Tasmania Surveyors

Meehan, James (1774–1826)

by T. M. Perry

James Meehan (1774-1826), surveyor, explorer and settler, was born in Ireland and sentenced to transportation for a part in the Irish rebellion of 1798; Commissioner John Thomas Bigge later remarked that his offence was not serious. He arrived in Sydney in the *Friendship* on 16 February 1800 and in April was assigned as a servant to Charles Grimes, the acting surveyor-general. In 1801 he accompanied Grimes and Francis Barrallier on an exploration of the Hunter River and in 1802-03 went with Grimes and Fleming to King Island and Port Phillip.

While Grimes was on leave in 1803-06 George Evans was appointed acting surveyor general but most of the departmental duties were performed by Meehan, now conditionally pardoned; Grimes considered Meehan capable of carrying out the duties and commended his faithfulness and impartiality on his return. During this time Meehan measured farms to grantees and explored part of the Derwent (1803-04) and Shoalhaven (1805) Rivers. In 1806 he received an absolute pardon and in 1806-07 was again working in Van Diemen's Land.

After Governor William Bligh's deposition in 1808 Colonel George Johnston sent Grimes to England with dispatches and the work of the Surveyor-General's Department again devolved upon Meehan, who was appointed acting surveyor of lands with a salary of £182 10s. Because of his part in overthrowing Bligh Grimes was not permitted to return to New South Wales and Meehan's appointment was confirmed by Governor Lachlan Macquarie. After John Oxley assumed the office of surveyor-general in 1812 Macquarie appointed Meehan deputy-surveyor of lands, and in 1814 he became collector of quitrents and superintendent of roads, bridges and streets as well.

Since a great part of Oxley's time was taken up with exploration, much of the routine work of his department, particularly the measuring of grants, was undertaken by Meehan who told Bigge, 'I have measured every farm that has been measured' since August 1803. Macquarie held a high opinion of Meehan's knowledge of the country and included him in the parties which accompanied him on most of his tours of inspection in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. In 1812-13 Meehan was in Van Diemen's Land resurveying land and correcting previous mistakes there and in 1818 Macquarie sent him with Charles Throsby to seek a route from the Sutton Forest district to Jervis Bay. After parting from Throsby, who went downstream, Meehan followed the Shoalhaven gorge upstream; he failed to find a crossing place, but discovered Lake Bathurst and the Goulburn plains. Apart from fixing the boundaries of land grants Meehan made several contributions to the mapping of the colony, most notably a map of Sydney drawn in 1807, and he surveyed the townships of Richmond, Castlereagh, Windsor, Pitt Town, Wilberforce, Liverpool and Bathurst in New South Wales, as well as Hobart Town in Van Diemen's Land.

In 1803 Meehan was granted 100 acres (40 ha) in the Field of Mars (near Ryde). This he sold five years later when Lieutenant-Governor Joseph Foveaux granted him 130 acres (53 ha) at Bankstown for 'His services and attention to his duty as Acting Surveyor in the Colony'; later he was granted 1140 acres (461 ha) at Ingleburn. These grants, like others made by the insurrectionary governors, were cancelled and reissued by Macquarie. Meehan named his

Ingleburn farm Macquarie Field and there built a house which the governor referred to as Meehan's Castle.

In 1821 as a result of the 'Hardships, privations and Difficulties' endured during his early years in the colony and of his declining health he tendered his resignation and sought a pension. Acceptance of his resignation was delayed while he completed writing descriptions of the farms that had been measured, and collected the quitrents that were due, none of which had been collected since 1815 because Meehan had been wholly occupied with other tasks. His request for a pension was sent to England with glowing testimonies to his character and service from both Macquarie and Oxley, and in 1823 Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane was authorized to grant him a pension not exceeding £100 when accounts were tendered for the outstanding quitrents, which he had by this time supplied. He retired to Macquarie Field where he died on 21 April 1826. His property passed to his son Thomas (b.1809).

Meehan was one of that small group of emancipists who played an important part in the affairs of the colony during Macquarie's governorship and whose energy and ability justified Macquarie's belief that good conduct and reformation should enable a man to regain the place in society which he had lost when sentenced to transportation. He was one of those whom Macquarie invited to Government House, and in his *Letter to ... Viscount Sidmouth* (London, 1821) Macquarie paid him this tribute: 'I have ... had an opportunity of witnessing his indefatigable assiduity in the fulfilment of his arduous duties. I believe that no man has suffered so much privation and fatigue in the service of this Colony as Mr Meehan has done ... His integrity has never, to my knowledge, been impeached; and I certainly consider him to be, both on account of his professional skill, and the faithfull and laborious discharge of his duty, a valuable man'.

Evans, George William (1780–1852)

by A. K. Weatherburn

George William Evans (1780-1852), surveyor and explorer, was born on 5 January 1780, the third child and eldest son of William Evans, secretary to the earl of Warwick, of the parish of St James, Westminster, England, and his wife Ann, née Southam. He served a short apprenticeship with an engineer and architect and gained some elementary training in surveying. In 1798 he married Jennett, daughter of Captain Thomas Melville, commander of the *Britannia* in the Third Fleet and later of the *Speedy*, and migrated to the Cape of Good Hope. He was employed in the Naval Store-keeper's Department at Table Bay and remained there until May 1802 when, in compliance with the treaty of Amiens, British forces were withdrawn. Evans was persuaded by Captain William Kent to go to New South Wales, and he arrived at Port Jackson in H.M.S *Buffalo* on 16 October.

Evans was initially given the position of store-keeper in charge of the receipt and issue of grain at Parramatta, but in August 1803 was appointed acting surveyor-general in the absence of Charles Grimes who was on leave in England. In September 1804 he discovered and explored the Warragamba River, penetrating upstream to the present site of Warragamba Dam. Discharged from the Survey Department by Governor Philip Gidley King in February 1805, he began farming at the Hawkesbury settlement on land granted to him the previous year. This venture failed during the disastrous flood of March 1806, but he remained in occupation until Lieutenant-Governor William Paterson appointed him assistant surveyor at

Port Dalrymple in 1809. However, his services were needed in Sydney and he did not leave to take up this office. In March 1812 he surveyed the shores of Jervis Bay whence he led a small party overland on foot to Appin; this journey of two weeks was conducted under most arduous circumstances and resulted in the settlement of the Illawarra district during the drought years that soon followed. His success probably induced Governor Lachlan Macquarie to select him for the task of penetrating the interior of New South Wales. In September 1812 he went to Van Diemen's Land with the acting surveyor-general, James Meehan, to remeasure grants made by former lieutenant-governors; these were in a deplorable state through the inefficiency and misconduct of Deputy-Surveyors George Harris and Peter Mills. While thus engaged he was appointed in November 1812 deputy-surveyor of lands, Van Diemen's Land, but in August 1813 he was recalled to Sydney and instructed to try to find a passage into the interior.

He set out in November and successfully accomplished this task, reaching the Macquarie River some forty-two miles (68 km) beyond Bathurst, and was thus the first European to cross the Great Dividing Range, the more famous expedition led by Gregory Blaxland not having actually crossed the main range. Upon Evans's return after an absence of seven weeks, Macquarie predicted that the achievement would have momentous effects on the future prosperity of the colony, and in recognition rewarded him with £100 and a grant of 1000 acres (405 ha) on the Coal River near Richmond, Van Diemen's Land. Evans and his family sailed for Hobart in May 1814, but Macquarie recalled him in March 1815 to act as guide on a tour of the recently discovered country through which William Cox had constructed a road to Bathurst. In May and June Evans led another expedition from Bathurst southward to within sight of the Abercrombie River, explored the middle reaches of the Belubula River, discovered the Lachlan River eight miles (13 km) downstream from Cowra, and traced its course as far as Mandagery Creek.

In July 1815 he returned to Hobart, remaining until 1817 when he was required to act as second-in-command to Surveyor-General John Oxley in an expedition then setting out from Bathurst to determine the course of the Lachlan River. Though forced to return by flooded marsh country when about nine miles (14 km) below Booligal, Oxley paid tribute to Evans's able advice and co-operation, and the accuracy and fidelity of his earlier narrative. In September 1817 Evans returned to Van Diemen's Land, but six months later he was again recalled to fill the position of second-in-command to Oxley, this time in his attempt to trace the Macquarie River to its termination. Once again flooded marshes proved too great an obstacle, so the party turned eastward to Port Macquarie and thence southward to Port Stephens. After twenty-three weeks the exploration was completed in November 1818.

Evans returned to Hobart and for the first time since his appointment as deputy-surveyor was able to confine his attention to his duties in Van Diemen's Land, where land surveys were in serious arrears through inadequate staff and continual demands for his services on exploration. None the less, he went with the first party to Macquarie Harbour in 1822. William Sorell had a high opinion of Evans, but the administration was lax and the surveyor had great power. Not only were mistakes often made but, in the issue of grants, a certain discretionary power was given to surveyors to 'throw in' additional pieces of land. Sorell also sanctioned the acceptance of 'presents of office' by surveyors to supplement their inadequate pay. This practice understandably brought complaints and accusations of corruption from disgruntled settlers and these were supported by (Sir) George Arthur, who replaced Sorell in May 1824. The new lieutenant-governor sent to the secretary of state a lengthy account of Evans's alleged involvement in bribery and his illegal disposing of crown lands in an attempt

to force him from office. When Evans asked to retire on a pension, Arthur, in order to expedite his removal, was prepared to concede that his practices had been condoned by Sorell, but the stigma effectually prevented all further promotion of Evans's assistant, Thomas Scott.

Evans resigned in December 1825 on the ground of ill health, eight months after his wife had died. A dispatch from London in May 1826 appointing him the first surveyor-general of Van Diemen's Land had only recognized his position as the Colonial Office knew it when revising the establishment of the Surveyor-General's Department; soon afterwards Earl Bathurst wrote welcoming his resignation, confirming his pension and agreeing to abandon further investigation of his past conduct. Evans sailed for England with his second wife, Lucy Parris, daughter of Thomas Lempriere, in November; while there, he supplemented his pension of £200 by teaching art, but in November 1828, when he heard of Oxley's death, he applied for appointment as surveyor-general in New South Wales, claiming that his health was fully recovered. He was unsuccessful but in 1831 he surrendered his pension for a lump sum of £600, and returned to Sydney next year. Arriving in August he set up as a bookseller and stationer, and soon became drawing master at The King's School, then housed in Harrisford, George Street, Parramatta, while his wife conducted a finishing school for young ladies. He returned to Hobart in 1844 to live with his family in Warwick Lodge, his home in New Town. After his wife died in August 1849, he moved to Macquarie Street, Hobart, where he died on 16 October 1852, aged 72, and was buried in St John's churchyard, New Town. He had at least twelve children, seven by his first marriage and five by his second.

As well as being a competent surveyor and a resolute explorer, Evans was an artist of some note. His aquatint view of Hobart in 1820 was published as a frontispiece in his *Geographical, Historical and Topographical Description of Van Diemen's Land* ... (London, 1822; second edition, 1824; and a French edition, Paris, 1823). The original, with another aquatint of Hobart in 1829, is in the Dixson Library of New South Wales, where four of his views of Sydney are also hanging. He appears to have drawn a number of sketches and water-colours, both of the settled areas of the colony and of the interior, when he journeyed with Oxley. His artistic skill may also have helped him to win Paterson's favour in 1809 and so to restore him to official life at that time.

Statues of Evans are in Bathurst, Melbourne, Adelaide and the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

Oxley, John Joseph William Molesworth (1784–1828)

by E. W. Dunlop

John Joseph William Molesworth Oxley (1784?-1828), surveyor-general and explorer, was born at Kirkham Abbey near Westow, Yorkshire, England, and baptised at Bulmer on 6 July 1784, the eldest son of John Oxley and his wife Isabella, who was related to the Irish Viscount Molesworth. He joined the navy in 1799 as a midshipman in the *Venerable*, and transferred in November 1801 to the *Buffalo*, in which as master's mate he sailed to Australia. Arriving there in October 1802 he engaged in coastal survey work including an expedition to Western Port in 1804-05. In 1805 Governor Philip Gidley King appointed him acting lieutenant in charge of the *Buffalo*, and in 1806 he commanded the *Estramina* on a trip to Van Diemen's Land. Next year he returned to England where on 25 November he was commissioned lieutenant. He came back to Sydney in November 1808 to take up an

appointment as first lieutenant in H.M.S. *Porpoise*, having sailed out as agent for the Transport Board in the convict ship *Speke*, in which he shipped goods worth £800 as an investment. He had obtained an order from the Colonial Office for a grant of 600 acres (243 ha) near the Nepean River, but Lieutenant-Governor William Paterson granted him 1000 acres (405 ha). Oxley had to surrender these in 1810, but Governor Lachlan Macquarie granted him 600 acres (243 ha) near Camden which he increased in 1815 to 1000 acres (405 ha) again. This he called Kirkham.

When Paterson allowed the deposed Governor William Bligh to leave Sydney in the *Porpoise* in March 1809 Oxley was aboard and sailed with Bligh to the Derwent. Next year he wrote a lengthy report on the settlements in Van Diemen's Land before sailing for England in the *Porpoise* in May. In London he applied for the post of Naval Officer in Sydney, and then, after paying Charles Grimes to resign, according to John Macarthur, he twice sought that of surveyor-general. Oxley denied that he had been a partisan of Macarthur when Bligh was deposed, but his letters show that he was on very intimate terms with the rebel leader. In 1812 he became engaged to Elizabeth Macarthur; this was broken off when her father discovered the extent of Oxley's debts. By that time, through the influence of Macarthur's friend Walter Davidson, Oxley's second application for the surveyor-generalship had been successful. In 1811 he had retired from the navy, and in May 1812 sailed for Sydney in the *Minstrel* to take up his new duties.

During Governor Macquarie's administration Oxley was as much occupied with exploring as surveying. In 1815 his assistant, George Evans, discovered the Lachlan River and reported good country south-west of Bathurst. In March 1817 Macquarie appointed Oxley to lead an expedition to explore this region and if possible 'to ascertain the real course ... of the Lachlan ... and whether it falls into the sea, or into some inland lake'. Leaving Bathurst on 28 April the explorers followed the Lachlan for more than two months until in July impassable marshes prevented further progress. Oxley then struck northward to the Macquarie River, which he traced back to Bathurst, where he arrived on 29 August. Macquarie highly praised Oxley's 'Zealous, Indefatigable and Intelligent Exertions' and recommended that he be given £200 for his 'Meritorious Services', which the secretary of state approved.

On 28 May 1818 Oxley led another expedition from Bathurst and followed the Macquarie River until it too disappeared into 'an ocean of reeds' (Macquarie marshes). From 6 July Oxley's party proceeded north-east until they discovered the Castlereagh River, then turning east they found the rich Liverpool Plains, reached and named the Peel River, crossed the southern part of the New England Range near Walcha, found the Hastings River and followed it to its estuary which was named Port Macquarie. A hazardous journey down the coast ended at Newcastle in November, some six months after the party's departure from Bathurst. The rich pastoral lands of the Liverpool Plains were quickly taken up by pastoralists, but Oxley failed in his primary object of tracing the Macquarie and Lachlan Rivers and formulated the mistaken theory of an inland sea. 'I feel confident', he wrote, 'we were in the immediate vicinity of an inland sea, most probably a shoal one ... being filled up by immense depositions from the waters flowing into it from the higher lands'. Nevertheless his reports aroused great interest, and not only did his *Journals of Two Expeditions Into the Interior of New South Wales* (London, 1820) give the first detailed description of the Australian inland, despite his grave doubts of the value of the lands he had traversed, but his discoveries paved the way for the later work of Charles Sturt and Sir Thomas Mitchell.

Oxley's naval experience fitted him better for coastal survey work than for inland exploration. In September-December 1819 he made a trip by sea to Jervis Bay, where he thought the country did not offer 'the smallest inducement for the foundation of a Settlement on its shores, being ... for the most part Barren and generally deficient in Water'. Earlier that year in the *Lady Nelson*, assisted by Phillip Parker King in the *Mermaid*, he had charted Port Macquarie, on which he reported favourably. In December 1820 he made a second survey of the district and reported in favour of establishing a new penal settlement there. In October 1823 he sailed north as far as Port Curtis, and on his return explored Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River, up which he sailed about fifty miles (80 km). His favourable report was again quickly followed by the formation of a penal settlement.

In 1820 Oxley had made several suggestions to Commissioner John Thomas Bigge about the sale of land in New South Wales. Bigge accepted these and, when Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane received his report, Oxley drafted in July 1824 specific regulations for sales at 5s an acre, to be paid over three years; in 1825 and again in 1826 he drew up further regulations on land grants in accordance with the fluctuating orders of the Colonial Office. In 1825 he was appointed one of the three commissioners to carry out the thorough survey of the colony and its division into counties, shires and parishes which had been ordered from London; but this work was not easily accomplished. The duties of the survey office became very extensive as settlement expanded and Oxley was always handicapped by the lack of a sufficiently numerous trained staff. Governor (Sir) Ralph Darling thought him 'very clever' but a man who would 'never submit to the Drudgery of carrying on the details of his Department'. He constantly sought increases in fees, salary and staff, but though both Macquarie and Brisbane supported his requests, the secretary of state was reluctant to incur the extra expenditure. In 1823 his salary was increased from 15s. to £1 a day; his fees had been increased in 1818 and between 1823 and 1828 brought him an average of nearly £1500 a year.

Oxley also had business interests. After he arrived in New South Wales in 1812 he acted as agent for Maude & Robinson of the Cape and Thomas & William Ward of London. He acted for the creditors of Garnham Blaxcell and Robert Campbell and of the firm of Lord, Kable & Underwood. He kept in touch with Walter Davidson at Canton, and acted for Jeffery Hart Bent with Alexander & Co. of Calcutta. In addition to these mercantile activities he was developing his properties and entered into partnership with Commissary David Allan in raising cattle for the stores. Near his property, Kirkham, he received further grants of 820 acres (332 ha) at Minto in 1816 and 630 acres (255 ha) at Appin in 1817. After 1816 he sent cattle into the Bowral district and in June 1823 was granted 2300 acres (931 ha) there registered as Weston (probably a mistake for Westow). As a sheep breeder he took prizes at the shows of the Agricultural Society which he helped to found in 1822, though in 1824 John Macarthur criticized his 4000 crossbred sheep which, he said, Oxley sold as pure merinos to strangers; but Oxley and Macarthur were then on very bad terms. For a time Oxley was a director of the Bank of New South Wales, but in 1826 he was one of the founders and first directors of its 'exclusivist' rival, the Bank of Australia. He was a shareholder of the Australian Agricultural Co., which appears to have paid him for advice and assistance.

Oxley was keenly interested in the public and cultural life of the colony. He was one of the first officers of the Bible Society when it was founded in 1817. In September 1819 he was appointed to the committee of the Female Orphan Institution, the Male Orphan Institution and the Public School Institution. In 1821 he became a foundation member of the Philosophical Society, and that December Governor Brisbane made him a magistrate. He subscribed to both St James's Church and to Scots Church where he was one of the congregation which in 1824

petitioned for government assistance for its minister. He was selected as one of the five members of the original Legislative Council in 1824, but was not reappointed when the council was reconstituted next year. He had always been a strong exclusive. Macquarie criticized him as 'factious and dissatisfied'. In 1812 John Macarthur wrote warmly of Oxley's 'good nature'; later he spoke in a very different vein after 'his unprincipled conduct made it necessary to drop his acquaintance'. Whatever his character his financial incapacity is clear, and this made him, in Macarthur's opinion, 'no more fit to make his way in the midst of the sharks among whom it will be his fate to live than he is qualified to be a Lord Chancellor'. Despite his investments, his fees and his land grants, when he died at Kirkham on 26 May 1828, he was so 'much embarrassed in his pecuniary circumstances' that the Executive Council felt compelled to recommend special assistance to his widow and children. The British government refused to sanction a pension but agreed to permit a grant of 5000 acres (2024 ha) to Oxley's sons in recognition of their father's services.

On 31 October 1821 Oxley married Emma Norton (1798-1885) at St Philip's Church. They had two sons, John (b.1824) and Henry (b.1826), but earlier Oxley had had two daughters by Charlotte Thorpe and one by Elizabeth Marnon. He kept a substantial town house in Sydney, opposite St James's Church, and he built a fine country seat at Kirkham. He was aged only 42 when he died, but his constitution had 'been materially injured by the privations which he suffered during the Several Expeditions on which he was employed in exploring the Interior'. He was buried in the Devonshire Street cemetery in Sydney.

Dumaresq, Edward (1802–1906)

by Roger Page

Edward Dumaresq (1802-1906), surveyor, public servant and landowner, was born on 16 June 1802 in Swansea, Wales, the youngest son of Colonel John Dumaresq, who fought in the American war of independence and could trace his family tree six centuries to Normandy. At 13 he entered the Royal Military College, Sandhurst; after three years study he accepted a cadetship in the East India Co.'s service.

Soon after his arrival in Bombay Dumaresq became a lieutenant in the Bombay Native Infantry, and also did some work with the Revenue and Topographical Survey Department of Gujarat. After four years in Indian villages his health broke down in 1823; granted sick leave, he recuperated first in Mauritius, then took a sea voyage in the *Perseverance*, which introduced him to Hobart Town and Sydney. Back in Bombay, doctors pronounced him unfit for further tropical duties, and he was invalided to England. His stay was brief. General (Sir) Ralph Darling, who had married Dumaresq's sister, had been appointed governor of New South Wales, and Edward, with his brothers, William John and Henry, accompanied the vice-regal party to Australia.

In October 1825 when the *Catherine Stewart Forbes* arrived at Hobart, Dumaresq disembarked, for he intended to make Van Diemen's Land his home. His decision was confirmed in 1827 when, after he had been promoted captain by the East India Co. for suppressing a rebellion, he was placed on half-pay and by his marriage in November to Frances Blanche Legge, the youngest daughter of a Dublin barrister.

Meanwhile Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Arthur had made him surveyor-general in 1825. The appointment was not ratified by Downing Street, but Dumaresq held office until replaced by George Frankland in March 1828. During his term the important survey and valuation of lands was almost completed under his guidance as chief commissioner. In 1828 he became collector of revenue and joined the Land Board, but found the salary inadequate and won appointment as police magistrate at New Norfolk. His duties, particularly with Aboriginals, proved damaging to his health and in February 1833 he obtained leave to go to New South Wales to recuperate. On medical advice he wisely decided to go on the land in 1835. He took over Illawarra, an estate near Longford, sections of which were rented to tenants, and by sage speculation on the mainland secured an adequate competence, if not wealth, for the rest of his life.

Dumaresq's most profitable deals were in Victoria, where the prices of June 1840 were inflated fifty-fold during the gold rushes in the 1850s. His Brisbane land also yielded handsome profits, but the Balmain allotments in Sydney, bought for £638 in 1850, realized less than £700 when he had to sell them in 1858.

In 1853 Dumaresq took his family to England, planning a long stay; before leaving Tasmania he sold his stock and farming implements and leased Illawarra. His chief aim was to buy an army commission for his eldest son, Edward John. The holiday, spent mainly at Malvern Wells, ended with the death of his wife. Dumaresq sailed for Australia and within a year committed what he termed 'the fatal act of a second marriage' to Mrs Charlotte Fogg. They lived together only a few months; after he settled on her £300 a year, about a third of his income, she drifted away. In private papers he denounced her as utterly selfish, hard-hearted, tyrannical and a swindler.

Amid this domestic upset Dumaresq stood in 1861 as a candidate for Devon in the House of Assembly. His prospects of defeating the sitting member, William Archer, were remote, and the election became so lively that he went to Melbourne to escape it. Despite this failure, Dumaresq retained a profound interest in politics. He advocated the annexation of Tasmania by Victoria, railway development, and a special tax to give state aid to all Tasmanian churches. In his last decades he made annual trips to Victoria and Queensland to inspect his investments, to escape the Tasmanian winter and to visit relations. As he aged Dumaresq marvelled at his improving health. He died at Illawarra on 23 April 1906, reputed the oldest justice of the peace in the world.

Deeply religious and a convinced Anglican, Dumaresq gave the property for Christ's College, and with rents from his New Norfolk farms financed the Dumaresq scholarship, held by his sons until the college collapsed under debt in 1856. He also built a stone church and rectory at Illawarra, and made generous contributions towards the cathedral in Hobart and to the Church of England in Victoria.

Calder, James Erskine (1808–1882)

by Jack Thwaites

James Erskine Calder (1808-1882), **surveyor**, was born on 8 June 1808 at Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire, England, ninth of eleven children of Alexander Calder, quartermaster at the Royal Military College. He was educated at village schools and in 1822-26 at the college

after it had moved to Sandhurst. He then joined the Ordnance Survey in England, and his interest in this work led his father to seek from the Colonial Office an appointment for him at the Swan River settlement or in some other colony. Calder was offered and accepted appointment as assistant **surveyor** in **Van Diemen's Land** on 5 June 1829. A month later he sailed in the *Thames* for Hobart Town, at half pay on the voyage. On 21 November he took up his position at full pay under the **surveyor**-general, Edward Dumaresq.

Calder became one of the colony's most distinguished early **surveyors**. Big of frame, with a strong physique, he was tireless in the bush, drove himself hard and quickly won repute for tackling difficult tasks. In May 1831 while in the Huon Valley he made a ten-day exploratory trip up the river with Alexander McKay whom he regarded highly and took on several later expeditions. Next year between 1 April and 30 September in a severe winter when fifty-eight days of snow and rain were recorded, Calder measured fifty-four town and sub-lots, a total of 48,932 acres (19,802 ha), investigating old boundaries round Sandy Bay and Brown's River. One of the best examples of his exacting work was the track he cut across the mountains in preparation for Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Franklin's proposed expedition to Macquarie Harbour. In his typical manner, as soon as Calder got permission to take the road where he liked, he 'stuck at nothing but went straight ahead like a rhinoceros well knowing that no-one except our old dare-devil Governor would ever travel over it ... so I took it up and down hills nearly as high and no less steep than the Dromedary'. Calder left Hobart with seven men in November 1840 and began work at Marlboro' on a bridle track. It went past Lake St Clair towards the south-west coast through country that he thought worthy of extensive draining, 'a favourable scene for the Employment of newly arriving Convicts'. By March 1841 the party was within thirteen miles (21 km) of the Gordon River, in mountainous country 'presenting some insurmountable impediments to progress'. Failing Macquarie Harbour as an outlet, Calder recommended Port Davey as the terminal, reporting that although his own knowledge of the area did not extend beyond the Arthur Range, McKay had vouched for the way being open. When Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin made their overland journey in 1842 it is improbable that they would have reached the Gordon River without Calder's assistance. The journey should have taken eight days but took twenty-one; persistent bad weather flooded rivers and turned plains into swamps, while food shortages added to Calder's troubles. In back-tracking to depots for supplies he once travelled 48 miles (77 km) in 54 hours bringing a return load of 80 pounds (36 kg), at the same time cutting a section of new track and securing bridges.

By a special licence issued on 8 January 1838 Calder had married Elizabeth Margaret, daughter of Richard Pybus of Bruny Island. After his marriage Calder's field-work continued, but his duties became 'much more of a special than of an ordinary nature', as he was given tasks that required much discrimination. In 1834 he had carried out a survey of Maria Island and submitted a comprehensive report on it. Now his reports became more numerous and varied. By 1851 he had submitted some 130 official reports, many of them leading to new legislation. However, the long years of arduous work and exposure ruined his constitution; he was attacked by rheumatism, and became largely tied to office work. In 1852 his wife became very ill and he had to take leave for eighteen months on half-pay.

He was appointed **surveyor**-general on 1 September 1859 in succession to James Sprent. While in office Calder kept the department on a good footing. His careful regulations and his appointment of reliable **surveyors** accountable for the proper conduct of all surveys in their districts did much to found the present survey system in Tasmania. On 30 June 1870 his position was abolished and the duties taken over by Henry Butler, minister for lands and

works. The office was not held again by a professional officer until 1894 when, under Edward Counsel's administration, the prestige temporarily lost since Calder's retirement was restored.

In June 1870 Calder was given a choice of field-work as commissioner of the Fingal goldfields at a salary of £600 or an annual pension of £470 and the office of serjeant-at-arms in parliament at a salary of £100. He accepted the latter position but reserved the right to press for a pension equal to his net salary as **surveyor**-general. His claim, 'which I humbly think will not be denied to me', was based on his meritorious conduct and on the Imperial Pensions Act; he also argued that since he was the only officer in the service appointed by the British government entitled to claim the advantages of the Act no inconvenient precedent would be established. His pension ceased when he died in Hobart on 20 February 1882. His wife died on 10 March 1891, survived by two sons and three daughters.

Calder had been a prolific writer. He published several official reports in Hobart and such works as *Oyster Culture* (1868), *Tasmanian Industries* (1869) and, in London, *The Woodlands, etc. of Tasmania* (1874). From 1870 until his death Calder contributed many valuable items to the press on the early history of the colony. Among them were topographical sketches of areas in which his work had taken him, and chatty notes on such prominent personalities as Thomas Gregson, John Wedge, Anthony Fenn Kemp, John Foster and on Governor (Sir) George Arthur, of whom he was no admirer. He also maintained a great interest in the Tasmanian Aboriginals and pleaded for the use of their place names; his *Some Account of the Wars, Extirpation, Habits, &c., of the Native Tribes of Tasmania* (Hobart, 1875) was a collection of material that had appeared in the *Mercury*, *Australasian*, and *Tasmanian Tribune* in 1872-75. His *Language and Dialects Spoken by the Aborigines of Tasmania* was published as a parliamentary paper in 1901.

Fossey, Joseph (1788–1851)

by E. R. Pretyman

Joseph Fossey (1788-1851), land surveyor, was born on 17 September 1788 at Baldock, Hertfordshire, England, the son of Thomas Fossey, a small landholder in Clothall parish and a maltster by trade, and his wife Mary. On 23 August 1825 at a salary of £100 Joseph was appointed assistant surveyor in the newly-formed Van Diemen's Land Co. With other officers he sailed from Cowes in the *Cape Packet* and reached Hobart Town on 4 March 1826. Transferred to Launceston, he was instructed to proceed westward to a district reserved for the company. He reached the Second Western River (Mersey) where he became associated with Alexander Goldie; in a whale-boat with a crew of six he left in July for Circular Head. After inspecting this peninsula and ordering the crew to take the boat to Cape Grim, Fossey and Goldie walked overland to the cape to examine the soil and inspect an area southwards on the western coast. From Circular Head they returned to the Mersey. Early in April 1827 Fossey set out from Launceston to find a land route to Surrey Hills, an area in the north-west selected by Henry Hellyer for the company's occupation. Naming features and overcoming difficulties, Fossey reached his destination on 12 May. Later under his supervision this track was formed for seventy miles (113 km) and met the one completed to Circular Head in

February 1828. For his preparatory work on this 'Great Western Road' and for his assets of £1300 Fossey received a grant of 2000 acres (809 ha) near Ben Lomond Rivulet.

In January 1830 Edward Curr wrote of him, 'Surveyor Fossey, now in charge of the establishment at Woolnorth, is a compound of many discordant qualities. He is not a man of talent ... but is quite conversant with the principles of his profession, is exceedingly slow in practice arising from too great an attention to minutiae ... In his general character he is made up of peculiarities, affecting to think and act on all subjects differently from everyone else ... yet altogether he is a man of worth and a conscientious servant of the Company and I am sorry to part with him because I know that I can place dependence upon him'. Fossey, his contract completed, sailed for England but returned in the *Forth* in April 1832. In May he offered his services to the government and on 30 June was appointed assistant surveyor in northern Tasmania but resigned in November. On 30 May 1835 at St John's Church, Launceston, he married Eliza Wood, late of White Haven, Cumberland. After living for some time on his grant they moved to Victoria where in July 1844 he became licensee of the Angel Inn, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. A year later this licence was transferred elsewhere to William Collins. Fossey then had a general store at St Kilda, but soon left his wife to manage it while he went north as a surveyor. He died at Gostwyck, New England, on 28 August 1851.

Boyd, Edward (1794–1871)

by G. H. Stancombe

Edward Boyd (1794?-1871), **surveyor** general, was born in England, and educated at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He became an ensign in July 1811, and a lieutenant in the Royal Staff Corps a year later. He saw active service in southern France and in the Peninsula, where he distinguished himself in laying down a bridge of boats across the Adour before receiving severe wounds. After the war he acted as aide-de-camp and private secretary to Major-General Smyth, lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick in 1817-23, and was also engaged on public works. In 1826 he received the rank of captain and the duties of paymaster, retiring on half-pay in July 1829 when appointed deputy **surveyor** general in **Van Diemen**'s **Land** at a salary of £350.

He arrived in Hobart Town in the *Lady Harewood* in July with his wife Jane, and a servant, who was to superintend the office in Hobart. In 1833, after much protest, Boyd was sent to open a branch of the department in Launceston. Disputes arose with the **surveyor**-general, whom he unjustly accused of failing in duty by himself staying in Hobart and sending Boyd to Launceston. His usefulness there was also limited by delay in the sending of essential maps from Hobart. Ill health, lingering from a paralysis suffered in Canada, prevented him from carrying out the survey of the town of Launceston, so disappointing the lieutenant-governor's hopes. Boyd's resentment at transfer back to Hobart, because his Launceston services were deemed a failure, capped his record of complaints. Nevertheless, as the senior administrative officer in the department, he became **surveyor**-general in January 1839, after the death of George Frankland, but the appointment was not to be confirmed until Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Franklin had been assured that ill health would not limit Boyd's efficiency in the office. Six months later abusive complaints of Boyd's unanswered correspondence and his indecision on the accuracy of surveys were embarrassing the government. By June 1840 it was obvious to Franklin that, although Boyd's health had improved, his energy and memory were affected, and he appealed to the Colonial Office for a **surveyor**-general from England. At this time Boyd was also criticized for careless administration of the system of contract

surveying. His explanation evidenced his integrity and goodwill, but failed to exonerate him from charges of negligence. In November 1840 the Executive Council advised Franklin to appoint a successor at once and remove Boyd to his former position as deputy, on grounds of ill health. Boyd took the cue; he applied at once for leave, was awarded half-pay at deputy's rates, and prepared to embark in the *Emu*. At this point a further complaint was referred to the Executive Council: he appeared guilty of putting up for sale land previously promised to settlers. When Boyd refused to answer summary demands for immediate explanation, his half-pay was cancelled. On arrival in England in April 1841 he presented his case to the Colonial Office, but, as his army half-pay was jeopardized by the delay in receiving information from the colony, he resigned and rejoined the army. In November 1841 he was promoted major in the 29th Regiment, and later saw service at Ghazipur, India. In 1854 he received the rank of lieutenant-colonel, having retired on captain's half-pay in 1850. He died in London on 2 November 1871, aged 77.

Boyd lacked both the health and native ability necessary to succeed in the harassed and responsible office of **surveyor**-general. Army duties with their lesser demands brought more profit to his later years. While in the colony he had established the Launceston Auxiliary Temperance Society and become its first president.

Frankland, George (1800–1838)

by P. R. Eldershaw

George Frankland (1800-1838), surveyor, was a son of Roger Frankland, canon of Wells Cathedral, Somerset, England, and of Catherine, daughter of the earl of Colville, and a grandson of Admiral Sir Thomas Frankland, fifth baronet, whose title descended to George's brother. He became an ensign in the army in 1819, served on the earl of Colville's staff in India as aide-de-camp and in the 24th Regiment, and in July 1822 married Anne Mason, a friend of Lady Colville's. Next year he was appointed surveyor-general at Poona, where he became acquainted with Edward Dumaresq. Ill health soon led Frankland to take his wife and daughter to the Cape of Good Hope on twelve months leave, at the end of which he resigned and returned to England. Family influence with R. W. Hay at the Colonial Office led to his appointment as first assistant surveyor of Van Diemen's Land in 1826 and he arrived in the colony in July 1827. Next March he succeeded to the charge of the department.

Frankland's 'acquaintance with the superior branches of his profession' led Lieutenant-Governor (Sir) George Arthur to direct that he should begin the general trigonometrical survey of the island; later his frequent absences from his office in the field were to try Arthur's patience, but the surveyor-general believed that exploration and discovery were major functions of his position. He insisted on his surveyors keeping careful journals of their observations and he conceived it his duty 'to observe and record every remarkable fact connected with the Natural history of the island whose surface and native production have, in a manner, been placed so peculiarly in his custody'. In 1828 Governor (Sir) Ralph Darling offered Frankland appointment as deputy surveyor general in New South Wales, which he said, offered a wider range of employment than Van Diemen's Land, but Frankland declined.

In 1831 Frankland was seeking a lead mine, convinced of its existence by specimens which had been shown to him by Aboriginals; and it was he who, in 1829, suggested the notable 'comic strip' proclamation to the Aboriginals. Expeditions in which he personally took part

explored the wild country westwards of the upper Derwent (1828), the upper Huon (1829) and the central highlands around Lake St Clair (1835). The most significant outcome of these efforts was the unravelling of the Derwent, Gordon, Huon and Nive river systems.

Lamenting the lack of credit given in the colony for work 'in the cause of science or general knowledge', Frankland wrote that he would have more time for exploration 'were it not for the circumstance of Colonel Arthur being so very averse to any of the officers of the Survey Department leaving the plodding work of marking the Settlers farms even for a day'. It is true that office responsibilities during Frankland's term were greater than those of his predecessors; yet geographical knowledge was extended more by Frankland's exertions and those of his men than in any other decade.

Much of his term of office was troubled by criticism; in November 1833 the Colonial Office questioned the slow progress of surveys. Why had no reports or charts come from the commissioners of survey and valuation, of whom Frankland was the chief? Frankland justified himself at length, both to Downing Street and to a local board of inquiry. He pointed to the gross inaccuracies of earlier surveys; scarcely a grant existed whose described boundaries could be marked on the ground without incompatibility with itself or neighbouring grants. The Caveat Board, of which the surveyor-general was a member, had been set up to issue new confirmatory grant deeds, and to decide the inevitable disputes; and responsibility for the resurvey of all lands adjudicated upon 'heaped upon this Department a load of additional labour which belonged to periods long gone by ... in addition to the current demands of the times'. His explanations were accepted.

A difference with Arthur in 1835 reveals in Frankland a sensitivity and a pride amounting almost to arrogance. Frankland had employed a convict to draft estate diagrams to be supplied privately to settlers. Arthur objected to the practice because he thought official resources were being used for private gain and suspected that it could be a cause of the delay in the description of boundaries. Frankland bristled at the 'direct impeachment' of his honour and the 'foul calumny', and listed the privileges he claimed as surveyor-general; they included the publication, at his own expense, of maps based on official surveys made under his orders. This Arthur denied, and refused to retract his reproof; Frankland continued to demand satisfaction: 'I cannot ... allow the matter to rest without degrading the Family of which I am a Member—the Commission I hold in the Army and the Office with which the King has honoured me in this Colony'. As for private gain, he wrote, 'I would no more dream of selling my manuscript drawings, than I should think of hawking about fish for sale in a tray on my head—Nevertheless I consider I have a perfect right to do so if I see fit'. The quarrel was finally patched up by Alfred Stephen though neither party capitulated.

Frankland never seems to have thought of himself as a colonist, and soon after his appointment referred to it only as one 'likely to detain me many years in this Colony'. He took a maximum land grant, but at the end of 1835 sought two years leave to visit Europe. It was postponed until 1838, when he appeared intent on leaving for good: in January he was advertising for sale his beloved house, Secheron, designed by himself on Battery Point. It did not sell and in September he tendered it to the government for five years.

Frankland may also have felt that he had done his duty to the colony by the completion of his map; although based on incomplete triangulation, it delineated the new counties and parishes and showed the position of each settler's grant. Certainly he was tired of official reproofs, and revealed his ruffled pride in a long memorandum of 1838 enumerating his multitudinous

duties, only one of which was the preparation of accurate maps; he doubted whether any English maps were as perfect as some of his county charts and quoted Under-Secretary Hay's compliment: 'Your Map is by far the most valuable contribution that has been received at the Colonial Office from any of the Colonies during my time'.

On 30 December 1838 Frankland died from an unspecified illness aggravated by the prevailing influenza. His wife, two daughters, Sophia Catherine and Georgina Anne, and one son, Augustus Charles, sailed for England next February. Augustus was killed in Persia in 1857.

His drawings, his forceful and intelligent language, his map and his house all show Frankland to have been a man of genuine accomplishment, professionally and in the arts and sciences. James Calder and John Wedge criticized his ability as a surveyor, Arthur said he was 'a little unbending in his manner', Lady Jane Franklin thought he was 'more accomplished than efficient' and the *Colonial Times* at his death referred to his unpopularity as a government officer; but his map remained the best for twenty years, and no one doubted his integrity. He was popular with his officers, whom he defended warmly against criticism and with whom his correspondence was of an unusually friendly kind. They erected a monument to him and even George Boyes lamented his loss.

Scott, Thomas (1800–1855)

by G. H. Crawford

Thomas Scott (1800-1855), surveyor and landowner, was the son of George Scott of West Morriston, Earlston, Berwickshire, Scotland, and his wife Betty, née Pringle. After education as a surveyor he came to Hobart Town in 1820 in the *Skelton* and temporarily became superintendent of government stock. Next year he was appointed by Governor Lachlan Macquarie as assistant surveyor under the deputy surveyor general, George Evans. Scott was active in his profession and responsible for surveying much of the early settlements. Between 1822 and 1824 he explored parts of the east coast, laid out the town of Bothwell, and published his chart of Tasmania which showed much more detail than earlier maps. A variant entitled 'A Military Map' was prepared in 1826 but not published. During the 1820s he took up Mount Morriston at the Macquarie River near Ross, to which he and his brother George later added.

In 1824 Evans applied for permission to retire and Scott applied for the vacancy, but when Governor (Sir) Ralph Darling called at Hobart on his way to Sydney he appointed his brother-in-law, Edward Dumaresq, as acting surveyor general. Lieutenant-Governor (Sir) George Arthur confirmed the appointment, but reported that he was satisfied with Scott's zeal and abilities and asked that his salary be increased. The Colonial Office then appointed Scott as surveyor-general, but Arthur changed his opinion of Scott's accuracy and honesty, partly because Roderic O'Connor refused to serve as a land commissioner under him. More important, Scott had become implicated in accusations against Evans, who had accepted bribes to measure holdings in excess of areas granted. In 1826 the Executive Council inquired into these charges and reported that both surveyors were at fault, but excused Scott for acquiescing in the errors of his senior officer. As a result George Frankland was appointed surveyor-general, Dumaresq acted as chief land commissioner and Scott continued as assistant surveyor.

In 1826 Scott took a party to Adventure Bay and South Cape to explore coal seams, but reported that the shaft and the road to the mine were too arduous undertakings. His party established friendly relations with the local Aboriginals. In 1828 he examined Port Arthur as a place for settlement. Next year he accompanied Arthur on a journey from Hobart to Mole Creek and through the Van Diemen's Land Co.'s land at Middlesex Plains, Surrey Hills, Hampshire Hills and Emu Bay. The company's proposed grants were based on Scott's map, but it misled the manager, Edward Curr, who deduced from it that the north-western country was isolated from other settlements by several days travel through impassable mountains.

In 1829 Captain Edward Boyd was appointed deputy surveyor-general, despite Scott's protests, but although still third in the department he was promoted senior assistant surveyor in 1830. In 1832 he became surveyor for the County of Cornwall. About this time he took up residence at Bowhill, Glen Dhu, Launceston; he also gave the town of Deloraine its name, taking it from the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, by his kinsman, Sir Walter Scott. In the same year his plan of Launceston was published for the *Hobart Town Almanac* by James Ross. In 1833 Boyd was sent to Launceston to open a branch of the survey office and Scott was moved to George Town. In 1835 he married Ann Reid. Next year he obtained two years leave to visit Scotland, and arranged for his brother James to be his deputy, each to share equally his annual salary of £350. Soon after his return he resigned and devoted himself to his own land and business interests. On his death at Earlston in 1855 he had amassed a fortune estimated at £107,800.

James Scott (1810-1884) arrived in Hobart in the *Ann Jamieson* in 1832. He was trained as a surveyor by his brother Thomas and worked with him, and on his resignation in 1838 joined the staff of the Survey Department. The appointment was short-lived. Next year when contract surveying was introduced he was approved as a surveyor to be paid on piecework. Of strong physique and an excellent bushman, he became the chief surveyor in the north. In 1845 he married Agnes Mathie McGown, by whom he had eleven children. He made his home at Bowhill.

James Scott is best known for his explorations of the north-east. In April 1852 he was engaged by the government to find a bridle road for stock from the last settlement on St Patrick's River to Cape Portland, a vast area not previously crossed by white man. He went up St Patrick's River, passed north-west of Mount Maurice to what he thought was Forester's River, over a tier to the Ringarooma River, which he followed south-east of Mount Cameron to Cape Portland, and then returned to Launceston along the coast. He reported adversely: any track would be very costly and devoid of resting places for stock. He proposed instead a line by way of Piper's River, across the Little Forester about three miles (4.8 km) above Bowood and then north-east to the Tomahawk and Ringarooma Rivers. In October 1852 he marked out this road. Next January he applied for government assistance to open up a line of communication from St Patrick's River along his former route to the Ringarooma River. He was promised £40 for this task but declined on the ground of ill health and other business. However, both he and his brother George applied for land on the Ringarooma River at what is now Legerwood, and by November 1853 he reported that he had completed a bridle road and that the land supposed to be on the Great Forester's River was on the main branch of the Ringarooma River. A little later he found fertile land in the near-by Scottsdale district, which was named after him.

For most of the 1850s Scott was the only surveyor in Launceston. In 1853 the department ceased to give him work, but not for long as no other surveyors could be found. When again

offered a government post he refused it and continued to work on contract. He did much of the early survey of Port Sorell and Devonport. When the lands of the Cressy Land Co. were broken up about 1854 he did the survey. He did not like 'teaching young men who might oppose me later', but in 1856 when Thomas's two sons arrived he trained the elder, James Reid Scott. After 1860 he restricted his activities as a surveyor. He owned many properties and an interest in a coal mine at the Don River, was a director of the British and Tasmanian Charcoal Iron Co., and a foundation director and later chairman of the Mutual Fire Insurance Co. He was appointed a justice of the peace in 1862. He served on the Launceston City Council, and in 1879 was chairman of the Launceston General Hospital Board. For some years he was chairman of the Paterson's Plains Road Trust. Independent of any political party, he was a member of the House of Assembly for George Town in 1869-77 and for South Launceston from 1878 until his death in 1884.