



An autobiography or  
**Tales and legends  
of Canberra pioneers**

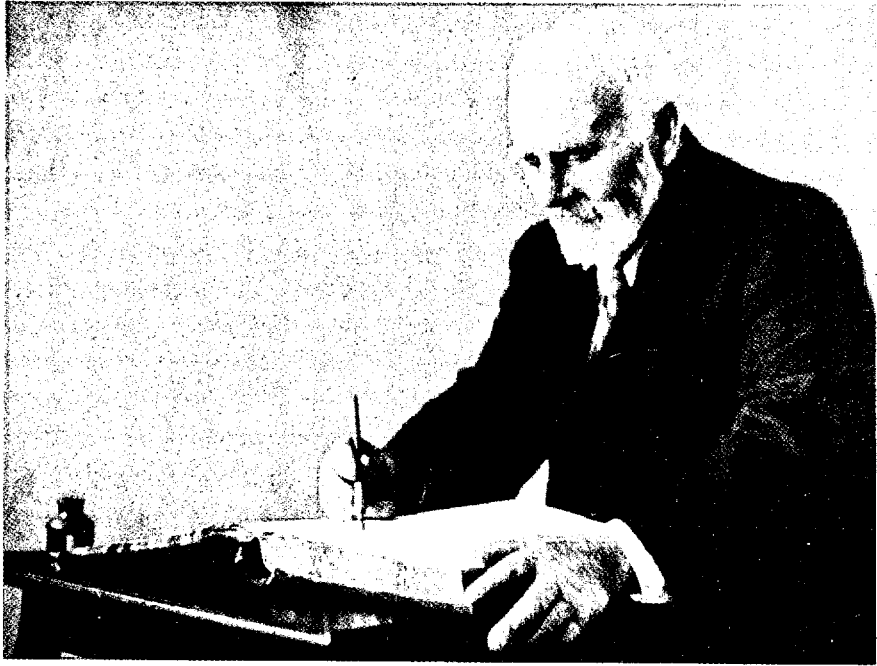
Samuel Shumack



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*Samuel Shumack, 1938*

*An Autobiography*

*or*

*TALES AND LEGENDS  
OF CANBERRA PIONEERS*

*by*

*Samuel Shumack  
of Springvale, Weetangerra*

*Edited by*

*J. E. and Samuel Shumack*

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*Australian National University Press*

**CANBERRA**



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© J.E. and Samuel Shumack, for the text, 1967  
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## Foreword

SAMUEL SHUMACK came to Canberra with his family as a boy of six in 1856. The Shumacks had long been established as small tradesmen at Mallow, Co. Cork. According to family tradition their ancestor had come to Ireland with a Viking band in the ninth century and the name was derived from the Ukrainian 'Chumak', meaning a merchant warrior. A more prosaic derivation is suggested by the fact that the first two recorded Shumacks in Mallow, in the early eighteenth century, were shoemakers.

At the age of fifteen Samuel Shumack took up, with his father, a selection at Weetangerra, just north of the present federal capital—the first selection in the district under Sir John Robertson's Land Act of 1861—and farmed it until his land was resumed by the Commonwealth in 1915, when he moved to Ravensworth in the Hunter Valley. He died in 1940.

Shumack had a strong interest in the history of the district and in its people, and he was gifted with an exceptionally retentive memory. In those days, when there were few amusements and plenty of leisure, he became the recognized custodian of the oral history of the community. It was a compact little world of small farmers, many of them inter-related by blood or marriage and all intensely interested in one another's affairs; a world as different from that of the great stations as from that of the 'nomad tribe' of pastoral workers. Shumack's anecdotes, which at first seem rambling, fall together as one reads on to make up an unusually complete and detailed picture of the life of such a community through the second half of last century. We are given precise details of yields of wheat in good years and bad, of the building of fences and haystacks, of plagues of native companions, possums and rabbits, of storms and droughts. But it is above all the people in all their variety, in their hard and often primitive life, who are brought before us in Shumack's yarns.

The day he was leaving Canberra, Shumack jumped from a waggon and pierced his foot with a hay-fork. This accident ended his active farming, and though he remained a keen gardener time sometimes hung heavily on his hands. Fortunately for us, he was persuaded to write down his stories of old Canberra, interspersed with his reflections on many other topics suggested by his reading or by events around him. These writings fill a large manuscript volume of 488 pages, the margins filled with elaborations or corrections of the text. Though it starts off formally enough as an autobiography, the book soon loses all semblance of order, recollections and stories being written down just as they came into the

*author's mind. Inevitably there is much repetition and much irrelevance, and while the writing is often vivid, it is often marked by the garrulity of old age.*

*The existence of this 'big book', generally but erroneously referred to as a diary, has long been known to students of Canberra history, but except for a few extracts in John Gale's Canberra: its History and Legends, published in 1927, it has not been generally available. It was, however, carefully preserved by the Shumack family, and two of his sons, John Shumack of Ravensworth and Samuel Shumack, now of Sydney, devoted great care and thought over many years to the selection and arrangement of the material of historical value in a form suitable for publication. This, owing to the nature of the manuscript, was no light task, and the typescript prepared by them is the basis of the present book. Even in this form, the work was still too long for economic publication. It has accordingly been further edited, mainly in the interests of brevity but partly also to present the material in a more readable form. Certain whole sections have, reluctantly, been omitted. These include some stories of the original discovery and settlement of Canberra, which cannot be reconciled to the facts as now known and which can have reached Shumack only years later at second hand, a number of life-histories of ex-convicts, particularly Irish, which, however interesting in themselves, had only indirect relation to the Canberra district, and a long chapter on cricket, a subject in which Shumack was much interested and which played a large part in the recreational life of the community. In addition, a number of smaller excisions have been made and the style has been tidied up where this seemed necessary, but it is hoped that no fact of significance has been omitted and that the flavour of the original has not been lost. So far as possible, the material used has been collated with the original manuscript. The 'big book' itself, together with a number of newspaper articles by Shumack, has very generously been presented to the National Library by the Shumack family, and may be consulted there. The present publication is an attempt to present in readable and more or less consecutive form the material preserved by Shumack on the history of the Canberra district.*

*Obviously, the book is a source of great importance for the early history of Canberra, but it has also a much wider relevance as a document filling a major gap in the record of our social history. I know of no other source where the life and world of the small farmers and selectors are described in this way: the nearest parallel, Skemp's Memories of Myrtle Bank, dealing with north-western Tasmania, while having some of the same authenticity, is much less full, and Skemp was an educated man who always remained a little detached from the life of which he wrote.*

*Shumack, as he tells us, had little formal schooling, but was always an omnivorous reader who, by the end of his life, had built up a library of some thousands of volumes. Of what passed under his own observation, he was a keen and accurate observer. Where he deals with matters within his own observation his evidence is, wherever it can be checked, exceptionally reliable, while his style is essentially the style of the storyteller, flowing from one year to another by a process of free association.*

*L.F. Fitzhardinge*

Canberra

November 1966

*An Autobiography*  
or  
**TALES AND LEGENDS OF CANBERRA PIONEERS**

## *We come to Canberra*

*We come to Australia Journey to Duntroon The Glebe farm  
The Shumacks at Canberra Early Canberra and the Campbells  
George Campbell of Duntroon Life at Duntroon*

I FIRST saw the light in Mallow, County Cork, Ireland, in the year 1850, and my memory of some of the scenes there is at the present moment clear and vivid.

In the year 1837 three of my uncles emigrated to Australia, William, George and Samuel, and settled in the Bathurst district. At that time a great depression prevailed all over the old land, and when they landed in New South Wales a great drought prevailed. Wages were low, and on landing all three were quickly hired at the wage of £15 per year with rations. In the year 1841 John, Peter and Joseph Shumack landed in Sydney. These three brothers went to Canberra. After a couple of years Joseph joined his brothers in the Bathurst district.

When these six brothers left Ireland their aged parents were left to my father's care, also my grandparents on my mother's side. Father's father died about the year 1848 and his widow three years later and my mother's father about the year 1853 or 1854, and as matters did not improve my father decided to emigrate to Australia.

My father was 39 years of age when he made this decision, and his occupation was farm labourer, servant and coachman. My mother, Ann, was 36 years of age and was a nurse. They had four children, Elizabeth (13), Margaret (12), John (8) and myself (5). My younger brother, Peter, had died at a very early age. My father was encouraged in his decision by my Uncle Peter, who was the one of the seven brothers unmarried, and he sent a sum of money sufficient to pay all expenses.

In April 1856 we boarded a steam packet at Queenstown, and on 29 May 1856 our barque the *Bermondsey* sailed from Plymouth for Australia. (The ship's doctor was a brother of a friend of my father in Ireland, and through his influence my father was appointed doctor's mate with good wages.)

We entered Sydney Heads on 21 August 1856, and after a short period in quarantine a steam tug drew us up to Campbell's Wharf. Mr George Campbell of Duntroon then came on board and asked for Richard Shumack, and after a brief interview he hired father as a station hand at a wage of 14s. weekly, with a ration and one half. This ration was 15 lb. meat, 15 lb. flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. tea, 3 lb. sugar and 5 oz. salt.

When we landed at Campbell's Wharf, Mr E. Craddock, who married my Uncle Sam's wife's sister, met us with a conveyance and took us to his home in Edward Street. Here we were his guests for a fortnight while awaiting transport to Duntroon. On the eve of our departure for Duntroon, two sailors from the *Bermondsey* came to bid us farewell. I will always remember one of them for his kindness—he was a young fellow named Portus, and he often took me about the ship on his back and up the ladders, which I greatly enjoyed.

The Duntroon horse team duly arrived in Sydney with a load of hides, and when it was due to return with a heavy load of station supplies Mr Campbell instructed the driver, Paddy Doherty, to pilot us to Duntroon. Paddy's vehicle was a double-shaft dray drawn by nine splendid horses, and father was put in charge of a light dray drawn by a horse named Duke, and on this conveyance we embarked with our worldly possessions and started for Duntroon.

We camped the first night at a place called McDonaaltdown, where there was an hotel, a store, and about a dozen houses in all. Not far from here we saw our first bullock team, and mother asked Paddy how many men were required to drive it. 'Only one', was Paddy's reply. A few minutes later a woman emerged from a store and brandished a long whip, and away went the team, much to our surprise. Mother was astonished and said, 'I always heard that things were upside down in Australia, and I believe it now after seeing that woman driving all those cattle.'

All along the route from Sydney to Canberra, camps were established where water was available. Some days we would travel less than seven miles—at other times we would travel thrice that distance to reach water. Once we came across a teamster and his load bogged, and father and Paddy spent the best part of a day assisting him. When we reached the Razorback, Paddy had to divide his load and make two trips to the top. This was hard work, and had there been another team there they would have double banked to take the load to the top. This was a common practice in those days, as the teamsters always assisted each other when such difficulties arose.

The trip to Duntroon was uneventful until we were a few miles south of Goulburn, where Paddy fell off the dray and was knocked out. Father thought he was dead, but after some treatment he revived and father lifted him into our dray and drove the team until we reached Poidevin's Wayside Inn at Collector, where father arranged with the proprietor to take care of Paddy and the team. He then wrote a letter to the Superintendent at Duntroon, giving an account of the accident, and sent it on the mail coach which arrived shortly afterwards. We resumed our journey the following day, leaving Paddy and the team in good hands.

We saw the Canberra Plain for the first time about a week later from a point close to where the Wells Station homestead now stands, and it was here that we met my future wife's uncle, John McPherson, and my cousin, Joseph Shumack. McPherson was on his way to bring Paddy and the team from Poidevin's Inn, and Joseph Shumack was to pilot us to the home of my late uncle, John Shumack, at the Glebe farm, Canberra. Our journey from Sydney occupied three weary weeks, and we were happy to rest as guests of Uncle John's wife and family.

In 1842 John, who had gone to work for William Klensendorlffe in 1841, left his employment and leased the Glebe farm, of which he was the first tenant. This consisted of 100 acres on the western boundary of Duntroon, near St John's Church and with a frontage to the Molonglo, which Robert Campbell had given as a glebe for the rector of the church. On this land John built a three-roomed slab house roofed with bark, and he commenced farming. He took an active part in church affairs and was one of the first wardens of the church, although his name has been omitted from the written histories, and he helped cart the stone for the church. He died in 1849, leaving a wife and four children, and about three years later his widow married a widower named Woods, who had three sons. About 1858 Woods took up land at Canberra and the family left the Glebe. Woods died in 1859 while bringing a load of supplies from Sydney.

The next tenant of the Glebe farm was Alexander Mackenzie, a very worthy man and a friend of my father, who died in 1898 aged 82 and is buried in St John's churchyard. He was followed by Thomas Harrington Line, of whom more will be said later, who held the farm for a couple of years. Then it was leased by a man named Slade, who died about 1861. Two years later Ebenezer Booth married Slade's widow, and in 1874 he built the house which was burnt in 1923.

When Uncle John's family left the Glebe farm they settled on their own land near Uncle Peter's property near St Ninian's Church. Here it was that Uncle John's son, Joseph Shumack, conducted the Canberra Inn, the first hotel to be opened at Canberra. The building still stands and is occupied by the Read family. Joseph's brother, Peter—known as 'Big Peter'—married twice and reared a large family.



His sons were George, Alex and Edward. Peter eventually sold some of his land to George Southwell—his son Edward farming the remainder. Alex in 1917 leased our old home, Springvale, Weetangerra, and there reared his family. His only son, Stanley, was killed on active service in New Guinea during World War II. Uncle John's youngest son, Richard, also went on the land at Canberra, and called his place Tolldale. He had three sons—Arthur, a farmer, and Samuel and Richard, who became schoolteachers.

In 1798 Robert Campbell arrived in Sydney and, being a keen business man, he quickly saw that this unknown land under proper management would, in the future, become one of the greatest producing emporiums of the globe, and he built what was for years known as Campbell's Wharf.

In the early days I constantly came in contact with 'old hands' who had worked under Merchant Campbell. They spoke of him as a just and honourable man, and I never heard of one unjust or harsh action during those early years when injustice and oppression were the rule.

An old neighbour of mine, James Kinleyside, in a conversation with me about a case of cruel ejection which took place nearby in 1878, said that the landlord concerned declared that he 'never allowed sentiment to interfere with business'. He then told me the following story of John Campbell (Robert's son), to whose honour it must be said that he certainly placed Christian charity before business.

John Campbell owned several cottages at Ashfield, near Sydney, and one of the tenants, having met with an accident, was unable to pay the rent and a writ of ejection and a Bill of Sale were obtained against him. His wife, with the assistance of some friends, made up about half the sum due, but Campbell's agent refused to accept it—he demanded the full amount. The poor woman walked all the way to the office at Campbell's Wharf and laid her case before John Campbell. Although she was a stranger to him, he gave her a very attentive hearing and expressed surprise that she had walked more than six miles to his office. He gave instructions that she be sent home in a cab and then handed her a letter and said, 'Do not worry, madam, and don't open this until you arrive home.' She complied with his request and found that her money was returned together with a receipt to date, plus another for a year's rent in advance. The note explained that the amount was to be treated as a loan—if they were able to pay at some future time, well and good, but if not, she was not to worry about the matter. Kinleyside said that the amount was later repaid when the injured man returned to work.

'Good old George' or 'the Cove' was a common expression used by employees of George Campbell (another of Robert's sons), and many would laugh and make fun of what they considered to be childish notions and actions. However, in his presence it was 'Yes Sir' and 'No Sir'. There is no doubt that this man's good qualities far overshadowed his weaker points. A well-known resident said it was a pity that 'the Cove' had not been educated in Australia. 'If he had been,' he said, 'we would never have heard the expression—"Keep off the grass"— and "No man can shear 100 sheep in a day and do it properly"— and many other absurd notions.' At that time the Duntroon shearing was a by-word throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Towards the end of the sixties Joseph Speckleton was one of the shearers at Duntroon. He had heard much about Duntroon and its owner, and wanted to test the truth or otherwise of these stories. Duncan Cameron was shearing there also. Shortly after shearing commenced, George Campbell caught a sheep Cameron had released and shorn it again, taking three ounces of wool off it. He then weighed the wool and hung it over Cameron's stand together with a ticket giving the weight and value of the wool that would have been lost. This incident afforded much amusement, and Cameron enjoyed it although at his expense. One night the men were recounting the incidents of the day and one said to Speckleton, 'Joe, you are the white-haired boy with the boss—you are the only man so far who has not been spoken to and told to "hold on there!"' An old hand then said that he had shorn there for many years and that no man had ever left the shed without Mr Campbell giving him a lesson in the art of shearing.

'Oh well,' Speckleton said, 'if he tackles me I will be ready for him.' The test came a few days later. Speckleton was opening up on the neck when Mr Campbell accosted him.

'I really cannot do any better', said Speckleton.

'Give it to me and I will show you', Campbell said. Joe handed over the sheep.

'See, this is the way to overcome the difficulty', said Campbell, as he deftly went to work.

'Yes Sir, I will bear it in mind in future', Speckleton replied, and grasped another sheep and placed it on the board.

'No, Speckleton, take this one, I only wanted to show you how to do it', Campbell said. Joe ignored the offer and said, 'Mr Campbell—I got into trouble a few years ago for taking a sheep out of another man's hands and I then made a solemn vow that in future I would never take a sheep from another man. Surely you will not make me break my vow?'

'No, Speckleton, I will finish it', Campbell said, and he did.

Joe received £1 per hundred at the settling up, and was not charged for rations. He was also given a pair of new trousers as his old ones were a wreck, plus an invitation to 'come again next year'. Cameron was advised not to 'forget the three ounces of wool' but to 'come again next year', as he (Campbell) would be pleased to see him.

I must say that the Campbells treated their servants well, and I speak from experience and observations embracing a period from 1856 to 1915.

In 1856 George Campbell instituted the half-holiday on Saturday. When he took over the management of Duntroon he was surprised one Sunday morning to see many empty seats at St John's Church. He queried a certain party, who by way of explanation said, 'I had to do my washing and other odd jobs and when I finished it was too late to go to church.' 'Very well, I understand', Campbell said, and the next day issued the following instruction: 'As from . . . 1856, my servants will cease work at 1 p.m. Saturday, shepherds excepted, and this shall be the rule unless something unexpected shall occur.' This instruction was faithfully carried out for more than 20 years, until the death of Allan McLachlan, his station manager, in 1878. George Campbell was denounced by other squatters for giving the half-holiday. William Davis of Ginninderra did not give his employees a Saturday afternoon off unless they were playing in a cricket match, and I have seen the toilers hard at work on the Ginninderra Estate on New Year's Day—Sunday was the only day observed as a day of rest.

On 26 January 1867 my brother John and I went to see a cricket match at Ginninderra — Queanbeyan *v.* Ginninderra. Every employee on the estate was hard at work with the exception of John Archer and W. Mason, who were playing for Ginninderra. Archer made 13 runs and Mason 7—Ginninderra won by 9 runs.

Shortly after the railway was opened to Goulburn, George Campbell drove his coach with four horses from Duntroon to Goulburn to meet some guests and his wife and daughter, who had been on a visit to the former's parents. Heavy rain had fallen throughout the district and the roads were bad. They made a very early start from Goulburn as the distance was sixty miles. Near Collector the coach became bogged and the horses were up to their bellies in mud. They were unharnessed, and the males in the group had to manhandle the coach a hundred yards or more before they could put the horses in and make another start. Though it was late when they passed through Gundaroo, they expected to reach the Canberra Plain before darkness set in, but they floundered into another bog. They made several attempts to free the coach, all failed, and after a couple of hours they abandoned their efforts and settled down for the night. It was mid-July and heavy clouds obscured the stars; however, there was plenty of firewood and they soon had a good fire going. It was strange that none of the party undertook the journey on foot or horseback to Duntroon, which was only eight miles distant, because Campbell and his coachman,

Landers, were familiar with the track. It was a standing joke for years that they were afraid to leave the comfort of the fire and seek help. However, with the first light of morning they saw the Canberra Plain about a furlong distant, and after extricating the coach they arrived at Duntroon about 9 a.m. And Mr Campbell was not pleased when it was suggested that his careless driving was the cause of their being forced to spend a night in the bush. Many old hands declared that if Mr Campbell had permitted his coachman, Landers, to drive, they would have reached Duntroon as planned and without mishap, but the fact was that Campbell drove all the way from Goulburn with the coachman seated beside him, as was his custom. The belief was that he considered no one could drive to please him.

There was a particularly bad section of road near Neylon's stone hut at Canberra. On the east side the mud was about three feet deep for three chains or more, and like glue. On the west side it was a foot to eighteen inches deep, with the consistency of thin gruel. On this side the foundations were hard, on the other the reverse. One day my cousin, Hugh Read, came along this road. Although the western side was slush, a few warm and sunny days had caused a crust to form on the surface on the eastern side, and cousin Read was deceived by the firm appearance. He rode in and his horse sank down to its girth. He then jumped off and found himself up to his waist in gluey mud. The position was further aggravated when Levi Plummer, who lived nearby, ran to his assistance shouting, 'Try the other side!' What Read said is not recorded. However, he eventually found his way out with Plummer's assistance, although his tailor-made suit was ruined.

This year—1870—was the wettest in my time. The rainfall for April, May and June was without parallel, and I heard that William Davis at Ginninderra measured seventy inches. He was the only man in County Murray who had a rain gauge and kept records at that time.

In the spring of 1873 the workmen engaged on the Canberra rectory were startled one afternoon to see a pair of horsemen galloping across the plain. They passed the building and disappeared south of St John's Church. The following day a reward of £5 was offered for information regarding the identity of the youthful miscreant who had been impertinent to Mr Campbell and trespassed and trodden down his grass. No one claimed the reward, and in a few days the matter was forgotten. In April 1876 Mr Campbell went to England, where he died in 1881. Shortly after his departure for the Old Country, Walter Palmer, son of P. C. Palmer of Jerrabomberra, gave Mr James Abernethy, the teacher at St John's, his account of the race across the plain.

I was looking for a horse that had strayed, and was informed that it was seen on the sheep camp, near Moore's, west of Mount Ainslie, and to be careful that 'The Cove' did not see me. For some years there was a lawsuit pending between my father and old George, and I did not wish to meet him under any circumstances, although we were related. I went to Mount Ainslie when I thought he would be at lunch. I saw some horses there, but mine was not among them. On passing Moore's Mr Campbell saw me and, I thought, knew me. I did not attempt to get away when we met.

He said, 'Don't you know that you are trespassing? Who are you?' I saw at once that he did not know me, and I said, 'Find out, old George!' 'You impudent miscreant, I will', was his reply, and he grabbed at my bridle rein and missed.

I was mounted on an Arab mare and was sure that his horse Akbar could not catch me; so off I started. At first I proposed entering the Black Hill scrub, but in the middle of the plain I thought of the fence that had just been erected there, and turned south; I was quite sure of escaping, and just kept out of his reach until the river was crossed. Then I let my mare go and left him far behind. I weighed about seven stone and he was fourteen stone or more. I looked back

about a quarter of a mile from the river and saw that he had given up the chase. A few days later I heard that he had offered a reward for information leading to my identification.

One day in the early seventies Mr Campbell paid a visit to the men's quarters, as was his custom, and on the wall he saw a life-size sketch of himself, in characteristic attitude. The drawing was done with a piece of charcoal, with his name written at the foot. He greatly resented this, as he called it an outrageous insult, and offered £5 reward for the author's name. There were two men there who were well educated—R. Whin and R. Heffer—and both declared they knew nothing about the matter. One of the other eight occupying the quarters was a Swede not long in the country, and was, of course, exonerated. After the usual nine-days' chatter, the matter was forgotten. A month later the overseer, Allan McLachlan, found a letter under the door, signed George Campbell, and giving him absurd instructions about some station work. Mr McLachlan was surprised and called on Mr Campbell without delay. Mr Campbell declared the note was a vile forgery but acknowledged it as a perfect imitation of his signature. Again, all hands were questioned with the exception of George Colemane, the Swede, and £10 reward was offered without result. A few days later a note in Campbell's handwriting was discovered in the garden, and this caused another stir for some days. This was the last note seen or heard of, and after a short time the matter was forgotten. A short time after the Campbells left Duntroon for England, Colemane told Francis Williams of the jokes. He had a natural gift as a cartoonist and could imitate any handwriting without error, so, he said,

when I saw how Mr Campbell treated the picture on the wall, I tried the notes and enjoyed the fun. I meant no disrespect when I drew him on the wall and he deserved all he got re the notes. I have this gift and have never injured anyone by the use of it and never will.

After a fortnight's rest with my Uncle John's family at the Glebe farm, father received word that he was required to remove to Duntroon. Our house there was a two-roomed slab and bark construction. The trunks we brought from Ireland for a time acted as seats and table until father, who had a knowledge of carpentering, constructed bedsteads and other household furniture from timber obtained in Queanbeyan. Until these articles were completed he laboured until midnight and carried on his daily labours as well. His hours of labour were from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with a half day on Saturday. He would be up with the first clang of the bell in the morning, and this bell rang at 6 a.m., 8 a.m., 9 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Father also made our boots, and mother was an expert with the needle, so that neither of them was ever idle. Mrs Campbell gave mother some part-time work as a laundress, and this was a great financial help. At night father would be bootmaking, and mother and my sister Margaret would be sewing, and brother John would read aloud from a book, several of which we brought out from Ireland. These included *Solomon Lobb, Right and Wrong, The Cotter's Daughter, Bishop Burnett's History of the Reign of King William*, and a large family Bible. At that time there was a library at the Canberra church which was a boon to those who were readers. The *Leisure Hour* and *Family Herald* could be obtained there, and in our house the long winter nights passed pleasantly.

A few days after father commenced his duties he was with a few station hands who were discussing one of their party who was absent, and the absentee was referred to as an old 'lag'.

'What is a "lag"?' asked father. The party gazed at him in astonishment.

'Don't you know what a "lag" is? A "lag" is a man who has been "sent out"—a convict', said one of the party.

'A convict,' said father, 'I am surprised at Mr Campbell having such a man on the station.' He was more surprised when a chorus came from around him, 'I'm a lag', 'I'm a lag', 'I'm a lag', and he then learned that of the two dozen men employed there, about eighteen were ex-convicts or ticket-of-leave men.

The Duntroon harvest of 1856-7 was a good one and I have a clear recollection of an incident that occurred during harvesting. Mr Campbell imported a 'back delivery' reaping machine which was fitted with a fan driven by a sprocket and chain, and this fan brought the standing crop to the knife. It required three men to operate this machine—a driver, a rakeman whose job it was to push the sheaves from the platform with a rake, and a postillion. About eight other men were employed as reapers and binders, and they cut six to eight acres a day. Mr Campbell offered a prize for the best binding, and father won this prize and received an axe, saw, and a pair of boots, plus thirty shillings in cash. This caused some jealousy on the station, as I shall tell later.

The harvest was about half completed when a mishap occurred. After dinner, father was assisting a man named Cooper, who was in charge of the machine, to put the horses in and had just hooked the traces on the horse next to the crop to the swingle bar when the horse on the other side sprang forward and jerked the other horse back. This sudden movement brought the machine — which was in gear — forward and severed the horse's fetlock; father had a narrow escape as one of the fingers of the machine marked his shin. It all happened in a second, and I will never forget the groans of that beautiful Clydesdale mare. Mr Campbell was quickly on the scene and all were surprised that he did not dismiss Cooper on the spot for this act of neglect, because if the machine had been out of gear no injury would have been done. Alfred Mayo put the mare out of her misery with a friendly bullet, and I, and others, wondered at the power in the stroke that severed the mare's leg.

Our next-door neighbour at Duntroon was Alfred Mayo and his wife Mary Ann. They were excellent neighbours and Mrs Mayo was a woman in a thousand. On one occasion she was called to attend a maternity case, and the prospective mother was Louisa McKenzie. The Molonglo River separated them, and when Mrs Mayo arrived at the Duntroon crossing she found the river was running a banker owing to a heavy storm the previous day. Matters were serious indeed for the mother-to-be, so one of the Duntroon hands in a short time constructed a raft of two boards fastened together to form a 'V' shape, on which a large tub was placed, and on this frail structure she crossed the river. A man called 'The Black Trencher' (I cannot recollect his proper name) swam the river with a line and then swam back again and steadied the float with its precious freight. At this time Mrs Mayo and Louisa McKenzie were the only ones in the locality with a knowledge of obstetrics; consequently, there was a wide-spread call for their services. Mrs Charles Campbell was considered an angel of mercy when she was in the locality, and when a call of this nature came she was quickly on the scene. The above incident took place when she was absent, and on her return she had a suitable raft constructed that did duty for years. I saw this raft being broken up in 1858, the first bridge in County Murray being opened about that time at Queanbeyan.

The quietness of Duntroon was occasionally broken when 'firewater' was brought in, and I remember a couple of serious disturbances. On one occasion an employee named John McMahon knocked 'the Cove' down and 'the Cove' floored McMahon with a rail and immediately discharged him. McMahon then went to Yarralumla, where he was employed for a number of years.

The first prize fight in the Canberra district took place between Alfred Mayo and John McMahon. In March 1857 Mayo, when in liquor, made some remarks about McMahon, who invited him to strip and settle the matter. Mayo, who was far the bigger man, said, 'I will not fight unless for money—you cover that', and put down a couple of pounds. McMahon accepted the challenge and that night he called at our house, where my father was busy bootmaking.

'Dick,' he said, 'Mayo said something vile about me and I am going to give him a hiding or else he will give me one, and I want you to be my second.'

'Jack, settle the matter some other way, because you will have no chance with him', was father's reply.

'No, Dick,' said McMahon, 'he will not fight for honour and there is four quid on this. It is in John McIntosh's hands and if I drew out now I would lose my money, and I can assure you that Mayo will not have it all his own way. Billy Appleyard will act as Mayo's "Second" and will soon be here to fix matters with you—McIntosh will act as referee, so all I want is your consent to act for me, and the sooner the matter is decided the better it will be for all concerned.'

'Very well,' father said, 'I wish you luck, but am afraid he will be too much for you.'

Billy Appleyard appeared and the fight took place next morning before work commenced at 6 a.m., and it was soon proved that Mayo knew little about the noble art of self defence, and that McMahon was no novice. Mayo made some mighty blows but they only struck air, while McMahon never failed to reach his enemy and at last knocked him out with a well-directed blow on the chin. The fight lasted less than twenty minutes, and when he was declared the winner and handed the four pounds, McMahon handed two pounds to Mayo and said, 'Here is your money, Mayo—I fight for honour only.' Thus ended the first prize fight at Canberra.

The Duntroon employees were each allowed a plot of ground for their own use, and father made the best of his plot, with the result that we always had plenty of fresh vegetables. He made many a shilling by selling to those less fortunate, and another employee named O'Rourke made £17 in one season from potatoes. The head gardener was a man named Duncan Keir, and in the autumn of 1857 father had a great crop of turnips which was the admiration of all. The cook at the Big House (as Duntroon was called) was a Mrs Cooper, and she visited our hut early one Sunday morning in May. She admired the turnips and told mother that they had none at the Big House, so mother gave her a dozen or so to take home. The next day during lunch Mr Campbell questioned his wife about the turnips and was told that they were 'grown by Shumack'. Campbell later inspected father's garden and was very impressed—he later spoke sharply to Keir regarding his neglect of vegetable growing, and as a result of this rebuke Keir looked on my father with no friendly eye. A few weeks later father was at work in the Duntroon garden, and as the day was hot he went to the water cask for a drink. On the way he pulled a pear from a tree and ate it. Keir saw him and immediately ran to McLaren, the overseer, and reported that 'Shumack stole fruit!' McLaren was quickly on the scene, and although father admitted taking the pear, he denied stealing it and quoted the scriptures to prove his point. A bitter dispute then took place, with the result that Keir was given a month's notice. When Mr Campbell returned from Sydney he endorsed McLaren's action and offered father Keir's position. Father declined the offer as he knew little about flower culture; however, on Keir's departure he took charge of the garden until a horticulturist named Lewis was appointed six weeks later and held the position for forty-two years.

The first bushfire I saw was in the autumn of 1858. It started west of the Murrumbidgee, and for days the whole locality was enveloped in smoke. One Saturday, riders were sent out to see that the fire had not crossed the river. On Sunday we went to church and cousin Joseph Shumack came home with us for lunch, and during the meal a report came that the fire had crossed the river and was fast approaching the plain. Joe mounted his horse and lost no time on the way home, and very soon flames were seen approaching from the west. Breaks were then burnt along an old cattle track and this quick action saved the homes and crops of the Shumack brothers, Maloney, Neylon, Flynn, Munday, Wainwright and a few others. Angus Cameron, who was employed on the Duntroon estate in charge of two flocks of sheep at £60 a year and rations, was not so fortunate, as his stacks of wheat, oats and hay were destroyed. All the Duntroon employees were out fighting the fire for forty hours, but stock losses were light, and as good rains followed within a few days the country looked splendid within two or three weeks.

In 1856 Allan McLachlan was the head stockman at Duntroon. He was a free man and married a girl named Mary O'Brien and they were friends of our family. The overseer was a man named McLaren, but after some trouble in 1859 he was dismissed and Thomas Harrington Line took his place. Line knew practically nothing about stock, and in consequence rows were a daily occurrence. One day in 1861 McLachlan refused to obey an absurd command given by Line and in the heat of the moment he knocked Line down. The result was that McLachlan appeared later in the Queanbeyan Court and was fined £5 with costs. When Mr Campbell returned from Sydney he investigated this case and other matters brought to his notice and dismissed Line and appointed McLachlan to the position of overseer. Allan thoroughly understood the work and gave great satisfaction. In 1874 his wife died, leaving a family of three sons and two daughters. The eldest son worked with surveyor Brock, and the second son, Hector, was an expert horse-breaker and trainer. The elder daughter, Leila, who was 16 years of age when her mother died, married W. Bates, a member of the sixth English cricket eleven, which visited Australia in 1881.

In 1875 or 1876 Allan McLachlan remarried, and when Mr Campbell sailed for England in that year, he was left in charge of Duntroon. All was harmonious and prosperous.

One evening in the spring of 1857 we were on our way home from school when we heard that Mrs Cavanagh had been drowned in the Canberra River. We could see a crowd on the bank and we hurried to the scene and arrived just as her son Patrick took her body from the water. His father, Thomas Cavanagh, was in a state of collapse. My cousin, Peter Shumack, was the last person to see Mrs Cavanagh alive. He spoke to her as she passed him on the way to the river and thought it strange that she did not return his greeting. A sensation was caused when the priest would not allow her to be interred in the Roman Catholic burial ground in Queanbeyan, and after some delay Patrick and a few friends buried her there. The priest had the body removed and buried outside consecrated ground, but Patrick and his friends re-interred the body within the cemetery and mounted an armed guard at the graveside, declaring that they would shoot any person who disturbed it. They kept guard day and night for a short period, and eventually an agreement was reached with the priest and church authorities. A few years later a nice headstone was erected to her memory in Queanbeyan cemetery.

Towards the close of 1856 a great hoaxer, Ambrose Russell, was employed by Mr Campbell as cook at the Big House. One night father was busy making a boot when a harsh knock startled the household. Mother opened the door and there stood a blackfellow, tomahawk in hand.

'Me want rum', he said.

'I am sorry, but I have no rum', father said.

'Me want meat, me want bread, me want tea.'

'Yes, I will give you those—I will get them now', mother replied, and proceeded to do so.

Suddenly the blackfellow said in a loud, harsh voice, 'Me want "bacca".' Father, who was not too sure of the visitor's intentions, said, 'Yes, I will give you some'—and he walked backwards into a room. Meanwhile, mother gave the intruder some bread and meat and a basin of tea. When he took a sip of the tea his blanket slipped down and mother saw white skin and black finger marks on his neck—a keen glance at him did the rest. When father appeared with a plug of 'Nailrod' tobacco, mother whispered to him, 'It is only Russell!' A glance convinced father of the truth of the statement, and the next instant Russell was on his back on the floor. However, the whole matter ended in humour, as at the time about a dozen old hands were near the hut watching the joke, and when Russell was floored they were pleased with the sudden turn of events, as they thought father had attacked the blackfellow thinking he was about to attack the family with his tomahawk. Later one night mother was sitting by the fire when she saw a

bulky object fall into the fire. She prodded it with the poker and it suddenly exploded and singed her hair. It was a packet of gunpowder dropped down the chimney by Russell.

And now we come to a sacrilegious joke perpetrated at St John's Church, Canberra, in 1857. The church was crowded one Sunday morning and the incumbent, the Rev. P. G. Smith, gave out the following: 'I publish the banns of marriage between Ambrose Russell, bachelor, and Elizabeth McDonald, spinster, both of this Parish. If any of you know cause, or just impediment why these two young persons should not be joined together in holy matrimony you are to declare it, and this is the first time of asking.' To the friends and members of the McDonald family this announcement caused the utmost consternation as it was believed that the parties concerned were not even on speaking terms, and for a moment they thought the seeming enmity between them must be assumed. However, a very painful silence following the announcement was broken when a deep voice resounded through the church—'I forbid the banns!'

'Come into the vestry after service', the incumbent said, but Russell, who was in the church when the banns were announced, walked out. Miss McDonald was also there, and it was reported that she fainted and had to be assisted home. Mr Campbell was furious at this joke, and after an investigation it was established that Miss McDonald resented Russell's attention and this was his method of retaliation. He was promptly discharged and left Duntroon with a small swag and a birdcage in his hand.



## *Duntroon Identities*

*William Appleyard William Ginn Edwin Elijah Bambridge Brian Logue*

*The McDonald family Charles Thornton The O'Rourke family*

*Mary McTavish George Rottenbury Bob Slade Michael Darmody*

*Peter Shumack and Andrew Morton Catherine Campbell Rev. P. G. Smith*

*William Mathieson William Shumack Findlay McDonald The Cameron families*

WILLIAM APPELYARD was an old soldier and Waterloo veteran. He had a splendid voice, and he and Edwin Elijah Bambridge were the choir leaders at St John's Church for many years. Old Billy was the first man to put me on a horse. Time upon time when he took old Duke out of the cart he would put me on his back and lead him to the paddock half a mile away, and often I would walk with him to the paddock for the ride back, so that old Billy and I were great friends. I never heard him curse or use bad language, and in 1857 when a Punch and Judy show performed at Duntroon he gave me a shilling so that I could see the performance. This kindness I can never forget, nor the packets of bon bons he gave me from time to time, and his wages were only 7s. a week.

Some time during 1857 William Ginn and his family arrived at Duntroon and he was engaged as ploughman. The harvest of 1857-8 was a splendid one and during Christmas some of Mr Campbell's guests were in the harvest field and expressed admiration of the crop, one saying it was the best he had seen that year.

'Well,' Mr Campbell said, 'I have the best farm hand now I ever had—William Ginn.' Several farm hands heard this compliment on Ginn's efficiency and were offended, and one of these was Alfred Mayo. Some months later firewater caused a great commotion on the station and Billy Appleyard was for several days unable to perform his duties as wood and water joey. One evening he went to see Mayo, who was suffering from the same malady, and said, 'For God's sake Alfred, give me a nobbler or I'll die.'

Mayo handed Billy a frying pan handle and said, 'Go down and knock on Ginn's door and when he opens it knock him down with this, and I'll give you a bottle of rum.'

The night was very dark and Billy went down and knocked on the door of Ginn's hut. Ginn opened the door and Billy then struck him a blow across the mouth knocking out four teeth and splintering his jaw. Ginn staggered back dazed, and Billy was preparing for a second blow when Ginn closed with him, knocked him down, dragged him to the woodheap and had the axe in hand when Mrs Ginn intervened and prevented an awful tragedy. Ginn was a very quiet man and was surprised at this hostile action to injure him; however, he was later told that jealousy was the motive behind the attacks. A short time later he left Duntroon and took a small farm on the river near St John's Church. He died in 1904 aged 83, and is buried in St John's churchyard with his wife.

A short time before the drunken scene just described, father drove into Queanbeyan in the station dray accompanied by mother, Mrs Mayo, Mrs McMahon and myself. This was my first visit to Queanbeyan and it was the first time I saw a horse shod. On the return journey father picked up Billy Appleyard who was on the spree, and all went well until the river crossing was reached near Duntroon. Here Billy announced that it was his duty to throw the women into the water, and there was some screaming when he attempted to do so. However, father laid the whip on to him with the desired result

and we arrived home safely. Billy had no knowledge of the incident next day and there was no doubt that vile liquor was the cause of this outburst. He is buried in St John's churchyard.

Foremost amongst the pioneers was Edwin Elijah Bambridge, farmer and bootmaker. He was a quiet and industrious man and I never heard him traduce his fellow man. He raised a large family of daughters and one son. All the girls were exemplary in their daily struggle through life. They had to reap, thresh and clean the wheat, and it was hard work in those primitive days. Bambridge was a churchwarden at St John's for many years, and when the church was consecrated in 1845 he and William Appleyard conducted the singing. Before the ceremony the Bishop gave them a trial verse in the vestry and was pleased with their singing ability, so these two men led the consecration psalms as there were no hymns at the time. Years later I heard Bambridge sing at the Duntroon Hall and also in St John's Church where Rev. P. G. Smith's wife was organist. Bambridge planted the first willow trees on the Molonglo River before St John's was built, with twigs taken from a tree at the Cowpastures, now Camden. This Camden willow originated from cuttings brought from a tree that overshadowed Napoleon's grave at St Helena, which were kept alive during the voyage by being imbedded in a sack of potatoes. When I first saw Canberra there were less than a dozen willows on the river; a few years later they lined the bank from Duntroon to Yarralumla. Bambridge, a native of Staffordshire, died in 1879 and is buried in St John's.

When we arrived in Duntroon in 1856 Brian Logue and his family had charge of the dairy. He had six daughters and one son, and the dairy, which was a building 30 feet by 16 feet, was a model of cleanliness and efficiency. There were no separators in those days and the milk was set in pans, sometimes as many as two dozen, from which the cream was skimmed each morning and placed in a vertical churn. I have seen the operators of these churns perspiring freely—there were no rotary churns then. Early in 1857 the Logue family left the dairy and took a farm at Canberra. Brian Logue Jnr is buried in the Queanbeyan cemetery, and his father's remains rest on the north side of the old Duntroon dairy, as there were no consecrated burial grounds in the locality at the time. A few early pioneers rest with him. Patrick Cavanagh married one of Brian Logue's daughters and both were highly esteemed. In later years I had good neighbours around me, but none better than this grand couple. Cavanagh died in 1914 and his wife in 1921. They are buried in the Queanbeyan cemetery.

When the Logue family left the Duntroon dairy the position was taken by the McDonald family. Alexander McDonald and his wife and three children arrived in this State about 1845. For years he was a shepherd at Mugga Mugga, where he looked after one flock and his daughter Mary looked after another. He lost his life when he fell from his horse on the way home from Queanbeyan, and after this accident an old sailor named Charlie Thornton was sent to take charge of one of the flocks, and the widow carried on this part of the station for about three years. One evening a thunderstorm was coming over from the south-west and Charlie hurried his flock home to the folds. He then went to assist Mary, who was some distance away and quite indifferent to the approaching storm, and the widow also ran to assist at the folds. With every flash of lightning and crash of thunder she would throw up her hands and call 'Lord save us', but old Charlie would blaspheme. Suddenly an awful flash followed by a fearful crash blinded and stupefied them for a few seconds, and when they recovered they found that forty-six sheep had been killed and old Charlie's dog lay dead at his feet! There was no more swearing from Charlie Thornton. He served on Nelson's flagship, *Victory*, at the Battle of Trafalgar, and it was his opinion that Nelson was shot by one of his own men. He was drawing a small pension of about 3s. 6d. a week, and when I first met him he was shepherding his sheep on land where Parliament House now stands. Here about 1876 he nearly lost his life during a hailstorm. He sheltered beneath an umbrella which the hail destroyed, and he received injuries which prevented him attending his flock for a couple of weeks. Sergeant Brennan

from the Queanbeyan police, who was caught in the same storm, escaped serious injury by removing the saddle from his horse and sheltering beneath it. He measured one lump of hail with his whip and it was 14 inches in circumference. I last saw Charlie Thornton at St John's Church on Christmas Day 1877, and he had dinner with my friends the Abernethys. Kate Abernethy later said to me, 'I invited Charlie to have dinner with us as it may be his last.' He died within a year in his 99th year.

When Mrs McDonald accepted the position at the dairy, father drove her there with her furniture and effects; thus began a friendship between our family and this kind old lady and her family which endured until all of them departed for a better land. However, the work proved too strenuous, as her daughter had no time to assist as she was busy with the sheep, and her son, Findlay, was above work. He was destined by his parents to be a parson, but they were sadly disillusioned. At that time a few well-educated men were continually on the tramp and they taught for a few shillings per week. However, most of them when they had a pound or two would be off to the nearest public house, where they would remain until their money was gone. Although Findlay received a good education from these itinerant teachers, he developed no love for work. His mother did not take strong drink, although she always kept a bottle in the house for the teacher—and Findlay, and as a result of this indulgence a habit developed which later became a curse. In 1859 they quitted the dairy and took a farm on the river, where Mrs Macdonald and Mary did most of the work. Findlay would do the ploughing and little else—the result was failure. I will never forget this kind old lady—she was one of the kind I was fortunate to meet in my youth, and often when following the sheep she would call me in for a meal of tea and 'bannocks'. She would then bring out the family Bible and I would read her two chapters—her favourites were the 28th Chapter of Deuteronomy and the 14th Chapter of St John's Gospel in the New Testament. Often she related sermons heard in Scotland. She brought a spinning wheel from Scotland and gathered all the scraps of wool available, which she spun into yarn and then knitted into socks and fancy goods for women.

When we arrived at Duntroon in 1856, Terence O'Rourke was the only member of his family there—his wife and children arrived later, and this is the tragic story of their early days in the old land and the new.

O'Rourke was a successful farmer in Ireland, and he had a large family consisting of Terence, Con, Pat, Mick and three daughters. It was his wish that the eldest son, Terence, should become a priest. Terence had passed all the exams with the exception of the final one, the passing of which would admit him to Holy Orders. About a month prior to this examination an election took place and a man was killed in a riot. O'Rourke and his sons Terence, Con and Pat were arrested, tried and convicted on a capital charge and sentenced to death. A reprieve was granted at the eleventh hour and two sons spent eight years at that 'earthly hell', Port Arthur in Tasmania; the other son was transported to another part of Australia, and O'Rourke senior was transported to New South Wales for the term of his natural life, and eventually arrived at Duntroon. When Mr George Campbell took charge of the estate in the mid-fifties he asked O'Rourke how he came to be a convict. O'Rourke gave him a full account of the crime and their conviction and reprieve. Campbell was convinced that father and sons were innocent, and took action in the matter, with the result that a free pardon was granted to all four members of this family. I remember the arrival of two of the O'Rourke brothers at Duntroon after the pardon was granted; and their first job was to thresh out the crop just harvested. Their brother Pat arrived about a month later. These boys married and reared respectable families, and are connected by marriage with the Shumack family. O'Rourke senior died in 1864 and he and his wife are buried in the Queanbeyan cemetery.

In 1856 a man named McTavish was employed at Duntroon. He was a widower with a daughter named Mary, aged about fifteen. He treated this girl in a cruel manner, and about three years before our

arrival he gave her a severe beating and she disappeared. Two months later she was located living with a tribe of blacks at Uriarra, and returned to her father. The blacks treated her kindly, and several years later she told her story to her friend Jemima Winter, who gave it to me when she became my mother-in-law. Following Mary's return to her father, he gave her another severe beating and she again disappeared. Police efforts to trace the runaway were unsuccessful. One day a youth called on Thomas Southwell at Parkwood and obtained work as a general hand. He proved a superior type of lad and was very good with horses, and on one occasion accompanied Southwell on a trip to Sydney with a load of produce. He was about two years with Southwell and then gave notice that he was leaving to take up a better-paid position as horse-breaker on a station south of Queanbeyan, and in due time commenced work there. One day Tommy, as the lad was called, was injured when a horse fell, and when the doctor arrived, Tommy's sex was discovered—he was the missing Mary McTavish. Southwell was sceptical when a trooper called and told him the story, so he visited the injured person and found that she was identical with the boy Tommy. I last heard of her in 1869 when she married the son of the station owner.

George Rottenbury was a stone mason, carpenter and bricklayer, and for a time was employed at Duntroon. About 1860 he started a lime kiln at Canberra, but this was closed when Tom Sayersbury constructed a kiln at Majura about 1867. One day during one of the drunken squalls on the station, Bob Slade, a fellow employee, struck Rottenbury across the face with a horse pistol, inflicting an injury which required several stitches. The scar extended from his mouth to his ear and he carried this mark to his grave. Rottenbury died in 1910 in his 91st year and is buried at St. John's.

Bob Slade was a Duntroon employee and later a tenant on the Glebe farm. He was a bootmaker by occupation and died about 1861. J. Oldfield was another bootmaker, and to my knowledge there were four people engaged in this trade, including two at Ginninderra—J. Plummer and Jack Booth. All boots were hand sewn—pegs were introduced about 1862.

Some time during the early thirties a young man named Michael Darmody arrived in New South Wales and after a sojourn of a few years settled in Victoria, where he prospered. Some twenty-five years later he sent home for his brother John, who was married, and on his arrival in this State was employed by Mr Campbell at Duntroon. This family proved by their industry and honesty to be valuable assets to the State. When the Land Act of 1861 became law they were amongst the first to secure land in the Queanbeyan district. Some six or eight years later, Darmody inherited a small fortune when his brother Michael died in Victoria.

When my uncles John, Peter and Joseph Shumack arrived in Sydney in November 1841, among their shipmates were Mr and Mrs John Gillespie, Michael and Patrick Sheedy and their wives, and Mrs Anthony Pike and several children. There was a family named Doherty in Ireland, and when the parents died the daughters Elizabeth and Mary were befriended by the Shumack family and Peter, at his own expense, brought Mary to Sydney with them and obtained employment for her.

Peter Shumack was hired by James Wright, and after a short period left Wright's service and was employed by Charles Campbell as a shepherd at a yearly wage of £17 with rations. His mate was a young man named Andrew Morton, and their home was a sod hut 16 feet by 12 feet. It was here that young Morton spent his spare time studying his medical books. Campbell's wife Catherine was one of the best women living and I have heard old lags declare that if ever there was an angel on earth it was Catherine Campbell. If a case of sickness was reported she would be first on the scene to assist the sufferer. One night she was called to an expectant mother named Skinner, and she sent urgently to Mr Campbell requesting the services of a doctor. The nearest doctor was at Goulburn, sixty miles away! Campbell then recalled that when he had last visited Peter Shumack and Andrew Morton with rations he had seen medical books and other papers on the table which clearly indicated that Morton was a qualified medical man. He

mentioned these facts to Catherine, who urged that the young man be sent for at once. Morton arrived shortly afterwards on the messenger's horse, and as a result of his skill the mother and babe were soon doing well. Morton later established a medical practice in Queanbeyan, where he was doctor and coroner for the district for thirty years. He died in 1881.

In 1856 Peter Shumack was employed by the Reverend P. G. Smith. Smith was short tempered, strictly honest, and straightforward in all his actions, and I will now relate an incident concerning these two which caused some laughter in Canberra about 1857.

One morning Parson Smith found that a heifer was missing and later said to Peter, 'Come with me and we will bring the missing heifer back—I have located her at Klensendorffe's.' Off they went—Peter on foot and the parson mounted on a splendid horse. Peter had to wade across the river, and the pair caused some amusement in their efforts to get the heifer from a mob of about 100 head. Peter was winded when the parson announced that they 'would have to give her best'. However, Pat Cavanagh was ploughing nearby, and Peter suggested that they enlist his aid. When Pat pulled up near them Peter said, 'Pat, get on that horse and drive that beast you saw us after into the yard—we couldn't do it in a month.' Pat agreed, and Peter then addressed the parson. 'Get off that horse and let a man who knows how to ride mount it!' The parson dismounted. Now Pat was a small man, 5 feet 3 inches tall—the parson was a big man, 6 feet 4 inches, and the horse was sixteen hands. Pat took some time to adjust the stirrups and then went to the house for his whip, which was 16 feet in length. He then mounted and swung the whip, which caused the horse to perform a bit, but Pat was unperturbed and in less than half an hour had yarded the heifer.

'I am much obliged to you Patrick. It was very kind of you to leave your work and do this for me', the parson said.

'No trouble at all Mr Smith,' Pat said, 'had you let me know, I would have taken her home for you.'

In 1857 some land at Canberra was surveyed into 100-acre blocks, and Robert Maloney, Peter Shumack and his nephew Joseph, and Joseph's mother secured blocks. These members of the Shumack family were the first to secure land in County Murray. My father assisted Uncle Peter to improve his land, and when Peter eventually left Parson Smith's service, father assisted him to fence the block, build a house and plant an orchard.

One hot day early in 1861 I was shepherding my sheep and they had camped during the heat of the day. On hearing the sound of an axe I investigated, and came across Uncle Peter doing some bush work. He asked me to bring him a quart of water, which I did. Some time later he asked me to bring him another quart of water, and as I had to go about half a mile to get it my hand was tired before I arrived back, with the result that my thumb was over the top edge of the quart pot and may have been in the water. He startled me when he shouted, 'Don't be washing your hands in it!'

'I am not washing my hands in it', I said.

'You are washing your hands in it', he said, and passed a few other remarks which greatly offended me. Later on he asked me to get him another quart of water.

I then said, 'No, I will bring you no more water, for you are a nasty, cranky old fellow.'

'I am not old and cranky,' he shouted, 'and you are an impudent, idle brat; and you have nothing to do but give your elders insolence.'

'I am not idle,' I said, 'but you are old and cranky—you are over fifty years old and no woman would marry you.'

'Who told you that lie?' he shouted, and for a few minutes he flew off the handle properly.

Years later I wondered that he did not spank me for my insolence. However, his bark was worse

than his bite. He was very honest and honourable although hasty in temper. Shortly after this episode he gave my sister Margaret a blood filly, a splendid animal from which sprang our saddle horses, which became known throughout the district.

Early in 1860 a young Scotchman named William Mathieson came to Ginninderra and was employed as a shepherd. At that time nearly every man had a sheath knife, but the knife in Mathieson's belt was different. I said I'd never seen such a big knife before, and he said, 'This is a dagger—not a knife', and showed it to me; and when I arrived home that night I told father and mother all about the dagger. Shortly after this he took charge of the Bald Hill run, as John Coppin moved to the head station. Mathieson's run adjoined ours on the south, thus a friendship was founded that lasted until his death in 1882. He was a good business man and made money on the side by trading. On one occasion he bought a couple of horses and in less than a month he sold them for a profit of £10. He was about six months on the sheep run when he sent home to Aberdeen for his sister Mary, and she arrived at Ginninderra in the spring of 1861 and kept house for her brother. Our respective houses were about three miles apart, and Uncle Peter soon became very friendly with Mary, and in February 1862 they were married in St John's Church, Canberra. Although no children blessed the union they were a happy couple, and years later, when uncle's health broke down, I assisted him in many ways and thus made amends for my impertinence in my younger days.

Mathieson married in 1865 and died in 1882, leaving a wife and eight children to mourn his loss.

Of my six uncles on my father's side, I never met John, Joseph or George. George and John died young—all the others saw three score years and ten. In 1871 we received a surprise visit from Uncle William, who walked from Dark Corner in the Bathurst district to Canberra within a week and spent two months with us and Uncle Peter. His wife's sister, Mary Flint, neé Doherty, was the girl Uncle Peter brought out from Ireland, and she lived about five miles from us.

The country between our homes was very rough and uncle expressed a desire to visit the Flint family. One afternoon John and I set out with Uncle William for the Flint home, and when we reached the river uncle looked at it in dismay and said, 'That is not crossable no how.' 'I will carry you over', John said. After a little persuasion he got on John's back and in a few minutes was landed safely on the other side. On arrival at the house we sat down but did not introduce our companion, and it was several minutes before uncle spoke.

He then said to Mrs Flint, 'How far is it to town?'

Mrs Flint jumped up and said, 'I have heard that voice before—say that again.'

He repeated the words and Mrs Flint said, 'You are Bill Shumack—I am sure of it.'

'Yes, I am', he said, and with that we left them to a joyous reunion. It was a surprise to us and many others when we heard that thirty-four years had passed since these two people had parted in the old country.

Uncle William spent a week with the Flint family, during which several social gatherings were arranged and many old friends and relatives attended and renewed old acquaintances; he then returned to Uncle Peter's, where a slight rupture in their friendship occurred. It came about thus: Uncle William could not sing, but he was most excellent at reciting old Irish songs and ballads, which Uncle Peter thoroughly enjoyed. However, Uncle William made a grave mistake when he recited a ballad called 'A Horn of Irish Whiskey-O'. I give one verse:

All ye old men who have young wives,  
To be fat, strong and lusty-O,  
Strip down their pride and tan their hides  
With a horn of Irish whiskey-O.

Now Uncle Peter was sensitive to the fact that he was several years his wife's senior, and when he heard this ballad he jumped up and stamped about shouting, 'You said that to vex me, you said that to vex me!'

'I did not', William said. It was no use denying it, however, so William left Peter and came to us. On the eve of Uncle William's departure, Uncle Peter came to bid him farewell and said, 'You should not have cleared out, Bill.' Peter's wife Mary then intervened and poured oil on the troubled waters, and all was forgiven. William returned to Dark Corner as he came—on foot—and died there six years later aged 73 years.

Uncle Peter died aged 74 in 1883, and is buried in St John's churchyard. About five years after his death his widow married Findlay McDonald, mentioned earlier. Findlay was well educated and spent all his money on drink. He paid little attention to the home. When Uncle Peter died the garden was a model of neatness, and I spent many a day working in it after his death. When I visited the home about four years after the widow re-married I was surprised to find that the garden had gone wild and some of the fruit trees were dead. During Peter's life-time the garden and dairy were his only means of livelihood—now it was a dairy only. Findlay made no provision for the lean years, and in 1895, in consequence of this neglect, had to send their stock away on agistment to the mountain property of Thomas Franklin, forty miles away. In 1896, when seasonable rains fell, Findlay was despatched with the necessary money to pay Franklin the agistment fees, plus a few shillings to quench his thirst, as he had to pass a public house. Findlay returned with the cattle, which were in excellent condition, but the empress of the herd was missing. Findlay explained that the cow was missing when the herd was mustered, and that Mr Franklin promised to send her back if she were subsequently found. Two years passed. In 1898 a sports meeting was held at the village of Hall, and Findlay and his wife attended. During the afternoon she met Thomas Franklin and queried him about the missing cow. She was astonished when Franklin said, 'I gave Findlay £7 for that cow.' Meanwhile, Findlay was enjoying himself at the bar with a few kindred spirits, but this enjoyment was shortlived because his wife, who had never suspected him, called him aside and gave him a piece of her mind, much to the enjoyment of the crowd. All the culprit could say was, 'Oh be jabbers, Oh be jabbers.' He got no more opportunities after this, and died suddenly in 1907, and his widow seven years later. She was interred in Uncle Peter's grave.

Some time ago I was asked what I considered to be the worst type of drunkard—the one that collapsed after a few glasses or the one that could carry the bottle under his belt. The latter was my answer. Findlay McDonald could dispose of a bottle of spirits and then work out accurately the most puzzling mathematical problem, and if his industry had been equal to his talents he would have been a model member of society. He had several opportunities to make good when he and his mother left their farm, but he failed to embrace them. John Morrison succeeded them and prospered, and he and his family are highly respected throughout the district. I regret that I have to record such a sad report of a man who had splendid opportunities of bettering his position, and I would be happy to report otherwise.

In 1856 there were four families named Cameron in County Murray, unrelated to one another: the Ainslie Camerons, the Water Hole Camerons, the Glebe Camerons, and Overseer Camerons at Majura. The Majura Camerons comprised four brothers—John, Samuel, Angus and Allan. Angus at that time had charge of the Ainslie sheep station and his two sisters kept house for him. Shortly after we left Duntroon for Emu Bank, Angus Cameron and John Winter married two sisters who were daughters of Hugh McPherson. Later Winter's third daughter, Sarah, became my wife. Angus reared a family of six.

In 1830 John Cameron and his wife Ann landed in Australia and in due course took up residence at Canberra. This worthy couple had a family of eight sons and five daughters, of whom eight were born in Australia. Cameron was a tailor by trade and when he emigrated to this State he expected to make a

fortune, but he quickly found that he must turn his attention to some other occupation if he wanted to keep the wolf from the door. In a short time he was employed as a shepherd on the Duntroon estate; the wages were low—£17 per annum and rations. A few years later he was in charge of two stations—Emu Bank and the Goat Station at Coppins Crossing. These stations were seven miles apart. He and two sons lived at the Goat Station and his wife and other members of the family conducted the station at Emu Bank. At that time his four eldest children had struck out for themselves—his two eldest being married in the forties. Cameron's duties were those of hutkeeper and he also had to change the folds each day—there being sixty hurdles to each fold. He was responsible for both stations and all went well until Christmas 1853. During Christmas week he sent into town for a supply of firewater and the overseer brought the spirits from Queanbeyan. The two boys folded the sheep on the evening of 23 December 1853 and then went to the hut for their supper. Their father was on the bed with a bottle near him and he did not speak. Next morning they had to prepare their own breakfast and when they came home in the evening they found their father dead. The following morning the lads had to tramp seven miles to Emu Bank to report the death and the inquest was held there on Christmas morning by the newly-appointed coroner, Andrew Morton. As soon as the inquest was over the funeral cortege started for Duntroon and a messenger was despatched to request Charles Campbell to conduct the funeral service in the absence of the parson at Gundaroo. That gentleman declined to do so or to allow anyone else to do so, and he also forbade the burial until the clergyman returned the next day; and the funeral cortege had to turn back one mile and the coffin was placed in an outhouse at the home of Mr A. McDonald. Ten years later Charles Campbell was a candidate for Parliament in the Queanbeyan Electorate, and this incident turned the scale against him, as every person present on the above sad occasion never forgave him for his action. Immediately after the funeral, the Cameron family gave notice to Charles Campbell and leased the Glebe farm at Ginninderra where Cameron's son Donald now became head of the house. A few years later his brother Dugald went to the Lambing Flat goldfields, where he became a prominent member of the Miners' Protective League during the riots in 1861. He paid a brief visit to his family at Ginninderra in 1862 and then left for the Otago goldfields in New Zealand. Twenty-three years passed, and then one day a swagman called at Emu Bank and asked Mr A. Cameron if he had a brother Dugald in New Zealand. On receiving an answer in the affirmative, the stranger said that Dugald Cameron had been his mate in New Zealand and was killed when a shaft they were sinking caved in. He further stated that at the time of his death Dugald was worth about £6,000. Advertisements had been inserted in the local press in an effort to trace relatives, but as no information was forthcoming, the government claimed the estate. Duncan Cameron and his brother Alexander were acquainted with the bushrangers Ned and Dan Kelly, and the story of their meeting at a shearing shed in New South Wales will be told later.

During the drought of 1865-6 John Cameron, eldest of the Glebe Camerons, who had two flocks of sheep, and a man named McGregor, who had one flock, daily watered their sheep at a dam not far from our home. One hot afternoon Cameron headed his sheep for home and he and McGregor then sat under a big shady tree and were conversing in Gaelic. Brother John, who had learnt a good deal of Gaelic from Mrs McDonald at Duntroon, crept up on them and suddenly yelled out some Gaelic swear words. Cameron told him to clear out otherwise he would give him a spanking, whereupon John called out, 'You must spell "able" first.' A chase was the result but John was too fast, and as Cameron was returning to join McGregor, John flung a stick which struck Cameron across the shoulder—the result was that the air was blue with Gaelic oaths. Cameron died a few months later in a drunken spree in his mid-thirties, leaving a widow and four children; and his eldest sister, Margery Murphy, passed away a couple of months later. McGregor later went to the Tea Gardens near Newcastle, where he was a successful fisherman for many years. He died about 1894 well into his eighties.



## *Village Institutions*

*The building of St John's Church Canberra Post Office*

*The school and its teachers The Kinleysides and St Ninian's*

*Christ Church, Queanbeyan*

THE BUILDING of St John's Church, Canberra, commenced in 1841, and the builder's name was Cameron. There was a rough stone tower twenty feet higher than the church but no spire. Later a subsidence in the foundations caused the tower to list to the south about two feet. The brothers John Campbell of Sydney and George Campbell of Duntroon considered the matter and John proposed to erect a chancel and add an extension of twelve feet to the church. George offered to remove the old tower and erect a new one with a spire, and Mrs Campbell promised a peal of six bells, though this promise was never fulfilled.

The work of demolition commenced in 1863 and the bell from the old tower was taken out and suspended from a frame near the church. I saw William Appleyard ring this bell in 1856 and for years after that date.

The work on the new tower commenced in 1864 when the foundation stone was laid by Bishop Thomas of Goulburn. Henry Burton was the builder and his tender exceeded £2,000. He was a master at his trade and some of his workmen were most proficient in the art of stone cutting—Wandles, Hutton and McDonald. During 1864 heavy rain fell and as a result George Campbell had trouble with the stone carters. The ground was torn up about 500 yards in width and Mr Campbell wanted the carters to drag a harrows behind their drays to level the ground. Some loads were thrown off the drays owing to the boggy nature of the ground and the material was left lying there for weeks. Edmund Rolfe was the principal carter at the time.

Work progressed until the early spring of 1865, when it was suspended owing to a severe drought and was not resumed for four years. Burton did well by his contract but the work ended when the stonework reached the ridge-pole as there were no teams to cart the material because of the drought. This drought broke in 1866.

In the meantime Burton took up land at the northern end of the Canberra Plain, where he built a stone house and lived with his wife and family. Five years later tenders were called for the church extension and chancel, and also a twenty-foot addition to the tower. Mr G. Hudson's tender was accepted and the public were surprised that Burton did not get the contract. In a short time rumours were in circulation about Burton and it was said that his real name was Hodge and that he had a wife and family in England, so that in 1880 no one was surprised when Burton's wife and family left him. His eldest son was over twenty years of age and was a tradesman; he obtained employment in the Narrandera district and quietly took his mother away and settled there and did well. They held no communication with Burton. A couple of years later Burton sold his property and moved to Mulligan's Flat, near Ginninderra, where he lived for about ten years, despised and pitied by his neighbours. I last saw him in 1887—he was a human wreck. His neighbour, J. Gillespie once said to me, 'What a misery that man's life must be; there he is just able to move about and it is months since he could mount a horse, and Bill and I have to bring him all he requires from the store. Well—as a man sows, so shall he reap.' A few years later he was found dead on the floor of his hut. He lies in a nameless grave a few yards west of William

Appleyard in St John's churchyard. My brother-in-law purchased some of Burton's tools, which were stamped with the letter 'H', so his name may have been Hodge.

Hudson did all the church work in a masterly manner; McDonald was the only craftsman to work under Burton and then under Hudson. A man named Priest also worked on the tower and the master mason was William Wandles. The work on the church was not finished until late in the seventies. Burton used a great number of poles and ropes in the scaffolds and when work ceased in 1865 all this was removed. Hudson did not use a scaffold—all his work was done from inside—and Kealman, who did all the woodwork, also worked from inside. The cost of the chancel exceeded £1,500, and of the tower £2,000.

John Kealman had the contract for all the woodwork, including the chancel and spire. T. Jenkins was employed by him on the chancel, and when this was completed Jenkins went on the spree from which he never recovered; this delayed the work and Kealman employed F. Young in his place. The spire was assembled on the ground and I was present when Kealman, Jenkins and Young laid the beam foundation on which the spire was erected, and I saw Kealman take all the measurements.\* Before the work was completed Jenkins withdrew on account of illness and died shortly afterwards. A few weeks later the spire frame was completed and it was left lying on the ground for months a few yards south of the tower door. I asked Kealman the reason for the delay and he said, 'Well, my man Fred has cleared out and got married and has taken a contract in the Braidwood district. I have a contract in Queanbeyan, so it may be months before I can finish here.†

Several months elapsed before work on the spire was resumed. Young did not return. Kealman's assistant was William Parker and I was present when they commenced to place the spire in position on the tower. Parker did the shingling from inside, and on one occasion I climbed to the top of the spire when it was almost completed and accidentally upset a bundle of shingles which made an awful noise when they clattered down on the inside. I saw Kealman construct the tin cap that was put on top of the spire, and this was done by a sailor. A stage protruded through a door on the north side of the spire and the sailor worked outside and was assisted from inside by Parker. The sailor told me that it was the most risky job he ever performed. He also placed in position a lightning conductor which was a steel cross five feet high above the tin cap. This work was completed early in 1878. The lightning conductor was dislodged by a flash in 1905.

My Uncle Peter was shocked at the way this spire was constructed. Thirty-five years later it was done as Uncle Peter said it should be done, and there is no doubt that had George Campbell been present the work on the spire would not have been passed. Years later Parker told me that Kealman slumped the work. On the other hand, Fred Young took a pride in his work and was never known to do a slumped job. Soon after Kealman finished the spire Fred Young returned from Braidwood and he assisted Kealman in constructing the gaol, post office, public school, and many other buildings in Queanbeyan. Later, Young rebuilt portion of Yarralumla House.

The font is the work of William Wandles, who was an expert in stonework. The bell was replaced in the tower by John Kealman about 1872. The old pulpit was east of the vestry door and 7 feet above the floor level. This is where it should be today and all the congregation could then hear the preacher. All the pews were made by Hellman.

The first baptismal entry in the church register is 10 June 1845: William, son of Ann and Samuel Elliot, groom, of 'Pialaga' or Duntroon. About 1905 I assisted Mr I. Much to put Samuel Elliot in his

\* *Robinson's History* is wrong about the church spire construction. Young did not put a shingle or a batten in the spire. I wish it to be understood that I do not blame the author for this mistake because his informants should have known better.

† Fred Young married Rebecca Krindel, who was employed by William Davis.

final resting place in the family vault in the Queanbeyan cemetery. He was 95 years and 6 months old. His son William died a few years later aged 76 years.

In 1855 a family of seven Blundells were baptized in St John's Church. They were John, George, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Richard and Susan. William Appleyard and Edwin Elijah Bambridge were the sponsors.

The first marriage on the register is that of Thomas Turner and Elizabeth Fisher, on 23 July 1845, but they were married 40 miles from the church. The first marriage in the church was that of Alfred Mayo and Mary Ann Smith.

About 1860 the first post office was opened at Canberra, and Mr Francis J. Williams was the Postmaster—he also conducted a blacksmith's shop. He was educated at the St James's parish school in Sydney and was a member of the choir in that church. About 1877 he acquired some land and opened a post office at Sutton, where he remained until his death in 1910 at the age of 82 years.

The following is from notes given me by Francis Williams's son, Edgar George Williams, who was a schoolteacher and personal friend of mine for many years.

The first Post Office at Canberra was probably in the stone building attached to the 'smithy', but may have been in the old bark hut where we first lived. About 1867, a new room was added and a verandah room specially set apart as the Post Office. It served a very large district from Majura and Duntroon, Mugga Mugga and Narrabundah, right out to Brindabella and Uriarra. Mails were handed out at any hour of the day or night, this latter especially on Sunday nights when the young fellows from the Murrumbidgee would be making home after visiting their friends or girls in the Canberra and Duntroon localities. The Post Master's salary was about £14 per annum, with five per cent commission on all stamps sold. I can well remember going to Duntroon with £2.17.0 or £5.14.0 in cash and getting a Sydney cheque from Mr George Campbell for that amount for which three or six pounds of stamps would be received. The only Sydney daily paper which came was the *Herald*—one each to George Campbell and Parson P. G. Smith and the postmaster was allowed to read either until delivery. The *Illustrated Sydney News* was the weekly paper to which the postmaster was a regular subscriber.

The blacksmith's shop was struck by lightning in 1861, and the bellows and forge were destroyed and the anvil knocked off the block. A report in the *Illustrated Sydney News* stated that the anvil was hurled 200 yards!

The mail route was from Queanbeyan to Canberra, thence to Ginninderra, Upper Gundaroo down to Lake George via Geary's Gap to Collector and on to Goulburn, where it connected with the Sydney line. In 1870, the lake became so full of water that a track was cut along the side of the Lake Range—Billy Roohan's track—for the mail which was carried on horseback, or in a light vehicle called a spider. In wet weather the roads were deplorable and as fences were few, the people simply went where they could get along. The road from Mill Creek towards Queanbeyan was half a mile wide in 1870, as a fresh track had to be taken every two or three days, greatly to the anger of Mr Campbell, who vainly tried to keep people, especially mailmen, in the one mud-hole.

Billy Roohan was the first of the pioneer mailmen, and we always had to get up on mail mornings and make tea for him. One cold morning he was unable to drink his tea, and during that day he was found dead beside a log up at the Tea Gardens, or Mulligan's Flat, with his horse feeding around and the mail intact. The Morans afterwards ran the coach on the mail route. During floods the mail could not be delivered to Queanbeyan for days sometimes, as the Molonglo River was unbridged and the Canberra River a banker. The Clark gang of bushrangers were

occasionally a source of trouble as the Lake Ranges were a favourite haunt for plunder. The mailman would come to each post office with an empty coach and the startling news that he had been 'stuck up'. The two Clarks, Dunn and Scott—who was afterwards found, murdered by his mates—rode past the Canberra Post Office one day with pack-horse and all their equipment, making for the Jingeras, which was home for them, but did not give us a call. Apparently money orders were not in vogue these days as people posting money would often cut bank notes in half and post, and when notice of their receipt was acknowledged, would post the other halves. The bushrangers got a good many of these half notes, but what the sender did with his half is a mystery, though he may have arranged with the banks beforehand. The old post office and the blacksmith's shop have been wiped out, and all that remained when I last saw the site were a few acacia trees which I planted some time in the sixties.

A Mr A. Monk had the Canberra post office for four months following the departure of Francis Williams, and Miss Warwick was Postmistress for a short period. Mrs Abernethy was there for a few months until 1878, when Ebenezer Booth took charge and conducted it in conjunction with a store for six years and then sold out to George Kinleyside. The Kinleysides sold out to Mrs McIntosh, who held the position of Postmistress until the city of Canberra was founded.

Hugh McPhee was the first school teacher at Canberra. In 1866 I was present when he and Alexander Cameron were talking about the early days, and the question arose how long it was since McPhee had left the Canberra school. Twenty years was the time mentioned and McPhee named some of the pupils, among others John McPherson and John Ryan. Later I heard James Neylon declare that Hugh McPhee was second to none as a teacher and was the first to be granted a salary at Canberra. It would appear that McPhee was teaching at Canberra in the early forties.

In 1857 Thomas Harrington Line took charge of the school at Canberra, and I was a pupil for a short time. He was a very disagreeable man and was unpopular throughout the district. Some of the pupils at this time were Stacey Flynn and her brothers John and Patrick, John and Ellen Wallace, Roseanna and Mary Ann McLachlan, and Mary and John McMahan. Line failed in all his undertakings. When he left Duntroon he opened a baker's shop in Goulburn where he prospered for a time and then failed. He left the State, and died about 1878. His widow was still living in 1910, well into her eighties. I remember her kindness to us when we were children.

About the middle of February 1865 a school was opened at the Glebe, Ginninderra, and Hugh McPhee was school teacher there for some time. Andrew Wotherspoon—of whom more anon—taught at the Canberra school for a couple of years about 1850. Following Donald Cameron's death in 1853, Wotherspoon left the school and took the Goat Station, near Coppins Crossing, which had been in Cameron's charge. Following a tragedy in the family in 1859 he opened a school at Ginninderra which he conducted for a few years. He was again offered the St John's school and he taught there in 1861 and 1862. He departed for Lismore on the north coast of New South Wales in 1863, when James Abernethy, who was one of my best friends, took over. Abernethy was a teacher at Canberra for more than twenty years. He left the district in 1883 and went to Young, where he took charge of a public school. He died at the age of 96 years.

The following are some notes given me by his former pupil, George Williams:

The Church of England Denominational School was the name given to our place of learning, but all creeds were well represented there. The first master was Hugh McPhee, in the early forties; Andrew Wotherspoon was the second, and he was followed by Mr Maybury. Andrew Wotherspoon's varied life would be well worth recording, as he was shepherd, farmer, and school teacher in his time at Canberra. He was also a poet of sorts, and a small book of poems, entitled

*The Maid of Erin and Other Poems*, now in my possession, is in many places equal to Bobby Burns, and is quite an ambitious effort. He dedicated it to Sir Terence Aubrey Murray in 1858. We older people well remember his tall hat and frock coat, and his strap which he would roll up and throw at any one of us, and lash us with it when we brought it to him if we weren't smart enough to get away, which we usually were.

Succeeding teachers were Messrs Wotherspoon, Maybury, Line, and finally James Abernethy, who remained till 1880, when he moved to Springbank, Canberra, under the new system of Public Instruction. He ended his school life at Woodonga, near Young, being the successor in that school to myself—one of his former pupils, to whom he wrote a very complimentary letter on the efficiency and discipline of that school. He was no disciplinarian himself, but an excellent teacher, and apart from the three R's, he was very keen on Grammar, Euclid, Mensuration, Geography, English History, and religious instruction. There was not one of us that didn't know his church catechism, and Parson Smith examined us every Friday afternoon from 'What is your name?' to 'Be in charity with all men', and as he mostly arrived at ten minutes to four and finished at half past, he was anathema to every boy in the school, and the girls too, I suppose. One of his stock questions was, 'What is faith?' and as we never knew, he would quote St Paul: 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen', a very illuminating definition for a lot of wild bush boys. In 1864, the school was burnt right out and the residents had to work to save the church. The excitement was intense with 60 or 70 boys and girls running in all directions, and the Blundells, Bambridges, Booths, Williams, Ginns and Crinigans sprinting to the scene of action. Very little was saved and all secretly rejoiced to think of the enforced holidays, but within two or three days the old dairy at Duntroon was ready for us. This meant a mile walk for Canberraites every morning, a source of great delight to us. One incident remains in my memory: one of those mornings we met 50 or perhaps 100 Chinese in a long row, trotting along with bamboo poles, and baskets on each end slung on shoulders, making for the Major's Creek and Araluen diggings with their picks and shovels and camping gear. We were all more or less afraid and got off the road and watched them pass along. The residence attached to this dairy was occupied by Mr Con O'Rourke and his wife and family. The descendants of this O'Rourke are among the claimants for the O'Rourke millions, and the sons attended the Canberra and dairy schools.

The first School Superintendent I remember was Mr Murray. Mr McCann was the first, and his last visit was in 1867; he was drowned going home at Rossi crossing place, near Goulburn. Mr Maynard, afterwards Chief Inspector, visited the school on several occasions. The Church of England also sent Inspectors. School fees were paid to the teacher as part of his salary, and I think were 1s. for one child per week, 9d. each for two from the same family, and 2s. for three or more. This was before the Public Schools Act became law in 1867 or 1868. Accounts were sent out at the end of each quarter and were mostly paid, though I am sure some are owing yet. Happy recollections are of sunlit plains, with shadows of clouds racing over them, the magpies warbling in the acacia trees in hot summer days, swimming holes and fishing, the rare falls of snow in winter, during one of which, in the month of August 1872, we punished old Smith, the brick-maker, so severely that he was forced to lock himself in his hut, and cursed us roundly.

I have endeavoured to conjure up from the misty past the names of some of the families who attended the Canberra school. Prior to 1860, before my recollection, I have found that the Wotherspoons, and some of the Williams, Blundell, Kaye, Bambridge, Rottenberry, Webb, Logue, Darmody and Mayo families attended, and very likely the sons and daughters of John Shumack,

who lived on the Glebe, near the school, and was one of the first residents. . . . The school from 1860 to 1878 was a very crowded affair, as sixty to seventy pupils were enrolled. Their names, spreading out from the school in distance, were Abernethy (teacher), Williams (postmaster and smithy), Ginn, Blundell, Bambridge, O'Donnell, Rottenberry, Kaye, Sullivan, Webb, Moore, Logue, Laffin, Morrison, McLaughlin, all from Canberra, while those from Duntroon were McLachlan, Mayo, Curley, Kealman, Helman, McPherson, Ward, Austen, Landers, Yates, Salter, Gregory, Kinleyside and Horocks, with the McIntoshes from Majura, and all the Camerons, McPhees, Lloyds, Flynns, Wallaces and O'Keefes, also McDonalds—two families. Perhaps I have forgotten some, but have thought that if some of the old descendants of the old pioneer families had been invited to the 'Opening of Parliament' deep abiding love for the old wilderness would have been there as well as polite curiosity, or political exigency, or etiquette. So mote it be!

About 1835 the Kinleyside family arrived in New South Wales and opened a wheelwright and blacksmith's shop at Ashfield, near Sydney. George Kinleyside Snr had five sons—George, John, Alexander, James and Thomas. All were gifted artisans except Thomas, and although they liked the trade their father had taught them, they had a desire to go on the land. When the report of the Californian gold discovery was published throughout Australia, George, the eldest son and principal artisan of the family, set off for this El Dorado. A few years later Kinleyside Snr disposed of the business at Ashfield and went to Canberra, where he leased a farm and established a coachbuilding business near the present site of St Ninian's Presbyterian Church. This was about 1858, and father gave them their first order—a dray costing £12. Fortune smiled on this family for a number of years. One of Kinleyside's daughters married Alexander McDonald, who was the lessee of the Acton estate in 1856, and another married Ambrose Austin, brother of George Austin, who founded a nursery business in George Street, Sydney.

About 1859, following the death of his wife, George Kinleyside returned from America with his two children and arranged to take over the coachbuilding business from his parents—it was also agreed that his brothers would work the farm. These arrangements were completed about 1862, and Kinleyside Snr died shortly afterwards and was laid to rest in St John's cemetery.

Before the coming of the Kinleyside family to Canberra the Presbyterians had no place to worship and no move had been made to establish a Presbyterian church. However, they were allowed to use the school room at St John's Church for religious worship—a concession granted them in the mid-fifties. About 1858 this concession was denied them, and very bitter feeling was the result of this intolerant and ill-advised action. It was then the Kinleyside family came to the relief of their fellow worshippers by erecting a slab and bark building on their farm, and this was used as a church for about twelve years.

The *Queanbeyan Age* newspaper was founded in 1860, and Andrew Wotherspoon, who was the teacher at the St John's school at the time the Presbyterians were denied its use as a place of worship, was a regular contributor to its columns. His letters dealt with the matter in a very lucid manner and exposed the bigotry of the so-called Christians. Mr George Campbell and Rev. P. G. Smith resented the implications in these letters, and when the identity of the author finally became known they tried to have Wotherspoon dismissed. They failed. The letters to the press continued—bitter but truthful.

About 1870 the heads of the Cameron, McDonald, Gillespie, Kinleyside, McKeachnie and McInnes families held a private meeting at which it was decided to call a public meeting with the object of drawing up plans for the erection of a suitable church building to replace the old one. Accordingly, a tea meeting was held in the old building and about 250 people were present. The minister at the time was Mr McKenzie—a very eloquent and popular preacher.

Mr Donald Cameron of the Glebe, Ginninderra, was voted to the chair on the motion of Robert Kilby, seconded by John Kealman, and Cameron called on Michael Slattery to open the proceedings

with a prayer. Slattery was a school teacher and was one of the best speakers I ever heard. After prayer the chairman called on Mr J. Southwell to address the meeting. Mr Southwell spoke for about twenty minutes and he enlightened his listeners by illustrating the obstructions the reformers had to contend with. Mr John Gale followed, and gave an account of how a backwoods preacher overcame a difficult situation by the adoption of what he called 'muscular Christianity'. In this instance the preacher fought and defeated a well-known bully who opposed the erection of a church, with the result that he became a regular worshipper. Mr McKenzie gave an account of a similar case in Scotland. Mr Slattery's address lasted an hour and was without doubt the gem of the meeting. He reviewed the early days and gave an account of the illiteracy prevailing in many districts. He said:

I am pleased to find that the people of Canberra are above average in this respect and I congratulate those responsible for this meeting. My advice is—God in his great mercy has given each of you an intellect, so exercise that gift with the object of learning the truth and you will succeed. Keep Christ and his Godly life ever before you and you will never regret that course! Several other speakers followed. Mr George Kinleyside gave an account of the reason for building the structure in which they were assembled and felt assured that success would crown their efforts. He was a good prophet, as the present St Ninian's Church proves. Dr Morton and Messrs E. and C. Cameron also spoke and Mr McKenzie dismissed the assembly with a prayer. So ended one of the most successful religious meetings held in Canberra in the early days.

The magnificent elm tree near St Ninian's Church was planted by my uncle, Peter Shumack Snr, in the winter of 1871.

I attended regular service at St Ninian's, where the congregation was of mixed Protestant faith. This applied also to the Methodist Church at Weetangerra and Wattle Park. Miss Annie Murty was organist for a time and when she resigned and left the district the position was taken by Fred Southwell's sister, Una. Later my eldest daughter, Mima, was organist during the appointment of Rev. E. S. Henderson. Tea meetings were the social event of the year and were well attended and much enjoyed, and the catering arrangements of Mrs Findlay McDonald, Mrs Tom Murty and other worthy ladies were renowned.

Christ Church, Queanbeyan, has been honoured as no other church belonging to the Anglican branch of Christianity in Australia has been, so far as I am aware. About eight or ten years after the church was consecrated the incumbent, then Rev. A. D. Soares, was flood-bound on his country visitations and a clergyman's widow undertook the conduct of the service. She performed the whole rite according to the rules laid down. Her sermon occupied twenty-four minutes, and a brief report of the service appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age* a few days later. A few straight-laced individuals shook their heads and said that such an outrage should be reported to the Bishop; but the vast majority of church-goers supported the innovation, and all who were fortunate enough to be present spoke well of the lady preacher and declared that she was equal to most of the parsons. This lady was a clergyman's widow whose husband had died a martyr to his duty when famine and disease raged in Ireland. She was loved and respected by all who came in contact with her, and during her residence in Queanbeyan, when sickness or trouble invaded a poor person's home, would be on the scene to assist the distressed, and her kindly actions made the name of Connelly esteemed and respected throughout the district.

## *Emu Bank*

*We leave Duntroon The Ginninderra estate and the Palmer family*  
*The Davis family Father takes charge of Emu Bank An English forgery case*  
*I begin shepherding The shepherd's life*  
*The Thomas Joslyn-William Davis episode Our first crop John Doolan*  
*Captain Tompsitt A defunct industry Wild game Vicissitudes of farming*  
*Smallpox scare, 1863 Ginninderra under the Palmers*  
*Death of H. W. E. Palmer St Paul's Church My schooling*

EARLY IN 1858 a friend informed father that a Duntroon employee who was jealous of father's industry and success had told Mr Campbell that Shumack was always late for work. Mr Campbell taxed Mayo with the matter and was told that Shumack was sometimes late for work, which was only natural as he worked for himself until midnight.

Father heard nothing further, but was grieved to think a fellow-worker should bear him a grudge. A short time later he was informed that there would soon be a vacancy at the Ginninderra estate as Thomas Flint—one of the shepherds—was leaving the out-station, Emu Bank.

Thomas Flint and my Uncle William married sisters. Uncle William married Elizabeth Doherty and Flint married her sister Mary, the orphan girl my Uncle Peter brought out from Ireland. On hearing of the vacancy mother and my Uncle John's widow, who had married a man named Woods, went to Emu Bank, where mother and Mrs Flint met again after a separation of seventeen years. Mother liked the locality and the house was better than the one we lived in at Duntroon. Father saw Mr Davis, the owner of Ginninderra, and the conditions of his employment were arranged to the satisfaction of both parties. His wages were to be £60 a year—an increase of £20 with three rations—a paddock of four acres for his own use rent free, and he had the care of two flocks of sheep. On completing these arrangements father gave Mr Campbell notice of his intention to leave Duntroon, where he had been employed for two years.

The Duntroon stock were noted as the best south of Sydney. The cattle were the Shorthorn and Durham breed, the horses were Clydesdale Coachers—blood stock. Father bought two cows with calves at foot for £7 each and a grand Suffolk Punch mare for £30. At the end of October 1858 my father and his family left Duntroon for the Ginninderra estate. Our furniture and effects were conveyed to our new home at Emu Bank on two bullock drays. The stock comprised the few head purchased from Mr Campbell, and the souls that accompanied them on the journey were father and mother, my sisters Elizabeth, Margaret and Phoebe Anna, brother John and myself. I have vivid memories of that journey along that wild bush track that has long been closed.

We arrived at Emu Bank at sundown and found the house we were to occupy still tenanted by Thomas Flint and his family. However, Joseph Shumack went to Ginninderra and from the homestead brought back a large tarpaulin which father erected as a rough tent, and beneath this shelter we spent the first three nights. As far as I can recall, the Flint family were Thomas and Mary Flint, and their children



Margaret, Mary, George and Tom. There were two younger children whose names I have forgotten; three more were born at Yarralumla. The Flints left Emu Bank three days after our arrival and went to Yarralumla, where he was employed as a shepherd for a number of years.

Our new home was close to the Ginninderra Creek and its junction with the Black Creek, and there was an ample supply of water. The Black Creek was not in existence then, but owes its origin to a trip made by John Patrick Cunningham—'Paddy Two Sticks'—with a horse team in wet weather from Ginninderra to Yarralumla. Heavy rain quickly scoured the deep wheel tracks and the present creek is the result. It rises at the foot of what was then known as the 'Round Hill'—now Mount Painter—and crosses the Weetangerra Road about half a mile on the Canberra side of the Coppin's Crossing turn-off.

As we were to remain as employees on the Ginninderra estate for a period of eleven years, I would like to place on record some of its early history and management under the original owners, the Palmer family.

George Thomas Palmer was the first owner of the Ginninderra estate, an area of more than 5,000 acres of some of the best grazing country in County Murray. I knew his sons, Pemberton and George, both of whom were magistrates. It was reported that George was very severe on those unfortunate enough to be brought before him; however, I must speak well of them both, as I knew them well and George was our neighbour for about fifteen years. They had a good start in life when their father died, but when I met them in 1858 both had been up 'King Street' [bankrupt].

Pemberton Charles Palmer was the proprietor of the Jerrabomberra and Hill Plain estates. He was one of those gentlemen who, if his income was £10,000 a year, would spend £20,000 a year, and in 1867 he went up 'King Street' for the second time. He was a noted pugilist, and this was his method of settling differences, and although below average build he was seldom beaten in an encounter. After his second trip up King Street he came and lived near us for about eighteen months. I liked him and we had several fishing trips together. He was sold out of Jerrabomberra in 1867, but the estate was entailed and could not be sold outright and was leased by auction. His brother-in-law, William Davis, gave him employment at Ginninderra for a couple of years, and as a neighbour we liked him. One morning he and a young man named Fred Smith had words and 'Pem'—as we called him—invited Smith out to settle the matter. Smith declined, stating that his time was Mr Davis's. A short time later the breakfast bell rang and Pem then told Smith that the time was now his own and if he refused to fight he would consider him a coward. Smith then stripped and gave Pem the father of a hiding—he blackened both his eyes, skinned his nose and split his lip. Mr Davis came on the scene and promptly sacked Smith, but after Pem had washed and cleaned up a bit he told Davis that the fault was his, and Smith was reinstated. Smith, who was twenty-five years of age, was unmarked—Pem was a man of fifty. The following morning Pem called at our house and when mother asked him what had happened he said that he had an accident and ran up against a bit of a snag but it was not worth worrying about because he was using Holloways ointment which had eased things a bit. About 1859 he employed a young girl of about seventeen, and for some unknown reason he gave her a flogging with a horse whip. The girl's father took action and secured heavy damages, and it may have been this incident that caused him to be struck off the commission of the peace. His brother George was also struck off.

George Palmer had five sons and the fifth was a schoolmate of mine. His sister, Susan Adriana Palmer, later married William Davis, who became the third owner of the estate, and the other sister, Catherine, married Charles Campbell and was the mother of Frederick Campbell of Yarralumla. I have heard old lags declare that Catherine was an 'angel in disguise' because she never failed to attend a sick call. I know this to be true.

In 1858 John O'Brien was the head stockman at Ginninderra, and when he took on farming this position was filled by W. D. Wright. Twelve months later Edwin Palmer—George's eldest son—took over from Wright, and he held the position for some years until George Palmer took his place.

I last saw George Palmer on 24 December 1865 when he and his aunt and sister passed me on their way to the river. I was cutting down a big tree and he called out, 'You have a big one there, Sam!' He left the district in January 1866 and obtained employment in Queensland.

At this time books were not easy to obtain, but George's father had a fair supply and lent me quite a few, although they were in fact heirlooms. I shall never forget his kindness.

All appeared to be well with the Palmer family until early in 1869, when we heard that George Palmer had been outlawed in Queensland. Newspapers were few and far between those days, and although we heard vague reports about him we kept an open mind. One day his father asked mother if she had heard the report that George was bushranging in Queensland. Mother said that we had heard the report and hoped it was untrue. However, a short time later all doubts were dispelled when a report appeared in the press giving an account of the exploits of the bushrangers Palmer and Williams.

In 1869 a great sensation was caused when it was reported that Patrick Halligan, storekeeper and gold-buyer, who was well known in Gympie and other districts in Queensland, was missing believed murdered. His horse had been found and he was known to have had a large quantity of gold in his possession. A blacktracker was employed and Halligan's body was later recovered in a stone-laden sack in the river—he had been shot from behind. It was believed that Palmer and Williams were the culprits, as they had been seen in the vicinity. A short time later Palmer was sighted by police and a chase ensued during which Palmer's horse fell, and he was found in a dazed condition behind a tree. His only weapon was a pocket knife, although two pistols were found on the saddle and another where his horse fell. Williams was captured about the same time, and Archibald, the proprietor of an hotel, was also arrested, together with a man named Taylor, one of their 'bush telegraphs'—who made a full confession. At the time of writing, another of Palmer's bush telegraphs had just died; what his real name was I do not know, but I knew him as William Reid and he came to County Murray in 1870. It appeared that Halligan and Archibald were great friends and therefore the latter was fully conversant with the former's movements. The trial opened at Rockhampton and there were sixty witnesses. All three were found guilty, and when asked if they had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed, Palmer and Williams said 'No'. Archibald protested his innocence but was also sentenced to death. Palmer's friends presented a petition to the Queensland Government, but it was dismissed. His uncle, William Davis, Charles Campbell, M.L.C., and a few more New South Wales M.L.Cs. then interviewed the Governor in Queensland, but he decided not to interfere with the sentence. This deputation was introduced to the Governor the day before that set down for the execution. At the time the nearest telegraph station to us was Gouburn, and the Palmer family did not know whether the deputation had been successful or not and were for days in a sad state of suspense. However, on the morning of 24 November 1869 mother and I were at work in the garden when George Palmer made his appearance—it was the morning set down for the execution and he gave us a surprise.

'Good morning to you, Mrs Shumack,' he said, 'I cannot rest and I did not close my eyes all night, and my wife is in a dreadful state. Of course you know this is the fatal morning, although we expect the last appeal to be successful. We hope for the best, but it will be days before we get any news about the matter.'

'My heart bleeds for you both, Mr Palmer,' mother said, 'and I hope you receive favourable news in a few days—come in and have something to eat.' He remained with us for an hour and had two cups

of tea but did not eat; at the same time his son, George Charles Frederick, was hanging from the neck in Rockhampton gaol. The final act was reported thus in the *Sydney Mail*:

Those wretched culprits suffered the extreme penalty for the outrageous murder of Patrick Halligan, on the morning of November 24th 1869. Both walked to the scaffold with firm step, and when the noose was adjusted the Sheriff asked if they had anything to say. Palmer said, 'I shot Halligan—I caught his horse by the bridle and demanded his gold, but he refused and cut me across the hand with his whip and I, smarting from the cut, let go the bridle and he galloped away, and I fired at him with fatal results. Williams was with me but took no part in the shooting at all.' 'I have something to say', Williams said. 'It is reported from one end of Australia to the other that we had a fair trial, but how can any fair-minded person call it a trial, conducted as it was by a "blackleg" on the turf and a bully at the Bar?' At that moment the Sheriff gave the signal and the bolt was drawn, and the murderers of Patrick Halligan stood before their supreme Judge. The bodies swung from left to right and from right to left for several minutes, and finally settled with their faces to the wall. After the usual interval the bodies were taken down and the usual inquest held and verdict given.

What an awful thing for a parent to read! Archibald's appeal was dismissed and he was hanged on 22 December 1869. Williams's remarks caused a great deal of comment at the time, and in a sense were correct because it was well known that Pring and Lilley were two notorious followers of the turf at the time, and it was not uncommon to adjourn the Court so that officials could be present at the races.

Shortly after his son's execution George Palmer lent me a book called *Holley Dale Hollows*, and I have never forgotten this kindly old man and his advice on social and family matters.

The misdeeds of one member of a family often react on another member—and it was so in this case. When George Palmer left Ginninderra in 1866 his brother Charles was appointed head-stockman—a position he held for six years. He then obtained a better position in Queensland and it was reported that he was doing well.

One evening in 1883 my neighbour Alexander Cameron and his wife were surprised when Charles Palmer rode up and after the usual greetings requested accommodation for the night. Sandy and his wife were pleased to grant his request, but were amazed when he expressed the wish that his cousins, the Campbells, should not be told that he was in the locality.

'Little did I think years ago, Sandy, when you and I stood at the wickets together, that I would come to my present state', he said. He then unfolded a sad story, and I shall repeat it as given to me by the Camerons some years later.

I was employed on a Queensland station of some seven hundred square miles and I had a busy time. The nearest town was a few miles away and I became friendly with a widow who conducted a store there and her four-year-old child. About twelve months later we married, and my wife carried on the business as usual. I continued working on the station and was often away for months attending to various sections of this vast property; I was also engaged on droving trips. Less than a year after our marriage I returned from a droving trip and found my wife had sold the shop and had left a letter for me with the new owner. She must have been partly out of her mind when she wrote it. She said that she had been informed that I was a member of a criminal family and she had made inquiries and ascertained that my brother had been hanged for murder and it would be better if we never met again. She said she hoped that I would repent the wrong I had done her and that she had changed her name.

He went on to say that he was searching for his wife and thought she may have come to Canberra making further inquiries, and that he would continue the search while his money lasted. After a few days he took his departure and promised Cameron that if his search was successful he would write. However, they heard no more from him.

In 1858 the Davis family were living at Ginninderra where William Davis Snr had retired. He gave father much good advice and lent him a horse and dray until father could purchase his own. Davis was never idle, and if he was not cutting wood he would be busy in the garden. I had a deep respect for this kind, considerate old man. I knew four of his daughters. The eldest married James Wright—the first magistrate to officiate in County Murray—the second married William Foxton Hayley, M.D., who practised in Queanbeyan for twenty-five years and was highly esteemed. The third daughter married surveyor Townsend, and the fourth, Lucy, was engaged to marry Pemberton Charles Palmer, second son of George Thomas Palmer Snr. This young man went to England in 1852 to purchase a carriage and up-to-date requisites necessary for a gentleman about to be married. The carriage cost hundreds of pounds and the four-horse set of harness cost 80 guineas. On the voyage back to Australia he fell in love with a young governess whom he subsequently married, and some troubles ensued. He never rode in the carriage or sat behind the harness—Mr Davis became the owner. Years later Mr Crace became their owner, and it was at his home some thirty years later that I saw the silver-mounted set of harness; it had been well looked after. Ten years later Lucy married John Cameron, who was the Ginninderra overseer, and in 1862 they left County Murray and went to Queensland.

William Davis Snr had six sons. The eldest, John, became a teacher in Sydney and was unknown to me. The second son was William, the third, Henry—who was known throughout the district as the 'Black Snake'—Frederick was the fourth, Harold the fifth, and Sydney was the sixth son. When we went to Ginninderra in 1858 William Davis Jnr was the 'Squire' of the estate and Frederick J. Davis, his brother, was overseer. 'Mr Fred', as he was popularly called, was a just, kind and lenient man, honest and straightforward in all his dealings. About 1862 William Davis Jnr married George Palmer's eldest daughter, Susan Adriana—sister of the unfortunate George Charles Palmer.

The morning after our arrival at Emu Bank in October 1858 Mr Frederick J. Davis, the overseer, arrived and counted the sheep into two flocks. My brother John had charge of the ewes and lambs and sister Margaret and I took charge of the wethers. George Flint went with John to show him the run and Tom Flint came with us. They told us awful yarns about snakes and death adders and said that death adders would stand on their tails and spit and if any of the spittle touched you it meant sudden death; they also said that a snake could move faster than a horse, and if a snake bit you the only comfort was that you would not die until sundown. We also heard strange tales about kangaroos that would attack and carry you to a water-hole and drown you. For a time we believed these tales, but after I had killed my first snake, a four-foot black one, we were no longer afraid.

We soon became accustomed to the sheep and they required only passing attention. They would quietly graze all day and would come home in the evening if undisturbed. Our work was often marred by wet weather; fogs and long grass were other drawbacks; however, Margaret and I had rather an easy time and the long hours were not unduly irksome as she always had some fancy work to do and I was always reading. One day when shepherding the sheep I saw Mr Fred in the distance and I then climbed a tree. He rode all round the flock and then reported to father that I was not with the sheep. This, of course, was a serious neglect of duty in those days—on one occasion a man was flogged for it—and when I arrived home that night father said, 'Did you see anyone today?'

'Yes, Mr Fred', was my reply. 'I was up in a tree and he rode underneath.' This was one occasion when I escaped a beating.

In 1859 Frederick J. Davis went to Kiandra, where his brother William opened a store. At this time Kiandra was in the limelight as a goldfield and thousands of diggers were on the field to try their luck. Others from Ginninderra were Edwin Palmer, J. Hatch, William Bowyer and Robert Kilby. They were away almost twelve months, and although they did not make a fortune they at least made good wages. Upon his return Mr Fred resumed the overseership of Ginninderra, and Edwin Palmer—the eldest son of our neighbour, George Palmer—was head stockman. William Bowyer married and left the district, Hatch opened a blacksmith's shop and Robert Kilby commenced farming. Here we will leave them for the moment while I relate a remarkable incident in connection with an English forgery case.

During the mid-fifties my cousin Richard Shumack was awarded a prize for general proficiency. It was a book in two volumes entitled *Anecdote Library*, which gave an account of the trial and execution of Dr Dodds in England on a charge of forgery. A petition was presented to Lord Thurlow, who summarily dismissed it. When I read the account of this case I did not think I would eventually meet two of his Lordship's grandchildren—yet such was the case. About 1863 the 'Squire' of Ginninderra, William Davis, advertised for a carpenter, and Samuel Jones—he who lent me the books—secured the job. His hut-mate was a young man named George Thurlow, who had just been appointed bookkeeper and storekeeper. About a week after commencing his new job Jones saw a young lady out walking with a little girl about five years of age, and on making inquiries was informed that the lady in question was the governess, Miss Thurlow, sister of his hut-mate George. Jones introduced himself to the governess and they became friends. He was a well educated young man and he and Miss Thurlow were constant visitors to our home. He was also a good athlete and could cover 33 feet in three standing jumps, and his time for 200 yards was very fast. He was at Ginninderra about a year when trouble started over the friendship between the carpenter and the governess. Mr Davis said, 'How dare you assume a friendship with Miss Thurlow.' An argument ensued and Jones was dismissed. Davis then cautioned Miss Thurlow about her friendliness with members of the station staff. The head stockman, Edwin Palmer, now fell in love with the young lady and, knowing that his uncle, William Davis, would not approve of the association, the lovers used to meet in the carpenter's shop, which was now in charge of John O'Donnell. All the district knew of the association with the exception of William Davis. However, he later became aware of it and forbade its continuance. The nephew informed him that he was engaged to Miss Thurlow and intended to marry her. Davis then dismissed her and she left for Sydney on the first mail coach. Edwin then gave notice and a few weeks later went to Sydney, where he and Miss Thurlow were married. He was later appointed Clerk of Petty Sessions at one of the city Courts, a position he filled with credit. Mrs George Palmer later told me that Emily and George Thurlow were the great-grandchildren of Lord High Commissioner Thurlow, from the youngest son. Samuel Jones was, I believe, the father of Sammy Jones, the great batsman of Murdoch's time.

After the first year at Emu Bank I was entrusted with my first flock of sheep. I was now ten years of age. I had what was known as the Round Hill run—now Mount Painter—and sometimes I would take the Bandicoot Plain run, which was John's area. The location of this run is now called Gungahlin. While we were busy tending the sheep, father was otherwise employed about the estate.

In his spare time father continued bootmaking, and on one occasion he made a pair of shoes for a neighbour who, in return, made him a cabbage tree hat which father valued at £30.

In 1858 a huge dam was constructed near the Bandicoot Plain run and in dry seasons about 5,000 sheep were watered there daily. It was the custom to wash the sheep before shearing, and the washpen was about 400 yards from our house. It was here that I first met Hugh Maguire, the giant shepherd of Duntroon who was the hero of Marcus Clark's book, *For the Term of His Natural Life*.

The flocks we were shepherding numbered 3,000 and each night they were enclosed in what was known as a fold. These folds were made with a series of hurdles and we had to move 120 of these each day. Each hurdle contained eleven pieces of timber and was six feet long and three feet six inches high—there were also 120 hurdle forks each four feet six inches long. The folds were set ten feet apart and the watchbox in which we slept was placed between them. Dogs were also tethered at vantage points where they afforded the best protection against marauding dingoes. This was the method of protection adopted in the early days. Our watchbox was more or less a small room which was moved from place to place with the aid of handles, and brother John and I slept in one of these contraptions for years. We were quite comfortable in fine weather, but if it rained, which it frequently did, it was misery. We had to place our wet garments under our head when retiring at night, and our boots were placed outside beneath the box. At five o'clock each morning father would call us with a loud rap, rap, on the watchbox, and the sheep had to be released from the folds by 6 a.m.—they were not returned until 6 p.m.

At this time the native dog, or dingo, was a great pest to the landowners and we had to be constantly on the alert to protect the flocks from this menace, especially if any sheep should stray from the main flock. Eagle hawks were also in large numbers, and during the lambing season it was necessary to employ extra hands to combat this pest. Strychnine was unknown until 1861, when it was introduced by John Cameron, who was for a time overseer at Ginninderra. Before this, ground glass and similar supposed poisons were used unsuccessfully, and the dingo and eagle hawk continued their depredations more or less unhindered.

One day John Macpherson sighted a dingo on the run east of Mount Ainslie and chased it to Duntroon. His horse was almost exhausted and the dingo was in a similar condition when it came on to the flat near the garden and was killed by the dogs. On another occasion he ran one down and despatched it with his whip.

Soon after we settled at Emu Bank I became the proud possessor of a tomahawk and looked around for something to try it on. I had been forbidden to ring trees, but nothing was said about cutting them down. About fifty yards from Davis's house was a dense clump of wattles, in the centre of which was the privy with a winding path leading to the house. I attacked these wattles with my little axe and levelled them to the ground, leaving the little house a conspicuous sight. Just as I had completed this devastation, Mr Davis rode up and surveyed the desolate scene. 'Why on earth did you do that?' he said.

'I thought you wanted me to', was my reply. Without another word he rode away, leaving me wondering why he looked so cranky.

About March 1860 a man named Attlee and his wife and children came to live near us. He had a contract from Mr Davis to build some huts and a large wool shed, and employed four men. They constructed a sawpit and all the timber used was cut in this manner. Mrs Attlee was a woman above average intelligence and she had a large stock of books which she lent us when required. At that time it was the rule after supper to read aloud some tale from the Irish National school books, which were used in all the schools at that time, or Daniel Fennings and the *London Spelling Book*. Every night John and I would indulge in this pastime, and thus became good readers. I acquired a love for reading and received many a good beating for losing my sheep when absorbed in an interesting book.

I have a clear recollection of the ration cart starting out on its rounds each Saturday morning. During the hot weather it was a common occurrence for the meat to be fly blown before the workers received it, and this usually meant days without this staple commodity. An example of the hardship suffered was given me in 1874 by James Ross, a shepherd who took over the Lime Kiln out-station when Ralph Edge retired:

My first job in the district, Ross said, was that of shepherd at Lanyon—Andrew Cunningham's station. My run was three miles from the head station and after I had been there about three months I received a visit from Mr Cunningham. He inspected the sheep, which were a flock of 1,800 wethers, and congratulated me on their condition; he then asked if I was satisfied with the rations. 'Yes, Mr Cunningham,' was my reply, 'but I often have to go for days without meat because it is bad when I get it.' 'I am sorry to hear that, Ross,' was his reply, 'but you can come in when you run short and I will see that you receive fresh supplies; you can come in on foot after you yard the sheep, as it is only two miles.' This I did, and all went well for the first twelve months and I was due for a week's holiday. An old man came out and took charge of the flock and I walked to the homestead to collect my pay. Cunningham and I had a friendly chat during which we discovered that we came from the same part of Scotland; he then handed me my cheque, which was several pounds short of the amount I expected. I then said, 'This is not correct, Mr Cunningham, I should collect more than this because I have not drawn anything since I commenced work here.' 'That is so,' he said, 'but you forget the meat you got from time to time.' 'What!' I said 'Do you charge for that?' 'Certainly,' was his reply, 'I never encourage waste.' I then told him in no uncertain terms what I thought and asked, 'Have you no shame?' 'None whatever,' he said, 'not the slightest—I left it all in Scotland.' I told him that he was a disgrace to Scotland and that I would not come back even if he doubled my wages.

Ross's story is a typical example of the conditions under which many employees laboured at that time. Mrs James Young and many others confirmed this man's story regarding inferior rations.

In many instances if an employee broke an axe handle or similar article it was charged to his account and he had no redress. If a sheep died and the shepherd neglected to skin it he was charged the price of the sheep. In many cases the ration was of questionable quality and the flour was in two grades—first and second. It was the rule for the miller to purchase damaged wheat which was then ground and sold as ration flour. I have seen father and mother in despair when making bread because the dough would not rise. If we had excessive rain during the harvest you would hear the toilers say, 'Ha, we will have sodden bread again', but if the harvest was dry they would say, 'Well, we will have decent bread this time.'

When Mr Crace took charge of Ginninderra he ordered two tons of sugar from a Sydney firm for station use and seven tons of flour from J. J. Wright, a flour miller in Queanbeyan. It was the usual ration-class flour of inferior grade and Mr Crace sent it back to the mill. Wright threatened to sue him and Crace advised him to do so and at the same time warned Wright that samples of the flour would be produced in court. Naturally, the matter ended there, and from that day a better state of things set in for the employees. I have seen and used the ration sugar and in many instances have had to skim the tea to remove the impurities floating on top. Not all squatters were guilty of these practices—there were a few exceptions. James Abernethy, who was overseer at Yarralumla for many years, told me that the standard ration there was very good, as Mr Gibbes had given strict instructions on the subject and these were rigidly enforced. In the absence of the Food Adulteration Act, all sorts of rubbish was sold as pure food. Oatmeal was in fact three parts pollard, pepper was five-eighths some other compound, and tea was bare-faced robbery as sand was freely mixed with it to provide weight.

One day in 1874 Thomas Joslyn took a load of farm produce to Queanbeyan, and after delivering it he left his horse and dray in front of Sindel's store in Monaro Street while he made a few purchases. When he returned William Davis was holding the leader by the winkers and he said to Joslyn, 'I claim

this mare as my property. Take her to Lee's "Rose, Shamrock and Thistle" hotel yard at once or I will take criminal proceedings against you.'

Joslyn committed Davis to the infernal regions and then jumped into the dray and drove ten miles to his farm at Canberra. He was enjoying a cup of tea and giving his wife Georgina an account of the matter when a police officer rode up with a warrant for his arrest on a charge of horse stealing. Joslyn then produced a receipt signed by H. Lever, poundkeeper, which clearly showed that on a certain date Joslyn had purchased the horse described and branded '9' on the nearside cheek and a triangle on the near shoulder. The officer then declined to take action and consulted Mr Davis, who angrily demanded Joslyn's arrest on what he described as a 'clear case of horse stealing'. The officer showed Davis the receipt produced by Joslyn and asked him to examine the newspapers and *Gazette*. This Davis did and he was surprised to see the advertisement. The mare was correctly described by the poundkeeper—the '9' represented the year the mare was foaled and the triangle was the station brand. Davis immediately sent for his brother Fred and accused him of neglect. However, Mr Fred pointed out that the mare had strayed from Gungahlin, where William Davis lived, and he could not be held responsible for her loss. Davis refused to accept this argument and dismissed his brother Fred from the position of overseer which he had held for twenty years. He and his family then came to live near us and he told my father of this injustice.

The position of overseer was now given to Davis's nephew, Henry William Ernest Palmer, the fourth son of my friend George Palmer and brother to the unlucky George Charles Palmer whom I have previously mentioned. This change was not a success. Frederick J. Davis was a hard worker on the estate and under his management good crops were grown; I have seen stacks of hay estimated to yield sixty tons. Under Palmer's management farming was abandoned and the station began to decline from that date.

When we took over Emu Bank, Thomas Flint had a four-acre crop of wheat which he sold as it stood to Donald Cameron of the Glebe, Ginninderra, who was at that time one of the largest farmers in the district. Immediately this crop was harvested, father enlarged the four-acre plot and dug it with the spade. He also enlarged the garden plot and raised some nice corn, potatoes and pumpkins—he sold the corn for 8s. a bushel.

In the winter of 1859 father sowed his first wheat crop. Preparations for this event began in the autumn; then came the first dry spell in my memory. Father had seven acres to plough and sow, the four acres allowed by the station owner and three acres which Uncle Peter allowed him to use on his farm at Canberra. Father had one horse and no plough, so he arranged for Robert Kilby to plough this land after he had sown his own crop. Kilby's charge was 15s. an acre. Great difficulty was experienced in ploughing as the ground was dry and hard, and it was late in June before Kilby was able to commence our ploughing, so that the crop was not sown until July. Father borrowed Uncle Peter's horse and harrows, and with Kilby's assistance our first crop was sown. The seed was well up during the first week in August, although the earlier crops in the district were a partial failure owing to the dry conditions. The heaviest fall of snow in my recollection now fell, a foot deep on the creek flats. This was followed three weeks later by another heavy fall—then came a couple of months of dry weather. Showers in November redeemed our crop, which was short, thin and heavy headed, and reaping did not commence until after Christmas. Father employed a reaper named Jeremiah Lenhane, and although he was a good reaper they could not cut more than three-quarters of an acre per day. The day they finished heavy rain set in, and this was the first time I saw wet stacks. All along the Ginninderra Creek the stacks were wet and had to be pulled down and the sheaves stood out to dry—it was the same at Canberra. Father was fortunate: he had a large canvas cover which he placed over the stack and did not suffer any loss. Father and mother threshed this



crop with the flail and the yield was 100 bushels. As we did not have a winnowing machine we climbed on top of some boxes and poured the wheat in a steady stream from a dish, thus allowing the wind to blow the chaff away. Other farmers used the same method. This wheat sold for 9s. a bushel, and the corn, which also yielded well, was sold for 8s. 6d. a bushel at the door. At this time dealers were going from farm to farm throughout the district buying butter, eggs, poultry, beeswax and honey. The latter was plentiful, as bees' nests in the bush were abundant, and 2s. a pound for honey was readily given. All these commodities and other farm produce went to the goldfields, where beeswax candles were in great demand for use in deep mining shafts.

Thomas Harrington Line, who had the Glebe farm at Canberra, had the best wheat crop in County Murray. When rain fell in July, Joseph Blundell and his son Jack planted fourteen acres for Line and the yield was 800 bushels, a record for that farm to the present time. Some years later Dick Blundell—Joseph's third son—had a yield of 1,500 bushels from thirty-two acres. The return from our first crop enabled father to buy a plough for £12, a set of harrows for £4.10.0, and a set of plough harness.

Water was scarce in 1859 and had to be carted ten or twelve miles from the river. Stock had to be driven great distances to water and stock losses were common. Ringbarking was condemned on the ground that it lessened the rainfall, and many a clip I got from father for leaving my mark on trees.

One day brother John and I found two swarms of bees suspended from a log, and father took these swarms after he was shown the art by an old pioneer named John Doolan. In a short time we had twenty-four swarms in boxes at our house and we knew the whereabouts of forty-six bees' nests in the bush. The wax moth was unknown at the time, but made its appearance in the early seventies.

John Doolan was a clever man and was always clean and neatly dressed. He had about two dozen bee hives and made a good living by selling honey. I always admired the neat manner in which he arranged his bee hives on the side of a brush fence. One day a brown snake was discovered in Doolan's house and it escaped into a hollow log. Doolan fired the log at both ends and later in the day a change of wind blew a spark into the brush fence and all Doolan's bees were destroyed. A few weeks later the community was shocked to hear that Mrs Doolan had levanted with a bullock driver named White, whose real name was Hopkins and who had a property in the Wagga district. Some months later Mrs Doolan expressed a desire to return to her husband, but Mr Davis refused her a home on the estate. Doolan never left the district, and when Mr Davis sold out in 1877 he was employed by George Harcourt for several years—his last employer was J. J. Wright. In 1894 he retired to the Old Men's Home at Liverpool, near Sydney, where he quietly passed away—another victim of an unscrupulous man and an immoral woman. Nothing authentic is known regarding the wife. A resident of Ginninderra saw her at Narrandera in 1877—she was then a human wreck.

John Doolan was for some years employed by Captain Tompsitt, who came to the district about 1865 and later contested the Queanbeyan electorate in the Liberal interest and was defeated. He later contested the Braidwood electorate with the same result, and it was he who opened my eyes to political matters. He spent money lavishly, and when an election was on he was the soul of affability—in normal times the worker was beneath his notice. In the early nineties this noble captain went to the river for a swim near the suspension bridge and he said to John Doolan, 'If I am not back by eleven o'clock you can come down the track to the rocky hole and you will find me there.'

Doolan did as directed and found Tompsitt dead in a wire fence with a gun beside him. Accidental death was the verdict, although all those who knew him did not agree that the shooting was accidental. However, the solution was soon known throughout the district. A lady of property in England had entrusted about £10,000 to Tompsitt for investment about five years previously, and on receiving information that matters were not all that could be desired she decided to come to Australia. On the

fatal morning a copy of the *Sydney Morning Herald* was found open on the noble captain's table, and on the up-turned page was a list of passengers who had arrived on one of the Orient liners, including that of the lady investor. She arrived in Queanbeyan on the morning of the funeral. And now this lady's task began. She employed a legal firm in Sydney, and after a lengthy investigation all she got for her thousands was a cottage in Queanbeyan, the sworn value of which was £420. Tompsitt was the manager of the wool scouring and tannery establishment, and also the roller flour mill in Queanbeyan. He now lies in a nameless grave.

At the time of our going to Emu Bank there was a great demand for feather mattresses, and all farmers near the water had large flocks of geese. Mother bought her first flock from Mrs Bowyer and at a certain time of the year all the geese would be plucked. A man named Jerry Sullivan was an expert at this work and his services were in great demand. Some settlers had as many as 200 geese and I have known £8 to be given for a bed tick full of feathers. When the Shumacks had the Glebe farm at Canberra they had an exceptionally large flock of geese, as did James Neylon at the Stone Hut on the Weetangerra Road. A few years later the landowners put a ban on geese because they were destructive to grass and crops as well as wheat and oat stacks.

In 1859 wild turkeys were plentiful on the Ginninderra Plain and all along the Ginninderra Creek. There were two varieties. One was a large bird of which I never saw more than two or three together, the other was much smaller and moved in groups of about seven. One wet evening I was with my flock when I saw a large turkey in the scrub about a hundred yards away. It was raining heavily at the time and I ran after this bird, which had difficulty in rising from the ground. I set my dog Flo on to it and as it rose from the ground Flo sprang and brought it down and I despatched it with a blow on the head. It proved to be a large plain turkey which weighed thirty pounds when dressed. Some time later Mr Davis and George Harcourt and a few friends went shooting along the Ginninderra Creek and bagged five wild turkeys and more than forty wild ducks. Wood ducks were the most numerous, although black ducks, teal, and a larger variety known as mountain ducks were in large numbers.

In 1860 father did his own ploughing and planted eleven and a half acres. In the autumn he manured the old four-acre paddock with sheep manure and the seed went in under favourable conditions. After sowing, he decided to enlarge the paddock to twenty acres, so I assisted by splitting a lot of posts and rails and enclosed the area with a three-rail fence. My first day's work was nine panels—my best was fourteen. Father ploughed this land and planted corn and an acre of potatoes—these were planted by ploughing them under the sod. He later sold them at 10s. a bag, and also fattened some pigs, one of which weighed 300 pounds. This father killed and cured, and sent down as some return for his kindness to Mr E. Craddock, the friend who had met us at the wharf when we arrived from Ireland. Craddock was surprised and returned the case full of sausages and other good things. When he learned that we had some land to cultivate he kept father supplied with seeds, and over the years they exchanged these gifts through George Kettle, a carrier who spent ten months out of twelve on the Canberra-Sydney road. Kettle later moved to the north coast, and after his departure the mailcoach was the link between these two friends, who were destined never to meet again. In a letter to father, Craddock said that the railway to Goulburn would be opened in 1868 and he would then pay us a visit. It was not to be. He died a short time before this line opened, and his death was reported in the *Sydney Mail*.

My sister Emily was born in October 1860, and a few days later a great hailstorm took place. I was in charge of a flock of ewes and lambs and when I saw the storm gathering I hurried the flock home and had just reached the house as the first hailstones began to fall. They were as big as pullets' eggs and were six inches deep on the ground. About twenty lambs were killed by the hail. Bowyer lost a hundred lambs and some ewes, plus a large flock of geese which were caught in the open. Edward Smith lost a litter

of pigs and the sow was badly injured and took some days to recover from the battering. Donald Cameron at Ginninderra lost his crop, which was out in head, and he estimated this loss at 1,200 bushels. Gardens in the path of the storm were completely destroyed, and Henry Hall of Charnwood lost several hundred lambs and some ewes. Heavy rain followed the hail and caused great damage to fences.

The season of 1862-3 was magnificent and our eleven acres averaged nearly forty bushels to the acre. Father threshed this crop with horses. He spread 400 sheaves in a circle on the ground and ran four horses over them, controlling them from inside the circle with a rein. Father had 400 bushels of wheat for sale, but the price was low—4s. a bushel or less. He employed Thomas Gribble and Thomas Wells as reapers—Gribble also built our stacks. At that time a man who had more than twenty acres was considered a moderate-sized farmer—one who had fifty to sixty acres was a very big one. There were only two of these in the district, Edward Smith and Donald Cameron, and they also each had teams on the road. Smith had two horse teams and Cameron had a horse team and a bullock team.

In 1863 a threatened epidemic of smallpox caused great excitement throughout the country. The Government sent supplies of vaccine lymph to all Government Medical Officers with instructions to vaccinate all children. Dr Hayley of Queanbeyan operated on a dozen children, including my sisters Phoebe and Margaret and brother George. Father expressed disapproval of Dr Hayley's methods because Millicent Sophia Ward was the only child successfully vaccinated. He examined the vaccination marks on this child—of which there were six—and expressed the desire to vaccinate other children with serum from her. Mr Ward suggested that the doctor be brought from Queanbeyan but father declined, stating that he had performed similar operations in Ireland. He successfully vaccinated ten children and used the blade of a penknife as a lancet. There was no chemist in the district at this time, and on many occasions father obtained supplies of powders and liquids from Sydney, and with the aid of beeswax made quantities of pills which he prescribed to residents free of charge.

In 1864 father planted twenty-four acres of wheat. In October all the crops in the district promised record yields and father and other farmers expected to start reaping early in December. A heavy thunderstorm passed over the locality early in the month and gave farmers a fright—a few hailstones fell but did no damage. This was followed by heavy rain which cleared off, and at sunset not a cloud was visible; the result was a very heavy frost which destroyed thousands of bushels. This frost was particularly heavy along the Ginninderra Creek and only early crops escaped damage. Father cut half his crop and his loss was less than 200 bushels. Donald Cameron estimated his loss at 1,200 bushels. Denis Gorman built our stack which later fell. I handed the old man the sheaves when he built this stack, which was the first round stack he had ever built, and he attributed this failure to his inexperience. At the time of the frost Cameron was away with his teams, otherwise he would have cut the damaged crop for hay. Edward Smith's crop was again three weeks late, so the frost did him no injury. His neighbours remarked, 'What a fortunate man is Teddy Smith—he escaped the hail and now he has escaped the frost.'

Subsequent events proved that Edward Smith was not yet out of the toils and tribulations that beset the farmer.

About five weeks later Donald Cameron was at Ginninderra, where William Davis had a paddock of wheat which was the admiration of the district. It was over six feet high and was as level as a table from one end of the paddock to the other. It was a late crop and Davis had obtained the seed from America. He asked Cameron what he thought the yield would be and Cameron's reply was, '50 to 60 bushels to the acre at least if it is all like this end.'

'Come, Donald, we will go through it and see', Davis said. It was a hot day and both men wore white coats, and although they were not short men the crop was inches over their heads. I have never seen its equal and had to climb on to the fence to see over it. When Cameron and Davis emerged from

the other end of the crop their clothing was red—this was their first experience with rust. A few days later the press reported rust in many parts of the State. This crop yielded sixteen bushels to the acre of pinched and milk white grain—the head was long and square. It was sown in August. Mr Davis did not try this variety again.

Smith did not discover the rust in his wheat until he started to reap, and the yield did not cover expenses. This was the first time he had seen rust. An old pioneer named Thomas Jordan said that he had seen rust fifteen years before but did not know what it was.

Our few acres of corn yielded well and brought a good price, since goods were transported by horse and bullock teams which had to be fed. Housewives were obliged to use horse and dray or bullock teams when they went to town shopping, and it was a daily scene to see a woman on top of a load of wheat or hay travelling at less than three miles an hour. Father and mother often left home at sunrise to go to town shopping, and did not return until 9 p.m. The journey took five hours each way by horse-drawn vehicle, six hours by bullock team.

In 1864, having disposed of his farm produce at a satisfactory figure, father bought what was known as a 'sociable'—it was a splendid vehicle and could seat six persons with comfort. He owned a mare that could travel the sixteen miles to Queanbeyan under two hours, and in consequence he seldom went to town unless accompanied by neighbours. In 1865 he took two wedding parties to and from St John's Church in the sociable: Thomas Wells and his bride, Charlotte Sidley, and Harold Maplecroft Davis and his bride, Annie Gowing, a sister of the Gowing brothers who founded the firm Gowing Bros. in Sydney. My sister Margaret was bridesmaid on both occasions. Thomas Wells was our neighbour for twenty-six years. In July father planted two acres of wheat for John Coppin at the Goat Station, but this crop was destroyed by rust. Father was paid for the seed only; he received nothing for his labour. Coppin at this time was employed by William Davis at a wage of 12s. weekly, and Mrs Coppin was given a small allowance and a food ration to cater for travellers who might be accommodated by them, as there were many tramps on the road owing to the gold rush at Kiandra and other fields. Thomas Gribble and Thomas Wells were partners on a farm near us and they bought the crop sown by father for Coppin for the value of the seed—five bushels at 7s. a bushel.

I saw the American axe for the first time in 1860 and the wiseacres laughed at it. It was looked upon with great disfavour by the old hands, who declared that they would not have that type of axe on the farm because 'We will be forever putting handles in the b—— things.' Father bought one in 1864 and it was not long before the old axe was a thing of the past. The work was much easier with the American axe and three men could do the work of five. It was the same with the American fork. The old ones contained enough metal to make three or four of the new model, and the handles were of enormous size. We bought an American fork in 1867, and by 1870 all the old ones were consigned to the scrapheap.

About 1862 William Hatch made his venture in farming. He had a contract in hand and through an accident was delayed. It was late in August before he started to plough, and after turning over two acres he had to abandon the attempt as the ground was too hard. However, light rain fell and he sowed two acres with wheat during the first week in September. Old farmers said that he threw his seed away. The spring was dry and no soaking rain fell in the locality. However, his crop headed and filled well, and he obtained stringy bark from the bush and tied the sheaves. Hatch drew this crop to a neighbour's place, where Edward Smith threshed it—the yield was 56 bushels. The next year he commenced farming near us, and in successive years the yield was 76 bushels from eight acres and 700 bushels from twenty acres.

The new management at Ginninderra under Palmer started with the dismissal of several old hands and the instalment of several new ones, amongst them James Murty. He was a smart young man and was given the position of head stockman. At that time less than half the run was fenced, and Jim was instructed to take proceedings against all persons caught taking short cuts. One morning he was sent to one of the paddocks and instructed to be back at 10 a.m. as it was calf-branding day. About 9.30 a.m. he intercepted a well-dressed man walking and leading a horse, and accused him of trespassing. The stranger politely informed Jim that he was a police officer in the execution of his duty, and added, 'I now call upon you to assist me in my duty and at your peril don't you dare refuse.'

He then directed Murty to take charge of his horse and to meet him on the other side of the fence, where he was to remain in attendance until his—the officer's—task was completed. Murty, who had seen the butt of the officer's revolver, asked no further questions, and it was dusk when he was discharged. It was after 7 p.m. when he returned to the homestead. An unsuccessful search had already been made for him as it was feared that he had met with an accident. Jim received such a severe reprimand from Davis that he immediately threw up his job. The trooper in the case was Murty's cousin, James McIntosh—he must have been disguised, because Murty didn't recognize him—in pursuit of the murderer in the 'Washpen murder case'. McIntosh could track like an Aboriginal and he ran his man to earth at Springbank, Canberra. I knew the accused, Thomas Robinson—better known as 'Tom the Soldier'—but never believed the stories in circulation about him. I first met him in 1866. He had a crippled leg which he said was due to an injury received at the siege of Sebastopol when a cannon ball struck a rock, causing a splinter of stone to shatter his kneecap. For many years before the murder of Jeremiah McCarthy at the Washpen he was employed as a shepherd by Hugh Read of Sutton.

Robinson had previously been befriended by Mr G. F. Dixon—one of Canberra's pioneer landowners. When arrested he did not deny the charge, but claimed it was self-defence. He was tried and sentenced to death for the crime, but was later reprieved and sentenced to fourteen years' hard labour on the roads. He was discharged after serving seven years and then visited his old employer, Hugh Read. Later, one winter's morning, he was found dead under a culvert near Yass.

About this time William Davis began to speculate on the turf and he raced a couple of horses in Victoria and elsewhere with some success. His nephew, Henry William Ernest Palmer, was an expert horseman and won more than one steeplechase, and as a result of these racing activities they were often away from the estate for lengthy periods and the management suffered accordingly. Davis and his overseer did not discover this for a considerable time. About 1876 the Palmers returned to the estate with several minor racing successes to their credit, and within a few days of their arrival a master butcher from Goulburn called and inspected the sheep that were grazing in the cemetery paddock. He purchased 2,000 wethers at 12s. 6d. a head, and at the same time arranged for two drovers from Goulburn to take delivery. The men duly arrived and a count revealed a shortage of 500 head. A reward of £100 was offered, but no trace of the missing sheep was ever found. It was well known that only workers were left in charge of the property during the absence of Davis and Palmer, and the stock thieves were quick to take advantage of the absence of authority. This theft caused a great stir for some time, but interest soon waned and uncle and nephew continued to attend race meetings in both States.

On 26 January 1877 a sports meeting was held at Ginninderra, and there was a foot race on the cricket ground between Ellis Smith and Hercules O'Keefe for a wager of £50, which O'Keefe won. A sporting man from Braidwood was on the ground and he issued a challenge for a high jump on horseback. Davis had a mare named Barbelle which never failed to clear 6 feet 6 inches, which was considered a record, and he accepted the challenge for £100, and that day month was arranged for the contest.

On 26 February 1877 a big race programme was arranged for the Queanbeyan Recreation Ground. O'Keefe was to run Rohan for £50 and there were many other races. These were the only sports I ever attended—I was in the McLachlan-Abernethy party. O'Keefe lost the race by faltering at the start and only ran forty yards. His supporters believed he could give Rohan five yards start in 150, and I was sure he could. His failure in this race ended his career as a runner. The mile walk for boys under 14 years was won by John McInnes, and the 200 yards race between Flannigan and Ebzery was a dead-heat. At 4 p.m. came the highlight of the afternoon—the high jump.

Palmer appeared riding Davis's mare Barbelle, and he said to Tom Gribble, 'Will she go over that fence, Tom?'

'Yes', said Gribble, 'she will go over that all right, but I'll bet you half a sovereign that the other horse cannot jump over it', and he pointed to Davis's other horse, which was a fine animal, inches taller than Barbelle and about four years old. Palmer then dismounted and put the saddle on the other horse, which was making its first appearance before a crowd. Palmer mounted and rode at the fence, which was of four rails with a sapling on top. The large crowd moved back and formed two lanes down which the horse galloped snorting with excitement. Near the fence the horse baulked and Palmer gave him the spur—he then rose and cleared the fence, but one hind foot struck the sapling, causing it to fall to the ground.

'That didn't win', was the cry from a section of the crowd, and Palmer then gave the horse a short canter and called on the crowd to stand aside. He came at the fence the second time, but the horse shied off into the crowd and several people narrowly escaped serious injury. The sapling on top of the fence was then taken off at Palmer's request and he approached for the third attempt. However, the horse again baulked—then jumped and landed on the fence. Palmer was thrown off and landed full length on the ground; the horse balanced for a second or two then fell on the prostrate rider, killing him instantly. The meeting was then abandoned. Palmer was 27 and had been married about eight months previously to a daughter of Mr Richardson of the firm of Richardson & Wrench, Sydney, and about six months after the tragedy a daughter was born. The widow left the district shortly after the accident.

A few days after the fatality I heard that Palmer went to the sports meeting very reluctantly. I knew that he went with William Plummer, a neighbour of ours, so I asked him about it. Plummer said,

Yes, it is true—I met him where the Weetangerra Lane joins the Yass Road and we had not gone far when he said to me, 'I think I will go back and take the horses with me.' Ted Rolfe was present and said, 'Nonsense, Mr Palmer, you will have an easy win today as Malone and his friend have no horse in the same class as your two.' No more was said until we were past St John's Church, when Palmer said, 'I must go back—something tells me that I should not go to Queanbeyan today.' I then said, 'Has your marriage made you nervous? Think of how Moran and Malone will crow and boast how they frightened you if you fail to appear.' Palmer then decided to go on.

Such was Plummer's report to me. Plummer was accidentally shot dead nine years later, aged 29 years.

Less than a year after the Palmer tragedy William Davis disposed of the Ginninderra estate to Mr E. K. Crace and the Palmers and Davises left the locality.

St Paul's Church, Ginninderra, was built about 1861 by Mr G. F. Dixon under instructions from William Davis, and £100 of its cost was subscribed in England. When the Davis family were living at Booroomba they wrote home to their friends and relatives advising that there was no church in the locality and saying they would be pleased if some financial assistance could be provided in order to build one. In due time £100 was subscribed in Devon, the birthplace of the Davis family. In the meantime they had sold Booroomba Station and moved to Ginninderra in 1858. Steps were then taken for the

building of St Paul's Church. The money subscribed in England was given to the building fund, and the cost, including the pulpit and seats, was about £130.

The first interment there was that of Ralph Edge, and he was buried in 1872. (In the register of births, deaths and marriages at St John's Church appears this entry: 'Ralph Edge, of Roundhill, died September 9, 1872, aged 80 years.')

The next interment was that of Ann Smith, wife of Shelton Smith, aged 57 years.

St Paul's Church was used as a school until 1874, and Hugh McPhee was teacher here until the early seventies. The last religious service was conducted about 1902.

Apart from a short period under Thomas Harrington Line's tuition, I did not attend school regularly until I was fourteen years of age. From the age of eight my time was fully occupied following the sheep. In 1865 I attended the school at Ginninderra for a period of six weeks, and Hugh McPhee was the teacher. At this time I could not write or cast accounts, although I was a good reader and had a good knowledge of geography. I quickly picked up the rudiments of arithmetic, but had to leave school to assist with our farming.

My father was a member of the Glebe School Board at Ginninderra, whose duty it was to visit the school once a month to satisfy themselves that it was being conducted in a satisfactory manner. One day on arriving at the school, father found the school inspector there and they had a friendly chat. The inspector asked father if the members of the School Board had been meeting regularly, and father assured him they had.

'But Mr Shumack,' said the inspector as he idly turned the pages of the Board's minute book, 'according to this book you have never met.'

'Oh,' father said, 'you see we meet here separately.'

The inspector laughed heartily and said, 'I can easily see, Mr Shumack, that you come from Ireland.'

From the age of seven years I was fond of reading. Books were scarce and expensive, and in many homes there were none. On one occasion I was in a home the owner of which could write his name to a cheque for £2,000, yet there were only three books there—a Bible, a psalm book, and another called *The Scottish Clans*. In another house I saw two books, a Gaelic Bible—which none could read since the head of the house was killed by a fall from his horse when returning home drunk—and the English Bible. Such was the state of things at that time. Later, neighbours named Attlee, John Booth, M. Ryan and William Hatch lent us a great number of books, but prior to this my reading matter was greatly restricted. About this time the *Sydney Mail* was first published—it was a magazine of eight pages and was a boon to settlers. The *Sydney Morning Herald* was another good paper, and the annual subscription was £4.10.0. The *Sydney Mail* was, I believe, £1 per year posted and 16s. at the office. Father became a subscriber as there was no local paper at the time. Popular writers in these publications were 'Peter Possum' and 'Old Boomerang', and the regular arrival of the *Sydney Mail* in a measure removed the irksome monotony of our lives. Mother had a book which was a gift from some dear friend in Ireland, and one of the stories in it was 'No Lie Thrives'. She kept this book in her clothes box and I was not allowed to take it away. However, I took it with me one day when shepherding as I was anxious to know the finish of an interesting tale. I was reading as I walked through the bush and almost trod on a black snake, so I ran to a clump of wattle, where I put the book on the ground and secured a stick and killed the snake; it was the first black snake I had ever seen and the second snake that I had killed. Elated with my 'kill', I forgot all about the book—a bushfire did the rest! Strange to say, the book was not missed for months and its disappearance was something of a mystery.

About this time Thomas Gribble and his wife went to a sale at Gundaroo, where they bought a quantity of books which they later lent me. The serials in the *Sydney Mail* gave us many hours' pleasant reading, and there were many other stories, among them 'Wild Oats', 'The Farm, the City and the Sea' and 'Micky Mahoney's Mishaps'. 'Christopher Cockle' and 'Rural and City Life' were Old Boomerang's work.

When Old Boomerang—whose name was a household word throughout the country—wrote 'Christopher Cockle', a record sale for the time was established. His work 'The Farm, the City and the Sea' gave an account of the great flood in the Hunter River in 1861. A farmer in our neighbourhood named Dave Rule would come to our house once a week to hear this tale read, and he would walk a mile or so to and fro each week until the story was finished. Mother and my sister would be busy with the needle and my brother John and I would read the story. In this manner we acquired knowledge, and the long winter evenings passed pleasantly. Dave Rule died in 1932 aged 86.

Among books lent to me by Samuel Jones, a carpenter, was *It is Never Too Late to Mend*. This book was first published in 1862-3, and was a grand work which revealed the awful treatment meted out to prisoners in the Old Land. These disclosures were confirmed by a man named John Drees, who shored at the Ginninderra woolshed in 1865. He told me that in his young days he saw scores of men and women publicly hanged each week, and in most cases the unfortunates were pleased to be 'turned off', as it was termed, as they contended that 'the other world can't be worse'. What an awful reflection on the social conditions of the country at that time.



## *First Years at Springvale*

*Free selection Shumack's Folly Accidents and disappearances*  
*Crops, seasons and prices 1865-7 Farming machines*  
*Schooling We leave Emu Bank More selection Bushfire William Boyd*  
*The sisters Clarke, Matthews and Grady A fortune lost A great storm*  
*We select land for brother George Dr Morton*  
*The Mulligan's Flat and Sutton sensations Ghosts and apparitions*  
*Jack Read's bullock Magillicuddy*

ABOUT 1860 the State was agitated by John Robertson's Free Selection Act. All the landowners bitterly denounced the measure, declaring that they would all be ruined and that its author was a limb of Satan, and they tried to rig the forthcoming elections. Mr Davis told father that if the Act became law the sheep men would have to discharge half their employees, so at the election father voted—it was his first vote—for the owners' candidate, William Forster (the toilers' candidate was William Redman). Later, father secured a copy of the Act and found out how he had been duped, and he told Mr Davis his mind on that and other matters. Mr Davis never forgave him, but he could find no fault with father as regards his station duties.

In 1861 Robertson's Act became the law of the land and proved a blessing to thousands, and father and I took up 100 acres in February 1865 under the Free Selection Act at Weetangerra. We called our selection Springvale. We now had an object in life—to establish a permanent home. My brother John and I now set to work in earnest to clear and fence this land, and we often split ninety rails in a day when shepherding. We preferred this bush work to following the sheep, our occupation for eleven years. We even preferred the strenuous labour of reaping under the hot sun to following the sheep, and often, when I had turned the sheep for home, I would run on ahead and cut a few sheaves with the scythe and enjoyed it. By so doing I became a good reaper. In February 1865 I built a bark gunyah on my selection, in which I took up residence until I could build a permanent home.

A school was opened at the Glebe, Ginninderra, at this time, and I attended as a pupil for just six weeks as I had to assist with the sowing of our crop at Emu Bank. The seed was coming up nicely when a plague of magpies descended and wrought havoc with the crop. I spent months protecting it from this pest, and although I shot hundreds they did great damage. However, after the wheat was well established I went back to Springvale and commenced grubbing out trees and stumps—I also made preparations to build a house. John and I split 120 slabs and hundreds of posts and rails during the winter months, and instead of leaving this material scattered on the ground we foolishly stacked it in one heap where it was destroyed by a bushfire in September.

John now commenced shearing as a learner at Ginninderra woolshed and I had to look after the sheep on my own. During this time I split more than 1,000 rails, and at night would cut down trees in preparation for the next day's work—I enjoyed this work and was never weary.

The great drought which afflicted the land caused a suspension of our building programme for fourteen months, and it was not until the spring of 1866 that work was renewed. I was seventeen years of age when I commenced building my house, which was erected in my spare time and completed in 1868.

In 1867 my brother John selected 100 acres of land adjoining mine and we cleared it and looked after the sheep at the same time. Sixteen hours a day in winter was nothing, and often the stars were shining as we had our breakfast sitting on a log. We split thousands of posts and rails, and always aimed to split 100 each day and very seldom failed; our greatest tally was 142.

William Davis—who was father's employer and the squatter on whose land we selected—had 20,000 acres, excluding some thousands of acres of Crown land for which he paid very little, yet he resented our efforts to strike out for ourselves and laughed at what he derisively called 'Shumack's Folly'.

'Three years,' he said, 'will see Shumack and his family sadder and wiser, for shortage of water will drive them out.' His prophecy miscarried! Some of these scoffers had 2,000 acres of land and a healthy bank balance—John and I had only our energy and initiative, plus 100 acres of free-selected land.

The drought of 1865 was very severe, and from the autumn onwards there were no such things as milk and butter. The cows that should have calved early had died, and black tea with black sugar was the rule. Life was indeed hard. Early in the spring Mrs Hatch sent us some butter from the first churning, the first we had seen for nine months. A month later one of our heifers calved, and from then on our milk and butter famine was at an end.

John Coppin took charge of the Goat Station and ill luck in the shape of a record bad season followed him. The autumn was good from a certain viewpoint, as occasional showers fell and assured good crops of pumpkins and potatoes, but the farmers had a bad time ploughing as the ground was hard. Water was scarce as there was no rain to replenish the watercourses, and from mid-winter until February 1866 most people had to cart water for miles. We lived within 200 yards of a waterhole that was never known to go dry, and to this watering place many settlers came for supplies. Father had twenty-seven head of stock when this drought commenced—four heifers and three steers survived.

In September 1865 William Hatch sent his twelve-year-old son Robert out to look for cattle in dense scrub on what was known as the Rocky Range. Robert's horse fell and he broke his right thigh. William Mathieson, who was in the vicinity dingo hunting, heard his call for help and made the lad comfortable on a bed of leaves near a fire; he then informed the parents, who lived six miles away. A messenger was sent sixteen miles to Queanbeyan for a doctor. It was fortunate that Mathieson was in the vicinity, otherwise the lad might have perished in the bush. A few years earlier a young man named Chippendale went out on similar duty and disappeared. Fifty-seven years later his remains were found among some rocks, and it was surmised that he had suffered an injury when falling from his horse and had been devoured by dingoes. A week after the Hatch incident the dingoes wrought havoc with the sheep in our charge. They were yarded about a quarter of a mile from our house and had been left unguarded for the night. The next morning we found thirty-three sheep and lambs dead and a dozen badly injured. This was the third time that the station sheep had been molested and Mr Davis blamed the settlers' dogs. However, old hands differed with him and said that the dingo killed differently from domesticated dogs. Father and John burnt all the carcasses with the exception of one; this they skinned and poisoned. They were rewarded next morning by finding two dead dingoes. As a result of this evidence Mr Davis admitted that he was wrong. This was the last substantial loss in the district from this pest.

In May 1865 father commenced ploughing. Light rain fell and he planted twenty-four acres. The seed came up well and for a time prospects were favourable. But spring rains failed and the crop wilted. Lambing started early in September and the losses were seventy per cent. October was well advanced when a series of thunderstorms passed over the locality, but not enough rain fell to lay the thick carpet

of dust. At Parkwood and on the western end of the Ginninderra Creek they received an inch or more, which was followed by a few light showers. Thunderstorms occurred throughout November, but Ginninderra and upper Canberra did not benefit. Farmers south of the river benefited slightly, but when December set in with no rain, despair was marked on the brow of most farmers. When harvesting began some of the farmers were pulling the wheat by hand. Joseph Hall spent three weeks at this job and got three bags of wheat; William Hatch did the same for thirteen bushels, and I gave him a hand; this was my first experience in pulling wheat. The Shumacks at Canberra abandoned this job after an hour or so. Dick Shumack spent a few days pulling wheat and then threshed out his laborious harvest which turned the scale at fifty-nine pounds. He was the only farmer in that locality with any crop, and it became a joke as people would say, 'Do you expect to beat Dick Shumack?'

December passed without rain and January set in dry. Stock were dying, and there was not a day that father did not pull some beast from the waterhole where we got our water. About half a mile distant lay the carcasses of dozens of cattle and a few horses, and the atmosphere is better imagined than described. Henry Cumming called one evening and stayed for supper, after which he said that it was the first meat he had eaten for three weeks. Many settlers did not have meat on the menu for months. Mr E. B. Percy went out with his gun one afternoon and returned a couple of hours later with two magpies and a few parrots which he made into soup—he said it was the first meat he had had for three months. Such cases were by no means uncommon at the time. There was not a drop of water to be found from Emu Bank to the Canberra River, and this was only a chain of ponds. The washing of the Ginninderra homestead and of the station hands had to be carted eight miles to the river, and every Monday morning several carts would pass our house en route for the river. This continued until the second week in February 1866.

On 26 January 1866 prayers for rain were offered all over the State, and on that day St John's Church, Canberra, was crowded. I was there and I am sure that this church never before or since has held a more sincere crowd of worshippers. The parson's text was taken from the Book of Joel. About a week later a change in the weather set in and light misty rain fell for several days. About 5 February I was looking for some sheep when heavy rain began to fall, and in a couple of hours all the watercourses were flooded and the Ginninderra Creek was uncrossable. The rain continued all night and light rain continued during the next day, and the drought was well and truly broken. The flock of sheep we had charge of numbered about 1,600 in September 1865: in February 1866, when mustered after the rain, they numbered 950. William Davis estimated his losses at one-third in sheep and one-half in cattle—the losses at Charnwood and Duntroon were heavier. All sheep that died during this drought had to be skinned, otherwise the shepherd was charged the price of the sheep.

Father knew at the close of November 1865 that the harvest would be a failure. He always had a piece of ground planted with potatoes and in this instance he had several bags of seed on hand. As a rule he would plant the autumn crop early in December, and to check premature growth he handled the seed every week for about five weeks. During the first week in January he planted the seed, but as no rain fell for a month he thought that it had rotted in the ground. However, a week after the rain fell he was agreeably surprised to see the potatoes up from one end of the drill to the other. It was a magnificent crop and people came from near and far to buy potatoes, as they were unprocurable elsewhere in the locality. Father grew some splendid spuds from time to time, but these were the best—many exceeded three pounds.

Captain Samuel Southwell said of this drought:

When the drought set in it was my second year on Spring Creek. I had twenty head of stock, and twenty acres of wheat from which I expected nothing. However, one storm altered this and I

harvested 200 bushels, which I sold for 10s. a bushel; on the other hand, I lost all my stock. Phillip Williams lost all his cattle with the exception of two cows, but was more fortunate with his bullock teams because they were away on a hauling contract at Penrith. My cousin, Samson Southwell, was in a similar position as he was carting in the same locality, and my father's team was also away for three months and so escaped the rigours of the drought.

John Walsh said:

I agreed to reap for John Southwell during the harvest of 1865 and, the year being bad, 12s. was the price. The highest wheat crop was two feet and this meant hard work, but I was glad to get a job and so worked for three weeks on the creek. I started at Southwell's and finished at O'Brien's, where the crop was from a foot to eighteen inches high, and I cut a little over two acres in a week. Further up the Ginninderra Creek the farmers had to pull the wheat by hand, but a couple of days at this work sickened me and I gave up the job. Some farmers were lucky to get a few thunderstorms, and those on the lower part of the creek threshed sufficient wheat to be able to sell a small quantity. We at Mulligan's Flat and the Tea Gardens had nothing at all, and it was the worst season I ever experienced as we lost all our stock except a few head.

Father had a few bags of wheat on hand, but as the station ration was sufficient for only one-third of his family requirements, he went down to Samson Southwell, who had just finished harvesting, and arranged to buy twenty bushels of wheat at 10s. a bushel when threshed. A month later Southwell delivered the wheat and said, 'You were lucky we agreed on a price, Richard, because it is 12s. a bushel at the present time.'

'I am well satisfied with my bargain,' father said, 'because it is that price in Queanbeyan, sixteen miles away, and I hope we never see such a season again.' His wish was gratified so far as prices were concerned because wheat never again exceeded 8s. 6d. a bushel.

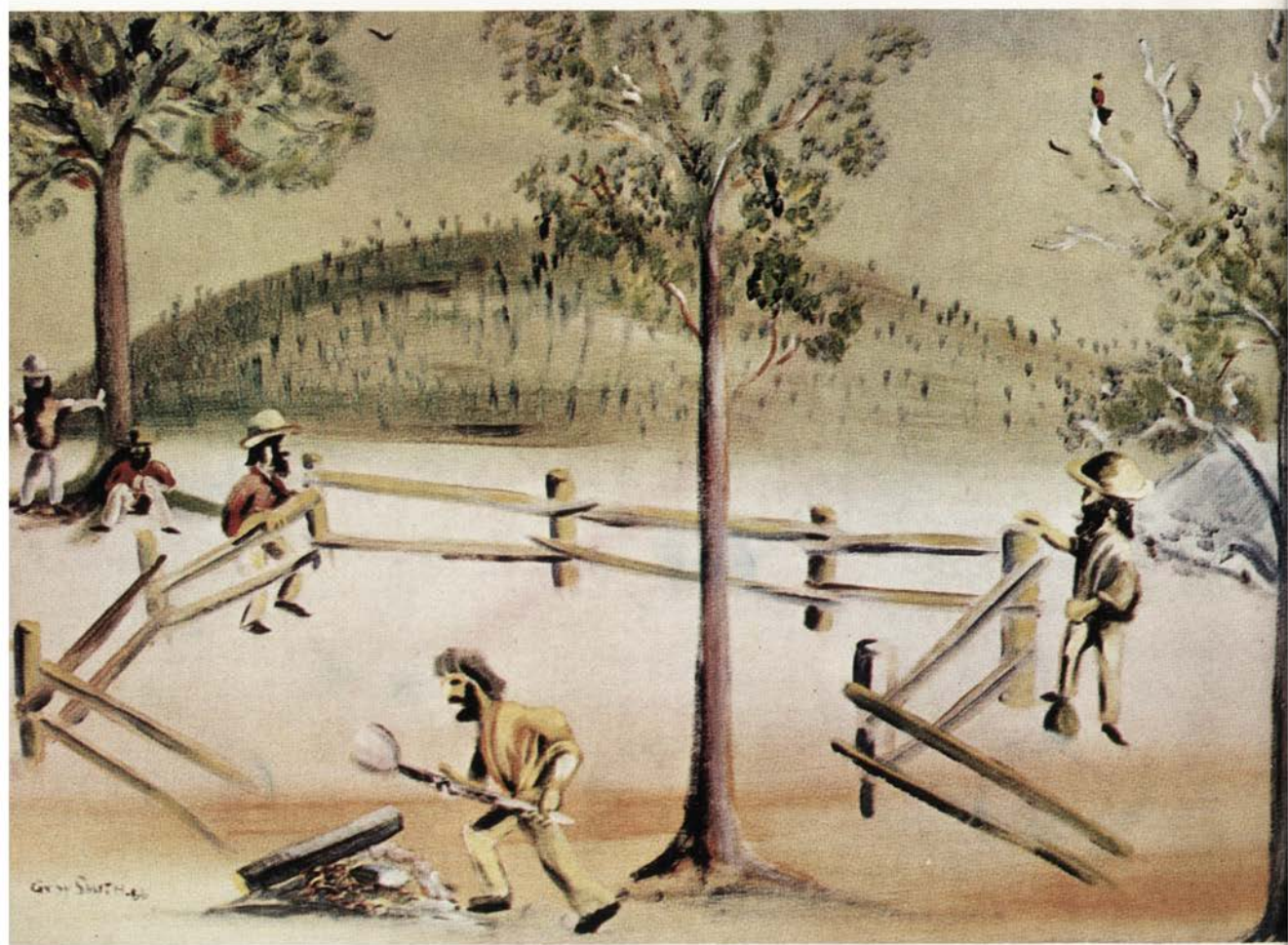
A number of farmers had stacks of hay on hand when the drought set in and they managed to save their stock; others disposed of the hay at good prices and let their stock die, gambling on good spring rains. The price of hay was £12 a ton at the stack. In the spring of 1865 and in January 1866 there was only one stack in County Murray, the property of a Mrs Meredith who lived two miles from Queanbeyan on the north side. A few days after the prayers for rain were offered, Mr J. J. Wright, the principal businessman in Queanbeyan, called on Mrs Meredith and offered her £500 for the stack as it stood. It was estimated to go fifty tons. Mrs Meredith contended that the stack was worth more than £500, but after some discussion her twelve-year-old son William prevailed upon her to accept the offer as 'it was a lot of money'. Wright wrote a cheque for £500, and in less than a week general rain fell throughout the State and down went the price of fodder. Wright did not lose by this transaction because he had several horse teams on the road which had to be fed. The above incident was related to me by William Meredith, who years later became a friend of our family.

The harvest of 1866-7 was a superabundant one all over the State, and I heard of no crop under thirty bushels to the acre. Father's crop was not under forty. I have previously mentioned the fifty-nine pounds of wheat which Dick Shumack pulled by hand and threshed—it was the White Llamas variety. Dick gave this wheat to father, who planted it on an acre of ground, the yield from which was fifty bushels. Some farmers, including Dick Shumack, had self-sown crops this year, and thirty-five bushels to the acre was common. The government provided seed wheat at this time; each farmer was allowed six bags. Hall and Neylon got six bags and there was some trouble over the payment a year later when the government demanded 11s. 8d. a bushel. Hall, Hatch and Denis Gorman had self-sown crops from the previous year and the yield was good. Gorman died on Christmas Day 1866 in his 65th year, and a few days later his neighbours cut the crop for the widow free of charge.



*Alan Cunningham gathering specimens on 'Mineira Downs' ((Canberra Plains) in 1824. He commented on the numbers of emus and their fearlessness*





*Moore's stockyards, between Black Mountain and the Molonglo River, about 1824*

This harvest gave us three stacks. This was my first year harvesting and there was no respite from start to finish. My sisters Phoebe and Emily looked after the sheep and this left us free for the harvesting. We would be out at 3.30 a.m. and father would take one land and John and I would take another. We bound our own sheaves and sister Margaret bound for father, and in this manner we harvested our crop. After the crop was carted in John and I threshed the White Llamas with the flail and our day's work was thirty-five bushels—a record. The next day John took five bags of wheat to the flour mill because our flour bag was low and Joseph Hall's was empty. A bag of flour weighed 200 pounds, and for wheat that scaled over sixty pounds to the bushel the miller would give fifty-two pounds of flour—later it was forty pounds and sometimes less. James Young, Wallace and Grady took their wheat to Yass, where the price was 3s. 9d. a bushel; father sold 300 bushels in Queanbeyan for 4s. a bushel.

The first threshing machine used in the district was introduced by William Davis. It was worked by horses and its capacity was 200 bushels daily. Our neighbour, Edward Smith, hired it from Davis, and in the season of 1865 he purchased one of his own. With this machine he threshed two stacks for us, and this was the first time father had this work done by a machine. In 1864 or 1865 Mr W. Woodman in Queanbeyan received a machine as a gift from his parents in America. It was worked by five draught horses and could thresh and clean 500 bushels daily. I saw Woodman work this machine at Canberra.

The year 1867 was wet and crops were light. Father left his biggest stack until this year and it was a wise decision, as many crops were never reaped because of the wet. 1868 was dry and the crops were inferior.

The first crop sown at Springvale was sown by me in 1868—six acres of wheat. Father had sown twenty acres at Emu Bank, and there was great difficulty in ploughing as the ground was very hard. Our plough was a Scotch Murdoch with a socket share, and each night John and I would walk to Francis Williams's blacksmith shop at Canberra to have the share 'laid' or pointed. After the crop was sown, passing showers brought it up well, but it received a set-back as the spring was dry, so the crop was short. As this was our last year at Emu Bank, the crop from the twenty acres there was drawn to Springvale, where it was stacked. Our first six acres at Springvale yielded fifteen bushels to the acre, which was the highest in the locality.

One evening towards the close of 1864 a gentleman mounted on a chestnut horse called at our house and introduced himself as the newly-appointed teacher of the Glebe school, Henry Pierce Grey, a relative of Reverend P. G. Smith. He had called to see how many children of school age there were in our home. His charge for teaching was 1s. a week, reduced if there was more than one child. My sister Phoebe was enrolled and a week later he opened the school, at which he was the third teacher in a period of three years. Grey dossed in the school-house and did his own cooking, as Mr Davis allowed him a free ration. About once a week, on father's invitation, he called at our place for supper. He was a good conversationalist and could talk on any subject, be it religious, social or military. He had been in the American army and had taken part in the war against Mexico in 1847-8 under the command of Captain May, at whose side he was seriously wounded. He gave a good account of the various actions and the march through the country under Generals Tooper and Scott.

Grey had been about a year at the school when he cleared out during the Christmas vacation, much to the surprise of all. The air was thick with rumours, but the following is the truth of the matter as it came from Reverend P. G. Smith, who was disappointed at what he called Grey's 'defection'.

Grey had previously held a good position in another part of the State, but lost it through his love of firewater. When he called on the parson in 1864 he took the pledge to abstain from drink, and Parson Smith then gave him the position of teacher at Ginninderra. It was well known that the parson's family did not welcome Grey at the parsonage. However, during the last week of the Christmas vacation

Grey called on Robert Kilby and offered him his horse, bridle and saddle at a modest figure. Kilby bought the outfit and Grey then disappeared and did not return to resume his duties at the Ginninderra school, where he had led an exemplary life during his term. Later we learned the reason for his so-called 'defection'. During the Christmas vacation he got drunk and told some of his cronies the reason for his flight from England. When attending a high school somewhere in the old country he and some fellow-students during a drunken frolic had tarred a cat and set it on fire, with the result that a disastrous fire followed which caused thousands of pounds worth of damage. Several arrests were made and Grey fled to America and, being destitute, he enlisted; no doubt he was deeply ashamed of his revelations and so cleared out. Hugh McPhee was Grey's successor, and McPhail succeeded him in 1871. The school finally closed in 1873.

We were now doing well and Mr Davis realized that his prophecy had miscarried. He now gave father notice to quit Emu Bank, where we had been loyal servants for eleven years. On receiving this notice we took up more land under the Free Selection Act—I selected another 100 acres and brother John selected 200 acres. Our family left Emu Bank on Easter Saturday 1869 and moved into my house, Springvale, Weetangerra. Joseph Hall succeeded us at Emu Bank.

There is no doubt that Mr Davis, when he dismissed my father, was certain that he would be ruined. However, the harvest of 1869-70 saw four large stacks of wheat on what he jeeringly called 'Shumack's Folly'. When we were threshing, Davis, with a host of friends, rode past and was heard to remark, 'I believed that shortage of water would drive Shumack off the land, yet I hear that they are never short of water and I am surprised at the way they have prospered since leaving my service.' This threshing yielded over 1,000 bushels and 700 were sold to Mathieson at 5s. 3d. a bushel at the shed. At this time there were more than 2,000 miners in the Braidwood district and all farm produce sold well. Father commenced dairying with twenty cows, some of which he had purchased from Mr Davis the previous year. Separators were unknown in those days and the custom was to set the milk in large pans from which the cream was skimmed daily and churned into butter. I never learned to milk a cow because I was too busy fencing and attending to other essential farm work. I erected all the post-and-rail fences, and often had two panels of fence up before the sun appeared. I was known throughout the district as the champion fencer. My best day's work was forty-two panels of two rails and thirty-three panels of three rails. Twelve years later the wire fence became general, and on one occasion when erecting one of these fences I put up ninety posts in one day. The posts were twenty-two inches in the ground and every twenty-fifth post was a 'strainer' which was three feet in the ground. We sold several horses this year, although the price was low compared with 1870, when the price of a good horse was from £20 to £25. We fattened our pigs on grain as this produced the best flavoured bacon, and as a rule we would kill about ten pigs yearly as there was a ready market for pork and bacon. Butter was a good price and mother also made cheese which sold well.

When others in the locality saw that 'Shumack's Folly' was a success there was a rush to the Lands Office in Queanbeyan. T. Williams, M. and T. Southwell, E. and A. Smith, E. Cameron, W. and E. B. Percy, W. and R. Kilby, G. Smith, W. Plummer, A. Blundell, J. Young, J. and T. Kinleyside, W. Mathieson, W. Young and D. McDonald all took up land.

Mr Davis now publicly announced that 'Shumack had set a bad example'. Meanwhile the rush for land continued, and William Hatch, D. Cameron, E. M. Ward, George Harcourt, G. Gribble, M. Walsh, J. Gozzard, J. Winter, M. and W. Ryan, G. and T. Gillespie, H. Burton and W. Jones settled on the eastern portion of the run. Such was the result of John Robertson's much abused Land Act of 1861.

William Davis never forgave father. He left the district in 1877 and returned on a visit ten years later when he found my father and brother George were also prosperous landowners. He admitted to a



friend that he had blundered, and said, 'I never thought this land would carry a sheep to the acre. I heard that Shumack threshed 800 bushels this harvest and shored more than 400 sheep—yet he has only 400 acres!' This was the truth. Davis paid only one visit to the locality after he sold out, and on that occasion I had a long 'yabber' with him. He died shortly afterwards.

One day when we were loading the last of the crop at Emu Bank in preparation for its transfer to Springvale we saw smoke west of the Rocky Range near the Lime Kiln. Brother John mounted a horse and went to investigate and we hurried with the loading. We had just put the last sheaf on the load when he returned and said that the fire was on the west of the range and that our house and stack were in danger. I mounted behind John and we were soon at Springvale, where we made hurried preparations to meet the approaching fire. There was very long grass south and west of the house and it was fortunate that in the late winter we had burnt off on the north side. We immediately started to burn a break on the west side, commencing at the burnt strip, intending to burn a half-mile break to an old bush track. We had burnt about half way when Robert Kilby came to our assistance, and he proved our salvation. A wall of flame eight to ten feet high appeared on the ridge west of us, and this fire met our break—we won by a couple of minutes. We had a narrow escape on the south as high grass grew right up to the house and the fence enclosing the stack. We had an anxious time for three days and nights, and then heavy continuous rain fell, much to our relief.

The late autumn and winter of 1869 were the most strenuous in the life of brother John and myself. We would be up and have our breakfast before the stars had vanished, and when the ploughing season arrived we had ten acres ready for the plough and six acres ready to be burnt off. From Monday to Saturday we never went to bed before midnight as we were busy burning off. We would return to the house about 11 p.m. and mother would have a cup of tea ready—we would be out again by starlight. Father did the ploughing this season and I did the harrowing, and we planted thirty acres of wheat and two of barley. The seed was sown in May, and the very frosty winter that followed was a blessing in disguise. Often the ground was so frozen that I could not harrow until 11 a.m. The spring was one of the best, but in the last week in October a heavy hailstorm passed over the locality and cut down the wheat crops. However, because of the frosts our crop was in the spindling stage and quickly recovered.

About 1869 William Boyd and his family came to Ginninderra. He was an expert with stock, and when James Ross at the Lime Kiln died Boyd took charge of that section of the run. He soon became very busy disturbing those persons who came to the river fishing, and when I heard this I went elsewhere as the land was unfenced. My acquaintance with the family lasted eighteen years and was friendly throughout. They were always relating stories of Mrs Boyd's ancestors, and Boyd once confided to me that his wife's family considered that she had married beneath her rank and she had been disinherited by her father. We were amused and listened attentively to these stories, which became a by-word in the locality.

Shortly after the family took charge of the sheep at the Lime Kiln, Mr Davis sold the property to Mr E. K. Grace. About six months later a sensation was caused when it was reported that George Smith had threatened to murder William Boyd. I was present when Boyd came to Gungahlin to report the matter to Mr Grace. George Smith had just finished erecting a fence for father, and he and his wife walked to the river about two miles distant to do some fishing. They were sitting on the bank watching their lines when Boyd appeared on the scene and said, 'What are you doing here?'

'Having a spell', was the reply.

'Well, you are not going to spell here, and if you don't clear out I will take your lines', Boyd said.

'Well, well,' Smith said, 'can you swim, Boyd?'

'What is it to you whether I can swim or not?' Boyd said.

'You are quite right,' Smith said, 'it is nothing to me, but it is everything to you—see—there is twelve feet of water here'—and Smith tested the hole with his rod—'and if you put a hand on my lines in you go, and if you can't swim, there you will stay until you are pulled out tomorrow or some other time.' Boyd quickly left the scene and hurried to Gungahlin. Next morning Crace went to Weetangerra to investigate, and near the Weetangerra school he met Edward Smith—George's father—who gave Crace an account of the matter. Crace laughed heartily and said, 'A dip would do Boyd good—I am going to fence the run, but will make no change in regard to fishing until the fence is complete.' Here the matter ended. A year later Boyd was moved to Mulligan's Flat, and in consequence he and Crace did not get on well together. A year later he leased Dixon's farm of 260 acres, which he worked for about eight years and did well. I assisted him every threshing season and he made a lot of money during 1882-3-4-5. The spring of 1885 was dry and these conditions continued until 1886. During that year he was offered £700 for a hundred tons of hay. He demanded £1,000, which was refused. Within a few days good rain fell over the State, and hay and chaff were unsaleable. Early in 1888 Dixon sold the farm to Hugh Read and Boyd had to quit, leaving the stacks, which he later sold for £30 each—Read bought two and Crace one. Boyd lost £610 on this deal: if he had accepted the original offer he would have been in a position to purchase the farm. However, he left in April 1888 and I heard that adversity overtook the family. When he refused the offer of £700, the intending purchaser went to Robin Maloney and offered him £7 a ton for a stack of 30 tons. Maloney demanded £8, with the result that he and Boyd were in the same boat. Maloney's sons Richard and Robert later cut the hay into chaff and sent it to Sydney, but had to send a cheque for 35s. to defray expenses. John Winter cut the chaff and his charge was 7s. a ton, plus bags, wages and rations. Such is the farmer's lot.

Some years after the Boyd family left the district we were surprised to see an advertisement in the Sydney newspapers stating that if Laura Ellen Boyd or her heirs should communicate with a firm of solicitors named, they would hear something to their advantage. However, I heard that he and his wife and some members of the family had died years before the advertisement appeared.

About the fourth decade of the last century three sisters landed in Sydney from England and were soon engaged to be married. One married a man named Matthews, another a man named Clarke, and the youngest married a policeman named Grady who was stationed in the Queanbeyan district. Matthews and his wife settled in the west of the State, where they prospered until sickness wiped out the family; the widow then returned to Canberra to end her days with a niece. The sister that married Clarke became the mother of the bushrangers John and Thomas Clarke, who were later hanged. I knew the sisters that married Grady and Matthews, but very few in the locality were aware of the relationship between these families. I never met Mrs Clarke.

At the time the Clarke brothers were active the country was unfenced and fortunes were made by running in unbranded stock as there was no Brand Act to curb this practice. The landowners with thousands of head of stock were the arch-offenders, and those who employed the Clarkes as stockmen did well until about 1866, when the Brand Act became law and they had to be more careful. The Clarkes soon became proscribed men, with the result that they took to the bush and ended their lives on the scaffold. I can remember only two instances where big squatters were prosecuted for this nefarious practice—one was sentenced to eight years and the other was acquitted; all the blame was placed on the stockmen.

Grady was highly esteemed by all who knew him. He died when about forty years of age, leaving a widow and four children—two daughters and two sons. The daughters married neighbours of mine—Catherine married William Mathieson and Bridget married William Young—and they were exemplary wives and mothers. About three years after Grady's death his widow married a man named George Pierce,

who, according to his own statement, was a gentleman in the old country. Some laughed at him, but it was easy to see when you conversed with him that he was well educated—his only fault was a fondness for drink. I enjoyed many a yarn with him, and met his wife for the first and last time in February 1869. When William Mathieson married Catherine Grady in the spring of 1865 he was living on what was known as the Bald Hill. It was dense forest at the time and the nearest resident was miles away, so the young couple adopted Sarah, the eldest child of the bride's mother's second marriage. Soon after this event Mathieson took up a selection near my holding and for years they were my nearest neighbours. In February 1869 Mrs Pierce visited her daughter, Mrs Mathieson, and it was here that I met her. Her nephews John and Thomas had been hanged a short time previously and Mrs. William Hatch was the only one in the locality who knew of the relationship. About noon one day Mrs Pierce was drowned when crossing the river near Yarralumla. The river was running strongly and the cart was upset when the horse jibbed. Mathieson, who was driving, could not swim, but managed to grasp a tea-tree shrub and thus saved his life. James Young was a hundred yards away when the cart capsized and he ran down and plunged into the stream and recovered the body of Mrs Pierce. Mathieson now acted the Good Samaritan and adopted one of the two children left motherless—my Uncle Peter adopted the child Ann, aged fifteen months. At the time of the fatality George Pierce was employed as a builder in Queanbeyan, and when he finished the contract he too came to live with Mathieson, and died three years later. After the funeral his step-children made a thorough search of his effects, and finding, as they thought, nothing of value, consigned a number of letters and papers to the flames. Less than two years later an advertisement appeared in the Sydney press seeking information respecting one George Pierce who arrived in Australia some eighteen or twenty years before. Mathieson interviewed the solicitor concerned and was mortified when he was informed that his information was worthless in law. He was unable to produce a single specimen of the deceased's handwriting, as they had destroyed all his letters and papers. The value of the estate exceeded £30,000. Mathieson left the office a sadder and wiser man, and Sarah, William and Ann—George Pierce's children—lost a fortune through the indiscreet action of the step-children. Mathieson died in 1882, aged forty-five, leaving a wife and eight children, and is buried in St John's churchyard. He was a native of Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

On the last Sunday in October 1869 father attended the morning service at St John's Church, after which he had lunch with my sister Margaret. About 3 p.m. they heard the roll of thunder and father said, 'I must go; otherwise I will be caught in this storm.' He was near Flea Bog Flat when he realized that the storm was much closer than he imagined, so he put his horse into a gallop. He was too late! He was about 400 yards from home when the first hailstones fell and the horse turned his rump to the storm. Father dismounted and removed the saddle and placed it over his head and crouched behind a stump, where he remained for more than an hour. The hail was the size of large plums and covered the ground to a depth of four inches. It killed several fruit trees in my garden, and at the Webb and McDonald farm was a foot deep. Phillip Williams and his wife, who were returning from church, were crossing a cultivation paddock and were severely injured by the hail, as was William Plummer, a lad of sixteen years. A few hailstones fell at Ginninderra and Charles Cameron was struck on the hand and received an injury which troubled him for several weeks. The wheat crops in the Weetangerra district quickly recovered, although the gardens were ruined. Young, who lived three miles south of us, escaped with slight damage. In January 1879 I saw larger hailstones during a severe storm, and I weighed four which tipped the scale at one pound.

The abundant harvest for the season 1869 was followed by a bad one in 1870, and prices were low; 4s. was the average. Mrs Meredith had a wheat stack estimated at 500 bushels and in April, Wright's threshing machine was 'set' at the stack. However, light rain fell for a week or more and one

evening torrential rain fell, and in the morning the stack was gone and part of the machine was never seen again. Some sheaves from this stack were found twenty miles down the river. Several other stacks were swept away in this flood, as were thousands of bushels of corn and tons of pumpkins. Potatoes rotted in the ground. Mrs Meredith now retired from farming and let the farm, which was taken over by Fred Warwick after the flood of 1879.

In 1870 we were busy day and night, intending to put fifty acres under crops. Alas for our hopes! We started early, and in March had sown fifteen acres when heavy rain set in and continued throughout April. This was the first and only occasion that we planted a crop in March. Towards the end of April one of the greatest floods ever recorded in County Murray took place. John Coppin of the Goat Station was building a new house, which was flooded to a depth of three feet. Wet weather continued throughout May, and in the last week of that month another great flood occurred and flooded Coppin's house the second time. Farming operations were suspended in June because the ground was too boggy, but in July we planted ten acres of wheat. The fifteen acres planted in March was a fortunate venture for us as we were the only farmers in the district to thresh 300 bushels, a little under twenty bushels to the acre. Our neighbours were less fortunate; several had to buy seed wheat and flour owing to crop failures. Joseph Hall, who succeeded us at Emu Bank, proposed planting thirty acres, but planted less than ten. His yield was eighty bushels—the average for the district was seven bushels to the acre. Thus the harvest of 1870 was included among the bad years, as was the next year; but if crops were light, prices were good.

In 1871 we selected land for brother George, who was not then eight years of age. The harvest this year was average. In 1872 we secured another block of land for brother George. Father supervised these matters and so far we all worked well together. In these years wheat sold at a good price and the principal markets were Braidwood and Major's Creek, to which also we sent large quantities of butter, cheese and beeswax. This continued until 1873, when a slump occurred; however, prices revived in 1875 at Braidwood and Araluen, Major's Creek having petered out.

One day in 1878 Dr Morton attended a serious case at Gundaroo, about twenty-four miles from Queanbeyan. He set out on the return journey at 11 p.m., and when he reached Sutton the sky was heavily overcast with a threat of rain. There were few fences in the district, and as the night was as dark at pitch he let his horse pick its way through the darkness. He was partly asleep when the horse stopped, and the sudden jolt woke him. He gathered the reins and spoke to the horse, but it refused to go on. He alighted from the buggy and took the horse by the head, but it refused to move. He then took a few steps forward and the earth seemed to swallow him; how far he fell he had no idea. He put out his hand and felt sand and water and a wall like the side of a house behind him, so he came to the conclusion that the horse had strayed from the road and that he had fallen into a hole made by gold diggers. He was sure that he was miles from Queanbeyan and in the vicinity of Mack's Reef or Kitty's Creek. Light rain was now falling, and as he had no matches he decided to remain quietly until daybreak. When day dawned he saw that he was in a creek about fourteen feet deep and had fallen on to a bed of sand and thus escaped injury. He climbed out and was surprised to see the horse and buggy—also a bridge not five yards from the horse. He now realized that this was Buttles Creek, as he could see the first buildings of eastern Queanbeyan. The riddle was solved: the bridge had been constructed only a few months before and the horse had followed the old track to the creek. A serious mishap was missed by a yard or less.

The Gillespie family were pioneers of County Murray and valuable assets to the country. John Gillespie secured land at Mulligan's Flat, where he reared a family of four sons and two daughters. In course of time the third son, William, married, and he worked the farm as his father had passed the three score years and ten. One day William went to town on business and had not returned when his parents retired for the night. Next morning his parents were startled to see William's horse grazing near the

house with the saddle and bridle on, but no sign of William. A search was quickly organized and the road was examined from Mulligan's Flat to the Canberra Inn, which at the time was kept by Joseph Shumack and was later the property of the Read family. Here they learned that William had left the inn at 11 p.m. and was quite normal, but had taken a flask of spirits with him. The search party now increased to a couple of dozen men, and William's hat and whip were found about half a mile from home. Tracks were found near a waterhole on the Ginninderra estate and it was believed that the body was in the water, but the police dragged this waterhole and several others without result. Rumours of foul play now circulated and several mysterious disappearances in the locality were revived—Thomas McGrath, Martin Ryan, O'Keefe of Canberra and Betsey Celia Naylor, to mention just a few. All were freely discussed and it was believed that this was another one to be added to the list. On the evening of the third day my brother John's wife said to me, 'There is a man down there and I think he must be "cranky" on account of the way he is looking around.'

We had heard nothing of the disappearance, so I thought he must be lost. I was about to start off to see him when he crossed my cultivation paddock in the direction of Yarralumla. Here James Cavanagh met him and discovered that he was the missing man. He did not know where he was and could only say that his head was sore. Jim assisted him into the saddle and took him to the Canberra Inn, where he was put to bed and a message was sent to his parents and the police. This strange case was never fully explained. William had wandered for miles and was seen out near Smith's on the Murrumbidgee, some twenty miles away. He never fully recovered and died about two years later.

When I first went to Sutton in the mid-seventies the only buildings there were a shepherd's hut which was used as a part-time school, and a weatherboard building which was used as a place of worship. The nearest settlers were a man named Robert Charters and his sons Daniel and Robert. Charters had lost an arm a short time previously: it was amputated at the shoulder without the use of anaesthetic. He lived about a mile from people named Woodlams. When he left the district some years later the property was taken over by John Wright of Canberra, who engaged William Weir, Mark Southwell and Stephen O'Malley to do some repairs. These men were well known to me. All three lived and worked together at the house, which was 200 yards from the river. One day John Wright called to inspect the work and, being very pleased with the progress, gave the men a pound or two on account. As rain had delayed the work, they sent to the Traveller's Rest Hotel about six miles away for a supply of grog. Next morning Mark Southwell went to the post office and asked Mr F. Williams if Weir was there as he was missing from the camp. Williams had not seen him so the police were informed and a search commenced. The police established that an altercation had occurred after some liquor had been consumed, but the stories were conflicting. In the meantime more rain fell and the river overflowed its banks, so dragging operations ceased. The river bank was patrolled for weeks without result and the search was finally abandoned. About two years later Mr C. A. Massey of Stoneyville, Gundaroo, was giving his horse a drink at the river when something in the sand attracted his attention. He dismounted and discovered a human skeleton. The police were satisfied that the remains were those of the missing man. Some believed that he was accidentally drowned and others that he had met with foul play. However, Constable Irwin investigated the matter and the remains were buried on the bank of the river without any inquest being held. Many people were disgusted at the police action and there was a report that Weir's relatives were going to have the remains removed to consecrated ground, but whether this was done or not I cannot say.

When the Weir case was agitating the district there was one Charles Haase, well known in County Murray as a 'Jack of all trades and master of none'. He repaired harness and painted buggies, and, as far as my judgment goes, he did the latter very well. There were many other jobs that Charlie handled efficiently, and he did very well in the locality. About 1880 he took up land west of Sutton and erected a

two-room cottage on it, and shortly afterwards he married. This caused surprise because the bride was a Miss Rowley, who was connected with the Hunt families at Queanbeyan and the Kaye families at Canberra. However, Charlie and his bride took up their abode on the selection, where he did well at his calling. He had a light spring cart and a good horse, and a journey of twenty miles or more meant nothing to him. The annual races were always held at Gundaroo on 17 March, and Charlie and his wife announced that they were going to attend. Charlie's one fault was occasionally to take a drop too much. 17 March dawned a beautiful day and Charlie and his wife passed Sutton in grand style—they looked like lad and lassie of no more than twenty summers rather than twice that age. Matters were most agreeable until about 4 o'clock, when he met some friends and partook not wisely but too well. His wife did her best to persuade him to come home, but Charlie threw discretion to the winds and announced that he was 'going to have a good time'.

His wife then declared that she was going home even if she had to walk. A lady friend offered her a lift, saying, 'We are going home in a few minutes—our cart is at the hotel.' Mrs Haase accepted the offer and said that she would walk on ahead. However, her friend saw nothing further of Mrs Haase and assumed that she and Charlie had adjusted matters. They were surprised next evening to hear that Haase had been arrested on suspicion of having murdered his wife, and still more so when Constable Aggassiz called to take a statement, saying,

I want matters to be carried out properly—this was not done in the Weir case and this one is stranger still. This woman starts for home and her husband soon afterwards, and according to your statement you should have overtaken her less than a mile from the racecourse. Her husband's replies to questions are very conflicting, and if she is not found by tomorrow we will search the creek.

She was not found and dragging was commenced, and there was a great sensation when a heavy sack was hauled to the surface. About forty people were present, including relatives and friends, but the bag was opened and found to contain the bodies of two dogs. These dogs had been reported missing and a local resident was blamed for their disappearance. All the waterholes were searched without trace, and every log and cranny was being searched when suddenly the missing woman returned home. Here is the story she gave:

I got my bag from the booth and started for home, but being a stranger in the locality I took the wrong track and became lost in the bush. I wandered about for days and at last I heard a dog bark and I went in that direction and came to a farmhouse and was amazed to know that I was in the Yass district. The farmer brought me to Mr Coleman's place and he brought me home. Her husband was quickly released and shortly afterwards sold his property to Hugh Read and he and his wife left the district.

When Haase left the district his place as harness repairer was quickly filled by Frank Morris, who was an excellent tradesman. He was also very deaf, but he was a good violinist and could tune an instrument to perfection. As a rule, when travelling the district he would stay with us a couple of days. He was the proud owner of a splendid black mare and refused persistent offers to purchase her. One day word came that there was a lot of work for him at Sutton, so he packed up and went there. Host Darmody was pleased to accommodate him free of charge and Francis Williams was pleased to give him a paddock rent-free. Frank was very busy all day and generally until midnight because many a fiddle was brought to him to tune, and his services as a player were readily availed of. One day Frank announced that he was leaving on a certain day and would be back in a few months' time. One afternoon he went to the paddock to get his mare but could not find her. A search next day failed to find the missing animal, and he then told Francis Williams that he suspected that she had been stolen because so-and-so wanted to

buy her. Williams consulted his son Frank, after which the two Franks went over to the paddock and found that the black mare had, chameleon-like, changed her coat to one of white—she had been 'white-washed'! This caused Frank to lose a day's work and walk many miles. He thanked Host Darmody and Francis Williams for their kindness, but never again would he go to Sutton—'too many "Lallikins" there for me', he said. Exit Frank—he was a quiet, simple man and did his work well.

Jasper W. Blair arrived at Duntroon from England about 1863. Shortly after his arrival he went out across the plain at the edge of the bush near Mulqueeney's paddock. When he reached this he turned around and was surprised to see a woman on the track he had just passed over. This gave him a surprise, as there was nothing to hide her within half a mile except a huge briar bush towards which she was walking. Presently she disappeared and he waited about 150 yards from the bush, watching it. At last he circled the bush on horseback but could see nothing, and he was greatly perplexed. That evening at supper he told what he had seen. Those present listened attentively and then asked him what time of day it was when he saw it.

'Three o'clock and no later', was his reply.

Mr Campbell then said, 'This has something to do with "Malcolm's Log"', and he then gave an account of it, but what this mystery was I never heard, although it caused a great deal of comment in the early days.

Blair passed as a surveyor and left the district eight years later and the incident was forgotten until it was again revived in a strange manner by one who had never heard of it. One evening in 1874 or 1875 James Abernethy dismissed the school and drove into town with his daughter Kate. On the way home, as they neared the briar bush, Kate saw a tall woman walking towards the briar. This surprised her and she wondered where the woman had come from, as she had looked around shortly before and all that was to be seen was the sheep and the grass glistening in the sun. On reaching home she mentioned the matter and then heard of the Blair apparition for the first time. Next day it was the all-absorbing question . . . what was it that Blair saw? About eighteen months after this episode Mrs Abernethy and Mrs Bambridge went to a funeral—they sat in the front and Kate sat in the back alone. When they were passing the bush the woman again appeared to Kate, who later said, 'I could have put my hand on her and she gave me a look that I will never forget.'

Kate was a well-conducted, truthful young lady, not given to fairy tales. A score or more people reported having seen something near the briar bush or 'Malcolm's Log', but what the mystery was will never be elucidated now. The log was destroyed by a bushfire in 1869.

Now I will give my own experience of the occult, which took place some years ago. I had a neighbour named Charles White—he was a good man but his one fault was a fondness for drink. One day he called and asked me to go to the town races which were to be held in a few days. Mrs Gribble advised me not to go because Charlie would go on the spree and would lose a week or more from work. I then told Charlie that I was not going and advised him to do likewise, and to this he agreed. One night as I was retiring three loud knocks came on the front door. I answered the door but there was no one there, and although I had a good look around I could see no one. About two minutes after the light had been extinguished we were aroused by a tremendous splash. I jumped out of bed and ran to the water puncheon, which was just outside the bedroom window. This puncheon would hold a couple of hundred gallons, and was full and covered over. My wife remarked that a man must have fallen into it, although we thought it was covered. I examined the puncheon and found it covered and the water calm with no sign of a splash. This affected us so much that there was very little sleep that night. We were at breakfast next morning when a friend called and said, 'Isn't it awful about Charlie White—he was drowned at ten o'clock last night when coming home from the races.'

This was the time when we heard the splash. I said to my friend, 'He promised me he would not go to the races', and he then said, 'Yes, but Jim Cook persuaded him to go and this is the result.' He was crossing a brook near the racecourse when the handrail on the bridge broke and he fell into ten feet of water.

Years ago it was a common thing to sit for hours listening to ghost stories, and in nine cases out of ten the narrator believed them. In 1872 an amusing hoax was perpetrated on Joseph Blewitt, who was employed by Edward Smith of Weetangerra. Smith was a great lover of horses and had some splendid draught stallions such as Young Blyth, Lincoln, Honest Tom, Grand Australia and Agronomer.

During the long winter evenings Joseph Blewitt would spend a few hours at a neighbour's place playing cards and listening to ghost stories. One night Dave Rule related a yarn that made those present shiver with fright. However, Joe declared that he did not believe in ghosts and nothing could frighten him. One dark night after Dave had related a few blood-curdling yarns, Joe prepared to go to his home, which was half a mile distant. His host, Shelton Smith, detained him for a short time on some pretext, and in the meantime Dave announced that he was retiring. Instead he went to a log fence which Joe had to cross on the way home, and he waited there with a dark lantern. Joe came along in due time, and as he put his foot on the top log of the fence Dave flashed the lantern in his face. Joe roared in terror and fell off the fence, and on regaining his feet he fled to Smith's house and threw himself against the door, which burst open. Shelton Smith feigned surprise and said, 'What on earth is the matter?'

'A b—— ghost', was Joe's reply. He then gave an excited account of the awful object with glaring eyes which he had encountered at the fence, and added, 'I could feel its hot breath.' Joe was so terrified that he had to be escorted home. At the time he had never seen or heard of a dark lantern—I did not see one until 1877.

Hugh Read arrived in Australia about 1859 and his first job was reaping for Joseph Shumack at Canberra. One morning at breakfast Hugh said, 'Well, Joe, as I came across the lane I met that Irish savage that lives over there—how is it that they let these Irish savages come here? They should be kept out.'

Joe laughed and said, 'We are Irish—so are Leonard, Neylon and Flynn.'

The person referred to was Robert Maloney. Read told me that he got the shock of his life when he found that the Irish were respectable members of the community, because in England the Irish were decried and looked upon as the lowest type of humanity. Years later a son and daughter married a son and daughter of the 'Irish Savage' Robert Maloney—such are the strange issues of life. Hugh Read married my cousin Elizabeth in 1861, and his marriage and those of his children were happy unions and all were valuable assets to the State.

I have experienced some strange and amusing incidents during my lifetime, and I will now relate one which appeared to be a just retribution for the unjust abuse of a hard-working lad. In 1881 I built a wheat shed for Hugh Read. He was a rough diamond and at times would be carried beyond reason by an ungovernable temper. My cousin Elizabeth, his wife, was the opposite, and her son Jack took after his mother. One night at supper Read said to Jack, 'I want you to bring in such-and-such a bullock tomorrow and have him in the yard by one o'clock so that he will have time to cool off before we kill him.'

Jack set out at 9 a.m., but lunch was over with no sign of him or the bullock. At sunset Jack appeared without the bullock, and supper was being served when Read came in and said, 'Where is the bullock I sent you for?'

'I don't know, father,' was his son's reply, 'I could not find him.' Read then roared, 'You b—— Shumack b——! It is just like you to spend a day in the bush and come home without him. I will bring him in tomorrow and will have him in early—see if I don't.'



Quiet prevailed during supper, and when we retired Jack said, 'Didn't I get it from father—I was all over the country and all the cattle were there with the exception of that bullock.'

'Well, Jack,' I said, 'I hope your father comes home without him—I was surprised that he did not question you as to where you went and what cattle you saw, and I hope he is unsuccessful.'

Read left early next morning and lunch passed without sign of Read or the bullock. After sunset I saw him at the stables, and when I went in to supper he was at the table and I said, 'Well, Hugh, did you find the bullock?'

'No,' was his reply, 'I did not—but I had my dinner off him—no wonder Jack could not find him. I went down to the pipe clay and all the cattle were there with the exception of the bullock. I then called on my brother George, who suggested that I call on McMullen, which I did. He suggested that I see Bob Gillespie. As I arrived at the door of the Gillespie home Mrs Gillespie put a roast of beef on the table and asked me to stay for dinner. I questioned Bob, who declared that he had not been on the flat for a fortnight—he said that Lucas had taken cattle from there to the Spring Range, and suggested that the bullock might be there. I then returned to McMullen and asked what he meant when he said to "ask Gillespie". He then told me that he saw Gillespie driving some cattle off the flat four days before and the bullock was there then. When I told him what Gillespie had told me, he said, "Ha, just like Bob." I was then satisfied that I had dined off my bullock.'

When my infant brother Peter died, mother became nurse to the infant son of a Mrs Leider, who was the daughter of the great Magillicuddy, who, if the system of Royal primogeniture as it is accepted is correct, should have been the King of Ireland. However, if he had not the power of royalty he had all its haughty pride, and he made arrangements for the marriage of his daughter Dorothy to an English duke. He consulted neither wife nor daughter on the matter, and both were surprised and shocked when he told them to prepare for the wedding. A week before the ceremony was to take place the bride-elect and her mother went to Dublin and Dorothy married W. Leider. Magillicuddy was a furiously disappointed man and disinherited his daughter. My aunt, Phoebe Shanahan, kept my parents informed about the Magillicuddy family, and when he died in 1863 she sent us a paper giving details of his death, etc., and also a description of his mansion, Rosenalee, in which was marble from all the quarries of the world.

In 1872 among the Duntroon guests was a tall young man who attracted great attention by his desire to associate with the workers on the estate. The Duntroon carriage went into Queanbeyan one day and it was there that father and Magillicuddy—for such was his name—met for the first time. He was surprised and said, 'My sister Dorothy gave me a good account of Mrs Shumack and I must call out and see her. I am pleased to say that father forgave Dorothy her runaway marriage and left her £16,000 in his will.'

However, he left Duntroon suddenly without calling, and we blamed Campbell for this. Magillicuddy was popular with the servants at Duntroon, and James Kinleyside, whose sister Mrs Austin and her family conducted the dairy there, said that the day after Magillicuddy arrived he came to the dairy and asked to be allowed to milk one or two cows each morning. The request was granted and every morning, wet or fine, he never failed to attend at milking time, an action of which his host did not approve.

## *A Saga of Pioneers and Old Identities*

*Bowyer family John and Catherine Coppin*  
*John Patrick Cunningham (Paddy Two Sticks) The McDonalds Martin Ryan*  
*Skinny Jack James McGregor and Crabb Joseph Fletcher Thomas Wells*  
*Murders Patrick Kelly Mick Kelly James Hawes James Harkins*  
*Francis Dunn Ralph Edge Convict labour Joseph Crabtree*  
*William Klensendorffe William Westwood (Jacky Jacky) Michael Murphy*  
*John Wilkinson Ploughs John Wilson's blasphemy*  
*Jerry Sullivan (George Baker) Uncle Sam's trip Mail-order marriage*  
*Levi Plummer Old Josh Robert Bradbury Thomas Gribble*  
*Christopher and Kate Donnelly A runaway sailor William Jamieson*

TWO MILES west of Emu Bank in 1858 lived a Mr and Mrs Bowyer and their children, William, George, Frederick, Emma, Dolly, Sarah, and another whose name I have forgotten. They were an excellent family. In 1858 Mrs Bowyer gave mother this account of her early life:

I was engaged in a shop in London, and there was a shortage of a few shillings in the takings and I was charged with stealing. I was innocent of the offence, but was found guilty and got eight years' transportation. Two of Mrs Fry's lady pupils visited the gaol where I was confined and they were a protection and comfort to me. About six months later I and about a hundred other unfortunates were put aboard a ship bound for Sydney. The lady officer who was in charge of us was a disgrace to civilization, yet I had no reason to complain until we were becalmed on the 'line'. Here we met a large British war vessel. One morning five of us were examined by the ship's doctor and we were then ordered into a boat and taken aboard the warship, where we were handed over to some officers. We were the sport of these beasts for a week or more. My owner was an officer of high rank and was addressed as 'Your Highness'. At last a fair wind sprang up and we were sent back to the transport again. I was only fifteen years old at the time, and some of the other girls were younger. On landing in Sydney I was assigned to a good Christian couple, and I was with them about a month when my mistress questioned me about my state of health. I then gave her an account of my treatment aboard the British warship, and she immediately informed her husband. A few days later he went to Sydney and reported the matter, but he was promptly snubbed and was advised in no uncertain terms to forget the matter, otherwise he would lose his assigned servants and the land he received with them—or perhaps more severe treatment. He had no option but to obey, and about five months later my son William was born. About six years later I met and married my husband.

The Bowyer family left the district in 1862 or 1863 and settled in the northern part of the State. Their son William married Elizabeth Crabb in 1862, her father having been one of the earliest pioneers in County Murray. William was an excellent worker and a good cricketer.

One evening a man and woman, each carrying a heavy swag, called at our house and inquired the way to Ginninderra. The man was aged nineteen years and his wife twenty-nine. A thickly-timbered ridge hid the Ginninderra homestead from view, and it was in this scrub about 400 yards from our house that John Coppin and his wife Catherine—for such was their name—erected their tent. It was Friday evening. The next morning John Coppin went to the homestead and asked Mr Davis for a job.

'I am full up at the moment', Davis said. Coppin expressed disappointment and said, 'Paddy said I was sure to get a job here.'

'Oh, you are the man Paddy spoke about,' said Davis, 'what part of England do you come from?'

'Kent', was the reply.

'Can you play cricket?' asked Davis.

'I played at home,' Coppin said, 'and was present when Kent beat All England.'

'Come into the office,' said Davis, 'I will engage you at 12s. a week and rations. I have no house to give you, but you can draw your rations now.' Coppin did so. A few days later mother received an early morning call and a son was born to this worthy couple. They were my neighbours for years and were industrious members of the community. John Coppin was a carpenter by trade and the gold fever lured him to Australia.

This is how this couple came to be married.

Catherine Sheedy arrived in Australia in the 1850s and accepted a position of lady's maid for the wage of 6s. a week. Her employer was a Mrs Deloitte and the household comprised her husband and family of six children. John Coppin arrived about twelve months later and was employed as a general hand. One day Coppin was directed to bottle some spirits in the cellar and to be sure to be at the gate at 6 p.m. to take charge of the horse and carriage. Master Quentin Deloitte gave Coppin the keys to the cellar and went down to assist him. When the mistress and daughter arrived home there was no one at the gate to take the horses, and Catherine said that she had seen nothing of the men since the ladies departed that morning. Mrs Deloitte went to the cellar and found the erring two something like Tam o' Shanter—both were 'glorious, O'er all the ills of life victorious'. The lady was furious and removed Master Quentin with difficulty. Coppin was left in the cellar until he recovered and then the mistress gave him a piece of her mind and said, 'You are discharged as soon as I can get a man to take your place.'

Here Catherine Sheedy took a hand: 'I think you are most unjust—your son is to blame because he is years older than this boy and he was in charge. You can take a week's notice from me, and I would not stop here if you doubled my wages.'

Seven days later this young couple appeared before Rev. Father Therry, the pioneer priest, and departed as man and wife. An hour later they started for the Major's Creek goldfield. All their worldly possessions were a small tent, a pair of double blankets, a few clothes and the usual bushman's kit and billy can. They were two months on the road, and as it was harvest time they got some harvesting work on the way up. On arriving at the goldfields Coppin soon found that not five per cent of those engaged were successful, and through his seven or eight months' toil as a digger he made only fair wages. A friend of his wife's, who knew the family in Ireland, advised him to look out for a position on a station, as gold digging was a very uncertain occupation. He mentioned that he was going to Ginninderra station as he had a job there, and offered to be their guide. Coppin and his wife accepted and they did the journey in four days. Their guide, John Patrick Cunningham, was also employed, the spring lambing having started. A few months later Coppin accepted the position of shepherd at the Goat Station—now Coppin's Crossing—taking charge of one flock of sheep while Cunningham took charge of the other.

Here Coppin and his wife reared a family of seven, and as neighbours were excellent. It would be impossible to find a more hospitable couple than John and Catherine Coppin.

After some years at the Goat Station, Coppin moved to the head station and was employed as a general labourer. One day he received orders to take out the ration cart as old Maurice, the ration cart driver, was sick. Before starting on the round he asked, 'Is the horse quiet?'

'Yes,' said the overseer, 'a broadside from a "74" would not startle him.' He called at Emu Bank, Crow Bone, and then the Ginninderra Falls, and here—while Coppin was having lunch with the hutkeeper—the horse took fright. Coppin rushed out, the dray struck a stump and capsized, and he was knocked senseless. The hutkeeper thought he was dead and dragged him into the hut and set out for Ginninderra, nine miles distant. He covered the distance in record time and a cart was despatched to bring in the body. Mrs Davis broke the sad news to Mrs Coppin. When the party arrived at the hut they were astonished to find the corpse gone. There was a pool of blood and swarms of ants, and after a fruitless search the men returned to the station. It transpired that after the hutkeeper started for the station, Coppin's senses partly returned and he found that he was covered with ants. He had no recollection of the accident and only a dim idea of why he was there. When he saw the dray and harness scattered about he remembered bringing out the rations, and started for Ginninderra. About half way he met Edwin Palmer, who kindly gave him his horse, which he rode to the station. He was covered in blood and dirt and was laid up for a month, during which he was given the usual ration but no wages. Dr Hayley, who attended him, only charged him £3—the doctor's usual charge for that distance was £7. His action in this matter has never been forgotten and has immortalized the name of Hayley, and his departure from the district was regretted by all classes. Coppin and his wife lived and died in the district, and their name lives in Coppin's Crossing.

Early one morning I was taking my sheep through what was known as The Gap when I met two men. They were a splendid pair of Scots, a father and son, both Donald McDonald. One was six feet seven inches tall and the other a couple of inches shorter. It had rained all night and heavy rain was still falling, and they told me that they had missed the track in the dark and had spent a miserable night in the bush. I directed them to our home, where mother gave them a meal; they then went to Ginninderra and the overseer directed them to Yass, where a job was vacant. About nine months later Cameron, the overseer, told father that young McDonald had stabbed a man at Yass and was wanted by the police. Both these men had sheath knives in their belt when I met them. As newspapers were few and far between at the time, we heard no more about the matter.

Shortly after the Ginninderra estate was founded one Martin Ryan laboured there. He had been transported from the old land—his crime was a desire to see his native land free from the foreign yoke. His brother died in Ireland in the mid-forties and Martin, who was unmarried, sent home for the family. In due time his nephew, with a wife and four children, arrived at the Tea Gardens, Ginninderra, where they reported that Martin's brother, his wife and all his family had died from famine and fever in Ireland. Mrs Ryan took charge as housekeeper, and her husband was otherwise employed about the estate. According to Judy Webb she was a very industrious woman, but although old Martin was one of nature's gentlemen, his nephew was the reverse. Early in the sixties Martin Ryan disappeared and his nephew reported that he had gone home to the old country. This report was not accepted, as Martin had been transported for the term of his natural life and had not been pardoned, so the police sent home a report requesting inquiries. More than twelve months passed before the Queanbeyan police were advised that the surviving relatives in the old country knew nothing of Martin's alleged visit. The nephew was in Queanbeyan when this information was received, and the sergeant advised him of the result of their inquiries and said that he was satisfied there had been foul play and that another search would begin

early next day. Ryan left town late in the afternoon much the worse for drink, and when he had crossed the creek near home he put his horse into a furious gallop, much to the surprise of his wife and a few friends who watched him approach. On he came, lashing his horse with the whip, and in this manner approached the house. When a few yards from the door the horse propped and Ryan was thrown over its head and struck the doorstep with terrific force and received injuries from which he died within an hour. Judy Webb was present and laid him out. Meanwhile the police conducted another thorough search of the locality, but no trace of the missing man was found.

About 1894 James McCarthy of Glenwood hired three brothers to burn off and scrub a heavily timbered paddock. It had been ringbarked some years before and there was one very large apple tree with all the branches broken off, and these the brothers piled around the trunk and fired. Late in the evening one of the brothers came around stirring the fires and he threw the unburnt ends around the trunk and gave it a few thrusts with a handspike. At last he poked a hole in the trunk and a human skull rolled out at his feet. He put it aside and called his brothers, who immediately notified the police. The ashes of the fire were subsequently put through a sieve, and an old tinder box, flint and steel, and the charred remains of a complete human skeleton according to medical testimony, and a complete set of trouser buttons and some shirt buttons were found. The skull had every tooth in it. The remains were buried where they were found. There is every probability that they were those of the missing Martin Ryan. James McCarthy later showed me the spot where they were found and said that if Judy Webb had been alive she might have been able to throw some light on the matter, as it was less than two miles from her grog shop. She had reported that Martin and his nephew did not agree, and said that she was as sure that he had killed his uncle, as sure as if she had seen him do it. I knew all the Ryan family with the exception of Martin, and they were good, honest people whose families were exemplary members of society.

Martin's nephew had six children, John, Timothy, Martin, William, Edward (Ned) and Margaret.

Ned Ryan, the youngest son, was anxious to visit Sydney, as the yarns told by the teamsters had fired his imagination and he wanted to see the ships that could carry a bullock team. At last his chance came, and there was not a happier boy in Ginninderra when he started for Sydney with a team of three horses and a dray and about thirty-five hundredweight of freight, in charge of an old-time teamster named Skinny Jack. The trip was uneventful and in due course they unloaded at Campbell's Wharf. It was late in the evening when they finished and the teamsters then drove across to what is now the Botanical Gardens. There was no Government House there at the time, and no sea wall, and much of what is now gardens was submerged. The teamsters, three in number, unharnessed their horses and told Ned to light a fire and boil the billy while they went to the township to get provisions. They were back within the hour, and as Ned had a bright fire going and had the tea made, they all sat down to supper. Suddenly there was an outburst of profanity, and Skinny Jack spat out a mouthful of tea.

'Where did you get the water to make this b—— tea?' he roared.

'Over there', young Ned said, pointing to the sea!

'Of all the b—— fools! Why did you do that?' Jack said. 'Didn't you know it was salt?'

'No, I did not know there was anything wrong with it', was the reply.

This caused a great laugh and a fresh pot of tea was quickly made. Ned's salt water tea was a standing joke for years and caused many a laugh at his expense.

About 1864 my cousin Joseph Shumack wanted to see Sydney, and though he was only a lad, Skinny Jack persuaded Joe's parents to let him make the trip. Joe was a happy boy the morning they left for Sydney because he expected to pick up many precious things in the streets. The season was very dry and they had to make longer journeys each day in order to reach water. All went well until they were a



*The Reverend Thomas Hassall, the 'Galloping Parson',  
whose saddle for forty-one years, from 1827, was his 'easy chair'*





*Shepherds lining up for rations: 10 lb. flour, 10 lb. meat, 2 lb. sugar,  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. tea.  
In 1856 Richard Shumack, as a station hand, received 15 lb. each of meat  
and flour, 3 lb. sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. tea and 5 oz. salt*

few days' journey on the Sydney side of Goulburn, where it was necessary for Skinny Jack to drive his bullocks about a mile from the camp for grass, as there was none near it. He arose at 2 a.m. and made a damper, and at daylight he woke Joe and said, 'If I am not back when the sun shines on that hill, take the damper out of the ashes and dust it.'

Joe obeyed instructions and had just made a pot of tea when a blackfellow and his gin appeared. Now Joe had heard some awful tales about the blacks, and Skinny Jack had told him many a hair-raising story about them. Consequently, Joe thought that if he refused their demands he might be killed and eaten.

'Me want damper, me want meat, me want baccy', was the blackfellow's plea. Joe was very liberal and gave them the damper and all the meat they had—plus an apology for not being able to supply them with baccy. The blacks departed shortly before Jack appeared with the bullocks, and when he heard what had happened and realized that there was nothing for breakfast, the air was blue.

'I wish they had taken you and made their breakfast off you—that is all you are fit for, you useless b——', Jack said.

Joe was now very sorry that he had left home, and his condition was further aggravated by the fact that it was very late in the evening before they were able to obtain supplies of flour and meat and prepare their first meal for the day. However, Jack's sense of humour soon returned and he gave Joe instructions on what to do if he ever had another visit from the blacks.

One summer's day in 1866 we were busy threshing at Ginninderra when Maurice Welsh brought the news that Skinny Jack was dead. It was depressing news, for Jack was a good sample of the old-time teamster and was esteemed and respected by all who knew him. He was a great friend of my uncles John and Peter.

In 1858 James McGregor lived on the Ginninderra Creek, three miles east of the head station, and I first met him in 1861 when sheep washing at Deep Creek. A man named Crabb, who was a stonemason and bricklayer, had the adjoining farm. I saw Crabb often when he was working in a quarry in the locality, and every evening he would leave his tools at our house so that they wouldn't be stolen. McGregor's farm was of seven acres and he had a good crop and harvest in the season 1859-60. One morning Crabb did not call for his tools, to our surprise, and later in the day we heard that he had been arrested and charged with stealing fifty bushels of wheat, the property of James McGregor. These neighbours had their wheat stacked in the same yard and were threshing at the same time with the flail. McGregor had charge of a flock of 2,000 sheep and employed a man to do the threshing, and I believe Crabb also employed a man for a similar purpose. One morning after breakfast McGregor's man reported that the heap of threshed wheat had been tampered with and that Crabb's heap of wheat was twice the size that it had been the evening before. The police were quickly on the scene and Crabb was arrested. The assumption was that Crabb came at night and removed half of McGregor's wheat to his own heap—the heaps were about a chain apart. A couple of days before the theft, McGregor's hired hand had cut his finger when repairing a flail cap, and he bound the wound with a tassel cut from a scarf. This had come off his finger and should have been in the heap of wheat he was threshing; however, it was found in Crabb's wheat. The trial was held in Queanbeyan and this evidence condemned Crabb, who was sentenced to three years' hard labour. I doubt if a conviction would be the result today. There were many who believed in Crabb's innocence and reasoned that it was the work of an enemy, and I believe this to be true. I never heard anything against Crabb other than this. Upon his release he and his family left the district and settled in the north, where they did well and a daughter, Betsey, married William Bowyer. At this time there were two families in the district—Crabb and Crabtree—and a shearer at Duntroon named Crabstick.



A day or so after Christmas Day 1859 a funeral passed our home at Emu Bank, and at the time it made me and other youths think of ghosts. The deceased was drowned when attempting to swim the Ginninderra Creek, which was in flood after a thunderstorm, not far from Parkwood. His story was told me by Thomas Wells, who was a good neighbour of mine for more than twenty-six years:

Joseph Fletcher was a native of London and was transported in the mid-thirties and served his time with Henry Hall of Charnwood until he became a free man in 1858. The ration allowed us at the time was not sufficient for a healthy man, and in due course Fletcher became a clever ration thief. However, I must speak well of him because he acted well towards me. He was butcher-storekeeper, and Hall would never entrust the keys of the store to him and would search him at the end of the day's work. I was employed as stockman. One evening Fletcher killed and dressed five pigs, and at supper said to me, 'Tom, do you like pork cutlets?' 'Yes, I do', I said. 'Well, Tom,' he said, 'I want you to put a spurt on tomorrow morning, and in that cherry tree bush down there you will find a parcel—bring it to our hut.' I did as directed and found the parcel but did not open it. When the bell rang for breakfast Hall searched Fletcher, saying, 'You know that I cannot trust you, Fletcher'—but he found nothing. Fletcher smiled—and we had pork cutlets for breakfast and Hall was none the wiser.

About this time Judy Webb conducted a sly-grog shop not far from Parkwood. One day Hall's team arrived from Sydney with station supplies, and it was Fletcher's duty to place these goods in the store. However, he determined to steal some sugar and later trade it to Judy Webb for grog. He knew that Hall would be watching him so he laid his plans carefully. It was Hall's custom to ring the bell at commencement of work, and on this particular day a few minutes after the bell ceased ringing it rang again. Hall ran to see who was ringing it and was surprised to see an opossum on the bell. He then thought of Fletcher and ran back just in time to see him enter his hut carrying a bucket. 'Where is that bucket you had in your hand?' Hall roared. Fletcher indicated a five-gallon bucket of water and said it was the one Hall saw him carry into the hut. 'That is not the one I saw you carrying, I swear', said Hall, and immediately searched the hut but found nothing. A few nights later Fletcher took a bucket of sugar to Judy Webb's sly-grog shop and traded it for two bottles of rum.

I asked Wells if he knew where Fletcher's plant was and he said he did not know—nor did he try to find out. No doubt it was under the big flagstone in the fireplace—Crabtree had one in his hut at Canberra, and it was not discovered until all the old hands were dead.

When his time expired in 1858 Fletcher obtained a farm at Ginninderra on what was known as The Grant, and of the few good crops grown in 1859 he had one but he was not destined to reap it. He was drowned on Christmas Eve attempting to swim the Ginninderra Creek. His body was recovered on Christmas Day and the inquest was held on Boxing Day. He was buried near where his body was found, and the night before the funeral a few of his cronies gathered for a wake and there was an abundant supply of firewater. A dispute arose between Thomas Wells and a man named Jones, who invited Wells outside. Wells proved the better man, so a man named Tinsley, who was a friend of Jones's, went to his assistance. Wells was compelled to adopt stronger measures, so took a stick from a fence and laid his attackers out, with the result that neither attended the funeral. When they recovered they laid informations against Wells alleging murderous assault and he was arrested later in the day by Inspector O'Neill, who took him into Queanbeyan handcuffed and chained in a dray. My father-in-law, John Winter, told me that when the police party passed through Acton he saw Wells chained in the dray. Wells told me that he would never forgive O'Neill for making him suffer this indignity, and said, 'I would have gone quietly—I only gave the cowards what they deserved.' I did not know Wells at the time, but we thought

that he must be an awful beast to have killed Morley and then to assault these men. He was convicted and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. Upon his release he returned to Emu Bank, where he was a good, honest neighbour for twenty-five years.

James Young told me that he was at the Goulburn Sessions in connection with a case of horse stealing, and the Wells case and a case of wilful murder were on at the same time. The murder case was a shocking affair. A well-to-do scoundrel persuaded a woman to leave her husband and live with him, but after a couple of months his conduct was such that she stated her intention of returning to her husband, who lived a couple of miles away. She went to see her husband, leaving her child asleep in the cot. When she returned a short time later and opened the door, the first thing she saw was the child's head on a plate on the table. It was a gruesome spectacle—and her lover was quickly arrested and charged with murder. Soon after the trial began, counsel for the accused drew attention to the fact that his client was charged with the murder of John Smith, whereas the name of the dead child was John Brown, and he demanded that the charge be dismissed. After a brief debate the judge upheld counsel's submission and the accused was discharged. Such was the law in those days. James Young and the public generally were shocked when this murderer was discharged, but as the law stood a flaw in the indictment wilfully inserted would save him. However, John Herbert Plunket took the matter up and prepared a Bill, and after a bitter debate in Parliament a law was passed permitting a case to be re-tried on the production of fresh evidence, and providing for a charge to be amended.

The earlier Wells tragedy had shocked the district. In 1858 Thomas Wells was a teamster in partnership with Thomas Gribble, and lived on The Grant at Ginninderra. His wife had a liking for drink, and this weakness was more pronounced when her husband was absent from home with the team. One day during his absence some loose characters called and proceeded to make merry. Samuel Morley heard about the party and went to the house and persuaded the characters to leave. He then had a couple of nips with Mrs Wells, and was well under the influence when Wells returned and attacked them with an axe. Morley was killed outright, and Judy Webb inserted thirty stitches in the wounds received by Mrs Wells. Wells was arrested and subsequently convicted on a charge of manslaughter. The testimony of his wife saved him from a more serious charge and he received a light sentence. Upon his release he returned to Ginninderra and was employed by William Davis. The first occasion I saw Wells was when he was driving a bullock team, and I had climbed into the topmost branches of a large tree. He passed close by and called out to his companion, 'Jim, look at that white blackfellow in that tree.'

John McIntosh of Majura told me that the first murder south of Goulburn took place near Queanbeyan about 1837. There was a sheep station where the town now stands, and one of the shepherds discovered the partly burnt body of a man. The remains were removed to Ginninderra, where an inquest was held and two men were later arrested. They were sent to Sydney for trial and were found guilty and hanged on the site where the Barley Mow Hotel was later built in Castlereagh Street.

We were shocked in 1862 when a bullock driver reported the dead body of a man in the Sawpit Gully near Queanbeyan. Dr Hayley examined the remains and said they were those of an Indian. Two brothers, Mahommet and Abdulla Cassin, and another Indian were arrested and charged with the murder, and the Cassin brothers were later convicted and sentenced to death. Abdulla was reprieved but Mahommet suffered the death penalty. A few days after the execution I was in the blacksmith's shop at Ginninderra and heard a full account of the case.

Late one evening in the spring of 1859 I was bringing some sheep and lambs to the folds when I was accosted by an old man who requested shelter for the night. Heavy rain was falling and he was drenched. I told him that father was working just over the ridge and that he had better ask him. When I arrived home after yarding the sheep the old man was sitting by the fire, very thankful for a night's

shelter. He was well educated and his name was Patrick Kelly. His history is a sad one and dearly illustrates how one false step can ruin a man's life. After supper we all sat at the fireside and Paddy—as we always called him after that meeting—told us the story of his life.

My parents were well-to-do farmers in Ireland and I was destined to be a priest. I had passed a couple of exams with honours when I and several other students took part in a political meeting. A riot broke out and a warrant was issued against me and a few others. As our offence meant death at that time, we cleared out to the Wicklow Hills and joined a gang that had been outlawed. We had a run of a year or more before our gang was broken up, and although we did not commit murder, one man lost his life in the following manner. One night we held up an estate, the proprietor of which, an absentee landlord, was a most inhuman monster to all dependants. Our captain intended to flog this man and then hang him, but we were a day too late; he had left. He then ordered the butler—who was intensely disliked as a tyrant—to prepare supper for us. As we were about to sit down to supper one of the servants gave our captain the hint not to drink the wine or spirits provided, so he then ordered the butler to drink. He protested on the false grounds that he was a non-drinker, but when threatened with the rope he drank the spirits and then prayed for the services of a priest. This was denied him and he died in agony shortly afterwards. We had supper and then took a supply of liquor from the cellar and returned to our hide-out in the hills. A few weeks later we were attacked and some of our party were killed—I and a half dozen others were taken prisoner, although our captain escaped to America. Later we were tried and condemned to death—five were hanged, and I was reprieved and later sent out here for life. I was twenty-two years old at the time and had the good fortune to be assigned to a good Christian family. When under sentence of death I met Captain Scanlan and his man Sullivan, who suffered the supreme penalty for the murder of Colleen Bawn. This girl was employed in a bootmaker's shop in Queenstown and Scanlan's command was in County Cork. Scanlan was connected with the best families in England, and although engaged to marry the daughter of an earl, he had designs on Miss Bawn and persuaded her to marry him. He arranged with friends for the services of a bogus priest, but they double-crossed him and a genuine priest performed the marriage ceremony and they then made demands on Scanlan for money. He now realized that he had been tricked, and decided to dispose of his wife in order to marry the earl's daughter—and a substantial dowry. He arranged for his man Sullivan to take his wife on a fishing excursion by boat and at a favourable opportunity she was shot, her body then loaded with stones and dumped in the water. A few days later it floated to the surface and was identified; Scanlan and Sullivan were speedily arrested and brought to trial, convicted and sentenced to death. In the condemned cell, Scanlan gave me an account of the murder and he said that with powerful friends at Court he would not be hanged. He was wrong.

Such was Kelly's story. The facts of this matter were suppressed at the time, but about 1863 a member of the House of Commons moved that full particulars of the case be published. After a heated debate the motion was carried and a fair report of Scanlan case appeared in the *Sydney Mail*. I last saw Patrick Kelly in 1862.

In the spring of 1860 a very old man called at our house and asked my mother if he could stay for the night. His name was Mick Kelly—no relation to the Kelly mentioned above. After making his request mother said, 'Yes, you can, poor man; why, you must be over seventy.'

'I am that,' he said, 'I don't know how old I am because I took part in the Battle of Vinegar Hill and I was a man grown years before that. I was present when Skulabogue Barn was burnt with the loss of about 140 lives, but with our crude weapons—no firearms—we had no chance against the troops.'

This old man told us about the awful state of Ireland in his young days and said that he saw a teacher hanged over the school house door for no other crime than teaching the Irish language. Here is account of the burning of a mansion and about seventeen persons in 1797. This awful event is recorded in history, and father and mother read the account when they were at school. The perpetrators were described as fiends incarnate, although no report was given of the awful crimes perpetrated by invading troops. There was no Press to give the other side of the picture—to report the pitching of infants across the street on bayonets by drunken troops, or the torturing pickets and spreadeagling. All these horrible tortures were practised all over the country until the authorities found a better use for the victims by transporting them. Here is Mick Kelly's story:

For years Mr ——— was suspected as a spy in the pay of the authorities. He lived in a mansion that was closely guarded and from time to time some unfortunate person would be seized and flogged, spreadeagled or picketed on information which we suspected was supplied by this man. At last we received definite proof that he was a spy and our leader then laid plans to deal with him once and for all. Our leader was a clever man and his brother was one of many unfortunates who suffered death on the picket. He called us to a secret meeting and then spread a false report that a raid was to be made by a large party of 'White Boys' some twenty miles away.\*

The false report of the impending raid drew the guard away from the mansion, which we surrounded about midnight but found the windows barred. We set fire to the building, and as the inmates tried to escape we thrust them back into the inferno with our pikes. A girl appeared at a window with a child in her arms—'For God's sake let me out!' she screamed. She was a nursemaid about sixteen years of age, and her father was a tenant well known to us. A big, strong fellow said, 'Quick, I will lift you out.' He did so, and told the girl to run away home with the child. I immediately snatched the child from her arms and hurled it into the flames, as we were sworn not to let any of the tyrant's family escape. When all was quiet except the roaring of the flames, we scattered. A few innocent men suffered as a result of our action, but our captain escaped to the land of the free. At this time the average Irishman was little better than a slave. He could cultivate land but could only dispose of his produce through our oppressors' hands—many of whom were absentee landlords—and the result was great misery. Many of these foreigners paid substantial rewards for information regarding members of our gang, and as a result some of our men were caught. A special meeting of our club was held as we were in possession of evidence sufficient to identify the traitor—lots were cast as to who should kill him. The fatal decision was made and this was the method adopted by us. A fair was held at a town, during which we started a row in the vicinity of the traitor, and as he ran up to see what it was about we beat him to death with our cudgels. I and a few others were later caught, tried and sentenced to death. Later I got what I never expected—they let me off and lagged me for life—and that is more than sixty years ago now. I had an awful time in Van Diemen's Land before I was sent to Braidwood in New South Wales. Here I received several floggings. Our hutkeeper was a spy, and one of his tales to my master earned me fifty lashes, after which I was sent back to look after the sheep without receiving medical attention. My mate and I then decided to play a trick on the hutkeeper. One night when he was asleep in the watchbox we carried it into a waterhole, and when he woke he had to wade out. This lark earned my mate and me another fifty lashes and I was unable to look after the sheep as I should. I was now haled before the Bench for neglect of duty and was promptly ordered another fifty lashes. A new doctor named Llewellyn was on the Bench, and when he heard me

\* 'White Boys' were peasants who wore white shirts over their clothing at night and raided farms, maiming cattle and destroying the crops of landowners who charged high rents or offered high rents in order to obtain land.

complain about the condition of my back he examined me and ordered me to hospital. From that day onwards the efforts of this doctor gradually improved the conditions for us unfortunates.

For years Mick Kelly used to visit us and stay a few days; he died at Yass in 1871, when he must have been over a hundred years of age.

Late one evening in the early sixties an old man named James Hawes called at our house at Emu Bank and asked for accommodation for the night, which was freely given him. This man's story of the past was a dreadful one of cruelty and oppression, and mother said, 'What sort of men must those in authority have been? They could not believe in God or the devil.'

'On the contrary,' the old man said, 'they were in every case to my knowledge great church supporters; they would actually flog a man to death and be devout worshippers the next day! . . . I have not been inside a church since I served my time. I have my Bible, which is a great comfort to me.'

In 1864 Hawes was hired as a shepherd at Edge's station, where he remained two years. In 1867 Frederick Davis was walking down Auburn Street, Goulburn, when he met Hawes, who invited him to lunch. Davis accepted, and was astounded to learn that Hawes not only owned the hotel where they had lunch, but had other property in the town as well. £15 a week was his income, yet he went shepherding!

In 1858 I met a man named James Harkins at Ginninderra. He was a quiet, well-educated old man, and I know little about him except that he had the history of the world at his fingertips, and if a dispute took place about history or other matters—and there were plenty in those days—Jimmy was never found to be wrong. He knew the facts of the Wars of the Roses, the wars of Louis XIII of France, the American Civil War, and the Italian troubles of the sixties. He had a great collection of books, and knowing that I was a reader he encouraged me in every way and lent me many books—he also had a wonderful memory. When we came to Emu Bank he was employed at Ginninderra, and he and Lucy Davis looked after the poultry—he also kept the lamps in order—and his wage was 5s. a week. I never saw him in church or ever heard of him attending a place of worship, nor did I ever hear anyone speak disrespectfully about him. He was a man in ten thousand, yet his background was a mystery. All the money he had to spare went on books. When Mr Davis sold out to Mr Crace in 1877, Harkins must have passed his eightieth year. Arrangements were made about his future at Ginninderra, where a house was allotted him for his natural life; also rations and £5 a year. Here Jimmy spent his last two years alone, and I will never forget the last time I saw him. In August 1879 I was returning from the store with a large parcel and I called on him and returned some books I had borrowed. He had a large parcel of books ready for me which he urged me to take.

'I will call for them next week, Jimmy,' I said, 'as I have a fair load now.'

'Just take the lot now,' he said, 'strange things happen in a week.'

'No, I will take this one', I said, and selected Wilkie Collins's book, *The Queen of Hearts*.

'You will like that one', he said, and so I left him.

This was the last I saw of the good old man. A couple of days later E. Holland called with the usual week's ration and found him very ill. He was taken to hospital and passed away peaceably a few days later. I lost the books, which I very much regretted, although I have *The Queen of Hearts* as a memento of this kind old man. Such was the end of James Harkins, whose early history remained a mystery, yet who was deeply respected by all who knew him.

Shortly after the shooting of the Myall blacks in the Hunter River district, one of the participants fled with his wife and child to Uriarra, where he was arrested a few days later by a constable from Queanbeyan. The following morning they set off for Queanbeyan, the constable carrying the prisoner's child and leading a second horse on which was the prisoner, handcuffed, with his wife riding behind him.

Crossing the Murrumbidgee River the prisoner suddenly jumped into the water, reached the bank and disappeared into the scrub. The trooper placed the child on the sand and gave chase, but the prisoner escaped. He then returned and found the child crying, but there was no trace of the mother, who had fallen into the water when the prisoner jumped off the horse. A week later her body was found half a mile down stream. Vile rumours now circulated about the trooper, but Mrs Donald McDonald and John McIntosh both declared that the trooper's version of the incident was correct in every respect. The unfortunate woman and Mrs McIvor rest side by side in the cemetery paddock at Ginninderra. An old Canberra identity named William Jamieson, who worked for me for many years, was present at the trial and execution of the other culprits involved in the Myall shooting crime.

Francis Dunn was a selector living near us. One morning he and his son Isaac were splitting timber on the west side of a ridge and we were at work on the east side. The second tree they felled caught in the branches of another one and kicked back, inflicting shocking injuries on one of young Isaac's legs. We heard someone calling out but thought it was Dunn's children and paid no further attention to it. We later learned that it was Dunn calling to his wife for assistance. Isaac died a few hours after the limb was amputated. He was the eldest son of a family of four. Later, twins were born to his parents, and one of them, named William Fraser Dunn, represented Mudgee in Parliament for more than twenty years and was Minister for Agriculture for several years.

William Francis Dunn was one of the earliest pioneers living when I first met him in the autumn of 1859. I was shepherding sheep one afternoon on what was known as the Bandicoot Plain when he came along with a dray and three horses. He gave me a fright when he shouted, 'What are you doing with these sheep on my run? I will have you and them in gaol.' I was very frightened, but father and Uncle Peter, who were with him, told me that he was only joking. He was a bachelor and well-to-do stock-owner, and I often saw him travelling the district with his blood stallion. I last talked with him in October 1875, when he brought thirty head of cattle to the home of William Mathieson and said to his wife, 'Where is Long Bill? I am full up of these b—— cattle eating my grass!' He stormed in this fashion for a quarter of an hour or more and Mrs Mathieson then quietly said, 'Come in and have some dinner, because you must be badly in need of some after all that talk.' He accepted the Mathieson hospitality and that ended the matter.

Dunn had some land at Dungarvan which he later sold and bought a property on the Monaro. He was a neighbour and friend of George Southwell, who called on one of his periodical visits one day and found him dead. News of his death was sent to Cooma and to the coroner in Queanbeyan, and in the meantime Southwell and his neighbours made a rough coffin. Several days elapsed without any news from the coroner or the police, and it was surmised that they were not coming; the body of deceased was then buried in an old mining shaft. A day later John Gale, the Queanbeyan district coroner, arrived to open the inquest, and requested those concerned to produce the body of William Francis Dunn. They explained the circumstances to Mr Gale, who reported the matter to the authorities but was advised to let it drop. Dunn's age was supposed to be between eighty-five and ninety-five. A search was now begun for the dead man's wealth—he did not believe in banks and was thought to have a few thousand pounds hidden somewhere. The search continued for days without success, although it was well known that he had a large sum of money when he left Canberra.

A few years after Dunn's death one of his neighbours left the locality and purchased a property elsewhere. Dame Rumour now became busy: 'There is old Bill's money . . . where did so-and-so get £3,500 to buy that property?' No doubt Dame Rumour was right on this occasion, as the party mentioned was very kind to Dunn, who had no relatives in Australia, and if he found Dunn's plant I don't blame him, because if this is what became of the money it was well invested.

In 1858 I became acquainted with John Patrick Cunningham, better known as Paddy Two Sticks—how he came by that name I do not know—when he showed brother John and me how to rob a bees' nest. He was a quiet, decent man and we became firm friends. He did not drink or use bad language, and in 1852 he and a mate made a small fortune on the Ovens goldfields in Victoria when they took 4,000 ounces from one claim. He did not foolishly squander this money, as was the custom, but invested it in land in Sydney. He would visit Sydney once a year to collect his rents, which he invested, and he would then return to County Murray for the lambing season. No one who saw him following his flock would have taken him to be a man of property, yet this was how he spent eleven months of the year.

In 1857 he read a report of the arrival of a vessel in Sydney, and in the passenger list was one Catherine Sheedy. He visited the ship and found that she was a daughter of an old friend and next-door neighbour in Ireland. He obtained employment for her and later, when she had married John Coppin, persuaded her to come to Canberra, as I have already stated.

In 1860 Paddy was in charge of a flock of sheep at the Goat Station (now Coppin's Crossing) and John Coppin had charge of another flock, and Mrs Coppin was hutkeeper. The hut was of three rooms, and Paddy kept his effects in one room and slept in the watchbox. Following a sudden change in the weather, Paddy went to the hut to get his coat and discovered that the lining, including the sleeves, had been cut open and the sizeable sum of money he had concealed there had vanished. He accused Mrs Coppin but she strongly denied the theft. However, Paddy was not convinced and he immediately left and went to Edge's station. He told father and mother the story and said, 'I am bitterly disappointed in my old friend's daughter—they will be strangers to me now—but if they were in distress I would help them for old times' sake.'

Thus the friendship of many years was shattered. The identity of the thief was later discovered. Mrs Coppin recalled that just prior to the incident mentioned a well-known identity called and they were discussing the story of a beggar man who travelled through the district and was found dead some time later with more than £1,000 sewn into the lining of his coat. Mrs Coppin was busy in the potato patch at the time and the visitor said, 'I wonder where old Paddy keeps his money? He is an old miser and must have a lot somewhere.' The visitor then went to the hut to attend to little one-year-old Jack, and there is no doubt that she took the opportunity to inspect the coat.

Paddy now took over the Lime Kiln, or Edge's station as it was called, and he remained here until 1865, when he went to Sydney to take unto himself a wife in his sixty-fifth year. When shepherding he always carried a Bible, and one day in 1863 he lost it; a couple of months later I found it, minus the cover and a couple of leaves. In 1865 my friend Robert Kilby was in Sydney and he met Paddy, who took him around and showed him his property. He had six cottages with an acre of land attached to each, and he owned more than a hundred acres of land in the County of Cumberland. This fine old man, who had been with the first dray that crossed the river at Canberra in 1823 or 1824, died about 1867.

In December 1858 an old man named Ralph Edge called at our house on his way to Ginninderra, where he was the hutkeeper. He was a grand old fellow and had a splendid vegetable garden, forty head of cattle and a large flock of poultry. Three rations went to his hut, and owing to an abundance of vegetables a full third of the flour ration was saved. More than once father bought a bag of flour from him. He was the soul of hospitality and no tramp or caller left his place hungry. His hut was on the northern end of what was known as the Lime Kiln Waterhole or Edge's Station. He was a very industrious man, and although his wages were only 7s. a week he made a good bit of money with cattle and pigs. We were only a short time at Emu Bank when father bought some pigs from him—£3 was the price. Edge also was able to sell butter when most people had none, and in this way he laid by a nice sum of money.

At the close of 1859 or early in 1860 his money plant was raided; he went to add a little more to it and found his bank empty. A shepherd named William Harnet, who had just gone on a fortnight's holiday, was suspected and later arrested at John Coppin's place. Coppin had just taken over the Goat Station and had retired to rest when Harnet and James Wotherspoon arrived about ten o'clock. They had left Queanbeyan late that evening on foot and said they were tired and hungry after the sixteen-mile walk. Both were carrying bundles which were Harnet's property. Coppin and his wife prepared supper for them and Harnet remarked, 'I am sorry we could not get here earlier, but it is a long way — Mrs Roach has been kind to me so I bought these parcels for her.' After supper Coppin made a bed for the callers on the floor and soon all were asleep. Suddenly, rap, rap on the door sounded throughout the house and a voice called out, 'Open in the name of the law.'

Coppin and his wife got a great surprise on opening the door, for there stood Sub-Inspector O'Neill, who promptly arrested the two visitors and took possession of the parcels. News travelled slowly in those days and this was the first Coppin knew of the robbery, although Edge lived only five miles away. The two men were charged and appeared before the Court at Queanbeyan. However, Wotherspoon was discharged and Harnet stood his trial and was sentenced to eight years' hard labour. The evidence disclosed that the parcels he bought cost £27 and he made gifts to the local priest amounting to £7, while his pay cheque did not amount to half the sum spent. Harnet was seen in Queanbeyan after the robbery with a roll of notes in his possession, but when arrested had only a few shillings. The police spent some hours at Edge's place searching for the rest of the money but without success. Coppin told me years later that he believed the other shepherd got some of the stolen money because he slept in the watchbox near a new brush fence near the house, and it was here that Harnet planted some of the money and must have been seen doing it. Edge was a heavy loser, although I believe he was awarded the parcels. Mrs Roach put in a claim for them which was disallowed, and a few months later she left the locality and was no loss. Harnet was a quiet man, but did not know the meaning of honesty.

Shortly after this incident Ralph Edge lost £10. He sold some cattle and then sent for a couple of bottles of firewater. A new fence was being erected at the time and a dispute took place between Edge and a man named William Hickey. They went outside to settle the matter and Edge made short work of Hickey, but when getting dressed he found that two £5 notes had walked out of his vest pocket. There were three other persons present, and of course all denied having anything to do with the theft. However, this did not act as a warning to Edge, for a couple of years later a shepherd relieved him of £46 in notes, a few sovereigns and some silver. The thief had found Edge's plant and was 'too sick' to follow the sheep, so Edge took over and told him to lie up for a few days and he would look after the sheep until he recovered. He also asked him to light the fire about sunset. When this good-natured man came home there was no fire, no shepherd, and his plant was empty. Edge then walked to the head-station and reported the matter, and found that the thief had been in that morning and asked for his wages as he was 'full up' of the place. This was refused him until his time was up. About £8 was due to him, but he was never caught. After this Edge left his money in Mr Davis's hands and was allowed interest on it. Ralph Edge could not write—Mr F. J. Davis did it for him. He died in 1872 aged seventy-nine years. His was the first corpse I assisted to excoffin, and he was the first laid to rest in the Glebe cemetery at Ginninderra. He was a very quiet man and I never saw him drunk and he never went on the spree. I do not know where he served his time, but the first job he got in County Murray was that of labourer on the construction of St John's Church, Canberra, in 1841-3, and when that job was over he took the job of hutkeeper at the Lime Kiln. He retired in 1869 and had a nice sum of money in Mr Davis's hands. His funeral expenses were under £5, and what little property he had went to John and Catherine Coppin, who had looked after him in his later days.



About 1838 George Thomas Palmer had a gang of assigned servants at work in the Pine Range splitting posts and rails. Edge's station had just been founded and was under the management of a hutkeeper and two shepherds, one of whom was named Donald Bruce. About a year later Bruce's sheep came home unattended and the hutkeeper, Thomas Jordan, and the other shepherd suspected foul play. Jordan reported the matter to Ginninderra and a search was made for the missing man. A week later his body was found in Belconnen Creek. Death was due to a badly fractured skull. It was assumed that the deceased was climbing a tree leaning over the creek near where his body was found and accidentally fell and received fatal injuries. A convict was a cheap chattel in those days, and it was rumoured that Bruce was a spy employed by Palmer, one of his duties being to pass on information about the splitter gang who were working nearby. It was broadly hinted that a blow from an axe or club was the most likely cause of this unfortunate man's death.

I first met Joseph Crabtree in 1861. He was a harness maker and was busy at his trade two miles from our home. I do not know the circumstances of his transportation from the old country, but in County Murray he was highly respected as a quiet, inoffensive man. My old friend Robert Kilby employed his son Harry, and this is the father's story of the hardship he suffered when an assigned servant of William Klensendorlffe at Canberra.

We worked early and late and were half starved and received an occasional flogging for some minor breach of the so-called rules. Our ration was 8 lb. of seconds flour, 8 lb. of mutton or 7 lb. of beef, 4½ lb. of pork and 2 oz. salt weekly. Sometimes the meat was bad when we got it, so we were driven to steal. There was a big open fireplace in our hut, and concealed in the centre was a crude oven which was always covered by plenty of hot ashes. We would kill a lamb, sucking pig or fowl and put it in the oven without skinning or dressing it—this was easier after it was cooked. When we made a raid on the poultry yard we would fix shingles to our boots so that we could not be tracked. On many occasions Klensendorlffe searched our hut, always without success, and on more than one occasion the spoil he was looking for was beneath the ashes. He often had a tracker, but he never found our plant. One day in 1844 he sent me to town with a note for the storekeeper, and in due course I set off for home loaded with supplies. When crossing the Mill Creek I was held up by a man with a pistol who demanded the name of my boss. 'Klensendorlffe', I said. 'Very well,' he said, 'give me those parcels and then go on home—I want them more than he does.' With that he took all the goods and I went home. A very angry man was Klensendorlffe when I told how I was robbed by an armed man. Now Klensendorlffe was a noted marksman, so armed with a brace of pistols and mounted on his favourite mare he set off to find the thief. About three miles away he met a horseman and asked if he had seen a man with some parcels. 'Yes, there he is now', the stranger said, and pointed at some distant object. Klensendorlffe looked, and with that the stranger seized his horse by the bridle and said, 'Get out of that saddle or I'll scatter your brains, you cruel monster.' Klensendorlffe found himself looking down the barrel of a horse pistol, so dismounted and was relieved of his pistols, shirt and trousers, and his prized possession—his beautiful chestnut mare. The stranger then rode away. A very crestfallen man was Klensendorlffe when he arrived home on foot minus shirt and trousers, and although he offered a large reward for his mare, she was never returned to him.

I never met Klensendorlffe, but Robert Kilby met him at Canberra about 1857.

The man who staged the holdup was William Westwood, better known as Jacky Jacky, who was hanged at Norfolk Island in 1846. Julia Webb knew him personally, and told us that he was one of nature's gentlemen whose one thought was for the relief of the distressed, and this was well known to the judges who tried his cases in three courts.

During the great depression that prevailed throughout England from 1815 to 1844, most of the working class were at starvation point. Bread riots were common, and many people lost their lives when they raided the shops for bread. Death by starvation was common, yet the storehouses were full, and I have heard old hands like John Winter of Red Hill describe the scenes, and William Ginn gave me an account which was later confirmed by John Brown of Lobbs Hole, near the Googongs.

About 1840 William Westwood—to relieve a starving family—stole some bread and meat, the sworn value of which exceeded 40s. It was proved that he made no profit from the theft and the defence that starvation was the cause of his action was disallowed. He was sentenced to death, reprieved and transported for the term of his natural life. On arrival in New South Wales he was assigned to the owner of an estate near Bungendore. I am not sure of this man's name, but he was a retired army officer and the 'cat' was always hissing when he was about the station. The result was that Westwood and a few other unfortunates absconded, and for months they roamed the wild bush and took refuge in a cave on the east side of the Black Hill, Canberra, where he was in hiding at the time he stripped and robbed Klensendorlffe. Crabtree later told me that most people would have been pleased had Jacky Jacky shot Klensendorlffe, because he treated his assigned servants shamefully. Westwood was later captured and sent to Norfolk Island, which was a perfect hell. The daily cruelty there caused a riot and several lives were lost. Westwood and a few more of the rebels were publicly hanged for their part in the revolt, and his execution caused a storm of protest as it was stated at the trial that he had saved several lives.

During the early forties a man named Michael Murphy escaped from Ireland to America, thus avoiding a capital charge. He was a teacher of the Irish language, and when he settled at Ginninderra he was a neighbour of Kate and Margaret Warren, who were well known to us. These sisters left Ireland about 1858 or 1859; Kate married Thomas Gribble, whose farm was less than a mile from our home, and her sister married a man named Michael Ryan—both excellent neighbours. This is Mrs Gribble's story:

When we were living in Ireland my father came home one evening and said, 'There is a warrant out for the arrest of Mick Murphy and he is sure to be hung.' This caused great excitement for a time, and then we heard that Mick had cleared out to America. A steampacket with an officer aboard armed with a warrant was sent to bring him back, but after a few weeks without news the interest in the matter waned and we heard no more.

Peggy and I now decided to come to Australia. Conditions in Ireland at the time were very bad, and although Peggy was engaged to Mick Ryan, the prospects of marriage were not bright. However, Mick assisted us with our passage money and promised that he would follow as soon as possible. We both obtained employment on landing in Sydney. Peggy was employed by a Mr W. McDonald, the owner of property at the Paterson River (who was the Speaker in our Parliament for years). About two years later Mick Ryan arrived in New South Wales and went to the Paterson, where he was hired by McDonald and later married my sister Peggy. I had been working at Ginninderra for some time and Tom Gribble decided to commence farming on his own account and gave notice. The position thus vacated—that of ploughman—was offered to Ryan, who arrived with his wife six weeks later. Mick was there about four months when he came to me one day and said, 'Kate—I am sure that I saw Murphy—the same man who was wanted on warrant in Ireland twenty years ago—he rode down the lane.' 'Why,' I said, 'that is Mick Murty.' 'Ah, Mick—the same name', Ryan said. We made some inquiries and found that Murty was employed by Mr Gibbes at Yarralumla. His wife, one of the Glebe Camerons, had died a short time before, and Mick used to visit his children, who were being cared for by his mother-in-law two miles away. His two eldest children, Tom and Jim, assisted him to look after the sheep; Mrs Cameron was caring for Anne, Agnes, William, Donald and Christina—the latter an infant

one month old. About a month later Ryan and Murphy met again and Ryan said, 'Well, Mick, this is a surprise—I thought you were in America.' 'You are mistaken—I never saw you before', was the reply. 'I am not mistaken, Mick Murphy,' Ryan said, 'you have a mark there that I would recognize anywhere and I was only a boy when you received it in a fight at Ruttevant Fair. . . . I am Mick Ryan!' 'You are right, Mick,' Murphy said, 'I did not know you as it is twenty years since we last met. I beg of you not to mention certain matters as I am perfectly innocent of the crime and it would wreck the prospects of my children if I was arrested.' The two friends shook hands and Ryan kept his word.

We did not learn of the skeleton in the Murphy cupboard until after his death in 1871. Mrs Gribble was seven years of age when Murphy fled from Ireland, but she remembered the incident. Michael Ryan knew Murty at home as Murphy, and Murphy is the name in St John's Church Register.

In 1859, when the Snowy River gold rush was commanding the attention of the public, a man named John Wilkinson called at our house and spent a night with us. John Coppin and a few other friends were present, and Wilkinson surprised the assembly with his knowledge of mineralogy. He gave a long discourse on the world and its minerals, and although many years have passed I have not forgotten his very informative talk. He was a blacksmith by trade and he made all the bolts and principals in St John's Church, Canberra. He made the first splitting instruments father ever used, and also a brand. His one weakness was firewater.

A few years after the discussion mentioned he took the pledge for seven years and kept it faithfully. At the expiration of that time William Davis said to him, 'Jack, you have been faithful in this matter and I have known you for twenty years; you have never enjoyed better health than during these years of abstinence, and I would advise you to renew the pledge without delay.'

'That is true, Mr Davis,' he said, 'and I will do so without delay.' A few days later Mr Davis learned that Jack had fallen in with some old friends who persuaded him to have a few drinks before giving it up for good, and that he was knocking down his cheques at the Cricketers' Arms Hotel. Wilkinson did not return and Mr Davis surmised that he was ashamed of his lapse and had gone away. A fortnight later a swagman called and reported that he had found a dead body in a hut at Bedullick. The police were quickly on the scene and found the body of Wilkinson on the floor of the hut with two empty rum bottles nearby. After the coroner's inquiry the body was buried near the hut, which was only used by an occasional traveller. Alas, John Wilkinson! He was a geologist of no mean order and was years before his time.

In the early days the farmers' implements were crude indeed compared with those of the present day. In 1862-3, when Thomas Gribble and Thomas Wells started farming, the plough was a crude implement with a wooden breast or mouldboard. About twelve months later a man named McAuliffe took over the blacksmith's shop at Ginninderra and announced that he was going to make ploughs at £9.10.0 each. Father had ordered a plough manufactured by Murdoch & Co., Scotland, and although it cost £13.10.0 it was a failure until he had a wheel fitted to the front.

McAuliffe's plough proved successful from the start. He employed a young man named John Wilson, who had served his time with Murdoch & Co., in Scotland, and for about fifteen years McAuliffe's ploughs were renowned throughout the southern districts. McAuliffe quickly grasped the ideas expounded by Wilson, and the boss was proud of his man and the man was proud of his boss.

One Sunday evening William Davis met Wilson and asked him why he did not go to church. Wilson's reply was evasive at first, and he then lost his temper and surprised those present with an outburst of vile language. 'You go to your b—— church—I will go to a better place—the Cricketers'

Arms Hotel', he said, and away he went. However, the Angel of Correction was on the track of the offender. About midnight he and his friends left the Cricketers' Arms, and near home his horse shied and he was thrown and had both wrists dislocated. The doctor said that it would have been better had the wrists been broken, because it was two months before Wilson could dress himself and six months before he could use a knife and fork. He had to abandon his trade and Davis employed him as a shepherd. For many months he did not have the strength to kill a sheep, and to the day of his death he could not use an axe. Most people who knew about his dispute with Davis and Wilson's blasphemy looked on this case with awe and considered it a just punishment for an unwarranted outburst against sacred things. Wilson was an excellent tradesman, but this accident ended his days at the forge as his wrists never recovered their strength. He left the locality in 1867 and went to Lanyon, where he remained until his death about 1907, aged seventy-seven years.

When Uncle Sam landed in Sydney in 1837 he set out for Bathurst along the western road. During this long walk he met an elderly man named Jerry Sullivan, and these two travelled the road to Bathurst, where they obtained a job harvesting. Thus a lasting friendship was born. Wages were very low so uncle in his spare time made boots, for which there was a ready sale. About 1867 he opened a shop at Meadow Flat; he moved to Sunny Corner some years later.

I first met Jerry Sullivan, whose correct name was George Baker, during the harvest of 1859-60. One evening when I came home with the sheep Jerry was at our house, and he remained there for several days as our guest before returning to Bathurst on foot. For more than twenty years he was a welcome guest.

Late one evening in April 1861 Jerry arrived at Emu Bank with a stranger and said to father, 'Well, I have been as good as my word, Richard, here is your brother Sam.' It was a great surprise as twenty-four years had passed since father and his brother had parted at Queenstown in Ireland. The men had walked across from Bathurst. After a stay of ten days they set out for Bathurst and covered the distance in eight days. Jerry said that he often saw the bushrangers Gardiner and his gang, also Ben Hall, Gilbert and Dunn. They never molested him. On many occasions he was asked by the police if he had seen any horsemen during the day and he always replied, 'I see horsemen every day but I don't know who they are and it is no concern of mine.'

Uncle Sam paid us another visit in 1880—he then had a store and post and telegraph office at Sunny Corner. He died five years later and is buried in the Meadow Flat Cemetery near Bathurst.

Jerry Sullivan was an expert stone-breaker and an expert with the reaping hook, and for years he would assist father and Uncle Peter at harvest time; he would then walk to Bathurst and assist Uncle Sam at Meadow Flat. I last saw Jerry on the 5 May 1882—he entered the Old Men's Home shortly after.

In 1858 William Turnbull and his son Archibald were employed at Ginninderra. Soon after our arrival at Emu Bank, Turnbull Snr advertised for a wife in the Sydney *Empire*, and the advertisement and correspondence was conducted by a man named W. Hunt in Queanbeyan. In course of time three women arrived by mail coach and Turnbull made his choice and was married in Christ Church, Queanbeyan. This marriage was the first in the district to be contracted in this fashion, and the woman was above average, and Turnbull later settled in the Monaro district, where he reared a large family. One of his sons was an expert shearer and a grandson was an all-round cricketer.

About 1865 Levi Plummer and his wife and three children, William, Francis and Elizabeth, arrived at Canberra and settled on a farm there. When Plummer first arrived from England his first job was on the Sydney-Picton-Mittagong railway line. The family were very industrious and were a valuable addition to the community. Six years later they took up a selection near my holding and were good neighbours. Plummer met an untimely end in 1876 when he fell from his horse. The accident occurred

at the first interment at the Methodist cemetery at Weetangerra. After this burial he and Captain Samuel Southwell walked around the cemetery and each selected a burial plot. They then left for home. About 500 yards from the cemetery was a set of slip-rails at which Plummer dismounted. After passing through and replacing the rails he remounted his horse, which bucked and threw him to the ground with fatal results. Ten years later his son William was accidentally shot dead when out possum shooting; he was twenty-nine years of age.

In 1862 the exploits of the Confederate cruiser *Alabama*, under Captain Semmes, caused a great deal of excitement. It was my lot years later to meet one of her crew. In 1882 a man about fifty years of age was employed as shearer's cook at the Ginninderra woolshed, and a tattoo on his arm attracted great attention. I do not know his correct name, but he was known throughout the district as Old Josh. One evening he gave Mr E. G. Williams and myself this account of his career.

I was a member of the crew on the *Merrimac*, and after her destruction I signed on board an English blockade runner. On arrival in England I joined the *Alabama*, which was being prepared for sea. The crew were mostly English, with a few Americans, and for a time we had a grand time and if I had not been such a fool I would be a wealthy man today. On one occasion when we put into Capetown I spent 4,000 dollars in a week, and on another occasion at a port in the West Indies each of us spent at least 2,000 dollars. Many of the ships that fell to our guns had a great amount of wealth on board, and there is no doubt that, had it not been for fear of our actions being blazed abroad, walking the plank would have been the fate of the crews. We took good care that neither passengers nor crew members had any money when we put them ashore, and we always helped ourselves to the best of goods. When we were unable to stow any more aboard we made for the nearest English or French port and disposed of our plunder. We must have taken millions of dollars in gold and silver, exclusive of general merchandise. At last we met our doom. We never expected our career to end so suddenly because we thought we would make short work of the *Kearsage* when we encountered her near Cherbourg. However, her guns were better than ours and she made short work of the *Alabama*, with the loss to herself of about ten wounded. Our dead numbered seventy—about thirty were killed before our ship sank, drowning about forty more. When the survivors were counted, 110 were missing. I and other crew members were rescued by the boats of the *Kearsage* and we were well treated until our release at the end of the war. The *Alabama* had destroyed sixty-nine vessels and ten million dollars worth of property. For this damage and that caused by other vessels fitted out in like manner from English ports, England had to pay the U.S.A. \$15,500,000 in gold as compensation.

My friend George Williams then said, 'Did it ever strike you, Josh, that you were engaged in a very wicked piratical business?'

'No,' he said, 'we were praised and applauded wherever we landed—nothing was bad enough for the "cursed Yankees"'. However, in latter years I have considered the matter and now admit that our actions were a gigantic crime and the promoters were worse than us because we believed we were acting in a just cause.'

Old Josh was a widower with a son twelve years of age when I first met him, and the boy lived with Thomas Coleman of Pipeclay, Upper Gundaroo, until he was fifteen. Old Josh was a splendid cook and a good workman—his one besetting sin was intemperance. He left the locality in 1888, and I heard that he died soon afterwards in a drunken spree.

I will now introduce Robert Bradbury—English aristocrat shepherd and drill sergeant. One day in the spring of 1859 an ordinarily dressed man entered my father's house at Emu Bank and gave his name as Robert Bradbury. After partaking of some refreshments he said that he was a big man in England

and that he had made the mistake of marrying beneath his rank. 'My wife is a good woman,' he said, 'and we have two children and live at the Lime Kiln, where I am engaged as a shepherd.'

He was an engaging personality, and after a lengthy chat he departed. However, although father made little comment, I am afraid that he looked on Bradbury's claim in the same light as our neighbours, who laughed at the 'shepherd-aristocrat' and his claim to be an officer of the Imperial Army. Ten years later we all had a different opinion, because George Campbell entertained Bradbury at Duntroon twice weekly and he gave Campbell's sons instruction in military science. I have never forgotten Bradbury's walk up the aisle at St John's Church. His firm military step and erect figure attracted much admiration and comment. Neither will I forget the surprise that flew from one end of Canberra to the other when it became known that Bradbury had become heir to tens of thousands of pounds worth of property in England. About three months after this news was received, Bradbury laid his case before George Campbell and stated that he had not the means to go home and would have to write for the necessary funds. 'That will delay the matter for months', Campbell said. 'I will lend you the necessary sum and you can leave on the next liner and go home as a gentleman should.'

It was thus arranged, and people wondered why Bradbury did not take his wife and family with him. This was known later. I often saw Mrs Bradbury at the Canberra post office, as she was a friend of the Williams family. Her daughter was a modest young woman and her son Robert was a splendid bushman. Thomas Yates declared that he was without peer with the morticing axe, as he morticed seventy-eight three-hole posts in one day.

When Bradbury went to England there is no doubt that his family thought their lives would be changed from constant labour to one of ease. They were bitterly disappointed. About four months after his departure a letter arrived stating that he had taken possession of the property and full particulars would be sent out later. Weary months of waiting followed and the family and Mr Campbell wrote home but received no reply. In the spring Mr Campbell announced that he would go to England the following year to investigate the matter, as he had advanced a large sum of money to Bradbury. Mr Campbell and his family sailed for England from Melbourne on 17 April 1876, and when he landed in May he immediately placed the matter in the hands of a detective of well-known reputation, who discovered that Bradbury had sold the property he had inherited and had gone to London, where all trace of him was lost. This report was a shock to the family. His daughter Hannah married Richard Flannigan, a friend of my brother John, and she died young. Robert also married, but he later left his wife and went to the Monaro, where he engaged in bushwork. He was later found dead in an old shepherd's hut where he lived.

In 1863 Thomas Gribble wrote home requesting that his parents come to Australia, and in less than six months the old people and their four children arrived in Sydney. Gribble Sr was a bootmaker, and soon after landing he and his youngest son, John, arrived at his elder son's farm, where he started bootmaking without delay. He did well in the locality and was a good conversationalist. About twelve months later he returned to Sydney, where he and his son William opened a bakery. He paid us a visit one day and we were surprised when he gave us an account of how the Irish were regarded by the British. He said,

My son Tom had left England about two years when we received a letter stating that he had married an Irish girl. When his mother read this letter she broke down and cried, 'Oh Lord, what have we done that our son should disgrace his family and marry an Irish savage.' I got the surprise of my life when we arrived here and found Tom's wife Kate was equal to any of my daughters.

Hugh Read of Canberra had similar opinions. He said,

I was only a month in Australia when I came to Canberra and got a job reaping for Joe Shumack. I was there a few days when I met Robin Maloney, and I later asked Joe if he knew who the Irish savage was. Joe laughed and said, 'We are Irish—Elizabeth and I were born in Ireland, and James Neylon, Leonard, Flynn and Coulton are Irish.' This gave me a surprise and I then realized that the stories I had heard about Irish savages were vile untruths.

Towards the close of 1866 Christopher Donnelly made his appearance at Canberra. He was a smart man about twenty-one years of age, and about twelve months later he married Mary McDonald, the youngest daughter of my old friend Mrs McDonald. Christy, as we called him, was an efficient workman and was quickly and constantly employed. He was as much at home with the blacksmith's tools as he was with the navy's pick or the bushman's implements. He worked off and on for me as a farm labourer for about forty years, and had few equals with the pitchfork in the harvest field.

In 1888 he came to live near me at Springvale, Weetangerra, and in 1893 I read a report in the *Sydney Mail* of a sad tragedy that had just come to light in England. It appeared that about 1870 one Thomas Blagg was hanged for the murder of a gamekeeper on one of the English estates. Blagg was an ostler at a wayside inn and was convicted on circumstantial evidence. Twenty-three years later the guilty party confessed on his death bed. After a chat about this case, Christy said, 'Did you ever hear that I did time?'

'No, I never did', was my reply. He then told me this story.

I was just eighteen years of age when I took a job splitting posts and rails for a squatter near Goulburn. I had been about three weeks on the job when a young man on the tramp called at my camp and I invited him to stay the night. At supper time he questioned me regarding a man who lived on a farm a few miles along the creek and I told him that it was old Mr Prew, who was considered to be a miser and was never known to extend hospitality to anyone. Imagine my surprise next morning when I found my visitor gone and my five-months-old pup had also disappeared. I went to work and thought this young man whom I had befriended was a miserable skunk for stealing my dog. About ten o'clock two police officers rode up, and after asking my name they announced that I was under arrest for committing a murderous assault on Mr Prew. I protested my innocence but was taken to Goulburn and charged with the assault, and was later committed for trial. It appeared that some time after midnight on the night in question the door of the old man's house was forced open, and when he jumped out of bed to investigate the intruder knocked him down with a club. His daughter screamed and fled in her night attire to a neighbour's house a mile away. The neighbour and several others were quickly on the scene and found the old man unconscious on the floor—my five-months-old pup was also in the house. Despite my denials, the old man and his daughter swore that, to the best of their recollection and belief, I was the attacker as he was of similar build and age. This evidence, plus the fact that my dog was found in the house, was sufficient for the jury to return a verdict of guilty, and I was sentenced to three years' hard labour. I served two years and three months—nine months being remitted for good conduct.

I have no reason to doubt this story because I found Donnelly truthful and honest during our forty years' acquaintance. He met his death in a simple manner during a sideshow performance at the Queanbeyan showground in 1910. He, with others, was a spectator at a buckjumping contest when a horse lashed out and both hooves struck Christy on the chest, killing him instantly. The ringmaster had called for everyone to stand back and all did so with the exception of Christy, who apparently did not hear the

order and so paid the penalty with his life. Fourteen years earlier his second daughter, Kate, met a tragic death. She was a quiet, well-conducted girl, and had been employed as a domestic by my brother John from about 1889 until his wife died in November 1891. Kate then got a situation at Lanyon. Soon after this she was introduced to a business man and his wife who had a shop in Queanbeyan, and they persuaded her to buy a ball dress for £27. Her wages were only 7s. weekly and after a month or so the shopkeeper began to press her for the money. She was unable to pay and offered to return the dress, which was refused, and she was served with a writ. She then left her employment for a week's holiday, and the district was startled when it became known that Kate did not arrive at her parents' home at Weetangerra. The police and a score or more civilians were scouring the plain, river and forest areas for two weeks without result. Then a report circulated that she and an acquaintance were seen on the platform at the Young Railway Station. Many believed this report, but those who were acquainted with her as I was treated it as idle talk. We believed that she had perished in the deep waters of the Honey-suckle Creek, between Duntroon and Queanbeyan. Twenty-three days elapsed before the mystery was solved. John McIntosh, who was going the rounds of his property, went to a dam to give his horse a drink and on the banks of the dam he found the missing girl. She was still alive, so he lost no time in moving her to his house and called in a doctor, and within hours she was in hospital, where, contrary to all expectations, she recovered. It was a month before she regained consciousness and recognized her parents, and three months before she was able to return home. She remembered nothing after leaving her cousin's home in Queanbeyan until she recovered in hospital, and the doctor was of the opinion that she had not had any food during that time—water sustained her. I saw her when she came home and she was quite sane.

About two weeks after she came home Kate arose one morning and went to the fire in her night attire. This caught fire and was burnt to shreds in a few seconds, and her mother had her hands severely burnt vainly trying to extinguish the flames. The unfortunate girl was an awful sight, as every bit of skin from her ankles up was scorched. She lived for five days and was quite normal until a few hours before her death. She was the first of her family to be laid to rest in St John's churchyard, and as Rev. P. G. Smith had to conduct a service at Gundaroo, I conducted the burial service. Her father erected a wooden block cross to her memory.

The news of this shocking tragedy spread like wildfire throughout the locality and the shopkeeper was severely criticised for his actions in the matter. He left Queanbeyan soon after and I never heard anything more about him.

Early in 1863 a young man made his appearance at Ginninderra and was employed by the late Thomas Gribble. It soon became apparent that he knew nothing about farm work, and when questioned he admitted that he had run away from a ship of war then in Sydney Harbour. He said that he was promised promotion and was disappointed, so hearing of the great finds of gold he slipped away to try his luck. However, when having breakfast one morning at a wayside inn he heard someone say that the authorities would soon capture deserters as they were sending an officer to all the diggings. This frightened the young man, who then and there decided to look for farm work. His name was Henry Cumming.

'I hope you will not give me away,' he remarked, 'my father is a surgeon in the Indian merchant service and my uncle is Gordon Cumming, the great lion hunter.' Gribble gave his promise, and this young man was soon proficient in everything he undertook. A grand-uncle had perished in the *Royal George* and Henry had in his possession a small case made from timber recovered from the wreck of that ill-fated ship.



Cumming remained in the locality about four years. On one occasion the Governor visited the locality and Cumming got a severe fright when he saw the uniformed officers, and he breathed easier when he heard that all had returned to Sydney.

At the time father was a subscriber to the *Sydney Mail*, which reported Cumming's hunting exploits, and young Henry read every word relating to his uncle. After four years' employment with Messrs Gribble, Wells and Edward Smith, he was offered a good position in the Wagga district and he left Ginninderra with a promise to his friends to keep them informed of his welfare. My father received one letter stating that all was well, but nothing more was heard. Several arrests of run-away sailors were reported but nothing more, and it was the general opinion that death had claimed this young man.

I first met William Jamieson in the mid-eighties and found him truthful and intelligent although uneducated. He had to work in a brickyard when he should have been at school, and as he reported to me, 'I was at work at the age of nine and my wages for the first year were 1s. 6d. per week. No one unless they witnessed it could imagine the abject misery that existed in Cheshire, where I came from, so I lost no time in quitting the country at the first opportunity.' And so, in the beginning of the fourth decade of last century, William Jamieson arrived in Australia.

He was concerned in a sad incident that occurred about 1864 in the Goulburn police district, and this is the story as he told it to me thirty years later:

I was looking for a couple of cows and called on farmer ——, but he was not home. They were not strangers to me, so when his wife came to the door I dismounted and asked for a light. I was filling my pipe when she brought me a lighted taper, and as I was lighting my pipe I heard a hum and then the report of a gun and she staggered back and exclaimed, 'My God, Bill, I am shot.' I caught her as she fell and carried her inside, but she was quite dead. This is how the accident happened. A police officer had been away several days after bushrangers, and when he returned he had been several nights without proper rest. On the morning of the tragedy he went to clean his rifle, and as there were no breach loaders in those days he fired his rifle into the hills near the police station. The house where the woman was standing was several hundred feet below the hill crest and the bullet was traced from where it struck the ground. It was almost spent when it struck and killed this unfortunate woman. Had I not been standing sideways I would have been struck and she would have escaped. What a slender thread our life hangs on.

## *More about the Old Pioneers*

*Some tragic deaths The missing bull Early builders Wheat-growing  
The first lime-kiln Dummying Jerribiggery tragedy The penal system  
Sly-grog Thomas Southwell Tobacco-growing Aborigines Fishing yarns  
Wool-stealing The vanishing bride Righting an injustice Free settlers  
Early hardships 'Finders keepers'*

I HAVE MENTIONED several names that have been omitted from the previous histories of Canberra—my object being to draw attention to the inaccuracies that are put before the public as actual facts when they are the reverse. I was surprised when I saw no mention of the toilers that really laid the foundation of Canberra. Some authors mention Moore, Klensendorffe and many others who had golden opportunities, but many of these failed. I consider the undermentioned persons to be among those who actually laid the foundation of our National Capital: Naylor, Edward Smith, John Shumack, Thomas Southwell, Mrs O'Keefe and Joseph Blundell. They proved that a living could be made where the élite of society failed, and this became an established fact when John Robertson's Free Selection Act became law.

Some time ago I was asked my opinion on the rampant social evils, drink and gambling, and which was the greater of the two evils. This was my reply. 'I would prefer a drunkard as a neighbour in preference to a gambler; I have known some excellent men who were drunkards, but cannot say that about a gambler.' Both these evils claim a lot of victims, and I will now relate some tragic deaths that were brought about by the evils of drink.

Jeremiah Daffin went to Queanbeyan for the doctor as his wife was ill. However, he remained drinking at the hotel with some kindred spirits and was later found dead at the side of the road a mile and a half from the Queanbeyan bush. A month later his widow erected a stone cairn on the spot which for years was known as Jerry Daffin's mound.

Soon after this a man whose name I have forgotten was killed a quarter of a mile from the northern end of Crawford Street, Queanbeyan, and a few weeks later another man was killed in the same locality. After this, that place bore an evil reputation and people avoided it at night. I believe there was a third fatality there because I heard Luke Develin and Dan Ryan discussing the three deaths that took place at this spot. It was here that Thomas Southwell's horse shied and threw him, as mentioned elsewhere. Soon after Daffin's accident a man named Smith, brother to Mrs Alfred Mayo of Duntroon, imbibed not wisely but too well, and left town at full gallop. He was found next morning in a dying condition near the Canberra Plain, where his horse had collided with a tree. A rum bottle in his pocket was broken and the jagged fragments had inflicted fatal injuries.

A few years later John Gregory drove into town in a dray with his wife and son and left for home after dark. He flogged his horse into a canter and the dray struck a stump and capsized, fatally injuring Mrs Gregory.

About 1862 Thomas Wells took a farm near us and, after sowing his crop, he and Augustus Leabert took a contract splitting three thousand posts and rails. They camped near a spring about ten miles from Ginninderra and a bush track passed their camp. One night they heard a horse gallop past,

and the jingling of the stirrup irons prompted Leabert to remark that the horse was minus its rider. Next morning a stranger rode up and said, 'Are any of your mates away?'

'No,' Tom said, 'why?'

'Well, there is a dead mean over there and you can see the body from here', the stranger said. Tom looked at the corpse and saw that the forehead was smashed in—also that the dead man was a stranger. Leabert then came on the scene and said, 'This is Tom Case—he lives a mile further on and has been for the post—see the letters and papers in his pocket.' Leabert then went to inform the wife of the tragedy and the stranger went to Queanbeyan to report the fatality. Dr Morton conducted the inquest, and it became known that Case was under the influence when he had left town at full gallop. An overhanging limb on a tree near the track clearly showed the mark where he had received his fatal injuries.

The next tragic death was that of John Gozzlet. This young man went to summon a midwife for his wife and the same old story resulted—he imbibed unwisely with some boon companions and left town an hour later stating that he would overtake the midwife before she reached his home. Some hours later he was found lying beside the track not far from home with a broken neck. He was a splendid rider and was mounted on a splendid three-year-old filly which later won first prize at the Gundaroo Show. His widow later married Thomas Boyd, a grandson of John Southwell Snr of Ginninderra Creek.

At 10.30 one Sunday morning Samuel Southwell was on his way to Queanbeyan to preach at the Methodist Church. As he entered the bush from the Yarralumla Road he found a cart upset and a horse standing by fastened by one trace. He dismounted and found the body of Patrick Sheedy, which was quite cold. Sheedy was highly esteemed in the locality and his only fault was an occasional drinking bout. These facts came out at the inquest. He had left town at dark driving a spring cart and must have been travelling at a fast rate when he struck a stump and was thrown yards and killed instantly. Many others must have seen the corpse lying at the roadside and took no action as they did not want to be involved in the inquest.

His nephew, Pat Sheedy, like his uncle, was partial to a friendly glass. I had business dealings with him and found him honest and trustworthy, but like his uncle he imbibed once too often. He left Queanbeyan after dark and I here give the account of this fatality as it was disclosed at the inquest. Mr Vance, a surveyor, gave this evidence:

My camp was in Sheedy's paddock and on the morning in question he asked me if I had any demands from town. I gave him an order as was my custom, and he always performed and carried out his instructions well and was usually home before dark. At ten o'clock that night there was no sign of him so I retired to bed. The cook then said, 'Sheedy is coming now, I can hear the horse and sulky.' After some delay the cook went to the gate where the horse and sulky were standing, but Sheedy was not there. I mustered the men and we found the missing man lying on the road about three miles away—he was alive but unconscious. Next morning it was discovered that he had fallen out over the dashboard and one foot became caught between the axle and the floor, and in this manner he was dragged head down for more than a mile. He died about twelve hours later. Such was this man's end. He was esteemed by all his neighbours.

Some time before Sheedy's death Pat Cunningham and T. Sullivan went to town to the Victoria Hotel, where they partook of the good things there. On the way home Cunningham fell off his horse and instant death was the result of a broken neck. About a month later T. Pike met a similar fate when returning from Queanbeyan. Both men were about twenty-seven years of age, and Cunningham had arrived from Ireland a short time before his death.

This now brings me to the tragic death of John McCawley. This man was not a drunkard and I never saw him under the influence of drink, although his death was the result of that evil but popular custom, 'shouting'. He and four others met in Queanbeyan to go shearing, and after an hour in one of the hotels they started on their journey. Seven miles from town they met an old acquaintance of McCawley's—they had not met for years, so they stopped for a yarn and the rest of the party continued on their way. Approaching the river crossing they heard McCawley's horse coming at a gallop with the rider urging it on. When McCawley drew level with the party his horse propped and its rider shot over its head—death followed in a short time. This was a shock to all who knew him, as he was a noted horseman.

This now brings me to the death of Tom Warner, a friend of my brother John. When Tom went to town he invariably arrived home the worse for drink. His last trip to town was with a wagon and team of six horses, and the load was wheat. The team arrived home without him. His body was later found miles from home—a wagon wheel had passed over his chest, crushing his heart.

About the mid-seventies a man named O'Halloran was employed at Duntroon, and one Saturday afternoon he went to Queanbeyan. He failed to report for work on Monday and inquiries revealed that he had left town late on Saturday night. Several days later his body was found floating in the river—he had walked over the river bank two hundred yards below the crossing. The same fate ended the life of W. Welch, who was employed at Wright's flour mill. He was last seen very intoxicated not far from his home, and his body was later found floating in the river.

I will now relate how Mr McCann, a school inspector, met his death. He was the first school inspector to visit the Ginninderra school, and about 1867, on a visit to the district, he had a fashionable dog cart which had a folding seat at the back and could seat four comfortably. On the return journey to Goulburn the river was rising and the coachman refused to drive into the stream. Words vitriolic passed between employer and employee, with the result that McCann took the reins from the driver, who then jumped out of the vehicle as it was driven into the river and swept away. McCann called out, 'Harry, save me'—but it was too late, and he and the horse were drowned. Neither man could swim.

I first met J. Boothe in the cricket field in 1879. He was a man highly esteemed and his only fault was an occasional drinking lapse. A few years after I met him he met his death. There was a dry spell at the time and Boothe went to town for some goods and partook unwisely. A thunderstorm had passed over the locality and darkness had set in when his horse arrived home with parcels on the saddle but the rider missing. Members of the family found his body face down in four inches of water in the creek crossing five hundred yards from home. The creek had been dry for months and the storm had put a little water at the crossing. There was no mark of injury on the body.

My next case is that of Joseph Mayo. He, with P. and J. Curley, had trucked some sheep for the Duntroon Estate, and when the job was completed the Curley brothers went home, but Mayo foolishly went to the pub and spent several hours there. Next morning his wife saw his horse with the saddle on and a search was made. Several hours later Mayo was found lying in the Woolshed Creek four hundred yards from the road. He was alive but unconscious, and died six hours later. It is believed that he fell from his horse and received head injuries, and then wandered through the fence and fell into the creek. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that his horse could not have approached to within a quarter mile of where he was found.

About 1881 I met Dr Beals for the first time. Some ten years before he had been struck from the roll of medical practitioners for having performed an illegal operation in the Braidwood district. He was released after serving three years, and when I met him was practising on the sly and acting as tutor. He was a perfect slave to drink and every three months or so would go on the spree and was known to abstain

from food for periods of eight to ten days during these drunken bouts. As a result he would lose about three weeks' work. He had been about two years with Hugh Read when he went on the spree for the last time. One day at One Tree Hill he locked himself in his room and was later found dead there. Dr Richardson—himself a slave to firewater—attended and said that Dr Beals had been dead at least two days.

Shortly after the death of George Kinleyside Snr, his son James went to Uriarra to assist John McDonald to muster stock. During the mustering he was thrown from his horse and lay for some hours in the snow before a search party found him at dusk. His was a lucky escape, for he was badly injured and dingoes were numerous in the locality. Soon afterwards his brother John was fatally injured in the same locality when mustering. In this instance his horse ran him against a tree and he received fatal injuries from which he died thirty-six hours later, leaving a wife and two sons and a daughter—the youngest an infant two months old.

About twelve months later Alexander Kinleyside was engaged carting wheat to Queanbeyan, and one evening when coming home he fell from the dray and was killed when a wheel passed over his chest. Now this man's end, the observer would think, would be a lesson to others to be more careful, but such was not the case, as we shall see from James Kinleyside's narrow escape as told in his own words:

We sold 600 bushels that year and all but one load had been delivered when Sandy was killed. Two weeks after his funeral I made an early start for Queanbeyan as I wanted to be home before dark. I delivered this load of sixty bushels to Wright's mill and then lunched at the hotel. I was about to start for home when some kindred spirits prevailed on me to stop for a few drinks and a yarn. We drank freely and all thought of home was forgotten until nigh on sunset, when my friends urged me to start for home. It was dark when I crossed the Mill Creek. When sunset came mother and sister Elsie were anxiously looking for me, and when I failed to appear with the approach of darkness they became alarmed. About two hours after dark Elsie told mother that I was coming as she could hear the horses and dray. They listened as the team approached and stopped at the sliprails which were about 200 yards from the house. After waiting for some time, Elsie went to the sliprails to ascertain the cause of the delay and there found the team—but there was no sign of me. She called out to mother, and now the worst was believed and tears were shed. Betsey, Elsie's small daughter, went over to Shumack's house, as they were our nearest neighbours, and Joe, Dick and Peter Shumack were quickly on the scene and they started walking back along the road towards Queanbeyan. Eight miles from home they met me—I was walking homewards but had no knowledge of the mishap—and we arrived home at eleven o'clock, much to the relief of all. It was quite obvious that I had fallen out of the dray, but where and under what circumstances I was unable to say, as my mind was a complete blank until I met the Shumack brothers. It was strange and fortunate indeed that I was not injured.

Such was Jim's account to me.

How Jim escaped injury he was unable to explain because he was riding on the float rail of the dray—as his brother was when he was fatally injured. A few years later Jim selected land near us and was a good, kind and obliging neighbour for about forty years. During that period he had only one night out, and I will give the facts:

Donald McDonald had made himself a by-word to the free selectors because he was a 'practical dummy' for certain squatters. About 1879 Jim attended the Queanbeyan Quarter Sessions as a juror, and the evening was well advanced before the Court adjourned and jurors were discharged. He mounted his horse and started for home when his attention was attracted to an altercation outside the hotel between McDonald and a stranger. Jim heard McDonald abuse the stranger and say, 'I could pitch your selection

into the river with a shovel.' Blows were struck and McDonald was floored several times by the stranger before Jim intervened and stopped the fight. The publican ushered McDonald from the premises and those present then proceeded to shout in their turn until all were well under the influence of drink. Much later Jim set out for home, and some hours later arrived at my father's house and wanted to know where he (Jim) was. Father quickly diagnosed his condition and after some treatment he put Jim on his horse and sent him home. Jim's sister, Mrs George Johns, spent a restless night because she was aware that only one case of minor importance was listed at the Sessions and she expected Jim to be home before nightfall. However, all ended well and Jim laughed about this episode afterwards.

The Kinleyside family are buried in St John's cemetery, but the eldest son, George, is the only member whose grave is marked by a headstone. He died on 14 October 1887, aged sixty-seven years.

Many years ago an advertisement appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age* and Yass newspapers calling tenders for the supply of 20,000 shingles, several thousand rails, and logs for a sawpit. The successful tenderer was Thomas Kinleyside, the youngest of the Kinleyside brothers. The timber was to be obtained on the west side of the Murrumbidgee River, and after reaching an agreement with Thomas Franklin, the owner of the property on which the timber was growing, Thomas Kinleyside and his party pitched their tents at the old homestead. It was Franklin's custom to visit the timber cutters once a week for a chat. One day Franklin paid his customary visit and inquired if they had seen his fifty-guinea pedigree bull, which was missing from the herd. The party told him that the bull was seen grazing on the flat a few days previously, but after another fruitless search Franklin informed the police and offered a reward of £25 for the missing animal. No trace of him was ever found. More than twenty years later Thomas Kinleyside gave me the following account of the matter.

When we boiled our salt junk we always threw the water on the ground a few yards from our tent and the bull came at night after the salt and frequently disturbed our rest. It was a regular occurrence, so I stated my intention to pepper his hide with shot should we be disturbed the following night. My mates agreed and I then loaded an old gun with shot. About 3 a.m. we were again disturbed so I gave the bull the contents of the gun and the herd went off at a gallop. Next morning at breakfast we noticed a strange object on the flat, and on making an investigation we discovered the bull—dead. A grain or two of shot must have found a vital mark. Realising that if Franklin discovered the dead animal it meant ruin for us, we set to work and burnt the carcass and then dug a hole into which we put the ashes and covered them up. We then lit another fire on top—not until then did we feel safe or easy in mind. Three days later Franklin again called and asked about the missing bull—actually we told him the truth when we said that we saw the bull grazing on a certain day, because it was the day prior to the accidental shooting.

About 1825 Thomas Jones saw the Limestone Plains for the first time. He and his mate were employed building huts for the settlers and he claimed to be the first man to erect a fence on the Ginninderra estate. This was the first fence erected in County Murray; and when we went to Emu Bank in 1858 it was in a perfect state of preservation despite the thirty-three years since its erection. It was a three-rail fence and passed within 300 yards of our house. In the early forties Jones married Isabella Donaldson, and after a couple of years' employment near Sydney he moved to Brisbane Water, near Gosford, where he and his mate, William Maitland, commenced business as sawyers. For a time they prospered—drink was their downfall. They returned to Ginninderra about 1862 and were employed by William Davis. Thomas Jones died about 1887 and is buried in the Glebe cemetery, Ginninderra. He built many huts in the Canberra district on a framework of forks and poles with sod walls. A few years later slab and bark structures ousted the sod buildings, although I have seen sod chimneys constructed as

late as 1862. The slab and bark structures became obsolete in the eighties. The first stone house erected in County Murray was about one chain south of Acton House.

Sarah Webb and her husband George were amongst the first pioneers in County Murray. Towards the close of the 1840s they secured some land at Uriarra. Mrs Webb died in 1845 and a messenger was sent on horseback to Penrith, where her mother resided. On receiving the news she immediately set out for Canberra, where she arrived four days after the death. She met the sad procession three miles from the cemetery, where she insisted on having the coffin opened. She cut a lock of her daughter's hair and kissed the pallid brow, after which the cortège proceeded on to the last sad and solemn scene. Sarah Webb's headstone was the first erected in St John's cemetery.

Mrs Julia Webb gave me the particulars of the death of Mrs Webb, and she was present when the incident referred to took place. There is a sad story about the infant daughter Mrs Webb left behind when she died. I have no recollection of having seen the child, although I know that she grew into a splendid type of woman. It was her father's wish that she marry Alexander Cameron, and I often saw him leave his home on Saturday to visit Miss Webb at Uriarra. In 1866 all the neighbours were surprised to hear that she had married a young man named Chippendale, much against her father's wishes. The ceremony took place in Queanbeyan, after which the young couple journeyed to the Clyde River on the eastern coast and embarked on a small vessel for Sydney. After a brief stay in the city they embarked on the *Cawarra* for Newcastle, where the vessel was wrecked on Nobbys with the loss of all hands but one.

A man named Finnerson was the first to grow wheat at Yarralumla, and I believe this was the first to be grown in County Murray. Thomas Sayersbury, better known as 'Canberry Tom', was the first to burn limestone south of Goulburn. In the early thirties he constructed a kiln on the Molonglo eight miles below Yarralumla, and it was here that all the lime was burnt that was used in building old Queanbeyan. This kiln was in operation for more than thirty years. About 1867 Sayersbury constructed a kiln at Majura, which was much closer to the markets of Bungendore and Queanbeyan. He became known as Canberry Tom from the berries which used to grow in large clusters on a vine something like a blackberry along the creeks, which he would gather in the spring and sell. They used to make excellent jam. Sayersbury died about 1871.

George Rottenbury started a lime kiln at Canberra about 1860, but had to close down owing to keen competition from Sayersbury. Later, Moses Morley, a brother of Samuel Morley, who was killed by Thomas Wells at Parkwood, started a kiln near Queanbeyan. The price of lime in my early days was 1s. per bushel, and as late as 1877 I paid Morley 1s. 3d. per bushel.

Donald McDonald was prosperous when we arrived at Duntroon in 1856. His father was one of the first men to settle at Canberra, and Donald had three brothers, Alexander, John and Colin. Alexander was also in a sound financial position, but all failed with the exception of John. When I first met Donald he was a dummy for Frederick Campbell, and when a period of five years had expired, as was the law, he would dummy another block for Campbell. This practice was most unpopular with the small settlers. However, McDonald gained nothing from it, and in course of time he was dismissed by Campbell. He was now an old man and had no money or property. His eldest son gave him a temporary home, but when the son married Donald had to get out; I then gave him a job and a home on my property of North Ashton. About eight years later the old age pension gave him some relief, and about six years later he and his wife died. McDonald was what the 'snobbocracy' made him; however, I could not say anything against him during the thirty-odd years of our acquaintance. He had the opportunity to establish a home for his old age and failed—all through the curse of drink. His wife was a good woman . . . valé to both of them. An old pioneer once said to me, 'Adversity has improved McDonald—he is a far better man now than when he lived at Woden.' This I believed to be correct. When he was at Woden

he shore 7,000 sheep, and when he came to live with me he had an old horse. His brother John owned Uriarra, and all those who worked for him spoke well of him and his wife. James Murty and many others gave his brother Alexander credit also for honesty and kindness to all who laboured for him in the days of his prosperity. I was not acquainted with the younger brother, Colin, who was laid to rest in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Queanbeyan. Alexander, John and Donald are buried in St John's, Canberra.

Another grand old pioneer was Jack Loughhead. He had served in the Scots Greys and fought at the battle of Waterloo. He was six feet four inches tall and weighed twenty stone; his wife Molly was under five feet. They were a very kind old couple and I will never forget their kindness and generosity—many a piece of fruit they gave me in the early days when we had none. She died suddenly in 1863 and Jack died in April 1866. When in good health it was his custom to walk to the Glebe church at Ginninderra, where service was held once a fortnight. Both rest in St John's at Canberra.

When we arrived at Duntroon in 1856 the whole country was agitated over the Jerribiggery tragedy.

Mary A. Guise was a sister of Mrs Chippendale and Mrs Cantor, and the latter and her husband were well known to me. About 1851 Mary Guise married a man named Brownlowe, son of a government official in Sydney, and after the marriage they settled at Jerribiggery, where it soon became known that he was a man of lax morals. A child was born of the union and another was expected when the tragedy occurred. One day when she was carving the dinner an argument developed over his association with another woman, and in the heat of the moment she stabbed him with the carving knife, inflicting a wound from which he died three days later. She was arrested and charged with murder, and was later tried at Goulburn and found guilty and sentenced to death. The whole of the southern districts was in a turmoil over this miscarriage of justice, as all who were acquainted with the facts were shocked at the inhuman sentence. Petitions were presented to the Governor in Council, but all were rejected and the unfortunate woman remained in prison until the birth of her child; a month later she suffered the extreme penalty. Years later W. H. Suttor published an account of the case in the *Daily Telegraph*, in which he said:

I called at Jerribiggery three weeks before the tragedy and it appeared to me that Mrs Brownlowe was an over-worked, heart-broken woman.

After Judge Stephen, the trial judge, died in 1894 the *Sydney Bulletin* published an article on this case and pointed out that evidence of provocation was disallowed and also evidence from Dr Morton that most certainly would have secured an acquittal. The case was also reported in the *Sydney Mail* thirty years later.

In 1877 Joseph Edgar of Gundaroo gave me an account of this case and said that feeling ran high against the trial judge. In 1882, when Sir Alfred Stephen was Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales, he visited Gundaroo for an important public function. The hall was crowded, and when the toast to the Acting Governor was proposed Edgar walked out in protest.

In 1876 I became acquainted with Mrs Brownlowe's daughter. She was three years of age when her mother was executed and she grew to be a very nice young woman and married Thomas Flannigan, a member of a family known as the 'decent' Flannigans.\* She died early in the 1910s. The child that was born in Goulburn gaol died a few months later.

In 1856 William Rolfe was the proprietor of a butcher's shop in Monaro Street, Queanbeyan. Some time during the 1840s he had had a small farm in England which he managed after the death of

\* At the time mentioned there were four Flannigan families in County Murray, but they were not related. They were known as the 'decent' Flannigans, the 'clean' Flannigans, the 'dirty' Flannigans and the 'filthy' Flannigans.



his parents. One morning he saw a hare in the garden and killed it, and for this venial offence ten years' transportation was his lot. I never heard the name of the person to whom he was assigned, but his nephew, James Rolfe, assured me that the humane employers at that time did not number one in fifty. However, when his time expired William did well by his painstaking industry and in course of time sent home for his brother Anthony and his family, who later took up land at Gold Creek, Ginninderra. William Rolfe and his wife died about the seventies, leaving two sons and two daughters. Their son William died a young man. The younger sister married a man named Flood and later left the district. The elder sister married a man named Rochford, and their descendants still live in the district. I have mentioned the Rolfe family in order to draw attention to the outrageous laws and the undue severity with which they were administered at the time. The administrators in the Old Country had friends here who wanted cheap labour, and many an innocent lad and lassie got a free passage in consequence. Years ago an old man of eighty years appeared at the Nyngan Court charged with 'failing to destroy rabbits'. He was asked to plead and said, 'I will not plead—when I was a boy of nine years I killed a rabbit in my father's garden and they gave me twelve years' transportation, and more than half that time was a perfect hell to me. I will die in gaol before I will pay a penny.' After a few whispered words the Bench sentenced him to the rising of the Court and he was released immediately.

There is no denying that Ireland has an army of patriotic victims scattered throughout the world. I have met a great number and Canberra has been the home of many. The Naughton brothers were of this number. They were ex-army men. Transportation for the term of their natural lives was their portion for wishing to see their native land free of the foreign yoke. These men experienced all the horrors described by Marcus Clarke in his book, and after years of untold misery they found a haven at Canberra. Mr George Campbell leased them a small farm on the Molonglo River near what was known as Klensendorlffe's, a short distance from the present Albert Hall. Here they eked out an honest living, respected by all who knew them. Patrick passed away about 1886 and James was left alone. He struggled on for a couple of years and then his health broke down, but he refused to go to hospital. In 1887 Arthur Brassey leased the Acton estate of 2,400 acres and for a time he was looked upon as an English 'snob'. However, when he became acclimatized to Australian ways and customs he was an ideal member of the community, and when James Naughton became ill he acted the good Samaritan. He personally attended the sick man and sent him many tasty dishes from his own table; when he was unable to attend he sent his valet Bette Carroll with strict instructions to render every assistance. Naughton crossed the Jordan after a year's illness, and after his interment in Queanbeyan Brassey was complimented on his humane and Christian attention to the deceased. His reply was, 'Reverse the circumstances—if these men were Englishmen we would look upon them as heroes and victims of outrageous oppression. These men were torn from their families when young men and suffered every indignity that an atrocious system could inflict. They have been exemplary members of the community since they came here and I had great respect for both.' The Naughtons were very quiet, well conducted men—each over six feet tall and they had no relatives in Australia.

About 1840 one James Devanney was transported for life to this State. He was what was known as a political prisoner and his offence was a burning desire to see Ireland free of the English yoke. He was made a free man about 1850, but was not allowed to leave the State until 1865. He came to Canberra in the early fifties and leased a farm on the river in Klensendorlffe's paddock, and it was here that I met him. He had a wife and four children in Ireland, where they had a small farm from which they made a modest living. Devanney was very industrious, and during the great drought in 1865 he saved his stock by hand feeding. When his supply of hay and straw was exhausted he drove his stock down to the river at Belconnen, where he lopped the oak trees for fodder, and by these means saved all his stock. When the

drought broke in 1866 he sold them for the high price of £8 a head and then leased his farm. Having received a pardon, he set out in 1867 for his native land and the family he had not seen for twenty-nine years. During the voyage he was robbed of a sum exceeding £700, but discovered his loss in time and the thief was caught and subsequently tried, convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. We can imagine the joy of the Devanney family re-union after their long separation, for when he was transported his eldest child was eight years of age and the youngest an infant in arms. Old hands at Canberra often referred to Devanney as the ideal of what a farmer should be, and later some, of whom I was one, adopted his method of coping with droughts.

In the forties Mrs Julia Webb—better known as Judy Webb—indulged in the liquor traffic on the Ginninderra Creek west of Parkwood. At the time most of the large landowners were adept at this infringement of the liquor law, and Judy's sly-grog shop was no exception. In 1857 or early in 1858 Thomas Sayersbury finished a lime-burning contract, and after paying his men he found that he had £17-odd to spare. Tom, who had a fondness for firewater, then went to Judy's sly-grog shop and handed her the £17 with instructions to let him know when it was gone. On the second day he was told to clear out as his money was all gone. Tom departed and sought the advice of a non-drinking employee, who told him that he had been robbed and advised him to go to the police. Tom did so and a few days later called on Judy and put down a half-sovereign and asked for a bottle of rum, which was promptly supplied. At a pre-arranged signal two police officers who were concealed nearby were quickly on the scene and Judy was duly haled before the Bench in Queanbeyan on a charge of sly-grog selling and was fined £30, of which Sayersbury received half. After the case was disposed of Judy Webb called at our house at Duntroon and gave us an account of it. This was the first time I met Judy, who later became a friend and regular visitor to our home and always had some interesting tales to tell of the early days. She said that when Thomas Southwell settled on the Ginninderra Creek in the forties the locality was a perfect hell. She did not like Southwell because he disapproved of her sly-grog selling, but although he cautioned her on several occasions, he never laid an information against her. She gave him every credit for the good he accomplished in a few years, and was unstinted in her praise despite their difference of opinion. Judy had many sympathizers, and was known far and wide for her willingness to assist those in distress; she could set a broken limb and was an excellent midwife. After her conviction the sly-grog selling was a thing of the past. It was reported that Sayersbury owed her money, hence the order to 'clear out'—also that Tom's men obtained grog in his name and he was unaware of what was going on.

Judy Webb died in 1877 aged fifty-seven years, esteemed and sadly missed by her family and many friends, and is buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Queanbeyan. She was a native of Kilkenny, Ireland.

Thomas Southwell, the reformer of Ginninderra Creek, settled there in the early forties. Henry Parkinson sold him 600 acres of land and this gave the family a start. About 1855 Southwell became a local preacher, and in a short time the moral atmosphere of this 'perfect hell' was vastly changed for the better as a result of his influence. He built a hall, and it was here that the residents attended in large numbers for service, the nearest place of worship being at Queanbeyan, twenty-four miles away.

One Sunday night in the winter of 1862 he preached in Queanbeyan, and after service left for home about 10.30 p.m. He had only travelled a short distance when his horse shied and threw him. Although unhurt, he was unable to catch the horse and had to walk the twenty-four miles home with the horse a short distance in front of him. He passed our home about 3 a.m. A few months later he again preached at Queanbeyan, and on the way home heavy rain fell and when he reached the Ginninderra Creek it was in flood and uncrossable. He remained a guest at our home for two days.

According to Julia Webb, a few of the leading men on the Ginninderra Creek were of evil repute, and in 1863 she called on father and mother and during a discussion on the subject she said,

I always carried a pistol although we women had nothing to fear from the bushrangers. I only met one really bad bushranger and his name was Curran. His leader, 'Jacky Jacky', nearly killed him for insulting a woman and then expelled him from the gang. We never thought that any man could effect such a change for the better as did Southwell, and in two years it was a different place and the daily debauchery ceased. On one occasion they assaulted and tried to rob him; their purpose was to drive him from the locality, but they failed. The men concerned and some of their confederates came to a bad end. Lehane died a pauper after his trial at Wagga Wagga for cattle stealing. However, Southwell, by his industry and honesty, reformed this locality so that it was a fit place for decent people to live, and his example, I believe, did more good than his preaching. I admire the man, and you will learn nothing but good from Thomas Southwell.

John Booth, the first man to open a tannery in the Canberra district, said that when Southwell first came to the locality the only law observed by those in charge of the stations was that of their own free will to do what pleased them, and that the owners in most cases were 'absentees' and were satisfied with dividends only. However, Southwell let the people know how the power in the hands of those in charge was shamefully abused, and that the attack on him was suggested by an official who wanted to see him frightened out of the district. It was reported years afterwards that a man named Edward Costello saved his life. I will give the facts as I know them. About 1850 Southwell returned from a trip to Sydney. He had three teams which he left near Ginninderra, and he rode home from there. He had just finished supper when a gang of masked men came in and demanded his money, which he refused to give them. They searched him and then ransacked the house, but found nothing. They then tied him to a tree and one of the gang pointed a gun at him and was about to shoot when the leader said, 'No, Bill—we will give him one more chance. I'll count nine slowly and if he doesn't speak you blow out his b—— guts.' Southwell stood the test and the gun was not fired. They then gave him a severe beating and left him tied up. Southwell's wife released him and the police were informed. Southwell (who spent a week in bed) said that he was sure he recognized the voice of the leader, but in this he was wrong because the man he named was in Queanbeyan at the time. Jack Booth gave my brother John a full account of the hold-up and said that the man Southwell named was in the plot but was absent, and the gang leader mimicked his voice to deceive Southwell. They would have murdered him but for Costello. Booth had warned Southwell that an attempt might be made to rob him when he returned from Sydney. Consequently, on arriving home he secreted over £100 in the bark roof of his house.

I met Costello years later, and in 1895 he called at our home, Springvale, and had dinner with us. He appeared sorry for his misdeeds and said, 'Here I am well into the seventies and I have thrown away many opportunities and there is only the Poor House to look forward to. Those whom I thought were my friends have deserted me and I suppose it is only what I deserve.'

I heard a lot about this man and how he had treated his family forty years before I knew him. They would have died from neglect only for a man named Waters. Sometime in the fifties Waters was passing an hotel in the Wagga district when he heard children crying. He noticed a horse and cart under a tree and there found Mrs Costello and two young children—the elder under three years. Being questioned, the woman said, 'We have been here for hours and Ned is over in the hotel—I am sick and going to have a baby.'

Waters hurried to the hotel and found the husband, who promptly told him to go to hell, and the woman also. Thus Waters formed an association with this woman and they lived in Queanbeyan as man and wife and reared a respectable family. I met and respected this family, who were beyond reproach.

Costello was employed at the Duntroon woolshed in 1895, and was never heard of after he left the shed.

Many of the landowners in the district are only a memory now—in many cases a disagreeable one—but the name of Thomas Southwell is inscribed on the historical records for all time:

‘I have fought a good fight,  
I have finished my course,  
I have kept the faith.’

These words of St Paul can be truthfully applied to Thomas Southwell. He died in 1881 aged sixty-eight years, and is buried in the old Weetangerra cemetery.

Henry Parkinson was one of the pioneers of the Canberra district and he secured 2,000 acres of land on the Ginninderra Creek. He was the first man to grow tobacco successfully in County Murray, and when Thomas Southwell came to the locality he sold him 600 acres of land—an action he later repented, as he was jealous of Southwell’s success and resented his actions as a reformer. Parkinson was a powerfully-built man over six feet tall and he had an evil reputation. He did everything possible to annoy Southwell and became a very bitter enemy. He lived less than a mile from Parkwood House, which was Southwell’s home, and Parkinson’s property was visible from it. If he was idle during the week he would always find some work to do on Sunday within sight of Southwell’s house. However, when his health broke down and his associates deserted him, it was Thomas Southwell who attended him on his death bed. His end was a fearful one, and Southwell told me that he would never forget that dying scene. He died intestate and a large quantity of tobacco in leaf and otherwise was sold by the bailiff. On one occasion Parkinson and a man named Jones were taking a load of wheat to Queanbeyan and became bogged near our place and father assisted them out. John Booth told us, ‘Parkinson is bad, but Jones is worse, and the least you know about him the better.’ Jones left the district about 1860.

About 1857 there was a great sensation at Charnwood, the home of Henry Hall, J.P. He had an assigned woman servant who was cook and housemaid, and she had been so for about two years. One morning Hall said to his wife, ‘It is six o’clock and there is no noise in the kitchen—Jane must have overslept.’ Mrs Hall went to investigate and found that the woman was missing and her bed had not been slept in. The news soon spread, and a messenger was despatched to Queanbeyan for the police. The black trackers were on the job but no trace of the missing woman could be found and it was believed that she had levanted with some man. Henry Parkinson had called on her a few times, but denied all knowledge of the matter when questioned by Hall and the police—and so the search ended. A week later the head stockman, John O’Brien, was doing the rounds of what was known as Langdon’s Paddock and had crossed what was known as the Willow Hole. As his horse was having a drink O’Brien noticed in the reeds the body of the missing woman. She was identified by the wearing apparel, and it was believed that she had been strangled. Her body was buried in a plot at Charnwood, in which about a dozen early pioneers are buried, including four children.

Maurice Welsh was transported in the early days and came to Canberra in the early forties. He was past seventy when I first met him, and he drove the ration cart at Ginninderra. He crossed himself a dozen times a day and said ‘By Jasus’ a hundred times a day. In 1860 brother John took the sheep to the washpen and he slept in the watchbox with Maurice, who taught him many prayers. He said to John, ‘I often cry when I think of your mother and father; what good people they are, and there is no hope for them if they don’t join the true church. It is awful to think they must go to hell.’

Maurice Welsh sincerely believed it was so, and would often walk the sixteen miles to Queanbeyan to attend Mass. On several occasions father gave him a lift to town, the last occasion being at Easter 1874. Maurice remained to see the races and was later found dead on the racecourse—vile

firewater was the cause. Father McAuliffe would not allow Welsh to be buried in the Catholic cemetery and so he was buried outside. A few years later the cemetery was enlarged and Maurice was then in consecrated ground.

I believe that Maurice Welsh was the last man to be flogged at Canberra, and when Dr Murray bought Yarralumla he had the flogging tree cut down. I saw the stump on many occasions. On one occasion when Maurice was being flogged he upset the triangles and one of the officials was injured. Maurice was then tied to a leaning tree and received a few extra lashes for good measure. He was five feet ten inches tall and weighed fourteen stone, and was supposed to be the strongest man in County Murray. I think that Christopher Dunn was a stronger man than Maurice—he was a man of seventeen stone when I first met him and was the champion wrestler of New South Wales. About 1849 Welsh was assigned to James Wright, the owner of Lanyon and Cuppacumbalong estates, and was installed as hutkeeper for the shepherds. One night the dogs set up a great row and Maurice left the box to investigate and saw a man lying near a log. He prodded the man with his hurdle fork and the intruder jumped up and ran away, but not before Maurice struck him a number of heavy blows about the head and body. Next morning he told the shepherds what had happened and then set off for the head station to report the matter to Mr Wright. On arrival he was informed that his master was ill. After some little delay Mrs Wright came to the door and after hearing Maurice's story she took him to the bedroom where Wright lay with his head bandaged. 'I have a headache this morning, Welsh—what is the matter?' Wright said.

'Thieves, thieves, Mr Wright—they came to steal your sheep. I nearly had one great big fellow—I gave him a couple of heavy blows and then tripped and fell. I think if we get the police we may be able to capture the thieves—Hong Kong, the police tracker, is just across the river', Welsh said.

'Thank you, Welsh,' Wright said, 'you have done your duty so go to the kitchen and Mrs Wright will give you breakfast.'

Maurice told me that it was the best breakfast he had had for many a long day, and when leaving Mrs Wright gave him a bottle of rum as a reward for his vigilance the previous night. Years later, when relating the incident, Maurice said that he had recognized the intruder as James Wright and that he had been warned that Wright would be prowling around at night and to be on his guard.

James Wright was the first magistrate to officiate in County Murray. In the thirties he and his brother William purchased land at what is now Lanyon, and James married the eldest daughter of William Davis Snr and sent home for his father-in-law and brought the old folk to this fair land. It was Wright who built the original Lanyon house, but later in the forties he sold the property to Andrew Cunningham. He then took up a large property at Booroomba and built a homestead which was later occupied by William Davis Snr, who in turn disposed of the property to Charles McKeachnie. It was popular belief that James Wright was very severe on any person unlucky enough to be brought before him. However, Mr and Mrs James Young, who were in his service for many years, spoke highly of him as an employer. Young was later a neighbour of mine for more than forty years, and could be depended upon. Wright's eldest son, William Davis Wright, was a great friend of mine, and he gave me a full account of the early days and the cruelty practised by those in authority. He assured me that the severest punishment inflicted by his father was to handcuff a man to a verandah post for the best part of a day, and when the man was released at night he always sent him a supper from his table. He also told of the capture of his father by brigands in Spain. About 1823 he was travelling through the Pyrenees when he was seized and carried off into a great valley; he knew that the object was ransom. After a journey of several hours he was taken to a cave and brought before an old chieftain. Wright was a Freemason, and as soon as he was addressed by the chief he gave the Freemason's sign—this was followed by other signs

and the captive was then treated as a guest of honour. After a stay of several days the chief gave him a gift worth several hundred guineas and he was escorted to the nearest town. The gift is an heirloom in the family to this day. In 1915, when William Davis Wright heard that I was leaving the Federal Territory, he came to my home at Springvale and spent the night, and we burnt the midnight oil in reviewing the early days of Canberra and its pioneers.

Joseph Brown was one of the first white men to see Canberra in its virgin state and he was present when the great battle was fought on the plain between the Narrabundah and the Pialligo tribe and a visiting tribe of about 300 blacks from Cooma. The visitors were camped on Mount Pleasant and a few braves came down to the river to challenge the local tribe. The battle lasted three days, and after minor casualties had been inflicted the visitors disappeared as suddenly as they had come. It is a matter of regret that no record of the battle was kept, because I have heard old hands say that it was wonderful how the spears were deflected by the use of shields. Joseph Brown told me that about thirty whites were present at the battle, and I now regret that I did not get a more detailed account from him. He was a very quiet man and was employed by Edwin Elijah Bambridge and Ebenezer Booth for a period of thirty years, and during my time was living with them. He was an ardent fisherman and a crack shot with the fowling piece. About 1867 a sensation was caused when Mr Campbell inserted an advertisement in the *Queanbeyan Age* which read: 'Whereas on such-and-such a date one of my black swans was shot on the river, I hereby offer a reward of £100 for information that will lead to the conviction, etc., of the miscreant so offending.'

Joe Brown was the offender in this case but he broke no law because it was a wild bird and the country was unfenced, and the public laughed at Campbell's assertion that the swans were his property. After this advertisement appeared in the paper Joe Brown bagged a great number of wild ducks on the river and was never prosecuted. Later, when the land was fenced and restrictions were placed on fishing and shooting by the landowners, Joe felt it very much. He ended his days at the Canberra post office and was accidentally killed when mounting his horse—he overbalanced, falling on his head on the offside of the horse, and death was instantaneous. There must be a good many who were acquainted with this gruff, honest and kindly old man at Duntroon.

George Forty Three, Joe the Trouncer, the Black Snake, Boat-Hole Donnelly, Mudbank Joe, Narrowhole Dick, Bill the Blower, Murrumbidgee George, Rocky Sam and the Black Trencher were some of the nicknames given to some of the old Canberra identities. The Black Trencher's exploit in assisting Mrs Mayo across the flooded river in a tub to attend a sick call has already been mentioned. Joseph Brown was known as 'Joe the Trouncer' for the following reason. Many years ago some sporting individuals were relating their exploits as crack shots and fishermen. As a sportsman with the gun, Joe held pride of place, but on fishing he was dumb. Thomas Jordan silenced the crowd when he related his experience at the Goat Station. Here is his account:

I was hutkeeper and all the work being done I took a couple of lines and went to the Oak Hole and put one line in and tied it to a branch. I put the other line in at the big oak tree and sat with my back against it and looped the line on my wrist. I must have fallen asleep because the next thing I knew I was floundering in the water. A big fish was on the line attached to my wrist, and but for the fact that I was able to grasp some reeds and hang on I would not be here today. After a struggle the fish eased up and I scrambled out and landed it and took it to our hut, where the overseer, Mr McPherson, took it to Ginninderra and weighed it—it was an 84-pounder.

When Jordan finished his tale a young man said, 'Joe, can you beat that?'

'I don't know', Joe said. 'My fish was never weighed. I tied a piece of salt junk on to a plough line and threw it into the water to soak prior to cooking it. When I went to get it a couple of hours later I

had a great tussle to get it out, and when I did so there was a fish on it quite as big and as heavy as myself. There were no weighing scales near, but I am sure that it was as heavy as I was at the time— $11\frac{1}{2}$  stone.'

'That is a "trouncer",' the young man said, 'I like a good big lie.'

Joe resented this remark, and the result was that he and the youth stood face to face on the green in front of the men's hut. Joe was twice the age of his opponent and a stone lighter, but he knew a good deal about the noble art of self-defence and in twenty minutes gave him the trouncing of his life—hence the name, 'Joe the Trouncer'. Joe's fish was not caught in local waters. Richard Shumack, who was the oldest native-born Canberra-ite at the time, assured me that the Trouncer's fish was caught in the Namoi River and that Joe had given him a full account of the experience.

John Wiending—known as 'Jack the Welshman'—was born in Wales and was about ten years of age when his parents died. An aunt took him into her care when he was sixteen, and she gave him a horse and cart and he commenced carting on the same lines as Barkis in *David Copperfield*. His aunt derived her living from the spinning wheel. She would buy small lots of wool from farmers in the locality, and this she would scour and bleach and weave into cloth. I never saw one of these hand looms, although they were common in my youth. Jack's aunt was doing well until thieves began stealing her wool. Acting under instructions from a well-known farmer, she scoured some wool and then put it out to bleach. The farmer came at night with a mastiff and gave the wool over to his care, and in the morning they found a big young fellow lying on his face in the wool with the mastiff sitting on his haunches watching him. The farmer turned the thief over on his back and there was the nephew with a scar on his breast and his jersey and shirt torn. The aunt was shocked when she saw her nephew, who had a bag with one handful of wool in it, and wanted to forget the matter. However, the farmer said, 'I will not close my eyes to a felony like this—I am sworn to uphold the law.'

Jack was handed over to the police, who searched his room and recovered stolen property worth £200. He was tried on several charges, convicted and sentenced to transportation for twenty years. When we arrived at Duntroon in 1856 Jack had a farm at Acton and his landlord was Dr Hayley. He was engaged to marry Christie Cameron, the third daughter of John and Ann Cameron of the Glebe, Ginninderra, and he was popular with all his neighbours. He had arranged to take over an hotel in Queanbeyan after his marriage, and the community was shocked when they heard that Jack had been jilted at the eleventh hour. All sorts of rumours were in circulation. In personal appearance, Jack was ahead of his rival, Vallance, who was a storekeeper at Foxlow. For a time the people in and about the Glebe thought that Vallance was the proprietor of the store, but the truth soon became known—he was an employee of Mr T. Rutledge and was on wages. It was an unhappy marriage, and those who knew the facts did not pity the lady in question. She died a young woman and Vallance died soon after in a drunken spree. Jack, with all his faults, was much the better man.

This disappointment was Jack's undoing and his dishonest traits developed and brought him to grief a short time later. Jack's neighbour was a man named Lonergan, also a farmer, and one day he caught Jack making free with his property and went for him with an axe and the second blow knocked Jack out. Lonergan was arrested and charged with assault with intent to murder, and was sentenced to three years' hard labour. He had a wife and several small children at the time of his conviction, and shortly afterwards the lease of his farm expired and tenders were called—that of Thomas Joslyn being accepted. Joslyn was in Victoria at the time, and when he received word that his tender had been accepted he lost no time in leaving for Canberra with his wife, horse team and furniture. On arrival they found the house still occupied by the Lonergan family, and Joslyn was shocked when found that he could not take possession, so went to Duntroon for advice. He was advised to watch the house, and when

Mrs Lonergan went out to take possession in her absence. Several days passed before Mrs John Winter went into Queanbeyan and Mrs Lonergan accompanied her. When she returned home about sundown she found all her effects in the roadway and the Joslyns in possession of the home. The poor woman collapsed. There she was with the canopy of heaven her only covering from the wild night coming on! However, John Winter and his wife took these destitute ones to their humble abode for three weeks. The community was later surprised to learn that Joslyn had been served with a writ for forcibly ejecting the family and wrongfully taking possession of the house. Mrs Lonergan secured a verdict for £100 plus costs, and this met with general approval as it was assumed that Joslyn's advisers would pay his expenses. This they would not do, nor would they lend him the money. This case was heard in 1861 and Joslyn had to borrow £65 from Thomas Southwell of Parkwood in order to discharge this debt. Joslyn died sixteen years later, leaving £45 still due to Southwell. F. Williams benefited from the will, and when all expenses were paid he was less than £50 to the good. Joslyn was the victim of a shocking case of injustice because he had to pay £25, which was a year's rent in advance, and he sent this amount from Victoria, and on arrival he acted on the advice of the Duntroon manager. This is a fair sample of justice as it was administered in those days.

I never saw 'Jack the Welshman' after he was jilted. The girl made the greatest mistake of her life when she married Vallance because he was dismissed from his post at Foxlow and came to Gundaroo, where he was assisted by W. Affleck, who was married to Mrs Vallance's sister, Kitty. Vallance and his wife died here a few years later, and I believe that none of the four children lived to see forty-five years. Such was the result of this young woman's indiscreet action—she would have made a good man of Jack, for notwithstanding his faults, all who knew him liked him.

Shortly after he was jilted Jack took a load of wheat to Sydney, accompanied by several other teamsters. A few were loaded with wool and others with grain, and Jack's mates were surprised when he was unloading his grain in Sydney to see a bale of wool concealed in his load. Jack said that a friend had asked him to take it to Sydney for him. They laughed, knowing full well that they would get the truth later. Here it is. The evening Jack camped at the roadside near Lanyon he unyoked his bullocks and then walked down to the shed where the pressers had just turned out the last bale for the day. He noticed that there were a few unbranded bales in the shed, and at midnight he returned and rolled a bale to his dray, which was half a mile away. He put the bale in the dray and then covered it with wheat. In the morning the pressers thought that a bale was missing, but as several bales were unbranded they concluded that they had been mistaken in the actual number. Years later Jack boasted how he had hoodwinked the pressers—he was in the shed when work commenced next day and he heard them remark about their mistake. He died about 1883.

About 1830 William McCarthy, the founder of Glenwood estate, near the village of Hall, was transported for a passive participation in the Freedom for Ireland question. I never met the old man, but my friend Robert Kilby knew him well and declared that he was one of nature's gentlemen. This I can readily believe because I knew his sons, William and James, and had business dealings with them. William was almost ruined by the drought of 1881. He was a splendid workman and excelled at fencing, farming and general bushcraft, and when ploughing matches commenced in 1872 he was appointed judge and he carried out his duties to the satisfaction of all. In 1881 he had 350 head of cattle for sale and refused £4 per head, and the drought later set in and he lost them all from starvation. His brother James assisted him during this misfortune, and after his wife died he left the district and took a small farm near Penrith. James never refused to subscribe to any public or private appeal, and I could give many instances of his generosity.



About 1859, when blocks of land were surveyed and sold at Canberra, Robin Maloney secured two blocks of 100 acres each and I often saw him at work improving this land when I was shepherding. I saw him building a house, and this news quickly spread and it was rumoured from Queanbeyan to Ginninderra that old Robin Maloney was going to marry Miss O'Keefe. The house under construction was the same type as those constructed locally, but was superior in that it had a double chimney and a verandah. Soon all was ready and the wedding day was announced. The night before the wedding Robin visited the home of the O'Keefes and spent a few hours with the bride-elect and her mother, sisters, and brothers Dave and Steve. All was arranged and the prospective groom was to meet the bridal party at the Roman Catholic Church at 11.30 a.m. next day. At 7.30 the next morning the O'Keefe family received a shock when they could not locate the bride-to-be. Her bed had not been slept in and her clothing and money were gone. A week later the mother's anxiety was dispelled when she received a letter from the missing one. She wrote:

I was never consulted on the matter and I believe I have done the right thing. When I marry—if I ever do—I will make my own choice and I will never become any man's slave if I can help it. When you were in bed I climbed out through the window with my carpet bag, and I had to run as I wanted to catch the coach which passed the corner at 12.30 a.m. I had to take off my boots and stockings to cross the river near the church and the water was very cold, but I soon got warm as I ran. I boarded the coach and got a job when I arrived in Goulburn.

This young lady returned a few years later to become Edmund Rolfe's second wife at Gold Creek, Ginninderra. The jilted lover did not die broken-hearted—he was a married man within a month.

Some ten or twelve years before this event one Michael McNamara and his wife arrived from Ireland and secured land south of Queanbeyan, where they prospered. Towards the close of 1858 Mrs McNamara sent home for her sister Mary, who was the youngest in the family, and about August 1859 Mary and her brother Joe Walsh arrived at Queanbeyan. This was about the time Robin Maloney was jilted. The local priest took the matter up, with the result that Mary Walsh and Robin Maloney were married within a month of the former's arrival in the district. I must say it was a happy union. I found Mary Maloney a good friend during her long residence at Canberra, and she and her husband were ever ready to respond to a sick call. On one occasion when my Uncle Peter was taken seriously ill and there was no other person in the vicinity to act as messenger, Maloney got out of his sick bed and did a journey of twenty-four miles to obtain medical assistance. By this action he added years to Uncle Peter's life.

About the time of Miss O'Keefe's flight to Goulburn her father went out one day and Canberra saw him no more. His disappearance caused a stir in the locality and a search was continued for days. Two years later, a couple of miles distant, some human remains were found which were supposed to be those of the missing man, but there was no definite proof and the incident was soon forgotten. However, a surprise was sprung upon the family. In 1856 Abraham Levy was a storekeeper in Queanbeyan and my father transacted business with him until about 1871, when he sold out and went to Melbourne. One day in 1874 Levy hailed a cab in a Melbourne street, and when he was seated the driver asked him where he wished to be driven. Levy recognized the voice and said, 'This is a surprise to me, O'Keefe—we all believed you dead.'

O'Keefe tried to bluff Levy, but finally admitted his identity and begged him not to reveal his whereabouts. Levy told him that he was a magistrate and intended sending a report to his lawful wife and was not going to condone a felony. A report was duly sent to Mrs O'Keefe, who declined to take any action in the matter, and nothing more was heard of O'Keefe. He told Levy that his reason for leaving home was that he owed a large sum of money to a Queanbeyan storekeeper and was served with a Supreme Court writ the day before his disappearance. His wife ended her days with her daughter,

Mrs Edmund Rolfe, at Gold Creek, Ginninderra. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her and her action concerning her recreant husband added to her reputation.

The first tenant of the Stone Hut farm on the Weetangerra Road was James Neylon, whom I first met in 1858. The story of his life is a pathetic one. He had a business in Belfast, Ireland, when he was a young man, and about twelve months after his marriage he was arrested on a charge of forgery. After a protracted trial he was sentenced to death and a petition for a reprieve was rejected. Undaunted, Neylon's friends continued their efforts and a reprieve was finally granted twenty-four hours before the time appointed for his execution. He was transported for life and arrived in Australia towards the close of the thirties. He left a young wife and daughter in Ireland, and it was some twenty years before they were to meet again. About fifteen years after his arrival in New South Wales he was assigned to Mr T. A. Murray—afterwards Sir Terence Murray—whom Neylon declared to be an honourable, just and humane Christian who did his very best to relieve the sufferings of those in his charge. Shortly after Neylon arrived at Canberra he gave Mr Murray an account of his arrest and conviction. Murray was convinced of his innocence and sent home an appeal on his behalf, and about two years later Neylon received a pardon. His wife and daughter arrived a year later. Some years later a noted reaper named Jeremiah Lenhane came to the district and Neylon refused to sit at the same table with him on the ground that Lenhane had refused to give evidence at his trial—vital evidence that would have cleared him of the forgery charge. Neylon left the district in 1869 and settled at Yass, where he died in 1871.

In 1928 there died at Ravensworth, in the Hunter Valley, John Winter, who was in his ninety-seventh year. Born at Barnet, Buckinghamshire, England, in 1832, he arrived in Australia on the sailing ship *Blenheim* in 1855. In England he had worked as a farm labourer, and day after day with other men would make his way to the village green, which was a picking-up point for any labourer the squire might require. Early in life he knew what it was to be hungry. His elder brother William did not take kindly to this life of scarcity, and to make a few shillings he took to poaching, to the horror and dismay of his father, who said, 'For God's sake, William, go to Australia before they send you!' This advice they both eventually decided to take. On arrival in Sydney John set off on foot for the interior, and he trudged up through the Hunter Valley and at last arrived at Kentucky, New England. Here he made good money as a mower, for good mowers were scarce because of the gold rush. Saving his money, he worked his way south until he reached Canberra. 'As soon as I saw it,' he relates, 'I said, "this is the place for me".'

There he selected land and called it Red Hill—it is now known as Gungahderra. For a time the brothers worked together, then William moved to Bungendore. His grandson was Anthony Winter, winner of Australia's first gold medal at the Olympic Games.

On 13 June 1861 John Winter married Jemima McPherson, daughter of Hugh McPherson of Majura. They had eight children—four sons, Joseph, William, John and David, and four daughters, Jemima (Mrs Cregan), Isabella (Mrs George Shumack), Sarah (Mrs. S. Shumack) and Elizabeth (Mrs Ginn).

This generation saw mechanization come to the land. In this the four sons played their part as engineers, first with a portable steam engine drawn by bullocks and a huge threshing machine called a 'drum'. They travelled from farm to farm to do the threshing and chaffcutting. The flails that fell on the fields of Babylon and Egypt—and of Canberra—now became museum pieces. At the start of the century they introduced the steam traction engine, which weighed twelve tons and pulled a threshing machine, elevator and wagon, chaffcutter and steamer, and field kitchen. With the introduction of shearing machines the Winter brothers were kept busy installing these machine and the first oil petrol engines. They were clever workers in metal and did their own repairs. Amos Winter, son of William, later played his part at Canberra with his contracting earthmoving machines. John Winter added to Red Hill until

he owned near 1,000 acres. After the Federal Government resumed it he moved to Ravensworth and lived with his daughter Sarah until his death. He is buried in the Church of England cemetery at Hebden.

When her first child was a toddler Jemima Winter had to shepherd a small flock of sheep and to prevent them straying on to a neighbour's land she often had to run to head them off. With a baby this was impossible, so she dug a hole in which she stood young Jemima. One day as she was heading back the sheep there came a sharp, heavy thunderstorm and in a few minutes gullies began to fill with water. Panic-stricken, Jemima abandoned the sheep and ran through the deluge—'Baby will be drowned!' She was relieved to find Jemima still with her head above water and seemingly happy. Years later a block of land was selected in Jemima's name and, as was required by law, she had to sleep on it at night. One of her younger sisters used to sleep with her for company. Night after night they would shiver with terror as heavy footsteps could be heard round the hut and the door would be tried. As soon as they could toddle the children became shepherds, and while they minded the sheep they had to heap wood—at least eight heaps a day. In the reaping field they reaped and bound side by side with the men—some were better reapers than the men. At the threshing floor the men wielded the flail while the women did the winnowing. Then came the reaper and binder and threshing machine, and gradually women left the fields, but not the cowyard—milking was women's work!

About 1849 Thomas Tinsley and his wife leased a farm on the Ginninderra Creek. There was a run of lean years in 1875-6 and this was repeated in 1877-8, and Tinsley, who was seventy-five years of age and his wife seventy-eight years, were in arrears with their rent. The Hon. Charles Campbell secured a bill of sale over their few effects and this fact was advertised in the *Queanbeyan Age*. When Captain Samuel Southwell saw the advertisement he rode to Duntroon to plead for the old couple: 'These poor people have paid you 10s. an acre per year for nearly thirty years, which is five times the value of the land, and surely you will not turn this aged couple out to perish'

Campbell replied, 'Southwell, I never allow sentiment to interfere with business—they can go to the old people's home.'

Despite Southwell's efforts the sale took place and Mrs Tinsley was admitted to the Queanbeyan hospital, where she died three weeks later. Mr McCarthy, when he heard about the matter, sent a messenger to Tinsley offering him a home, which he gratefully accepted; however, he died within twelve months. Many people were incensed by Campbell's action and said that the old couple had been hurried to their grave by this callous ejectment.

Some forty-odd years ago a certain personage went to the Commercial Bank, Queanbeyan, and withdrew a large sum of money which he placed in his pocket. When near the Queanbeyan bridge he pulled out his handkerchief, and in so doing dropped the wallet of notes. A lad of fifteen saw the incident and recovered the money; meanwhile, the owner had disappeared. On making inquiries he was informed that Mr ——— had gone into the nearby hotel, where he was subsequently located by the lad and his informant and the money was returned. He counted the money and thanked the finder, and then retired to the bar. A letter appeared in the next issue of the *Queanbeyan Age*, signed 'Spectator', describing the incident and castigating the owner for his 'miserliness'. In the next issue of the same paper was a reply, signed 'Owner', which said that 'Spectator' must have forgotten that, had the lad not returned the money he was liable to fourteen years for larceny by finding. 'Spectator' acrimoniously replied that, had the incident occurred in the old country, the lad could have recovered more than £20 by legal proceedings, and that such men as 'Owner' were a disgrace to the State. Here the matter ended. When I read this letter one of the party present said,

Yes, there are plenty like that mean hound. A few years ago I was driving sheep in the Braidwood district and I found a small leather bag containing twenty-seven sovereigns. The loser

turned up soon after and asked me if I had seen the bag, which had fallen from his buckboard. I returned the bag and sovereigns and he thanked me and drove away. I thought afterwards that he could at least have given me one out of the twenty-seven.

Three years later I heard the truth of this matter. I went fishing on the river near Edge's old station and there came across a party of three, including this man James ——-. They had a supply of firewater and one was relating an incident similar to the one just recorded. When he finished the story James ——- said,

I had a bit of luck about ten years ago when driving sheep near Braidwood. I found a small portmanteau on the road shortly after a gent in a buckboard had passed me, and it contained a few articles and twenty-seven sovereigns. I took the sovereigns and threw the port into the creek. Later in the evening, when we were pitching our tent, the gent in the buckboard returned and asked if we had found a small port. My mates knew nothing of my find so we all declared that we had not seen anything of the missing article. The gent was a surveyor who was camped twenty miles from town and he had been in for supplies—the sovereigns were to pay his men. He did not miss the port until he got to his camp and had no idea where he lost it—I was not fool enough to tell him because he got his money easier than I did.

Such was James ——-'s story, and I believe he told the truth when under the influence. I regarded him as an honest man until he told this story, and I was surprised that he had no recollection of previously telling me a different story.

## *Chronicles of Springvale, 1870-95*

*The seasons 1870-80 Mother's death John and I branch out Dr Hilder  
Our first crop The 'Dandenong Gale' Sister Elizabeth's death  
Father buys out Mark and Samuel Southwell Tubbo Station incident  
Father's house, Round Hill*

THE YEARS 1870-3 were marked by low prices for dairy produce. Meat was cheap, and in the spring of 1873 father sold fat bullocks for £10—in 1868 they were £8 a head. Butter sold at 3d. a pound. Father commenced butchering in 1873 and had no difficulty in disposing of beef at so much a quarter—his greatest difficulty was being paid for it. Some he was never paid for; consequently he did not remain long in the butchering business. In 1873 we planted fifty acres of wheat, and as our cattle had increased father sold some fat bullocks to Mr Beatty, a butcher in Queanbeyan, for which he received more than £100. I was busy fencing at this time and in four days I erected 156 panels; it would have been 170 but I was called away to assist with the stock branding. The fence was a heavy one of two rails and was still standing fifty years later.

On 30 May 1873 we suffered an irreparable loss when our mother passed away after an illness of three weeks, aged fifty-two years. She was laid to rest in St John's cemetery. The management of the house was now in the hands of my sister Phoebe, who was only fifteen. Sister Emily was twelve, brother George ten, and sister Elizabeth was an invalid thirty years of age, so Phoebe had a hard task to perform and I consider she did wonders. Emily did wonders for her age, too: she could make a sponge cake and bake bread that would be a credit to any woman. We had a good harvest this year and Phoebe, who was a splendid hand with the reaping hook, often cut a quarter of an acre each day as well as attending to the household duties. When I cast an eye on the distant days of the toilsome past I am surprised at what my sisters accomplished. When farm produce prices rose in 1875-6 the girls did all the dairy work under father's supervision. People today have no conception of what hardships the early settlers had to contend with, and we were no exception. All sewing had to be done by hand; the first sewing machine used in Canberra was introduced by Mrs Abernethy in 1863, and Mrs Alfred Mayo had the first one at Duntroon.

In 1874 the prices of farm produce improved. The rainfall was moderate and 1875 promised well. However, rain did not fall during the months of April, May and June, so the crops were sown under difficulties. August and September were dry, but seasonable rains fell in October and the first week in November and the farmers' hopes revived. The usual practice was to keep sufficient wheat on hand for the coming year, and if the crop promised well the surplus could be sold if the price was satisfactory. This was the case this year and the farmers with surplus stocks sold them. John Glynn, who was the largest wheatgrower at Canberra, ordered 600 wheat sacks. The weather changed about 10 November and hot winds with scorching temperatures continued without rain; the result was that the crop was short. Glynn had seven men reaping for him—no machines then—at 13s. an acre, and I assisted with the threshing. The grain was good and at the conclusion of the threshing he had 300 sacks on hand—this was the rule everywhere. The price was 5s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. a bushel. Hay was a good price, but few farmers had any to sell.

After John Glynn's threshing was done my cousin Peter Shumack threshed his crop with the assistance of John Southwell, who had a threshing machine. Water was scarce and Southwell had to cart it two miles for household purposes and drive his stock the same distance. I assisted with this threshing. It was very hot the day we started, and the next morning was also hot with a few thunder clouds on the western horizon. The machine's capacity was about 200 bushels daily, and at 3 p.m. the thunder began to roll and we finished work for the day. An hour later the storm burst and within a short time the two dams near Peter Shumack's house were overflowing. Steady rain continued for an hour, and what a blessing it was! John Southwell said, 'This is worth £20 to me', but when he reached his home three miles to the north he found that the dust had not been laid, nor did the Canberra post office, two miles south, receive any rain, as the greatest width of the storm was three miles. Fortunately our land was in the centre of the storm area and for six weeks showers fell at intervals on this favoured strip, which made a pleasing picture. But a man named David Powell, who had ridden from Braidwood a few days after the storm, said that he had not seen a blade of grass until he reached Canberra, and had never seen the country so drought-stricken.

In 1875 I had 200 acres, John had 260 acres, and brother George, who was twelve, had 300 acres. We did more than our share in laying the foundation of his future.

John and I now decided to make a start on our own and in October 1875 I went to live with him in a shack on his land adjoining mine. I was twenty-five years of age and John was twenty-eight. We did our own cooking and sister Margaret, who lived four miles away, did our washing. My father, sisters Phoebe and Emily, and brother George lived a quarter of a mile away in my house, Springvale, free of rent. The autumn of this year was the driest ever known. Most of the farmers were hand feeding their stock and hay was £20 a ton at the stack. January and February passed without useful rain and some farmers were driving their sheep and cattle eight miles to water. At this time the train came only as far as Goulburn, and it was a costly matter to obtain fodder outside the district. March passed without rain and Charles Cameron of Ginninderra took steps to move his stock to a place known as Little Plain, to the south, which was surrounded by hills and was well grassed and watered. Three weeks later 400 head of stock were on the road to this haven. Cameron said, 'I have tons of hay and could keep them alive with that, but it would be dear stock with hay at £16 a ton and grass only 9d. per head per week.' I agreed with him. During Easter week 1876, 450 head of stock passed through Queanbeyan on the way to mountain pastures. Captain Samuel Southwell, assisted by twenty drovers, was in charge. However, the venture was not a financial success. Little more than half the stock returned in September, and Southwell was never fully paid for his services.

Although we were busy, John and I continued to assist the family at Springvale. This was in the centre of an oasis and so was a very busy place as there were thirty cows to milk. Father went to Queanbeyan thrice weekly and supplied customers with butter at 3s. 6d. a pound, and many people bought it at our house. Vegetables were practically unknown outside our oasis, and although we had sufficient for ourselves we had none to sell, although father often gave some to neighbours. These conditions prevailed for more than a year.

I now erected a mile of fence for my neighbour William Mathieson, and with the money received I was able to select an additional eighty acres which brought my holding to 320 acres—the maximum allowed by the Act of 1861. Later an amended Land Act allowed the selector to increase his holding to 640 acres, and I then selected another eighty which brought my holding to 400 acres. There was now no more land available adjoining my holding. John had also taken up more land, bringing his acreage to 442.

When John and I finished the harvest of 1875-6 I commenced reaping for Robert Maloney at 13s. an acre. The crop was light and short and we cut nine acres in eight days. We cut the bands for the sheaves from a patch three feet high and I then helped cart in the crop. In the meantime Francis Williams, the blacksmith at Canberra, secured land at Sutton which he was anxious to improve, so he asked me to take charge of his sons James and George and teach them bushcraft. 'We want 2,000 posts and rails and my boys know nothing about this work', he said. I agreed and a few days later we made a start. The storm previously mentioned had not reached Sutton, consequently the nearest water to our work was three miles away. George soon became an expert with the axe and saw and we averaged 500 posts weekly, and I put James in charge of the camp and he attended to the ration and water supplies. These lads later became schoolteachers.

One evening on the way to our camp we heard a 'cooe' in the distance and a few minutes later a man rode up and said, 'I am Dr Hilder—I have been a guest of Mr A. M. Rich and was on my way to Mrs Tully's when I took the wrong track and got lost.'

Night was closing in so I invited him to stay and share our meal. He declined, saying that he was expected at Tully's, so George showed him the track and he set off again. Soon after we heard a cry from the ridge and within a few minutes the doctor returned, having lost his way the second time. He agreed to spend the night with us. When leaving next morning he gave us some fatherly advice: 'Never touch drink under any circumstances, because for every life it saves it kills ten thousand—it is the greatest curse on God's earth.'

Almost a year later I met him again in the Ginninderra store and he asked me the way to Newman's. I agreed to show him the way, which was some three miles, and on our journey he told me something of his history. He said:

I have been the victim of drink for years. I was employed by the Orient Steamship Company, but on the way out from England in 1875 a young lady died and I was charged with neglect and dismissed the service. My case of surgical instruments' valued at 88 guineas was confiscated. My young friend, have nothing to do with grog.

By this time we were near the Newman residence, and as the doctor could see their kitchen light he left me and that was the last I saw of him.

In April 1876 he was called in to see Joseph Rolfe, who was very ill. He diagnosed his complaint as typhoid fever and cautioned the parents against giving spirits to the patient, who was only a youth. 'Milk is what he should have,' he said, 'because his condition is very serious.' When Dr Hilder called next day the parents refused to let him in and declared that they did not believe he was a doctor because there was no typhoid fever in Australia. 'Very well,' he said, 'if that is your opinion I will take my departure, but I advise you to send for another doctor immediately.' Dr Morton arrived nine hours later but Rolfe was dead.

Dr Hilder later went on the spree in Queanbeyan and was found dead the following morning. His brother suffered a similar fate when celebrating a £3,000 legacy.

When I completed the job at Sutton, John and I resumed the work of improving his land. This delayed the ploughing until May, and I then ploughed twenty-three acres with three horses in a single furrow plough in a month. A few days later general rain set in to the joy and relief of all farmers. This was our first crop and it came up quickly. In the middle of June mushrooms were abundant throughout the district and we did not get any winter weather until August. The stock put on condition before the winter set in and this was a blessing to the farmers, although few of them could get milk and butter. Father gave away many pounds of butter as we were fortunate with rainstorms, and for six months he coined money despite his generous giving.

After I had sown our first crop I agreed to sow twenty acres for John Coppin, as he and Levi Plummer were going on a shooting expedition with a party of 'swells'. George Harcourt and William Davis were the promoters of this venture and it must have paid Coppin well otherwise he would not have been in a position to hire me to do his farming. I completed these farming operations on 20 July 1876, a few days after the shooting party returned. They shot 2,700 wallabies; Coppin shot 300 and also skinned for a couple of the gents. He was very pleased with the trip, which was repeated the following year.

John and I now started splitting posts and rails. We wanted 4,000 rails—there was no wire fencing until three years later. On 7 August 1876 John left for the shearing season at Tubbo station on the Murrumbidgee, accompanied by Matt Smith, James Hall and Robert Kilby. I continued work on my own and averaged eighty rails a day; I also gave Dick Shumack several days' splitting and gave several hundred posts and rails to father. The first month of real winter was in August this year, and it was dry. September set in dry, but on the 9th good rain set in and continued all night. It ceased at sunrise and the wind which had been blowing all night increased to hurricane force. Neither I nor anyone else in the locality had ever witnessed such a storm. The continual roar of the elements was deafening, and the crash of falling trees and branches was continuous for eight hours. The destruction was enormous. The force of the wind at the Sydney Observatory was ninety-three miles an hour for hours, and one gust registered 153 miles an hour. Several lives were lost and towns in New South Wales and Queensland were battered by the fierce winds. Bundaberg was wrecked and a man named William Jamieson, who was there at the time, gave me a vivid description of its destruction. The steamship *Dandenong* foundered off Jervis Bay with the loss of forty-one lives. This storm was known as the 'Dandenong Gale'. The rainfall over the three days was not excessive.

On the day this storm burst Captain Samuel Southwell was returning with the stock from Little Plain. Several owners were at Tharwa to meet him and help put the stock across the river. They later told me that they would never forget that awful day of hurricane-force winds and torrential rain. The stock losses in this venture exceeded 200 head. J. Bolton, W. Hatch, C. Cameron and a few more were heavy losers. James Abernethy lost the most—twenty out of twenty-four. These cattle were sent away four months too late and the general opinion was that half the number lost were stolen and driven interstate. Archibald McKeachnie told me that he was certain that no more than one-third of the missing cattle died naturally, and it was his considered opinion that they were stolen and taken into Victoria through Gippsland. Stock losses were common at the time and only once was a conviction secured.

Dry conditions prevailed after this storm, and as John was away shearing I gave my cousin Dick Shumack a hand to gather his hay crop. We cut it with a scythe and gathered it with the hand rake—it went a ton and a half to the acre. I then spent several days reaping for my father. He employed a man named Jeremiah Lenhane, who was considered an expert with the reaping hook, but I cut thirty sheaves above his day's tally, much to his surprise. I commenced reaping our crop on Christmas Eve, and on this day John returned from shearing. We resumed reaping on Boxing Day and we cut the paddock in twenty days—over an acre a day. We drew in this crop in three days and then gave John Coppin a helping hand—it was the custom for years to help our neighbours if we finished our reaping first. It was not an uncommon sight to see the womenfolk in the harvest field. Mrs Coppin was a better reaper than her husband, and Mrs John Brunning could beat her husband easily; they averaged seven acres a week.

I will now describe an incident that occurred during John's shearing trip to Tubbo station. On the journey to the station John was kicked on the leg by Matt Smith's horse and was severely injured. The manager's wife at Tubbo—Mrs Spiller—visited the men's quarters twice daily to dress the wound and provided a leather legging to protect it from the wool yolk. John did not lose a day's work, although



the wound restricted his shearing tally. At this time 130,000 sheep were shorn at Tubbo and the full complement of shearers was forty-six. These men signed on for 17s. 6d. per 100, but the penalty clause received no support from Spiller, who paid £1 per 100 with free rations to the shearer who did his work well. About ten miles from Tubbo was a man named Cowley, who had a large property and 7,000 sheep. He arranged with Mr Spiller to have these sheep shorn at Tubbo after the station shearing was completed. When the pressing was finished, Cowley's sheep were brought in and were shorn by John and his mates and a man named McIntyre, who remained at Tubbo as the other shearers had been engaged by other sheds. After Cowley's sheep were shorn John and his mates expected to be paid the £1 per 100; however, Cowley refused to pay more than 17s. 6d. A bitter dispute took place and McIntyre knocked Cowley down. This blow cost McIntyre £17 in fine and costs!

On 30 December 1876 my sister Elizabeth died as the result of burns. She was an invalid and was cooking at the open fire when her crinoline ignited and she was fatally burned. She was laid to rest in St John's cemetery, Canberra, on New Year's Day 1877.

Now that the amended Land Act was law, father bought out Mark and Samuel Southwell. Their collective holdings amounted to 263 acres, which were unenclosed except for a couple of small cultivation paddocks. Before Mark Southwell had left the property he had leased it to George Harcourt, the proprietor of the Ginninderra store. Alexander McDonald had three daughters, named Flora, Grace and Margaret, who were clever with the needle. They applied to George Harcourt for a job and he promised them work if they could find a place to work in. The girls inspected Southwell's vacant house and offered to take it if it was repaired. I helped Southwell to repair the building and a month later the girls were at work. Harcourt paid them 4d. for each shirt made. Anthony Hordern, of Brickfield Hill, Sydney, paid 2d. per shirt and 6d. to 8d. for trousers. The McDonald girls worked hard for Harcourt, but Hordern's 'tuppenny' shirt won the day and a year later the McDonald girls closed their business. Flora took on housekeeping at Duntroon and Grace and Margaret married. In the winter of 1879 I demolished Southwell's house and re-erected it at Round Hill, enclosing it with a split fence. It adjoined Springvale and was later the home of my brother George and known as Rosebud Apiary.

In 1877 John again went shearing to Tubbo and I began morticing posts and carting material to fence father's land. I began erecting this, a heavy three-rail fence, late in October. My best day's work was thirty-three panels, my lowest twenty-four. On 12 November I had to suspend operations as my hay harvest was at hand. I now worked early and late and cut nineteen acres with the scythe and hand-raked it into neat cocks. The farmers to a man condemned machinery, as Mr Campbell's experiment with a reaping machine was not a success. I worked sixteen to eighteen hours daily and had the crop cut and cocked when John returned from shearing. We stacked it and we then cut four acres of oats which yielded 200 bushels.

We now heard that the wire binders were a success in America, but for a time we did not believe these reports. However, in 1878 Mr Francis J. Williams, the Canberra postmaster and blacksmith, ordered a back delivery reaping machine which he had heard was successfully operated in Victoria. This machine arrived and was successfully tested at Canberra in November 1878; it was a decided labour and money saver.

The harvest of 1878-9 was my last with the scythe and reaping hook. During this season a wire binder was imported from America and was successfully tested at Bathurst. Later, half a dozen of these machines were in use in County Murray, and for the harvest of 1879-80 I speculated in a combined 'back and side delivery' machine. The 'back delivery' machine was a great success but the 'side delivery' was a failure, so I disposed of it a year later and ordered a 'Wood string binder' which duly arrived at Springvale in December 1880 and was successfully tested on the 22nd of that month. Many of the farmers who

came to see it in operation gasped with surprise when they saw it at work. The crop was a splendid one and all the sheaves were of equal size, which surprised the onlookers. One man remarked, 'It appears to me that it has human brains—no matter if the crop be thick or thin the sheaves are the same size.'

This was not so with the wire binder, which was most unsatisfactory because the sheaves were all sizes, the size being regulated by the driver. A year or so later the wire binder was consigned to the scrapheap. The following year saw the introduction of the Deeming and Johnson machines, and the Harmsby, Samuelson and McCormack string binders followed a year later. All these machines were successful except the Samuelson, which was a complete failure. All were fitted with the Appleby knotter. For a time the Harmsby machine took pride of place and was then discarded. This machine was unduly favoured, its main fault being that after several acres had been cut it failed to tie the knot. The McCormack held pride of place as a wire binder and held its own as a string binder. I ran my old Wood binder until 1890, when I purchased an improved model. From 1891 to 1898 I cut John's crop and my own with this labour-saving device, and we more than doubled our cultivation area and sheaved the hay from that time onwards with one exception—the harvest of 1889-90.

The price of all produce was low for the season 1877-8: the price of hay in May 1877 was 30s. a ton pressed and carted sixteen miles to Queanbeyan. In May 1878 I sold it for 35s. a ton in the yard. In August 1878 I had a stack of self-own oats and weeds which I looked upon as rubbish, but owing to the dry spell I sold this to the same man for £4.10.0 a ton—such is the uncertainty of farming.

I completed father's fence in 1878. After the fence was completed I went with some friends to the river to relax and try my hand fishing. I took them to my favourite pool, known as 'Scotch Peter's', only to find that it had silted up and the deepest part did not exceed three feet. We then went to the Oak Hole, where we caught some nice fish. A flood in 1879 cleaned out both these holes and I caught some nice fish there later on. This silting process has been repeated several times since then.

In 1878 my sister Phoebe married Abraham Blundell and my sister Emily was now sole house-keeper for father and brother George.

About 1877 father erected a fence of ninety chains between his land and that of Mr Davis. At that time most of the land throughout the locality was unfenced, except small cultivation paddocks. Father interviewed Mr Davis before the erection of this fence, but Davis, who was still smarting over our success, refused to assist him in any way and they parted in anger. In March 1878 father had just left the Glebe school at Ginninderra, where he was a member of the School Board, when he met Mr Charles Campbell, M.L.C. and barrister-at-law, with a stranger.

'Good day, Shumack,' was Campbell's salutation, 'allow me to introduce you to your new neighbour, Mr Crace.'

After the introduction Campbell said, 'How is the dry weather treating you, Shumack?'

'Fairly well', father said. 'I have been fortunate as thunderstorms filled our dams a month ago and there have been nice showers since which have given the grass a nice shoot. My neighbours down here have been unlucky to miss the rain, and if we don't get a fall within a week or so they will have to take their stock to the river and cart water for domestic purposes.'

'What! Across my land?' Campbell shouted.

'Why not', father said. 'The country is open—if it was enclosed it would be a different matter.'

'I will prosecute anyone who trespasses on my land in any way with the utmost rigour of the law, so I give you all timely notice. I will not tolerate any trespass whatever under any conditions whatever', Campbell said.

'Well if that is so, what are these unfortunate people to do if rain does not fall soon?' father said.

'Let them sell out—I will buy them out', was Campbell's reply.

'Mr Campbell,' father said, 'you profess to be a Christian and attend church every Sunday, do you not?'

'Yes,' Campbell said, 'it is my duty to set a good example.'

'That will do, Mr. Campbell', father said. 'As a Christian leader you must be conversant with those parts of scripture that say, "woe to you that lay house to house and field to field . . . if any of you seem to be religious and seeth his brother in need and shuteth up his bowels of compassion — how dwelleth the love of God in him?" As I understand scripture, the poor people here are your brothers in the Lord, and you would see them beggared, their stock die, and you would take advantage of their circumstances and buy them out at your own price! Mr Campbell—your actions condemn you and I am sorry to say I cannot stay here and talk all day—good day, Mr Campbell.' Father then rode away and Mr Crace laughed heartily and said, 'That is rough on you, Campbell!'

Charles Campbell did not expect this verbal broadside from father, as he liked having his own way. However, I often heard that Campbell, after some disagreement with his men, would send them something choice from his table after he had cooled down. Mr Crace paid father for his share of the fence when he took over the Ginninderra estate and they became good friends.

No rain fell until May, and Mr Crace gave the settlers all the water they needed. I was threshing at Smith's and they had to cart water from the Ginninderra Creek more than two miles away; it was half that distance on Campbell's property, yet they dared not touch it. Frederick Campbell gave his neighbours permission to water their stock and cart water in dry times from the nearest point available on his property, and this was a neighbourly and Christian act.

Early in 1880 my father, sister Emily and brother George vacated my home Springvale and went to live in the house I had just erected for them at Round Hill. Father now remarried, seven years after mother's death; his wife was a schoolteacher named Eastern Jane Armstrong.

I now took up permanent residence at Springvale but continued to have my meals with brother John in his small house. When he was away shearing I did all the farm work, cooked my meals, and sister Margaret baked my bread, and in this manner we struggled along for some years.

The harvest of 1880 was very good, although dry conditions set in with the new year. The settlers had the same trouble as of old and had to cart water and take their stock long distances for this precious commodity. A settler named Coleman had to cart water for all purposes a distance of six miles for five months of the year, and this heart-breaking work was a lesson to him and many others. They then began to construct dams, but very little was done before 1881 about water conservation. The dry weather continued and many farmers were faced with ruin. However, relief came in October when good soaking rain fell; this was followed by light showers and a fair crop was the result. I had one paddock which was late sown and this yielded twenty bushels to the acre, the highest yield in the locality. This late-sown crop was very short and very difficult to harvest with the machines in use. I averaged fifteen bushels to the acre; the district yield was under nine.

A curious, mean episode took place at Duntroon during the shearing season of 1881. At the commencement of the shearing Thomas Whitehead was in charge of the board and Mr Frederick Campbell was in charge of the station and shed. Mr Campbell addressed the men:

Now, my men, we are about to start, and I publicly announce that all the shearers who finish without a black mark against them will be paid £1 per hundred instead of the usual 17s. 6d., and will also receive free rations for the time engaged—ring the bell!

Shearing commenced, and my brother John and James Murty were pen mates. They agreed to 'go for the pound and rations', as it was the last shed of the season. All went well until the shearing was three-fourths through and Mr Campbell was called away on urgent business. His father now took charge

as general manager until the shed cut out. On pay day John went to the office and received his cheque, which was several pounds short of the amount expected. Realizing that he was being paid at the rate of 17s. 6d. per hundred, he drew Mr Campbell's attention to the fact that he had finished without a black mark. Campbell said, 'That is what you signed for, so take your cheque and go.'

John departed a sadder and wiser man and told James Murty what had occurred. Murty now entered the office and after an argument refused to accept the cheque, stating that he would adjust the matter with Campbell's son when he came home. The result was that he received £7 more than the amount first offered. John was not so fortunate—he had accepted the cheque in the first instance and Mr Campbell refused to consider the matter. John and Murty refused to shear at Duntroon after that season.

In 1882 no rain fell in January and February and there was no water on many farms. We now enlarged our dams, though we were not short of water. Others were less fortunate, and a lot of stock were sent on agistment to mountain pastures. Mr Crace allowed us and my father to water our stock on his land and we never forgot this kind and neighbourly action. March commenced with hot days and nights and scorching winds. On 4 March we experienced the greatest rainstorm in my memory. At 7.15 a.m. I was a short distance from the house when I heard a peal of thunder to the south. I saw the approaching storm and ran for the house, which I reached as a sheet of water fell. For twenty minutes torrential rain fell and I could not see the front fence, which was less than a chain from the front door. Many fences were washed away and great numbers of stock were drowned, but we suffered no stock losses as we did not have any wire fences. At Canberra, cattle and horses became entangled in the wire and perished. Kate Blundell was a heavy loser, and the Canberra postmaster, Ebenezer Booth, had two cows drowned within fifty yards of the post office when they became entangled in a fence. On the evening before this storm 12,000 sheep passed my holding on the way to Mount Corrie on agistment. They camped for the night at the Pine Range and the drovers were at breakfast when the storm broke and a wall of water six feet deep swept through the flock. Hundreds of sheep were swept away—some escaped and joined Crace's flocks, but when the paddocks were mustered over 400 were missing. Mr Crace lost 200 sheep and two miles of fencing. I had no rain gauge at the time, but the general belief was that a foot of rain fell in less than half an hour. George Harcourt at Ginninderra had a wheelbarrow in the yard at his store and this filled with rainwater in less than ten minutes. I had tubs outside that overflowed in a like period. William Ingram, who was employed by my cousin Peter Shumack, said that he was afraid that he would suffocate owing to the density of the rain. John Mayo had a contract ringbarking 7,000 acres at Belconnen. He and his party of four had just commenced work when the storm broke and they got the fright of their lives. When the rain eased off they returned to their camp, but everything had vanished except a fragment of one tent.

In March 1882 my brother John married Maria Mary Read and they settled down in my house free of rent for a period of eight years. It was a great advantage to find a good meal on the table when I came in after a hard day's work. I had these meals free in return for free rent, and John and I always assisted each other without thought of payment. When he was absent shearing I always supervised his farm and stock.

No follow-up rains came in the wake of the March storm, which deluged an area ten miles wide by 200 miles long, and hot, dry winds continued for some time. No growth followed this rain, as the rush of water had carried away the loose topsoil and the hot, dry winds did the rest. I usually commenced ploughing at Easter, but in this year the ground was too hard. Cold winds set in on 25 April, followed by general rain on the 27th which continued for forty hours. At the time of this cold snap I was busy erecting a fodder shed and Dick Shumack called and asked me to go fishing. I declined because I was

expecting the threshing machine to call, and Dick went on alone. However, although the fish were biting, the intense cold eventually drove Dick from the river.

Ploughing now became general following the soaking rain, and the seed went in under favourable conditions. Spring was again dry and the crops were average. Most farmers had to depend on pot holes for their supplies, as the storm had filled their dams with debris. I cleaned out two dams in February 1883 and removed five feet of silt from each.

The seasons 1883-4 were much the same. There were no flood rains, and although the crops were above average we had the usual shortage of grass and water. I sold straw in the yard at £3 a ton. Hay went to £7, and wheat was 5s. 6d. to 6s. a bushel. The farmers did well, although some lost their stock from starvation. This was their own fault as many discarded the straw after threshing and others burnt it.

I sold Mr F. Warwick a stack of sixteen tons for £3 a ton and I had another large stack of eight tons with which I kept my stock alive and in good order. I purchased a chaffcutter and found it a payable proposition, as good chaff cut from straw and mixed with hay chaff was ideal stock fodder. Many farmers did not save the straw or 'beeswing', but I always took care of this by constructing what we called 'yankees'—a framework of forks and poles with waterproof walls and roof of straw—in which this fodder was stored.

In 1885 I planned farming on a large scale. George Smith, whose property adjoined mine, left the district and I purchased his land. I ordered a double furrow plough, intending to start ploughing in March. However, this was impossible owing to the dry weather.

I now have a confession to make—I had neglected my holding in one particular branch—ringbarking. This practice was condemned by many of the so-called savants, and I was one who believed that ringbarking would reduce the rainfall. Some fifteen years before I had read several letters in the *Sydney Mail* contending that to convert New South Wales into a desert all that was necessary was to ringbark the trees. Another writer advised the settlers to plant two trees for every one cut down. These letters appeared from time to time denouncing ringbarking, and many settlers believed them. I let saplings grow along the fence outside my crops and I soon realized that something was wrong because the crops near the fences were failures. 1885 was a repetition of 1881, and there was no growth within a chain of the trees. I now began to realize that my brother John was right when he denounced the ringbarking bogey as 'bunkum'.

Soon after the close of 1885 a Dr Bell wrote several letters to the *Sydney Morning Herald* condemning ringbarking and quoting statistics to prove his case. Mr Leopold Fane de Salis wrote in opposition to Dr Bell and asked him to explain the great drought of 1837, and that of 1821, and several others. Dr Bell replied that there was a very dry spell in the seventh decade, followed by another in the eighth decade, and now another worse period had us in its grip. He said,

Here we are half way through 1886 and the farmers have a hard struggle to plant their crops; I am willing to stake my reputation that worse conditions will prevail in 1887.

De Salis replied in a very able manner and gave an account of the drought that had prevailed about sixty years before Governor Phillip landed in Australia, and of the droughts experienced by the pioneers before ringbarking was practised. Dr Bell in reply lost his temper—so did de Salis—and personalities were freely indulged in. However, during the heat of the discussion bountiful rains fell throughout the State and the argument was forgotten. Up to this time very little ringbarking was done on any of the properties, as many believed it would ruin the country. This belief was finally dispelled by the wet of 1887, which shattered Dr Bell's statements. Consequently I began ringbarking certain areas of my property soon afterwards. Mr Campbell said, 'You should have started fifteen or twenty years ago', and he was correct.

The winter of 1886 was the driest in my recollection; I do not think that four inches of rain fell from January till 25 July. I finished sowing my crop on 24 July in clouds of dust; I rolled the cultivation the next day and good rains then set in and continued. The rivers were flushed but not flooded, and there were prospects of good crops everywhere. The hay harvesters commenced about the middle of November and I had forty acres cut and in cocks when continuous rain set in and this hay rotted in the paddocks. However, I had a few tons in the shed for which I was thankful. My father and brother George were in the same predicament, and our neighbour Mrs Young lost all her wheat, which was cut for hay. These wet conditions continued for five weeks, then the weather cleared and Christmas week was fine. Cold weather now delayed the harvest. I started harvesting after Christmas and I had my own and John's crop to cut. We cut his first and built one stack. We then cut mine and had built one stack as night closed in. Heavy rain now commenced and continued for forty hours. All the rivers and creeks were in flood and we had a very unpleasant job standing the sheaves out to dry—we killed several snakes during the process. When we finished this job we went to Ginninderra, where I saw thousands of sheaves belonging to John Ryan of Mulligan's Flat piled against a hawthorn hedge, where they had been deposited by the flood waters. On the day we arrived at Ginninderra heavy rain again set in, and when it cleared several days later every sheaf in the field was green and wet stacks were general. Many were pulled down and the sheaves stood out to dry, but more rain fell and more wheat was ruined. Fortunately our two stacks were dry. Mine yielded 430 bushels from nine acres, John's yielded 250 from ten acres. Mrs Young lost sixty tons of wheaten hay; we lost twenty-five tons of hay and 800 bushels; D. Boon lost 2,400 bushels and Charles Cameron lost all his crop from 150 acres, which had all been cut except eight acres. This ruined Cameron and put him and his wife into early graves. W. Marshall lost about 2,000 bushels and Kelleway lost 250 tons of hay and 2,000 bushels of wheat. Before the harvest Kelleway had purchased a Marshall threshing machine, but he never put a sheaf through it and it was sold for less than half the price he had paid for it. This incessant wet did not finally cease until March, and in the second week of that month we commenced to cart in the best of the damaged wheat, from which we built one stack each. My stack yielded 400 bushels and Mr E. M. Ward bought most of this for sheep feed for 2s. a bushel. Such is the farmers' lot! Towards the end of April rain again fell and hindered ploughing, so that farmers were unable to plant the proposed acreage. The aggregate yield for the State for 1887 was very low, and as this was the wettest year known, Dr Bell's prediction was entirely wrong. Some showers fell in January 1888 and dry weather then continued until May. Ploughing was impossible because of the extreme hardness of the ground after the excessive rains of the previous year. Relief came in May, when two inches of rain fell and the ploughs were busy for a few weeks.

In this year I used a double furrow plough for the first time. I had ordered one in 1884 but the ship, the *Lyc Moon*, was wrecked on Green Cape on the eastern coast and two dozen ploughs—including mine—went down with her. However, notwithstanding the dry season, I planted sixty acres. The district crops were a partial failure, and those who harvested enough for their own use were fortunate because no rain fell from May to December. The grain sown in May and June came up fairly well; that sown after 25 June was indifferent. The seed sown in July had not shown a blade by August or September, and I supposed that it had the dry rot. Throughout the district the outlook was miserable—dams were dry and the farmers' prospects were deplorable, for the occasional showers did not lay the dust. I commenced harvesting in December with a mower and horse rake, as the crop was too short for the reaper and binder, and I expected 200 bushels. On the second day of the harvest an inch or more of light rain fell and then cleared off. I finished cutting and had the crop all cocked when rain again set in and continued all night, and again cleared. Some hours later heavy rain began and continued with thunder for thirty hours. I have never experienced anything like it before or since—the thunder shook the house

and the vibration stopped the clock three times. Many cocks of hay were swept away by floodwaters and covered with drift. I had one area of twenty-five acres which did not germinate until the middle of December although it was sown in July. It made amazing growth at Christmas, and when I cut and stacked it in January I had over thirty tons of hay for sale. The wheat yield was 140 bushels, but none of it was fit for milling so I sold it for pig feed. Hay and chaff were dear before the weather broke, but prices dropped after the rain. We had no real summer weather after the break in the drought, and delightful spring weather continued until June. We had a few light frosts in April and May and the stock were rolling fat. Chaff was a good price in Sydney, so I cut one stack and sent fifteen tons to Sydney. I held the other stack until I got my returns, which gave me a shock—I received £5.7.6 a ton, and the lowest price reported in the press was £8 a ton! William Young, a teamster, said to me, 'There must be a mistake somewhere because in no part of the State is the price under £8.'

While I made inquiries, bountiful rains fell throughout the State and the prospects of a record harvest for 1889 were bright. The price of chaff fell to £3.10.0 to £4 a ton. William Young now asked me what I was going to do about the remaining stack, so I asked him to bring his team and take it to the railhead. He cut and trucked it for £1 a ton, and consigned it to Frederick Barker and Company, Sydney. A week later the cheque arrived and I received another shock as the consignment, notwithstanding the great drop in prices, was sold for £6 a ton. This convinced me that I was swindled out of £60 on the first consignment, but I had no redress. A short time later I sent 200 fat lambs to Pitt, Son and Badgery, and my return was 2s. 10d. a head. I then sent another consignment to another firm and received 4s. 9d. per head!

About this time Smith & Co., bag merchants, advertised, 'When you want bags deal direct with us and save the "middleman's profit".' I wrote and asked for a quotation for fifty dozen good second-hand bags, but I considered it too high. In the meantime I received word that the threshing machine would be round ten days earlier than expected so I sent an order to Harrison, Jones and Develin for fifty dozen wheat bags. In the second bundle I found an invoice from Smith & Co. to Harrison, Jones and Develin for fifty dozen bags. When I received the account I was astonished to learn that I had saved £2.5.0 on this transaction.

The harvest of 1889-90 was very good and prices of farm products were fair although the price of wool was low. Walter Ginn's wool brought 4d. a pound. I sold six bales for 6½d. a pound, and the highest price of 8d. went to Yarralumla.

A great change now took place in the weather and incessant rain reduced the harvest of 1890-1 below average. A large area was put under crop, but too much rain injured the growth; sheep were also badly affected by fluke and foot rot.

The greatest flood ever known in County Murray took place on 27 June 1891. At 5 o'clock that morning the residents of Yarralumla were alarmed by gunshots in the vicinity of the dairy. The countryside was flooded and the water was still rising when James Murty and Scott Robertson set off to investigate. They could see nothing owing to the darkness so waited until daylight. What a scene met their eyes! The dairy was surrounded by flood waters which were seven feet deep in the first storey of the living quarters, and Murty on a tall horse rescued the Macpherson family one by one—the father, mother and two daughters. John Macpherson, who was ill in bed at the time, passed away three weeks later. The family were afraid that the building would collapse, but it stood the test. If this flood had come a month earlier the losses would have been tenfold greater as the farmers had just completed gathering the potato, pumpkin and corn crops. Sullivan lost about twenty tons of hay, and one stack was carried half a mile and wrecked against some trees. A great mound of timber passed Yarralumla with a lot of poultry

on it, including several roosters crowing lustily. This pile of timber was later found six miles downstream, but the poultry had vanished. On 30 June I went to Sutton to give Mr Francis Williams an account of this flood as he had recorded the flood marks during the past twenty years. We examined the records and found that the flood of 1891 was the highest ever recorded up to that time. The flood of 1852 was the second highest. I was assisting John Coppin with his threshing when this flood came down and washed away his boat.

In 1889 I purchased a rain gauge and my first measurement was three points on 1 July. My neighbour Robert Kilby had had one for some years and his report on the rainfall for 1888 was eight inches from January to 30 November, and eleven inches in December. During the twenty-six years that I kept rainfall records at Canberra the heaviest fall for twenty-four hours was 614 points in January 1891, and 977 points for the month.

About 1887 I assisted brother John to build a house on his land and a man named W. Parker constructed the pine ceiling. John and his wife and children—Ann, Elizabeth, Walter and Sophia—now moved into their new home, where misfortune fell upon them. Their daughter Sophia, who was three years of age, fell into a tub of boiling water and died within a few hours. In February 1891 twins were born—Marian and Henry. Henry died on 20 November 1891, and the mother six days later. Thus in three months three members of this family passed away.

My sister Margaret now acted the Good Samaritan and took the four motherless children to her home while John came back to live with me. This continued until June 1893, when I married Sarah Winter, daughter of John Winter of Red Hill, Canberra. John's children Ann, Eliza and Walter then came to live with their father at my home. My wife now had a busy time supervising John's family and looking after her own home, which I had to enlarge to accommodate this increase in our family.

In 1892 good rains fell during the first three months and I proposed ploughing at Easter. I failed because of the hardness of the ground, which had not been ploughed for six years. The area was eighty acres. Several storms occurred during the last week in April and I made another attempt but again failed, ploughing no more than an acre. It was mid-May before seasonable rains fell and I lost no time after that. Late in June I had a mishap—my best plough mare fell into the creek when the bank collapsed where she was feeding and she had to be destroyed. I was only able to sow fifty-five acres, from which I harvested 1,880 bushels. This was the best crop in the district and was five bushels above my estimate. The harvest throughout the district for the season 1892-3 was excellent, but that of 1893-4 was reduced by half as it was a wet year: and twenty-four inches of rain fell during the first six months.

In May 1895 I purchased Phillip Williams's property of 320 acres. This was a dry year: only three inches of rain fell in January, 157 points fell in June, an inch in August, 63 points in September, 168 points in October and a few points in November and December. In November I went over the thirty-acre paddock with the mower and hayrake and got four-and-a-half tons of hay, worth £30. This helped me through the bad times and I had sufficient fodder for my stock. My return from this season was 112 bushels of wheat and four-and-a-half tons of hay. It is interesting to note that in this season I planted 110 bushels of seed and harvested 112 bushels. Many farmers got nothing. My wife's uncle, Angus Cameron, planted more than fifty acres and got nothing in return as the October rains missed him. He had to buy hay at £8 a ton. The loss of stock was minimized through water conservation, for past experiences had given the farmers a lesson they never forgot, and they improved water storage as the years passed.

Cameron suffered a sad bereavement in November 1895. His second son, John, went out to catch a horse and took with him a bridle and a handful of hay. He did not appear at supper time, but this was



not unusual and did not create any feeling of misgiving. At 3 a.m. next morning his brother Donald woke with a start and aroused his brother Duncan, saying:

Something dreadful has happened to Jack. I dreamt that he came to my bedside and woke me up and one side of his face was smashed in. I have looked in his room and he is not there, so we must go and search the paddock.

The brothers dressed with haste and then looked in the harness shed; Jack's saddle was there but the bridle was missing. They aroused the household and all set out for the horse paddock, which was a quarter of a mile away. In less than twenty minutes John Cameron was found unconscious. One side of his face was smashed in as his brother had described, and he died within a few hours. The general opinion was that the horses had gathered around him after the hay and the fatal injuries were received when one of the horses kicked at another. Donald's vision caused a great deal of comment, and the number of ghost stories told as a result would fill a good-sized volume.

## *Premonitions and Tragedies*

*McLachlan's death Wire fencing Joe Hall's disappearance A near-drowning  
Wallaby drives Early drownings Bush mysteries*

I HAVE ALREADY TOLD in these pages how Allan McLachlan was given the position of overseer at Duntroon, and how he and his wife Mary were great friends of our family. His wife died in 1874, leaving a family of two sons and three daughters. When George Campbell went to England in 1876 Allan, who had recently remarried, was left in charge of the Duntroon estate. All went well until January 1878, when McLachlan died suddenly.

We had finished reaping on 11 January 1878, and late that evening after the stooking was done I rode down to the Canberra post office and spent the night with my friends the Williams family. In the morning I said to George Williams, 'I had a strange dream last night—I dreamt that Allan McLachlan died and I was at his funeral. It was a large one, and when the pallbearers reached the church gate the end of the funeral procession was on top of the hill in the Duntroon bush.'

George laughed and said, 'What nonsense dreams are—Allan McLachlan is one of the healthiest men in the district and has never had a day's illness in his life.' No more was said until breakfast time, when George said, 'Sam had a strange dream last night—he dreamt that Allan McLachlan was dead and buried and he is going to show me where the grave was dug when we go to church.'

This caused a laugh, and Mrs William's said, 'Paddy Curley told me yesterday that Allan had a cold and had sent for the doctor.' We went to church at the usual time and I pointed out the spot where I dreamt the grave was dug and McLachlan laid to rest. After the service I had lunch with the Abernethy family and we had just finished the meal when Will Curley arrived and said, 'I have bad news, Mrs Abernethy—Allan McLachlan has just died and the grave must be ready by 4 o'clock tomorrow.' I attended the funeral, which was exactly as I had seen it in my dream.

A day or so later James Abernethy told me that the general opinion at Duntroon was that McLachlan did not die from natural causes. In spite of this there was no move to have the matter investigated. This death was a sensation for years. However, I considered Allan and his wife to be an ideal couple and I believe she sincerely loved her husband. He was in his forty-third year.

Two months later McLachlan's second son, Hector, a strong, healthy youth of eighteen years, died after a short illness. Shortly after this the family scattered and Duntroon knew them no more. I heard in 1910 that John, the eldest, was employed in a lawyer's office in Sydney.

After the death of Allan McLachlan, Frederick Campbell took charge of Duntroon. Without delay he commenced to fence in the run which previously had been in charge of shepherds. With the advent of the wire fence many old servants were discharged, and shepherding was a thing of the past by 1880. Following Frederick Campbell's lead, fencing became general.

I erected my first wire fence in 1880 between father's land and the Ginninderra estate, and I erected my last post-and-rail fence in 1881 for Hugh Read, my cousin Eliza's husband, who did not believe in 'b—— wire fences'. This was the last split fence he erected, as the wire fence had come to stay.

Early one morning in 1907 Christopher Donnelly called on me and inquired if I had ever heard of the mysterious disappearance of an old man at Misery Point, Yarralumla. 'Yes, Christy,' I said, 'I knew the old man very well and he was a friend of my neighbour, Joe Hall. Why do you ask?'

Because I got a fright at my camp near the Crow's Nest [he replied]. I pitched my tent near the spring, and after supper I filled my pipe and was about to light it when I saw an old man coming up the gully. I had a good look at him and saw that he was a stranger with a long beard—I looked around for something for him to sit on and he just disappeared. A couple of nights later I again saw the same person and I did not take my eyes off him, and when he got close he just seemed to sink into the ground.

Christy then went on to say that he hurried to the station and reported the matter to the overseer, Dick Vest, who advised him to come and see me.

Well, Christy, [I said] about 1866 Arthur Webb took up a selection near Misery Point on the west bank of the Molonglo River, and being a shearer by occupation he employed an old man named Develin to look after the place during his absence. He was a quiet, well-conducted old man who owned a few horses. He was godfather for Joe Hall's daughter Minnie, and when she was ten years of age he gave her a beautiful mare. One evening Arthur Webb called at the selection but there was no sign of Develin, and it was clear that he had not been there for some time. The police were informed and a search made, but no sign of the missing man was found. It was assumed that he went to the river for water and fell in and was drowned. Soon after this Webb sold out to Mr Gibbes of Yarralumla.

A couple of years passed and one day Thomas Southwell of Ginninderra was out boundary riding and his dog ran a bush rat into a hollow log. When Southwell stooped down he saw a pair of boots and human remains there. The police came the next day and removed the remains, which were no doubt those of the missing man. All sorts of theories were advanced as to the cause of death, but the mystery was never solved.

'Ha,' said Christy, 'some people don't believe in ghosts, and if this wasn't a ghost—what did I see? I never heard of this case and I saw the man quite clearly; I was not thinking of anything other than my work.'

'Well, Christy,' I said, 'keep your eyes open when you go back, and if you see anything—speak to it.'

'I will not stop there another night,' Christy said, 'not even for the Yarralumla estate.' He went back and shifted his camp a mile-and-a-half west and had to carry water a mile to his camp. The log where the body was found was two miles from Webb's house and Develin was well away from his sphere of duty; this increased the mystery, which was never solved.

When George Campbell took up residence at Duntroon he inaugurated an annual festival for New Year's Day, and sometimes 150 or 200 people would be present. I was never present at these functions as it was the farmers' busy time and I made it a rule never to neglect harvesting. There were foot races for the young of both sexes, a cricket match for schoolboys, and other athletic events, and at 6.30 p.m. the youths would bathe in the river near where the sports were held. On New Year's Day 1874 about 200 people were present and the elaborate programme eclipsed all previous years. When the sports concluded at 6.30 p.m. there was a great rush for the river and about two dozen boys were soon skylarking in the water. Alfred Mayo and Francis Williams were on their way to the Duntroon hall when they heard the shouts and laughter from the bathers, and Mayo said, 'What a blessing to be young—how these lads enjoy themselves'

'Yes, Alfred,' Williams said, 'it is quite true. You and I have had our day, but I think we had better go back as there is deep water there and all may not be able to swim.' And they came back and sat on the bank watching the boys until the bell rang for supper. There was a general rush for the bank and Mayo and Williams started for the hall. Suddenly there was a cry, 'He is drowned!'

They rushed back and Williams threw off his coat and boots and dived in. 'They are there', a couple of boys said, indicating the spot. A few seconds later Williams and his son Jim laid the insensible bodies of Frederick and Edward Campbell on the river bank. First aid was applied and after several hours both lads recovered. When the bell rang Edward, aged ten, was on the other side of the river, and swimming back he became exhausted and sank in nine feet of water. His brother Fred, aged twelve, went to his assistance and he sank, too. George Williams jumped in and brought Fred to the surface, but Fred threw his arms about him and they sank to the bottom. Here George tore himself free and managed to crawl out on the bank 'quite done up', as he said. As he crawled out his father and brother jumped in and rescued the drowning lads; thus a dreadful tragedy was averted.

About 1890 a young man named James Scott Robertson arrived at Yarralumla from Scotland. A week after his arrival he attended a hare and wallaby drive held in the district. He owned a beautiful Mortimer & Son double-barrelled gun which cost 100 guineas in Scotland, and during the afternoon he shot several hares, which were plentiful. At lunch-time the captain in charge of the drive, Dick Vest, said, 'We will be amongst the wallabies this afternoon so we will now take up a collection for the drivers.' This amounted to thirty shillings.

During the afternoon we drove the hills and the Crow's Nest range, where the wallaroo, wallaby, and kangaroo rats were plentiful. However, Scott Robertson and his Mortimer failed to stop any game, notwithstanding the fact that a few hares had given themselves up to the Mortimer in the forenoon, and he expressed surprise at his failure to stop these 'bounding curiosities'. At the conclusion of the drive, when the usual three cheers had been given for the sponsor, Mr Campbell, he announced that another drive would take place in a fortnight and that we would meet at Yarralumla. The drive was to be on Weston and Taylor's hill and he invited all present to attend and bring a friend. The day arrived and everyone was very interested to see if Mr Robertson would have any success on this occasion. They were not disappointed, because he bagged several hoppers with successive shots. We later learned that he had been practising with a couple of drivers on the Black Hill and had soon mastered the problem that had puzzled him at the first drive. My brother George was top scorer. I shot a very large kangaroo and got 3s. 6d. for the skin. Less than a year later brother George shot a kangaroo that was seven feet tall.

Robertson lived within a mile-and-a-half of my home for a period of fifteen years. He was a good neighbour but had one serious fault—a fondness for firewater. He was a splendid sportsman and it was a pleasure to have him next to you at a drive. He was a remittance man from the old country and his end was a sad one. He employed a man to look after his property, and one night in a fit of depression he announced that it was his duty to shoot him. The employee fled to the home of my brother George, where he remained for the night. In the morning they went to Robertson's property and found that he was missing. A large crowd quickly gathered and joined in the search, but it was not until the second day that the body of the missing man was found in the bush, with a revolver from which one shot had been discharged lying nearby. Three weeks later a letter arrived from Scotland advising that his sister had died and had left him her estate, the sworn value of which was £82,000. On more than one occasion Robertson told me that he deplored his weakness for firewater, which had claimed many victims in the district. During my lifetime about forty persons have been killed on the roads from Queanbeyan, Canberra and Gundaroo—all through over-indulgence in drink.

Early in 1860 a farmer at Canberra, Thomas Jordan, was in the toils of debt to Mr J. J. Wright, who obtained a bill of sale over his wheat stack, which was sold by public auction. When these proceedings began Jordan asked for time to pay but was refused. Many other settlers were in debt to Wright, and as they were not allowed to bid at the sale, he bought the stack for one-third its value. A few days later his threshing machine arrived and was set at the stack in readiness for chaff cutting. However, during the night the stack and the machine were destroyed by fire and Thomas Jordan was arrested and charged. Mrs Jordan was distracted and hurried over to the home of James Neylon, where she informed Mrs Neylon that the suggestion for burning the stack was her own. When her husband would not agree she waited until he was asleep and then slipped out and fired the stack. She wanted to confess to the crime but her husband would not let her. He pleaded not guilty but was convicted and sentenced to five years' hard labour. His wife died shortly afterwards. On his release from prison he was my neighbour for a couple of years; he was then employed by John Gillespie of Horse Park, Ginninderra, where he died about 1874. He was a good man and was one of Canberra's pioneers. He worked at Sayersbury's lime kiln in the early days and was only a lad when the first house was built in Queanbeyan. He had much to tell of Palmer, Lanyon and Klensendorlffe.

The first drowning fatality at Canberra was in 1843 in the Molonglo River south of the Glebe farm. David Macpherson, a youth of twelve years, was the victim. St John's Church was in course of construction and the builder, a man named Cameron, was a friend of the Macpherson family, who lived at the Cross Roads, Ainslie. Cameron and some of his men used to visit the Macpherson home periodically and pass a couple of hours away. One evening Mrs Macpherson called to her husband, 'Here come the men, Hugh. There are some strangers with them and they are carrying something.' Macpherson went to look while she cleared away the dishes after the evening meal. He called out, 'Where are the men you spoke of? I can see no one.'

His wife had another look and then said, 'My goodness! Where have they gone? There were six men and they were carrying something.' Macpherson then had a good look around but found nothing, and he and his wife were greatly upset.

The following evening at the same hour a party of six men were seen approaching the Macpherson home carrying a burden. It was the body of their son David, who was drowned half an hour previously when swimming in the river. The bereaved mother's vision was a household story for many years. Macpherson's wife and son David are buried in the Honeysuckle Reserve, where a headstone was erected to their memory. This stone was later destroyed by stock, and the fence enclosing the plot wherein lie buried a dozen or more pioneers was destroyed by fire in 1870 and was never renewed.

This bushfire was not accidental. Early in the spring of 1869 a lad of fourteen took a short cut across the Mill Flat as there were no fences at the time. Now Mr Campbell's hobby was 'keep off the grass', and in consequence of this trespass the lad was duly summoned and fined £5 with costs. People cried 'shame'—but the lad's father paid the fine and there the matter ended, or so they thought. At this time an old Trafalgar veteran named Charlie Thornton was employed as shepherd on Campbell's property. One day early in 1870 a well-dressed man rode up to Thornton and said, 'Good-day, old fellow. This grass will burn well, so you had better take the sheep to the river and lose no time about it—they will be safe there.'

Thornton did as directed and the man then dismounted and set fire to the grass in several places and then galloped off. Thousands of acres of grass were burnt and Mr Campbell offered a reward of £100 for the identity and conviction of the culprit, but he was never discovered. It was generally believed that he was a friend of the lad fined. However, general rain fell a few days later and in a couple of weeks the

countryside was a picture. Had rain not fallen, thousands of sheep would have had to be sent away on agistment.

The second drowning fatality was that of the Reverend George Edward Gregory, first Rector of St John's Church, Canberra, on 20 August 1851. He had been on a tour of the settlers on the western side of the Murrumbidgee River. He crossed the river at Tharwa, but when he reached the river at Canberra it was in flood. He dined with the family of Mr Stewart Mowle, who occupied Klensendorflfe's old home. The parsonage was less than a mile distant on the other side of the river, and after the meal Gregory determined to swim across as he was anxious to continue his studies before undergoing a final examination. To miss this examination would mean a delay of twelve months, and as he had already been delayed a week by snow and rain, and as the river was falling, he decided to cross. He first tried on horseback, but the horse refused to face the water and broke away. Gregory then removed some of his clothing and, despite a plea by Mr Mowle, he plunged into the water and struck out for the other side. He was a strong swimmer and would have succeeded but for the intense cold of the snow water. He swam strongly for a while and was only a few yards from the north bank when he threw up his arms and sank. His body was recovered on 23 August 1851. He is buried in the vault under the church, which is now open to visitors.

The third drowning took place a couple of years later and the victim was a man named McPherson—no relation to the family previously mentioned. He had the gold fever and left his wife and family at Canberra and went to the Victorian goldfields, where he was moderately successful. After an absence of twelve months he returned to Queanbeyan, where he fell in with some drinking companions whom he treated liberally. At dusk he started for the home from which he had been absent for more than a year, but he was destined never to see his family again. A day or so later his family heard of his being in town and made inquiries, but no trace could be found. The police were soon investigating and a thrill struck the Canberra folk when it became known that Edwin Elijah Bambridge had been arrested on a charge of making away with McPherson. At dusk on the day McPherson disappeared he and Bambridge had been seen walking with their arms around one another in the direction of Canberra, where Bambridge arrived alone. The police search continued for several days, but was finally abandoned. A fortnight later Patrick Cavanagh was out looking for some stock and when crossing the river he saw an object in some reeds—the body of the missing man. An inquest returned an open verdict, and Bambridge was discharged after stating that he had no knowledge of parting from the deceased on the fatal evening. The general belief was that McPherson was eased of his gold and then pushed into the river. Alexander Cameron said there was no doubt about the matter, as several men in town knew McPherson had money when he left the hotel well under the influence.

Edward Kendall Crace, the first squatter to set about giving better rations to employees and a good neighbour in times of drought and water shortages, met an untimely death at the early age of forty-seven years.

A week before his death he and Mrs Crace went to Sydney on business, and they returned on the morning of 20 September 1892. They drove to the Ginninderra post office and then to George Harcourt's store, after which they returned to the old Ginninderra homestead. About three o'clock in the afternoon a thunderstorm passed over the locality, and when it eased off Mr Crace and his groom, George Kemp, decided to drive home to Gunghalin. They were advised to cross the Ginninderra Creek at Harcourt's store crossing, where it was wider and much shallower. However, Crace took the reins from Kemp and said, 'We will try the garden crossing because it is much shorter that way.' They drove into the flooded creek and were soon in difficulties. Kemp jumped into the stream and took the horse by the head, but it refused to move—meanwhile, the flood water was rising. Dave Rule ran down from the store with a rope,

but before any attempt at rescue could be made the horse and buggy with the two men were swept away. Grace's body was found five hours later, but ten days elapsed before Kemp's body was located. An intensive search was conducted under police direction and miles of the Ginninderra Creek had been probed with poles, long handled rakes, hooks and grappling irons, but without success. One night I had a dream that Kemp's body was in a deep channel where the drowning accident took place, and the next day I told the leader of the search party, Senior Constable Loughlan, and those present of my dream. He laughed and said, 'Forty young men searched that channel on Sunday—a sucking pig could not remain there unobserved as every inch of it was searched under my supervision.'

The search was abandoned after nine days and I then went with Christy Donnelly to the scene of the drowning. I examined the channel, and in the exact spot revealed in my dream we found the body of George Kemp. It was underneath the bank and one hand was firmly gripping the root of a tree! Such was the end of this sad fatality. Kemp was to have married my wife's cousin, Margaret McPherson, within three weeks

In 1883 a young man named Thomas Studley was employed by Joseph Bolton near Canberra. One Sunday morning this young man was on his way to St John's Church when he met George Curran and James Gillespie.

'Where are you going?' was their salutation.

'I am going to church', was his reply. 'I was a churchman in the Old Land and I have not been to St. John's.'

'Well,' one of the party said, 'you can go to church any Sunday. We are going fishing and have plenty of tucker and lines, so you had better come with us.'

After some persuasion Studley yielded and accompanied his friends to the river. About four o'clock the same day Curran and Gillespie returned with the alarming news that Studley had drowned when swimming after lunch. A large crowd assembled and hurried to the river, where dragging operations were carried out without result. The story told by Curran and Gillespie was as follows: 'We set our lines and then had lunch and Tom decided to have a swim. He dived several times to test the depth of water and on the last occasion failed to appear.'

A fruitless search was continued for several days and there was much speculation as to what had become of the body. About two years before this fatality a man named Boat had reported having seen an alligator in the river close to this locality; this caused some consternation amongst the anglers, but as time passed without any further reports of the monster, it was soon forgotten. However, the disappearance of young Studley revived the story, and the general opinion was that the alligator had devoured the body. The search was finally abandoned.

About two years after this incident I examined the locality and was not satisfied with the statement made by Curran and Gillespie. The river bottom at this particular spot was unobstructed and sandy, and the greatest depth was nine feet—the average depth was seven feet. I made several tests and although I was only an average swimmer I could bottom the river without much effort. The police shook their heads when questioned on the matter.

During the next two years there were two big floods in the river and after the last one subsided, Frank Young, who was repairing a section of fence near the river bank, went to a heap of flood debris to extract a pole embedded in it and grasped a human leg. It was portion of the body of the missing man. Meanwhile, the alligator story had fizzled out and the mystery deepened. However, the solution came to me forty-five years later from one of the party concerned. I will give it in his own words:

After we set our lines on that fatal day we had dinner and partook too freely of firewater. Studley stripped and went for a swim across the river and Gillespie said, 'I will give Tom a bit of

a fright when he swims back and he will think it is the alligator people have been talking about.' He then got a big stone and when Tom was about thirty feet away Jim called out, 'Tom, see how deep it is there.' Studley dived, and as he was coming up the stone was thrown and struck him on the head and he sank instantly. This tragic event sobered us, and as the body would no doubt show the mark of a blow we pointed out a false position—the fatality occurred a mile lower down the river.

What a mental burden these practical jokers carried for forty years or more! I knew James Gillespie from 1865 until the day of his death and found him an agreeable companion. He was a practical joker, but would never wilfully injure anyone by word or deed. He was correspondent for the *Goulburn Penny Post* for many years and was respected by all.

Many years ago a family in the service of James Wright of Cuppacumbalong suffered a sad bereavement. The mother had a disagreement with her eldest daughter, who was only about twelve years of age, and the girl ran away and hid in some tea-tree scrub some distance from the house. At tea time the father asked his wife where Kitty was and when informed of the trouble he laughed and said that no doubt the girl would come in later on. Next morning when the family arose they found the girl's bed undisturbed, and on making a search found her remains in the tea-tree scrub—the dingoes had torn her to pieces. I heard an old pioneer say that on one occasion he counted twenty-three dingoes around a dead bullock on the Ginninderra plain. Many a poor tramp perished in this manner in the early days, and the practice was when in the wild bush country to keep a good fire burning all night.

Some time during the sixties a man named Peter Naylor had a property at the Burra. Fences were few and far between in those days and it was not uncommon for stock to stray for miles. One day his daughter Betsy Celia went out to bring in the cows and was never seen again. Despite a wide search, no trace of her was ever found and the mystery was never solved.

A few years later a girl disappeared in the Gunning district under similar circumstances, and but for a dog her body would never have been found. The poor girl had been outraged and strangled and her body carried some miles away. A gold brooch that had been given her by a relative was missing. A shepherd was suspected; his reputation was an evil one and when his hut was searched the missing brooch was found with some money secreted in the fireplace. This monster paid the extreme penalty in Goulburn. I cannot give his name, but it was believed that he was also the murderer of Betsey Celia Naylor, as he was in the locality at the time.

Some time in the early fifties it was reported to Mrs Wright at Cuppacumbalong that Francis McGrath and his infant son were missing from their home on the west side of the river. This caused a sensation throughout County Murray as a man named Andy Anderson reported that he thought McGrath had been murdered as he had been threatened by a man recently returned from a trip to England who carried on the trade of bootmaker in the locality. The police and black trackers were quickly on the scene but no trace of the missing man and child was ever found. However, Anderson was firmly of the opinion that McGrath and the child had been shot and then burnt. A few weeks before I left Weetangerra in 1915 I had a long talk with W. D. Wright about mysteries of the past, and Wright declared that McGrath's disappearance was the greatest of them all.

Many years ago I was in charge of woolpressing at the Ginninderra woolshed and I made the acquaintance of a steady, hard-working young man named Alfred Suitor. One evening a young man called whom Suitor introduced as his brother Herbert. After his departure the following day Alfred gave me this account of his family—father, mother, five brothers and one sister.

I am the eldest alive now. A few years ago my father had charge of a station twenty-five miles from Queanbeyan and my brother Sam and I were the shepherds. All went well for a couple



of years. One day my brother was found dead in a patch of wattle scrub; foul play was suspected, but the matter will never be cleared up because the man we thought responsible was killed in an accident soon after my brother's death. Another brother, William, was drowned four years later when swimming in the river. This was a dreadful shock to my parents, but worse was in store. A year or so later another brother met with an accident from which he died after a few days, and now there are only Herbert and I and a married sister left. I am engaged, but cannot marry for some years as I have to assist my father on the property.

Soon after Suitor left and went home to his father, and in less than a month a double fatality fell upon this unfortunate family. Herbert was drowned in a river near Braidwood and the news of his death caused his father's collapse and death. The survivors were impoverished by the family deaths and the small property which was their means of livelihood was sold to defray expenses. However, the widow was hired by William Sullivan of Springbank, Canberra, after the marriage of her son Alfred twelve months later. A year or so later an infant was born to Alfred and his wife and the former wrote and invited his mother to come and live with them as it was time she took things easy. She accepted the invitation and a few days later left Canberra for her new home. Six weeks later we received the news that this unfortunate woman had been accidentally burned to death. Her death was the sixth in this family in fifteen years. After the inquest Alfred sold out and left the district.

A short time before I met Suitor I became acquainted with Thomas Daniel Ryan. He was well educated, with a knowledge of history far above the average, and his report on the conditions in Ireland was appalling. Twenty or thirty years before the newspapers had reported the shooting of Lord Letrim in Ireland. They declared that it was a cruel and cold-blooded murder as his Lordship simply demanded overdue rent which was his right. The ruffian was reported to have escaped to America and an officer was sent over to arrest the miscreant, but when the ship was searched he could not be found. When I read this account I did not think I would ever meet the man referred to, but I did. Here is Ryan's account of the shooting:

Lord Letrim was an absentee landlord and our family had been tenants of one of his farms for more than a hundred years. Sickness, a failure in crops and the potato blight, plus a disease known as 'Redwater' among the cattle caused our family to fall into arrears with the rent. My eldest brother laid the facts before his Lordship's agent and was advised to see his Lordship. He did so, but received no sympathy. His Lordship's custom was to visit the property during the shooting season and then return to England, and before his return in this instance my mother and sister decided to call and see him and plead their case. His Lordship looked them over for some time and then made an infamous suggestion to my sister. My mother was horrified and said they would submit to death but not to dishonour. His Lordship laughed and said, 'While I am here the proposal stands—I leave here in three weeks' time, and if you don't accept—out you go.' They left his presence in tears. Later I told mother that I would deal with this beast. She pleaded with me not to do anything rash, so I said that I would state our case to the president of our secret society and perhaps get some assistance. Although there had been much distress I managed to raise a few sovereigns—only a few pounds short of the amount due. I then decided to interview Lord Letrim and offer him the money and a promise to pay the balance owing as soon as practicable. I did not expect to be successful, so I laid my plans carefully.

One night I called at the Manor House and requested an interview with his Lordship. The butler refused my request, stating that he was not to be disturbed. I was in my twentieth year, six feet tall, and thirteen stone in weight, and was not in the mood to take orders from a butler, so I forced my way into his Lordship's study. He was very angry and ordered me out, saying, 'If you

don't go out I will have you thrown out by my servants', and he reached for the bell cord. I promptly disconnected the bell, locked the door and put the key in my pocket. 'My Lord, I am here to settle this matter and if you don't agree to my proposal it will be your fault and not mine. Our family have been good tenants for many years and it is not our fault we cannot pay now.' I then offered him the money and promised that the balance would be paid within a month. He then said, 'Get out, you dog. You will get ten years for this, and if the money was paid twice over I would not renew the lease.' I said, 'If you don't give me a receipt for this money and renew the lease I will deal with you in another way—you deserve death for the insult to my sister, so decide quickly.' He then called out to his guests to break down the door, but I said, 'Do not do that or I will drop the first man that enters.' There was no attempt on the door. I then said, 'I will give you another chance—give me the receipt duly signed and I will go.' He replied, 'I will see you in hell first.' I then drew my pistol and said, 'You beast—I gave you every chance so I will send you there', and I shot him. I then opened the window and escaped—mounted my horse and fled to Cork, where I boarded a ship bound for America. A steamboat was despatched without delay and when the *Erin* arrived in America it was searched but I was not aboard. I transhipped in mid-Atlantic to an American ship bound for Australia. For years I was a member of a secret society in Ireland known as 'Hearts of Steel', and we were sworn to assist each other. The captain and officers of the ship were also members of this organization, and my escape presented no difficulties as Lord Letrim bore an evil reputation.

Such was Ryan's story.

The authorities thought that the culprit might not have left Ireland, and in 1893 a report taken from the London press appeared in the Sydney press that the murderer of Lord Letrim had died in America. This was not correct. He died in Sydney, and Thomas Daniel Ryan was the man. He was highly respected by all who knew him, and if he believed he had a sincere friend he would relate incidents from his early life. He considered the shooting of Letrim was the best action of his life.

About 1861 there were two families employed at Yarralumla, named Murphy and Hyam. Hyam, like Murphy, was a widower with three children—two boys fifteen and thirteen years of age and a girl of seventeen years. Hyam was a bit of a bruiser and, of course, 'boys will be boys'. The Hyam and Murphy boys were always arguing, and on Christmas Eve 1862 matters reached a climax and the two elder boys decided to settle matters. They were evenly matched and Tom Murphy defeated his opponent with ease. The younger boy then attacked Jim Murphy. The Hyam boy was big for his age and was eighteen months older than Jim, and for a time had the advantage. However, Jim took the initiative and gave young Hyam a great thrashing. This greatly upset Hyam Snr, who determined to square matters next day. Early on Christmas morning, having partaken liberally of firewater, he wended his way to Murphy's hut with the object of avenging the defeat of his sons. Two neighbours—Brown and Wallace—were on the scene to see the fun. Hyam was over-confident. He was a heavier man than Murphy, although the latter had an advantage in height. He demanded that Murphy flog his boys for what he described as 'the cowardly assault on my sons'.

'Nonsense!' Murphy said. 'Boys will be boys, so come and have a drink.'

'Yes,' Hyam said, 'you will need a few when I am finished with you, so put up your hands.' Jim obliged and Hyam received a severe thrashing, much to the joy of Brown and Wallace. A fortnight later Murphy appeared at the Queanbeyan Court of Petty Sessions charged with assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm to Hyam. The charge was dismissed.

I often saw Hyam at St John's Church, where his daughter married a man named Eusenby Poncey. He was a native of Chile who could turn his hand to any branch of farm work and was painstaking and

honest in all his dealings. On one occasion he carted hay from my place to Guise's Flat, twenty-five miles distant, and the job lasted more than a month—two loads each week. His wife died in 1884 leaving two daughters, nineteen and sixteen years of age.

In 1891 a great flood occurred in the Murrumbidgee River and about three weeks later the sisters went to Queanbeyan in the family buggy. The river crossing had been washed out, leaving a deep hole, and the new route was around this hole in the shape of a half-moon. Their father guided them across the river on horseback and his last instructions were, 'I will meet you here at five o'clock this evening, and if you should arrive before me do not attempt to cross.' He arrived shortly before six o'clock but there was no sign of the girls. He then noticed a double set of buggy tracks leading to the river from the opposite side and then saw a strange object downstream. On investigating he found the upturned buggy and the body of the horse, which had drowned. Next day the bodies of the girls were found about half a mile downstream. Ponsey later told me that he could have been at the river at five o'clock as arranged, but did not think the girls could possibly arrive there before six o'clock. He loved these girls with sincere affection, and a short time later the broken-hearted father wound up his affairs and returned to his native land. Hyam died in 1887.

## *Teamsters and Farmers*

*Braidwood market Teamsters Freights Brother George Allen Fitzallan  
 Denis and Ann Gorman James Allen and a silly hoax Closing the road Fires  
 Injustice Andrew Wotherspoon John Glynn Joseph Kelly John Gale  
 John Robertson's Act Elections*

WHEN WE commenced farming Braidwood was the market on which the prosperity of the Canberra, Ginninderra and Weetangerra farmers depended. At that time there were twenty to thirty thousand miners engaged on the Major's Creek and Araluen goldfields and two flour mills were working day and night. We sent thousands of bushels of wheat to the Braidwood mills and there were a score or more horse and bullock teams engaged on the road from Canberra. The best-known teamsters in the locality were Gillespie, Ryan, Smith, several Southwells, Rolfe, Mathieson, Young, Cameron, Flint, Tinsley, Thomas Wells and Gribble. The roads were very bad at the time and a load of fifty to sixty bushels was normal on the long haul of forty or more miles. The price for cartage was 1s. to 1s. 3d. a bushel, and the price received from the Braidwood mills was from 7s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. a bushel. About 1877 or 1878 a general exodus from these mines set in and we farmers suffered a great loss as a result of the drop in prices and decreased demand for farm produce. Some time between 1872 and 1876 James Rolfe, who drove a team for his cousin Edmund Rolfe of Gold Creek, Ginninderra, delivered the last load of wheat to the mill and received payment in cash of more than £300. Four other teamsters were travelling with him, Tom Southwell, George Gillespie, Patrick Butler, and another whose name I have forgotten. Rolfe, having such a large sum of money, said, 'If some of the road gentry suspected that I had this money I would be "bailed up", so I must take precautions against being robbed.' He then put the roll of notes in an empty wheat sack and placed it in the bottom of the wagon, and over this he placed 300 empty wheat sacks and some goods. On arrival home several days later he was astounded to find that his roll of notes had vanished and been replaced with some bush rubbish. Suspicion rested on Patrick Butler, who had remained in the camp one morning when Rolfe and his mates went to round up the horses. Butler was most indignant at the charge, and although nothing was proved against him these two neighbours were never reconciled after the accusation was made. Butler left the district shortly afterwards and died a young man. Rolfe passed away at the age of eighty-four years, esteemed and respected by all who knew him.

Mathieson on this occasion took 800 bushels of wheat to the mill for us. The average weight in each bag was 260 lb. and the price was 7s. 6d. a bushel.

At the close of 1859 on the main road from Queanbeyan to Yass there were a couple of hundred acres of land which the travelling public believed to be a stock reserve. It was frequently used as a camping site, and about this time Shelton Smith, Robert Kilby and two other teamsters were camped there *en route* to Sydney. They were loaded with farm produce and did not reach this camp until after dark. As they were having supper a voice roared, 'What are you doing on my land?' They were astounded! The roared query came from Henry O'Brien, the owner of Doura station, Yass. An altercation ensued, with the result that these weary men had to harness up and leave their camp and seek another some

miles further on, where there was no water. A month later John Gillespie and his son George had camped at the same spot when O'Brien appeared and threatened court action. After some argument Gillespie invited him to dismount and settle the matter by fisticuffs, and when this invitation was not accepted he got his heavy whip and advanced towards O'Brien, who quickly took his departure. Next day as Gillespie passed through Yass a constable served a summons upon him which alleged threatening language and attempted assault on O'Brien, and the hearing was set down for a certain day. Gillespie laughed and said, 'Tell the "snob" that I expect to be in Sydney on that day.' He was in Sydney on the day mentioned and never heard any more about the matter. It was years before O'Brien ceased to annoy the unfortunate traveller. He founded the boiling down industry in 1843, but the goldrush sounded its death knell, though. There was an attempt to revive it in 1889. In 1891 I saw sheep sold in Queanbeyan for 7d. a head—the lowest price I ever received was 2s. 3d. in 1893.

In 1870 William Mathieson was the owner of two horse teams—he drove one and John Flynn drove the other. One day they were returning from Braidwood and when they reached the Warrie River Mathieson took his team across the swollen stream without incident. Flynn took his team into the stream a few yards lower down and did not hear Mathieson's warning call not to cross at that point. The team was washed away and drowned and the wagon load of tea, sugar and other goods was a total loss. This carelessness cost John Flynn his friendship with Mathieson and he left the district in 1877. A short time before this incident James Grady and a team of bullocks were drowned at Deep Creek returning from Braidwood.

My brother George was born on 23 April 1863—St George's Day—and about ten days later he was baptized in St John's Church, Canberra. One of his godfathers was a man named Allen Fitzallan, one of the greatest horse-breakers Australia has produced. He was employed in that capacity at Duntroon and married Clara Hines, the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Hines of Sutton. Clara, who was for many years in the service of Mr Davis of Ginninderra, left the district in 1875. This family were well known to me.

Fitzallan joined the New South Wales police force about 1866 or 1867 and was a member of the police party that was sent to the Jingeras in search of the Clarke gang of bushrangers, who were very active in that locality at the time. When the body of Scott the bushranger was found Fitzallan was one of the first troopers on the scene. He was left in charge of the body for two days and nights before assistance arrived. An investigation revealed that Scott was a member of the Clarke gang and had planned to deliver them up to the police. The gang discovered his treachery and he received a traitor's reward—a couple of bullets. After the inquest on Scott I heard no more of Fitzallan. There are a large number of the Hines grandchildren and great-grandchildren scattered throughout County Murray, and they are all good members of society and valuable assets to the State.

Denis Gorman was a quiet, hard-working man when I first met him, a carpenter by trade. He was Ann Gorman's second husband. Her first was a man named Dempsey, who went to America and never returned. Mrs Gorman was very kind to me in my youth and related many amusing tales. Once she said to me,

Dinnis and I were burning some rubbish and we then went in for a cup of tay. After a few minutes Dinnis said to me, 'Ann, what is that?' 'I think it is wind', says I to Dinnis. 'No, it is not wind', said Dinnis to me. 'I will look', said I to Dinnis. So I went outside and, oh man! The fowl-house was on fire and all the noble slabs and bark. I ran—and Dinnis ran—but we could do nothing. I had a hin sitting on some eggs and she was burnt to death. She laid an egg as big as this (closing her fist) and I was afraid to ate it, and this hin ran into a log fince where I found her and rubbed grace all over her and she got all right!



*William Farrer, whose experiments finally resulted in rust-resistant wheat*





*The tower of St John's Church, Canberra, struck by lightning in 1851*

Denis Gorman died on Christmas Day 1866 and all his neighbours harvested his crop free of charge. He was sixty-five.

When James Allen proposed to the widow some time later she said, 'I will marry no one until I put up a headstone to Dinnis—he was a dacent husband and was niver in gaol a day in his life.' A stone was later erected to his memory in the Queanbeyan cemetery. A month later Allen and the widow were married in St John's Church, Canberra, Reverend P. G. Smith performing the ceremony. James Allen was a man to be avoided. I never heard him say a good word for anyone and my maxim with his kind was to be 'civil and strange'. He was a lag and served his time at the Limestone, where I think his employer was Klensendorlffe. He was for a short time employed by Mr Charles Campbell when he got his ticket-of-leave and was a tenant on the Duntroon estate in later years. No one liked him.

For some years James Allen and John McIntosh were bitter enemies and over a period of time McIntosh played some practical jokes on Allen. And now, to vex McIntosh, Allen turned Roman Catholic. McIntosh was an Orangeman and would often flash an orange sash when passing Allen's house. This insult was crowned one morning when Allen got up and saw an orange-coloured rag flying from a tall rod on top of his haystack. In vain he searched for his thirty-foot ladder. He then tramped into Queanbeyan and laid the matter before the police, who declined to act. He then returned home and found his ladder planted in long grass and he took the accursed rag down and burnt it. About two years before this incident a very cruel hoax was played on Allen. Mrs Allen's married daughter lived at Ulladulla on the south coast. One day a letter arrived asking Allen to meet his step-daughter at Gunning, as she was coming to spend a fortnight with them. Allen had no cart of his own, and as he was not on speaking terms with his neighbours he called on Thomas Hannan, who lived two miles away and was the only person friendly towards him. He arrived just in time to see the cart depart.

'This is most unfortunate,' Hannan said, 'but you can have it the day after tomorrow when it comes back.'

'Too late', Allen said. 'I wanted it tomorrow.' He then called on the postmaster but his cart was undergoing repairs. The next morning Allen set off on foot for Gunning, where he arrived two hours before the arrival of the train and he hired a local man to drive them back to Canberra in a dog cart and gave him a half sovereign on account. The train duly arrived but there was no step-daughter aboard, so he remained in Gunning until the next day, when he was again disappointed. He now had a row with the carter, who wanted another half sovereign, which was refused. Allen walked back to Canberra and arrived in a state of exhaustion, having been almost drowned in a thunderstorm. After a couple of days' rest he went to the Canberra post office and was relating his experience to Mr Williams, the postmaster, when the mail coach arrived with a letter bearing the same handwriting as the previous one and signed with his step-daughter's name. The postmaster read the letter to Allen. It stated that the step-daughter was sorry for any inconvenience caused and by way of compensation invited her mother and Allen to come over for a month or longer—enclosed also was a cheque for £50 to defray expenses. This cheque was signed 'Jack Straw'. Allen now realized that he was the victim of a cruel practical joke. Williams advised Allen to say nothing about the matter and then wrote a letter for Allen advising the step-daughter of the facts. He told Allen to come back in a week or so, when a reply could be expected. Allen did so, and I was there when the letter arrived and was read by Williams to Allen. The step-daughter and her family knew nothing about the hoax. There the matter remained for a couple of years.

Shortly after there was trouble over the closure of a road that passed Emu Bank, leaving the Round Hill on the west as it crossed to the east of the Yarralumla homestead and through to Cooma. Frederick Campbell purchased the station in 1880, and when it became known that this road was to be closed the news came as a shock to the community and there were public meetings of protest. However,



a fence was erected across the road and some time later, acting on legal advice, an assembly of about forty settlers met at the disputed fence and Campbell was advised that his fence was going to be removed. John Southwell Jnr was spokesman for the settlers. William Young then struck a post with an axe and Mr Campbell rushed forward and embraced the post, saying, 'I will protect my property.'

Southwell put his arms around Campbell and lifted him away, saying, 'Mr Campbell, if that axe strikes you you may be crippled for life.'

Campbell said, 'Thank you, Southwell. That is all I want—you will be sorry for this day's work.' Young went on and destroyed the fence.

Campbell now took action against Young and also issued a writ against Southwell claiming £1,000 damages for assault. A sympathizer approached Campbell on behalf of the defendants, saying, 'My uncle and I have travelled that road for more than thirty years and we were never stopped. You must lose the case and it will cost you £1,000.'

'I am not going to lose the case—what is £1,000 to us? That road is going to be closed if it costs us £5,000 or double that amount', Campbell said. He was correct. The road was closed, although it was a triumph of moneybags over justice. He received a verdict and damages of 1s. and costs against Young.

James Allen was one of Campbell's witnesses, and he swore that there never was a road there and that for years he had reaped wheat on the spot where the road was claimed to be. Several others did the same thing. Young's witnesses included several old carriers who declared that they had travelled this road for forty years and were never prevented. Mr de Salis, M.L.C., swore that he had travelled the track in question for fifty years with stock and goods and his right to do so was never questioned. James Abernethy, who was overseer at Yarralumla for years, confirmed this, as did several others, yet the plaintiff won the case. This meant ruin for William Young and his father, James Young, and for John Southwell. The great Pilcher's brief was fifty guineas, and to raise the necessary sum Young had to mortgage everything he possessed. When the case opened Pilcher stated the defendant's case and the Court adjourned for a week. When it resumed the great Pilcher did not appear because there was not another fifty guineas. A month or so later a writ was issued against Young and his house and land were sold by public auction in Queanbeyan. After the sale the matter was discussed in the parlour of the Commercial Hotel, and here the witnesses in the case came under review, and firewater was partaken of not wisely but too freely. During the discussion James Allen's name was mentioned and one man said that it was a pity that he was not drowned coming home from Gunning. A bystander said that it was strange that no one knew who had perpetrated the joke on Allen and added, 'If I knew I would shout for all hands.'

'You would, would you', said John McIntosh Snr. He then told the crowd that a friend at Ulladulla had posted the letters to Allen, which McIntosh had written, using the step-daughter's name. He said, 'I thought I would give old Jim a surprise, but I never thought he would be mad enough to walk to Gunning because he is one of those men who knows everything.' Thus the truth of the matter became known and was soon common knowledge throughout the locality. Allen had always hated McIntosh, but this disclosure increased his hatred tenfold.

The action against Southwell cost him more than £400. Collection cards were sent out on Young's behalf and a goodly sum was collected, but this did not save him from the auctioneer's hammer.

A short time before the truth of the hoax on Allen became known one of McIntosh's sons, Sandy, commenced farming on a large scale. He had about 140 acres under crop and had purchased a reaper and binder, mowing machine and hay rake. Allen had a crop of hay and gave Sandy McIntosh the contract to harvest it. Everything passed off satisfactorily and there was no unpleasantness; this started later when the identity of the hoaxer became known. A month or so later the public were surprised to learn that James Allen had taken legal proceedings against Alexander (Sandy) McIntosh over the contract

and harvesting of his crop. A couple of weeks later, on my way home from Canberra, I saw the reflection of a fire over at Majura and took it to be some of the farmers burning straw. Next day I was informed that Alexander McIntosh's crop had been destroyed by fire and that James Allen had been arrested. About ninety tons of hay and 1,000 bushels of wheat and oats and other property were destroyed. Allen was committed for trial and released on bail. Shortly after his committal Allen's case against McIntosh came off in the District Court. My neighbour Mr A. Cameron was foreman of the jury. I went in to hear the case. Allen's plea was that the hay was stacked too soon after cutting and he called only one witness to prove that the hay had heated. McIntosh on oath said that Allen insisted that he cut one day, rake up the next, cock the hay on the third day and draw in and stack on the fourth day. He said that he advised Allen that it was too soon and that he should allow five days before drawing in, but that Allen knew better. He called two witnesses to prove his story and they said that during the harvesting they had wanted to attend a sports meeting in Queanbeyan but Allen warned them that if they did attend and rain came during their absence he would take action against McIntosh. Despite the fact that McIntosh told Allen the hay was too green because of the cool weather, Allen insisted that he do as directed. The result was a verdict for McIntosh.

Shortly after this Allen's trial took place. The evidence disclosed that he was tracked across the paddock to the scene of the fire. Allen made his own boots and one was larger than the other owing to an old injury to one foot. The verdict was guilty and the sentence was five years' hard labour. This fire ruined Sandy McIntosh. He had a high rent to pay and had machinery bills to meet and was finally ejected for default. Such was the sequel to a cruel practical joke perpetrated by a man who should have known better.

This fire was the third in the locality within five years. On one occasion a shed full of hay was destroyed at Duntroon. Allen had come to see Mr Fred Campbell to pay the rent and had tried to sell him a stack of hay, but Campbell said, 'No, Allen—I have enough for station use as I have thirty tons in that shed, but if I am short I will give you a call.' A few days later a chaffcutter was set at Campbell's shed and during the night a fire broke out and destroyed the lot. Allen sold his stack as it stood in the yard for £4.10.0 a ton! After Allen's trial and conviction the local residents were convinced that the fires were caused by the disgruntled James Allen.

He was released after serving three-and-a-half years. He was then eighty years of age and his wife was dead. My Uncle Peter took pity on him and gave him a home. He had been about a month with Uncle Peter when Mr Campbell met my uncle and said, 'I am surprised at you, Peter Shumack, for having Allen—he is a bad man.'

Uncle Peter was also surprised, because he knew that Allen's testimony had won the celebrated road case for Campbell. When my Uncle Peter died on 29 September 1883 my cousin Peter Shumack assisted me to encoffin him. James Allen was present and said, 'Peter and I were born in the same year and have known each other a long time.' He lived at Peter's home for about two years; he then became helpless and went to the Liverpool Old Men's Home, where he died at the age of eighty-three years. And so I close the Allen incident—he was a product of the times!

Southwell was the defendant in another road case in which Mr E. K. Crace was the plaintiff in 1882. This concerned the same road as that in the Campbell *v.* Young case, but on a different part of the property. Southwell was sued for £1,000 for damages and trespass. In this case the Surveyor-General sent his deputy to inspect and report on the locality, and he and a host of witnesses testified that they had used this road. As in the previous case, Southwell briefed Pilcher. Southwell drew up a long list of questions but Pilcher never made use of them. On the third day Mr Tynham, the Deputy Surveyor-

General, was sworn and Toby Barton Q.C. asked him, 'Have you made an inspection of the locality and the old road?'

'Yes', was the reply.

'Have you sent in your report on the matter?'

'Yes, I have sent in a report on the subject and it is in the Surveyor-General's office in Sydney.'

Barton then made application for a copy of the report and counsel for the other side opposed the application. A couple of hours was lost in argument over this matter until the judge finally granted the application and adjourned for lunch. Southwell looked upon Tynham as a hostile witness because when he came to inspect the road and locality he had been a guest of Mr Crace. When the court resumed Barton called Southwell aside and said, 'I have good news for you; I have spoken to Mr Salamons and he has agreed not to call Tynham, and that will be in our favour.' However, Southwell lost the case and had to go up King Street, and he never recovered from this blow.

I first saw 1,200 head of cattle passing along this road in 1858, and thousands of sheep and cattle were taken along it up to the time of the action. In 1859 it was the main road to the Snowy River goldfields.

About two years later there was another road case connected with Southwell's road on the north side. Mr O. M. Wood was sent up from the Surveyor-General's office to report on the matter as Tynham had done on the previous occasion. Wood was benighted and spent the night at Southwell's. After supper Wood said, 'There will be no trouble in this case and there should have been no trouble in the other one because Tynham's evidence should have given you the verdict without any support whatever.'

When Southwell told Wood what had occurred at Court he was surprised and said, 'I have a copy of Tynham's report here and I will read it to you.' It read in part:

On . . . I inspected the locality and found that the track in question was worn three feet deep in places and was bare of grass in some sections half a chain wide. There is evidence of heavy traffic on this road up to the time it was closed by the fence across it.

This clearly shows what a farce the courts were when there was boundless wealth on one side and none on the other. There was no redress. It was gross injustice.

After the death of Mr Cameron at the Goat Station at Coppin's Crossing, Andrew Wotherspoon, who had previously had charge of St John's Church School, took charge of the station and had the care of two flocks of sheep. His second and third sons, Robert and Walter, were the shepherds, and it was here that I first met Wotherspoon in 1858.

We had been only a few days at Emu Bank when Wotherspoon came to our house and said to mother, 'Mrs Shumack—could you oblige me with pen, ink and paper? I have notions in my head and want to write them down.' Mother obliged and he then wrote the poem known as 'The Sheep Station', from which come the following stanzas:

Untold are half the poor man's joys  
When evening closes in,  
To see his faithful wife and boys  
Rejoicing, fill their skin.  
And grateful thanks his spirit nerves  
For blessings mair than he deserves.

Now! I'll tell your father—boys,  
The partial mother cries,  
When high above the loud guffaw—

Young Andrew's notes arise.  
Here Janet—ye maun be the cook  
Until I give the wean a sook.

The youngest are then sent to bed,  
The parting kiss is given,  
They bend their little knees and heads  
To him who dwells in heaven.  
For they have raised a busy hum,  
O'er spelling book and little sum.

Wotherspoon's daughter, Janet, to whom he refers in this poem, was drowned at the Goat Station on 3 March 1859, soon after the poem was published. She went to the river for a bucket of water and slipped in. Her mother, who was four hundred yards away, witnessed the tragedy but was unable to help.

Later Wotherspoon published a book of poems entitled *Maid of Erin*, in which he wrote of conditions in Ireland in terms which made him some enemies:

Unhappy Ireland! He exclaimed  
As he pursued his way,  
These people's acts cannot be blamed,  
But rather—Castlereagh.  
Goaded and hunted like wild beasts,  
And their religion crushed,  
Their altars and their holy Priests,  
Demolished in the dust.

Tis time this tyranny was broke,  
Sore burdened with this cruel yoke,  
What right has man to tread on man?  
His equal in God's eyes—  
What right to bind his conscience down?  
Eternal Justice cries.  
Give them but freedom as their right,  
Rule them by love and not by might.

His hopes for Australia were expressed in the following stanza:

When equal laws shall be the rule,  
The State becomes a fostering school,  
To elevate the mind.  
When arts and science shall have shone,  
To give society a tone—  
Of taste and view refined.  
A nation shall Australia be,  
The Empress of the southern sea.

Wotherspoon was a great contributor to the press. At that time there was no newspaper south of Goulburn, but when the *Queanbeyan Age* was first published in September 1860 he became a regular contributor. He had several pen names and was often bitterly abused for his writings, but he never wrote on a subject he did not thoroughly understand and he proved superior in discussions with his critics.

Shortly after his daughter Janet was drowned in 1859, Wotherspoon opened a school at Ginninderra, which he conducted until being again offered the St John's Church school in 1861-2. As a teacher he was in the first rank. About a year after he took charge of the St. John's school some letters appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age* which were resented by George Campbell and Reverend P. G. Smith. For years the Presbyterians had no place of worship at Canberra, but towards the mid-fifties they were allowed to worship in the Church of England schoolroom. This concession was now to be taken away. Articles in the press dealt with this matter very lucidly and exposed the bigotry of the so-called Christians. It was some time before the author of these letters was discovered, and several were blamed unjustly. At last Wotherspoon was asked point blank if he was the author. He did not deny it. Campbell and the Reverend P. G. Smith tried to have Wotherspoon dismissed but failed, and the letters continued, bitter but truthful.

In 1863 a series of balls were organized on the station properties to raise funds for the hospital and there was active rivalry between Ginninderra and Duntroon. Mr Campbell directed the Duntroon Hospital Committee to prepare a full report of one of their functions for the *Queanbeyan Age*. 'Wotherspoon is the man for that', said one of the party.

'Well, send him an invitation to attend the ball and get him to do the job', said Campbell. This invitation was duly sent and was politely declined, so one of the committeemen called to ask the reason.

'You can tell the Lord of the Manor,' Wotherspoon said, 'that I will not attend unless I receive an invitation from Mr Campbell personally.'

A few days later Mr Campbell asked Wotherspoon his reason for refusing the invitation. Wotherspoon said, 'Mr Campbell, you and Mr Smith have done your best to injure me and my family for no other reason than my opinions. As you know, I never write on private matters. What I have written is on matters of public interest and is the truth—which is sometimes bitter. If I have touched you on a tender spot I am sorry.'

'Thank you, Mr Wotherspoon,' Campbell said, 'I am glad I called on you, I can see that I have been too hasty in these matters, so let us forget our difference. It gives me pleasure to extend an invitation to you and your wife to attend this function, and I will be very pleased if you accept and report on the night's proceedings.'

Wotherspoon accepted the invitation and a few days later reported that the ball was a great financial success; also that Mr Peter Shumack Jnr and Miss E. Bambridge were beau and belle of the ball, which was attended by 210 persons. Mr Campbell called on Wotherspoon and complimented him on his report. He then said, 'Mr Wotherspoon, I hear that you wish to move to the north coast—is that correct?'

'Yes,' Wotherspoon said, 'but I have not the funds available.' After some discussion Campbell agreed to lend him a sum of money at bank interest and whenever he wanted it. In less than a month Wotherspoon and his family left Canberra for Lismore, where he opened a store in 1864. His son Walter was one of the first timber cutters to operate a sawpit in the locality, and another son, Robert, was Mayor of Lismore in 1888.

In 1865 John Glynn leased a farm at Canberra on which were two houses. The previous tenants were the Kinleyside family and Denis Gorman. In 1867 Glynn rented the smaller house and twenty acres to two shearers named N. McInness and J. Webb—the latter being married to McInnes's sister. The crops of 1867-8 were light, and in 1869 when the crops were good the rent due to Glynn was long

overdue. One day he heard that McInnes and his partner had leased a farm at Wagga and intended to slip away one night without paying their rent. Glynn spoke to Webb about the matter and he promised to pay the rent within two months. However, Glynn was not satisfied so he enlisted the aid of Jim the Grubber and they watched the place day and night. One evening at dusk he and Glynn saw McInnes and Webb leave the farm and about 11 p.m. they returned, each leading a horse with a load on its back. Glynn observed them unload two quarters of beef and then he and the Grubber appeared in the doorway, much to the consternation of the occupants. The result was that Glynn was paid his rent and the farm was vacated within a month. Webb left for Wagga, leaving his wife at her mother's place, where she died a few weeks later. She left two children who were cared for by my father. Webb never returned to Canberra.

A couple of days later Christopher Donnelly was splitting timber in the Black Hill when he discovered the remains of a freshly-killed beast. He instructed his wife to say nothing of it, as he did not want to be involved in any 'dirty business'. Two days later two troopers called to inspect the remains, and the brand, which had been neatly cut out, was found under a stone in the creek. It was later identified as belonging to Francis McGrath of Ginninderra, who declined to prosecute. The fact that Webb had left the district prompted Jim the Grubber to mention the matter to a friend—this led to a quarrel between Jim and Glynn and the breach was never healed.

Some years later another case cropped up in which McInnes was involved. Henry Rottenberry had 130 acres at the Round Hill which he rented to McInnes and his family, who lived close to a paddock where Rottenberry had some cattle. One day he missed a fat heifer and spent days searching for her without result. His tenants left soon after. Twelve months later I bought the property and Christopher Donnelly went to live in the house. He was effecting some repairs and removing some silt from a dam when he came across something which startled him. He hurried to my place and said, 'Did Rottenberry ever find that heifer he lost?'

'No,' I said, 'no trace of her was ever found.'

He then said, 'I think I found her head and legs wrapped in the skin when I took that stuff from the dam.' Rottenberry examined the remains and was satisfied that they were those of the missing heifer. However, he declined to take action in the matter.

In October 1877 I became acquainted with Joseph Kelly. He was a schoolteacher who acted as deputy for Mr Cameron, the Weetangerra schoolteacher, when he was absent undergoing a special three months' training course at the Yass public school. He was a grand man and was a regular contributor to the press under the *nom de plume* of 'Bushman', and in addition to regular articles on various subjects he composed poetry. He was a keen student of debate and his advice to me on this was: 'Never write or talk on any subject unless you thoroughly understand it, and never stray from the point in dispute. If others introduce foreign matter it strengthens your argument.'

One day he said to me,

My wife and I have had a hard time. There is plenty of religion in the world, but very little true Christianity. I am a Roman Catholic and there are men in the Church that are a disgrace to it or any church. But for one of these so-called priests of God I would not be here today. Shortly after I married I got a job as bookkeeper-storekeeper at a weekly wage of 18s. There was no school in the locality so a meeting was called at the home of Mr Andrew Pike of Tuggera-gong. There was no Education Act at the time. After a long discussion Mr Pike gave half an acre of land and a liberal donation towards the school building. The next question was that of religion. I then proposed that I take over the school when erected and I agreed to give one hour of religious instruction to each religious denomination each week. This was accepted by all

present. The priests and clergy who visited the school were broadminded men and all went well until a Father McAuliffe was transferred there. One day he came to the school and a bitter dispute took place regarding the presence of a Church of England prayer book, which he threatened to throw in the fire. I threatened court action should he do so. He lodged a complaint with Mr Pike, who supported him. I refused to teach the Roman Catholic children and the school was closed down and used by Pike as a granary. As a result, bitter feeling has grown up in that community. However, my application as teacher has been accepted by the Education Department and I have been appointed to a school at Yass, where I will go when Mr Cameron returns.

After Cameron's return to Weetangerra, Kelly went to Yass and prospered. Several of his children became teachers. His last poem, which appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age* in 1877, was a satire on some of the local scribes and began:

Neath the shade of giant gum trees,  
In these hot November days,  
When the fields are filled with yellow sheaves,  
And the Post with doggerel lays.

All those concerned in this un-Christian act came to untimely ends. In less than eighteen months Andrew Pike disappeared and was found drowned. His son Thomas was killed by a fall from a horse. In 1878 it was reported that Father McAuliffe had committed suicide by drowning himself in six inches of water. However, an inquest found that the priest had fainted when taking a drink of water and had drowned in this shallow pool.

John Gale, the father of Queanbeyan, of whom it can be truthfully said that he was the selector's friend, was born at Bodmin in Cornwall on 17 April 1831 and arrived in Sydney on 24 May 1854 as an ordained Methodist minister. He left the ministry for journalism in 1857. He was district coroner in Queanbeyan for more than forty years, and died there on 19 July 1929 in his ninety-ninth year.

When John Robertson's Land Act became law in 1862 those in possession of tens of thousands of acres of Crown land used every method to frustrate the laudable intentions of its author, and in numerous instances succeeded. John Gale fought for the poor man with tongue and pen. I believe it was he who proposed that the selectors bring forward a candidate at the next election. His advice was accepted and James Bamford Thompson was the man selected.

John Gale was a friend of mine for many years and these were the circumstances under which we first met. About the shearing season of 1875 my brother John was shearing at Naas, which is about thirty-five miles from Springvale. Rain was falling and Mr de Salis announced that shearing would cease until the following Monday. John then said he would return home for the week-end and he was accompanied by Stephen Grady and Jim McLaughlin, as all three lived in the same locality. They arranged to meet on Sunday afternoon at the Acton crossing at Canberra. They met as arranged, and Grady then announced that he wanted to call on Archie McIntyre, who lived some distance off the direct track to Naas. Jim McLaughlin went with Grady and John arranged to meet them at the river crossing as they would probably have to cross in a boat. Part of the road to Naas was through private property, and the owner, Andrew Jackson Cunningham, kindly allowed his neighbours to use this track as it shortened the journey by four miles. There were three gates on this track and there had been some trouble recently about them being left open. John rode on as arranged, and when Grady and McLaughlin joined him the latter said, 'We are for it, John. When we came through the middle gate Steve would not let me shut it, and Mr Cunningham was hiding behind a clump of bushes and took our names and is

going to take us to court. He told Steve that he had him "set" for a couple of years and was going to make an example of him.'

John voiced his disapproval of Steve's action and pointed out that when in his company he always rode at the rear in order to see that all gates were properly closed. The case came off and it cost Grady £17 in fines and costs. He then wrote a letter to the *Queanbeyan Age* which John signed. However, two more letters went to the *Age* office complaining that Grady and McLaughlin were convicted on Cunningham's perjured evidence as the gate was open when they came to it. There was also a letter signed 'John Shumack' which stated that the gate was open when he came to it and he always made a practice of leaving the gates as he found them. My brother was surprised when he read these letters which indicated that Grady had two witnesses to prove their truth.

A few days after these letters appeared in the press I was walking down Monaro Street, Queanbeyan, when I heard my name called and saw Mr Gale walking towards me. He said, 'I want to see you about that letter of yours. I have been served with a writ for £1,000 and I hear that Cunningham has a grudge against Grady and has taken a wicked course against him. What are the actual facts?' I then told him that the letter as published was not the letter my brother John signed, and that he had been surprised at its contents. I gave him the facts as John had given them to me, after which Gale said, 'I am glad that I met you, Mr Shumack, because Grady and his mates have misled me and I will have to apologise—it is a lesson to me.' This incident led to my friendship with John Gale which continued until his death.

Gale paid plaintiff's costs, which exceeded £50, and had he not met me there is no doubt the amount would have been much higher. Gale referred in conversation with me to the gate case and said, 'Grady told me such a tale that I was completely deceived, and had I not met you in the street I would probably have been ruined—Grady is a wicked, unprincipled man.'

Yet for all this Grady had some principles, as his action towards his companion clearly proves. McLaughlin was fined £7.10.0 and Grady £10.5.0, and Grady paid the lot, saying, 'I should pay because you wanted to shut the gate and I would not let you.' This was the only redeeming feature in this case and John Shumack severed his friendship with Grady after this episode. Grady left the district shortly afterwards and we were surprised to hear that he had joined the New South Wales police force. He was dismissed a year later. I met him only once after that, and he was killed by a fall from his horse, leaving a widow and two sons both under the age of seven years.

About 1875 a swagman was arrested and charged before the Queanbeyan Bench with breaking into a shepherd's hut and stealing certain goods, to wit, provisions. The accused pleaded 'not guilty' and said that he had been lost in the bush for about a week when he stumbled across the hut. 'I had had nothing to eat for several days, and as the door was locked I broke the staple with a stone and took what rations I found cooked—that is all', he said. The magistrates, after a brief consultation, sentenced the offender to the 'rising of the court' and then rose, and a minute later the accused was a free man. The next issue of the *Queanbeyan Age* severely criticized the Bench for their leniency. Many people blamed Mr Gale for publishing this article, which most readers believed he wrote.

Soon after this Mr W. Reid of Brindabella reported that he had found falls exceeding 500 feet in height less than a hundred miles to the south, where he had been prospecting.

About 1877 or 1878 John Gale and Mr Reid made a trip to these falls. However, as the season was dry there was only a trickle of water and Gale said that it must be a grand sight when the creek that fed the falls was in flood. Reid then took Gale to a reef which he thought might contain payable gold. The area traversed was in its wild virgin state and their rations were expended as they turned for home. However, they became lost and spent a miserable night in the bush. Next day they followed a bush track and late in the evening they came to a shepherd's hut. Reid said, 'I know where we are now—this is old



Bob's hut and the head station is eight miles away. We will get something to eat here and then go on to the homestead.'

The door was locked so, as 'necessity knows no law', they forced it open and found plenty of flour and meat, but nothing cooked. It was getting late so they decided to press on to the homestead, but before leaving each took a handful of black sugar which Mr Gale later declared was 'splendid'. They were well treated at the station and after a couple of days returned to Queanbeyan. A full report of their trip to the Brindabella ranges appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age* and caused some amusement, the question asked by many being whether Mr Gale gave a thought for the swagman he had condemned when he and Reid broke into the shepherd's hut for food!

I corresponded with John Gale for many years, and this is part of the last letter I received from him, dated 13th December 1924.

Do you know—I have been thinking of asking you a favour. It is this. I have been pressed by prominent persons (not a few of them) and notwithstanding what has already been published in the way of the history of Queanbeyan, which is in fact the history of Canberra, to write my own version of it. My nearly seventy years' residence and intimate knowledge of the locality gives me, I allow, special qualifications, but I am chary of the task. Yet when I think of you and your marvellous memory, and possibly the diaries and other written records of historical local value, I am emboldened to ask you to come to my aid. If you will kindly do this and set yourself to the tedious task of compiling and sending on to me a few historical notes, I can lick them into shape and I will see to it that you shall have due credit when I shall have completed my intended task. Do you know, I sometimes think that the Great Preserver of men is sparing me for some such useful purpose as this. I am sending you something under separate cover—something I was pressed to write just a year ago, and a copy of which—not sent by me or with my knowledge to the authorities of the Mitchell Library, and has caused them to communicate with me and to say that they consider the historical matter it contains to be of the first importance as contributing to the History of Australia. . . .

My introduction to public affairs began in 1860 when, as I have mentioned earlier, the State of New South Wales was in a state of ferment, caused by John Robertson's Free Selection Act. The moneyed class sent paid hirelings throughout the State denouncing the Act and its author. Not one elector in twenty-five understood the matter—not one in ten ever saw a newspaper.

The squatters without exception declared that this Act meant ruin to them if it became law. My father's employer, William Davis, made the case clear against the Act and vehemently denounced it to father and other employees. However, John Robertson secured a majority and the Act was passed. Later father and others saw how they had been gulled by the enemies of Free Selection. From then on father looked into political matters when an election was due and the squatter's man got his vote no more.

In 1859 or 1860 Francis Williams opened a blacksmith's shop at Canberra. He was a reader and thinker, and the squatters' canvasser could not sway him in a discussion on the question of the Free Selection Act. One day a farmer called on Williams and said, 'I am pleased to hear that you did not promise your vote to the squatter's man.'

'No,' Williams said, 'I told them that I would vote for Redman—not Forster.'

'I am glad of that,' the farmer said, 'but I'll bet you two to one that you won't vote at all.' This remark set Williams thinking, and he came to the conclusion that the opposition would swamp him with work on polling day. Seven horses had been booked in to be shod the following week, so he set to work and made all the shoes in readiness for the expected rush. On the morning of the election nine horses

were sent over from Duntroon to be shod. Williams immediately set to work and did not stop for lunch. His wife had his horse saddled and when he finished the job he rode nine miles to the polling booth, which was about 150 yards from the Ginninderra homestead, arriving with three minutes to spare. On entering the polling booth and giving his number, Dr Hayley said, 'Who do you vote for?'

'William Redman', was the reply.

'What!' said the doctor with some surprise.

'However,' Williams said, 'my vote was taken and I could see that the doctor was annoyed.'

William Redman was returned—the Free Selection Act was passed—and this was the last election under the old system, as the ballot box was then introduced.

John Robertson's Free Selection Act was one of the best pieces of legislation ever put on the Statute Book. This Act resulted in thousands of land-hungry men acquiring and farming prosperous areas which before were virgin bush, and resulted in the growth of sturdy yeoman-class farmers such as we know today. In spite of this Act, however, money still talked and the selector did not have it all his own way. About 1866 William Ginn went to the Land Office in Queanbeyan to select a block of land. The Land Agent assured him on looking over the map that the block he wanted was part of Moore's 5,000 acres. Ginn left the office disappointed. But when he told Crawshaw, the publican, about it, he said, 'That scoundrel is at his dirty work again—Thompson the surveyor is in town, so go and see him.'

Ginn hurried to the surveyor's office and the map was produced. 'The land is there', the surveyor said. 'In fact three times the area you applied for. It is a quarter to three and the office closes at four—you can get there in ten minutes, so go and insist that he takes your application.'

Ginn hurried round only to find the office closed, and he knocked and knocked in vain. On the following Thursday he again went to the Land Office and was coldly informed that George Campbell had taken up the land!

My father, William Ginn, John Coppin, Fred Harris and many others were cheated out of blocks of land, and the squatters tried to buy Mr J. B. Thompson, the surveyor, but failed.

About this time Richard Shumack went to Queanbeyan to select a block of land, but the agent could not find a receipt form. This 'squatter's tool' then said, 'Your application is in and you will be all right, although I cannot accept your money as I have no receipt forms and dare not issue one in any other form.' Richard Shumack called the following Thursday and found that he had been swindled out of the land. John Coppin was 'hoodwinked' in much the same manner. He went to the Land Office to select a block of land and was assured by the agent that the land applied for was not there. Coppin then called on J. B. Thompson, the surveyor, and after they had examined the map Thompson assured him that more than three times the area applied for was available. He also told Coppin that he considered his chances of obtaining this land were slim indeed. The following Thursday when Coppin presented himself at the Land Office he found that the land applied for had been taken up by the squatter's nephew. Coppin poured the vials of his wrath on the agent, who smiled on him! Due to this sort of thing several meetings were held in Queanbeyan and resolutions were passed condemning the agent. In each instance the Minister ignored the petition.

In 1875 an amended Land Act was passed. Under the old Act a parent could take up land in his child's name, even for an infant of tender years. The new Act fixed the age at fifteen years and the would-be selector had to apply in person. Mr W. Harris went in to select land for his son William, a lad of sixteen years, and the agent pointed out that the lad had to apply in person. On the following Thursday Harris and his son went to the office only to find that George Campbell had selected the land, although he was in England at the time! The matter was again taken up and a petition prepared and forwarded to the Minister for Lands. A reply came in the following terms:

The Honourable Minister has the utmost confidence in the integrity of the Officer in question and rejects the prayer of the petition.

Such was the manner in which the toiler was treated in those days.

Following the rejection of this petition steps were taken to nominate our own man for Parliament—one who would stand up for the small man—and we persuaded Surveyor J. B. Thompson to contest the election. There was a difficulty, however, as there was no provision for the payment of members and he was a poor man with a large family. In order to surmount this difficulty it was agreed that we, the electors, should pay him if elected. I promised £2 per year and others promised more or less, and Thompson agreed to stand. There was great excitement when his name was announced and his rival put on free drinks at the four hotels in Queanbeyan and at as many more throughout the electorate, and free drinks could be had for the asking up to 10 p.m. three weeks prior to the election. However, on polling day, notwithstanding this bribery, we put our man in by a majority of 120 votes.

Thomas Rutledge, the biggest squatter in the electorate, was the wealthy man's candidate. Money flowed like water on the one side, while a few bawbees was all the other side could spend. The following illustrates the bribery that was engaged in on this occasion. John Kealman was a carpenter well known in the locality and a selector whom we all expected would be a strong supporter of our candidate. However, he now appeared as a canvasser for Thomas Rutledge, and in consequence was severely abused wherever he went. Three weeks before polling day Rutledge gave orders that free liquor was to be supplied to electors, and following this order Kealman took large quantities about with him during the campaign. Notwithstanding this, we won the election, and it was reported that Rutledge's liquor bill exceeded £1,000. Kealman the traitor was now left lamenting, and I heard him declare that 'Rutledge was no gentleman because he broke his promise', and he added, 'He promised to give me a lump sum as a canvasser and also to use his influence for me in another matter in the town; this latter he refused to do and I was surprised when he turned me down.' I was present when he made these remarks to Francis Williams in 1883, and as a result of the alleged breach of Rutledge's promise Kealman had to relinquish his business as a carpenter. He took it very hard and denounced Rutledge, yet he was a far worse offender because he deserted his own party for money.

After this election matters improved in the Land Office in Queanbeyan and the shameful treatment of the selector ceased. Thompson represented us in Parliament for more than two years and he then accepted the position of Government Land Valuator. It now appeared that a vast number of the electors had failed to honour their promise to pay Thompson's salary. Had they done so he would have received over £400 a year. The actual sum he received was less than half that amount, and no one was surprised when he accepted the Government appointment which returned him £1,000 a year plus expenses.

After the poll was closed on the night of J. B. Thompson's election, Mr James Abernethy, who was the presiding officer at Canberra, rode into Queanbeyan with me and we witnessed a scene such as I have never seen before or since. It appeared that the great crowd had gone mad, and the cause was Rutledge's free grog. Fists, umbrellas and palings were freely used, and sore heads and black eyes were plentiful. Many were unfit for work after this night of turmoil, and I could name several who were unfit for months. If I had had the power I would have given Mr Thomas Rutledge six months in one of the State 'hotels'. In those days such scenes were not uncommon and in this instance matters were much worse at Yass and Goulburn. There was no attempt to abolish the free public bars until the Labor Party was formed. They were strongly opposed but eventually succeeded in having the grog shops closed on polling day.

I attended my first election meeting in November 1869, and the speaker was Charles Campbell. He spoke well, but avoided all points dealing with labour and the farming industry. After his address he came among the crowd of listeners and had a friendly chat. Levi Plummer asked him if there was any prospect of a rise in wages. Campbell said, 'Speaking from a personal knowledge of the matter I cannot see any prospect—I could not afford it as the result would be "King Street" for me. I consider that any man should do well on 15s. a week when he is in receipt of sufficient rations.'

A few more questions were asked and then one man said, 'It must take a good sum to keep you and your family, Mr Campbell?'

'Yes,' Campbell said, 'I cannot do it under £2,000 a year!'

After he had gone Joseph Hall said, 'There is a man who thinks that 15s. a week is sufficient to keep a family! I have seven—he has four—and he can't do it under £2,000 a year! He won't get my vote.' Several others were of the same opinion. Campbell's remark cost him the election because when the numbers went up they were: William Forster 334, Charles Campbell 325.

The next election was in 1872, and this was the first time I entered an election booth, but was unable to vote as voting was under the old Electoral Act. The next time was in 1874. I was there early and witnessed some amusing incidents during the day. The polling place was at the Canberra post office and the hours were 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. George Campbell was there and recorded the names of those who voted. At 4.30 p.m. the presiding officer, Mr Abernethy, declared the poll as follows: William Forster 57, J. J. Wright 47, O'Neill 6 and informal 1.

Mr Campbell now lost his temper and said, 'There are traitors in the camp! Of those who voted today eighty-four promised me their vote for Mr Forster—therefore twenty-seven are traitors!' He then turned on my Uncle Peter and said, 'I never thought you would vote against me, Peter Shumack!'

Peter replied, 'Why should I vote for your man? I have the right to vote as I think proper just the same as you have—the old days of intimidation are dying, Mr Campbell', and Peter laughed.

Campbell then said, 'I never thought you would turn against me after all I have done for you.'

'What have you ever done for me, Mr Campbell? Would you please explain', said Peter.

'Have I not loaned you money?' Campbell said.

'Yes, and have I not paid back every penny with interest?' replied Peter.

'Yes, that is so', said Campbell.

'Well, Mr Campbell,' Peter said, 'I thought you were a gentleman and I will say no more.'

A general laugh followed this remark and Mr Campbell took his departure. It was his last election here. He went to England at Easter 1876 and died there in 1881. He was a good man and all his employees loved him—in fact he ruled his station through love.

His family returned to Duntroon a year after his death. In 1885 some visitors were being entertained at Duntroon and at 7 a.m. one morning great laughter was heard coming from Sophia's bedroom. This continued for some time and was followed by piercing screams. In a few minutes it was reported that Sophia Campbell was seriously ill. A doctor was called but the young woman died within an hour of his arrival. It appears that she and her girl friends had been discussing a female performer they had seen and were trying to perform some of her tricks, including putting their feet behind their heads. Sophia, in trying to perform this act, received internal injuries which resulted in her death three hours later.

One election that created great feeling was one in which Public Instruction was one of the principal subjects, and I am sorry to say this Act was strongly opposed by the churches.

The Roman Catholic Church opposed it to a man, as did ninety per cent of the Anglican churches. About forty per cent of Presbyterian and Methodist Churches were in favour of the measure and sent

lecturers throughout the State to support the Bill. The Act's religious opponents denounced Henry Parkes as an enemy of religion and a disciple of the devil.

I will never forget the agitation of the local schoolteacher, Hugh McPhee, when he called one night at our home and described a speech he had heard in Queanbeyan, given by one of the so-called ministers of the lowly Saviour. According to the minister, Parkes was a vile servant of the devil. However, in spite of this denunciation—which was widespread throughout the State—Parkes won, and his Act ranks as one of the best ever passed.

One of the reasons for the Church of England's opposition to the Act was that religious instruction by the State teachers was to be discontinued, and instead there should be one hour each week in which clergymen could attend the schools and instruct the children who belonged to various faiths. McPhee and most other teachers supported Parkes.

One clergyman, in an unguarded moment, said, 'I do not believe in educating the labouring class—if they can read and write it is enough; otherwise they may want to know too much.' Parkes at the time was in favour of education being compulsory and free, but these points were not included or the Bill would not have become law. It was more than thirty years before education became free.

Early in the first decade of the present century Granville Ryrie was a candidate for the Queanbeyan electorate. I first met him at a cricket match—he was a true sportsman and his father was one of the best employers in the State. When the shearers' strike took place in 1890 I had a long talk with him. He blamed the squatters more than the shearers, and I then saw why Braidwood returned Alexander Ryrie to Parliament for so many years without a break. He said,

My class are much more to blame for this than the shearers—had they treated the men as they should have been treated there would have been no union in existence today. I have never had any trouble with my men and I pay them £1 per 100—cutting a shearer down to 15s. is most unjust—hence the union and the present trouble.

Mr Ryrie was correct; therefore I was a strong supporter for his son when he came forward. On one occasion he and I drove to an election meeting at the Canberra post office and he gave me his opinion on public matters freely. There was a good crowd present and I presided. Ryrie was loudly applauded and on polling day was at the top of the poll. He was our member for about two years when the Federal Liberal member asked him to resign his seat and contest the Werriwa Federal electorate, then held by Mr Hall. I opposed this and said that if he did Hall would beat him by 1,000 votes; also that the party would lose the Queanbeyan seat. I was laughed at for my views and Ryrie resigned and contested Werriwa. He was beaten by more than 1,650 votes and Queanbeyan was lost to the party. After the election I was asked on what evidence I formed my views about Werriwa. I said that Mr Elias Solomon was my informant—he was a hawk and knew every part of the electorate well; he was also a keen observer and a good business man.

## *Bushrangers, Aborigines, and Pests*

*Frank Gardiner Ben Hall and John Gilbert William Davis's boast*  
*Hall's imitators His death John Dunn Ned and Dan Kelly*  
*Did Dan Kelly escape? William Dunn Aboriginal battle Pialligo tribe*  
*Tribal leadership Jimmy the Rover Bobby South Coast tribe Tribal laws*  
*Survivors Fishing Importation of rabbits Tiger cats Native Companions*  
*Kangaroos Possums Birds Hare and wallaby drives*

SHORTLY AFTER the goldrush to the Snowy Mountains ceased, Frank Gardiner was 'King of the Road'—a position he held until after the Eugowra escort robbery, when he vanished. Others then took his place. Gardiner, Ben Hall and company had a host of impersonators, and many of these were in the Queanbeyan district. Alexander Fraser at Gundaroo had several visits from these pseudo-bushrangers.

I can remember only one of Gardiner's gang suffering the death penalty—his name was Henry Manns. A friend of mine named William Casey was in Sydney with his team and went to see the execution. He later told me that he would never forget the awful scene—the hangman was drunk and did not adjust the rope properly. When the bolt was drawn and the victim dropped through the trapdoor the rope closed around his head above the ears and his hands came loose and he grasped the rope. The hangman kicked the struggling man's hands to make him let go, and eventually he was hauled up on to the scaffold, his hands tied, the rope shoved round his neck, and he was thrown off. The savagery of this execution raised a storm of protest which lasted for some time and the press was most vitriolic in their attack on those in authority. Several of the gang were tried for the same offence and were sentenced to fifteen years' hard labour, and the public wondered at the variation in punishment.

Ben Hall was, in a measure, Frank Gardiner's successor. My neighbours Thomas Gribble and Thomas Wells met this gang shortly after they stuck up the escort between Yass and Gundagai, when Sergeant Parry was shot dead and Inspector O'Neill surrendered. Gribble and Wells were *en route* to Sydney with a load of wool when they were stuck up by the gang, and when they returned from Sydney they gave us an account of the hold-up. Gribble said,

We had just passed the Lake Ranges on the Goulburn Road and were going up a steep hill when a horseman told us to take the team into the bush. He said he was Ben Hall and that they were waiting for the mail coach, and advised us to do as we were told in order to avoid trouble. I did as directed and some distance from the road I joined some other teams and a group of men and women. Dunn was in charge of this group and I was surprised that all seemed happy. He was relating some of the gang's exploits when he was interrupted by a cry, 'Here she comes', and we then saw the Royal Mail Coach coming down the track with Hall on one side and Gilbert on the other, and there was a loud moan when we saw that the coach was full of passengers. Our store-keeper, George Harcourt, was the first male passenger to descend. All the male passengers were searched and relieved of their valuables and cash, and a large case was broken open and found to contain cherries, of which all hands were invited to partake. The mail bags were then ransacked

and Ben Hall announced that they had done a good day's work and invited us to continue our journey, after which they lifted their hats and galloped away. They treated us in a very polite manner.

Our employer, William Davis, was a noted shot and had won prizes all over the State. He made a boast that if ever he met the bushrangers he would reduce their number. Ben Hall had sent Davis a message telling him that he was a boaster and that they would meet one day. In the meantime Davis ordered a new repeating rifle which had just been perfected, and he showed father his arms and the precautions he had taken to defend the station should Hall and company pay them a visit. The Ginninderra homestead was more or less a fort. All his men—about ten—were armed, and shooting practice took place daily. It was an absurdity to think that a party of three bushrangers would attack such a place. Davis knew this—but his name was in every paper and he was greatly praised. Some scribes 'wished we had a few more like him and the bushrangers would soon be a thing of the past'.

A short time later Mr Davis went to Picton by mail coach and then by train to Sydney, where he purchased a small arsenal which included a £50 shot gun, a revolver of the latest pattern and a repeating rifle. He practised with the latter at a range near Sydney in preparation for a chance meeting with the bushrangers.

About 1840 a young man arrived from England and his name was John Brown. He was employed on landing at a wage of £12 per annum, later increased to £17 per annum. He was a steady young man and he prospered and was a landowner at Canberra twenty years later. In 1864 he went to Sydney on horseback to purchase a large quantity of goods which were despatched by horse team for Canberra, and he left for home on horseback with an up-to-date saddle outfit. All went well until near Collector, where he met Ben Hall and three of his men, who told him to turn off into the bush. Here he saw several others bailed up like himself. Hall took his watch and said, 'Well, well, I am surprised to see a "swell" like you with such a common timepiece, but it is better than none—I expect a splendid one from a passenger on the mail coach, and if I am not disappointed I will return you this one.'

Although the bushrangers were well mounted, Dunn had a bridle made of greenhide and his saddle was little more than a wreck. Less than twenty-four hours previously they had had a brush with the police and Dunn lost horse, saddle and bridle. He now confiscated Brown's new outfit, which he replaced with his own, saying, 'There—old "Brusher"—fair exchange is no robbery.'

Hall interrupted and said, 'She will be here in a minute—come, Johnny', and he and Gilbert went away leaving Dunn in charge of about twenty persons who were not visible from the road. Soon after the mail coach appeared in the distance and stopped at the foot of a hill, where a passenger alighted. After a brief delay the coach moved off followed by the passenger—William Davis. When about half way up the incline he was astonished to hear, 'Throw up your hands, you blowing windbag, or we will scatter your brains!' He then saw Hall and Gilbert—one on each side of the track. Davis was well covered and had no option but to throw up his hands. Hall relieved Davis of his revolver and Gilbert directed the coach off the road into the bush where the group were standing. The passengers alighted and Hall relieved Davis of his fifty-guinea watch and a purse containing £10. Gilbert took the repeating rifle and mockingly thanked Davis for his thoughtful kindness in bringing them such a splendid weapon. Hall now addressed Davis. 'There,' he said, 'is the "swell" windbag who was going to give us hell if ever we appeared before him; however, we have made a good day's work today so you can have the gun, Johnny, and you, "old Brusher", can have your watch as I was not disappointed', and he returned the watch to Brown. He then told Davis what he thought of his boasting and warned him against any repetition. The ladies were not molested. Whilst Hall ransacked the mail bags, Gilbert amused the crowd with tales of their exploits and



*Bushranging was the refuge of the vicious and the victims of the penal system.  
The text reflects the settlers' ambivalent attitudes.  
Here a convict joins Tennant's gang*





*The great flood of 1870, when the Qucanbeyan River burst its banks and flooded 'The Harp of Erin'*

during a temporary lull one of the female passengers, a widow named Charlotte Sidley whom Davis had hired as cook, had a few words to say: 'Ye are very bad men, you know, very wicked men, you know, and if you don't give up this wicked life, you know, you will all go to that place, you know, where the devil will have ye, you know.'

Here Dunn interposed: 'Shut up, you ugly old devil—good looking men like us don't go to bad places like that—only old devils like you go there—it is full of ugly old things like you.' A general laugh followed and Hall, having emptied the mailbags, bade them 'good day' and the gang rode away. Father and mother went to see Mr Davis when he arrived home and he gave them a full account of the matter. He said, 'I had no chance as my revolver was in my belt.'

'If you had had it in your hand do you think you could have done anything?' asked Robert Kilby.

'No, they had me covered before I saw them and I was powerless with surprise. Hall asked me about remarks I had made about him and his gang—I made them at my dinner table and would like to know how he obtained the information.'

This question is easily answered because his remarks were common knowledge. I met John Brown years later and he gave me an account of the hold-up and Davis's humiliation at the hands of Ben Hall. Charlotte Sidley married Thomas Wells eighteen months later. Davis had few sympathizers and for a time was the laughing stock of the district.

In County Murray and south of it Hall and his gang had a host of imitators. Fraser's store at Gundaroo was stuck up several times by robbers who were masked and addressed each other as Ben, Johnny and Dunn. Levy's store at Michelago was also stuck up by three bushrangers who similarly addressed each other, and there was about twenty hold-ups at that time which were believed to be the work of Ben Hall and his gang, although the police knew otherwise. I know of several men who tried this get-rich-quick method, and all failed. They were Jobson, Wilson, Williams and Antill. I never met Wilson, although a relative was my neighbour for more than forty years. Antill read a great deal about bushrangers and thought he would have a go at the easy money. He bailed up a shepherd with his own gun and stole his watch and a sum of money. He was finally caught and sentenced to fifteen years. He served about ten, and when released came to live with William Hatch. He was for a time a correspondent to the *Queanbeyan Age* under the *nom de plume* of 'Working Bullock'. I attended school with one of his sons in 1866. Bermingham was another who posed as a member of Ben Hall's gang, although he had never met Hall. He was nineteen years of age when arrested and Robert Kilby gave me the following account of his arrest:

I was passing the stone hut at Canberra when James Neylon called out, 'Bob—would you like to see Bermingham the bushranger? The police have him inside and we are going to have dinner.' I went inside where I saw Bermingham, whom I recognized—he shone under another name at Ginninderra. Neylon gave him a good plate of food and said to the officer, 'Take those "darbies" off and let the poor devil eat in comfort.' The officer removed the handcuffs.

Jobson was another who wanted to get rich quick—eight years was his reward, and I met him after he had served his time. Williams was another of the same class—he got ten years and served eight. I met him in 1875, after his release from gaol, and enjoyed a chat with him. Jerman was the last of these get-rich-quick gentlemen. He was tried in Queanbeyan in 1866 and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. James Neylon was on the jury and told me that Jerman got his just desert.

Ben Hall had many sympathizers. Many felt that he was mentally and socially ruined by an unfaithful wife and the duplicity of a man who posed as a friend. John Gale—editor of the *Queanbeyan Age*—had a talk with Hall on this matter and later said that he felt a sincere sympathy for him.

For many years my brother John and Robert Kilby shore for a station-owner named White in the Lambing Flat (Young) district, and he gave them the following account of his experience with the bushrangers:

The station-owner who treats his men well has nothing to fear from the bushrangers. I have been through the mill—from a wage of £17 yearly to shearing for 15s. per hundred—and now I have 40,000 sheep to shear which are my property. I have not forgotten how I was treated and I treat my men as I would wish to be treated and my men respect me and do their work well. I had one visit from the bushrangers. One day I sold 150 head of cattle, a cash transaction, and the next morning when at breakfast the dogs barked and one of the men said, 'Here comes Hall and his men—they must have heard of your deal.' The party was about 300 yards away. I went outside and greeted them with—'Good morning, gentlemen—you are out early this morning and I dare say you could do justice to some breakfast.' 'Right O—we just can', said the leader, and they dismounted. I directed one of my men to take the horses to the stable and feed and rub them down. During the meal they did not say very much and we did not mention their names. They stayed about an hour and a half and on leaving thanked me for my kindness and shook hands with Mrs White and departed. I had £800 in the house at the time. A couple of days later I was visited by Captain Beattie and a police party, who accused me of harbouring bushrangers. The captain blustered and threatened to put the darbies on me. I told him that three men had called and had breakfast and their conduct was beyond reproach, which was more than I could say about him, and the sooner he took his departure the better. After some further threats the police party left.

Ben Hall was later shot dead by a police party and conflicting stories were told of the manner in which he was shot. However, a few years later the black trackers gave the true account of the matter, which was substantiated by two of the troopers. They said that all the police party—with the exception of Inspector Davidson—wanted to take Hall alive, and could have done so without much risk as he was asleep. However, it was not to be.

Some months after the Davis incident his gun and repeating rifle were recovered at Binalong. Dunn and Gilbert had spent the night at the home of a relative, who betrayed them to the police after he had tampered with Gilbert's rifle and revolver. He could not get at Dunn's revolver because he slept with it as his side. At a given signal the police party converged on the hut, but Gilbert's hearing was acute. He sprang to his arms and no doubt some of them would have fallen if these had not been tampered with. He was shot down, while Dunn escaped and was followed by Constable Hall, who emptied his revolver without effect. Dunn now proved himself a hero in truth and deed because he waited until Hall was within a chain of him and then said, 'Go back, Hall—I do not want to shoot you—my revolver is fully loaded and yours is empty—think of your wife and family.' Hall did go back, but if Dunn had known the type of man Hall was he would have undoubtedly shot him. Sub-Inspector O'Neill was in charge of Queanbeyan when Hall was stationed there and Hall's conduct was disclosed by W. G. O'Neill in a letter to the Queanbeyan *Age*. He was later transferred. Dunn escaped and was employed on a station about 200 miles away as a horsebreaker. Some months later he was seriously wounded in an encounter with police and he caused a sensation when he escaped from the gaol hospital three weeks later. His freedom was short lived. He was arrested and brought to trial in Sydney, where he was convicted and suffered the supreme penalty on 18 March 1866, aged nineteen years.

In 1863 Johnny Gilbert disappeared and it was reported that he had been shot. However, he had a large sum of money in his possession and was on a pleasure trip to New Zealand. He had the opportunity to reform but did not embrace it. He led Johnny Dunn to evil courses—also George Bermingham, whom I have mentioned earlier.

About 1876 Duncan Cameron and James Murty were shearing at Togglemayne Station, in the Hay district, when they met the brothers Ned and Dan Kelly. Dan was tar boy and Ned was a shearer. These friends of mine declared that Ned and Dan were well-conducted youths, and Murty said that during his forty years as a shearer he never met a nicer lad than Dan Kelly. They worked together for several seasons. Later, when the police party were shot at Stringybark Creek in Victoria, they were shocked to learn that Ned and Dan Kelly were the culprits. However, the battle of Glenrowan took place and, to the credit of the press, it was condemned. Sarcastic poems were published throughout the country, of which this is a sample:

Down at Glenrowan much that is odd is—  
Forty brave 'Peelers' peppering dead bodies.

Yet there were brave men among the police party; eight troopers volunteered to charge the hotel premises in which the Kelly gang were sheltering, but were not allowed. They were ordered to open fire on the building and as a result two unfortunate swagmen were shot. The Kellys escaped the fusillade despite the continuous volleys, and the hotel was then fired. When the ruins were examined only one set of armour was found, although there was no mention of this at the time. Some years later Duncan Cameron and James Murty again went shearing in south-western New South Wales. After reporting at the manager's office they were *en route* to their hut when a familiar figure accosted them. 'Well, Jim and Dunk—how are you both?'

They stared in amazement and Duncan said, 'If I did not know that Dan Kelly was dead I would say that you were he—who in the name of wonder are you?'

'I am Dan Kelly', was the reply. 'They did not get me at Glenrowan. Ned and I escaped but he made the mistake of going back.'

Duncan said, 'I think you are very foolish, Dan—naturally we are very pleased to see you—but what if the police find out that you are here?'

'Oh, I have nothing to fear from the police,' Dan said, 'because they shot me and burnt my body and got well paid for doing it.' He then gave them an account of his escape and said that he planted his armour in a hollow stump a few miles from Glenrowan.

About 1890 a rumour became general that Dan Kelly was alive. The authorities and the police discounted these rumours, but there were many who believed Dan had escaped because one suit of armour was unaccounted for after the Glenrowan battle. James Murty last met Dan Kelly during the shearing season of 1899, and he gave Murty a full account of his family troubles and the reason he and Ned took to the bush.

A few years after this meeting a farmer was clearing some land a few miles from Glenrowan and found a complete set of armour in an old stump. There is no doubt that this was Dan's armour, and it confirms the report that he escaped. In addition, James Murty and his uncle, Duncan Cameron, were reliable men whom I knew for many years. I listened attentively to their stories and asked many questions about their meetings with Dan and Ned Kelly, and I am quite satisfied that Dan escaped the holocaust at Glenrowan.

About 1862 William Dunn applied for a licence for the Rob Roy Hotel on the Queanbeyan to Cooma Road. The licence was subsequently granted under that name. Dunn was a splendid conversationalist and was very popular—in fact blandishment was one of his greatest attributes—and he made the hours pass lightly when entertaining his guests. After the hotel opened there were a number of local stick-ups, including one mail coach robbery. Some people thought the robber was Gardiner himself and some thought it was someone who lived in the locality.

One evening in 1863 or 1864 a gentleman called at the Rob Roy and put up for the night. Host Dunn was at his best and the guest met affability with affability and disclosed the purpose of his visit. He said that he was on his way to Cooma to collect outstanding debts and asked mine host to reserve a room for him on a certain day. The visitor's trip was successful and he returned on the date mentioned. Some four or five miles from the Rob Roy he was held up by a masked robber who relieved him of his watch and all his cash and ordered him to 'stay here until the sun is behind that tree top or I will scatter your brains'. As this would have meant a delay of an hour or more, he was in full gallop a few minutes after the robber departed. A mile or so further on he met Constable Donohoe, to whom he gave a full description of the robber and his horse. The constable, who was on a special mission, asked him to make a further report when he reached Queanbeyan. The victim duly arrived at the Rob Roy and inquired for host Dunn. He was informed by Dunn's wife that he was absent at Michelago and was not expected home for some hours. The victim stabled his horse and was giving those present an account of the hold-up when Constable Donohoe and host Dunn arrived—the latter with the darbies on!

Constable Donohoe had ridden less than a mile after receiving the report of the hold-up when he saw a man ride out of the bush mounted on a horse similar to the one described by the victim. As they met the constable said, 'Stop—you are under arrest for robbery under arms.'

Dunn immediately set spurs to his horse and galloped into the bush with Donohoe in pursuit. The constable fired several shots—two of which passed through Dunn's hat—and when he realized that there was no chance of escape he stopped.

'Who are you?' the constable said.

'The game is up,' the fugitive said, 'so I will tell the truth. I am William Dunn from the Rob Roy Hotel.' Donohoe searched the prisoner and found a crêpe mask and a well-filled wallet of notes in his pocket. He was subsequently charged on several counts of highway robbery and was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment. He was not related to other families of the same name in the district, and I never heard what became of him after his release.

In 1856 the local tribe of Aborigines numbered about seventy and their chief was Jimmy the Rover. There were strange and bloody stories in circulation about him, and any new arrivals in County Murray were eager and ready to believe all they heard about the blacks. About ten years before our arrival at Canberra a dispute between two of the local tribal leaders was settled in primitive fashion, each man using a nulla nulla and a shield called a cooliman. The site selected for the combat was where the Queanbeyan showground is now, and about a dozen pioneers were present, including Thomas Beattie, S. Naylor, Richard Moore, Wright, P. McNamara and A. McKeachnie. Jimmy the Rover killed his opponent and the howling of the gins could be heard a mile away. Archibald McKeachnie later told me that the body of the victim was buried in a sitting position, and his account of the fight confirmed that given by Mr Wright.

After the death of his rival, Jimmy the Rover became chief of the Pialligo tribe and it was now that his roving instincts became manifest. Shortly afterwards he disappeared, and some two years passed before he again appeared in County Murray with a little white girl about four years of age. He looked after this child and she was his gin when I first met them. They often visited our home, but mother was unable to get any information from her because Jimmy guarded her jealously and she was uncommunicative in his presence. However, Mrs John Coppin learnt from some of the local lubras that when Jimmy left the locality he went to the north of the State and joined a tribe, but it was not long before they were hunted by the local squatters and many were shot. In retaliation the tribe made a raid on a station homestead and killed all except the little girl. Jimmy had to fight some of the tribe's stalwarts to save the child's life, so he fled back to County Murray, taking the child with him. The journey took some months

and another blackfellow named Hong Kong had usurped his position as chief, so Jimmy had another fight on his hands. This took place at Lanyon and lasted an hour; Hong Kong then fled to Cuppacumbalong, where he later died. Years later a strange incident took place there. A visitor from England, when he heard the story of Hong Kong, opened the grave and took the skull as a souvenir. Mr de Salis was very displeased when he heard about this, and the Rover set out to kill the despoiler of the burial ground. These are sacred places and the Aborigines never forgive the despoilers of their dead. In this case the offending party quickly left the district. Some months later de Salis received a letter from him stating that he had had the skull silver mounted as an ink stand and it was much admired by his friends.

One day Jimmy the Rover called at Mrs McKeachnie's house at Gudgenby and said that he was very hungry. She gave him a good meal and a parcel of food to take away, and Jimmy became a regular caller. Some two years later Mrs McKeachnie's young daughter Mary wandered away from home and all her efforts to find the child were in vain. It was all wild bush then, and as her husband was absent for some days her plight was desperate. After a long search she returned to the house, where her young baby was crying, and as she was consoling the child she heard a voice say, 'Why you cry?'

She looked up and there stood the Rover. She told him about the little one being lost and he said, 'Where you see her last?'

She told Jimmy all she could, and although the shades of evening were fast falling Jimmy set off in search of the missing one. About two hours later he returned with the child quite unharmed. She had strayed about three miles up the river, and as the native dogs were numerous in the locality the parents never forgot Jimmy's action.

The last time I saw the Rover was in 1863 when the tribe camped near our home at Emu Bank and a native named Bobby called to see us. Mother asked him how Jimmy and Ginnie (the white girl) were and Bobby said, 'Ginnie is dead three months and Jimmy cry a lot for her.' Shortly after this the tribe moved out towards Yass, and here Jimmy killed another blackfellow during a fight. The police from Yass came out to arrest him, but he took to the bush and later called at Uriarra for rations, saying, 'Police want Jimmy—don't tell police where Jimmy is.'

These people befriended Jimmy and after a short stay he went on to Booroomba homestead, where he saw the McKeachnie sisters. 'Jimmy bad—police want Jimmy—no tell police that Jimmy camp in such-and-such a cave', he said. When they agreed to keep quiet about his visit he said, 'You leave Jimmy some tucker at such-and-such a place and Jimmy get it there.' They faithfully looked after him for some months, and then one day he appeared at the homestead and his appearance shocked them. He was almost white in colour and said, 'Jimmy soon fall down and never jump up again—you bury Jimmy?' He then gave instructions about where he and his weapons were to be buried.

A month later the girls took his rations to the usual spot and found the previous supply untouched. They told William and Joseph Webb, who made a search and found Jimmy dead in his cave. Archibald McKeachnie told me that his sisters attended the burial and Jimmy's wishes were carried out according to his instructions. This would be about 1864 and Jimmy's age was believed to be sixty. It is strange that the authorities made no effort to trace the antecedents of Jimmy the Rover's white gin.

There were a good many males in the Pialligo tribe in 1860, of whom I remember Jimmy the Rover, Bobby, Jimmy Taylor and Kangaroo Tommy. I first saw Bobby in 1858 when the tribe were camped near our house. During this time my father saw Bobby break in an outlaw horse at Ginninderra and later told me that Bobby's exploit was superb. The horse tried every trick known to the equine race but it never unseated him. His lubra's name was Nellie and they had two children—Eddie and Millie—but both died young with measles. On one occasion Nellie gave one of the leading citizens of Quean-

beyan a piece of her mind when she said, 'You know Nellie, we make good laws. See that building over there, it is a gaol, and if people break our laws we put them in there.'

'Yah,' she said, 'you have a lot of big rich men over here that should be in there. You come and take our land and kill our game and let us starve, and if we take a sheep or kill a calf you shoot us or put us in gaol. You bring your disease and give it to us—we had nothing like that until you came and stole our land—you give us rotten blanket and bad rum.' Nellie was a very intelligent woman and was honest and truthful.

About 1871 Bobby was known throughout the district south of Goulburn as the champion wicket-keeper and was also a good bat. He and his mate Jimmy Taylor did great things for the Ginninderra cricket club. Taylor was a splendid bat and could field in any position. A few years later Jimmy Taylor collapsed and died suddenly at Spring Creek, where he had gone with Coppin, John Archer and 'Frank the Swede' to split some oak timber. He was buried on the Spring Creek above flood mark, but no man today can point out the actual spot. I know the locality but not the grave. At this time his son Johnny was a lad of sixteen years, and about 1868 he was employed by William Davis at Ginninderra, where he received some cricket tuition. He eclipsed them all, scoring well in every match. His departure for the Tumut district, where he had accepted a position as head stockman and horsebreaker on a station property, was regretted by all. He continued to score well at cricket and on one occasion made a record hit of ten runs—all run out. He died from measles shortly after this and his death was recorded in every paper throughout the country.

In the autumn of 1862 or 1863 the South Coast tribe paid a visit to County Murray. This tribe numbered three to four hundred and they camped near our house. The chief and his lubra and another gin came in and had tea with us and mother had a long talk with them on tribal customs. I regret that no record was kept; however, I remember them saying that death was the penalty for some breaches of their tribal laws.

When this tribe was camped at Emu Bank one of Paddy McLoughlin's children went to the river at Yarralumla for a can of water and fell in. The child could not swim and quickly disappeared. The waterhole was dragged without success and the searchers thought the body had drifted into a crevice in the rocks. When the chief of the visiting blacks heard of this he went with two dozen stalwarts of his tribe and directed operations from the bank. After about two hours he said, 'Piccaninny not here—he gone down the river.'

His opinion was scoffed at by the whites, who continued to drag the waterhole without success. The chief and his men then returned to Emu Bank. 'White men know better than blackfellow', was his remark. They left the locality next day.

About ten days later Patrick Cavanagh was crossing the river a mile downstream when he found the body a few yards from the water's edge—this proved the Aboriginal chief had been correct. This accident and the inquest were fully reported in the *Queanbeyan Age*, in which the following report also appeared:

On Tuesday Queanbeyan was invaded by a tribe of blacks of about 400 in number and they camped in Dr Hayley's paddock at The Oaks. On Thursday evening there was a great uproar in the camp and some said the blacks were having a corroboree; a few said this uproar denoted mourning. Soon all was quiet. Early next morning Dr Hayley's son Fred went out to catch a horse and saw some blacks digging a hole, and nearby was an object on the ground. He told the doctor and the doctor told the police, who lost no time in inspecting the locality. But the tribe had vanished. There was ample evidence that some object had been buried. A spade was obtained and the body of a warrior was unearthed. Dr Hayley examined it and found no less than two

dozen wounds, but after consultation with the Magistrates of the town it was decided that no action should be taken as it was the general opinion that the deceased had broken some tribal law and thus paid the penalty.

Had we known about this when the tribe was camped near us there is no doubt that father or mother would have obtained the full account of the tragedy. As it was, the tribe was in the Tumut district when the news came to us. They were never in our locality again.

Twenty years later I met the sole survivor of this tribe in Queanbeyan. He was known as 'King Billy'. When Bobby died Nellie became King Billy's lubra. I was present when she upbraided King Billy for selling a foal belonging to her small daughter—she was most eloquent. This couple were always quarrelling, and after a few tempestuous years he passed to the happy hunting grounds. I last saw Nellie in Queanbeyan in the early nineties. She had a letter in her hand ready to post and I gave her a stamp. She died about 1894. Valé, vale to her and her tribe—they were vilely treated by the white despoilers, of whom only a few were exceptions. William Davis treated the natives very well indeed; Henry Hall treated them particularly vilely.

In 1872 Bobby and Nellie and their children were the only pure-bred blacks in the locality—a measles epidemic about 1862 had decimated the tribe that camped near Emu Bank in 1858 and 1862. There was a half-caste lubra named Nanny who had eleven children, all of whom were three-parts white. When Ainslie took possession of the Duntroon plains his guide was a young lubra, and Nanny was believed to be their daughter. Many years ago a tale appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age* under the title 'Silverwater Bend', some of the characters in which were believed to be drawn from Ainslie and his lubra.

Shortly after 1872 Bobby, Nanny, Eddie and Millie were carried off by measles and Bobby's gin, Nellie, was the only pure-blooded member of the tribe left. Nanny's eleven children, with the exception of her second daughter, Sarah, were scattered. Sarah married Richard Lowe, who was at my farm Springvale on several occasions with his bullock team for hay. He left the district about 1885 and I heard no more about them.

One of the old hands described to me the blacks' primitive manner of fishing. There was a long waterhole in the Molonglo River near the Duntroon dairy, and about a dozen stalwarts would enter the water at one end. A few minutes later most of the tribe would enter the waterhole at the other end and move forward, making all the noise possible. This disturbance drove the fish to the other end, where the natives speared a great many.

About 1850 several squatters imported live rabbits to County Murray and the settlers were blamed for the non-success of these ventures. The actual cause was the native and tiger cats. In 1859 William Davis imported dozens of rabbits, and on certain parts of the run he constructed special hutches for them. One day in 1859 I met George Bowyer when shepherding and he said to me, 'Come with me and we will have some fun—there are a lot of rabbits over on the corner and they make splendid pies.' The corner was a mile away and on arrival there I saw several rabbits in casks and boxes set in the ground, and each entrance had special protective stone coverings. We removed some stones and killed a big rabbit which George gave to me as he was afraid to take it home, although he was in his fifteenth year and I was in my tenth. Near home I also became afraid and threw the rabbit into a creek. A few days later the overseer, Mr Hall, told father that some scoundrel had destroyed the rabbits and shelters that had cost Mr Davis many pounds to construct, and that a substantial reward had been offered for the identity of the thief or thieves. However, I was not suspected as the corner was not on my part of the run. The shelters made specially for the rabbits proved a splendid harbour for the native cats, although the squatters were unaware of this at the time. Mr Massey at Gundaroo made several attempts to breed



hares, but met with little success until the native cats were destroyed. A few years later Davis turned some more rabbits loose with no better results. His last attempt was in 1864-5, but in each case the native cats destroyed them. However, with the introduction of strychnine in this decade, the native and tiger cats were almost exterminated. I saw a tiger cat in 1884 three feet in length.

Towards the close of the seventh decade many pests made their appearance and began to annoy the farmers on the Canberra plain. The Native Companion caused great destruction, and the havoc wrought by the opossum on grain and fruit was incredible. The kangaroo now appeared in great numbers; I first saw a kangaroo in 1867, and now they were in plague proportions. Shooting parties were organized to keep the pest down and in 1880 the first wallaby and kangaroo drives commenced in County Murray. Thomas Coleman, who lived between Ginninderra and Gundaroo, invited his neighbours to a night's possum shooting. He provided powder and shot free, with supper at 12.30 a.m. There was a good roll-up and more than 1,000 possums were shot and not one of them was skinned. Soon after this the first wallaby drive took place on the Black Hill and eighty-two were shot. A short time later the Pastures Protection Board put 2d. a scalp on these pests and organized drives were held from June to October. The record score for a day's drive on the Black Hill was 217.

In 1871 the possums caused great destruction to wheat crops, and Robert Maloney and John Coppin had their crops totally destroyed. Maloney estimated his loss at 350 bushels. We also suffered heavy losses and shot hundreds in the bush near the wheat paddock; wallabies also did us great injury although I shot a great many. As the ploughing season progressed this year I planned to carry out a crusade against the possums. George Harcourt agreed to take all the skins I could produce at 3s. a dozen, and I shot 1,800 during the winter and sent 112 dozen to Sydney. The ammunition cost a fraction less than 9d. per dozen. Trapping became general a few years later and my highest night's tally was seventy-six. I had a Greener muzzle-loading gun, and if the game was low in the trees I used only half a normal charge. A friend was surprised at my returns when the season was over and said that ammunition cost him half his returns from the skins. Breech-loading guns then came into favour throughout County Murray, though at the first drive on the Black Hill there were only two of these guns amongst twenty shooters. I now bought a Richards, which cost £11, and the profits on the possum skins paid for this gun and 100 cartridge cases. During the winter months after 1882, drives were held about twice a month.

The Native Companion was also a bad pest and was hard to shoot as the feathers were believed to be shot-proof except from behind. Tom Williams fired a rifle shot into a mob of about eighty on his father's paddock at the Canberra post office and succeeded in killing only one. The blue jay, blue magpie, leather head, the white cockatoo and about a dozen of the parrot family were also pests to the bush orchardists. On one occasion I shot more than 500, but they came on in greater numbers than before. The same thing took place at Duntroon. Mr E. C. Campbell shot more than eighty before breakfast, and he declared that when he went out at 10 a.m. twenty in addition to every one shot had come to the funeral of their mates. He discontinued shooting and employed men to cover the trees with wire netting and thus saved the late cherry and apricot crops.

In 1887 the hare became a pest and reached such proportions that drives were held every Saturday. These continued from May to October, and embraced the areas of Ginninderra, Red Hill, Wells Station, Charnwood and Yarralumla. When these drives started there was a woeful waste of ammunition—plenty of noise but very little game, as most shooters liked sitting objects. On one occasion I secured four for thirty-six shots, so I asked a gent who professed to be an authority the reason for my failure. This is what he said: 'The game is moving fast so you follow it with your gun—you and your gun are in motion and if you have the game covered when you pull the trigger you will hit it no matter how fast it is travelling.'

I tried and failed. Brother George and I then covered a hoop from a salmon cask with paper and practised shooting at it as it went bounding and bumping down the hillside, and in a short time we never failed to hit this moving object. George became one of the best shots in the State.

Our first drive after the hoop training took place at Yarralumla. Frederick Campbell gave this drive and the rule was for the shooter to bring a driver; the property-owner provided the lunch and was driven for, and positions at the drive were determined by drawing numbered tickets from a hat. After lunch there was always a double drawing: one for shooting positions and the other for cash prizes for the drivers. Each shooter was expected to contribute a sum of not less than 1s., and some gents gave as much as 5s. or 7s. 6d. There would be one to five prizes, according to the number of shooters and the sum collected. The highest prize I ever saw was 10s. and the lowest 3s.

After the shooters had drawn for places, Mr Frederick Campbell announced that he would award a half sovereign to the best shot of the day—the number of game did not count; it was the least number of shots fired for the game secured, and 'I will take the shooter's word for it', he said. At the close of the day's shooting only two qualified for the prize—George Shumack, who secured five with six shots, and James Brown, who secured two with two shots. Brown was awarded the half sovereign although it was not a satisfactory decision and Mr Campbell knew it.

At the first drive organized at Yarralumla the shooters were surprised when it was announced that all shooters had to be tested before the drive began. An object on springs was sent jumping down the hill and any shooter who missed hitting this object was not allowed to shoot—four out of twenty missed and had to drive. I was not at this drive. Another took place within a fortnight and I moved, and was supported by a dozen present, that if the test was proposed all shooters should demand free ammunition from the proponents. This ended the matter of tests, as we all intended to ride home if our demand was not granted. The overseer was informed of the move and he advised Campbell, with the result that no further innovations were introduced.

At a drive at Duntroon in August 1892 there were forty-seven shooters and ninety-seven drivers, and 602 hares were shot. A. W. Delhunty was top scorer with twenty-three, and I was next with twenty-two. Three years later George Shumack at one stand shot twenty-three hares with twenty-one shots.

In the autumn of 1892 Mr E. K. Crace gave a three-day drive and 1,680 hares were shot. George Shumack top-scored with 124 in the three days. Shortly after this the rabbits began to increase and we tried to drive these like the hares but without success.

In the winter of 1887 Frederick Campbell gave a wallaby drive at Belconnen and a stranger with Mr Campbell attracted great attention by his attire, which was something new to these gatherings. On making inquiries we ascertained that the gentleman was Arthur Brassey, nephew of Lord Brassey, of whom we had heard a great deal. We drew for positions and Brassey was on my right and W. Mayo was on my left. We soon knew that the wallabies that came to him were safe. He never addressed one word to me during the shoot in the forenoon and at 12.30 p.m. we retired for lunch, which was nicely set out about 300 yards above the junction of the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee rivers. I secured some bread and meat and a pint of tea and glanced around for a seat. I saw a block of wood about a foot long nearby and I stood it on end and sat on it. I then heard a voice say, 'Thank you, Shumack; thank you, Shumack. I brought that block down here from the fence yonder.'

I said, 'I beg your pardon', and left the block and was about to sit on another one when Arthur Brassey again said, 'Thank you, Shumack—I brought that one also.'

I said, 'Thank you, Mr Brassey, for your consideration, but as you cannot sit on two blocks I will use this one and I thank you for it.' As I sat down there was a titter in the crowd and no more was said.

Later, when the captain was preparing the tickets for the afternoon draw, Mr Brassey came to me and said, 'I brought those two blocks down for the ladies to sit on but they sat on a log, so it is all right. This is my first drive in Australia and I cannot hit those hoppers—have you been long in Australia?'

'Thirty-one years', I replied. That is how Arthur Brassey and I became acquainted. He was a good friend and neighbour and lent me many books. He returned to England a month later and married a Miss Grant, and then returned to Australia. She died twelve years later.

These drives were held over a period of twenty years and during that time we had several minor accidents and one serious one. William McCarthy, the proprietor of the Glenwood estate, fired at a hare that was killed instantly and Duncan McInnes, more than a hundred yards away, was struck in the right eye by a grain of shot. He later went to Sydney and had the eye removed. McCarthy paid half of the hospital and doctor's fees. About three months later, during a drive at Charnwood, which adjoined Glenwood, George Harcourt was struck by more than twenty pellets which penetrated the skin. This shot was fired by John McInnes, who was about forty yards away, and Harcourt was certain that it was fired intentionally as he had had a disagreement with McInnes over the ownership of some hares. A doctor and the police were called and McInnes was arrested, but the matter was not proceeded with as Harcourt was pressed by many persons who knew both parties not to prosecute. He told me later that he was certain that the shot was intentional and the fact that he was wearing a very heavy overcoat at the time saved him from serious injury. After this incident McInnes did not attend any more drives. On another occasion George Shumack was struck in the arm by three pellets and George Williams had his leggings pierced by pellets which punctured the skin. On this occasion a hair trigger caused the mishap and the shooter was a boy of fifteen years. The usual starting time of these drives was 9.30 a.m., and after the draw for positions the shooters were stationed in a line from eighty to a hundred yards apart, and no one was allowed to leave his position more than ten yards. This system worked well. The captain always took the outside position. If you crippled a wallaby or hare you were not allowed to run after it owing to the danger of being accidentally shot. Many shooters were dishonest, but they were soon detected and the true sportsman would warn his fellow shooter, 'Look out for so-and-so.' Such was the rule.

## *Chronicles of Springvale, 1896-1912*

*Brother John's death, 1896 Seasons and stack building*  
*The great drought of 1902 Our first test cricket match*  
*The Gunghalin tragedy The great rabbit plague Pit traps*  
*Another big stack The Federal Government resumes Springvale*

IN MAY 1896 brother John developed pneumonia after getting wet when ploughing. Two doctors were in attendance but could do nothing for him. When the end seemed near he requested me to take charge of his children and property. It was his wish that his son Walter should have the land and the girls its value in money equally divided between them, plus some household furniture and stock. I promised him I would do my best. After an illness lasting five days John passed away on 25 May 1896, aged forty-nine years. He was buried in St John's cemetery. My wife Sarah and I now took charge of John's children, whose ages ranged from five to thirteen years. My sister Margaret took the youngest. I now had a gigantic task before me. I had to enlarge my house to provide accommodation for the children, and I also applied for letters of administration, though a lawyer and friends warned me not to. But I had promised my brother. Three months after John's death I hired a man named E. H. (Ted) Clark, and he and his family took up residence in John's house.

I now commenced farming on a large scale. Seventy acres was the largest area I had under crop up to this time; I increased the acreage to 100 and sowed it with wheat. The yield for 1897 was under the average, although the price was fair.

The season of 1898 was similar. I now allowed Ted Clark to farm seven acres for himself and his first harvest was a little over 100 bushels.

In 1898 I put 140 acres under crop. I intended to plant 170 acres but the intense hardness of the ground prevented me. However, seasonable showers fell and the seed came up well. I now gave Clark another three acres. In August he went away shearing on the understanding that he would be back early in November, as I wanted to have my shearing finished before the harvesting commenced later in the month. He and Robert Kilby did my shearing—1,400 in all, but the price of wool was low—6d. a pound for fleece.

Owing to the rains of August, September, October and November, I commenced harvesting a splendid crop in the last week in November and I cut the hay into sheaves for the first time. This system had been introduced a short time before but did not meet with general approval for some time. I found it to be a step in the right direction and if the sheaves were not too big they were fit to stack in four to seven days after cutting, according to the weather. I had forty tons of hay this season, but prices were low. My two extra men this year were Joe Richardson and Christopher Donnelly, and as the weather was favourable throughout the harvest we averaged twelve acres daily. I had six stacks excluding the hay, and we were about half way through the harvest when I planned a big stack with the approval of my men.

In 1899 I built this big stack and I never left the yard during its construction. William Moore with a wagon and Clark and Richardson with a dray and three horses brought in nine loads a day. I used water in building this stack—the first occasion I had done so—as the season was dry. Edward Smith, the

first man to use horses when ploughing in County Murray, was also the first man in the locality to use water in stack building, and his wheat always brought high prices. On one occasion he and several other farmers went to Bennison's mill at Braidwood, and after testing all the wheat the miller gave Smith 7s. 6d. a bushel, 3d. more than the other teamsters. He purchased 750 bushels from Smith and then asked why his wheat was superior as a flour producer. Smith said, 'If the harvest is a dry one I always sprinkle a couple of buckets of water on each course of sheaves when stack building—it makes the building easier and the straw and chaff are much better for stock.'

'A most excellent plan', said Bennison. 'It also improves the quality of the grain for flour.' This was why I adopted the use of water when stack building, although I never used water on oat stacks. On this occasion there was a good dam of water a chain distant and I used two five-gallon buckets of water on each course of sheaves. When the stack was twenty-three feet high I built a stage at this level and Ted Clark did excellent work on this shaky platform. Richardson or Moore would be on the wagon pitching the sheaves to Donnelly, who would then hand them to me. When I laid the eave sheaves I measured the stack, which was twenty-one feet at the base and thirty-three feet at the eave—the rain water fell six feet from the base of the stack. The wagon was unloaded at various places around the stack and this enabled me to keep a perfect level. To complete this stack we had to lash three ladders together, one thirty-one feet long, one twenty-two feet long and one nine feet. I used 15,000 sheaves, none less than four and many five feet in length. The horse dray brought in six loads a day averaging 400 sheaves; the wagon brought 750 sheaves. When the head of the stack was half or three-quarters built, Ted Clark was posted on the ladder and Donnelly, when the stack reached a certain height, had to be relieved and took his place on the load. He was a good sheaf pitcher but was getting on in years and we did our best to ease his labours. To finish this stack Ted Clark took up a dangerous position on the ladder half way up the roof of the stack and he did his work well. He would catch the sheaves on his fork as they were pitched by Donnelly, and he would then hand them to me. The yield from this stack was 1,000 bushels. When the stack was finished the report was circulated from one end of County Murray to the other and farmers came from near and far to see it. Many were surprised that it was not thatched. I never thatched a stack after the advent of the reaper and binder and I never had a stack get wet or had one fall. I built left and right and I attribute my success to this method.

The price of wheat was low this season; 2,000 bushels I sent to Sydney sold for 2s. 5½d. Some 15,000 bushels were disposed of the day mine was sold, and the highest price was 2s. 6d. for one small lot. My profits this season were small and, strange to say, more from the straw, chaff and beeswing than from the grain. Brother George was an excellent stack builder and none of his stacks ever got wet. It was the custom to rake down the Yankees and straw stacks shortly after they were built and they would then throw off the rain water as though they were thatched.

I have seen tons of straw drawn away and burnt after the threshing season and I always condemned this practice. In 1882 I helped my friend Williams with his threshing and I saw twenty-five tons of straw drawn away and burnt. In 1895 I sold ten tons of straw to T. McAuliffe for £2.10.0 a ton—he lived twenty-five miles away and was glad to get it. I sold large quantities of beeswing at 6d. and 9d. a bag, and I have fed large stock on it in winter. The lowest price I ever received for straw was 25s. a ton, and the highest was £3.

1900 was not a good season. The crops were under the average and prices were low as a result of a surplus from the previous year. As soon as the crops were sown a party consisting of George Shumack, E. H. Clark, T. K. Clark and myself was organized for a shooting trip to the Tidbinbilla Mountains, where rock wallabies abounded. We made an early start with two carts with a good horse in each and we reached our destination at dusk. The overseer of the property, Mr Archibald McIntyre, gave us a

splendid reception and some good advice. We spent three days in these mountains and thoroughly enjoyed the change from farm work. George Shumack was top-scorer, I was second, E. Clark was next and Tom Clark was 'drummer', as the lowest scorer was called. When we returned home Ted Clark went shearing for the last time. His yield from his crop was 300 bushels that season.

The harvest of 1900-1 was under the average and the ploughing was carried out under great difficulties. Of the 150 acres that I put under crop, the last thirty acres came to nothing as it partly germinated and then died. We received several showers that were not recorded at Canberra or north of Ginninderra, and some spring showers gave me more than an average crop, excluding the thirty acres that failed. I got twenty-five tons of hay from twenty-two acres, and harvesting was carried on with one employee fewer as I was sure the yield would be light. Ted Clark had twelve acres of crop and he engaged Peter Vallance to strip it—an action he later regretted as the beeswing and straw were worth £15. Vallance later told me that he had fifty acres under crop and the yield was nil. At Canberra only a few farmers harvested for seed and they got less than £8 in return. Syd Kilby had two wheat stacks from each of which he got 115 bags; my average was 100 bags each—a total of 190 bags. One small stack turned out sixty-five bags and the oat crop was much better than I expected. On one occasion my threshing team numbered twenty-three—all good fellows and none on wages. When threshing had to be done in the locality we helped each other and no money passed between us for labour done—the spirit and amity never died and this showed that the true Christian spirit existed. My friend Robert Kilby was a model neighbour—a half day was usually sufficient to complete his threshing, yet he often spent five days assisting me with mine and he never would accept anything for his labour, nor was he ever absent. This applied also to James Kinleyside, E. Cameron and others.

We now come to the great drought of 1902. In the early stages of this drought I disposed of large quantities of straw and chaff and I proved that the farmer who failed to conserve the straw made a great blunder. After the threshing of 1901 I had more than 160 tons of straw in my yard, and I sold 140 tons at 25s. a ton in the yard. The autumn of 1902 was very dry and the general belief was that good rains would fall in April and May. However, there was plenty of thunder but no rain. The demand for fodder was great and I sold forty tons of straw as it stood in the yard to Miss Jane McKeachnie. She employed Alexander McIntosh and G. N. Norton to cut this straw and cart it to Queanbeyan railway station, where it was weighed on the weighbridge and was then cut into chaff by Phoebe Anna Pike's chaffcutter. I cut over a hundred tons at my yard and my price was £3.5.0; delivered in town it was £3.15.0 a ton. Several people came twenty-five miles for it and Davis Perrott came thirty miles and bought three tons. The usual wage was 4s. a day, but I paid my men 5s. a day. I used 3,000 chaff bags this season.

In January 1902 E. H. Clark left my service and went to work for my cousin Peter Shumack, who wanted a man to take charge of his sheep on the summer run at Mount Coree. In May the hand feeding of stock became general throughout County Murray and continued until Christmas. I had forty head of large stock to feed and I also fed several head which belonged to a neighbour who had no means at the time. Good luck was the result: there were no losses and I was not out of pocket when the bad times ended. I fed the cattle on straw sprinkled with molasses twice daily, and the sheep by lopping trees—and lost one-third. The working horses were stabled and fed on hay chaff with two quarts of grain to each horse per meal—they did very well.

I commenced ploughing in March and finished in July, working alone, and the ground was loose and very dry. I put 140 acres under crop. No general rain fell, although we had 157 points in June and an inch in July, followed by a few light thunderstorms in August and September. Water was scarce, although I was not badly off. Three families obtained their water from me, and this continued until December. I finished shearing in November, and as only six points of rain fell during that month I made

a thorough examination of my crop and was surprised at the prospects. The crop sown in the red loam soil was two to three feet high and coming out in head, but the white soil flats were a failure. I estimated the yield to be 700 to 800 bushels. In the Wallaroo locality the farmers expected quarter crops or a little more. I was satisfied that my sixty-three acres would yield 600 bushels and I sold 400 bushels from the previous year's harvest for 5s. 6d. a bushel.

In December a friend called and said, 'Have you heard about the grasshopper plague at Wallaroo? They have destroyed every green thing there and not one farmer escaped.' Worse was to follow. Joe Brown was the first to suffer, and when Ellis Smith saw the advancing plague he went to work with his mowing machine on a seven-acre patch of oats. He expected this to average about one ton to the acre. When he finished cutting at sundown the plague had appeared on his property, and when he went down with the horse and rake next morning not a vestige of his crop remained. On the evening I was informed of the approach of this pest they were at the Grant and coming our way. Next morning at 9 a.m. they found my crop. They appeared in cloud formations and obscured the sun—by nightfall my crop was completely destroyed and not one stalk remained. This plague was widespread and in many instances trains were stopped. A party near Lanyon were out driving when they encountered the grasshoppers and their horse became unmanageable and capsized the sulky. A few days later general rain set in which ended this pest. I now realized that my loss was more than 1,000 bushels as the rain would have greatly improved my crop. When the drought broke I employed James Murty, and Ted Clark went to work for Mr Crace after he returned with Peter Shumack's sheep in 1903.

James Murty's first job was to plough and sow two acres with sorghum—tons of splendid fodder was the result. I had purchased Phillip Williams's 320 acres, on which were two miles of log fence covered with blackberries which in places were a chain wide and eight feet high. These were a great harbour for rabbits, which were a pest at the time, so I now fired this fence and so destroyed the blackberries. I now had three miles of wire fence to erect and I had a splendid man in James Murty. We carted the material and made a start in hot weather. We breakfasted at 5 a.m. and would boil the billy at 8.30 a.m.; lunch was at noon. If the day was hot we would resume work at 3.30 p.m. or 4 p.m., and we averaged fifty post each day, each twenty-two inches in the ground. Jim dug the holes and put the posts in, and I lined and rammed them and bored six holes in each. The posts were twenty-four feet apart, with a strainer every twenty-fifth post three feet in the ground. We completed the three miles at Easter. The monotony of this hard work was broken each fortnight when we spent a day and night at the river, where we caught some nice fish, including a few ten-pounders.

After Easter we commenced ploughing. Jim used the double furrow and I used the single furrow plough and it was our custom to plough for four days and then sow for two days, provided there was no break in the weather. I now realized that I had made a blunder in selling the wheat on hand as I had to buy 100 bushels at 7s. 6d., forty bushels at 5s. 6d., and 100 bushels of maize at 4s. 8d. for horse feed. The Government provided seed wheat for the farmers this season, but I did not apply. I also bought two tons of chaff for £7 a ton—the straw on hand was also a great boon as it brought in nearly £200. When the seed came to the Queanbeyan railway station Jim and I went in with three horses in the dray and brought out sixty bushels each load. My wife Sarah now volunteered to do this work so that Jim and I could sow the crop. She went to Queanbeyan with the spring cart and two horses and in this manner the chaff, wheat and corn were carted to Springvale. The cart would carry a ton, and my wife went to town thrice weekly and she and Mrs Harry Rottenbury were well known at the railway station. Jim Murty went shearing late in July and returned the first week in October, when he and Robert Kilby did my shearing while I cut and stacked twelve tons of hay. Kilby shored for me for twenty years; I employed Murty for fifteen.

I had just completed stacking the oats and was ready to start on the wheat when a great thunder-storm passed over the locality. It was a perfect tempest and torrential rain fell for more than an hour and entangled the crops in such a manner that it was difficult to harvest. Mr Crace had to cut one paddock by hand, and most of mine was in such a tangled mass that I could only take half a 'cut' with the machine. I employed a man to follow the machine and push the crop from the platform to the elevators with a stick. However, all was safely gathered in on 9 February 1904, which was a record for lateness. This storm caused a great loss to us all—I estimated my loss at 700 to 1,000 bushels, and Crace lost more.

As soon as the harvest was complete Evan Cameron, George Shumack and I went to Sydney to see the test cricket match—Warner's team *v.* Australia—and this was the first test match I had seen and during it a couple of very unpleasant incidents took place. Clem Hill was given 'run out' and the spectators believed that he was well within the crease. The crowd abused the umpire and Warner for some time and play was held up. The other incident occurred when a few drops of rain fell and the players left the field for more than half an hour; the general opinion was that the cricketing committee wanted the match to drag on into another day. The mob became incensed at the delay and rushed the ground to inspect the pitch. About sixty police took up positions in the arena, which was bombarded with empty bottles by the angry crowd. It was said that more than a ton of bottles were cast over the fence and broken on the asphalt cycle track. There was no justification for the delay: my mates and I were in the pavilion and noticed several ladies in summer dresses on the lawn, and they did not leave their seats while the few drops of rain fell. The spectators in the pavilion as well as on the Hill were dissatisfied with the hold-up in play and the disgraceful scene that followed, for which the authorities and the New South Wales Cricketing Committee were to blame. During my subsequent visits to the Sydney Cricket Ground I have never seen the Hill misbehave without just cause.

I now come to the Gunghalin tragedy that shocked the locality. Early in 1902 a series of outrages were perpetrated in Sydney and a policeman was killed. The miscreant was a desperado named Shaw, and a reward was offered for information leading to his arrest and conviction. Considerable excitement existed throughout the State, and it was surprising in how many places the man was reported to have been seen at the same time, consequently a few innocent people were arrested. One bitter cold evening in August 1902 a couple of strangers called at the Ginninderra post office and inquired about a letter and the prospects of accommodation for the night. As the reply was unfavourable, they started for Queanbeyan, intending to camp when they reached suitable shelter. The postmaster became suspicious, and when he saw them make camp and light a fire he lost no time in going to the local police station, where he told Constable Madden that he was certain that one of the men was the criminal Shaw, and that they were armed and had made camp in the cemetery paddock near the old store. Meanwhile the strangers had boiled the billy and one of them partook of the last meal he was to enjoy in this world. It was quite dark by the time the postmaster had passed on his information to Constable Madden, who immediately went to the Cricketers' Arms Hotel to enlist volunteers. He got two—John Hollingsworth and H. Pooley. He then called on John Butler, who would have nothing to do with the matter, nor would he let any of his sons go, as he said it was nonsense to think that a man such as Shaw was described to be would come to the country. Having gathered a party of eight, the police party went to the camp near the old store only to find that the birds had flown; the remains of the camp fire were there, with evidence that they had partaken of a meal. They heard a few shots in the distance and after a consultation they set off in the direction of the shots. They proceeded with extreme caution and about three miles south saw a fire and two men nearby. The leader considered it advisable to get reinforcements—no doubt the suspects loomed gigantic in the firelight. He left his troupe with orders to remain there and keep watch and he wended his way to Gunghalin, where all had retired to rest. The proprietor, Mr E. Crace, was quickly



roused, and as soon as he was dressed and armed they joined the rest of the party, which now advanced upon the enemy. When this force was about a hundred yards from the sleeping suspects Mr Pooley said, 'With your permission, Constable Madden, I will go to the camp and have a word with these men, as they may be honest and industrious men, and if they are the men you believe them to be there will be no harm done.'

Madden would not allow this, and after a brief delay they advanced on the sleeping men. Close to the fire was a tree against which the guns of the suspects could be seen, so Madden now gave his final orders. 'I will get their guns. You have your guns ready but don't fire until I do, then you can all fire!' Stealthily he approached and seized the guns in his left hand, and with his pistol in his right he turned to the sleeping men and called out, 'Surrender!'

As they sprang to their feet in surprise the constable's revolver accidentally discharged, followed by a louder report, and one of the men fell back dead. John Hollingsworth had fired from a distance of five feet. The victim's name was Elias Heapes, a young man under thirty years of age and the sole support of his mother. His companion was a casual acquaintance whom he had met in Yass a short time before, and the shots heard by the police party were fired at opossums, of which several skins were found in their possession.

At the inquest the jury's verdict was unpopular as Madden and company were exonerated. The dead man's mother lived in Sydney and the authorities bore the funeral expenses and, I believe, awarded her a pension of a few pounds a year. There was no Workers' Compensation Act, and apart from defraying the funeral expenses the Government treated the bereaved mother shabbily. It was the general opinion that if there had been no reward offered for Shaw's apprehension there would have been no tragedy at Gunghalin. Hollingsworth was exonerated as he acted under an order to 'fire if I do', and Mr Pooley was quite right when he said, 'This man can't be Shaw.' However, there was considerable feeling in the locality against the postmaster and Constable Madden, which intensified as time passed, and they were subjected to many petty annoyances.

Patrick O'Rourke was carting chaff to Queanbeyan and as it was a two-day journey from his home he used to camp at the Stone Hut, close to where Heapes was shot, on the first day. There was plenty of water here and he would camp on his return and reach home the next day. A month after the tragedy O'Rourke called at the police station in Queanbeyan and asked for Constable Madden. Madden appeared and asked what he wanted and O'Rourke then said, 'I want to report to you that I propose camping at the Stone Hut tonight so that there will be no mistake like there was in the Heapes case—that is all, so good evening, Constable Madden.' This was repeated a few times, with the result that the constable was transferred to the Braidwood district and the postmaster was sent elsewhere. This ended the Shaw controversy, and John Hollingsworth was tolerated simply because of the great respect in which his parents were held in the community and of the fact that he was acting under instructions from the constable, who had fired the first shot. I consider that O'Rourke went too far in this matter; also that Madden was incompetent to deal with the emergency as his nerves were disordered. Pooley was the only person who showed presence of mind either at the tragic scene or in the court room during the inquest, where he gave his evidence in a straightforward, truthful manner, whereas every word had to be dragged out of the other witnesses.

About two months after this tragedy a sensation was caused in Melbourne—shots were exchanged and a desperado, to use a press description, was shot dead. He was a stranger to Melbourne and to the local police, and it was suggested that he was the wanted man, Shaw. The body was placed in a vat of formalin and several men who knew Shaw went from Sydney to view it. Some said it was the wanted man—others declared that it was not, and at last his sister went over and said the body was that of her

brother. This ended the matter, although many doubted the identification. One public man declared that the sister's declaration was of no value as her brother was a marked man and her identification would release him from further pursuit.

The seasons of 1904 to 1906 were only average and the price of wool and all farm produce was low. A plague of rabbits caused much injury to pasture and crops during these years and in the season of 1906-7 a great crusade was carried out against them. Many farmers were under the impression that they had the pest under control, but Mr E. Hudson, who was manager of the Duntroon estate, said, 'Do not be deceived—you do not know what this pest is really like!' He then told us of his experience in the north-west of the State, and within two years I learnt from bitter experience that he was right.

I now made great preparations for the season of 1907, putting 190 acres under wheat. Throughout the winter and spring the rabbits were kept under control, and in October I expected a record crop—at least twenty bushels to the acre. Rabbits were few, and by drives every week throughout the Weetangerra district and the Black Hill and by trapping the rabbits and wallabies were kept down to a minimum.

James Murty returned from shearing about the first week in November, and he and Robert Kilby shored my 1,600 sheep. I cut ten acres of hay and during this operation I saw a few score rabbits in the crop; when I commenced carting in a few days later they were there in thousands. They came in a great grey moving mass and the harvesting machines killed and maimed great numbers. When the wheat was stooked it harboured hundreds, and I now saw the truth of Hudson's remarks. Off one paddock of forty acres I carted in only 400 sheaves, and when the threshing machine came it told a sorrowful tale. Off my 180 acres the yield was 220 bags and twenty tons of hay. Many farmers did not fare as well as I. Mr Hudson now advised us to wire-net our properties. We did not take this advice kindly, and foolishly did not adopt his suggestion during that year. However, there was another bitter lesson in front of us. The rabbit wave passed and we fondly hoped that we would never see such a wave again. I now planted 185 acres, 150 of which had been lying fallow for five years. The seed went in under good conditions and the prospects seemed bright.

The season of 1908 was a repetition of the previous one but the rabbits were greatly reduced in numbers. I planted twelve acres of corn and used a ton of Shirley No. 3 fertilizer. This crop came up well and then the rabbits appeared as they had the previous year. One day I went down to inspect the crop and found the rabbits there in thousands. Two days later there was no sign of my corn crop and the roots had been eaten out of the ground. My yield from the wheat was 182 bags—less than a bag to the acre. The choice facing us was ruin—or to wire-net.

I ordered six miles of wire netting and made preparations to enclose my land. We had a busy season. My men William Southwell and James Murty did the farming while I sowed the seed and erected the wire netting. I also engaged Christopher Donnelly, H. Murty and George Morris to trap rabbits on my property. Poison was tried unsuccessfully; on one occasion we laid a trail of four miles and got less than a hundred rabbits. Samuel Southwell told me that he laid a sixteen-mile trial and got less than sixty rabbits.

I now dug pit traps along the western boundary of my land and these were very successful. One morning I found 680 in one trap and 377 in another, and in a period of two weeks 6,000 rabbits were caught in two traps of this kind on this line of fence, which was less than two miles in length. The price of skins was low and very few of those caught in the pit traps were any use as they sweated and the skin and fur were ruined. The steel trap was the best so far tried from this point of view. Many landowners did their best to prevent the rabbit from becoming a marketable commodity, but failed. Some landowners now adopted another course—they supplied printed forms which prospective rabbit-trappers were

compelled to sign, undertaking to give the landowner 2d. a pound. Mr Fred Campbell of Yarralumla was the originator of this scheme and when the Duntroon manager told him that the trappers would not agree to this outrageous proposal he said, 'We will put the poison cart in if they don't sign.' The Cunninghams were also leaders in this matter of printed forms and Tuggeranong, Lanyon and Ginninderra also adopted this system. Mr Hudson was a good prophet on this occasion for the trappers refused to sign the forms. The poison cart was now put to work but the rabbits went on strike and would not take the bait. On Palmer's property at Langdon's paddock, forty miles of bait were laid and less than twenty rabbits were killed. I passed through this locality two days after the poison was put out and the rabbits were there in thousands, but I did not see any dead ones. It was the same at Yarralumla and Lanyon. Six weeks later the printed forms were consigned to the wastepaper basket and the trappers were given a free hand. Two trappers at Bulls Flat caught 140 pairs the first night and this was given full publicity in the local press.

I enclosed my cultivation paddocks with netting and I had sixty acres less under crop than in the two previous years. The season promised to be more than average and Murty and Southwell did excellent work. I had two large wheat stacks and one of hay, and on Tom Clark's advice I decided to build another big stack. He said, 'I have nothing to do—you build a stage and I will work on it and we will show them how to build stacks.' We commenced building this stack, which was half a yard bigger at the base and measured eleven yards at the eave, and the stage was twenty-three feet high. This stack contained 15,500 sheaves of an average length of five feet, and farmers came long distances to see it. The quantity in bushels exceeded 1,600. When threshing commenced I received a note from Mr Campbell offering to take 200 bushels from the yard at 1s. 9d. a bushel and return the bags—the price in Queanbeyan was 1s. 6d., including the bags. Naturally I let Mr Campbell have the oats and would have sold him a lot more at that price. Prices generally were low and I refused offers of 1s. a bushel. During the winter I sold a few bags for seed and the following year I found a ready sale for it at 4s. 6d. a bushel.

Most of the wheat in the district was delivered to the mill in Queanbeyan, and I had then no idea this would be the last grain that I would sell or deliver there. At this time there was a slump in the market and the manager of the mill said to me, 'We are only just paying expenses, yet the Sydney millers can send flour here for 7s. 6d. a ton less than our price. I cannot understand how it is done as I can get wheat as cheap if not cheaper than they can.' However, the solution came when the mill closed—up went the price of flour and all mill produce: such are the tricks of the trade.

For the season 1910-11 I had 120 acres under crop, seventy of oats and fifty of wheat—I had also a few tons of hay on hand from the previous year. Our roads were very bad and we petitioned for repairs in vain. For this reason I did not cut any hay, as it was much easier to cart grain than chaff. I commenced harvesting on 7 December. The day was fine with a few clouds in the south-west but no indication of a storm until a rumble of thunder warned us. A short time later the storm broke and my son Evie and I released the horses from the machine and two of them bolted across the paddock as the hail began to fall. The crop was cut to pieces by the hail, which was followed by torrents of rain, and next day some of my oat sheaves were found miles down the creek. We had cut three tons and I gathered what was left of the sheaves and stooked them. The yield was fifty-five bushels to the acre, and I believe this seventy acres would have averaged sixty bushels but for the storm. The oat crops throughout the district were very good—it was the Algerian variety which I first tried in the season of 1903-4 and found a valuable acquisition to the district. The other variety suitable to the district was known as 'Potato Oats', but it was susceptible to bunt although the correct application of bluestone would prevent this disease. I never used bluestone on the Algerian variety and it was never affected by bunt on my land. On more than one occasion I have seen the 'Potato' variety fully two-thirds destroyed by bunt or smut. My cousin Joe

Shumack always used bluestone and was never troubled by these diseases. The Algerian variety was known to exceed seven feet in height and four tons to the acre. F. Warwick harvested this variety at Canberra and I drew some stalks from a sheaf, one of which measured eight feet four inches in length. One of my seven-acre paddocks averaged seven feet in height and I had to set the reaping machine as high as practicable in order to cut it. The yield per acre was sixty-nine bushels. Charles Cameron at the Glebe, Ginninderra, beat this yield in the harvest of 1882 when his oat crop yielded seventy-seven bushels. There is no mistake about this because I was there and sewed the bags. My greatest yields of wheat were forty-eight bushels to the acre in the harvest of 1886-7 and a little under forty bushels in 1892-3. Boon had a record-breaking crop in 1886-7 but it rotted in the paddock. C. Cameron had the same misfortune, as did brother John and I and several others. We were penny wise and pound foolish, because had we hired a couple of farm labourers all the wheat crop would have been safely harvested and stacked. Cameron, Boon, Marshall and several others saw this when it was too late—they were ruined. A £10 note would have saved them, as the weekly wage at the time was 30s.

After this harvest I intended to increase my cultivation area. Prices were low and I made every effort to have 200 acres or more under crop in 1912, but my plans were upset by a great rainstorm and by moves by the Federal Government to resume my property.

The storm took place on 29 March 1912. My rain gauge overflowed within an hour, during which 404 points of rain were recorded. Wire netting fences suffered and I had to purchase half a mile of netting in order to effect repairs, which occupied a month. All in the path of this storm were heavy losers and I sent Jim Murty to give assistance to the Hatch brothers, who suffered heavy losses.

IN FATHER'S LIFE the great March storm could be viewed as a baptism of disaster. Up until 1912 life flowed tranquilly and happily at Springvale. Besides his own eight children, eight nephews and nieces had found sanctuary there and were treated as his own, and at one time twelve children attended the Weetangerra school from Springvale. Many well-fed horses lined the stalls at the stables and were available to numerous visitors from Duntroon Royal Military College, the Administrative Offices at Acton and elsewhere, for picnic trips to the Ginninderra Falls and other beauty spots. All was peace and prosperity. However, following the great storm of March 1912 there came a chilling change! Hale and hearty at sixty-two, father could take the blows of nature in his stride, but against the actions of scheming men it was a different story. Now fell the first of three blows which for five years caused him and his family to taste the bitter waters of tribulation. In 1912 came the first shots in a legal battle that was to drag on for five years and waste his assets and children's heritage almost to vanishing point.

When his brother John died in 1895 his property consisted of 405 acres, of which a large portion to the east known as The Scrub was and still is of poor quality. As Solicitor Garraway prophesied—so it came to pass! Two of John's daughters married men who 'knew not Joseph'. When Ann was seventeen she was employed at the Rectory, Canberra, by Mrs P. G. Smith, and later father obtained a position for her at Yarralumla, where the work was more congenial and remunerative. Here she remained happy and contented until her marriage to Harold Hincksman in April 1904. On 1 April 1905 she died giving birth to a son, and soon after this sad event Hincksman joined the New South Wales police force. When Ann's sister Marian attained her majority in 1912 and Hincksman remarried, legal proceedings were instituted against father by Hincksman, who filed a suit in the Equity Court claiming £2,900. This case was not finalized until October 1917.

Justice deferred leaves the field to injustice—and so it proved in this case. Year by year the costly law suit dragged on, and when the verdict was given the defendant it proved a Pyrrhic victory. That he made no fortune from the use of John's land can be seen from the fact that although he had 1,190 acres of his own land when his brother died, he never added another acre after that, and he, like his brothers John and George, did not smoke, drink or gamble.

The second blow was the resumption of Springvale by the Federal Government. As can be read in Newman's *Spirit of Wharf House*, the price paid to landowners at the time may be said to have been decided by the wellbeing and benevolence felt by one man following a good meal in congenial company. The one law for the big man and another for the small man now operated. Frederick Campbell, by threatening legal action, did force the Government to raise its price, but the small man could not challenge the Government in this manner. Thus it was that Springvale was sold for £1 an acre less than had been offered in 1908, when the rabbit plague was at its height and before improvements such as netting, dam sinking and scrub cutting had been completed. The resumption of their land by the Federal Government came as a profound shock to the older farmers. That they could stay on as tenants made no difference to their way of thinking. From the day of selection they had been free men on their own holding. With their own hands they had cleared and ploughed the virgin soil, built their houses, dug dams, and in general moulded the selection to their hearts' desire. Here they married, experienced joy and sorrow in rearing their family, and having their own 'vine and fig tree' was no empty phrase.

Now all this was changed! They would be under the control of an outsider. They couldn't even cut down a tree without permission—they whose whole life had been a battle against the scrub! They viewed the situation in the way the old Boers viewed the coming of the British to Cape Colony, and like

the Boers they trekked. It is significant that those who stayed on at Weetangerra were of the second generation. These were Evan Cameron and William Webber, who came to the district in 1908, and William Southwell, who stayed for a while. Those who left were Samuel and George Shumack and Roderick McDonald. In August 1915 Robert Kilby from Land's End rode up to Springvale to say goodbye to his old friend. Mother asked what he intended to do. He was silent for some time, staring at the floor, then he said, 'I don't know where I am going, but I'm not staying here.' Then he rode sadly away. In three months he was dead.

Following a send-off and presentation at Weetangerra and another at St John's Church, father and his family left for the Hunter Valley in September 1915. In spite of the financial ulcer—the dragging law suit—all viewed the future in their new home with hope and confidence.

However, now fell the third and final blow. Although he was to live twenty-five years longer, our father's farming days were over. On his last morning at Springvale, following the sale on 16 October 1915, he jumped down off a plank and landed on a board with two rusty nails which deeply penetrated his foot. He released himself with difficulty. This pained severely for a while and then eased and he forgot the matter. On Sunday 24 October—seven days after he received the injury—he attended Camberwell Church, and during the service was taken seriously ill and three days later was admitted to the Dangar Cottage Hospital, Singleton, suffering from blood poisoning and double pneumonia. Several operations followed and he was discharged from hospital on 27 July 1916. In time he recovered his health, but his activities were restricted to his garden—to spade, book and pen.

In 1929 he and mother went to live with their married daughter, Mrs Frank Barnes, at Springvale, Peakhurst, and here they continued to grow old happily. In 1932 he visited Canberra after an absence of seventeen years, and on his return wrote,

I visited St John's Church and was pleased to see the sacred building was at last finished in a proper manner. The original work should never have been passed; why it was at the time [was] a problem many churchgoers could never understand, and from time to time it cost a lot of money to repair and keep both church and tower in fair condition. On one occasion the organ was very much injured and a large sum was spent in repairing the damage. Mr George Campbell was in England at the time and the contractor took a shameful advantage of his absence. The late Peter Shumack moved in the matter but met with very little support. However, I am pleased to say that after fifty years it is at last completed in an efficient manner, and is now an object to admire and reverence. I was grieved to see the piece of land on the north side of the churchyard outside the new fence. This should never have been done. I feel sure that there are three dozen graves outside the consecrated enclosure and I herewith give the names of a few: Brothe, Tinham, O'Halloran, Carey, Keir, Lloyd and Brown. In the early days three men were drowned at Duntroon and these graves are all outside the present churchyard. About 1912 a plan was shown to officers of the church, of which I was one, and we rejected the plan as absurd and sacrilegious.

This visit to St John's Church brings to my mind's eye a sad assemblage there many years ago. It is the funeral of Mrs Sinclair, who has passed away from an attack of measles, leaving an infant a few weeks old. It is indeed a sad bereavement, as it means the breaking up of a home and the scattering of the family. The deceased's brother, Alexander McDonald, acted the Good Samaritan; he has taken charge of two of the orphans, Janet and Andrew, whom I knew very well.

For several years Sinclair was a wanderer in other parts of Australia, but he was employed at the Duntroon woolshed in 1871. He was an expert with the bagpipes and one evening he went over to Duntroon and played 'The Campbells are Coming' and some other popular airs. Sinclair's pipes—a wag declared—were used at the battle of Bannockburn and were the principal

cause of the rout of the foe. About the time of this event at Duntroon a lady in America had completed a patchwork quilt composed of 55,555 pieces, and this wag declared that Sinclair's pipes beat this quilt by one piece, as there was nothing of the original in it now—it was all patches and could be heard half a mile away. A week later, after the six o'clock bell rang and work had ceased in the shed, Campbell's carriage arrived with his family and several friends. Mr Campbell called on Sinclair to come out to the carriage and produced a large bundle. He opened this and with a few well-chosen words presented the bundle to Sinclair. It was an up-to-date set of bagpipes. Sinclair was surprised at the unexpected gift and after a brief pause he thanked the donor in a manner that surprised all those present. Sinclair slept little that night, and few, if any, of the shed hands did. On Saturday evening Sinclair had the pipes in order and they resounded from Mount Pleasant to Honeysuckle, and Mugga Mugga to Narrabundah, causing panic among the stock, and the wag said that the dingoes fled from the locality and none were ever seen there since that day. 'The Campbells are Coming' and 'Bonnets of Blue' were played many times until shearing was finished, and I never heard of Sinclair again after that year. His brother-in-law, Donald McDonald, could give me no information as to his whereabouts.

My thoughts on beholding Canberra after an absence of seventeen years are better imagined than described. My mind's eye sees the first white man guided by an Aborigine who was befriended by Merchant Campbell, and in return he told him of this place of beauty that is now Australia's capital city. Again I see Ainslie with a lubra taking his first glance over the virgin landscape, and we may imagine his thoughts as he saw the sheep he so successfully piloted through more than 200 miles of bush, scrub and plain to a splendid pasture.

The scene changes and I see a figure pass in torrential rain with a bundle in her arm, through water and mud ankle deep. It is Mary Maloney, who has received a sick call and was ever ready to respond to the same.

Again there is a change in the locality. I mentally see a heavy dray and in it there is a woman and a boy. It is dark as pitch, and whence go these wanderers in the dark? Yes, it is Julia Webb, who has received a call from a sister in travail, and despite the tempestuous night responds to the call of her sister in distress.

Those are pioneers of the early days and the present generation know them not; they are a tablet in the archives of the great land of Australia.

Now the scene changes again and it is a busy farmyard in 1867. It is smoko and a confabulation is taking place on the merits or demerits of the principal stack builders in the locality. These were Edward Smith, Tom Gribble and Denis Gorman, and the confabulators were William Hatch, Joe Wells, I. Hall, Robert Kilby, Richard Shumack and S. Smith. Richard Shumack expressed the opinion that it was impossible to build a stack properly if the builder did not go on his knees, and he was supported by all the others mentioned; yet of the three builders discussed, the builder who did not go on his knees had the best record. This was Thomas Gribble. There was no fallen or wet stacks to his discredit—which the other two could not claim. So the point was settled in favour of the 'knee builders' without any opposition, when suddenly a bolt fell from the blue as follows: 'What! Ye all think a man cannot build a stack if he don't go on his knees to do it? I have seen better stacks built than any about here and the man that built them never touched them with his hands or went on his knees; I have seen him build dozens, and he never handled a sheaf, except a dozen or so on the top.' The men stared at the speaker, who was James Shanahan—better known as 'Jim the Grubber'—and said, 'It is not possible; how could he build if he did not handle the sheaves?' 'He used a fork', was the answer. 'Oh what nonsense', said the men—yet

they all saw the impossible a few years later. Old customs die hard! I have heard a farmer say that no man could build a stack rainproof; 'It must be thatched,' he said, 'or it will get wet.' Later I convinced him to the contrary. I gave him an invitation to be present when I opened a stack which stood the test of fifty-three inches of rain. These sheaves were machine cut and bound—hand cut sheaves are quite a different matter to handle. In my youth Edward Smith was supposed to be the best stack builder in the district. I never saw him building, but he built some grand stacks, and as a rule they would resist an ordinary fall of rain. About 1863 I saw Thomas Gribble stack building and I considered him superior to Denis Gorman, J. Jordan and several others. Next to Gribble, L. Smith was the best in those days and I never regretted taking him as my model. All are gone now. Valé, valé ye pioneers of the past, who laid the foundation of Canberra eighty years ago.

Now I see a great assemblage of men and horses. Yes, it is a ploughing match and it actually was the foundation of the present annual Queanbeyan show. Those gatherings continued for twelve years. This one was held in 1872 close to the present Mill Creek bridge, and about 500 people were present. The following were prize takers: D. Anderson, E. Perkins, Joseph Shumack, J. Gregory and S. Gifford. The following year Thomas Yates won the championship. In subsequent years the undermentioned won prizes: G. Smith, William Plummer, R. Blundell, J. Southwell, R. Southwell, D. Boon and Robert Kilby. The man who won the most prizes was George Smith, and he is living near Hornsby at the present time. He was champion on four occasions—John Southwell was next with two wins. For about eight years great crowds attended these ploughing matches, and then the attendance fell off. Weetangerra was the only locality to provide competitors.

The scene changes again and I behold a youthful couple bogged on the plain; they are marriage bent. At that time all marriages had to be solemnized by noon, and the couple had to take the horse out of the 'trap' and drag the vehicle a long distance as the ground would not bear the horse. Finally they got started again and in due course stood before the altar and the service began at five minutes to twelve. The happy couple were James Cartwright and Miss Cantor of Sutton, greatly esteemed by all who knew them. Both have passed over the Jordan—peace to their ashes.

Whenever father went to Sydney on business he would write a letter to mother, and the following copy is a typical example:

Belmore House, Sydney  
3 October 1899

Dear Sarah,

I write these few lines and trust they will find you all well. I arrived here at six o'clock on Saturday morning and had a pleasant trip down. Shaw has left the 'Black Swan' so I am staying at another place in Castlereagh Street, kept by an elderly couple named O'Donnell, very nice, quiet, homely people. I could not do any business on Saturday or Monday as all the large establishments close on Saturday and Monday was a public holiday. I saw the Eight Hour Day Procession; it was well worth looking at.

I met P. Ryan in George Street; he looks well. I did not ask him anything about Mrs Cameron as I heard there are money difficulties between them. I will not be able to get away until Thursday night, so if you could ride Lina into the Queanbeyan railway station on Friday morning next we can drive home, as I have bought a sulky and harness. It will leave for Queanbeyan by train tonight. Tell Ted to start for Queanbeyan early on Friday morning and take a couple of bags of wheat to the mill. I have ordered two 600-gallon tanks; they will leave here on



Thursday night, so will be in Queanbeyan on Friday morning. I enclose the sulky receipt in another envelope so that if one should go astray you will get the other.

I went to St James' Church on Sunday morning and went to the Protestant Hall in the evening to hear ex-Priest Slattery. He preached a very good sermon and never once mentioned the Roman Catholic Church. He lectures on Thursday night on Purgatory—how to get in and how to get out. Mrs Slattery lectures tonight to women only.

I did not go to see Aunt Liz yet; I will try to go tomorrow. I do not think Hassan, the machine expert, was in Queanbeyan that night as I did not see him. W. E. Glasscock is a good man. I parted with him at Goulburn after he treated me to luncheon there. There was a row in the street close to here last Thursday evening; several hundred people assembled in no time and one man was taken to hospital. I intend to go and see Paul Cinquavalli tonight.

I now conclude with fond love to all. Kiss Mima and Evy and baby, and I will kiss you all when I get back.

Your loving husband,  
Sam

Busy with spade and pen and keenly interested in social and world events, father enjoyed good health until his death 5 April 1940, in his ninetieth year. He was buried at St John's Church, Canberra, and his four sons carried him to his grave. The funeral service was conducted by an old friend, Archdeacon C. S. Robertson, a former Rector of St John's Church, who returned to Canberra to conduct the service.

On Sunday 4 November 1951 Archdeacon Robertson again returned to Canberra to dedicate a memorial window to father in his former church. The window, which is one of several memorials in St John's Church to the Shumack family, has been placed in the church tower and depicts St John the Evangelist. Archdeacon Robertson, in the address following the dedication ceremony, said,

It is to the pioneers of the early days of settlement in Australia that we owe much of the heritage that is ours today. They gave many examples of a way of life which we would do well to follow. The story of the Shumack family was typical. The diary of Samuel Shumack reflected the intellect of a scholar keenly interested in social problems of the day. It was not surprising that the old school by the church gate produced more teachers than anywhere else in Australia. There was taught a man's worth in the community. Stories of the early days reflect a life of comradeship and Christian fellowship in the Canberra community. One of the saddest things in the Canberra of today is the passing of those early pioneers, but as the links in the chain are broken the chain is re-formed in the life beyond. Samuel Shumack stands out as a man whose life was dedicated to his fellow men and to God.

Archdeacon Davies extended a welcome to the Shumack family and those who were present and said, 'The parishioners were honoured to have in the church a memorial to the "grand old pioneer".'

Our mother was a remarkable woman. She married at the age of twenty-three and straight away had a family on her hands—John Shumack's children, Eliza, Ann and Walter. Later came the children of her brother Joseph after his wife died—these were Mary and John. Then came the Hamilton children—Colin, Archibald, Margaret and Heather. In addition she had eight children of her own—four sons and four daughters—John Everest, David Henry Bright, Samuel Heber, Stephen Rupert Wilberforce, Jemima Ann, Elmira Ruth, Sarah Clementina Selina Adeline and Ethel Margaret Catherine Eileen. The last to be taken under her wing were the Jennings children, Ronald and Mona, whose mother had died.

Often when newly married she would be alone except for the children. One night when father was on the river fishing, mother walked to the bedroom, which was detached, to put the baby to bed. At

the garden fence some ten yards away she saw what she thought was a man in white shirt sleeves leaning on the fence watching her. She put the baby to bed and walked back—the man was still there. She experienced a great fear but determined to force the issue at once and not wait on uncertainty. Selecting a stout piece of wood, she walked straight at the figure only to find it was the white pudding cloths she had put out to dry! The call of sickness never found her wanting, and as midwife she brought a couple of dozen children into the world with no fatality. She used to play at dances on violin, concertina and accordion. On 22 February 1954 she died peacefully at a private hospital at Strathfield.

The *Singleton Argus*, in an obituary notice on 17 March 1954, announced:

The death has occurred at a private hospital at Strathfield of Mrs Sarah Shumack in her eighty-third year, widow of the late Samuel Shumack. Mrs Shumack was the daughter of the late Mr and Mrs John Winter of Red Hill, Canberra. Of the family of eight, only two are now living—Mr David Winter of Yass and Mrs Elizabeth Ginn of Canberra. As an old pioneer of the district Mrs Ginn, now aged seventy-eight, was presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her recent visit to Canberra. Frederick Campbell of Yarralumla built the historic home of that name—now Government House—for his bride, Miss Christine McPhee, a cousin of Mrs Shumack. 'Granny' Shumack's record of service as a pioneer of the Australian outback is both romantic and astonishing. She had eight children of her own and managed to rear eight others as well. She acted as doctor, nurse and midwife—delivering twenty-six babies into the world in the days when Canberra was an outpost of civilization far from medical aid.

The late Mrs Shumack was laid to rest beside her husband in St John's cemetery, Canberra. The funeral was an impressive sight, numerous friends and relatives coming from Sydney, Maitland, Singleton, Yass, Young and Tharwa. Archdeacon Arthur conducted the service.

A tombstone in St John's cemetery reads: 'In memory of Samuel Shumack of Springvale, Weetangerra, a native of County Cork, Ireland, pioneer of the district, arrived 1856 Duntroon—1850-1940; and his loving wife, Sarah, of Canberra, 1871-1954.

'The Lord your God hath given you this land to possess it.'

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## Tales and legends of Canberra pioneers

In 1856, at the age of six, Samuel Shumack came to the Duntroon Estate in Canberra. He farmed in the district until 1915. Forced by injury to retire from active farming, Shumack, at the age of 59, began to record his memories of old Canberra. He was an acute and accurate observer. His stories move freely from one episode to the next. The text is enhanced by eight colour plates by artist Gray Smith. This fascinating book will be treasured by all who have an interest in Canberra's history.



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