





"Creep" Threat At Boolaroo

A big landslide has begun on the side of a hill at Boolaroo, and threatens to affect a large portion of the town's residential area.

Two house properties have been damaged. Residents fear that heavy rains must make the danger worse.

The slide comes within 20 yards of a million-gallon water tank near the top of the hill. The tank is undamaged, but will not be filled above half level pending surveys.

Residents yesterday said the slide began during the torrential rain in June. It has recurred with recent rain, and the hillside is marked with big, semi-circular cracks. Some of these are seven feet deep.

In Third-street, slide debris knocked over the fence separating Mr. F. Williamson's home from the moving area. It also knocked down part of the fence between Mr. Williamson's and Mr. W. Needs's home.

Heard Rumbling

Mrs. H. Cadman, of Fourth-street, described the first signs of the landslide.

"It happened one night in the middle of the rain last June," she said. "Above the roar of the rain, we heard a rumbling from the hill."

"we heard a rumbling from the hill. It was just like thunder. Next morning, we could see the cracks."

About 120 yards from Mrs. Cadman's home, sections of ground up to 50 yards long have been squeezed, like orange pips, to several feet above their normal level.

A "frightful smell" came from the big earth cracks for weeks after the rain, Mrs. Cadman said.

Mrs. A. H. Reid, of Fifth-street, said a woman neighbour had fainted when she first saw the landslide.

She believed landslides had occurred there about 10 years previously.

Other residents said landslides were not uncommon on the hills in this part of the lakeside. They blamed the crumbling soil, which, they thought, may be sliding on the top of a wet and sloping rock layer.

The water tank was emptied three weeks ago for its annual cleaning and inspection. It showed no sign of damage or leak, and workmen yesterday were resealing its floor joints with bitumen, a regular maintenance procedure.

tenance procedure.

Members of the Hunter District Water Board inspected the tank and the landslide which comes within 20 yards below it. The board engaged an expert consultant to survey and report on the landslide danger.

Lake Macquarie Shire Clerk (Mr. Halton) said his council had agreed to cooperate with any remedial measures the expert recommended.

Seam Uncovered

From the summit of the hill, the landslide appears as many stepped-up gaps in the hillside. The cracks are roughly horizontal. Some appear only a few days old. The dam is about 40 feet below the summit, and just above the sliding area.

Large masses of earth and rubble have been washed down the hillside toward Third-street. The upper end of Third-street had to be cleared with bulldozers.

During the coal strike, a crack uncovered a seam of coal. Nearby residents kept their fires burning with coal from the open seam. They said it was extremely good household coal.

Lakeside areas which normally rely on the tank for water will not be affected by the tank over haul. They will get water direct from the mains from Chichester reservoir.

◆ Pictures—Top: The million-gallon water tank (seen empty for inspection yesterday) may be damaged by the landslide. The township of Boolaroo is seen at the rear. Right: A close-up of part of the creep.