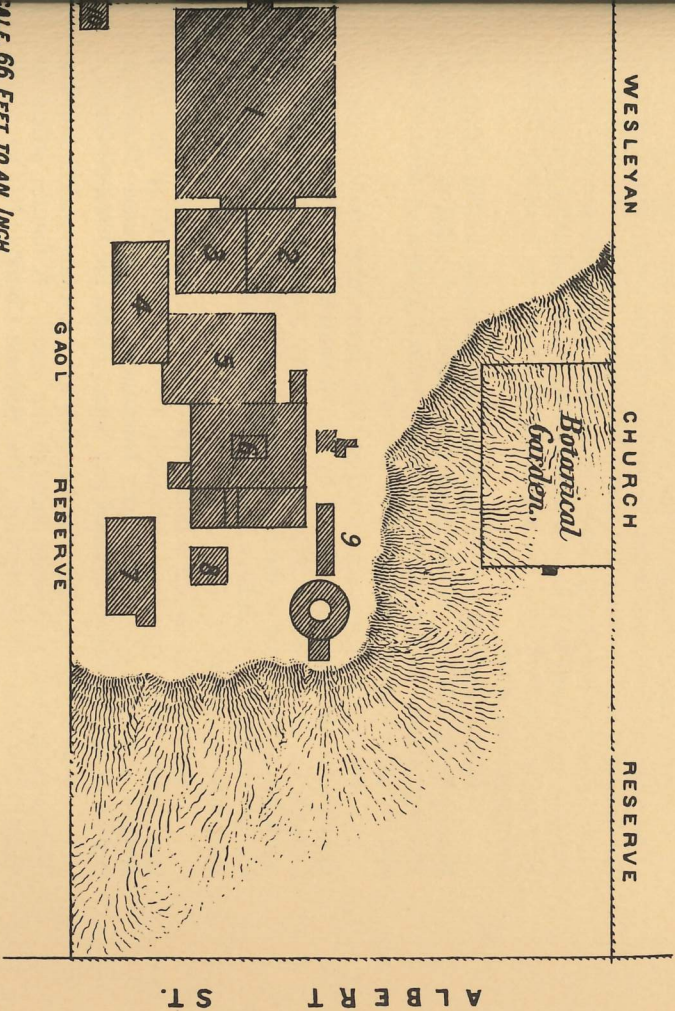


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PLAN OF GROUND AND BUILDINGS

1880



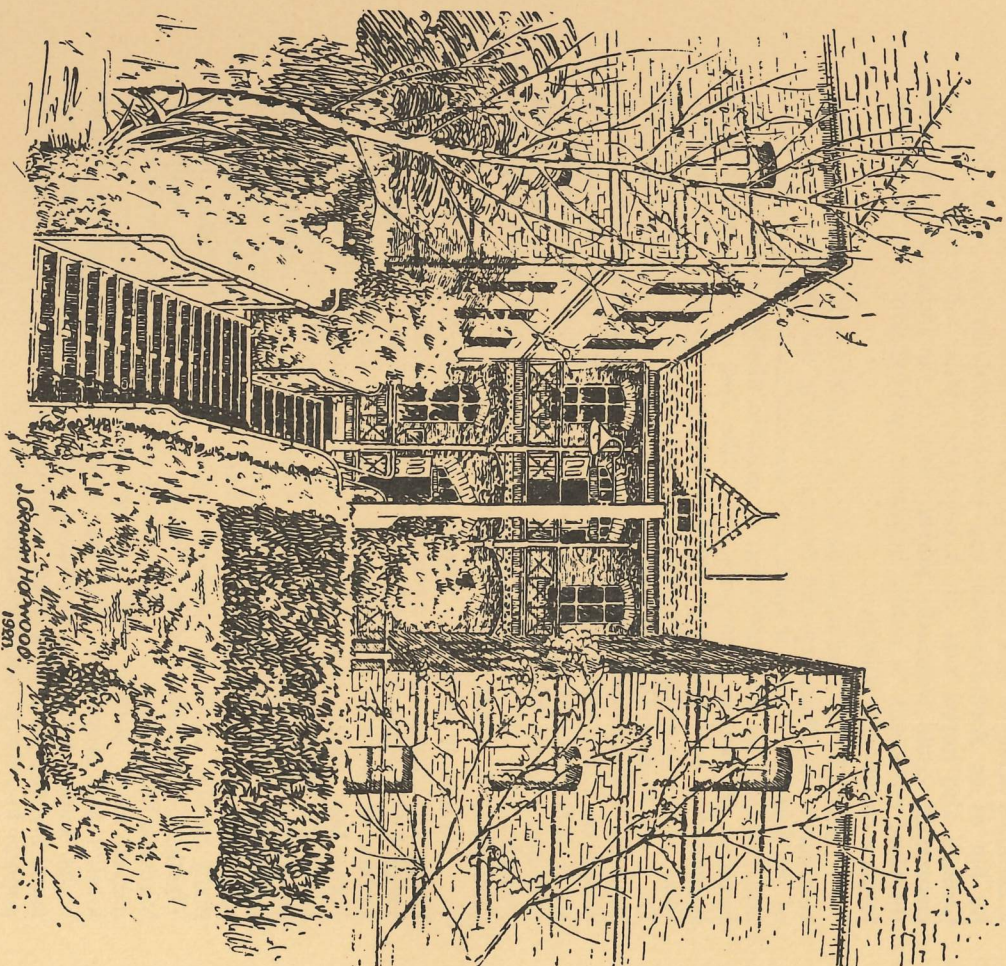
- 1. MUSEUM OFFICES &c
- 2. MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
- 3. SURVEYING AND MATHEMATICS
- 4. QUARTERS
- 5. CHEMICAL LABORATORY

REFERENCE

- 6. METALLURGICAL LABORATORY
- 7. ENGINE ROOM
- 8. STORE ROOM
- 9. PYRITES WORKS
- 10. TOWER

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J. G. H. HARRISON
1920.

CENTENARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT BOTANICAL GARDENS 1879-1979

When the School of Mines Ballarat was established in 1870 the primary purpose as stated in the Provisional Constitution was "to impart instruction in the various branches of science relating to Mining." This it certainly achieved with distinction, not only within the local community but as an Australia-wide and international service. The School Council also hoped that, on a vocational basis, most people in the community could eventually pursue "any of the industrial arts," and therefore envisaged "a public industrial establishment", or in modern terms a community college.

Early in 1879, in response to community needs, classes had been commenced in Pharmacy and Botany. Along the Northern boundary of the S.M.B. property a small area was enclosed with a picket fence and prepared for the cultivation of suitable plants for the use of the lecturers on Botany, Pharmacy, etc., "the cost of these works being insignificant compared with the advantages." In May of that year, subsequent to a meeting between members of the School Council, led by Dr. R. F. Hudson (Vice President) and representatives of the Pharmacy Board of Victoria, the School of Mines Council resolved to establish the classes on a firm and mutually recognised footing. From the outset the study of Botany was very closely associated with Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Materia Medica, the principal lecturers in which were Joseph Francis Usher, M.D., L.A.H.D. (1879-1891, 1895-1909) and Emil Gutheil, M.B., Ch.B. (1892-1894, 1910-1916).

Lectures in Botany commenced in January 1880, Mr. Joseph Flude illustrating subject theory with appropriate slides — "I have about 100 objects mounted, and by means of the Limelight a large amount of information can be conveyed." During the year Mr. George Porter Day tended some "200 varieties of plants, over 150 of which are medicinal, and are included in one or other of the Pharmacopoeias". In November at the last Horticultural Show, held in the Alfred Hall, the display by the School of Mines won a first-class Certificate and reportedly deserved most attention. The fresh-gathered specimens "embrace many humble plants of medicinal value — Borage, Marigold, Fennel, Thistle, Chamomile, Prickly Comfrey, Yarrow, Carraway, Asafoetida, Madder; Pennyroyal . . . duly ticketed with their common and botanical names, class, natural order and sub-order, genus, species, country, locality and properties. The instructive list shows what are wound-herbs, tonics, aperients, emetics, expectorants, stomachics and stimulants; and the parts to be used. The use of simples . . . is a branch of popular knowledge which is rather neglected . . ."

In regard to dried specimens (*hortus siccus*) by the end of 1880 there were about 1,000 dried, mounted and classified specimens of various kinds, 40 of which were presented by Baron von Mülller, in the S.M.B. collection.

In February, 1881 George Porter Day was appointed gardener "at a rate of \$17/10/0 per annum, for 6 months certain." Through the courtesy of the Mayor, Mr. J. Noble Wilson, the Ballarat Botanic Gardens were placed at the service of the instructor in Botany for class

purposes, together with the assistance of Mr. George Longley, the Curator, who had already rendered the School considerable service.

Of additional interest during 1882 was the formation of the Field Club and Science Society with Mr. James Oddie as President. This Club held its monthly meetings at the School. Some 90 members had already held several field excursions to places of interest in the neighbourhood; specimens had been collected, and the descriptive papers prepared and read. During the following year a Club member and part-time lecturer at S.M.B., Mr. W. H. Wooster of Bolwarra inaugurated a class for instruction in Microscopy.

After taking charge of the Botany classes Mr. Day reported in 1884 that he had conducted "a course of structural, morphological, physiological and taxological botany, illustrating each section with living plants; and that the *hortus siccus* consisted of over 1,550 species, mainly indigenous, as well as a large number of British Pharmacopoeia plants." He readily acknowledged the assistance of Messrs G. Longley (Botanic Gardens), and others.

Baron von Mülller, in addition to examining in the subject of Botany from 1880 to 1888, donated collections of seeds of medicinal and leguminous fodder plants, including valued grasses of interest and use to agriculturalists and graziers generally.

Pleasing progress continued in 1885, favourable results being obtained from the Pharmacy Board by the 10 students of Medical Botany. Classes for State School Teachers were very well attended; practical work being completed at the School, theory at home; and results recorded as excellent. Candidates for the Education Department Certificate were also successful.

By 1886 the syllabus had been developed in greater detail, and text books were specified, including Cooke's *Manual of Structural Botany*, and Baron von Mülller's *Introduction to Botanic Teachings; Native Plants Succinctly Defined and Select Plants for Naturalization*.

The School of Mines liaison with local horticulturalists and kindred organizations continued through the years. A feature article entitled: "120 Years of Gardening", *The Ballarat Courier* (20 Oct. 1979), notes that Andrew Anderson, J.P., had served the Ballarat Horticultural Society as President for 30 years. He was also President of the School of Mines from 1889 to 1910.

The transplanting of a Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria*), in the possession of Miss Jessie Knox Smith for 22 years, was carried out by the S.M.B. Past Students' Association in memory of her famous brother Professor Alfred Mica Smith, B.A., B.Sc., F.I.C. (Staff member 1881-1922).

To this day the School's terraced gardens, containing a variety of native and foreign plants, are a matter of fascination to visitors, who, quite apart from their pre-occupation with botanical specimens, are delighted with the much improved aspect provided by the College administration and its energetic staff members.