

during this enormous length of time, protected by their hard outer rind. The fire had evidently destroyed this rind, and so liberated the myriads of seeds in the soil, and enabled them to germinate. The young wattles soon choked the grass and the whole sowing was lost. It was found, however, after the grass was again sown, that this could be remedied by stocking the place heavily with sheep, as these eagerly ate the young wattle shoots as soon as they appeared, and so allowed the grass to grow; and after the first failure, the whole clearing was soon covered with a thick pasture of grass and clover. The climate proved to be very mild and the rainfall abundant, so that the stock did remarkably well, especially fat lambs, which have always found a ready sale in the Hobart markets. Most of the land was subsequently cleared and laid down with grasses and clovers.

The place, however, was difficult to manage, on account of its inaccessibility, and on Mr. Clerk's death, some years later, I took it over, and have worked it on my own account ever since.

We had long been looking for some place in the country where we could spend our holidays more comfortably than at a hotel but could find nothing suitable until we were offered 135 acres of bush land on the River Derwent above New Norfolk, 25 miles from the city. The soil was a light loam suitable for apple growing and gardening, and the rising ground overlooking the River Derwent offered an excellent site for a home with unequalled views of the River and surrounding hills.

We bought the property in 1906, and as it had never been cultivated, started to clear the land at once, and to build a cottage and farm buildings for the manager. During the next five years our weekends and holidays were devoted to the interesting job of bringing the

land under cultivation and planting an orchard of sixty acres, most of it with apple trees that we had raised from seedlings and grafted. We took special care in land-scaping and planting ornamental trees round the site that was reserved for our future home, and along the river banks, so that the property should become not only a commercial orchard, but an attractive country home and garden as well.

This preliminary work kept us busy for the first five years, by which time the orchard had started to bear fruit. We then built "Linden" a rough-caste ten-room bungalow on solid foundation of stone from our own quarry; and a red-tiled roof.

The house was conspicuously placed on high ground surrounded on all sides by the garden, and from the wide verandah we had wonderful views up and down the river and of the hills beyond. The lawns and flower beds sloped away from the house to a sheltered beach, where we kept the boats that were our only means of access to the small railway station at Hayes, on the opposite bank of the Derwent, which at this point was about 200 yards wide and very deep.

What made the place unique was its unlimited supply of clear water from the river, as we had installed an electric pump that gave us all we needed for the house and garden, and an ample supply for irrigating the orchard. Even during the hottest summer, the sprinklers kept the lawn fresh and green, and greatly helped to increase the yield of fruit from the orchard, so that in a record year we were able to market 20,000 cases of apples and pears, besides plums, cherries, peaches and apricots.

Fortunately the manager, who now occupied an annex to the house, was a keen gardener, and eagerly devoted his spare time, in caring for the flowers and lawns, while his wife was an excellent cook and

housekeeper, and made us most comfortable during the twenty years they remained with us.

Owing to the abundant water supply and the extreme fertility of the soil, the ornamental trees we had planted along the avenue and near the house, grew very rapidly and made the job of laying out the garden so simple that in a few years the grounds had quite the appearance of an old home surrounded as it was by the orchard, of which it formed a part, with neither fence nor hedge to show where the garden ended or the orchard began. As it developed we became very attached to the place, and have happy memories of lazy afternoons spent on the lawns shaded from the heat of the sun by one of the many scented limes, while we entertained our friends at tea. Through the leafy branches of oaks and elms we could catch glimpses of the clear waters of the broad Derwent flowing serenely by, reflecting on its placid surface many a green hop field and fertile orchard as it made its way to our nearest village, three miles below.

The place was less than an hour's motor drive from the city, and the whole family looked forward to the week-ends and holidays that were spent either lazily in the garden or in helping on the farm, fishing, boating or swimming in the river. As long as we remained in Tasmania, "Linden" never ceased to be a joy to all of us.