

Settlers of Southwell

"GLENDOWER"

By Doris Stirk

While the roar of gnus heralded the departure of Charles Somerset after a visit to Grahamstown, Thomas Philipps was handed a grant to portion of Reed Fountain for which he had applied several years before.

Greatly relieved because his two sons, Edward and Frederick, had already started to build on the farm which he had named Glendour (in anticipation of receiving the grant), Thomas wrote to his relations in England:

"In one of my letters I alluded to a rich belt of land which was situated along the coast . . . within this belt we are now happily placed; but the whole country between the Kowie and Kasouga possesses other beauties in addition, and differs from all the others in splendour of scenery of the softest and most luxuriant in nature." He went on to describe the road leading to the "richest pasture imaginable an extensive parkish plain is bounded towards the South by gentle swelling hills with clumps and groves . . . the road passes under a wood; half way or more over a plain it divides, on leads to the intended new village and the other to Glendower."

LAMPETER

Thomas Philipps led a Welsh party of Settlers from Pembrokeshire, and they embarked on the Kennersley Castle, his wife Charlotte, four daughters and three sons accompanying him. They first lived on "Lampeter" near Bathurst.

The farm Glendower was teeming with games of all kinds, Reedbuck, Grysbok and Oripi. The cottage they lived in was composed of reed-and plaster over a frame, and consisted of an entrance hall, two sitting-rooms and five bedrooms.

Ever full of plans, Thomas and his sons crossed South Down sheep with Spanish Merinos, they grew all kinds of crops, which flourished until the locusts attacked them in 1829. Lieut. James Holman, R.N., who, although blind, was touring the country, mentioned that the Philipps' house was situated about a mile down the valley from Reed Fountain village. In the same year a whale was washed up on the beach, and Thomas cut up the blubber and conveyed it to be boiled, and sold the oil to farmers. He extracted 150 gallons of oil for this purpose.

In the Sixth Kaffir War, 1835, the homestead of the Philipps was burnt down and the family left the farm to settle in Grahamstown. William Cock became the owner in 1848, and offered it for sale the following year. Edward and Stephen Dell had been occupying the farm but vacated it in October, 1849.

In 1853 Thomas Corbett, who was living on Glendower, offered his cattle, implements and crops for sale as he was giving up farming.

He had been living on Woodlands farm in 1849 where he offered two spans of oxen for sale. The following year he accompanied Bishop Robert Gray together with Catechist Henry Waters of Southwell School Chapel, to Farmer-field and on to Salem to sleep. In 1854 he was at Mount Pleasant and married Mary Finaughty, of Grahamstown. He also played an active part in the war of 1851-53, and was Commissariat issuer at Southwell Camp.

Other occupiers of Glendower were; Carlisle, Gray, Usher, Parker, Sam Reed and Fred Keeton.

In 1881 the tower was built on the highest hill on Glendower overlooking the sea. It was built by K. H. Waldron, and is a landmark that can be seen for many miles on land and sea, and is known as Glendower Beacon.

The late George Vernon Ford, son of Ann and James Ford, of Kasouga Farm, lived on Glendower for over 40 years. He had married Doris, daughter of Reginald and Ermie Stirk, in 1920, and they had four children. Colin, the surviving son, is now on the farm, which still lives up to the description given it by Thomas Philipps, who fell in love with it so many years ago.