

OLDBURY

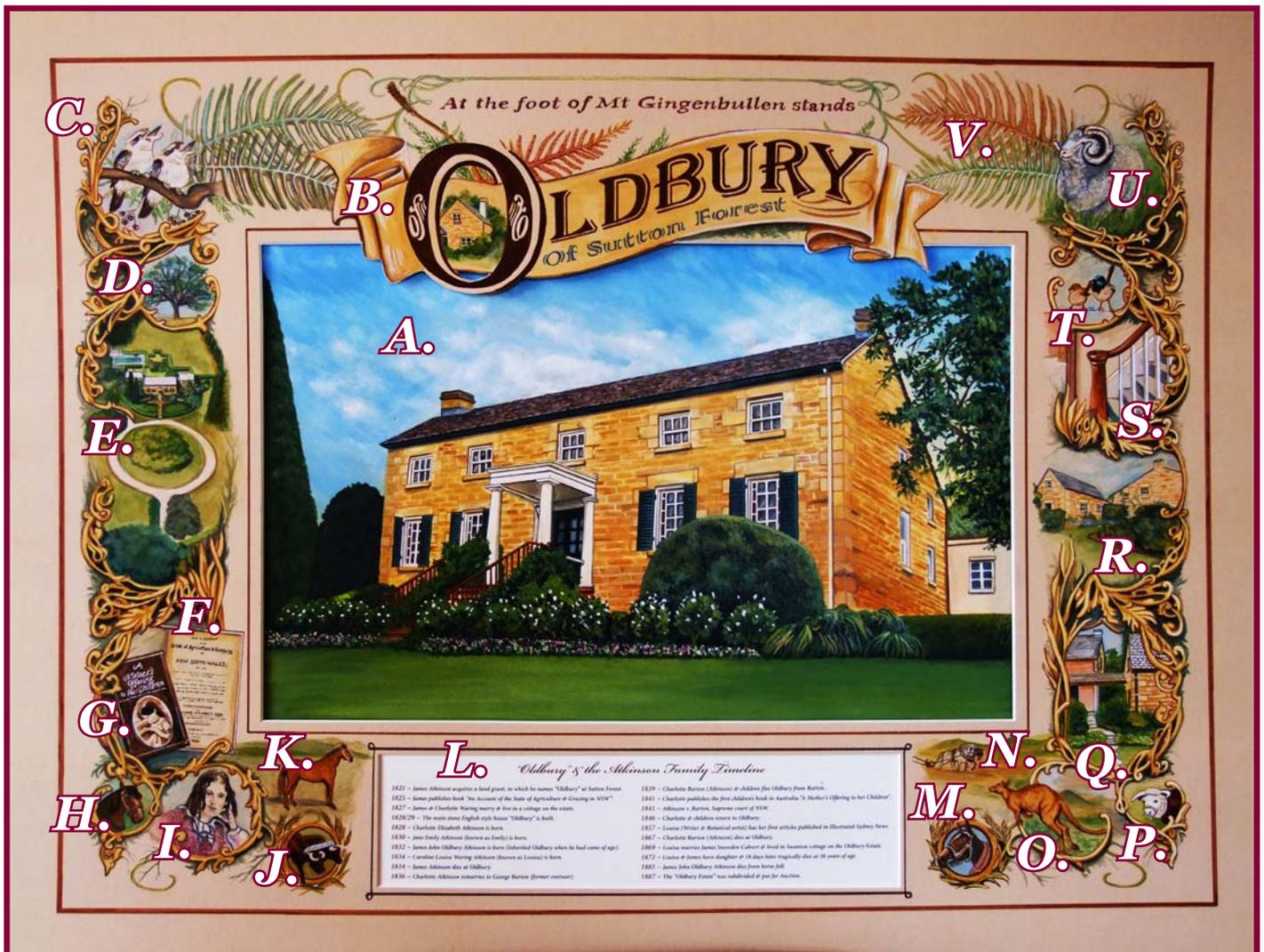
The story behind the painting



The journey begins with my husband Peter and I purchasing our late Victorian home in the Southern Highlands. We had so many questions about this feel good, character house, such as; when was it built, by whom, whose lives had past through it, what were they like, what did they look like, were there any photos of them standing out the front of our house?

We joined the Berrima District Historical & Family History Society where we were able to gain so much knowledge and information. Armed with our newly gained knowledge and sheer determination the search eventually lead us to a remarkable man named C.C.Gale. It is so exciting to be able to speak to a Gale family descendant, it truly makes the past so real and inspirational.

Every picture tells a story, every house has a story to tell and this is Oldbury and the Atkinson family story~



MARGARET J MAPPERSON



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The story behind the painting

An Artist's Perspective

A. Oldbury is a grand two-storey stone, Georgian style house built in around 1828 by James Atkinson. Resembling an English 18th century farmhouse, believed to relieve his wife Charlotte from home sickness for England. The front gardens have been beautifully landscaped in more recent times.

B. Oldbury, Sutton Forest ribbon banner was inspired by the Oldbury Estate 1887 subdivision Auction Sale poster.



C. James Atkinson was said to have been a founding member of the Agricultural Society of NSW. This was a great inspiration to researching the old illustrative award certificates at the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW. The Research Archivist at the Heritage centre kindly helped with various references throughout the many years of the RAS. The illustrative filigree illuminated borders have become a lost craft of yesteryear because of its time consuming fine detail.

D. Old Elm trees along Oldbury Creek are believed to have been planted by James Atkinson.

E. An aerial over view of the Oldbury property.

F. James Atkinson was a noted agriculturalist whose advice was sought by many. He published the highly recognised book *Account of the State of Agriculture and Grazing in New South Wales*. In 2002 a Landline reporter interviewed a collector whom had this rare book. The collector mentioned its estimated value at the time was \$25,000 - \$35,000 and hadn't appeared on the market more than three or four times in the last decade.

G. Charlotte Waring Atkinson Barton was an accomplished artist and as a young student in England had been taught by the renown landscape painter, John Glover. Charlotte published *A Mother's Offering to Her Children*. Australia's earliest known children's book.

H. Tall stature, muscular backs, and powerful hindquarters made the draft horse a source of "horsepower" for farming.

I. *Caroline Louisa Waring Atkinson Calvert (known as Louisa)* is known to be the first Australian born female novelist, and the first female newspaper columnist. An artist and noted botanist, she had produced many botanical drawings and discovered numerous new plant species in both the Blue Mountains and the Southern Highlands region.

J. Bullock drays were quite slow although considered more cost effective than horses and the best form of heavy transport in the early years, particularly in the bush. A single bullock usually used for short journeys.

K. Horses were respected in the area and provided riding enjoyment and transport.

L. Oldbury and the Atkinson family time line, 1821 - 1887.

M. James Atkinson strived to attain quality bred stock.

N. James Atkinson, a progressive farmer, was motivated to raise the efficiency of farming in NSW such as ploughing competitions, stock breeding, cheese making and dingo eradication.

O. An abundance of Australian native wildlife presumably roamed the property, most probably eating Atkinson crops.

P. James advocated improved animal husbandry techniques. Horned cattle are subject to diseases in the colony, unless allowed to suffer from poor keep.

Q. Two detached outbuildings, the kitchen and dairy.

R. The beautiful stone walls, sloping roofs and wrap around gardens are so picturesque.

S. The stunning scroll ended wooden stair rail, which would have had many an Atkinson hand upon.

T. Blue Wrens in the Oldbury Estate area still seen today.

U. James visited Saxony, England with Charles Macarthur and brought back Merino and Saxon sheep.

V. Louisa is commemorated with plants named in her honour such as the Loranthaceous genus *Atkinsonia*, and in the species *Erechtites atkinsoniae*, *Epacris calvertiana*, *Helichrysum calvertiana*, *Xanthosia atkinsoniana* and *Doodia atkinsonii*.