

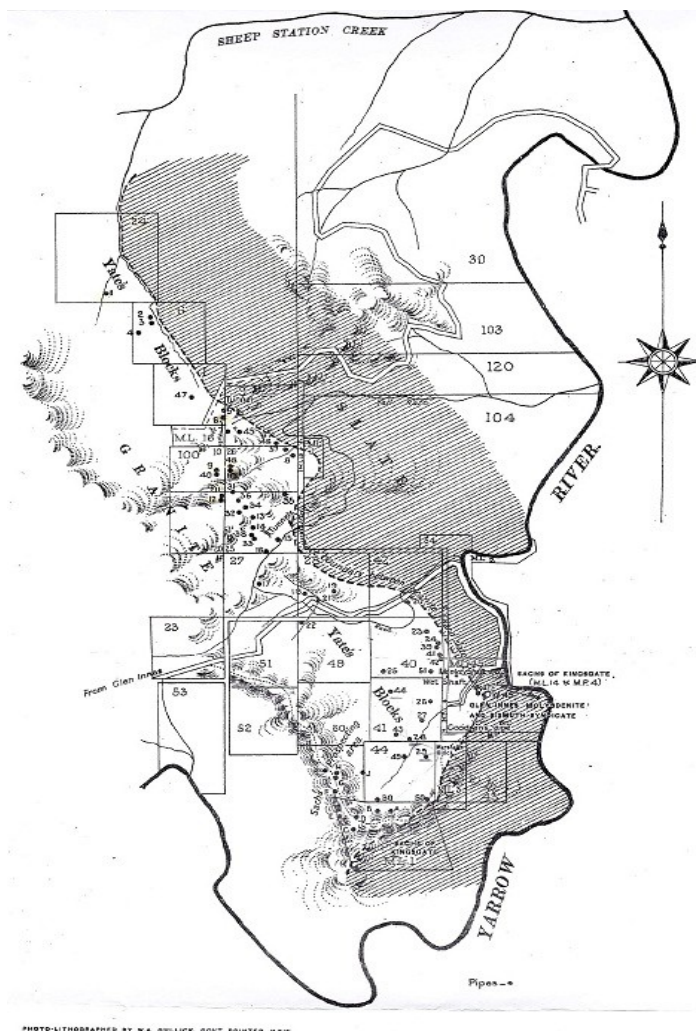
Chapter 13 Quinn's Find - Hole #1 - Kingsgate Mine

In the local aboriginal dialect Tingha, means *flat country*.¹ For a while I managed a dredge excavation on the peneplain flats around Tingha. Such levelled country is the ultimate old age stage of terrain subjected to the corrosive forces of erosion. It became clear to me that such sedimentary accumulation of minerals was the result of erosion of a much older bedrock. I remembered back to when as a ten year old we lived for a time on the Uralla gold fields. Sometime after a government census in 1853 Dad just gave the game away. He packed in his pan and returned for a while to cedar cutting, sawing red gold in the jungles below the tableland near the coast. Even yet I dreamed the fossickers dream of finding an upstream hard rock mother lode that had eroded to form traces of pay dirt in the stream. With this childhood dream still fresh in mind, I was in the process of exploring the tableland escarpment and hills to the east of Glen Innes for just such an original vein a mother lode. It was October 1879 and my mind had turned to seeking in solid bedrock for a place where minerals had accumulated as injections into hard rock.

My exploration led me along Yarrow River as it cut north through the edge of the escarpment twenty miles east of Glen Innes. Further downstream the seasonal waters of

the Yarrow flowed east after it joined the mighty Mann River that cascades off the tablelands to join the Clarence. Big River then roves across the coastal plain in many a majestic meander on its journey to the sea. To me this was all familiar territory following my youthful years of trailing the mail from Clarence Mouth to Armidale. Now equipped with increasing understanding of nature's process of hard rock mineral formation, I was on the lookout for evidence of a contact zone between ancient granitic bedrock and its overlying heat-hardened sediments. Riding west from the Yarrow, up Sheep Station Creek I turned south into a dry creek bed along the bottom of a small broad valley. The gently sloping upland vale, capped by a sky of brilliant blue, was sparsely strewn with wooded stringy eucalypts. And all the while approaching summer heat sizzled in the air so still.

Cicadas in their thousands droned in eerie harmony and thickened the hazy heated air of that still, drowsy noon. Late Spring brought the wilderness alive and you could almost feel the bush beating down and bearing in on every sense. I found myself squinting uphill to view a rocky escarpment of granite to the west,



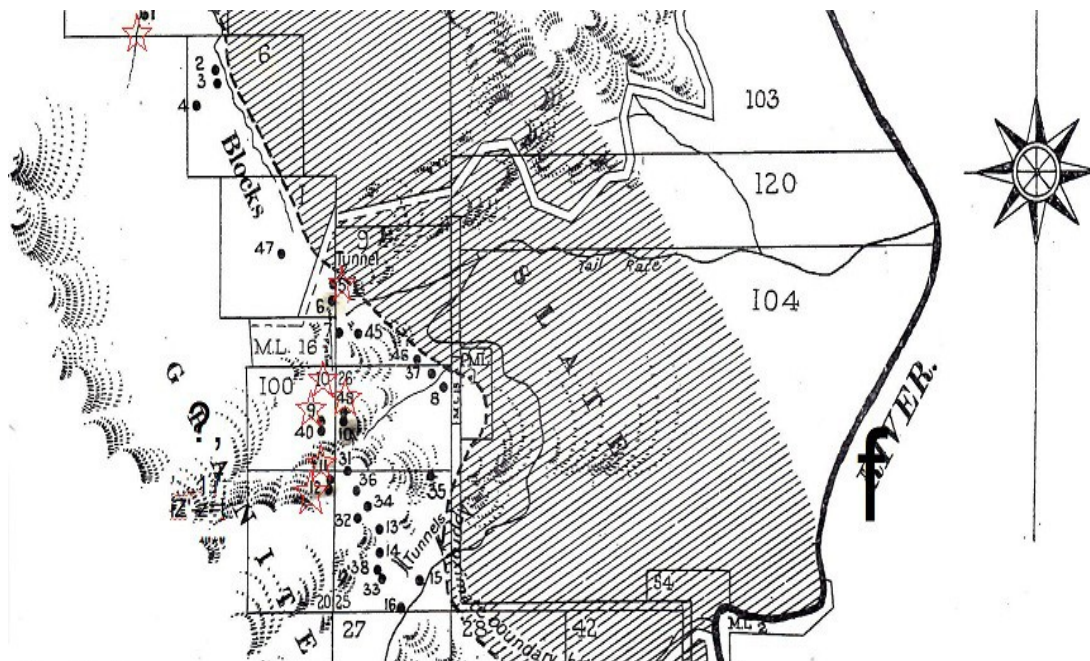
Kingsgate mines Map: Quinn's hole is number 12
exposed by aeons of erosion. As I drifted in and out of a lazy day dream my horse picked its own path along the slaty bedrock, exposed after aeons of erosion, that formed the sun dried creek bed.

My left knee lazily nudged old horse up a short side gully climbing south below the granite tor line. I must have dozed off in the saddle for suddenly I was startled by a sharp

shrill silence. The symphony supplied by orchestrating locusts subsided suddenly and abruptly stopped. Old horse too, suddenly, stood stock still, jolting me out of my reverie. My dream of eldorado was totally shattered by the stillness silently screaming through the spring filled air. Not a sound distracted me from the sight that met my eyes as I jolted from my reverie in the suddenly silent bush.

Old horse relaxed and dropped his head towards what looked like a rock of salt lick, encrusted with a fuzz of tiny yellow crystals. Instinctively I flicked the reins to deter him from tasting the yellow crust that coated the rock. Maybe it was Sulphur. Closer inspection revealed a lump of massive whitish quartz, stained brown by surface weathering with a fine patch of yellow incrustations on the outcropping vitreous silica. My excitement mounted as I examined the yellow crust of micro fine crystals. Such a weathered gossan often forms where a mineralised injection from inside bedrock is exposed to air at the surface. Such mineralisation can occur when erosion exposes the rock surface of an in-ground ore body to weathering. Such a golden halo could be a sign of treasure below. This yellow crusted quartz promised pay dirt. Was this eldorado at my feet? My hazy dreaming shattered as I hammered off a lump of crystal covered quartz to confirm my fortune. And fame followed as I later filed my claim on Quinn's Find Pipe number one. Thus commenced the Kingsgate Mining Rush after the local paper got wind of it, October 28 1879.³

Hugh Quinn's Kingsgate Claims



Will Yates, owner of the land around Quinn's Find, classified the samples as Bismuth ochre and several leases were pegged out on his land. Together my mates Boyd and Fergusson took up leases in the area to explore the load. We scouted out interested parties and eventually a mining company was floated. In the years following my find many additional pipes were identified mainly a little to the south along the western slopes of that dry creek gully. It marked the contact between the overlying intruded and eroded slate and the more resistant intrusive granite to the west of the gully. Claims were filed on over fifty weathered pipes eroding towards their granitic bedrock that outcropped as the scarp along the western rim of the valley. That off times dry little valley running north into Sheep Station Creek, a tributary of the Yarrow, soon became a hub of feverish activity. Fame was short lived as the riches of subsequent finds to the south of Pipe #1 far out stripped those of Quinn's find. Fortune too was found, but in greater abundance by others, particularly in pipes worked by Valentin Sachs further south in the scarp above the creek. Nevertheless a good living was to be made with hard work on the leases we claimed.

To explore pipe number one we first attempted an open cut excavation to expose the extent of the outcrop at the surface. Three pipes were found over a distance of a chain on strike ten degrees east of north (10 T), that paralleled the local trend of the creek. We investigated two of the pipes by shallow pits, but the northernmost was mined using a ladder for access and a head frame to raise the ore. This vertical shaft tended to flood in the wet season. Pay dirt consisted of coarse rosettes of molybdenite to half an inch across that occurred in rocks of different lithology. Rock type (1) was quartz-feldspar (sericite) rock, locally traversed by veins and masses of unmineralised, massive white quartz. In lithology (2) molybdenite rosettes occurred in quartz-pyrite-(sericite) rock with abundant disseminated pyrite aggregates in quartz with coarse, disseminated molybdenite.⁴ The ore assayed a return of 2.67% Mo, 1.33% Bi, 0.50% As, 921 ppm Pb, 424 ppm Cu, 370 ppm Sb, and 13.8 g/t Ag. So as well as the main components, Molybdenum and Bismuth as arsenates, there were small traces of Lead, Copper, Tin and Silver that made the ore commercially viable. Our team worked this first find, Pipe #1, over four years until 1884.

GLEN INNES MAIL TABLE.

ARRIVE FROM—

Sydney, Armidale, and Falconer : Daily, at 7.30 p.m.
 Tenterfield, Deepwater, and Dundee : Daily.
 Wellingrove and Inverell : Every Monday and Thursday, at 7 p.m.
 Vegetable Creek : Every Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday at 7 p.m.
 Grafton : Every Monday and Thursday, at 6 p.m.
 Dalmorton : Every Monday, at 6 p.m.

DEPART TO—

Sydney, Armidale, and Falconer : Daily, at 8 a.m.
 Tenterfield, Deepwater, and Dundee : Daily.
 Wellingrove and Inverell : Tuesday and Friday at 5 a.m.
 Vegetable Creek : Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, at 8 a.m.
 Grafton and Dalmorton : Monday and Saturday, at 6 a.m.

Mails close at 9.30 the previous evening; office hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; delivery, twenty minutes after arrival. Money Orders issued and paid from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Telegraph Office opens from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Glen Innes Examiner

"Sworn to no Master, of no Sect am I."

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1874.

LAND ENQUIRY COURT.—Mr. Sydney Blythe announces his intention of holding a court at Glen Innes, on the 3rd of next month.

BISMUTH.—We understand that Mr. Hugh Quinn has discovered bismuth at Kingsgate, and the land has been taken up by Messrs. Fergusson, Boyd, Quinn. On Saturday 300 cwt. of stone was sent to Sydney by the Grafton coach, for the purpose of being tested.

FREE SELECTION.—On Thursday at the Lands Office, the following conditional purchases were made:—John M'Cutcheon, 50a., county Gough, parish Wellingrove; William Marshall, 40a., county Gresham, parish Broadmedows.

DISCOVERY OF A RICH REEF.—A few days ago an experienced miner, named Charles Vitnall, discovered a gold-bearing reef at a place called "Hell Hole," on Mount Mitchell East, about five miles from the station, and about thirty-four miles from Glen Innes, in the same line of country as the Barrington. The reef is said to be well defined, and as seen struck in Nos. 6 and 10 south of the prospectors' claim. Sixteen claims have already been registered. Mr. Registrar Hutchinson informs us that he forwarded some stone from the reef to the Warden, who is at present in Sydney, which contained gold of a very good quality. The neighbourhood of the new discovery is an auriferous one.

Beginning in the seventies with local alluvial deposits a mineral boom was in full swing in the tableland region. As each new find became public knowledge a fresh rush of hopeful diggers exited towns to deny town businesses of staff. On alluvial diggings all a digger needed to work was a pick and shovel, a wheelbarrow and panning dish, a tent and, as an alternative to tedious panning, some sort of rocker box. Such simple equipment is all an alluvial miner needed to separate the sought-after heavy treasure, be it gold, tin, or emeralds from the embedding alluvial dross. On the field of early alluvial finds it was not very expensive for an individual digger to bankroll a plan to dig up fortune. Always there was urgency in actually staking a claim for big business had obvious interest and a single consortium could stake claims over large areas of any new find they found promising.

Hardrock deposits, on the contrary, needed drilling and blasting for removal. They were worked differently to sedimentary water deposited minerals. Igneous reefs, veins and plugs in heat-indurated rock could indicate precious underground mineral loads injected as

molten magma cooled. Veins, pipes and reefs injected surrounding rock haphazardly during final stages of cooling from liquid magma. These were being increasingly sought after as prospectors became more savvy about fossicking for a mother lode. Understanding of the evolving earth improved the search for original hard rock sources of later accumulated alluvial sediments. Hardrock mining involved harder work and usually high explosives. Drilling equipment and expensive explosives were necessary to open up the riches of heat-hardened rocks. As a consequence hardrock mines tend to be more expensive to work simply because of the nature of the encasing gangue. Only actual mining could prove the value of the mineral content of a claim and the extent of mineralisation. For such reasons finance was a more important consideration when planning to mine minerals in hardrock formations. Quinn's Find was initially explored by our team of three locals Messers Ferguson, Boyd and Quinn as reported in the local paper. We despatched a load of stone to Sydney by the Grafton coach to be tested. By the middle of the following year a consortium of ten local investors registered the Kingsgate Mining Company with a nominal capital of twenty four thousand pounds.⁵

Share holders included the land owners William Hatfield Yeates from Kingsgate and John Rush from Red Range; John F Utz. who served as mayor of the Glen Innes Council in 83 and for years managed a large store in town; from Sydney Samuel Levy Bengurian; and some notable Glen locals namely J J Cotton, George Wm. Harris and Robert A. Lewis. All invested heavily along with my original partners Wm. John Ferguson and Geor. H.

**ANNUAL
FANCY-DRESS BALL**
IN AID OF THE
GLEN INNES HOSPITAL,
To be Held in the
MASONIC HALL,
ON
FRIDAY, AUGUST 27th, 1880.

TICKETS —Single.....	13s
To admit Lady and Gentleman.....	25s
To admit two Ladies and one gentleman.....	30s

STEWARDS—Messrs. J. E. Maund, R. A. Lewis, G. W. Harris, H. B. Sanders, Jas. Martin, and F. W. Long.

COMMITTEE—

George Martin, P.M.	E. J. Marcus
J. J. Phillips	J. W. Hoyle
Thomas Browne	W. G. Martin
Frank Marshall	J. J. Cotton
W. J. Ferguson	C. B. Lowe
H. O. St. Vincent	F. Phillips
Dr. A. E. Deak	H. H. Hutchinson
W. E. Wright	E. Grover
T. Connor	J. J. Matthews
S. W. Barridge	Fred Utz
J. Clark	J. Munro
M. M. Murrow	H. W. Gibbs
C. Fletcher	M. H. Fitzhardinge
C. C. Macr	A. J. Dodd
P. McCormack	P. Kinsella
James Harris	Dr. Deans (V. Creek)
G. E. Boyd	J. A. Boyd
J. Priest	H. Seyffer
J. A. McIntyre	W. T. Cadell
C. J. Metcalf	R. A. H. Mitchell
James Campbell	Dr. Clayworth.

HENRY B. SANDERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Sinclair Boyd. Several of these, including Fred Utz were deeply involved in the Glen Innes community. Some were also involved on the 1880 committee organising the Annual Fancy Dress Ball in aid of the Glen Innes Hospital⁶

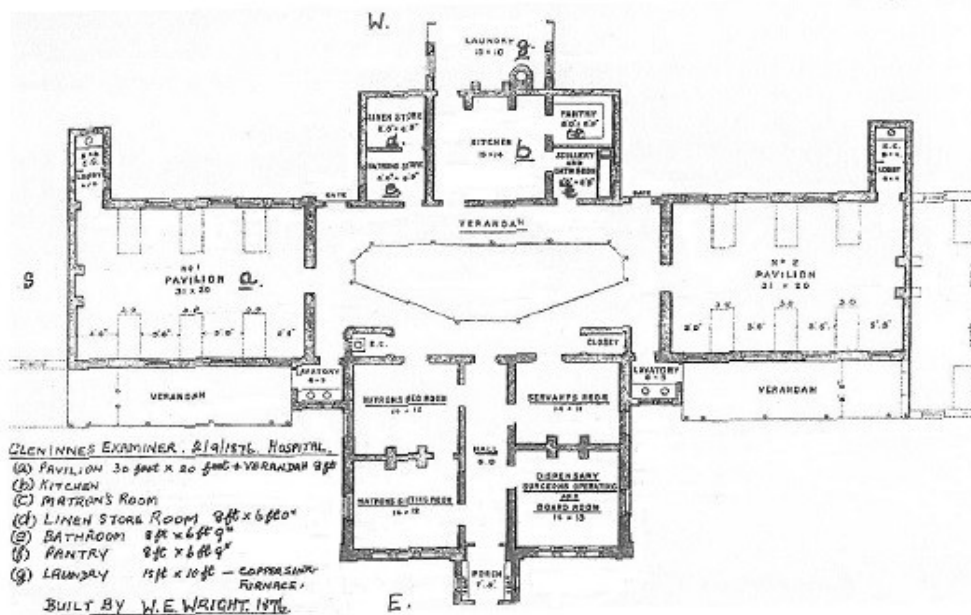
Glen Innes was riding high, not only on the rich rural products of the region but even higher on the local mining boom. I'll briefly recap some of the steps in this progress. 1874 saw the new Court House completed and a year later, the Police Barracks and stables were built. Also in 1875 telegraph wires connected Grafton to the Glen and thus to the telegraphic wire network that Glen Innes had enjoyed for a decade. A public library and reading room was established in 1877 in the original School of Arts to provide a much needed sober social hub as an alternative to any of the local pubs. A year later the Municipal Band formed and was destined to play a loud and musical part in future celebrations of the growing community. As already stated the council took steps to improve the quality of civic buildings when, in 1879, it prohibited the use of bark in building construction.

Before all this development as far back as 1873 Glen Innes council received a petition from concerned citizens for the establishment of a

hospital. Fund raising followed apace with a concert staged by an amateur company calling itself 'Star of Australia Minstrel Company'. It performed a production of the Negro farce entitled 'The Intelligence Office'. Tickets cost up to five shillings for front stalls. All up the goodly sum of £11.11.6 was raised. Estimates of the cost submitted to the council by Sydney architect Mansefield Bros. ran to £1,750. The Colonial Secretary promised £1,000

and the hat was being sent around among local workers including shearers from Strathbogie to Wellingrove and miners from Vegetable Creek to Kookabookra. By June 1875 the council had arrangements in hand for making a start. On Wednesday August 4 1875 the foundation stone was duly laid by the Worshipful Master of the Glenn Innes Lodge of Freemasons.⁷

On September 2 1876 plans for Glenn Innes hospital were published in the Examiner⁸ and within a year they were implemented by W. E. Wright. Patients were being received from all over New England and by 1879 tenders were called for the first additions. G I H added several further buildings before I spent the last days of my life there. It served me well prior to my final move in 1915, to my hole in the ground, RC A-78 at the cemetery. It may just be coincidence but 1878 was the year I discovered Quinn's Hole, Pipe #1 in the Kingsgate Field.



Not only was a mining boom under way as we entered the eighties but also, our family was experiencing a baby boom. Our eldest, Hugh Albert junior was nearly nine years old having being born in Emmaville in 1872. His sister Selina (7 years old) had been born as we moved to Tingha in 1874. John James (5 years old) had entered life in 1876 at Skeleton Creek. Selina was to marry Pat Molloy at Narrabri in 1900 and complete her family by 1906 giving birth to Ida in 1902, Patrick in 1904 and Benjamin in 1906.

John James was to marry Catherine Jones, a Welsh lass on December 28th 1900 at Bundarra. Fathering seven children, his large family lived in Frome Street Moree just across from his yet to be born younger brother George.⁹ John was destined to die tragically in 1919 in Moree aged 43. He became one of the 12,000 Australian victims of the global flu pandemic that killed 5%¹⁰ of the world population. Returning soldiers after the end of the Great War carried the virus to the world. This pandemic has been described as 'the greatest medical holocaust in history' and may have killed more people than the Black Death.¹¹ Globally, flu related deaths were more than double the number of deaths caused by that War to end all war.

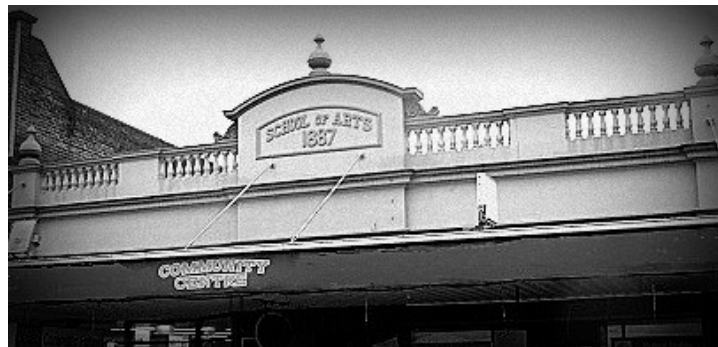
On a brighter note, Anne delivered Herbert William in 1879. Herbert, our fourth child was an excited one year old in 1880. If I remember rightly he was born at Tingha. Bert was destined to marry Isabell Rachel Meller in 1904 at St Leonards in Sydney where his two sons Jack and Doug were born in 1905 and 1907. By 1908 he was living in Queensland at Many Peaks where his sons started school. Herb split from Rachel during that Great War and the boys went with her to Gladstone.¹²

With hindsight I can see that my mining activity left me little time to help out at home. After all I suppose that a woman's place is in the home even when I remember that such

an attitude left my mum without assistance that could have saved her. I do regret that I was not a great help with our young family around the house. Anne however was a model of motherhood, gathering her litter around her just as a clucky chook cares for her chicks.

Dad had settled into Grey street and was well known around town as the bell man and town crier for the local newspaper. He also found sawyer work locally in hardwood mills that were becoming part of industry in the region. Even Newton's Timber Mill at Tingha provided employment for his sawyer skills when the Glen Innes saw mills were experiencing a slack period. In 1880 Ann was pregnant for a fifth time and before the turn of the century Ann and I had five more children to a total of ten, two of whom died in the year they were born. All together Paddy and Selina's four children produced more than thirty grand children sprouting out across the North West of New South Wales.

What a turn around had time and this timeless country worked in my attitudes. The ancient atrocities wrought in the name of God and Monarch on which our ancestry nourished their young seemed to fade into the mists of a newly found perspective. This new country was providing us with a fresh start, leaving each person free to choose their own allegiance.



The new School of Arts built in 1887

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Chapter 13 Endnotes

- 1 Tingha, meaning, http://www.gnb.nsw.gov.au/place_naming/placename_search/extract?id=TRwGWyUIKW
- 2 Andrews E C & GS NSW Mineral Resources No 11, Molybdenum, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn2527708>
- 3 Bismuth Find by Hugh Quinn, Glen Innes Examiner 28/10/1879 L O B Museum collection.
- 4 Henley H. F. et al. 2001. Grafton McLean Map, data sheets GR1896 p378 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn2688269>
- 5 Kingsgate Mining Co., Glen Innes Examiner 20/07/1880 L O B Museum collection
- 6 Hospital annual Ball, Glen Innes Examiner 20/07/1880 Watts Beardy Museum collection.
- 7 Fraser, Jeannie Ross. Glen Innes Hospital 1874-1956 G I & D H S Inc p5 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn5980800>
- 8 Ibid Fraser p 6 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn5980800>
- 9 ACT Pioneers Database, abridged, <http://terryq14.tripod.com/PDB/fam00198.htm>
- 10 Wikipedia, 1918 flu pandemic http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1918_flu_pandemic#Around_the_globe
- 11 Potter, C.W. (2001), A history of influenza. Journal of Applied Microbiology, 91: 572–579. doi: 10.1046/j.1365-2672.2001.01492.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1046/j.1365-2672.2001.01492.x/abstract>
- 12 Personal communication from Douglas' Grand daughter Ann B 2013
- 13 Story Copyright © T Quinn. All rights reserved.