

TORRENS VALE HISTORIC LOOKOUT

The view before us extends from the pine clad Mt. Hayfield in the west where legendary aboriginal figure 'Tjilbruke' rose from the ground, to Mt. Robinson in the south east.

The area between these land marks is known as Torrens Vale, formerly called Dairy Flat, and the western section is called Hay Flat, an area of very rich alluvial soil where the first settlers found grass up to their horses' backs.

The Ingalalla Falls can be found cascading down from the Parawa highlands to Hay Flat near the foot of Putland Hill.

Lieutenant William George Field R.N., first mate of Colonel William Light's ship the 'Rapid', built his homestead 'Hillside' near the foot of Mt. Hayfield from where he could survey the herds he grazed in partnership with his brother Henry, who successfully brought stock overland from N.S.W. in the late 1830's.

Torrens Vale in the foreground, was a very important early settlement from the 1850's; there were some six churches, four cemeteries, a butter factory, post office, blacksmith's shop, store and school. Some of these settlers were also skilled stonemasons, carpenters, sawyers and bootmakers.

The area is surveyed into 80 acre sections. Wheat growing and dairying were the main early industries and the old 'lands' or plough marks can be seen some 140 years later.

There are still some old cottages standing but sometimes the only reminders of these early dwellings are solitary fruit trees or clumps of iris or jonquils.

A unique feature is that most of the land we see before us is still held by descendants of the early pioneers.

About 700 metres behind us is a large round hill known as Cockatoo Hill and around its foot and leading down towards Yankalilla the area was called Cockatoo Flat.

Beyond Cockatoo Hill to the east are the Bald Hills.

The early road from Encounter Bay to Yankalilla And Normanville passed through Torrens Vale.

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YANKALILLA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

