides an eyewitness account of Charles Brady's farm at North Tumbulgum.

'"Antony," the farm of Mr. Charles Brady, and his homestead, is situated on a pretty hill, and an air of neatness pervades the whole of the surroundings. On the slope of the hill mulberry-trees, bananas, orange, apple, and other varieties of fruit trees grow in profusion, the former being by far the more numerous, and the total area being between 12 and and have no faith in the industry. He views the world, therefore, or at least the little world around him, from a cynical standpoint, works in his own particular groove, and seems quite satisfied that things should go on as they are. From a somewhat desultory conversation with him, I learned that he has had 20 years experience in the silk industry; that the worms are the result of peculiar treatment, and new food grown on virgin soil; the mulberry trees being treated in a peculiar manner; that he arranges for three rearing seasons—early spring, summer, and

autumn; that the worms are all of the annual description; that he started originally with silkworms from Europe, India, Turkestan, and Algiers, and by careful breeding, he has now become possessed of a strong healthy lot of what may be termed pure Australian worms. The building in which these are kept has canvas sides and an iron roof. Three rows of zinc platforms, one above the other, and a foot or 18 inches apart, are suspended by chains from the tiebeams. Wooden trays 2 feet square, resting on the platforms, contain the worms, which are fed here six times a day. The feeding process is rather peculiar, the mulberry leaves being thrown on white cord netting, which rests on a bed of half-eaten leaves. Through the netting the silkworms crawl, and devour eagerly the supply of fresh food, which on each occasion amounts to 25 or 30 bushels of leaves per day. As the worms expend their substance in making the cocoon, they gradually fall into a chrysalis state, in which they remain from 14 to 20 days. Then the moth comes forth, and from this the eggs are obtained, both male and female moth dying before the eggs are hatched. The latter is done by artificial means (a contrivance invented by Mr. Brady), steam or hot and cold water being used. The silkworm is the result of the hatching process, which generally takes from four to five months. There being no demand in Australia for silkworm eggs, Mr. Brady sends them to European markets, where he states he invariably obtains a good price. At any rate, his concluding remark to me was, "I employ most of the year five or six hands, and all you see around has been made on silkworms."
Such is an unvarnished account of what I saw and was told at this sericultural farm. The industry is one almost unknown in New South. Wales, or, for the matter of that, in Australia; but if it succeeds here, why not elsewhere?'

After the passing of Charles's wife Margaret in 1887 at their property Antony, Charles decided to give up on the silk industry and the Tweed. The news prompted the NSW government to form a select committee to report on what contribution Brady had made to the colony. The select committee report of 1892 titled 'Mr. Charles Brady's Services in Connection with Sericulture' concluded that he had rendered some service to the colony in connection with sericulture but had failed to make the industry a commercial benefit to the colony . The report considered that, given the small population, it was premature to embark on such a labour-intensive industry at this time. It also noted that Brady had no evidence to make a 'legal claim on the Government for pecuniary consideration'.

One might think all this drama would be enough for anyone. But not for Charles Brady. He left the Tweed and in 1893 was working for the Department of Agriculture on various projects to establish sericulture as a viable industry. He was also employed at Hawkesbury Agriculture College teaching sericulture.

One of the last newspaper entries that we can find mentioning Charles Brady is dated 1896 when he and Antonio Morendy, of New Italy, New South Wales exhibited the Sericulture process at the Sydney Show. Charles was 77 years old and still working on his passion for silkworms.

We don't know what later became of Charles. Sadly we find no obituary, no notice of passing nor record of final resting place of Charles or Margaret Brady. It would be easy to dismiss Charles Brady as gone and forgotten. However the authors who are the current custodians of the land Brady called Antony, believe his name and legacy live on, not in a thriving Australian silk industry for which he tried so hard and failed to establish but in places he toiled and in things that mattered to him. Residents may take for granted the community building efforts of our early pioneers. Brady's Point overlooking the Spit Bridge in Sydney is now some of Australia's most expensive real estate. Brady Place, a little cul-de-sac in North Tumbulgum bears his name. The system of roads through the Tweed are much as Charles argued for because they made the most sense for the people; the breakwater was not built at Byron Bay; mail is indeed delivered to the towns as he suggested; Tweed Shire did become a separate shire from Lismore; the Murwillumbah-Casino rail he thought a waste of money no longer carries trains and is now a rail trail for bicyclists and people still talk about a need to establish a rail link from the Tweed to Queensland.

Along the banks of the ephemeral creeks and in the rainforests of North Tumbulgum mulberry trees grow wild. The spirit of Charles Brady lives on through his trees.

Charles Hugh Fawcett – an eclectic life

Part 1. The Botanist

Henry James tells the story of a kaleidoscopic life…

The sheer magnificence and diversity of plant communities of north east NSW inspired some colonists of the region to become enthusiastic amateur botanists. Robert Campbell was one so inspired. His role in the formal recognition and naming of *Diploglottis campbellii* (Small-leaved Tamarind) was described in *Timelines*, Volume 12, Number 1, September 2024.

Charles Hugh Fawcett was another north coast settler who like Campbell submitted many plant specimens to state herbaria. In Fawcett's case, most were collected in the Richmond River catchment and nearby upper Clarence. But he also collected in the Tweed, and in the Bulahdelah and Stroud area. Fawcett sent his specimens to Ferdinand von Mueller, the chief botanist of Victoria at the time, and with a few exceptions they are now in the National Herbarium of Victoria (NHV). Duplicates of a small number of those specimens have been sent from the NHV to other Australian herbaria over the years. Fawcett also had a personal collection of specimens that were donated to the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney upon his death. The Australasian Virtual Herbarium (AVH) records show that the National Herbarium of NSW (NHNSW) holds 101 specimens attributed to Fawcett, the bulk of which have a nominal date of collection – 1876 - and are probably those from Fawcett's personal collection. The remaining few appear to be duplicate specimens sent from the NHV to the NHNSW. The AVH, which maintains a record of all specimens in all the main Australian herbaria, lists 1402 specimens of 691 species submitted by Fawcett. About half of the records have a date of collection. Of those, almost all were collected between 1875 and 1885. One was collected in 1867, two in 1887 and one in 1889. It seems likely the undated specimens were largely collected before 1875. It is also likely that specimens collected by Fawcett ended up in herbaria overseas. The *Northern Star* reported in October 1878 that a 'collection of 99 specimens of the small shrubs, ferns, &c., of this district, which were collected by C. H. Fawcett, Esq., and kindly presented to [a fundraiser] … [were the subject of] a spirited bidding … [and] eventually bought by a gentleman (a stranger to the town) for the purpose of sending to America'.

Portrait of Charles Hugh Fawcett (1813-1890) taken around 1880 when he was a member of parliament for Richmond.
Image from the Australian National Herbarium website.

There is evidence that Fawcett was in communication with Mueller and so had an active interest in the topic as early as 1866. In *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae 5*, published in 1866, Mueller gave the name *Cylicodaphne fawcettiana* to a rainforest tree that is now called *Litsea fawcettiana* (Brown Bollywood). It grows in rainforest from central Queensland northwards. The specimen Mueller relied on was collected by Anthelme Thozet near Rockhampton, but Mueller decided to name the tree after Fawcett, saying in a footnote to the description of the plant: 'I put a clear name on a spectacular species. C. Fawcett, of the northern territory of Neo-Cambria, a man well-merited by the exploration of the natural products of the natives there'.

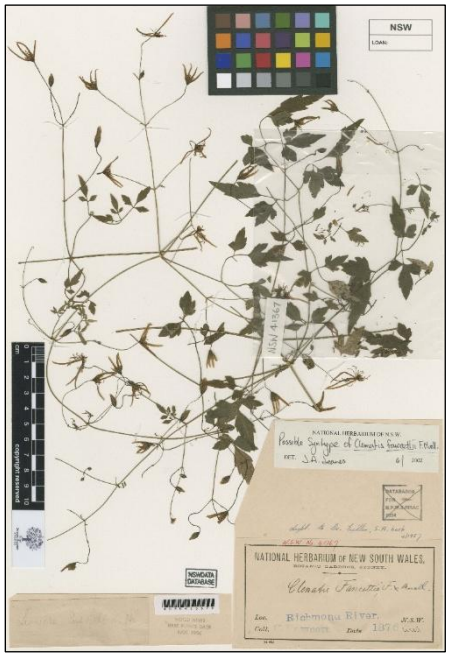
Mueller also named two other species and a genus after Fawcett. *Ripogonum fawcettianum* (Small Supplejack) is a vine that grows in rainforest in NSW and Queensland. It was first formally named in 1878 by British taxonomist George Bentham and Mueller in *Flora Australiensis 7* on the basis of collections submitted by Fawcett (from Richmond River) and Robert Fitzgerald (from Macleay River). *Clematis fawcettii* (Stream Clematis) is a small vine that has a limited distribution in dry rainforest habitat in the upper catchments of the Richmond and Brisbane rivers. It is a vulnerable species under NSW, Queensland and Commonwealth legislation. It was first formally named in 1876 by Mueller in *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae 10* on the basis of collections made near Lismore by Fawcett and William Carron. *Fawcettia tinosporoides* (Arrowhead Vine) is another rainforest vine of limited distribution. It grows in subtropical rainforest, mainly in the Richmond-Tweed catchments, with a small number of outlier occurrences on the Gold Coast, upper Clarence catchment and around Coffs Harbour. It is a vulnerable species under NSW and Queensland legislation. It was first formally named in 1877 by Mueller in *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae 10* on the basis of collections made by Fawcett on the Richmond River. In 1981 it was included in the much larger genus *Tinospora* to become *Tinospora tinosporoides*.

Charles Moore was the chief NSW government botanist for most of the second half of the 19th century. He named *Macrozamia fawcettii* (a Zamia Palm) in 1883 in the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW 17* on the basis of material sent by Fawcett to Mueller, part of which was sent on to Moore at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. Specimens from this collection are preserved at both the Sydney and Melbourne herbaria. The species' range is confined to the Richmond and Clarence catchments and coastal areas down to Coffs Harbour.

Two other species of trees were distinguished by Mueller on the basis specimens submitted by Fawcett alone, but were named after other notables of the era. *Owenia cepiodora* (Bog Onion or Onion Cedar) and *Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia* (Red Bopple Nut) are rainforest trees that have limited distributions with the Tweed at their centre. Both are vulnerable species under NSW, Queensland and Commonwealth legislation. *O. cepiodora* was named in *Fragmenta Phytographiae Australiae 11* in

Leaf and immature fruit specimen of Ripogonum fawcettianum *(Small Supplejack) collected by Charles Fawcett in the Richmond River district and sent to Ferdinand von Mueller at the National Herbarium of Victoria.*

Image from The Australasian Virtual Herbarium website.



Leaf and flower specimen of Clematis fawcettii (Stream Clematis). This was part of Fawcett's personal collection that was donated to the National Herbarium of NSW upon his death.

Image from The Australasian Virtual Herbarium website.

Leaf and flower specimen of Fawcettia tinosporoides *(Arrowhead Vine).*

Image from The Australasian Virtual Herbarium website.

Leaf and flower specimen of Hickbeachia pinnatifolia *(Red Bopple Nut) collected by Charles Fawcett near Murwillumbah in 1883 and sent to Ferdinand von Mueller at the National Herbarium of Victoria. (Part of the letter accompanying this specimen is reproduced at the end of this article.)*

Image from The Australasian Virtual Herbarium website.

1880. *H. pinnatifolia* was named in *Southern Science Record 3* in 1883. Fawcett posted the specimens of Red Bopple Nut from Murwillumbah with a letter dated 12 March 1883. (Images of specimen above; and letter on next page.)

There are also a number of species of plants that do not bear Fawcett's name but were first named by Mueller and others on the basis of specimens collected by Fawcett and others. One is *Spilanthes grandiflora var. calva* which was first named by Bentham and Mueller in *Flora Australiensis 3* on the basis of specimens that included some collected by Fawcett and Mueller himself. It is an herb in the daisy family and is now known as *Acmella grandiflora var. brachyglossa*. *Centaurium spicatum* (Spike Centaury) was a name given by B. P. G. Hochreutiner in 1929 to a herb with a very wide distribution. He relied on a number of specimens including one in the NHV collected by Fawcett. Years before, in 1869, Bentham and Mueller had decided the Fawcett specimen and many others were examples of a plant first collected and named *Erythraea australis* by Robert Brown in 1810. More recently, the two species have been considered to be the same. Brown's naming took precedent, but on the basis of genetic relationships, it has now been given a new name – *Schenkia australis*. *Tabernaemontana pandacaqui* (Banana Bush) is a widespread variable species of large herb originally named by Lamarck in 1792 on the basis of specimens from New Guinea. Mueller identified and named a variant he called *Tabernaemontana orientalis var. angustisepala* on the basis of specimens collected by Fawcett and others. These specimens are now treated as examples of *Tabernaemontana pandacaqui*. In 1878 Mueller changed the name he had given Grain-of-Wheat Orchid from *Dendobrium minutissimum* to *Bulbophyllum minutissimum* when for the first time he had access to a flowering specimen sent by Fawcett.

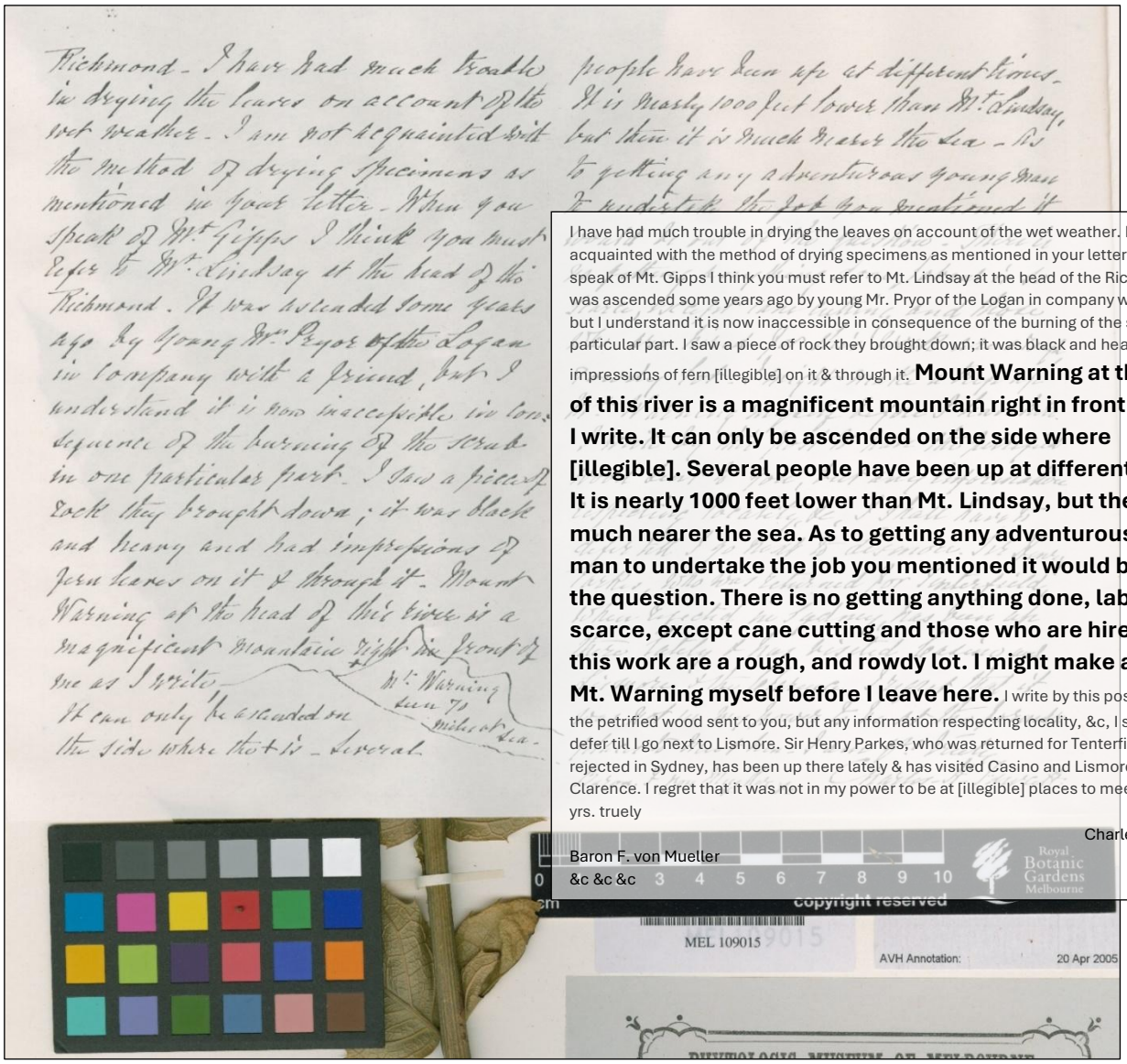
Not surprisingly, Fawcett was an advocate for the conservation of forests of the region. He delivered a paper to the Presbyterian Tea Meeting at Lismore in April 1878 that is an elegy to forests that were then fast being demolished. Fawcett expressed concern that little of them might soon be left and that species then common might become extinct. He railed against the 'abominable improvement clause' which required selectors to rapidly clear forest on their land. He observed that the clearing required was often well in excess of the area selectors could or should turn into pasture or cultivate, and that often it led to land covered by a mess of regrowth and weeds and to a great waste of timber. He did not mention that some fairly large areas had been set aside as forest reserves in 1871-2 in the Clarence, Richmond and Tweed, but it is quite possible he met government botanist William Carron who surveyed forests of the region to define the boundaries of these reserves. Fawcett may even have been a guide. At least as early as 1863 contemporaries noted that he was employed as an acting Crown Land Agent, a role that along with his botanical interests would have made him uniquely qualified to act as a guide for Carron. (The main task of Crown Land Agents was to administer the sale of land by the government. It

involved inspecting the portions that had been sold to check that purchasers were meeting conditions of residence and 'improving' their selection. Crown Land Agents were also responsible for issuing licenses to cut timber on Crown Land and to monitor compliance with conditions of the license. This may have been part of the reason that Dorothy Kinny, an early local historian, said Fawcett 'seems to have been employed by the Forestry Department'.) In her history of the pioneer Yabsley family, Kinny remarks that in 1863 Fawcett 'hated to see timber wasted', and that in 1880 he 'continued to press the conserving of timber'.

Though most of Fawcett's time in Australia was spent in the Richmond, he did have some connections with the Tweed. The AVH holds records of nineteen plant specimens of fifteen species collected by Fawcett in the Tweed region. Seventeen of the records have dates and they coincide with Fawcett's short tenure as Police Magistrate in Murwillumbah. Fawcett left Murwillumbah to take up the position of Police Magistrate at Bulahdelah in 1883, and then later at Stroud. During the early part of this phase of his life he continued to collect specimens for Mueller. Overall, the AVH has records of 166 specimens of 139 species collected between 1883 and 1885.

Fawcett attained aristocratic status in imperial British botanic circles when he was elected to the Linnean Society of London on 2 December 1880 at the recommendation of three other greats – Ferdinand von Mueller himself, William Woolls and Robert Fitzgerald.

In the next issue of *Timelines* we tell the story of Charles Hugh Fawcett the pioneer squatter, Police Magistrate and member of the NSW parliament.



I have had much trouble in drying the leaves on account of the wet weather. I am not acquainted with the method of drying specimens as mentioned in your letter. When you speak of Mt. Gipps I think you must refer to Mt. Lindsay at the head of the Richmond. It was ascended some years ago by young Mr. Pryor of the Logan in company with a friend, but I understand it is now inaccessible in consequence of the burning of the scrub in one particular part. I saw a piece of rock they brought down; it was black and heavy and had impressions of fern [illegible] on it & through it. **Mount Warning at the head of this river is a magnificent mountain right in front of me as I write. It can only be ascended on the side where [illegible]. Several people have been up at different times. It is nearly 1000 feet lower than Mt. Lindsay, but then it is much nearer the sea. As to getting any adventurous young man to undertake the job you mentioned it would be out of the question. There is no getting anything done, labour is so scarce, except cane cutting and those who are hired for this work are a rough, and rowdy lot. I might make a trip up Mt. Warning myself before I leave here.** I write by this post [illegible] the petrified wood sent to you, but any information respecting locality, &c, I shall have to defer till I go next to Lismore. Sir Henry Parkes, who was returned for Tenterfield, when rejected in Sydney, has been up there lately & has visited Casino and Lismore & the Clarence. I regret that it was not in my power to be at [illegible] places to meet him. I am yrs. truely

Charles H Fawcett.

The Back Page …

The annals of research

The Society received a letter from Ron Clarke in South Australia seeking further information about a family that owned a horse named Sam. Sam refused to work on Saturdays, leading his owner to adopt the Seventh-day Adventist observation of the Sabbath.

The story was that Wilfred (Whit') North, having accepted his mother's invitation to attend Saturday Sabbath services, lent Sam to a neighbour. He returned Sam to Whit, saying that the horse had refused to work. Sam worked for Whit through the week, but on loan to the neighbour again on the following Saturday, wouldn't work. On the third Saturday Whit decided to stay on the farm and work the horse himself, but to no avail. In the end Whit took this to be a sign and, following his mother's example, became a Seventh-day Adventist. As for Sam, he never worked on Saturday again and at the end of his working life was 'left to go out in the paddock until he died'.

The story was told to Brendan Scale (of Faith FM) by Whit's granddaughter, Di. According to her 'all of Murwillumbah knew that story' back in the day. (You can listen to the podcast here.)

Sam the horse, his owner, Wilfred North (on the left) and a friend of his from the Seventh-day Adventist church.

It is through Brendan's good offices that Di has provided the photo that appears on this page.

Thank you to Ron, Brendan, and Di for this 'Back Page' article.

Do you have stories to share? Timelines *would love to hear them and share them with our readers. The Society's contact details appear below.*

ABOUT THE SOCIETY: Formed on 16 March 1959, the Society's aim is to research, preserve and promote the rich and unique history of our town of Murwillumbah and its surrounds in the picturesque Tweed River Valley of far northern New South Wales. The Society operates out of our Research Centre in the Tweed Regional Museum's historic Murwillumbah facility. The Society is proudly supported by the Tweed Regional Museum, a community facility of Tweed Shire Council.

CONTACT US: Phone: (02) 6670 2273
Web: http://www.murwillumbahhistoricalsociety.org.au/
FB: http://www.facebook.com/murwillumbahhistory
Email: editor@murwillumbahhistoricalsociety.org.au
Mail: C/- Tweed Regional Museum, 2 Queensland Rd, Murwillumbah NSW 2484 or PO Box 373, Murwillumbah NSW 2484

ABOUT THE MUSEUM: The Tweed Regional Museum is a Tweed Shire Council community facility, established in 2004, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Tweed Shire Council and the Murwillumbah, Tweed Heads and Uki and South Arm Historical Societies. It is one museum that operates across three branch locations; Murwillumbah, Tweed Heads and Uki, and in association with these three local Historical Societies. The three locations connect the Tweed Shire from the coast to the mountains, providing a unique journey into the history, people and places of the majestic Tweed Valley. For information about the Tweed Regional Museum please visit: http://museum.tweed.nsw.gov.au/ or phone on (02) 6670 2493.

To preserve maximum space for content, sources and references will not usually be listed. These are available from the Editor upon request.