

Tocal's one-time squire – Caleb Wilson

Tocal is one of the premier estates of the Hunter Region. A book has just been published on Caleb Wilson, the second owner of *Tocal*, by Jean Archer.

Caleb Wilson bought the property in 1834 and it remained in the hands of the Wilson family until 1907. He had arrived in the Colony of New South Wales as a free settler in 1804 with his two small children, his wife having died during the voyage from England. He was a tailor by trade, but he initially was granted 100 acres on the Hawkesbury River at what is now Richmond.

From those beginnings he became one of the wealthiest men in the Colony. He did this through continuing in his trade, working his land, lending money and holding mortgages and by establishing a large import business with a warehouse and shop in George Street, Sydney. At the height of his wealth he built a large mansion in Potts Point, called *Grantham*, after the town in England where he was born. The house was demolished in the 1930's but Grantham Street in Potts Point remains.

He held a number of interests in the Paterson Valley when he purchased *Tocal* from James Webber in 1834. He set about improving the property and many of the buildings on *Tocal* were constructed or planned during the years he owned the property before it passed to his son, Felix, after his death in 1838.

The book is the 30th in the *All about Tocal* series. The series has been created over the last 20 years with writers from the College staff and the community.

"*Tocal* is probably the best recorded property in Australia but there are always more topics to be researched and recorded," College Principal, Darren Bayley said. "We are delighted to see the story of Caleb Wilson told – something we have been looking forward to and I thank Jean for her thorough and painstaking research."

The book "[Caleb Wilson Owner of Tocal 1834-1838](#)" is available from Tocal for \$20.00 or by mail order \$25.00 including postage. Ph 02 4939 8901

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Picture: Jean Archer with book on Caleb Wilson in building probably built at Tocal