

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – a series of 14 articles that appeared in the Narandera Argus and Riverina Advertiser in 1908 [July 24<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November 1908].

In 1911, a report in the same paper provided details of the writer, as follows,<sup>1</sup>

DEPARTURE OF OLD RESIDENTS. PRESENTATION TO MR. AND MRS. G. H. STIVENS.

Than Mr. and Mrs. George H. Stivens there are few older residents of the Narandera District. For longer than most of the present generation remember they have resided at "Lucknow" Brobenah; but for many years previous to making their home on the Barellan boundary they were residents of the town of Narandera; and for a still longer period have they been identified with the Riverina Districts. Quite recently they disposed of their Lucknow property, which has been acquired for purposes of closer agricultural settlement, and have decided to spend their remaining years in or near Sydney. About three years ago, Mr. Stivens contributed a special series of "Old Time Memories" to the columns of this paper. The lucidity of the articles, their historic interest, and the minuteness of the writer's recollections of many stirring incidents of half a century ago, attracted much interest, particularly among older residents and those for whom the evolution of the district possesses a charm. Leaving, aside the historical incidents, the points of the autobiography indicate that Mr. Stivens was a man of keen perception, and his reminiscences may be briefly reviewed in connection with his departure from Narandera.

In 1850 young Stivens was a junior clerk in a mercantile house in Liverpool, when he became interested in the gold rush to Australia; and towards the end of 1851 he booked a passage in the "Martin Luther," arriving in Hobson's Bay in March, 1852. On the same ship there came to Australia the Rev. David Reid and his extensive family; one of whom is believed to be the present High Commissioner for Australia. The young emigrant lost no time in getting to the diggings, his first move being to Forest Creek, but soon after went, first to Montgomery's Hill, and then to Bendigo, where he was present at the first race meeting held on the Epsom Course. The Ovens river rush attracted him to the north-east part of Victoria; and from there he made his way to Wagga, where for some time he was book-keeper to Forsyth and Co. It was in these stirring days that Morgan was ranging the country, and Mr. Stivens was more than once brought closely into touch with the work of the bushranger. When Mittagong Station was stuck up and the woolshed burned down, he acted for Mrs. Vincent in settling the shearing accounts. Later, when he took to stock dealing, Mr. Stivens travelled extensively through the country ravaged by Ben Hall, O'Malley, Blue Cap, and Gilbert,

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<sup>1</sup> Narandera Argus and Riverina Advertiser. 25<sup>th</sup> August 1911, p3.

with some of whom he was brought into touch, fortunately without misadventure. While engaged in cattle dealing, he was assisted by Mr. H. D. Adams, then a smart youth and reliable young drover. The dealing operations extended through the Narandera district to Kooba, Tubbo, Benerembah, Cocketgedona, and other stations; and of many of the notable incidents of that time (such as the Pholman brothers murder) Mr. Stivens had a distinct first-hand recollection and knowledge. Illness necessitated his return to Melbourne, but he later tendered for the mail service from Deniliquin to Hay, known then as Lang's Crossing. Though he did not secure the contract, he conducted the mail service for some time, and thus saw much of the early history of Deniliquin. Eventually he returned up the river to Wagga: and during five or six years subsequently did much exploring on the Merool. About 1870 he came to Narandera, which then consisted of about half-a-dozen houses; since which time he has been a constant resident of the district; first store-keeping and farming in Narandera, and later at Lucknow. Mrs. Stivens was resident in Wagga when they were married; and their sons and daughter have been born and raised on the Murrumbidgee.

It was fitting, therefore that the little social organised for last Friday evening by Miss Rose Adams should be held in Narandera, even though of late years Mr. and Mrs. Stivens have been more closely associated with Brobenah. At the gathering, which took place at the Parish Hall, the Brobenah and Colinroobie neighbours were well represented; while many who were unable to be present through sickness and other causes sent their apologies and best wishes for the future happiness and welfare of Mr. and Mrs. Stivens. The proceedings took the form of a card party, interspersed with musical items. After supper, the Mayor, after a short speech full of reminiscences and recollections of kindnesses received at the hands of Mrs. Stivens from his infancy, and expressions of warm admiration of her character and regret at her departure, called upon the Mayoress to present her with a memento of the esteem in which she is held by her old friends in the Narandera District. Mrs. Elwin then presented Mrs. Stivens with a diamond and tourmaline pendant and silver jewel case; and to Mr. H. P. Stivens for his absent father, with a set of silver backed hair-brushes. Speeches in support of the Mayor were made by Messrs. H. D. Adams, James Faulkner, R. and G. Elwin, E. Laphorne, and G. H. Evans; while Miss Rose Adams, after reading numerous apologies, also addressed herself most fluently to the subject. Messrs. H. P. and S. E. Stivens responded in neat speeches on behalf of their parents; thanking their friends for the kindly spirit that had prompted the gathering and the presentation; and assuring them that their parents required no material object to remind them of their old friends and their long association with the district. The floor was then cleared for dancing, and after about an hour of this recreation the company dispersed with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

## George Tupper Stivens – Some Biographical Details

George Tupper Stivens, was born at Bristol, in Somerset, England on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 1835, the son of John Stivens and Mary A Stivens [nee Herbert]. George was baptised as “George Tupper Stivens.”<sup>2</sup>

It seems that George sometimes recorded his name as George Herbert Stivens. His baptism record, marriage registration, and death registration all record, “*George Tupper Stivens.*”

By his own account he immigrated to Australia in 1851, reaching those shores in 1852, on board the vessel, *Martin Luther*.

In 1861 he married Amelia Vincent, at Mittagong Station. Elizabeth Vincent, the owner of the Mittagong Run, was now his mother in law. Her son, Demas, who managed Mittagong Station, was his brother in law.

George and Amelia had a total of ten children – two daughters and eight sons. Their 5<sup>th</sup> Son, Sydney Edward Stivens, married Sarah Buffrey, the daughter of Charles Buffrey and Sophia Buffrey [nee Bollard], at Goulburn, in 1905.<sup>3</sup>

George and Amelia left his property at Brobenah and moved to reside in Sydney.<sup>4</sup>

George Herbert Stivens passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1915, at his residence, “*Leura,*” in Frenchman’s Road, Randwick, at the age of eighty years.<sup>5</sup>

Amelia passed away in the following year, on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1916, at a private hospital in Petersham, at the age of seventy five years.<sup>6</sup> An obituary provided some additional details of her life,

“The death of Mrs. Amelia Stivens, relict of the late Mr. George H. Stivens, which took place at a private hospital at Lewisham recently, removes one of the pioneers of the Narandera district. The deceased lady, who was 75 years of age, came to the Narandera district from Wagga half a century ago. Mr. Stivens for many years followed farming pursuits on Cuba, and afterwards conducted a store at Gillenbah, a short distance from where the old punt was situated. About 30 years ago. Mr. Stivens took up a block of Barellan Station, near Brobenah, where the family resided until five years ago, when Mr. and Mrs. Stivens decided to spend the remainder of their days by the

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<sup>2</sup> England & Wales. Non-conformist & Non-parochial registers: 1567-1970. [Ancestry.com].

<sup>3</sup> NSW BDM’s. Marriage registration # 4160.

<sup>4</sup> Riverine Grazier. 29<sup>th</sup> August 1911, p4.

<sup>5</sup> Narandera Argus and Riverina Advertiser. 30<sup>th</sup> April 1915, p2. / NSW BDM’s. Death registration # 6882.

<sup>6</sup> Albury Banner. 25<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p31.

seaside, and took up their residence at Randwick, where Mr. Stivens died nearly a year ago.”

The following pages feature the fourteen articles published under the heading, *Old-Time Memories*.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 1 [24<sup>th</sup> July 1908, p6]

I was Junior Clerk to a Mercantile firm in Liverpool in 1850. This firm had a branch in Panama, and it was arranged that I was to be sent out there as clerk. I was delighted with the prospect and had informed all my young friends and companions of my good fortune.

Unfortunately — owing to a slump in cotton and a financial crisis — Messrs. Campbell, Arnott and Co. had to make an arrangement with their creditors; and my father was informed that my departure must be delayed for at least twelve months. This was so disappointing to me that I determined, after obtaining permission from my parents, to go to Australia. My passage was taken in the "Martin Luther," one of Duncan Gibbs' liners. I may here mention that amongst the passengers was a Rev. David Reid, Presbyterian Minister, who had a large family of little Reids, either 11 or 13. I have often wondered if the distinguished statesman, now the Opposition Leader, was one of that family. However, to proceed, after a prolonged voyage, putting in at the Cape of Good Hope for water, we reached Hobson's Bay in March, '52. Melbourne seemed sparsely populated, a large number of the males having left for the Gold Diggings, which had been discovered a few months previously at Fryer's Creek.

I had, amongst others, a letter of introduction to the then firm of Messrs Heape and Grice. Mr. Summer, their Managing Clerk, endeavored to persuade me to take a stool in his office; but of course, like many others, I was anxious to see the Gold Fields. He (Mr. Summer) obtained for me from Mr. Charles Steel, a letter of introduction to Mr Angus McDonald, the Manager of his store at Forrest Creek. After a weary walk I reached that place upon a Sunday afternoon, presented my letter, and was invited to remain there a few days until I looked round and decided upon my further movements. Mr McDonald, who was living alone, seemed pleased at the prospect of company, and preparations were made as regards sleeping arrangements. I had an elevated position, the stretcher being placed upon the summit of about ten tons of flour. A walk was proposed. We had not gone far when we noticed a crowd of men — which of course we joined. The attraction was a fight between a very big man and a lithe [missing word] active sailor. The latter I immediately recognised as one of the deserting sailors of the "Martin Luther." I may here [missing word] that I felt quite pleased that the big fellow eventually [missing word] the sailor best. The latter had seen me and hastened to ask me not to mention the fact that I had seen him; also informing me that all the rest of the crew had deserted. The "Martin Luther" was still in the bay with only Captain Kenny on board. The Manager and I returned to the store and in due time turned in. I remember the night was brightly moonlit. About midnight I felt a peculiar canting of the stretcher upon which I laid, and looking to the side of the store, which was like most other buildings of canvass, I saw the shadow of a man and a large rip made in the canvass. I saw also that the man was lowering a bag of flour, which, though not exactly under my stretcher, was near enough to account for the rocking

I had felt. I cautiously got down from the pile of flour and found my way to McDonald's bunk, awoke him, and told him what was happening. He said "well there is an old gun here; I forget whether it is loaded or empty, but it may have the effect of frightening off the would-be thief." I was instructed to go down one side of the establishment, whilst he, armed with the doubtful weapon, went round the other. In a few minutes I heard a calling upon the thief to stop, and immediately afterwards the report of a shot. As I reached the corner of the store the thief and I collided and he fell. McDonald and I sat upon him in order to keep him prisoner if possible. He struggled violently for a few minutes, when I was shocked to hear McDonald say that his hand was covered with blood. By this time a small crowd had collected and one of them volunteered to bring a Dr. Newman, who pronounced the thief as dead; shot through the back of the head. This was my first night at Forrest Creek. I was rather uncomfortable for a day or two, but after a time I became used to it; for murder and robbery were of almost nightly occurrence. An inquest was held next day: verdict, of course, justifiable homicide. The thief's name was found to be Kelly, nicknamed "Kelly the Rake," by his mob of whom he was the leader, McDonald received a threatening letter from this mob warning him that his time upon earth was very short, but a few years since I know that he still lived. Daylight revealed the fact that the thief and the fighter were one.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 2 [31<sup>st</sup> July 1908, p6]

#### THE PHOLMAN BROS. MURDER NEAR NARANDERA.

Some thirty years ago I was living about five miles from Narandera. One night, just before going to bed, my wife remarked to me that there must be a big mob of travelling sheep camped upon the "Big Plain," as there was a large fire distinctly visible. Instead of a sheep camp the fire was, after some three weeks, discovered to have been caused by the burning of the bodies of two hawkers, the Pholman Bros. These unfortunate men were in the habit of making regular visits during the shearing time to different stations upon the Murrumbidgee. They had visited North Yanco, then the property of Messrs. McNeil Bros., had received the firm's cheque for about £15, and started for Narandera, some 15 miles distant. They camped for lunch at a bend of the creek, near which was a waterhole, since known as the Murdering Bend. That proved to be the end of their journey. In turning out their horses for a feed and a roll they left the collars upon them. One of the boundary riders frequently saw the animals in this state, thought it very strange, and reported the circumstance to the manager, Mr. W. G. Elwin; the proprietors being away at the time. The Sergeant of Police in charge of the township, Mr. T. Foley, was informed of the suspicious circumstances. The result of a search showed that the waggon had been stripped of most of the portable goods, and a fallen pine tree had evidently been used for burning the bodies of the brothers. A spot was also discovered at a gum tree stump which had thrown out numerous suckers, where the bodies had been temporarily hidden awaiting nightfall to consume them by burning. It was noticed that many of the suckers had been cut half way through,

and so bent over fully concealing the bodies. Blood was also to be seen upon the ground. The residents of the township and station were quickly in a great state of excitement. The Wagga police were communicated with, but no arrests were made. Strange to say, the police at Wagga were looking for three men who were suspected by them of having robbed some store in the district. Their suspicions were aroused in this way — one evening some swagmen were camped near a surveyor's camp between Wagga and Gumly Gumly. They asked the surveyor if he would buy some tobacco from them, as they had more than they wished to carry, and also wanted the money. A purchase was made, and the tobacco being so much liked, enquiry was made as to where more could be obtained. The swagmen replied they had purchased it at George Forsyth's store. A few days after this the surveyor being in Wagga, called at Forsyth's and asked for a supply of a similar quality. The storeman remarked that he had been employed for some years at the store and had not seen that particular brand of tobacco during his time, and was quite sure the men he bought it from did not get it where they told him. Suspecting something wrong he (the surveyor) called upon Sergeant Carroll and stated the case. Several small bodies of police were sent out to try and find the three men and cross-examine them; thinking that under the circumstances petty larceny was the full extent of the charge they were likely to get up against them. I may here observe that at this time the murder and robbery at Narandera had not been discovered. The Wagga police traced the men from stage to stage as far as Boot's Mundarlo Hotel, near Nangus, where they sold a watch to the cook and then separated. The police returned as they started — no prisoner. Within a few days the report of the tragedy at North Yanco reached police quarters; but still these tobacco sellers were not suspected until a man, whose name I forget, who was employed burr-cutting at a place called The Island on North Yanco, came into Narandera and told of three swagmen who early one morning came across the bush to him and asked him where there was a shallow crossing place on the river, as they wanted to make a short cut to Yarrabee. He went with the travellers to show them the spot. Whilst going there he asked them where, they came from; their reply being across the bush from the Merool Creek. The burr-cutter remarked they must have taken great care of their boots, as they appeared to have been polished that morning (new elastic-side boots). Upon this there was a consultation among the swagmen, and from their villainous appearance the burr-cutter was convinced that something was wrong, and thought they were discussing the advisability of sending him to join the poor hawkers— though at that time nothing was known of their murder. After this report a vigorous hunt was made by the police, and the movements of the men traced from point to point until they connected with the suspects whose tracks had been lost at Mundarlo: Again no result. Many months after a Mr. Alexander McNeill, a cousin of the owners of North Yanco — who had been present when the hawkers had received the North Yanco cheque, and had also noticed the three travelling swagmen there a short time before the brothers left with their waggon — was in charge of fat sheep going by road from Yanco to Flemington, and was camped near Chiltern. In those early days it was quite the usual thing for swag-men

to call at a sheep camp and get something to eat. When Mr. McNeill came to the camp, after seeing everything in order with the sheep, the light of the camp fire reflected upon the face of a traveller. It was instantly recognised by Mr. McNeill, who quietly drank his cup of tea and then re-saddled his horse and visited the police camp at the adjacent town, and informed them that one of the suspected murderers of the Pholman Bros, was at that moment at his camp. This man (Campbell) was arrested, tried at Wagga, and there hanged. The other two have never been arrested, which is strange, as one of them was well known as a pit sawman.

Some narrow escapes from joining the poor hawkers came to my knowledge shortly after the discovery. The nights were very frosty. My brother was coming up the river with some horses when he saw a large fire, at which the murderers were busy burning the bodies, and he determined to leave the horses he was driving and go across the short distance to have, a warm. Fortunately, I think for him, the horses would not keep the road, but followed round the bend of the creek, which made it necessary for the drover to follow them. By the time they were got upon the right road again they were some distance past the fire, and he came on. Another instance was related to me by the carrier. Mr. Frank Jenkins (then owner of Buckingbong) had a cattle station down what on the Lachlan, called, I think, Lake Walgiers. When holding a heavy supply of provisions at Buckingbong he sometimes loaded a team and despatched some of the surplus to the Lachlan. Such had happened about the time I write of. The carrier had that evening made the waterhole previously mentioned, and determined to camp. He had unharnessed his team of five horses and turned them out to graze. As he was returning from the creek with his billy of water he was confronted by a murderous looking man, who enquired what he was doing. He replied that it was his intention to camp there, upon which the man advised him not to do so; remarking in addition that the water was poisoned. What with his murderous look and the advice, the carrier thought he would be more comfortable at a greater distance from the swaggie's camp, so harnessed up his horses and went on several miles that night. I may mention that when the news of the tragedy reached Sydney, the mother of the poor fellows, who with a sister, I believe, depended upon the boys for assistance, wrote to the Narandera police informing them that there was a secret spring under the seat of the waggon which disclosed a box in which the lads usually kept their cash and valuables. This was found, and in it was, besides other cheques and cash, some jewellery and the £15 Yanco cheque, making in all something over £70. The murderers, however, must have discovered some of the valuables, as the watch sold at Mundarlo was identified by the wholesale firm who had supplied it to the Pholman Bros., and proved a very strong link in the evidence against them. I often saw the pine log against which the bodies were consumed, It showed two half arches, partially burnt through. The ground in front of the log was covered with small portions of bones and teeth, with buttons, etc., and in that state I believe their remains are up to the present.



WHEN MORGAN STARTED BUSH-RANGING.

In the year 1859 or 1860 I was employed as bookkeeper, etc., by the firm of George Forsyth and Co., at Wagga. Amongst other duties I had frequently to visit several of the customers on matters connected with the firm. Upon the occasion I have now in my mind I had to go to Mittagong Station, then owned by Mrs Elizabeth Vincent and her family. When I arrived I found that the young men were away at some of the neighbouring stations helping to muster cattle for branding purposes. The eldest of the family (Demas) was considered by everyone who knew him to be an expert at that line of business; as a roughrider and tracker I knew him to excel anyone I ever heard of. In the evening of my arrival I got into conversation with him, and became quite interested in it. I will relate as nearly as I can remember what I heard from him and in his words: "Yesterday morning as I, in company with the mustering hands, was walking up to the stable for our horses I saw a horse track that was strangely familiar to me, that of my favorite mare. I had put her in the horse paddock for a few days spell after the heavy and fast work she had been doing at the mustering. I remarked to the men — ' Here is the track of my mare and also the track of a horse beside her which was carrying a rider. I must follow this, you can go on without my company for a time, when I get the mare back I will follow you.' I then followed the tracks, which took me to Urangeline Scrub, some twenty miles. Luckily I had picked up my horse as I passed the stable. When I reached the Scrub I saw my mare hobbled with seven other horses upon a little open land in the middle of the dense scrub. I rode up to her, dismounted, and took off the hobbles, and placed my halter upon her. As I was about to remount, a man stood behind me, and asked in a very excited manner what I was doing with his horse. I told him that he should consider himself very fortunate that I left him the hobbles. Nothing more was said, but I took the opportunity to look at the other horses, and could identify most of them as the property of station holders in the neighborhood; and I inwardly determined to let them know where their missing horses could be found.

"Perhaps, as you are going to Wagga to-morrow, you would report the matter to the police; also that the man who claimed my mare and the other horses was at the mustering today and accosted me, asking if did not think I was a very lucky man to be allowed to take possession of my own horse so quietly; at the same, time throwing up the tail of his coat and so exposing what appeared to be a loaded revolver."

In due course I related the circumstance to Sergeant Carroll, of Wagga, who upon thinking the matter over, decided that it would probably be lost time for the police to go out and endeavor to find the camp— that most likely the horse stealer immediately cleared out. I told him that young Mr. Vincent would take him to the spot himself. However, the police did not go out, and within a fortnight Morgan the

horse stealer had developed into Morgan the bushranger ; for in that time he had stuck up and robbed a hawker, and also Mr Baylis, then Police Magistrate at Wagga, whose duties took him once a month to Urana to hold court. It was upon one of these visits that he met with the highwayman and was robbed of a small cheque. Upon Mr. Baylis' return to Wagga he, in conjunction with a Superintendent Morrow, just then appointed to the Wagga district, organised a party to run down the robber. Accompanied by two or three of the force they started out, and eventually came upon Morgan's camp. As there were two sleeping places at this camp, it was evident that Morgan had been joined by a companion (afterwards found to be a man named Clark). The police party found the ashes of the fire to be still alight, so made their camp some little distance off; and strange to say had a light in their tent (which fact I often thought accounted for the failure of this attempt to capture). In the early hours of the morning Mr. Baylis thought he heard stealthy footsteps; others of the party thought it some old man kangaroo. Mr. Baylis was, however, convinced, and arming himself with his revolver sallied forth into the darkness and gave the usual challenge "Who's there? " The reply was a shot from Morgan, which struck Mr. Baylis in the breast near the collar bone. He carried this bullet under his shoulder blade for a number of years, and when it was extracted had it nicely mounted as a watch-chain pendant. After the shots (Mr Baylis having also fired) two men were heard getting away. Owing to the darkness nothing was seen of them. The next time, and within a day or two, Morgan unaccompanied, stuck up a shepherd's hut and foully attempted to murder the unfortunate shepherd— who, badly wounded in the stomach, was brought into the Wagga Hospital and reported as follows :— Early in the morning he was aroused by Morgan, who demanded rations. The shepherd (I forget his name) told him he could have some breakfast, but as he had a large family and would get no more rations from the station until the usual ration day, he was not inclined to see his children go hungry. Morgan thereupon fired into the man's stomach, remarking that he at any rate would not want any more breakfast. Morgan was alone upon this occasion, and it is presumed that between the time of engagement with Mr. Baylis and with the police, he made away with his confederate. Strange to say, the shepherd, who after staying a short time in the hospital, was forwarded on to Goulburn, (as there was a larger and presumably a more efficient staff there than in the early days of Wagga) completely recovered from the horrible wound ; the ball had passed through his body.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 4 [14<sup>th</sup> August 1908, p5]

#### SOME MORE EVENTS CONNECTED WITH MORGAN.

After Morgan's attempt to murder Mr. H. Baylis, he seemed to become reckless, frequent robberies and occasional murders marking his career. The scope of country he covered was enormous: one day he would be heard of about Tumut and

Adelong, and very shortly afterwards Urana would receive a visit from him. Upon one occasion he called at Yarrabee, then owned by Mr John Peters, and managed by Mr. Stephen Apps. Morgan told the latter that he had heard that rations were stingily supplied to travellers, and he insisted that Apps should be more liberal. For this first offence Apps would be let off lightly— merely branded with the Station cattle brand— any lapse to the old style meant shooting. In acts such as these Morgan posed as the travellers' friend, and so secured many who would, by false information, mislead the police parties supposed to be in search of the outlaw, and also let him know if any residents assisted the police in their efforts at capture. Among his many heartless murders I recall that of Sergeant McNity, who with a junior mounted man, had some duty to perform at Walla Walla, then owned by Dr. Stitt. He was returning to his home when he overtook a horseman who appeared to be a traveller. He got into a conversation with the supposed traveller, and naturally made enquiry respecting the bushranger. It appears that for some little time it was not known to Morgan that his interrogator was one of the police force, being without uniform. When the fact dawned upon Morgan he deliberately checked his horse, remarking "Oh, so you are one of the —— police, this will do you good!" At the same time firing at the Sergeant. The bullet went through him and he fell dead upon the track. The constable who was with McNity stated at the inquest that the suddenness of the shot startled his horse, which became altogether unmanageable and bolted with him. The evidence did not appear to be of much value, as he was dismissed from the force, and afterwards kept a public house in North Wagga.

Another cruel murder was that at a station called, I think, "Hentys," at Round Hill. There the outlaw bailed up a large number of the hands and ordered them into a shed adjacent to the homestead, cautioning them to remain there and keep quiet, whilst he conducted his business with the owner or manager of the station. When that was concluded, accompanied by the manager, he came towards the shed occupied by the "stuck up" hands, and as they apparently were making more noise than was necessary, Morgan coolly fired a revolver at the crowd, wounding a young man named Herriot in the foot. When the result was known to the bushranger he appeared to relent in some slight degree, and expressed his sorrow at having injured the young man's foot. He accordingly ordered one of the hands, who knew the country well, to go to Walla Walla and ask Dr. Stitt to come over and dress and otherwise attend to the injured man. He warned the messenger not to give information to any police he may meet: and to go straight, or it would cost him his life. After the young man had started, Morgan was heard to remark "That young fellow is not going to Walla Walla, but is looking for the police — I will interview him." He soon overtook him and taxed him with disobeying orders and deliberately shot him dead. The many robberies and murders committed about this time by this bloodthirsty scoundrel would occupy too much space. The residents of Wagga were in an excited state and held meetings to organise parties to endeavour to run the outlaw down, but the station holders in the districts received the greater part of Morgan's attention, and were in a very awkward position. The police were

continuously patrolling the country — some people unkindly said — "hoping not to find him." Be that as it may, I know that it was dangerous to give them any information, as upon almost every station in the district were young fellows who found means to let Morgan know what occurred upon the numerous visits of the police. The result generally was a visit from Morgan's gang, sometimes resulting only in the loss of a horse or two (Morgan, from information received, seemed to know the names and descriptions of the best horses upon each homestead). Sometimes, as in the case of the burning of Mittagong woolshed and store, in a much more serious loss to the informant of the police. I remember upon one occasion a half-demented swagman came into Wagga with a piteous tale of how he had been stuck up by a bushranger. He described the encounter as follows; "A horseman suddenly appeared upon the track near Grubbin and ordered me to lay down my swag and hold up my hands. This I declined to do, but got behind a small tree. After several shots at me, the robber appeared to get annoyed and told me he would give me only one more chance to surrender. If I did not avail myself of that, he would shoot to kill; and I would have no one to blame but my own obstinacy. As it was a very small tree I had for shelter. I thought it better to do as he advised. He then searched me. This searching took some time, as he could not credit me, when I told him all the money I had in the world was 3d. He asked me what reason I had for risking being shot — having only 3d. on me. My reply was that I did not think anyone had the right to bail me up on a public road, and I determined to resist him. He said I must be a "shingle short" and permitted me to proceed. I feel very much outraged, and if I had money to buy a gun or a rifle I would make it my business to run this man down, especially as I am told there is £500 reward upon his capture." Some of the residents went round with the hat and sufficient was collected to start Noble the swagman on his expedition with a serviceable rifle and a week's rations. To show that this crank faithfully performed his duty, one of Morgan's "Telegraphs" said that Morgan enquired from him who this man was that was walking about the bush, having seen his hobb-nailed tracks all over the country. When told the object the traveller had in view, he laughed and said he was afraid he would have to shoot him after all.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 5 [21<sup>st</sup> August 1908, p3]

#### MORGAN'S DEPREDATIONS.

One day, as I was occupied as usual with the books in Messrs. Forsyth's office, an old and valued customer, Mrs. Elizabeth Vincent, was announced. After matters of business were completed, Mr. Forsyth asked if Morgan had paid a visit to Mittagong, as he had been heard to threaten. Mrs. Vincent replied that up to that time he had not done so; but that her sons fully expected that the station would be stuck up. The parties of police roaming about the bush searching for the desperados frequently made Mittagong their camp; and as their movements were

quickly reported by some of the "telegraphs," as these young men were called, there was sufficient cause to create anxiety. Mr. Forsyth told this lady that if her sons would let him know should such an event occur, he would immediately go out to the station and see what he, as a Justice of the Peace, could do to settle matters with the shearers, many of whom were known to be tools of the bushranger. About a fortnight passed: when early one morning, about 3 a.m., I was aroused from my slumbers by Mr. Forsyth, who informed me that Morgan had stuck up the station, burnt the woolshed containing 16 bales of wool, and also the store and contents. I remarked that I suppose he intended starting out as he had promised. He said that an intended visit to Tubbo upon the following day would, he regretted to say, prevent his doing so; and he hoped I would go out and settle with the shearers. As I did not look upon the proposal as a pleasant picnic, I answered that had I promised Mr. Vincent, as he had, I would go; and as he purposed going to Tubbo to-morrow, it would be a very short distance out of his direct road if he called and passed the night at Mittagong. After some further discussion, I reluctantly agreed to represent him. I was to be provided with signed cheques wherewith to pay off the shearers, also a revolver and belt, so that if I was lucky I might capture Morgan. Probably, I thought, this programme would be reversed: and I should be the captured one. When nearing the station I met some of the shearers, who told me that the books containing the particulars of each man's store account had been burnt with the store; and they were going into Wagga to obtain a settlement from Mrs. Vincent, at that time living in her suburban cottage near Wagga. When I told them I had come out to settle with them, they returned: and in the evening they were all assembled in the office. I told them that the storekeeper (J. Forster) would, as nearly as he could remember, give me the amounts to be deducted for goods supplied to each separate man; and a cheque for their shearing would be filled up. Some of them did not seem inclined to pay anything for the stores, shears, etc., they had got, as Morgan had told them not to do so. I suggested that those who were inclined to make an honest settlement of the matter could stand upon one side of the room, and I would arrange their account for them, and deal with the malcontents afterwards. Most of them did so; but one flash young man told me that Morgan had given him a new saddle before he had the store burned down, and he intended to keep it. What could I do in the matter? I told him a warrant for his arrest as an accomplice of Morgan's would be issued against him. After a lengthy conference with his mates, wiser counsel seemed to weaken his previous bravado; and the saddle and other articles, such as trousers and shirts, were handed over to the storekeeper. After this matter was settled, I had an opportunity to hear from Mr. Vincent some of the particulars connected with the outrage. Some weeks before the visit of Morgan, a party of police made for Mittagong for their night's quarters. As usual, they asked for information as to the bushranger's present whereabouts. Mr. Vincent told them that situated as he was, it, was neither safe nor wise to tell them anything about him, as information previously given was by some means imparted to Morgan, who had renewed his threats. He also told them he could not understand how the out-law, although frequently sighted by the police in the bush,

invariably got away from them, notwithstanding the high condition the police horses were always in. "I feel quite sure," he said, "that we have several horses here that, once getting view of him, could run him down; and they are not stabled at all. Taking this and other circumstances into consideration, I cannot help thinking that you are not very anxious to find him."

When leaving in the morning, another appeal for information was made to Mr. Vincent; and this was reluctantly given. 'If you go to —— you will see a wattle and daub stable. If in that stable you see a grey horse, you may be sure your man is not far off. Should there be no horse of that description (Morgan was seen riding a fine grey horse on the previous day), there is a clump of thick scrub within a short distance of the stable, where you can have a fair view and yourselves be almost invisible." Hearty thanks were given, and the party left. It was said that they had not gone many miles before they met the owner of the stable. One of the police left his companions, and had an interview with the traveller. When asked if he could tell them anything about Morgan his reply was that he did not know such a man. He was indignant when the trooper thoughtlessly told him the particulars he had gathered at Mittagong. Whether this account was true or not I cannot say. A great many people believed it. However that may be, when Morgan bailed up the station, he enquired particularly for Mr. Vincent, and greeted him with the remark that he had come expressly to see him. "You told the police on such a day that you had several horses here, grass fed, which could run me down. Those horses will be very useful to me. You also told them I was riding a grey horse, and kept him stabled at —— . The police believe that I am harbored there; but they are mistaken. I force myself upon them when it suits me, just as I am doing here to-day. In order to caution people against giving information, I intend to shoot you. That should be a warning to them." He then called upon one of fourteen shearers, and ordered him to strap young Vincent up to a fence near the woolshed. The young man was then covered by Morgan's rifle, which was placed within a foot of his head. Noticing that the straps round Vincent's wrists were not very light, he called upon the shearer to make them as secure as he possibly could. Then the torture was renewed. The outlaw would occasionally look at his watch (he had two), and inform his victim that he had so long, perhaps five minutes, to live. Then another look at his watch — each time, of course, the period diminishing. All the time this cowardly scoundrel was asking tantalising questions, or making what he considered witty remarks. At length Morgan enquired if his victim would like to see his wife before he died. A shearer was sent down for the ladies. When they came upon the scene, their tears and entreaties for Vincent's life to be spared seemingly moved the callous Morgan: for he asked Vincent if he would sooner see the woolshed and stores burnt down than be shot. Of course the poor young fellow did not want to be murdered, neither did he want to see a wanton destruction of property, which he told Morgan did not belong to him, but to his mother. Nothing less, however, would appease this bloodthirsty villain, who ordered two or three to light a fire at the side of the shed, rip open the bales of wool, and throw them on to the blaze. This was done; and during the time Vincent was still strapped to the

fence, Morgan would not permit any of the men to loosen him. When the shed and wool were destroyed, the men were ordered down to the house. The destruction of the store, which was built some distance from the garden fence, was to be the next performance. Before it was burnt down, Morgan called the men around, and asked them if there was anything they wanted; at the same time throwing out more trousers, shirts, tobacco, etc. The only saddle left in stock was handed over to the young man previously referred to. A few weeks previous to this, Mrs. Vincent had bought a new dog-cart and harness, which were kept under a skillion at one side of the store. Morgan insisted that it should be pushed well over the burning material, so as to ensure its destruction. There was also just purchased ten tons of flour. This, of course, went with the rest. After this, Morgan told a man to go up and liberate young Vincent, who had up to this time remained strapped to the fence. When the man reached him he was found almost, in a state of collapse. His whiskers, moustache, and eye brows had disappeared; and so tightly had he been bound that the blood was almost bursting through his nails. Before I left Mittagong, I took an inventory of the burnt property: and without counting the cost of the buildings, the loss amounted to £1600. Upon my return to Wagga, I strongly advised Mrs. Vincent to make a claim upon the Government for this amount; but to my everlasting regret, this was not done.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES- 6 [28<sup>th</sup> August 1908, p7]

MORGAN'S MURDEROUS REIGN. (Continued).

Shortly after the destruction of property at Mittagong, as related in my last number, I left the firm of George Forsyth and Co., as I saw an opportunity of making money at cattle buying and selling. My first adventure was in the district over which Ben Hall, Gilbert, O'Malley and Co. held a somewhat disputed sway. One evening I reached Lambing Flat, where I heard of a small mob of cattle, then being mustered for sale near Weddon Mountain. I made an early start and pulled up at a comfortable hotel, then occupied by a widow named Regan, for lunch. When I was about to start that landlady asked me in what direction I was travelling. I told her I was going to Nolan's station, some distance from the Weddon Mountain. I was then advised not to stay or call at a shanty, which I would have to pass at the foot of the Mountain, kept by some people of doubtful character. I thanked the lady, who really seemed anxious for my safety, but at the same time determined that I would inspect that shanty and interview the proprietors. In due course I reached the calico dwelling, and upon entering saw a rather attractive lady behind the counter. I of course was gallant enough to ask her if she would join me in a drink of square gin. There was no objection to that proposal, and during the few minutes occupied in sampling the Holland's, I was quite sure I heard a muttered conversation going on in a room which was separated from the one I was in by a calico partition only. I thought it was time to make a start, and was preparing to do so when I was asked

if I really meant to go. "If you remain for the night I can find you a comfortable bed, and your beautiful horse can be put in a paddock at the back which has lately been put up by Johnny Gilbert." I am proud to say that I withstood these temptations, and pushed on up the Mountain. The next dwelling I saw was what I supposed was a public house, on the summit of the Mountain. I thought that for a pub it looked unusually quiet, but I determined to enquire where the turn-off track to Nolan's station was situated. To my surprise, a constable was the only one in possession. He strongly advised me to go no further that night. He would be very glad of my company, and would supply my horse with plenty of government crushed maize and hay. This latter decided me; and "Blink Bonny" was very soon in a loose box and enjoying herself. I noticed that there was another horse in the stable, apparently lately brought in out of the bush. Such, I found, was the case. Musgrove, the hospitable man in possession, told me the horse had been brought in that day, and was to be trained for the races which were to be held at Regan's Hotel on 1st January. Mr. Musgrove seemed very pleased that I decided to stay with him that night. Being a total stranger, this rather aroused my curiosity. I asked him why he appeared so anxious. His reply was, 'Ah, you ask me a straight forward question, I will tell you. My mate has gone today to the Flat with the monthly or weekly despatches. I don't expect him back until tomorrow evening. I was quite alone until you called and as I heard that Ben Hall and his party are in the neighborhood, I think it very it very probable that some or all of them will call to get the bay horse you saw in the stable.' This statement naturally caused me to remember the whispering I had heard at the shanty some two miles away. After something to eat it was proposed by my host that when I felt disposed he should make up a bed for me upon what was originally the taproom table. Amongst other questions I put to him before retiring, I asked him if the Department, had purchased the hotel for a barracks. He smiled, as I thought at my simplicity, but answered that the Government had taken possession of the house and cancelled the license, as the licensee was suspected very strongly of harboring the outlaws. As it was situated in the centre of Hall's territory, the Inspector of Police determined to make it a temporary Police Station. I expressed the opinion that it was a very drastic step to take, and entailed probable ruin upon the man who was expelled. Upon this, with another smile, he told me that in the morning I should pass close to the ruins of a homestead, up to lately the property of the O'Malley family, which owing to suspicion, probably well founded, the Government had burnt down, and cancelled the old man's lease of the small station. I did not express any opinion upon this case, but remarked that I was ready for bed whenever he felt inclined. With that he collected an arm full of blankets and suggested I should follow him to the front of the house. I picked up the lamp and did so. When we had passed some rooms he turned round and noticed that I had the lamp in my hand. He seemed alarmed at this, and without a word blew it out. When I asked his reason for doing so he told me that had I taken the lamp into my temporary bedroom and it was seen by any of Hall's scouts, they would know exactly where to fire. This information banished any inclination I may previously have felt for sleep. When we reached the



room the moon was just rising; and I noticed that the table which was to serve as my bedstead was exactly opposite a large window. I suggested that to somewhat equalise matters he should supply me with some firearms, so that all the firing should not be with the outlaws. He readily agreed to this, and after a few minutes' delay returned with quite a number of weapons; all, he told me in first-class order and loaded. These he deposited at my head and all round me. I never before or since used so much caution in getting into bed. With a "good night and pleasant dreams" he left me. I soon heard a rather musical snore, which proved to me that anxiety did not keep him awake. Not so with myself. I had to lay very still, as careless movements might bring about me a discharge of some of the firearms. As to sleep, I had given up all idea of that before I had turned in. After about two hours' anxious listening, I heard a horse galloping round the fence which enclosed the stable and all of the house save the front entrance. My thought was, "here they are;" and as I did not wish to deprive my hospitable companion of his full share of the pleasure he was sure to feel in welcoming the visitors, I cautiously got off the table, and guided by the snore, soon had Musgrove upon his feet. After listening a short time he said, "Yes, there is no doubt that is Ben Hall after my racer." There was at short intervals a suspicious silence; then the galloping would be renewed. By this time the moon was giving a bright light, and we were looking out of the window of my bedroom, one upon each side, giving as little exposure as possible. It was a great relief to both of us I think — certainly to the writer— when a wild stallion from the adjacent hills presented himself to our view. With a laugh, my companion turned hastily round; and before I had picked my way to the blankets I could hear the old familiar snore. For my part, I do not remember ever to have put through such a sleepless and uncomfortable night, notwithstanding the kindly efforts of Mr. Musgrove to make me comfortable. Starting on the road early next morning, my host gave me some good advice. He said that many friends and some relatives of the Hall gang were residents in the neighborhood I purposed visiting, and it would be unwise to make any derogatory remarks to them about the bushrangers. Such I found to be the case. After travelling some miles along a track which from disuse had become very faint, I descried the remains of what had been the O'Malley homestead. I pulled up amongst the charred timber, and was soliloquising. I was thinking that in all probability the O'Malleys, who had lived for many years upon the spot I was now reviewing, had in their younger days entertained hopes that their numerous family or some of them, would hold honorable and respected positions. If so, their disappointment must be great, as some three or four weeks before my trip, one son had been shot by the police, and another was one of the Hall gang, with every prospect of meeting a similar or worse fate. Suddenly a voice close to me startled me a little. The speaker was quite a young man, and was well mounted and sat upon his horse as though he was a fixture. After wishing me good morning, he gave me an interesting account of the O'Malleys. He told me he was one of the cattle musterers, but had to go to Forbes that day, so could not accompany me to the cattle camp. After he heard from me that I was going to look at Nolan's cattle with a view to buying, he was quite

affable. I shortly afterwards heard that the youth was the notorious Johnny Gilbert; and although I had heard dreadful accounts of him I can only say that to me he was quite courteous. Continuing my journey, I came upon a small slab-hut, which I afterwards found to be a camp used by Mr. Nolan, Senr., when gathering cattle in that part of his run. I could at first see no one about. After shouting for some time, there appeared the most villainous looking old man I ever saw. His first salute to me was, 'Where the —— did you come from?' When I suggested that I was sure he could be a little more polite, if he made an effort, his manner improved very much. He excused himself for his outburst by telling me that he thought from the cut of my horse that I was one of the police, and they were a class of people he had every reason to dislike and avoid. "You have now," he told me, "a good chance to see Nolan's cattle. The whips will be going directly, and you will find old Nolan not far from them." I soon found and inspected the mob. The old gentleman said that as to price and everything else, he left that part of the business to his oldest son, whom I would find at the homestead. "I am going to send my old hut-keeper in this afternoon for rations; and if you go with him he will take you a shorter cut than you are likely to find alone," he remarked. Shortly afterwards the old Cook, or hut-keeper, as they were then called, started for the homestead. We were soon in heated conversation. The old fellow said, "I hear you have a bushranger over on your side of the country named Morgan." "Yes" I said, "and a blood-thirsty scoundrel he is. It would be pleasant news to me to hear before I return that he was hanged." "Oh," he remarked, "I don't blame him at all for what he has done. When a man takes to the bush it is the fault of the people he has to stick up if they get themselves shot. If they did as they were told by Morgan it is very likely they would not be hurt much. The bushrangers these times, he continued, "do not know much about their business." I have given many a wrinkle to Hall and his company, and they seem very much obliged to me." I asked him where he gathered his experience. "What!" he said, 'don't you know me? I am Bluecap. I and my mate kept possession of the Bathurst road for three days, and stuck up every man and woman who made, use of it. The third day a Police Magistrate and a policeman came along and showed fight. My mate shot the policeman, and I wounded the P.M. in the arm. I had him made fast to a sapling; but I could not stand seeing him suffer with his wound, so I went to him and dressed it and bound it up as well as a surgeon could do it. The bullet had gone right through the muscle of the arm." Many other feats which he told me about caused me to think he was doing some romancing. I asked him if he was taken at all. "Oh, yes, I was taken in a very cowardly way. You see there were a lot of blacks about at that time, and I was always very good to them, often giving them more than their share of my spoils. This suited me in a way, as I often got information from them as to the police movements; but the day after shooting the P.M. I was making across the bush through the night. Towards morning I heard the dogs at a blacks' camp; and not suspecting anything, I walked right into the midst of them. To my surprise I was covered by the muskets of four blacks. These men had been bought over by the police, and armed by them with the muskets. However, I was taken, and stood my

trial." "How," I enquired, "do you account for being here and at liberty?" "Well," he said," I made up my mind it was a case of scragging; but I was let off with life. I think my kindness to the Magistrate after wounding him had something to do with it; and now I am out on a ticket." I felt quite sure that all or nearly all he told me was manufactured for the occasion; but, on my journey home to Wagga I stayed a night at a very hospitable station owned by Mr. and Mrs. Shaw. During the evening's conversation I told them of the hut-keeper's yarn, remarking that I did not believe there was any truth in it. Mrs. Shaw told me then that in her girlhood she was one of the thirteen people who were stuck up by this pair of outlaws; and as to the other adventures, she knew nearly all of them to be positive facts.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES - 7 [4<sup>th</sup> September 1908, p5]

MORGAN'S MURDEROUS REIGN. (Continued).

In due course we reached the homestead. I saw Mr. Nolan, jun., and purchased the cattle. Prior to leaving Wagga I had procured from Mr. W. A. Cottee, then Manager of the A.J.S. Bank, some cheques initialled by him as correct. One of these for £100 I offered to Mr. Nolan as deposit on the purchase, but with native shrewdness that gentleman remarked that possibly the cheque was valueless: for, he said, it would be very easy for anyone to put the initials " W.A.C." on the cheque. I saw it was useless to argue the point, and as I was anxious to get the cattle, and could in fact see a good profit for myself, I suggested that he should send one of his stock men over to Forbes or The Flat, and from there telegraph to the bank about the cheque; in the meantime I would remain and assist in the mustering. This plan was adopted with, I think, satisfaction on both sides. At any rate I was made welcome and as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Amongst the twenty musterers there were of course some typical young Australian bushmen, men who appeared very much more at home upon the back of a half-broken horse than upon their own feet. Among the lot was a younger brother of the O'Malley lately shot and previously referred to. They were all very obliging to me; and had I carried any valuables upon my person I am sure it would have been as safe there as at the Bishops' Conference recently held in England. When starting away from the homestead Mr. Nolan suggested that I should go across the bush with two of the men, who would put me upon a track that would save me some miles. Shortly before reaching the main road I saw two men at some little distance from where I was. I supposed they were also helping at the muster. The young man riding near me pointed out the direction I should take whilst he was absent interviewing the strangers. When he returned he asked me if I knew who they were. Of course I did not. He then told me that they were Ben Hall and Gilbert, and that they made a sign to him that they wanted to see him. They wished to know who I was and what I was doing in that part of the country. When told that I was a cattle buyer, and had bought Nolan's mob, Hall said that in that case he would not

interfere with me in any way, as buyers were the class of men that were wanted out there. "I thought," he said "he was one of the police, judging by the horse he is riding." In due course I took delivery of the mob at the northern side of the Wagga bridge, sold all the younger cattle to Mr. Robinson, of Kimo, and started the balance on the road for Deniliquin. My second in command was our old and respected townsman, Mr. H. D. Adams, then a young man, and a very smart one amongst cattle. Business detained me for a few days in Wagga, so I arranged to overtake the mob somewhere near Brookong. Amongst the horses I sent on with the mob were two white ponies I had purchased from Mr. Keighran, of "Mormon" fame. The horse I purposed riding to overtake the cattle was a powerful and well-bred one named "Danger," the winner of several races at Wagga, and bred and owned previously by Mr. Lintott, of Coonindrew, a small station about 15 miles up the river. I overtook the cattle and found with them Mr. Watt, of Watt and Thompson, Urana, to whom I sold them. After counting them out Mr. Watt asked me if I could allow the men to stay and brand the cattle, as this was his first experience with big stock. I told him if he could arrange with the men I had no objection at all. He was a very liberal man so this matter was soon settled, and I also remained a day or two. On a Monday morning I left the station for home. As I had passed through Urana a few days previously I had bought from Messrs. Burke Bros, a buggy and double harness, so I left " Danger " to be brought home with the rest of the cattle horses and rode one and led the other white pony, with a view to driving back to Wagga. I called at the Urana Hotel, then occupied (I think) by a Mr. Wise, who told me that anxious enquiries had been made by Morgan as to when I was going back to Wagga, as he had been in Urana on the Sunday. He (Morgan) appeared to know that I had sold the cattle for cash to Messrs. Watt and Thompson, but he could not account for the delay. Under these circumstances I thought it advisable to rip the seat of the buggy cushion and deposit temporarily therein the £1135 cheque I had received from Messrs. Watt and Thompson that morning. Mr. Wise also told me that Morgan had remarked that he had a bullet which would stop young ——'s career. "I have to pay him out," he said," for settling with the Mittagong shearers." All things considered, I did not feel very gay starting upon this home-ward trip. However, there was no other road I could go. When a few miles on the Urana side of what is now Lockhart, then called Green's Gunyah, I noticed upon the hillside on my right a chestnut mare, with a blaze down her face, saddled and bridled. I knew this mare had been commandeered by Morgan some time previously. Upon looking again, I found that the mare had gone. About half-a-mile along the road from where I was I knew there was a fairly deep creek I had to cross, and supposed that Morgan and the mare were coming to meet me along the watercourse. I did not feel at all comfortable: and when I reached the creek I fully expected the command, to "pull up." To my great relief, however, there was no appearance of man or horse. I was quite sure they were not far away, so I determined to try if the ponies were as good as Mr. Keighran represented them. I found them all I could desire, and I made Wagga in, I think, record time. I passed Claxton's Hotel at Lockhart at a hand gallop. I afterwards

heard that he (Claxton) thought the ponies had bolted with me. Some fortnight afterwards I was travelling upon that road by coach. Whilst changing horses Claxton told me that about an hour after I had galloped past his hotel Morgan had called, and casually remarked that he had lost fully half a day waiting in the hills for the writer of this. "I saw him," he said, " as he went to overtake the cattle: he was riding a fine, useful sort of bay horse, which I made up my mind to borrow from him: and I had other matters to settle with him." When he was told that I had passed, hours previously he was much annoyed: as he had seen a buggy and two grey horses pass, which he took to be the mail, and he did not want to interfere with it on that occasion. I often thought my protecting angel must have been with me that day.

When I left Watt and Thompson's that morning, the drovers were not quite ready to start. It must have been after lunch when they got away from Urana, where some of them indulged a little too freely in Mr. Wise's whiskey. Mr. Adams had been detained at the station settling up with Mr. Watt; and the afternoon was well advanced when he overtook two of the drovers and a boy whose name I forget. This boy he found bareheaded and in tears. He complained to Mr Adams of the way these two (brothers) had been treating him. They had amongst other jokes taken and detained his hat (the weather was something like 110 degrees in the shade). Mr. Adams then, as now, tender-hearted, asked them to give the boy his hat. "Here is the hat, you give it to him," remarked one of them. As Mr Adams reached to take the same he was knocked almost senseless from his horse, and the two half-drunken men dismounted and attacked him. Recovering his senses a little, he gripped one of his assailants by the leg, after which the youths were glad to escape his clutches. He gave the lad his hat and advised him to get away with him and leave the young men to themselves. This was managed for a time, but as Mr. Adams had some very pressing business to attend to he had to leave the lad behind and hurry homewards. He was riding a fast trotting mare, and being favored by a bright moon he made good progress. After some miles had been traversed he was startled by a man stepping out from behind a tree with the salute, "pull up." He naturally thought he was in the hands of Morgan, and as the mare was rather "hard in the mouth," he could not obey the command very quickly. To his great relief, how-ever, he had not travelled very far when another armed man stepped out from his concealment and challenged him. These men proved to be portion of a police party waiting for Morgan. They seemed very much disgusted when they found a law-abiding traveller, instead of the outlaw. Mr. Adams, however, spent the balance of the night with the party, which proved to be in charge of Inspector Touch, an old school fellow of his. I think this night must be impressed upon the memory of our townsman, and I also think he still carries the marks of the cowardly assault made upon him by his follow drovers. It was not long after this that the country about Wagga was getting too hot for the outlaw, and he tried to get away into Victoria. The last I heard of him was that after stealing a racing mare named "Victoria" from one of the Bowler Brother, he rode almost exhausted on to Peechelba Station, where, after holding up all hands, he passed the last night of his

troublesome life. I heard that after insisting upon the governess entertaining him with some music, he told Mr. Macpherson (I think) that he felt very weary and suggested that they should have a "night cap" and then go to bed. When the liquor was supplied he insisted upon his companion taking the first drink from the decanter, "for," as he said, "You cannot be too cautious these times." Upon sitting down he placed his revolver at his elbow upon the table, and then, simulating drowsiness, gradually pushed the revolver nearer to Mr. Macpherson, apparently accidentally, but really in order to tempt his companion to use it or attempt to do so. After he was shot the next morning the weapon was discovered to be very artfully loaded, caps and bullets could be plainly seen, but there was no powder in the cartridges.

The manner of his capture as I heard it afterwards was as follows:

About daylight the servant girl was sent to the kitchen for something. Upon her way she saw two of the station hands, who had been away back the night previously, just taking off their saddles. When informed of what had occurred one of them proceeded to the nearest township to report to the police. The other one, having a rifle in his hut, quietly armed himself and took up a position near the house, his person concealed by a huge gum stump. He had not been there long when he heard some of the house doors being opened. From the house came Morgan and the Manager. They were walking close together and in the direction of the stable. When a few yards past the stump, the concealed station hand made up his mind to attempt a shot at the outlaw. He said afterwards that he felt very nervous, as his boss was so close to the man he wanted. He fired and Morgan fell fatally wounded. He, the scoundrel who had deliberately murdered dozens of useful colonists, only remarked, "You are a cowardly lot," before he died. About an hour afterwards the police arrived, called thither by the report of the station hand. They took possession of the body, which was, I think, buried at the township, minus the head, which was sent on to the head of the Department, in Melbourne, in a bag in Cobb and Co's coach. I heard, whether true or not I cannot say, that when the bag was opened for the purpose of identification, the authorities found that the flowing beard, of which Morgan in life seemed inordinately proud, had been, with the skin, removed from the chin. I also heard that one of the police had removed this to keep as a memorial of an act which resulted in his dismissal from the force.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 8 [11<sup>th</sup> September 1908, p3]

Towards the close of Morgan's career there seemed to be quite an epidemic of bushranging. Narandera was surrounded by different gangs. Whether it was attributable to the long reign of Ben Hall and Co. and Morgan, and the seeming inability of the police to capture them, literature of the "Dead Wood Dick" order, or heredity I cannot say; but at that time other gangs in this neighborhood began to

make themselves a nuisance and terror to isolated settlers. Blue Cap and gang of three (I think) took up their selection of country, bounded on the west by Bringagee, the north by Hillston, and east by Ganmain, helped themselves to valuable horses and any other property that they thought would be useful to themselves or their friends. They avoided, unlike Morgan, bloodshedding, though in some cases they came dangerously near making themselves outlaws. Mr. Waller, of Waller and Gordon, of Cooba Station, who when bailed up, resisted and fired upon them, had quite an exciting half-hour with them. Mr. Waller showed me the corner post of a stockyard, behind which he sheltered himself from their shots; upon which I saw several bullet marks. This same gang too stuck up "Bolero," now a portion of Mumbledool run, but at that time occupied by Mr. James Flood, known then as young James, to distinguish him from his father, old Mr. Flood, who owned Midgeon at that time. When Blue Cap and Co. took possession of the homestead, they explained to the occupants that they did not purpose doing any damage, but merely felt inclined for a "good time." They had heard that the governess was an accomplished pianist, and they were fond of music and dancing. Miss Davis was induced to play some lively dance music, and the young bushrangers did the dancing amongst themselves; thanking the young lady, and declaring that they had passed a pleasant evening. I never heard that these misguided youths ever murdered a man or robbed a woman. There were about this time frequent petty robberies about the river frontage, perpetrated by a masked man with a revolver. Several travellers had been stuck up; and naturally Blue Cap and his gang were supposed to be the operators. These attacks at last became so frequent that a doubt was engendered as to the robberies being the acts of that gang; and as upon one occasion a man was stuck up near Benerembah, while the gang were known to be many miles north-east of Narandera, suspicion became stronger that someone was doing business upon his own account and allowing the gang to bear the blame of his acts. Some eight or nine months prior to the events I am about to chronicle, a young man, in a very travel-stained condition, walked warily into a public house not far distant from Darlington, asking assistance from the landlord and appealing to him for employment of some or any kind. Touched by the intelligent appearance of the youth, but cautious, he told him that he could do some light work about the yard and stable in the meantime; and if anything better offered and the young man proved deserving, arrangements more satisfactory to both would be made. After a short stay in the yard, he was promoted to the position of tutor to the children, of whom there were several. The few months thus occupied brightened up both teacher and pupils. The former's wardrobe was replenished, with the result that the whilom tramp presented quite a gentlemanly appearance; and he soon made a favorable impression by his intellectual conversation and manners upon the neighboring station-holders and travellers. It quickly became known that the young man had originally been intended by his friends for the medical profession. This fact enabled him to earn something in addition to the small salary the publican was able to afford him; and he was usually addressed as "Doctor," and made occasional visits to the

surrounding stations in that capacity. Upon one occasion I met him at Benerembah, then owned by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Thomas Baillie. Shearing was in full swing at the time, and the "barracks" consequently fully occupied by the wool classers, clerks, and known travellers. Some seven or eight mattresses were laid upon the floor of the largest room. The One I was to occupy chanced to be next to the Doctor. When turning in for the night, I noticed this young man place a revolver under his pillow: and it appeared to be as though the barrel was in a direct line with my head. I naturally objected to this, and insisted upon its removal. After some argument upon the subject, this was reluctantly done. I asked the doctor why he wanted a dangerous weapon like that under his pillow.

His reply was that he always carried it to protect himself in case Blue Cap and his gang stuck him up. In the morning when I was about to start for Narandera, the doctor told me that he was going my way, and would accompany me if I had no objection. I agreed to this, providing he discharged his revolver before starting, which was done. Upon the road to Darlington Point he made a very liberal offer for the horse I was riding. I told him that I did not wish to sell, and the price he offered me was considerably more than the market value of the animal. He said he did not mind that; but as he had taken a fancy to the horse he wished to own him. If I would send him down by the mailman he would forward me the amount. No business resulted, as I did not think it was "good enough." He had received a small cheque from Mr. Baillie, so he told me, for medicine attendance on the Benerembah cook, to the amount of some three or four pounds. When we arrived at the Darlington Hotel, kept then by Mr. and Mrs. Linsell, I was invited by my companion, to "come and have a drink." When we were seated in the bar parlor, he asked Mrs. Linsell to call in anyone there may be about to join him in a drink: at the same time handing over the cheque previously referred to, saying "Never mind the change — I shall doubtless cut it out before I leave."

I shortly afterwards told him that as I had a long ride before me I would make an immediate start. Previous to reaching the hostelry I had come to the conclusion that there was something about the doctor's proceedings that I could not altogether understand; and I felt relieved when I wished him good-day.

I had occasion to call at Cooba; and whilst talking to Mr. Waller, was asked by him what I thought of the mysterious and frequent cases of sticking up that had lately occurred. He was quite sure, he told me, that there was someone not connected with the Blue Cap lot who was personating the gang; and that he could name the individual. "You," he said, "would never guess whom I suspect." I then told him what had occurred the previous night. During my ride up from Benerembah he remarked, "That is the man, I feel convinced." It was the intention of Mr. Waller to mention his suspicions to the Narandera police at an early date. Within a week from the time we were discussing the matter however, the doctor vanished suddenly and mysteriously. Shortly afterwards there appeared in the coastal papers accounts of outrages committed by an unknown criminal answering minutely the



description of our doctor. He was at length taken prisoner by the coastal police, tried for robbery under arms, and sentenced to death. This sentence was reduced to imprisonment for life. I have abstained from mentioning the name of the misguided and unfortunate young man, whom I afterwards heard was closely related to a family holding a highly respected position in society. I think it uncalled-for cruelty to cause the shame of a relative to cast a shadow upon their good name.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 9 [18<sup>th</sup> September 1908, p2]

From 1852-1859.

In 1852, after passing a few days at Forest Creek looking around, I entered into an engagement with Mr. Garvin Ralston, storekeeper at Montgomery's Hill, as assistant. Amongst my other duties was that of gold-buying. Saturday afternoon was usually fully occupied by me in that department. Many of the customers would bring sufficient gold, in small wooden match boxes principally to provide them for the coming week's outlay. This I spread out upon a large sheet of white paper. Frequently the gold, which to the naked eye appeared quite free from impurities, was much reduced in weight after I had passed a large and powerful magnet through it — attracting an enormous quantity of iron which adhered to the instrument. After this operation, any dust or lighter impurities were blown away. As the match boxes above referred to held when full exactly 12 ozs, or 1 lb of gold, the miners sometimes expressed great surprise that the purchasable weight was so much less than they anticipated. Occasionally a fraud would be attempted by an imprincipled miner — by mixing crushed brass or some other rubbish with the gold. With these few exceptions the bona-fide digger I always found to be of good principle. This was to me the more surprising from the fact that many of the diggers at that early date were ticket-of-leave prisoners from Van Dieman's Land. On the other hand there were many barristers, solicitors, businessmen, sons of English gentlemen and others — whose love of adventure had guided their footsteps to this Eldorado. About this time many complaints were made by men who were working golden claims at the constant vigilance required to hold possession of the treasure in their tents: one of the party having to be continually on watch at night. A meeting was held and it was determined that a Private Escort Company should be formed, and a weekly despatch of gold and valuables established. Mr Alexander Ralston, a son as of Mr. Garvin, was unanimously elected Secretary. I think this gentleman was afterwards for many years connected, in a high position, with the Mutual Provident Society, or some other high-class financial institute in Sydney. The troopers were all young Englishmen and good riders, and from their martial appearance seemed to occupy exactly the post they were fitted for. I remember them starting on the first trip: it was quite a gala day upon the Hill. A strong spring cart contained a large quantity of gold, and the gay well-mounted young troopers under a superintendent whose name I forget, left at a

rattling pace amidst the cheers and plaudits of many who were thus relieved of the irksome duty of nightly guarding their gold. Many other successful trips were made and the companies formed: notably the McIvor Escort Company which was shortly afterwards stuck up by a gang of bushrangers — some of whom, as well as two troopers, were fatally shot. A strange happening took place connected with this event. Some months after those who had been captured had paid the law's penalty, Mr. Warren, an ex-trooper in the McIvor Escort, was riding with a friend of mine. Seeing a canvas shanty with the alluring sign of "Cool drinks," they dismounted and sampled the beverage. My friend noticed a strange and excited manner about the ex-trooper. The latter wrote a note to the Commissioner of Police and asked my friend to deliver it as promptly as possible; while he would remain in the neighbourhood until his return. He kept guard near the "cool drink" establishment until two or three troopers and my friend returned, and then gave into custody the man who was acting as proprietor of the shanty, on the charge of being one of the bushrangers who assisted in sticking up and robbing the McIvor escort. He was afterwards tried and convicted of the crime. To return to my Forest Creek experiences, I was one day taking a walk in the gully at the foot of Montgomery's Hill. This ground had lately been "rushed" by miners. Some had "bottomed" on golden patches; other holes were in various stages. I saw a number of diggers running towards a claim; joining the crowd, we found that of the two miners who had been sinking the claim which was attracting attention, one had gone to his tent to prepare luncheon, leaving his mate to follow. As the latter had not done so, his mate returned to the claim and on looking down saw the miner laying at the bottom. He was quickly lowered by some of the crowd, when it was seen that the poor fellow was quite dead. At the inquest it transpired that he had died of heart-failure. The last spade full of dirt he had removed showed a vein of nuggety gold, which the jury thought had so excited him — the sudden transfer from poverty to wealth being too great a strain upon a weak heart — that he collapsed. No one knew who he was or where he came from. This added another to the many hundreds, who at this exciting time, had passed away, unknown to any friends they may have had. As I was returning to take up my afternoon duties at Mr. Ralston's store, an old German, a regular customer, with whom I had had so many yarns at the store that we had become quite friendly, called out to me that he wanted to see me. He ceremoniously introduced me to his fran and his son, a youth of about my own age. He then mysteriously beckoned me to follow him into his tent, from the floor of which he removed a stone and some dirt, disclosing beneath a small-sized camp oven. Upon his removing the lid of this, my eyes were quite dazzled; for I saw it was quite three-parts full of bright nuggets, I tried to convince him of the folly in keeping so much treasure — so liable to be stolen. He said that no one save his wife, son, and myself knew anything about it. This did not satisfy me, and I told him that I would get some of the Escort people, down to further argue the matter out with him. Mr. Alex. Ralston with two troopers returned with me, and after some argument convinced the old fellow that his camp oven would be much safer in the Escort barracks. It was, however, with a rather distrustful manner he

followed the Secretary up and accepted a receipt for the contents of the camp oven. Shortly after this I experienced another wish for change. I determined to leave Forrest Creek and my kind employer; who said he was, and really appeared to be, sorry I had so determined, and hoped that should I find wandering about less attractive than I then thought it. He would be glad to welcome me back.

My first visit was paid to the McIvor diggings, where I presented a letter of introduction to a Mr. Brocklebank, an auctioneer in business there. Whilst conversing with that gentleman I noticed some fifty or sixty men sitting down like a lot of tailors. Asking an explanation as to what they were doing, Mr. Brocklebank proposed we should go across and see for ourselves. When we reached them I was indeed surprised, the bank of earth upon which they were sitting and working was black soil. Each man was provided with a knife and pannikin. The knife they wielded in continuous sweeps, taking with each movement a narrow slice of soil. Meeting with any obstruction this was examined; sometimes they were disappointed, a stone or pebble meeting their view. But whilst we were present many substantial nuggets were gathered and placed in the pannikin. Unfortunately the golden area was limited, or I think Mr. Brocklebank and the writer would have increased the number of operators. Upon the afternoon of the same day I saw a spring cart attended by several troopers leave the Government Camp. In the cart was a black man heavily manacled and on his way to Melbourne, there to be tried for highway robbery. This man was known as Black Douglas, and he had been for some time previously the leader of a gang and terror to travellers. I did not remain long at McIvor, Bendigo attracting me. This world-famed goldfield was then in a very primitive state. I was resident there when the Bendigo "Advertiser" was first introduced to the mining public. Though a very small publication, it was handled by able men in those early days. Mr. Angus Mackey, Mr. (now Judge) Casey, and the very popular Bob Haverfield, being in themselves a tower of strength. Even the young man who had the honor of distributing the little sheet was an Oxford graduate, a nephew of the celebrated Sir Benjamin Brodie. With this young man I was fairly intimate. Upon one occasion I met him when he seemed to me to have put aside his usual cheerfulness. Questioned as to the cause, he told me that he had that morning received a letter from home. Upon my remarking that a similar event generally had quite a different effect on me, he said that what annoyed him was that his friends had heard from a man who had paid a flying visit to Australia that he had seen young Brodie and conversed with him, supplementing his report with the following: "The gentleman is still visible, but is heavily tinctured with Colonial rowdiness." He soon recovered his usual good spirits.

I was suburban traveller for a wholesale and retail firm, Messrs. Cameron and Rogers, of Golden Square. My rounds consisted of a tour amongst the smaller stores out Long Gully and Eaglehawk way. As I was starting out one morning I was accosted by a man who informed me that he was, in the Old Country, a soap maker, and as he had so far had no luck at mining, he purposed trying his old trade. He had a sample of the article he was prepared to supply, and would allow me a

handsome commission on sales I might make amongst my customers. Mr. Stuart, Cameron and Rogers' manager, upon being consulted, gave his sanction to the arrangement, and I effected what sales I could for the out-of-luck digger. This man's name was George Lansell, some years afterwards the well-known millionaire. Although the Bendigo "Advertiser," as I remarked before, had the advantage of very able and intelligent men, it had by no means a monopoly of them ; as amongst many I recall to my mind were Mr. Sullivan, wine and spirit merchant, of the Red House Store, Pall Mall, a Canadian I think, a very popular and honorable business man at the time I am alluding to, afterwards a valuable politician and Minister of the Crown. There also was Mr. Emmett, an Adelaide man, known by his intimates as the " Adelaide Lion," who unsuccessfully stood for the Victorian Parliament at the first election at Bendigo, and was opposed, if my memory serves me well, by one of the Mr. Symes (Ebenezer I think), who also saw defeated, so the " Lion" failed in good company. Then "Bendigo Mac," a very just and able police magistrate, though of a rather irascible temperament: Shadrach Jones and — MacPherson, both highly respected and prosperous auctioneers— men afterwards very much before the public. I may also mention Heffernan and Crawley, who when I first knew them, kept a canvas restaurant at the back of Geo. and Thos. Harkers store, and known as the "American" Restaurant. These gentlemen were much respected and loyal Irishmen, and afterwards built that imposing hotel known as the Shamrock Hotel, to which was attached a very large music hall where concerts (free) were held every night save Sunday, and enormous audiences always attended. Mr. Harker, assisted by a few waiters, personally attended to the wants of the thirsty miners. The local comic singer and poet, Thatcher, there held sway. Helen Reckie, the Scotch singer; Madame Carradina, Octavia Hamilton, Miska Hanser— the celebrated violinist, with many others too numerous to mention, I have heard in that hall. There were many other men, who, though comparatively unknown in the early days of the goldfield, after wards ascended to the height their intellect fitted them for. There was Jimmy Irons, afterwards of the Black Swan: John Harney, of the Bridge Hotel; William Vasie Simons, a chemist at White Hills, who was either the first or second Mayor of Sandhurst; and a perfect host of others I could mention. I cannot resist mentioning one other, a Dr. J——, who before the spirit licenses were granted at Bendigo, made a fair fortune in the following manner. Thirsty miners would call upon him and wish to be examined; the prescription of course was a bottle of spirits, 30s, with a small and inoffensive powder to be used or not according to the wish of the poor patient. About this time three brothers, the Tysons, came to the goldfields with cattle, put up a slaughtering yard on what was afterwards known as Tyson's Hill, and supplied retail butchers with carcasses of beef. All these men did well as regards accumulating wealth. One of them, James, as most people know, died a millionaire, and his accumulated riches are being liberally distributed by his next-of-kin. I saw the first race meeting which was held at Epsom, near Huntly, a Mr. Keating being most successful with his Adelaide horses. About this time great discontent was felt and great grumbling was heard about the exorbitant license fee

(30s per month I think). A miner unable to produce his license was marched off by a constable and run into a crowd previously collected and held by other police—from thence to the camp where they were brought before a warden, a fine or imprisonment was the usual termination. Delegates from Ballarat, Forrest Creek, McIvor, and other goldfields met at Bendigo; and arrangements were in progress for a combined rising at all the goldfields. The sudden and unexpected movement at Eureka Stockade, however, brought matters to a climax. The effects of the Ballarat rising resulted in many pacifying reforms; amongst others was that of the withdrawal of the license fee. In these early days there was a street running parallel with a creek which divided the Government Camp from Pall Mall. At the corner of this street nearest to View Point was a general store kept by an American. His name does not alter the facts, so I repress it. This man had a very attractive and engaging manner and was consequently much esteemed and trusted by his customers. As no banks had up to this time been established, many of the miners, instead of placing their gold in the hands of the Commissioner, gave it for safety to this person, who held it for them and made pecuniary advances upon the deposit when required. During the two years I was upon the field, this man had made one or two trips to Melbourne, then an undertaking of some magnitude; I may here remark that carriage of goods from Melbourne was about this time as high as £180 per ton. However, little or no surprise, and certainly no alarm was felt when the miners were told that their confidential friend had gone to Melbourne. After a few days, rumors began to circulate, and some of the miners made application to the man in charge for their property. They were informed that Mr. ——— had taken all the gold and cash with him to town, and that nothing could be done until his return. Some of the depositors, so convinced of their friend's integrity, appeared quite satisfied; until it was pointed out to them by others that the stock, which had previously always been a heavy one, was now reduced to almost vanishing point. Gradually murmurs became louder and more general. Weeks passed and no appearance of the missing one: till eventually it became known that there was no probability of their ever seeing again their once popular idol. Time passed, some of the miners seemed reconciled to their loss, others were loud in their denunciations, and took what steps they could to solve the mystery. Sometime after the departure of their friend and banker, word was received from Melbourne that a corpse had been washed ashore somewhere near Williamstown. This was positively identified by five or six friends of the missing man as that of the departed store-keeper. If this was the man (which many doubted) he must have taken the gold and other valuable property into the ocean, as no trace could be discovered of his having banked or invested it again. Rumor again became busy, and the missing man was said to have been seen and positively identified in America. I never heard of any of the miners recovering their gold. The store was closed up and was in that state when I again felt symptoms of my old disorder: and after nearly three years in Bendigo, I turned my wandering steps towards the Ovens River rush.

A small party of us started upon the long journey to the Ovens River rush. As, after many weary miles, we neared what we all fondly hoped would be our El Dorado, we met hundreds who advised us that the rush was a hoax and that we had better return, as they were doing, without seeing the field. We determined as we had come so far, to see the place and judge for ourselves. The diggings we found occupied by not more than two hundred miners. They were situated upon Reid's creek, quite thirty miles from the Ovens River. I believe the creek was so named by the early diggers because a widow named Reid (mother of Mr. David Reid, afterwards a prominent and respected resident of Albury), occupied a Sheep Station on the Ovens River, and the site of the diggings was upon portion of her leasehold. I joined a party of four and started upon a new claim near the creek. Three California pumps were kept continually at work, and even then the men in the shaft were up to their waists in water. Deaths were of hourly occurrence. One evening, being unused to this sort of work, and feeling very tired, I sat upon the side of my bunk, still wearing my wet clothes. I unfortunately fell asleep: when I awoke I was unable to rise. My mate who occupied a tent not far from mine, kindly went for the Government Doctor, and I was under his hands for some four or five weeks suffering from rheumatic fever. At one period of my illness he (Doctor Barker I think was his name) told me that he had very little hope to offer me, and he thought it advisable to prepare for death. I told him the address of my parents, to whom he promised to write, when I had reached that happy land we read about. He was personally acquainted with a brother-in-law of mine: so, he assured me, I could feel perfectly satisfied that he would not forget. A day or two after this arrangement he called to see me: I was in a low state and inclined to be delirious. I could not tell him when I had last taken his prescribed beef tea. He also asked me who was looking after me and supplying me with what nourishment I could take? When I told him it was my mate Martin (whom I knew originally in Liverpool), he exclaimed, "no wonder you are in a low state, for Martin was buried yesterday." He made arrangements with a married man who lived close by to look after me, and under his kindly thoughtfulness and attention I slowly made my way towards recovery. When with the aid of two home-made crutches I could hobble about, I made my way to the post office with the hope that I may then find a memo from home. When I made enquiries there, the young man at the pigeon hole asked me to repeat the name: he then called the postmaster, Mr. Whitty, who again questioned me. I was pleased at not only receiving a letter from home, but he informed me that he and his family had not long since arrived from Liverpool; and amongst his shipmates upon the ship " Thornswalden " were two of my brothers. He gave me their address and also promised to immediately write to them concerning me as he could see that I was too afflicted to write myself. I was soon in communication with them and received so much cheerful news from England that I feel sure my complete and speedy recovery was hastened by it. Wet sinking had no further attractions for me. When lying on my bunk my vision had many times during each day been offended by the sight of many funerals in all sorts of primitive coffins,

from broken up cases to sheets of bark. Referring to the letter I may remark that Dr. Barker asked me one day how I should prefer to go to my last home, and although the abrupt enquiry gave me a shock, I always during my illness felt that I should not require a coffin of any sort for a long time. Being here to-day shows how justified I was in my confidence that I would push through all right. I determined as soon as returning strength permitted to take a trip to Melbourne and visit my brothers, who had advised me that they had rented a cottage in Prahran, after enduring the discomforts of Canvas Town for a time. My next and last visit to the Ovens Gold Field, now known as Beechworth, is associated with melancholy recollections. My old friend Mrs. Vincent was sending over some fat sheep and cattle to be sold by Mr. Telford, managing partner of the firm of J. H. Gray and Co.: and asked me to go over and arrange the financial part of the business. Her son, Demas, was taking charge of the cattle and her sheep overseer Davis had the flock of sheep. A few days before the stock were started from Mittagong I went and assisted at the cattle mustering. Coming down the hill at the back of Grubben Station my horse fell with me, and in rising put his shod hoof upon my head. I did not experience any very ill effects for some two or three days after the starting of the stock; and in order not to disappoint my friends, I determined to drive over in a buggy. When I reached Beechworth, having passed the cattle and sheep slowly drawing towards the sale yards they were to be offered next day, I felt very unwell, and called to see Dr. Dempster, who informed me that I must not attempt to drive home after the sale, but arrange for someone to drive the buggy whilst I held an umbrella over my head, as I was suffering from slight concussion of the brain. I was staying at the Star Hotel, then kept by Mr. Peter Wallace, adjacent to Telford's sale yards. After taking a look at the sheep I wandered amongst a pile of sawn timber near the yards, and overheard a man talking about the sheep. He remarked that Mr. ——— wanted so many; Mr. S —, another wholesale butcher wanted a certain number: and it was arranged amongst them that only one man was to bid for the sheep. So avoiding competition and getting the sheep at a low price. It was evident to me that unless I got someone to bid against this combine, the sheep would be sacrificed. Walking through the yard looking for someone I knew whom I could induce to bid for me, I reached the front of Wallace's Hotel, where one of Cobb's coaches had just arrived. I was pleased to see an old acquaintance of mine was amongst the passengers. I explained the situation and he readily agreed to assist me. Being a pastoralist, it was, he said, his duty to put a check upon this sort of business. When the sheep were offered, the leader of the combine started them, I think at 8s. My friend advanced on that. I heard the wholesale butcher who had made this arrangement inquire in wrath "Who is the traitor?" However he advanced, as did my agent, and the sheep were eventually "knocked down" at 11s 6d to Mr John Wallace, a brother of the man at whose hotel I was staying. Mr John Wallace was then a successful mining speculator, having large interests in many of the best paying gold mines. He afterwards came into possession at Quatta Quatta Station, near Corowa, and figured prominently in the Legislative Council of Victoria. Having settled up matters, I was prepared to make a start for home next

day. Young Mr. Vincent asked me on Sunday morning to drive for a few miles and he would overtake me; then give his horse to the drovers and join me in the trap. I had driven some two miles along the Albury road, and when nearing the Vine Hotel, which was built upon a sidling road, I saw my friend approaching. I noticed, as his horse was about level with my right elbow, that the rider had remembered that I could not hear anything on that side: so he turned to approach me upon the lower or left side. In attempting this his horse must have placed its foreleg between the spokes of the wheel, turning the trap completely over. I was thrown some few yards from the vehicle and against the paling fence of the hotel garden, and temporarily stunned. The first thing I remembered seeing was the horse I had been driving cantering and kicking along the road. The landlord was trying to secure him. My friend was lying where the accident took place, and when I reached him was quite unconscious. In a few minutes, the drovers and a younger brother of Mr. Vincent came up. One of them, dispatched for a doctor, soon returned with Dr. Dempster, who at once pronounced the case a very serious one and recommended the removal of the young man to the hospital. A wood carter happened to be passing and conveyed the sufferer to town. A little before sunset my friend occupied a bed in the hospital ward and was examined by the resident doctor, whose grave appearance prepared me for the opinion which he gave — that he thought there was little or no hope of recovery. I asked to be allowed to sit beside him, so that should consciousness return and any message or direction be given, I could convey same to his relatives. The doctor told me that if I excited myself in any way, I also would require a bed, as he could see I was in a bad state. He asked me to come into the surgery, and advised me to take a dose of medicine which he prepared. He then told one of the warders that I was to be permitted to sit beside my friend until ten o'clock, at which time one of the warders was directed to accompany me to Wallace's Hotel. After sitting there for some considerable time, the lights were lowered and stillness reigned. Suddenly shouts of anguish from a corner opposite quite startled me. I went over to see what this corner bed contained. There was a man securely bound by calico bandages to his stretcher. He implored me to loosen the straps, which he said were cutting him very severely. I suppose I must have been almost as mad as he was, for I let go all that was fastening him. The lunatic jumped up from his stretcher and commenced the most unearthly noise, running up and down the passage between the rows of beds. I was told the next day what I had done; but the first thing I clearly remember was seeing three or four men endeavoring to secure the mad patient. I think I assisted them all I could, and the poor fellow was eventually brought back to his corner and refastened. I was not permitted another chance of doing mischief, as a warder accompanied me down to the "Star" Hotel. The next morning I hurried up to see how my friend was: one look through the French light made it unnecessary to ask any questions. I could see the bed occupied the night previously by Mr. Vincent was empty, and was made up in preparation for the next patient. I wired the sad news to his mother and wife; and as there would be no time for any of his relations to arrive, we left him in the Beechworth Cemetery. My lonely journey to Wagga I



shall never forget. After leaving Albury, the horse I was driving became ill. As I neared Walla Walla, it was evident the animal was becoming worse. At that station, then managed or owned by a Mr. Ingram, I endeavoured unsuccessfully to borrow or buy another animal to complete my journey. I managed to get on a few miles, and camped for the night. The next day I left the buggy on the road, and turning the horse loose to take his chance, walked on as far as Doodle Cooma, then owned by a Mr. Keighran. The hospitable kindness he and his family lavished upon me I shall never forget. He sent a man for the buggy, and when I was sufficiently recovered, drove me as far as Mittagong; offering to take me into Wagga if no horse; was available there. To return to my unfortunate visit to the Ovens diggings. After a few weeks the doctor told me I could risk the trip to Melbourne. I found that city very full of immigrants; ships with crowds of passengers arriving every day. Canvas town, on the St. Kilda side of Princes' Bridge, and occupied by the new arrivals, was a sight well worth seeing. And although daily a large number started for the different gold fields the number of tents seemed to me to increase daily.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 11 [16<sup>th</sup> October 1908, p2]

A very short rest at Prahran completed my recovery. As illustrating the then and the present condition of that neighbourhood I may mention that during my visit, a party of us went out opossum shooting ; and without walking more than a mile from the cottage we potted thirteen of (as one of the party named them), "the game of the country." An opossum banquet was arranged and some shipmates invited. They certainly appeared to enjoy the feast. I soon reached Bendigo again and engaged with Messrs. George and Thomas Harker, of the Manchester Store, Pall Mall, as town and suburban traveller. The alteration and improvement in the township was remarkable. Mr. Wallace had built a commodious Theatre and Mr. Abbott had opened the Lyceum. At the former I had the pleasure of witnessing a performance by G. V. Brooke, the actor of the century. At the latter I saw Lolla Montez (the Countess of Dansfeldt) in her spider dance. Mr. Heffernan was "going strong" with the best available talent, at the Shamrock Concert Hall. Many men who were in a very small way of business when first I knew them, had laid a sure foundation for a large fortune which in many cases they accumulated. I may mention Henry Watson (Ironmonger), View Point, afterwards a millionaire or very near it. Mr. Pike, who, although handicapped by total blindness, had built an imposing row of offices in Pall Mall, the rents of which must have amounted to a very large sum. Mr. Sullivan, wine merchant, of the Red Store, was talked of as one of the coming politicians: he afterwards fully justified the good opinion the public had of him. Macord and Abbot had an extensive fruit shop adjoining the Lyceum Theatre; and many others I could mention, whose names are now almost forgotten by the few who remain who knew them; but who have no interest for the present generation. When upon the goldfields I was always restless and desirous of

seeing country life. An advertisement calling for tenders for a mail service from Deniliquin to Hay gave me an opportunity. I journeyed thither, tendered for it, but was unsuccessful. Messrs. Marshall and Warning were the fortunate (?) ones. I made arrangements with them to carry it on for them. As it was 90 miles, 50 of which consisted of the Old Man Plain: and the distance had to be covered twice a week, I soon discovered there was not much in it. I managed to do it for five months but was very tired of it before that time expired. Upon my first trip, when nearing the river, I saw at a distance what turned out to be a spring cart driven by Mr. Matthew Palmer (manager of Mungadal, owned by Gideon Lang). He was the first human I had seen since leaving Broadribb's station on the Billabong. In a course of conversation Mr. Palmer remarked "You must be careful not to get off the track or your fate may be that of this poor fellow." He then removed some bagging and disclosed a bleached skeleton, whose bones he had a few days previously discovered on the plain and had now brought in. Lang's Crossing, as Hay was then known, was a very small village. One hotel kept by an American named Leonard; and one small store owned by Captain Cadell, the explorer and navigator, the first man to take a steamer up as far as Gundagai. My old friend, Bob Haverfield, also an explorer, was a resident there. A blacksmith's shop; a doctor, whose name I forget, who made Leonard's his centre ; and the lock-up — with the usual barracks — at that time in charge of that old resident, the late Mr. Benjamin Bradley, then Sergeant. This about describes all there was of Hay. My spare time, part of Saturday and Sunday, was spent at Deniliquin, which was even at that time a lively township, as it was the main crossing over the Edwards for overland stock. A very enterprising townsman, Mr John Taylor, was the life of the town. Besides owning an interest in nearly every business there, baker, blacksmith, butcher, etc., he had a very well kept hotel. He delighted in jokes of all kind, practical for preference. He had two working bullocks, which he used to hire out to cattle men to lead their mobs over the river: for which services the drovers were glad to pay liberally. Upon one occasion the river was in high flood. A drover whose mob was on the other side thought it too dangerous to attempt to cross until it was more within its banks. I heard Taylor trying to persuade him there was no danger. This failed Taylor then offered to bet him £10 that he would ride one of his bullocks over the river. This was accepted and arrangements were agreed to as to the price for leading the mob over. Taylor won his bet, and the cattle crossed without loss. Many tricks and freaks I call to mind connected with John Taylor, the then king of Deniliquin. His hotel was of two stories, with a nice balcony. Upon one occasion he was talking to Mr. McLaren in the upper room. Upon starting to go down the rather narrow stairs, Mr. McLaren happened to be in the lead, Taylor pretended he wanted to get past him. McLaren, who was a broad man, continually blocked him, saying he meant to be down first. An offer to bet a case of champagne was made by the landlord that he would be in the bar first. McLaren, relying upon his breadth, considered it a certainty that he would win, and accepted. Taylor hastened back to the room they had left, climbed over the balcony and slipped down one of the posts, and was in the bar prepared to supply the

champagne when McLaren, very much astonished, arrived. On my return from Lang's Crossing one day, I found the townspeople in a state of excitement. The Bank of New South Wales branch had been burgled and all the gold coins upon the premises stolen. Mr. Miller (afterwards General Manager of the Bank) was then in charge: and Mr. White, then quite a young man, afterwards, I think, the Hon. J. C. White, M.L.C., was the accountant. I forget whether any of the robbers were captured at the time or afterwards, but know that for a considerable time there was a suspect hanging about and spending money freely, principally sovereigns, both at Deniliquin and Moama. I saw this individual go into one of the hotels and call for drinks for the crowd. When payment was due he tapped his chest, which he said was his bank, and the rattle of coin could be distinctly heard. He then threw up a sovereign upon the bar counter. This man was afterwards arrested by the police, suspected of being one of the bank burglars: but there not being sufficient evidence against him he was dismissed. Some months after the robbery Mr. Edward Burrows was taking a stroll along the banks of the Edwards River, accompanied by a little terrier dog. A rat which the terrier was chasing ran into the carcass of a long-time dead bullock, followed by the dog. The extraordinary noise made by the scratching of the dog in the carcass caused Ned Burrows to closely examine it, and it was found to contain over 300 sovereigns. He reported the matter to the police and handed over the coin. Many of his friends blamed him for doing this. However, the Bank of N.S.W. made a claim; and eventually the find was handed over to Mr. Miller. Burrows was liberally rewarded for his honesty. Mr. White, the accountant previously alluded to, passed most of his leisure time in snake hunting. One Saturday afternoon he asked me to accompany him in a walk along the banks of the river. To make the invitation especially attractive, he informed me that he hoped to capture alive some good specimens of the black snake, then very numerous. Without hesitation I firmly declined. I saw him returning from his ramble in the evening. He had been fortunate and had his captive, a very large and vigorous specimen of the black snake, in a bag which he carried in his hand. On the Monday morning following I had occasion to interview Mr. Miller, the manager. When I entered the private, office, I noticed that he looked very pale and uneasy. Enquiring as to his health I was told that he had had a great shock. "When I came into the office this morning," he said, "and was in the act of sitting down, I discovered a large black snake in possession of my chair." As he was aware of Mr. White's peculiarities, he strongly suspected him of having put the reptile there in order to give him a fright. Dr. Jones about this time started the first newspaper — I forget the name of it. A young man named Adams, (now and for many years proprietor of the Albury Banner), was the compositor.

EARLY DAYS IN DENILQUIN.

My bi-weekly trip across the Old Man Plain did not provide much excitement. After riding or driving 360 miles I usually felt more inclined to rest than look for it. Mr John Taylor, to whom I have previously referred, provided the greater portion of the amusement there was to be had at Denilquin. Upon one occasion there was an election — municipal I think. That frivolous gentleman had a party of men working at his farm some few miles away. By some means Taylor discovered that they purposed voting for a candidate that he strenuously opposed; he led them to believe that the person he objected to and they supported was the "man for Galway," and his elected one. He promised to drive out for them upon the evening of the election and so save them a long walk. True to his promise he arrived, driving a tip dray profusely ornamented with calico decoration advising everyone to vote for ————— (the objectionable one). There was no time to spare; the cart was soon loaded up with the willing voters, and a start was made for the township. Between Taylor's farm and Denilquin there was, and I suppose still is, a large lagoon with fairly deep water in places. When that was reached Taylor on pretence of watering his horse, drove well into the waterhole. When he thought he had reached a fair depth, about four feet, he watched his chance to have a fair weight behind, then took out the lynch pin of the front and deposited his cargo in the lagoon: then pretending his horse had bolted, cleared out and left the voters up to their shoulders in water. By the time the party had reached their camp and changed their clothes it was too late to think of voting. Thus was lost substantial support to one of the candidates. Sometimes in crossing the Plain, the monotony of my trip would be relieved. Mobs of fat cattle from the lower Lachlan would sometimes start from Hay in the evening to drive through the night the forty miles between that village and the Black Swamp, about 10 miles north of Wanganella. This swamp after a thunder storm would generally hold some water for the stock — very acceptable to them after their long night drive. Among the drovers was a fine looking young Irishman named Murphy. He was generally in charge of Messrs. Maiden and Denny's fat cattle. Upon one occasion I saw his camp at the swamp, and of course went over for a yarn. I noticed one of the young drovers looking very pale and out of condition. Upon my enquiring as to the cause, Mr. Murphy called my attention to a recently killed black snake. It seems that when the cattle had their drink and were resting after the long drive, most of the drovers took a sleep. This young man had selected for his siesta a good sized salt-bush. When the Cook went round to tell the sleeping ones breakfast was ready for them, he saw about a foot of the tail end of the snake at this man's foot; the rest of the reptile was inside the leg of his mole skin trousers. Very thoughtfully and without waking the slumberer he went for Murphy. A consultation was held and this plan was decided upon. Murphy, ascertaining as nearly as, possible the locality of the snakes head, was to grasp it: the cook was then to cut away the trousers and give Murphy a chance to draw the snake out. This was successfully accomplished before the youth had

awakened. The lad naturally suffered a severe shock and was still suffering when I asked him, what was the matter with him? Notwithstanding occasional relief, the monotony of the long ride was very depressing; for miles sometimes I was accompanied by packs of native dogs, their hideous yell being most unpleasant. I often thought if this is life in the bush I prefer the goldfields. Usually the trips across the plain were done at night time, thus avoiding the intense heat. Emus, alarmed no doubt by my sudden appearance, would scamper off along the gravelly track, giving it a strange and weird appearance. Sparks of fire, caused by the rapid motion of their feet amongst the stones, arose vividly as they ran. After my first trip I was frequently asked—" Did you meet the headless trooper riding a trotting cob?" I afterwards learned the meaning of this strange query. Many assured me that the stretch of country between the Black Swamp and the Pine Ridge was haunted by a ghost which had been seen by many of the drovers and travellers across the plain. About that time I think I saw more of the locality than anyone else, and at all hours; but I never had the pleasure of meeting the headless trooper or any other ghost. There is no doubt that dozens of people at both ends of the plains firmly believed in the legend. Shortly after my first trip I met a Mr. Williams, one of two brothers who had a cattle station some miles north of Hay. In the course of conversation he remarked: "If ever you get off the track at night time and cannot find it, if you steer a course between the Magellan clouds you will pull up very close to Deniliquin." I thanked him, but felt sure that I would not intentionally leave the slightly marked road. About a fortnight after this conversation I was riding through the Pine Ridge, and thought it time I had a smoke. I laid the reins upon my horse's wither and struck a match: the sudden illumination frightened the animal, and off he went full gallop. I had some difficulty in finding the reins, which had fortunately caught between the horse's ears. When I regained command I must have been quite a mile from the track. After using nearly all the matches I had in trying to find the road, I made up my mind to camp until daylight. Then I remembered the advice of Mr. Williams: I could just discern the clouds that were to be my guide. After rather a rough and anxious ride of many miles, about daylight I saw the Edwards River timber, which made me very thankful. Messrs. Pippen and Broadribb, not receiving their mails, supposed I was lost on the plain, and the latter gentleman sent into Deniliquin to inform the authorities. His messenger returned with my thanks to him for his thoughtfulness.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 13 [13<sup>th</sup> November 1908, p5]

Whilst deliberating as to my future moments, I heard of a little township on the river called Wagga Wagga, which was said to be slowly but steadily progressing. I therefore determined to inspect. With that object in view, I purchased from Mr.

Tom Richards (then managing a small station near Hay belonging to Messrs. M'Evoy, and afterwards of Buckingbong) a brumby to carry me and my worldly goods to that township. Arriving at North Wagga I put up at a Hotel kept by Mr. John Fennell, a thorough "White Man," and my steadfast friend for ever after. Through his instrumentality I was introduced to Mr. Fowler Boyd Price, founder and then owner of the "Wagga Express." This very popular gentleman had inherited a property in England and purposed realising on his Wagga belongings prior to leaving Australia. He wanted someone to make up his accounts and otherwise arrange his Wagga business. After an interview, a mutually satisfactory agreement was made, and my time was very profitably employed for some three or four weeks. This work brought me under the notice of Mr. George Forsyth who wanted a bookkeeper. That is how my engagement came about. In the meantime preparation was being made by a few of the residents of Wagga to visit a rush to the Snowy River, where good gold was reported. As I had determined to see that district, my arrangements with Forsyth and Co. gave me three months clear. I joined the party, each paying a fixed sum to the promoters and owners of the dray and team of horses, Mr. Job. Blythe (Blacksmith), and a relative of his — Brooker (driver). In due course the party reached the foot of "Talbingo" where we found our first serious check. Hundreds of miners were camped at the foot of the hill awaiting their turn to be drawn up by one of the two teams of bullocks kept for that purpose by the owners of a shanty and refreshment tent. A beautifully clear and moonlight night induced me to leave the somewhat crowded camp to pass the night at the foot of the big hill. In the midst, of my reflections I heard a voice addressing the hill thus. "Well old man, I have seen Lobb's Hole, Razor Back, and a few more of what they call hills, but you can take my word for it you are all their "daddies." The hill was at that time in its natural state, save that a narrow track had been made by the few teams that had been dragged up for a few days previously. The next day a team of eight bullocks was attached to our party's dray, and each of the party was expected to carry in his hand a block of wood to place behind the wheel when the bullocks were halted for a spell. In the worst portion of the hill the halts were frequent — say every eight or ten yards. Sometimes, however, good progress would be made — say twenty to thirty yards. In many places, however, the track was very narrow, and upon either side could occasionally be seen the remains or vehicles that had toppled over and smashed up. The distance from the top to the bottom of the hill was, if I remember rightly, about one and a half miles; and it was sundown or very near it when we struggled to the top — starting from the foot after lunch. We found Kiandra a very busy place. We reached it upon the day that the unfortunate Daniel Boon and the Jew Boy had met in the pugilistic ring. The former, although of perfect physique and a heavy-weight, had been completely defeated by the active little Jew Boy. I thought I had seen the most complete contrast of men gentlemen, and blackguards upon the other goldfields I had wandered over, but to use the words of the old miner at the foot of Talbingo, I can say to the Snowy River "You are all their daddies." Near where I was camped was a canvas store kept by Mr. Cowper, for many years sheriff, and I think, son of the

gentleman known in politics as "Slippery Charlie." Many detectives were sent up from both Sydney and Melbourne, and a dozen of the "wanted" ones were arrested and forwarded to their several destinations. My short leave soon expired and I returned to Wagga to take up my duties with the before-mentioned firm. During my short absence I found that Mr. F. Boyd Price had sold, on very liberal terms, the "Wagga Express" to Messrs. Bentley and Rogerson, two young men who were previously compositors in his employ. During my engagement with Forsyth and Co. I made many acquaintances, and I hope some friends. In the former list I may include a Mr. William Marshall, who informed me that he owned a small station and a public house known as The Rock, near Temora, and that he was also interested in two large unstocked runs not very far from the Merool for which he was desirous to find a purchaser, the price for the two runs being fixed at £100. I placed the particulars before a friend, and we arranged that, accompanied by Mr. Marshall and his friend, Robert Sproule, we would pay the country a visit at the earliest opportunity. A week's leave of absence being obtained by me, Mr. Vincent and I made a start. On arrival at The Rock Mr. Marshall informed us that he had never seen the runs himself, but that Mr. Sproule, who had been out there gathering wild cattle and horses two or three times, would accompany the party and act as guide. Providing ourselves with two or three days' supply we made a start from the Merool Creek, a little west of Mr. Geo. Hannah's run. A cloudy day made it difficult to strike a direct line to our destination. Marshall and Sproule took the lead; the former I noticed frequently dismounted and placed his compass on the ground. This we found to have been roughly used and rendered unreliable. My companion re-marked to me, "These men are travelling by guesswork, and if they continue as they have been going for any length of time we shall find ourselves not far from where we camped last night." I suggested that he should speak to them on the subject. This he declined to do; I presume being contrary to bush etiquette. However, as I felt no such feeling on the matter, I rode on and enquired if they were sure they were going in the required direction to Buddagower and Wallandry. I was assured we were. Towards evening young Mr. Vincent called my attention to some red earth, which he informed me was the bank of the Merool Creek, and not far distant from our camping spot of the previous night. I was about to again interview our guides when I noticed that Sproule had dismounted, and was busily engaged jumping upon his hat. When we reached him he informed me that my mate was correct and we would have to camp at our resting place of the night before.

This lost day, of course, made a great difference in our ration bags; consequently for the next day or two we were upon short supply. During the day's ride we could occasionally see a few head of wild cattle in the scrub; but there must have been hundreds there, judging by the numerous tracks. Sproule proposed making for a Coolamon hole for the third night's camp. When that was reached it was quite dry. No water and very little rations offered a very discouraging prospect; and I began to think how much more comfortable I should feel at Wagga. Sproule then said he knew of another hole in the hills, about three miles farther on. When we reached

this, my companions, all trained bush men, seemed very pleased to see a clear liquid left in the Coolamon hole. Of course, I also was glad of the prospect of a drink. I saw my mates upon their knees, apparently enjoying themselves. I took one mouthful, but quickly returned it, as it was quite salt. These bush men then told me that although the liquid was slightly brackish, when made into billy tea the objectionable taste was entirely absent. I did not find such to be the case: so I prepared to pass a thirsty night, and hoped for better luck next day. About midnight I saw a few passing clouds, and a little later a nice steady shower commenced to fall. My mates were all asleep; and I fixed all the saddles on the limbs of fallen trees, and collected all the pannikins, billies, and everything that would hold water, and placed them to catch the dripping water from the saddles. I succeeded in securing about three quarts. After indulging in a drink, I put the billy on and invited my companions to a drink of tea. Although they assured me they were not thirsty, they seemed to dispose of the liquid with a great amount of relish. The last of our rations was discussed at breakfast next morning. I sincerely hoped that Merool Creek would be our objective; but the majority decided that, as we had spent so much time upon the trip, it was advisable to make another effort to discover the Buddigower Run. When attention was called to the empty condition of the ration bag, Mr Marshall said that a very old friend of his was looking after a flock of sheep belonging to a widow, Mrs Hardy — a sister, I heard, of the late Chief Justice Stephen. He was quite sure that we could obtain some bread and meat from him. About noon we came upon a shepherd's hut, which Marshall identified as the country residence of his friend. Of course, the man was away with his flock. We secured our horses, five in all, near the hut. Marshall in the meantime was very busy exploring the meat cask, and soon had some salt mutton over the fire. We had a very satisfying meal; but when I saw the unused balance of bread and meat disappear in our bags, I asked Marshall if he had authority for so acting. He replied, "Certainly; my old friend would be much annoyed if we came here hungry, and did not help ourselves." He further stated that it was his intention to leave a note and payment for what we had taken. Whether he did so or not I cannot say. All hope of finding the runs being at an end, a start was made south — very much to my satisfaction. Whilst our party had been doing this exploring business, we found upon our returning to Mr. Sproule's house that the police had met some of Frank Gardner's gang near Sproule's; one of them leading a pack horse carrying the spoils stolen by them from a hawker's van. The pack horse was wounded and the goods recovered, but Johnny Gilbert had made good his escape. Mrs. Sproule (mother of our mate) appeared very much upset and showed us the marks of several bullets in the garden palings, and also in the slabs of the house. My friend and I soon reached Wagga. The day following our return I met the Sergeant and remarked that I saw very few of the police about. They started yesterday, he informed me, as a report had come in that Gardner's gang had stuck up a hawker and cleared away with one of his horses and all his goods, and that tracks of five horses had been picked up on the north of Merool Creek.



Also that a shepherd's hut had been burgled and all his rations stolen; and that the tracks of the five horses were very distinct outside the hut. I thought it wisdom to say nothing about our visit out there; and so ended that trip of exploration. I heard about two years ago that one of the runs (Buddigower) had been sold for many thousands.

OLD-TIME MEMORIES – 14 [20<sup>th</sup> November 1908, p5]

### OLD NARANDERA.

After a residence in and near Wagga covering about four or five years, I determined upon removing to Narandera. It was then a very small village; two hotels — The Royal and Riverina, one store (Mr. Fredk. Savage's), a blacksmith's shop (Josiah King's), a police barracks (in charge of Sergeant Graham), and one or two private dwellings constituted the township. The corner allotment now adorned by the old Post Office building was then used as the pound-yard, and the whole of the sandhills north of the pound yard was a dense scrub, interspersed by a few pine and honeysuckle trees. Mr. James Flood, sen., resided upon the bank of the creek now called Waterview. At that time the building was used as the home station and store of the Narandera and Midgeon runs, both of which that gentleman owned. There was also a Mr. Know Ellis who had erected a store and other buildings upon the flat, south of the sandhill now forming Larmer Street. These buildings and their contents suffered considerably from floods occurring about the mid-sixties; and were completely destroyed by the great flood of 1870. The area from opposite and parallel to the Royal Hotel up to about Duval's chemist shop was a very much neglected vineyard; adjoining that was the very primitive police barracks. The only means Sergeant Graham had of securing suspected criminals was by chaining them to a log like a butcher's block, which was then a fixture upon what is now Mr T. H. Elwin's mart. Mr. Henry Baylis, P.M., used to make an official monthly visit, if anything special required magisterial attention. Mr. T. H. Browne (Rolf Bolderwood) managing partner of Bundidjarie run, also made frequent visits to the town-ship.

Narandera at that time was a sort of suburb to Wagga. Most of the required supplies were obtained from thence; but from the earliest days of settlement it was evident to the observant, that being so centrally situated, the township must progress and attract the necessary population to enable it to dispense with the assistance of Wagga and enter vigorously into the business of improvement. Religious service were held quarterly, weather permitting, in a hall dividing the parlors of the Royal; Magisterial Courts were held in the same place. About the year 1866 there were two or three brothers named Halbisch [?] in the employ of Mr. J. H. Lupton, of Berembed. One of these young men, whilst engaged in his duties at the northern part of the run, picked up what seemed to him specimens of

gold-bearing quartz. He showed these to two American drovers, named Fraser and Hunt, and to a smart stockman employed at Berrembed named Charley Farnham. After a tour of inspection a mining lease was applied for, and work to develop the discovered reef commenced. A jovial party was invited to attend the christening ceremony. The "Countess of Belmore " was the name bestowed upon the hidden treasure; and with every wish of for their success the guests retired, leaving the firm of Fraser, Hunt, and Farnham to open their golden claim. Some few months afterwards, the residents and a sprinkling of travellers' were assembled in the new billiard room erected by the enterprising landlord of the Royal (Mr. John Clark) in the back yard of the hotel. This building would be considered rather primitive and barbarous in these advanced times, but then it was considered quite a progressive speculation. The sides were composed of sawn timber, and the roof of bark. The billiard table, a very ancient one, was upon blocks of timber sunk into the earth, visible perhaps to the present day. As before remarked, nearly all the residents of the township and a few travellers were there assembled, when entered Messrs Hunt and Fraser. The former carried in his hand a parcel which he explained he wished to exhibit. The contents proved to be some hundreds of pieces of quartz, each containing glittering samples of gold, and said to be from the Countess of Belmore reef. Many of the specimens contained more gold than quartz, and the lucky were congratulated upon their seeming good fortune. Hunt started that night with his parcel of specimens for Melbourne — at that time a long and expensive trip. The next day several residents of the town went out and marked claims upon what they presumed was the line of the reef, and awaited further developments. Hunt arrived with his parcel of specimens, and got a number of Bendigo quartz reef experts at Clelland's Hotel in Bourke Street. They were very much impressed, and sent a delegate back with Hunt. This man must have favorably reported upon the prospects, as a sum — some thousands of pounds — was offered for the claim. The prospectors, however, were not satisfied, and wished to hold a number of shares themselves. A lengthy correspondence ensued, which eventually proved fatal to Messrs. Hunt and Company. The pioneers put on some few men, expecting to further develop the reef. In this they were, grievously disappointed, as the spur from which the specimens were obtained petered out, and no reef could be found. The party, though very depressed in spirits, continued for some twelve months trying to discover the reef, and eventually ended in bankruptcy. The last time I saw the "Countess" it had a most forlorn appearance, having fallen in in several places. Some two years after the collapse of the "Countess," a rumor was heard that another and very superior reef had been discovered at Cowabee, and a party was made up from Narandera to investigate.

About this time a syndicate had been formed at Wagga to develop the river trade. They determined to purchase a steamer for that purpose, and decided to close with the offer of Captain Dorwood, owner of the Str. Victoria; one of the conditions of purchase being that the steamer was to be delivered on or before a certain date. The Captain and owner (an old Moama friend of mine) reached within a few miles of Narandera fully three weeks before the stipulated date, when unfortunately he was

blocked for want of water, and it seemed altogether a forlorn hope that he would reach Wagga in time. His good luck however did not desert him, for within a fortnight copious rains fell which enabled him to fulfil his contract. During the fortnight of his enforced visit I was much puzzled as to how I could entertain him. The rumor of the wonderful show at the Cowabee reef came to my assistance. With Mr. T. A. Browne, he and I decided on a trip to the reef. When we arrived we found some hundreds of visitors already there. Our little party commenced to examine the heap of quartz already raised by Messrs. Pike and Meurant. We were advised by one of the prospectors to go to a particular heap which he pointed out to us. Comfortably seated we commenced our investigations and we were interestedly occupied for quite an hour. Upon an average every third or fourth stone displayed the glittering metal. We were invited to inspect the shaft, and being each supplied with a candle, we were directed to take especial notice of spots indicated by Mr. Meurant during our descent. At fully half-a-dozen spots a view of gold could be seen upon close inspection. Quite satisfied that a highly payable reef had been discovered we each decided to mark out and apply for a mining lease, which entailed an outlay of six pounds each. Captain Dorwood, like many others, was quite excited over the prospects looming in the near future. He told me that he was intimately acquainted with some experienced and speculative miners in Bendigo, and he purposed writing them particulars of his visit to the Cowabee reef. This I know he did, and I believe this report of his was the cause of a visit of inspection shortly afterwards made by some Bendigo miners, who offered Messrs Pike and Company ten thousand pounds for the reef, and gave them a fortnight to decide whether they would accept or decline. After this offer was made Mr. Pike went over to see Mr. Roberts, then manager for Mr. Edward Flood at Midgeon. That shrewd man of business advised Pike not to hesitate a moment, but accept the offer; but his advice was not favorably considered, for, said Pike, " I think I should be doing an injustice to my young and large family in taking this offer" — which was eventually declined. Within twelve months the golden spur was lost; and as in Hunt and Fraser's case the reef was deserted, and remains to this day as they left it. Should these records of years ago induce any experienced and speculative miners to further explore and develop these reefs and so improve the promising prospects of this district, I shall feel very pleased at being a factor in so desirable a result.

