

Knopwood's Waterfront Strip

The first resident of Battery Point was the Reverend "Bobby" Knopwood, who granted 30 acres of land bordering on Sullivan's Cove. He pitched his 'marquee' early in 1804, in 1805 work began on his cottage, and on March 14th he moved into his new home, which he called 'Cottage Green'. For some years his farm prospered, but by 1816 his financial state became precarious and over the next 10 to 15 years he had to sell off his property in plots.

The remaining 90 acres of Battery Point were granted to William Sorell in 1819, but in 1824 Sorell sold the whole property to William Kermode. Kermode and his wife, in whom most of the land was vested, developed the property, and George Frankland bought the 'Secheron' estate from Mrs Kermode. Kermode's son, Robert, who inherited in 1852, built roads, subdivided the land and sold plots for building.

1830 seems to be the year when Battery Point began its transformation from farm land to a residential area. Grant, on the plot he bought from Knopwood, built a new 'Cottage Green' in that year, but, this has been destroyed to make way for office blocks. 'Stowell', built for John Montague, and 'Secheron', built for George Frankland date from 1831. Andrew Haig built 'Narryna' in 1836, though he bought the land from Knopwood in 1824.

Poor Knopwood, in addition to his financial difficulties, had great problems over the sale of his property. Originally his grant stopped 11 yards short of the high water mark on Sullivan's Cove. It was obvious that this strip was too narrow to build an adequate road to the battery, and at some stage Governor Sorell and Knopwood came to an amicable agreement to exchange a 22 yard strip inland, for the road, for the 11 yard waterfront strip. In this way Knopwood's waterfront plots would be enhanced in value. However, when Governor Arthur took over, it was found that Sorell had never signed the agreement, and Arthur insisted on the waterfront road. Naturally the purchaser of Knopwood's waterfront plots were infuriated, and one, at least, repudiated his contract. Knopwood's misfortune was, of course, fortunate for present day Hobartians. On this land Salamanca Place was built, with its unique row of waterhouses. These were built between 1835 and 1860.