

SAM PRINGLE'S COTTAGE

by Bob Colefax

When the advertisement below appeared in the *Southern Star* of 8th October, 1997, it brought back to our 94 year old member many memories of Granitetown. As the following commentary shows, Bob's belief that his memory is not what it was is ill founded. The cottage has since been sold at auction.

It occurred to me that the advertisement is worthy of a place among the Historical Society's files - this cottage is the only one of sixty seven remaining in the quarry area.

They were erected early in 1925 by Harvey Dunne, the foreman builder at the quarry and his two assistants, Jim Egan and George Patrech - three residents of Batemans Bay. The cottages seemed to spring up overnight, like

mushrooms.

They were constructed of hardwood and lined with Baltic pine. The hardwood came from Mitchell's Narooma Mill, and was delivered to Granitetown for twenty three shillings (\$2.30) per 100 superfeet - even at that time a bargain price. The pine came from Sydney per the Company's steamers. Each cottage was built for less than £100 (\$200). The one under discussion, with associated land is advertised at \$220,000.

The original design of the front of each cottage is faithfully portrayed in the photograph.

Sam Pringle, an Aberdeen stonemason and his wife were the original occupants of this particular cottage. For the full six year period of the quarry's activity their rent was eleven shillings (\$1.10) a week. I prepared statements for the tenants to sign authorising the pay office to deduct the rental from their pay. Sam was the only dissident. He preferred to be paid in cash: so he tendered a one shilling coin, wrapped in

a ten shilling note every week. His net pay, less rent money, was already prepared, so to make his pay to the full amount, we returned his own eleven shillings to him. Sam persisted with this farcical pantomime for the whole of his six years of employment.

However credit must be given to Sam for his skilful workmanship, especially for the two granite pillars he crafted to grace the the gateway of the house in Page street then occupied by Bill Morrison and Archie Davidson and their families. Bill Morrison was responsible for cutting to within an eighth of an inch every dimensioned stone in the piers and pylons of the Harbour Bridge. Archie Davidson was the supervising quarryman responsible for selecting the initial rough stones.

Sam Pringle's two granite pillars are still in perfect condition, and are now prized exhibits at the Moruya Museum.



For sale - a piece of history

Seventy years ago this lovely cottage was one of about seventy built to house the thriving community of Granitetown.

And now Barry Dedrick real Estate, the exclusive marketing agent, is offering this last remaining piece of history - for sale.

The famous Moruya granite was chosen for the pylons on the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the granite quarry employed some 240 men many being highly skilled workers migrating with their families from overseas.

On three-quarter acre land, this two bedroom cottage was constructed of local hardwood and lined with Baltic pine - all still in good order. The floors are also original pine.

The kitchen and bathroom have been remodelled and a large recent extension takes full advantage of this superb waterfront position.

If you are seeking a waterfront with semi-rural environment and have a leaning towards the history of our nation this property must be inspected. There is ample room to expand - the position cannot be repeated.

The vendor is asking \$220,000 is keen to sell and will listen to sensible offers.