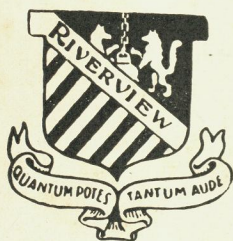




JUBILEE BOOK

ST IGNATIUS COLLEGE
RIVERVIEW
SYDNEY.

1880 ~ 1930.



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RIVERVIEW

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1880 - 1930

Riverview at its Origin

My recollections of Riverview are so much in the dim distant past, so many of my masters and contemporaries have passed away, that I am afraid my experiences will not be of much interest to the present generation.

I went to Riverview just after my eighth birthday, early in 1880; spent four years there, that is until November, 1883, and left just before I was twelve to go to school in England. It was in February, 1880, that I entered Riverview. The beloved Father Dalton was the Rector. Some six or seven other boys joined at the same time, and I was perhaps the youngest; most of the others were a great deal older than I was.

Going for and coming back after the holidays was somewhat different in those days. I had to ride from Armidale to Tamworth, and ride anything that came along in the way of change of horses, sometimes by way of a change I travelled by Cobb and Co's Coach, which had raw hide springs. When I first arrived at Riverview my wardrobe was carried in leather saddle bags.

Amongst the originals was the late Thomas Joseph Dalton, afterwards to be my brother-in-law. Herbert Wardell, the Architect, was a day boy, and used to ride across from The Grange, in North Sydney, now part of the Church of England Grammar School. Herbert Wardell is the son of Australia's most distinguished Architect, who at the time was building great edifices in Australia, such as St. Mary's Cathedral, in Sydney. My brother, Dr. Stratford Sheldon, came some eighteen months later, and Mr. A. A. Rankin and his brother, Donald, came about the same time as my brother.

The only building at that time was the stone cottage; that building comprised the whole school. Two other small boys and I slept in the room in the front of the west side, having as our other room companion no less a personage than the dear old Rector himself. I can recall after these fifty years his tender care for us youngsters.

I learned to swim after being at school one day by being thrown off the end of the wharf by one of the bigger boys and left to seek my own salvation. We used to bathe in the open river and later on, on many occasions swam across Burns Bay and Tambourine Bay and at times across the River itself to Hunter's Hill. Perhaps we boys in those days were tougher, and that is the reason why the sharks did not take us.

Before the end of my first year, the number of boys had increased to about fifteen, but before that happened I can distinctly recollect being in the First Eleven at cricket. As a matter of fact, when the first cricket match was arranged with some visiting team there were only ten boys in the school, hence my early success.

Current events were the deeds of the Kelly gang of Bushrangers who were at large; great interest was taken in their exploits, and the burning of the Exhibition Building in what are now known as the Botanical gar-

JUBILEE BOOK—FIRST DECADE

dens; the fire was easily distinguished from Riverview. The sinking of the Orient steamer "Austral," in Neutral Bay, was another great event to us boys, as we rowed down over the submerged steamer.

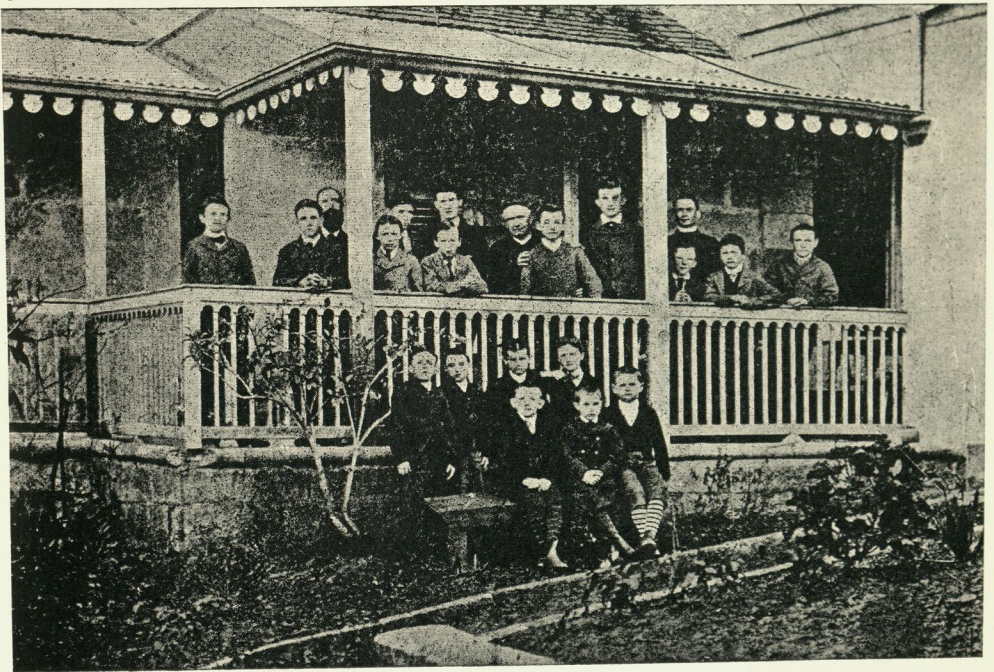
The college grew very quickly; there must have been well over 100 boys when I left at the end of 1883. In the meantime, buildings had grown up and many boys had arrived who afterwards achieved fame. I can also recall M. F. Dalton coming to school just before I left.

In those days Riverview was quite in the wilds, with thick scrub and heavily timbered, and it abounded with native animal life in the way of bandicoots, opossums and bears and native cats; we were great trappers. Snakes used to be pretty plentiful.

I remember Father Gartlan arriving in Australia and joining the teaching staff. He was not then a priest, but was just as jovial then and full of goodwill towards everyone as he proved to the future generations who have passed through Riverview.

Now Riverview has passed her first fifty mile post; may she pass many more; and I trust the future generations that enter her Halls will lend lustre to the old college.

MARK SHELDON.



COLLEGE GROUP, 1880. TAKEN AT THE EASTERN END OF THE COTTAGE.

Back Row: Mr. Murphy, W. Walsh, Joe Flemming, Father Dalton, J. Cosgrove, Mr. O'Neill, S.J.
Third Row: A. Cosgrove, C. Birrell, F. Souter, J. Armit, C. Derwin, F. Donovan, Plunkett
O'Sullivan, Bob Hyndes.

Second Row: W. Birrell, T. Dalton, T. Curran, A. Moore.

First Row: P. O'Connor, T. Moore, M. Sheldon.