

Mary Lydia Pannach and Walla Walla

I am not sure when John Traugott Pannach and family arrived in Walla Walla, but it seems they were there by 1887 as his first child was born there. The notes below were taken from Wikipedia in October 2015 by R Rawson. Mary Lydia was born there in 1892.

Australia became a popular destination for German immigrants from as early as 1838 when religious persecution in Prussia led to the first organised group migration of Old Lutherans to South Australia. What was to follow was a progressive chain migration from the areas in northern and eastern Prussia, which was to last until the end of the nineteenth century. However, with this influx, land soon became difficult to obtain at reasonable prices. Also, land holdings in South Australia proved too small for sustainable cropping with Australian soils unable to cope with the type of intensive farming that was traditional practice of German farmers in the homeland. These factors, combined with the desire of the Germans to live in homogenous communities, their land inheritance practices, and the typically large size of German families, culminated to instigate a second migration wave from South Australia to the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria from the 1860s. Substantial numbers of German settlers left South Australia to select land in the Southern Riverina.

The Albury region had long been a settlement area for Catholic Germans, particularly farmers and wine growers from the Rhineland, who had begun to melt in with the Anglo-Celtic population. The first South Australian Germans to reconnoitre the Riverina took up land in May 1866. By the end of 1866 Germans had selected seven parcels of land, totalling 1,470 acres (5.9 km²). In the following year an additional 55 properties with a combined area of 7,680 acres (31.1 km²) had been selected by German settlers, while in 1868 a further 51 properties (with 4,503 acres) were selected. While some of those moving to the Riverina were original immigrants who had come to Australia from Germany, the majority were apparently first generation Australia-born Germans. Ethnically, many of the Germans were in fact Wendish or Sorbs, an ethnic community in north-eastern Germany. Even though most were Australian-born, the German and Wendish settlers in the Riverina remained culturally Germans with little if any acculturation to the English environment. This cultural identity could be maintained because these German settlers formed close-knit communities held together by Lutheran Christianity, and also due to their adherence to the German language. As in South Australia, both factors became the distinguishing element from mainstream New South Wales.

While the Germans made up the greatest non-British Isles immigrant community in NSW, their overall numbers were not that large. What made the Germans so visible, was the clustered nature of their settlements: two thirds of all German holdings were concentrated in the four postal town areas of Albury, Jindera (57 properties each), **Walla Walla** (28 properties) and Gerogery (27 properties) all of which were located close to each other.

The Walla Walla area was home to the Wiradjuri aboriginals who inhabited this area for many thousands of years prior to European settlement.

The explorers Hume and Hovell passed through the area in late 1824 noting its potential for grazing livestock. Squatters first arrived in 1834 and four stations, including "Round Hill" and "Walla Walla" were established by 1845. During the 1860s the bushranger Dan "Mad Dog" Morgan frequented the area holding up the Round Hill Station at nearby Morven. He also established a lookout at a granite outcrop 6 km north of Walla Walla adjacent to the Walla Walla Station and Billabong Creek.

Walla Walla was established in 1869 when 56 settlers of German extraction moved from their home in the Barossa Valley of South Australia in the search for farming land. At that time South Australian farmland was in short supply and the New South Wales government was releasing tracts of fertile land at relatively cheap prices.] In all, 56 people made the trek in 14 covered wagons and 2 spring carts, leaving their hometown of Ebenezer in October 1868. This group was led by Father Klemke and it comprised the families of Michael Wenke, Andreas Mickan and Andreas Lieschke; as well as two Klemke families, the Fischer, Terlich and Hennersdorf families and two single men in Ferdinand Schmidt and Wilhelm Luhrs. Ethnically, most of these families belonged to a minority group known as Wends or Sorbs and some had only recently emigrated from the North Eastern German States. Although these settlers first named the township Ebenezer after their hometown in South Australia, its name was changed to Walla Walla (Aboriginal for "place of many rocks") because another township with the same name existed in New South Wales. This was neither the first nor the last trek by German South Australians to the Riverina with other settlements established nearby at Jindera, Bethel, Gerogery, Wallendool (Alma Park), Dudal-Cooma (Pleasant Hills), Mangoplah, Edgehill and Henty.

Walla Walla Post Office opened on 1 February 1878.

The Walla Walla Hotel was opened in the early 20th century by Mr Fredrick Voss, the original publican.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Walla Walla was charactered by its close-knit community which contributed to its preservation of the German language and the old ways. Although the First World War fostered a sense of nationalism (albeit strongly allied to the British Empire) this period was a challenging time for the Walla Walla community due to its ethnicity and the political issues of conscription and disenfranchisement from the electoral roll. According to one view, Walla Walla was reported as 'Berlin' and a 'hotbed of disloyalty'. In all, four local residents, including two Justices of the Peace and members of the Culcairn Shire Council were interned in the Holsworthy Concentration Camp. Tellingly, the honour board at the Walla Walla Soldiers Memorial Hall describes the war as one against 'Prussian Militarism' rather than Germany.
