

**WWDHS  
NEWSLETTER  
No. 458  
Jan. 2024–Mar. 2024  
ISSN 2207-1016**

**NEXT MEETINGS**

**The society's next meetings will be held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at the Museum of the Riverina, Willans Hill site.**

**Committee meeting at 1.30 p.m.  
General Meeting at 2.00 p.m.**

**Guest Speaker: TBA**

**COMMITTEE**

President: Geoff Burch  
Vice President: Geoff Haddon  
Secretary: Mark Christison  
Treasurer: Geoff Burch

Committee Members: Brian Andrews, Judy Buik, Margaret Hill, Leanne Diessel, Craig Dixon, Dianna Lovett, Peter Morris, Sherry Morris, Margaret Nowlan-Jones, Rhonda Reedy, Margaret Walsh.

**Dates to remember:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024 [Easter Saturday] – Bunnings Sausage Sizzle – volunteers needed.

**Our feature article in this edition is from member Mark Christison who traces the history of an interesting old photograph. In addition, Sherry Morris has provided an interesting article on Sister Annie Catherine Cameron.**

**WWDHS Patron: Michael McCormack,  
Federal Member for Riverina,**

**WAGGA WAGGA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.  
PO BOX 90, WAGGA WAGGA. 2650.**

**President:** Geoff Burch [mob. 0417 277 592]

**Vice-President:** Geoff Haddon

See society website for additional information.

**Newsletter Editor:** Sherry Morris

**Email:** info@wwdhs.org.au

**Web site:** www.wwdhs.org.au

**Committee meetings:** 3rd Monday of the month

**General meetings:** 3rd Monday of the month

**Annual Subscriptions:** Single: \$20, Couple: \$30.  
**Due on 1st July each year.**

**Disclaimer:** The Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society Inc., and/or its members, through this newsletter, endeavours to provide accurate and reliable information, but does not warrant or make any representation regarding the accuracy or reliability of information contained within this newsletter. To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, the Society and/or its members shall not be liable for any damages of any kind relating to the use of this information, including without limitation, direct, indirect, special, compensatory, or consequential damages, loss of profits or damage to property, even if the Society and/or its members have been advised of the possibility of such damages. Anyone acting on the information contained within this newsletter does so at their own risk.

## HAPPENINGS

### RAHS Annual Conference

The RAHS 2023 Annual Conference was held at Wagga Wagga over the weekend of Saturday the 21st and Sunday the 22nd of October. The conference venue was the Mirage Room at the Wagga Wagga RSL Club [great people to deal with].

The main event was preceded by a pre-conference welcome on a Friday evening, held in the Historic Council Chambers.

Saturday afternoon concluded with a tour of the new Museum of the Riverina complex up on Willans Hill, followed by a dinner in the Mirage Room that same evening.

The conference and the pre-conference reception were both very successful thanks to the support of many people. The MoR and the Wagga Wagga City Council were very supportive of the event and the conference would not have been possible without their support.

A big thank you to our local speakers at the conference – Sam Leah, Michelle Maddison, and Bill Speirs – who all gave fantastic presentations.



**Above:** WWDHS members at the conference. [L to R] Geoff Haddon, Margaret Nowlan-Jones; Mark Christison; Geoff Burch; Sherry Morris; Peter Morris.

**Coolamon Ganmain Farmers Review** – Trove continues to post more editions of this newspaper online. The WWDHS has contributed \$1,000 towards stage 1 of this project, which will cover the period 1906-1918. WWDHS has contributed another \$1,000 towards stage 2, which is yet to be finalized with the NSW State Library. Details will be advised as soon as they are finalised.

### **Museum of the Riverina**

Road works on Lord Baden Powell Drive are mostly completed, and, importantly, access over the hill is restored. We have started to move back into our archives room at the site and will continue the process in the new year. It has been a difficult year for the staff at the Mor and they will be keen to re-engage with the public in 2024.

### **Bunnings Sausage Sizzle**

A very successful sausage sizzle was held at Bunnings on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Thanks to those members who volunteered on the day – Peter Morris [chief cook]; Geoff Haddon; John and Leanne Diessel; Peter McCallum; and Margaret Walsh. Thank you to my daughter, Bianca, my son-in-law, Lyam Jones, and my grandson, Luke – who all helped on the day.

Thanks to Bunnings for providing this valuable community program. Thanks to Riverina Ice for their support. Funds raised on the day will go towards one of the society's 2024 projects. Bunnings has given us another date for 2024 – 30<sup>th</sup> March [Easter Saturday], which should be another good day.



**Above:** Bunnings sausage sizzle – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2023.

### **Xmas Party 2023.**

The WWDHS Xmas party [December 2023] was held at the Uranquinty Hotel. It was a very cosy and enjoyable day with eighteen members in attendance. The food and the service was great. Thanks to Geoff Haddon who suggested the venue.



**Above:** Xmas party at the Uranquinty hotel [December 2023].



**Above:** Some of the people who attended the combined Coolamon and Wagga Wagga Historical Societies meeting in November, at Coolamon. [L to R] Mark Christison, Ian Penfold, Geoff Haddon, Marc Canino, Margaret Walsh, Geoff Burch.

# “Dudley” Does Wagga Wagga’: A Photographic Moment in Time - A Journey of Research into the Vice-Regal Visit to Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm, 1924

by Mark Christison

In order to see more of the behind-the-scenes operations and collection of the Charles Sturt University Regional Archives, particularly following its June 2023 reopening, the author attended, as part of a community group, a guided tour [1], along with approximately twenty others, led by the Manager, Regional Archives and University Art Collection, Wayne Doubleday. Following an informative introduction, the group moved through large double doors to the ‘unseen’ vast collection. As one walked through the doors, one hoped there was not someone on the other side about to say, “Thank God, you’re here!” After viewing numerous different sections on one floor, the group was led to a lower floor into a sealed-off area. This area included carefully organised shelving housing numerous old newspapers from various areas of the Riverina including an original copy of ‘*The Wagga Wagga Advertiser*’ from 10 December 1868 and subsequent copies [now the ‘*Daily Advertiser*’]. A couple of original papers from significant dates had been laid out for the careful viewing by group members.

Having seen and researched old newspapers in the past and being at the rear of the group, the author’s gaze wandered to some carefully placed framed items against a wall. Seen from a distance of at least five metres, was a framed, black and white ‘vintage’ panoramic photograph of a rural scene containing outbuildings and including a group of people. When asked as to what was this a photograph, a member of the group gave it a quickish semi-perusal stating it looked to be a picture of “Lord Dudley” at “Wagga Experiment Farm in 1924”. The group moved on to another section and the author did not get to move more closely to inspect the panoramic photograph. However, one’s mind had immediately known the name “Lord Dudley” from “somewhere” and an investigative appetite had been whetted – ‘Who is this fellow, “Dudley”? What was he doing at the Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm? Why was he even in Wagga Wagga? When in 1924 was he in Wagga Wagga? Was he on his way to somewhere else? What did he actually do in Wagga Wagga? For how long? Where had he come from to get here? How did he get here? Where did he go from Wagga Wagga? Who was with him? ...and why? Any particular purpose in how the photograph had been ‘posed’/constructed...? Why was this photograph taken? By whom? Intended audience? Historical questions kept on rolling. Burgeoning intellectual stimulation led to internet inquiry initially to confirm who “Lord Dudley” was, why he was in Wagga and what he was doing etc as above. Very quickly one was reminded of who “Lord Dudley” actually was

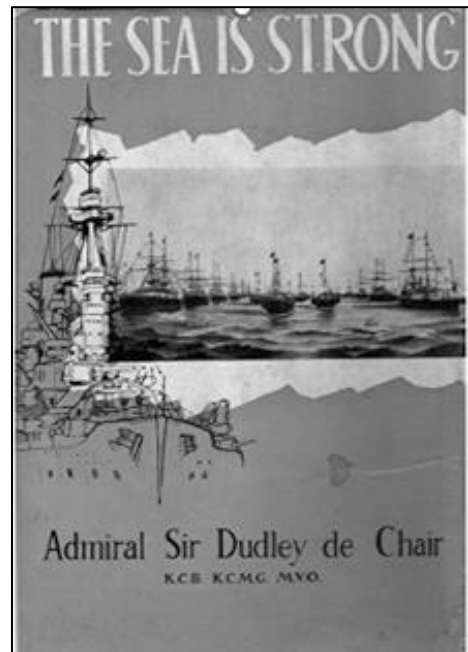
– i.e. the fourth Governor-General of Australia 1908-1911 [born 25/5/1867 died 29/6/1932] – a British aristocrat, politician and military officer. At least he was alive in 1924 – but having long departed Australia. As it wasn’t he, who was it at the Wagga Experiment Farm? [2]

Online research quickly happened upon another “Dudley”! Admiral Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford de Chair KCB KCMG MVO – a senior Royal Navy officer AND, later, Governor of New South Wales... whose period as Governor, 1924- 1930, included 1924! Further, the online reference showed pictures of him with one of them, as fate would have it, a segment of the panorama photograph from 1924! This segment from the panorama had been published in the *Daily Advertiser* [Wagga Wagga] February 8, 2020 but on a phone screen nothing could be seen beyond the pictured segment with a title for the photograph shown underneath “*MOMENT: A visit to the Wagga Experiment Farm in 1924 by the Governor of NSW Admiral Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford De Chair, KCB, MVO. Picture: Brian Walsh*” [3]

Well, soon historical curiosity would be easily resolved by heading off to the Wagga Wagga City Library. Retrieve the *Daily Advertiser* of February 8, 2020 and read the rest of the article which related to the photograph.... How simple is this! With the helpful staff at the library, the microfiche reader was set up with the *Daily Advertiser* from the relevant period and scrolled through and there it was! – a segment of the panoramic photograph – BUT that was all that was

there – the segment of the photograph and the caption. The rest of that page dealt with events occurring in 1970 and 1995 - it being the well-regarded and still running historical page with events from 25 and 50 years ago... and, in this case, with a nice historical photograph to boot! One thought that all would have been revealed thinking someone had already acquired and presented all the information regarding the picture and event and its background, participants and purpose – alas...not so ... only further sparking one’s queries....

Numerous nights and days on Trove ensued. Early in these pursuits, implementing the idea of ‘going straight to the horse’s mouth’ itself, with a copy of Dudley de Chair’s memoirs – de Chair, Admiral Sir Dudley K.C.B. K.C.M.G. M.V.O.; with a preface and epilogue by Somerset De Chair, *The Sea Is Strong*, George G. Harrap, London 1961 being sourced and ordered. Duly the book arrived with keen anticipation present that much about de Chair’s time as Governor of NSW, including his trip to Wagga Wagga, would be revealed. Just as one’s earlier anticipation that all would be revealed through the 2020 Daily Advertiser, de Chair’s memoir, *The Sea Is Strong*, contained just two references to de Chair’s Governorship of NSW – two lines in the foreword by his son, Somerset de Chair, with a further four lines on p239 in the one page Epilogue where, regarding events after the Armistice of 1918, it is determined by his son, that “The account of these activities seem to me, and to the publishers of this memoir, to belong to such a different way of life that they should be left to a separate book. This one is the story of one of Jellicoe’s admirals – a breed of men as legendary as Nelson’s, and no less significant. Their trade was war; and they were highly successful at it.” [4] The published memoir thus did not address any of the questioning areas – what was he doing in Wagga Wagga and all the other historical questions... So where to now? The drums were clearly beating to return to the CSU Regional Archives to access the photograph and forensically inspect the picture myself given that answers to questioning were not revealing themselves... thus, off to the CSU Regional Archives [13th September 2023] to hold and closely look at the photo, read any inscriptions on it and to photograph it as allowed. Jillian of the Archives staff greeted me pleasantly and listened attentively to my request to view this framed photograph. Using encyclopaedic type knowledge of the archives collection, she retrieved the said framed panoramic photograph.



*Initially, the photo was seen at a greater distance than as pictured here. (All photos of original photograph, unless otherwise specified, were taken by Jillian Salzke and Mark Christison Source CSU Regional Archives)*

Inspection of the photograph clearly revealed the following caption in handwritten white on the surface of the photograph “Sir Dudley. And. Lady de Chair. At. Experimental. Farm. Wagga. N.S.W. Aug. 28th. 1924.” The actual month and day of the month in 1924 were now clear. According to the photograph, the Governor of NSW was at the Experimental Farm and in Wagga Wagga 28th August 1924!



As the photograph was carefully further inspected, archives staff assisted in identifying some other potential sources of information. A general reference authority used regularly for routine inquiry into the history of the Experimental Farm was retrieved, i.e. June Sutherland, *From Farm Boys to PhDs: Agricultural Education at Wagga Wagga (1896 - 1996)*, Charles Sturt University, 1996. [5] Following joint reference to ‘*A Guide to State Archives at CSU Regional Archives 2014*’, Jillian returned with a number of aged, thick, heavy ledger type books which related to records of the Farm and its correspondence with the NSW Department of Agriculture. [6] The comment was passed that there were 28 volumes and, as one sank back into the chair aghast at that prospect, it was reported that only the last one covered the period including 1924. Phew! It was about 6cm [over 2”] thick with many hundreds of very thin almost transparent pages being the remaining pages from duplicate or triplicate carbon copied records. The cudgel was taken up with archives gloves and searching commenced. Another of the tomes about 6cm thick revealed nothing whilst the other was largely invoices, staff leave approvals and queries about the cost or number of items ordered and seeking the farm to provide explanation... classic bureaucratic stuff! Interestingly, in one case, where “a stallion and filly had to be shod” by a farrier from outside the employ of the Farm who had been engaged to resolve the issue which had been called into question by the NSW Department of Agriculture. The farm official had replied to the Department to state that, given the needs of the animals and that no on-farm personnel had been available on duty AND that the animals needed to be shod “in time for the Wagga Show it was necessary to utilise the services of a town tradesman”. [7] Additionally, as part of a sick leave approval for a staff member at the Experiment Farm the approver noted that 27<sup>th</sup> August [1924] was not to be included in the number of days sick leave as “27<sup>th</sup> August observed as public holiday (Wagga Show) in lieu of August Bank Holiday.” [8] Clearly, in 1924, at that time on the Experiment Farm and in Wagga Wagga – there was ‘no business-like Show business!’! However, no reference in any of these tomes to the Governor’s visit, itinerary, purpose or farm visit was found.



Reference was found online to the modern-day restoration of a “seven passenger imperial limousine”. “The car was fully imported from the USA, reputedly for the use of the NSW Governor, Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair.” [9] Here was a huge find about the large black car in the middle right of the panorama! Further investigation established that it may well have been de Chair’s vice-regal vehicle during his Governorship but, though similar in style, it is NOT the

vehicle, in the panoramic photograph at Experimental Farm, Wagga Wagga. The restored Buick 29/X50L built in Detroit USA – is the 1929 model – and one recalls that the Experimental Farm photograph was taken in 1924... five years earlier!



**Identification of which persons are the Governor and Lady De Chair** - even eBay had several Sir Dudley de Chair [and Lady De Chair] photographs shown including him alongside a range of people – Lady de Chair, daughter Elaine, other dignitaries, visiting military personnel, official openings and so on with numerous pictures also available with varying or indeterminable copyright situations from archive and library collections online lending themselves for use in identifying possible persons in the Experiment Farm photograph. Inspection of numerous photographs shows that the man second from our right in the hat holding the walking stick/cane is Governor Sir Dudley De Chair [Person 9] with the female next to him being Lady Enid De Chair [Person 8].

#### **Who are the rest of the people constituting the group photographed?**

The **Lady in Black [Person 7]** – The *Daily News* [Perth, W.A.] reported 30<sup>th</sup> January 1924 with reference to the De Chair's younger two children, Elaine born 7 April 1907 and Somerset born 22 August 1911, that they were not leaving the United Kingdom until August 1924 [10] to steam to Australia. Dudley De Chair's unpublished memoirs relating to his life beyond his naval career informed that Somerset was to be enrolled in the King's School, Parramatta upon arrival.

[11] Could the children have arrived in Sydney and been able to travel [by train?] from Sydney to Wagga Wagga to join the parents they'd not seen since January? Or, at least the elder of the two, Elaine, at 17 years and 4 months could actually have been there? Could this be Elaine in the heavy black coat? Elaine, the daughter of a highly capable and modern woman in Lady De Chair, went on to contribute to community organisations along with her mother and worked as an actress in Australia appearing in *'The Cheaters'*, an early Australian movie made by the McDonagh sisters and, later, in British productions. How rewarding to be able to identify 'The Lady in Black'! However, just as the black car in the 1924 photograph was not the restored 1929 model, Dr Anne Sanders reports that Elaine De Chair was with her brother spending three months prior to their arrival in Australia December 1924 with relatives of her mother [who was born in South Africa and had lived on a farm there].[12] It is thus quite likely that Lady De Chair knew much more about farms and farming than her naval hero husband who had earlier in 1924 publicly admitted he knew little about sheep.[13] Identification of the Lady in Black – remained a work in progress...

Before proceeding further, the author spoke regarding the photograph with Peter Gissing and Brian Andrews, both with long term community contributions to matters historical in Wagga Wagga and its community in general. In short, to share the unintended find of the historic photograph and a range of historical inquiries related to it were being worked through – not the least of which was, who was in it? Peter Gissing looked at it and immediately exclaimed, "Well that one is my grandfather!" A jaw dropping moment. "Yes, Harry Gissing, H.E. Gissing", "... his name was Henry but was known as Harry." What an amazing experience to share. It was like, in the presence of the grandson, the grandfather leaping out from the static photograph providing a tangible link to

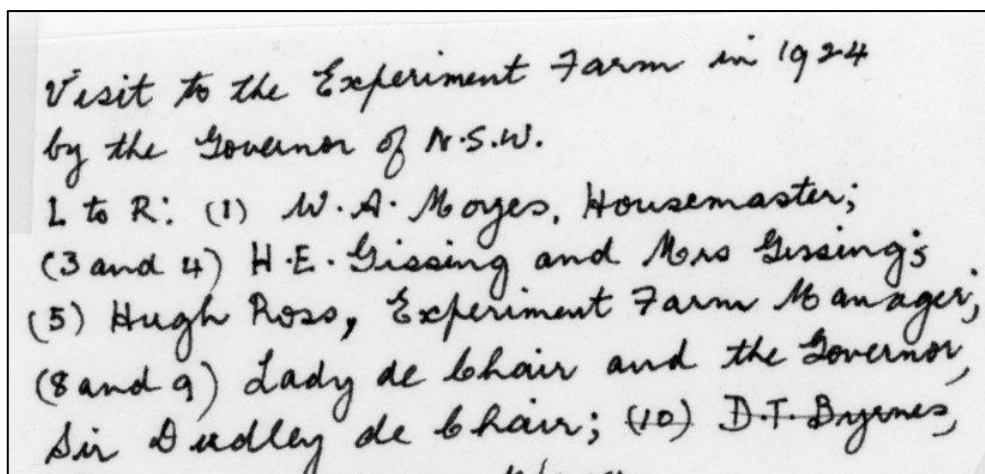


the present! Peter Gissing had identified the male, third from the left. Generalised conversation ensued which included Peter being informed that the picture, as had been in the *Daily Advertiser* 8 Feb 2020, showed just approximately twenty per cent of the full panoramic photograph! Peter offered to check if he had anything else regarding the picture. That evening an email arrived from Peter Gissing containing a copy of Peter's own original print of the section of the panorama which had appeared in the *Daily Advertiser*.



*A segment of the full panoramic photograph of Governor of NSW Visit to Experiment Farm, Wagga Wagga 28 August 1924. Source Peter Gissing*

Peter had attached one more attachment which left the author speechless! i.e. the one following...



*Notation of the reverse side of the photograph of A segment of the full panoramic photograph of Governor of NSW Visit to Experiment Farm, Wagga Wagga 28 August 1924. "Somebody had thought to write it down on the back..." [Peter Gissing September 2023] Source: Peter Gissing*

A serendipitous follow-on from a talk earlier that afternoon at a Wagga Wagga and District Historical Society meeting by Brian Andrews, who was present in the earlier conversation, about, not only aspects of his own family's story, but of the imperative to 'write it down now' to be there for the future generations.... A lesson demonstrated clearly here!

Working left to right, there was now identification with reliable provenance that, of the ten people in the photograph, Person 1 is W.A. Moyes, Housemaster at Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm; Person 2 not identified; Persons 3 and 4 H.E. Gissing and Mrs Gissing (Ethel Gissing [nee Booty]); Person 5 Hugh Ross, Experiment Farm Manager; Person 6 not identified; Person 7 The Lady in Black... still not identified; Persons 8 and 9 Lady Enid de Chair and Governor Sir Dudley de Chair; Person 10 D.T. Byrnes. What a find!

Who were these people and what might explain their role there?

**Person 1 W.A. Moyes**, [known as Bill "Shack" Moyes][14] Housemaster, Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm. It is reported that the Housemaster did most of the work regarding the running of the Farm and the students. [15] Moyes was a later Vice President of the Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm Ex-Students Association [in 1934 at least][16] which gives additional indication of his respect and/or popularity amongst the student population.

**Person 3 Henry [Harry] Ernest Gissing** [1888-1953] after Meritorious Service in WW1, he had been a Wagga Wagga Council Alderman 1920-1923 as well as President of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League 1920-21 and Vice President in 1923. He had been Secretary of the Wagga Branch of the Riverina New State Movement in 1921 and President of the Greater Wagga League in 1924-1925. It is in this latter role, it is thought, was the reason for his presence in the Governor's party and his presence on the visit was reported as being in that capacity.[17] Apart from later becoming Mayor 1937-44 and 1949-51 during his unbroken period as Alderman 1934 until his death in 1953, Henry Gissing was Chairman of the Committee formed in 1925 which established the Ambulance Service in Wagga Wagga and led to the construction of the Wagga Wagga Ambulance Station in 1929. He, in addition to running a successful chemist business, contributed in other and ongoing ways to the community until his death. Gissing's activities in the area of ambulance provision from 1925, only months after the Governor's 1924 visit and that the Governor's party had a visit the day before the Experiment Farm visit for an inspection tour of the Wagga Wagga township and hospital,[18] provides further insight in accounting for Mr and Mrs Gissing's presence in the Governor's party. [19] Further, Gissing's four and a half years of war service including witnessing the Gallipoli landings from a medical ship stationed offshore and further active service on the Western Front would have provided an element of shared experience with the Governor, an Admiral during the war, though it would seem unlikely that such experiences would have been anything more than acknowledged if that, let alone discussed in company.

**Person 4 Mrs Ethel Gissing [nee Booty]**, daughter of the Manager of the Wagga Wagga Bank of New South Wales had become engaged [20] and married H.E. Gissing during 1920 and acted as Lady Mayoress also playing a number of roles in the community over the years such as Inaugural President of the Wagga Wagga Ladies Bowling Club in 1952 [21] and President of the Wagga Wagga Ambulance Ladies Auxiliary for a period of time including 1938. [22]

**Person 5 Hugh Ross**, long-term Experiment Farm Manager until his retirement in 1937. [23] *Hugh Ross was an authority on wheat growing and the diseases of wheat, who usually had nothing to do with the students and in fact was rarely seen by them. Ken Collins, a student in 1931, recalled that Ross met the students on arrival but thereafter the Housemaster kept an eye on them.*" [24] Sutherland notes that Ross enjoyed the pomp and ceremony associated with the position as Manager; "*Bob Butts [an employee at the Farm], in his recollections, called him 'the great Hugh Ross' and remembered show time in Wagga Wagga. When the cattle and horses were polished up, they went to the local show in a long procession up the main street to the showground, headed by the great Hugh Ross and Bill (Shack) Moyes in a sulky. This was, Butts remarked, one of Ross's 'Lord of the Manor acts to impress the locals.'*" [25]

A small but specific reference to the photograph – or indeed the Hugh Ross section of it was made – note that it was described as “*a photograph of Hugh Ross was taken in 1924, during a visit by the State Governor, Sir Dudley De Chair...*” [26] The reference here may be to a photograph solely of Hugh Ross and not the panoramic photograph under discussion here – however, no known single photo of Ross from 27.8.24 has been found to date and Sutherland’s description is consistent with Ross appearance in this panoramic photograph], i.e. “*It shows him dressed in tweed coat, riding breeches and polished leather leggings, lord and master of his domain.*” [27]

**Person 6 Flight Lieutenant Maxwell H. Coote** [also referred to on occasions in 1924 as Captain and also Commander] became readily identifiable. Coote had been with Sir Dudley and Lady de Chair upon their arrival in Perth and travelled with them to Sydney and continued as the Aide-de-Camp [ADC] to the Governor and/or Lady de Chair. Numerous photographs show him in attendance at events with the Governor and Lady de Chair with probably the clearest being held by the State Library of Western Australia showing “Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair, Lady Enid de Chair and Flight Lieutenant Maxwell H. Coote at Government House, Perth” [32] Coote continued as ADC until the de Chair’s eldest son, Henry Graham de Chair [1905-1995], arrived in Sydney and took over as ADC in 1929 until his father completed his Governorship in April 1930. [33] Coote is shown, in the Perth photograph, standing dutifully behind the de Chair’s in similar pose and clothing, though lighter in colour, to that in the Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm picture. This seems to have been his standard demeanour and pose.

**Person 7 ‘The Lady in Black’ and Person 2 still remained unidentified.** As the author pontificated as to potential identities for ‘The Lady in Black’, Jillian Salzke, CSU Regional Archives, suggested that with Person 10 now identified as D.T. Byrnes, Mayor of Wagga 1923-25, that ‘The Lady in Black’ could well be... “his wife”! Seemed such a straightforward conclusion! A search ensued and a photograph showing D.T.[Daniel] Byrnes and his wife, Lydia was readily found showing a strong likeness to the ‘Lady in Black’ to resemble strongly Lydia Byrnes, wife of the Mayor. [35] Lydia [1874 in Crookwell and died in Wagga Wagga 1944; had married Byrnes in Sydney 1914. [36] Though no report of Mrs Byrnes presence including dress at the Experiment Farm visit is extant, it was reported in the *Daily Advertiser* that at the luncheon with the Governor and Lady de Chair the day before she had chosen “*a black crepe romain made with flounced effect, trimmed with jet and ostrich feather, and becoming black hat of crepe de chine, relieved with white and a black osprey. She carried a handsome coat.*” [37] A *Daily Advertiser* report the day after the Experiment Farm visit provided confirmation of some of the people present on the farm site and, by implication, appearing in the photograph in stating that the Governor and Lady de Chair “*were accompanied by the Mayor and Mayoress of Wagga, Alderman and Mrs D. T. Byrnes, the president of the Greater Wagga League, Mr H. E. Gissing and Mrs Gissing and a number of other district residents.*” [38]

**Person 8 Lady Enid de Chair** was born Enid Struben in South Africa 1878 died Kensington, London, 1966. marrying Dudley de Chair in Devon 1903. She was a woman actively engaged with the ‘modern times’. She supported the modern art movement, as well as more traditional artists. She was a particular supporter and friend to the modern artist, Roy de Maistre, and the more traditional, George Lambert, with B.E. Minns a regular visitor to artistic functions at Government House. She even attempted her own pieces of art and actively supported women’s groups and organisations. [28] Regarding Lady de Chair, Sir Dudley reported in his memoirs that, The Press found her “*likeable*” and to have “*a delightful personality, and is intensely alive. When she talks her voice is musical and her laugh delightful.*” He went on further to state, in a praiseworthy tone, his wife could “*compete with the best*” of “*silver tongued orators.*” [29]

**Person 9 Governor Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford de Chair** born in Canada 1864, died Brighton UK 1958 had had a distinguished high level naval career reaching Admiral and had spent the two years prior to his retirement from the Royal Navy in 1923 as president of the Inter-Allied Commission on Enemy Warships. He was a friend and supporter of First Sea Lord, Sir John Jellicoe and had worked in 1911-1912 as Naval ADC. to King George V. It is not in the scope of this article to do justice to the enormous and wide ranging naval and diplomatic career of Sir Dudley de Chair. [30] He had put his name forward for the governorship of South Australia but missed out and his name was put forward by the First Lord of the Admiralty for the Governor of NSW as Governor Davidson had died in office in September 1923. de Chair's uncle, Sir Harry Rawson, had been Governor of NSW 1902-1909. It is said that King George V himself had provided impetus to de Chair's appointment. de Chair and the now King George V had served together as naval cadets. [31]



**Sir Dudley de Chair, Lady Enid de Chair and Flight Lieutenant Maxwell H. Coote at Government House, Perth, February 1924**  
Item 4517B/7 Sourced from the collections of the State Library of Western Australia and reproduced with the permission of the Library Board of Western Australia

**Person 10 Daniel Terence Byrnes**, Mayor of Wagga Wagga 1923-1925, Alderman 1920-28, former shearer, clerk, trade unionist, and later a stock and station agent, he married Lydia Cramp of Cowra in 1914 and then did over three years' service in World War 1. He was later a strong advocate for a victory memorial garden in Wagga Wagga and in related disputes about its location and construction. He stood unsuccessfully as Labor candidate for the seat of Farrer in the 1951 Federal election including hitchhiking from Wagga Wagga to Albury to go on his campaigning there. [34] Outliving his wife, he left Wagga Wagga for Sydney in 1955, dying in Sydney in 1974.

**Person 2** an unknown male. It had not been uncommon for people in photographs to present a side profile to the camera, whether this was this person's approach or they were making a statement about one or more members of the group or the visit is unknown. As to his identity, the former mayor E.E. (Edward Easter) Collins, a wool merchant, was still a member of Wagga Wagga Council [1910-22, 1923-36 being Mayor 1917-20, 1925-27, 1928-1934] and a strong influence in council matters throughout this period. Maybe it had seemed politic to include him in the party especially given his background as a wool merchant and the presence of sheep at the Experiment Farm. There were later court proceedings against him in 1926 by D.T. Byrnes and the Victory Memorial Gardens Committee related to the construction of the gardens. Collins' physical stature was not dissimilar to that of person 2. [39] Other significant councillors who had been Mayor and remained on council in 1924 were Hugh Grant Oates, tailor [1908-17, 1919-25; Mayor 1915-1917 and, immediately preceding D.T. Byrnes, 1921-1923] and Isaac Cullen, agent/auctioneer [1914-1928; mayor 1920-21]. Maybe Person2 could be one of them? Further, it could have been an official of another local society or group or another Experiment Farm staff member and/or the driver of the car behind them... Maybe the local MLA? The Members for The Murrumbidgee [the local seat] in the NSW Legislative Assembly at the time were Arthur Grimm [Nationalists], Ernest Buttenshaw [Progressive] and Martin Flannery [Labor]. Mr Matthew Kilpatrick MLA and the Hon. Richard Thomas [R.T.] Ball Minister for Works and Railways had indicated that they would be in Wagga on the day before. [40] Could one of these latter two politicians have stayed over and attended the Experiment Farm visit and thus be in the photograph?

Matthew Kilpatrick [born in Donegal County Ireland 1873- died Coogee 1949] became a MLA in 1920, the year after his first wife, Fanny Jane (Annie) Pyke, whom he had married in Berrigan in 1898, had died [41], and remained MLA until 1941. He was married in Sydney 3 October 1921 to Mary Black [1889-1960]. He was the Member for Murray 1920-1927 continuing on as Member for Wagga Wagga 1927-1941. Being an ex-shearer, he had become a wheat and sheep farmer in the Berrigan and Oaklands districts about 150km south west of Wagga Wagga. He was a member of the Wagga Wagga Land Board and, by 1924, a former executive member of the Farmers and Settlers Association 1920-21.[42] Available photographs of him are of him much older than he was in 1924 with grey hair but carrying a distinctive, albeit grey, moustache and in a November 1934 photograph standing beside Alfred S. Henry MLA Kilpatrick stands somewhat taller than Henry, maybe by a good 5cm. [43] This apparent height may well rule him out as Person 2 in the photograph despite his presence, at least on the day before the photograph, in Wagga Wagga and his position as an MLA and a farmer of wheat and sheep.

Then there was Richard Thomas Ball (1857-1937), [Free Trade, Liberal and Reform Party, Nationalist, United Australia Party, United Country Party] also present in Wagga Wagga for at least the day before the Experiment Farm photograph had been a previous Minister for Agriculture [April-June 1922], was a long-term MLA for the seats of Albury, Murray and Corowa - being the Member for Murray in 1922-1925; was a delegate to the annual Farmers and Settlers Association Conference; and a delegate for the Riverina New State League to the All Australia Conference in 1922. He had been an MLA in nearly unbroken fashion since 1895 and his wise counsel was sought [44] Ball was heavily involved in the ceremonies, luncheon and speeches on the day before the Experiment Farm visit.[45] Further, he had similar facial features, especially the distinctive moustache and despite his advancing years retained his dark black hair and distinctive black moustache at least till 1926 [46] could it be R.T. Ball? It does seem a distinct possibility. Further, it could have been an official of another local society or group or another Experiment Farm staff member... However, upon closer examination of the career and photographs of Richard Thomas Ball, for the present, he seems the person extremely likely to be person2 with conclusive identification requiring more evidence.



**The Hon. Richard Thomas Ball.**

**Source:**

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/Pages/member-details.aspx?pk=1031>

Retrieved 4.11.2023.



**“Mr R. T. Ball, a former NSW Minister for Works who recently married his secretary.”** (*Barrier Miner* [Broken Hill] Saturday 13 February 1926, p). Ball still sporting his black hair with noticeable hairline and distinctive moustache.

When investigating photographs of the Archives' panoramic photograph in comparison to the picture provided by Peter Gissing of a segment of the panorama – there is a top to bottom break in the surface ['tear'] of the panorama photograph held by the Archives. Upon close and repeated investigation, the same "tear" is clearly shown when Peter Gissing's photograph and thus the one shown published in the *Daily Advertiser* 2020 as evidence that Peter's photo is actually one taken of part of the Archives' panoramic photograph. Questions arise. How then/when did the family or others take/receive this photograph? Did the original photographer, frame it? Unlikely. How did it get the 'tear'? One proffers that it had, at some stage, been posted and/or stored in a rolled-up circumstance, most likely for an extended period, and when straightened, possibly at a time of framing and/or to prevent further such tears through storing it rolled up, the surface 'crack' appeared. However, what started as interrogative viewing of enlarged pictures of the photos – an eleventh person in the photo was found! One had to check it, then check again? Was this one of those ghostly apparitions people speak of in old photographs? The Ghost of Experiment Farm? Detailed inspection revealed that there was no Ghost of Experiment Farm – well not on this day in 1924. What was there was, that in the large black car in the middle of the photograph, there is a driver sitting and looking towards the photographer ...[47] Further inspection shows the driver is a male with a 'driver's style' cap/hat on. The Governor mentions a chauffeur in his unpublished memoirs, a Major Mills. [48] However, there is no known reference to Mills or any official chauffeur being on the 1924 trip to Wagga Wagga to which the Governor had travelled by train. The driver's identity, whilst not known, is likely to be that of a trusted local citizen of some prominence.

### **What had the Governor been doing in the lead up to his visit to Wagga Wagga?**

Governor and Lady de Chair had been on a tour of the far west of NSW. The *Barrier Miner* in Broken Hill provides a detailed insight into he and his party's long-distance and constant movements on that tour. He had left Sydney on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1924 to the western districts of NSW including Hay, Balranald, Yanga Homestead [guests of a Mr and Mrs Kilpatrick] and, by the 3<sup>rd</sup> August, was at Euston opening a soldiers' memorial, on the 4<sup>th</sup> at Mallee Cliffs, next day in Mildura, the 6<sup>th</sup> at Wentworth to a municipal reception, inspected the school and hospital in the morning and the Curl Waa irrigation settlement in the afternoon before another reception, on the 7<sup>th</sup> to Cuthero Station and from 8<sup>th</sup> at Netley Homestead and by the 11<sup>th</sup> August was in Menindee with an inspection of the school and a reception by the progress committee with the 12<sup>th</sup> being at Albemarle thence 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> touring Wilcannia, Nelvambo, Dunlop, Tourallie and Bourke. He was expected to leave Bourke on the 18<sup>th</sup> to arrive in Sydney the next day, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1924! In the late- night hours of the 25<sup>th</sup> August or the early hours of the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> August he and Lady de Chair left Sydney for Wagga Wagga – just six full days after that huge tour of the western districts! [49]

### **Why did the Governor of NSW come to Wagga Wagga? How did he get to Wagga Wagga?**

The day before the photograph at Experiment Farm the *Daily Advertiser* [Wagga Wagga] gives insight into the reason behind the Governor's visit to Wagga, "*The fifty-ninth year of existence of the Murrumbidgee Pastoral and Agricultural Association closes with the holding of the present annual Show which, being sixtieth show held, is being observed as Wagga's Diamond Jubilee Show. It is fitting that on such an occasion the Show should have as a visitor, the Governor of the State, Sir Dudley de Chair and the leading lady of the land, Lady de Chair.*" [50]

**VICE-REGAL VISITORS**

—◆—

**SIR DUDLEY DE CHAIR TO OPEN SHOW.**

—◆—

Admiral Sir Dudley Rawson de Chair, K.C.B., Governor of New South Wales, accompanied by Lady de Chair, arrive in Wagga this morning and at about noon will visit the Show Ground and declare the Wagga Diamond Jubilee Show Open. Full arrangements have been made for the entertainment of the Vice-Regal visitors, details of which will be found below.

Governor and Lady de Chair's main public purpose in arriving in Wagga Wagga was to officially open the Wagga Wagga Diamond Jubilee Show. This was to occur on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 1924, the day before the photograph at Experiment Farm.

The Wagga Show had actually opened in showery weather the day before its scheduled [27<sup>th</sup> August 1924] official opening.

Great rains had fallen for two days prior to the show, and the weather on the first day was very cold, with occasional driving showers of rain. [51] It can be seen from the itinerary [below] published in the Daily Advertiser 27 August 1924 p.2 that a full schedule had been laid out for the Governor and Lady de Chair.

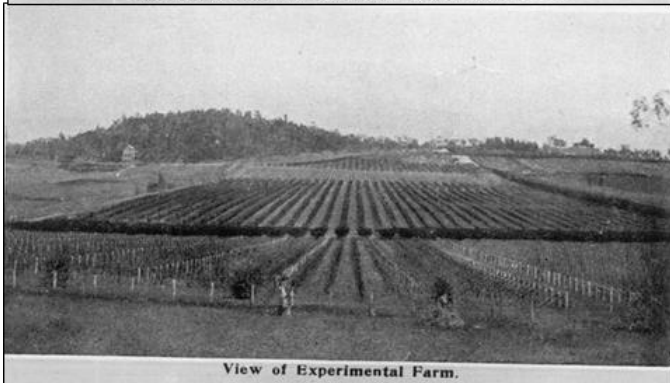
<p>car at the railway station for the evening. On Thursday they will visit the Wagga Experiment Farm, and in the afternoon will go to Wantabadgery Station, where they will be the guests of Mr. C. Macdonald, the owner, for a few days.</p> <p>Following are details of the itinerary:—</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27.</b></p> <p>Arrive at Wagga by rail.</p> <p>9.15 a.m.—Party to be met at station by mayor and other citizens; procession to Town Hall starts.</p> <p>10.0 a.m.—Reception at Town Hall.</p> <p>10.45 a.m.—Morning tea.</p> <p>11.0 a.m.—Leave for inspection of town and hospital.</p> <p>12 noon—Arrive at show ground; welcome by show committee.</p> <p>1.0 p.m.—Attend official luncheon.</p> <p>2.0 p.m. to 4.0 p.m.—Inspect pavilion and industrial hall and sheep pens.</p> <p>4.0 p.m.—Attend ladies' afternoon tea as guests of Mrs. J. J. M'Grath.</p> <p>4.30 p.m.—Inspect cattle, pigs and other live stock, before returning to car at railway station</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THURSDAY, AUGUST 28.</b></p> <p>10.0 a.m.—Arrive at Experiment Farm and inspect farm work before luncheon.</p> <p>2.0 p.m.—Leave for Wantabadgery Station.</p>
--

The Wagga Wagga Show would not be the first agricultural show opened by the Governor, as reported by the Daily Advertiser, as, in Sydney in early July, “At the show [Sydney Royal Agricultural Show Ground] luncheon Sir Dudley de Chair confessed that he did not know very much about sheep yet but he would visit the remote parts of the State when he hoped to learn more. Incidentally he said that he would visit Wagga, which he pronounced as “Wagger” with “a” as in “dagger”. For a moment no one laughed but presently there was a titter which opened to a roar of laughter. When the Governor does pay his promised visit at [Wagga] show time, he will learn no doubt how to say Wagga.” [52] Undaunted, the organisers in Wagga Wagga ensured pomp and ceremony in the welcoming for the Governor’s arrival. Having travelled by the mail train from Sydney [53] through the night in the special carriage for the Governor, he and Lady de Chair would need to be ready for a full program of ceremonies commencing outside their carriage at Wagga Wagga railway station at 9.15am. They were to be welcomed by the Mayor, D.T. Byrnes, the Mayoress, aldermen and citizens. The Governor and Lady de Chair were then to form part of a procession all the way from the railway station to the Town Hall complete with the Wagga Brass Band, mounted police, returned soldiers and sailors, cadet forces and boy scouts complete with returned servicemen forming a guard of honour along the way. The Town Clerk, Robert Emblen, would then read a formal welcome and speeches by the Mayor and the Governor [who, on his first visit to Wagga, had by this stage probably seen about as much of Wagga Wagga as can be seen from Bayliss Street given his train had travelled in the dark]. No doubt he correctly pronounced Wagga Wagga! Morning tea catered by the ladies of the Red Cross Society would follow and then a tour of the town and Wagga District Hospital. Interestingly the inclusion of the hospital had not been mentioned in an earlier itinerary [54] suggesting it may have been an error or later inclusion. J. F. O’Regan M.L.C. at the Hospitals’ Association of NSW annual conference January 1925 expressed the view that the Governor’s visit to the Wagga Wagga Hospital was done “owing to the courtesy of the Mayor, Ald. D.T. Byrnes.” O’Regan went on to state that at said visit “the wards were looking at their best and brightest” with “the patients expectant of the pleasure in store for them” with a “handsome souvenir booklet” presented to Lady de Chair on behalf of the Hospital Committee. [55] Given that the Governor’s morning tea was provided by the Red Cross Society an inspection of the hospital would seem apt if not for any other reason. The Mayor, D. T. Byrnes, was thanked then off to the Show for luncheon, official opening, meeting the Show Committee, inspecting sheep pens and the like including an invitation only ladies’ afternoon tea for Lady de Chair before retiring to the special railway carriage for the evening.[56]

It can be seen from the published itinerary that the next day, the 28th August, the Governor and Lady de Chair would travel to Experiment Farm to arrive by 10.00am. From the photograph under examination, it appears that they travelled to the farm by sizeable modern motor vehicles. Thus, the photograph would, given that the schedule had been adhered to [57], have been taken between 10.00am and 2.00pm. Given that the 27th and 28th August, after the opening day [the 26th] had been showery, were described as being “*all that could be desired*” [58] is strongly suggestive of at least some sunshine thus the photograph would seem to have been taken at midday given no discernible shadows are being cast by the people or the trees and buildings. Only the area under the vehicles is in any shadow. This suggests that the photograph was taken following the ‘*inspection of farm work*’ and it is proffered that the party may have been disembarking in readiness to go into the students’ dining room for lunch when the photographer saw fit to get the panoramic picture showing off the group along with a wide perspective of the Experiment Farm, especially given the photographer’s penchant for creating panoramic photographs. It is noted that Lady de Chair is holding a floral arrangement, possibly a gift from someone/group on the tour around the farm. She was given bouquets at almost every stop whilst in Wagga Wagga. [59]



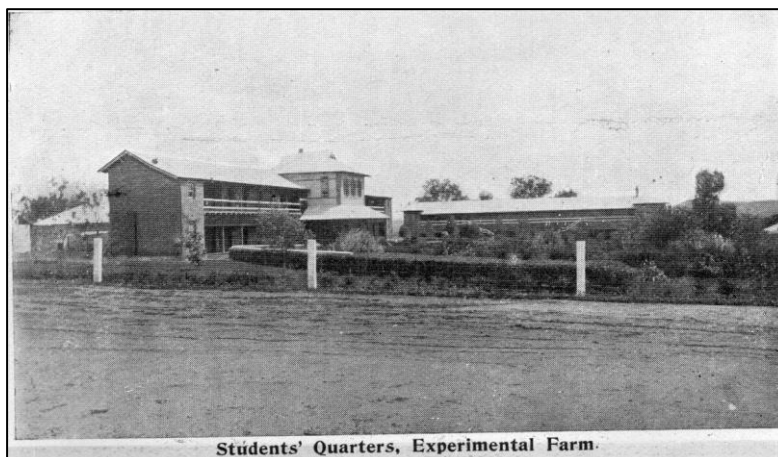
Entrance to Students' Quarters, Experimental Farm.



View of Experimental Farm.

Source for all pictures showing Experiment Farm – *Souvenir of Wagga Wagga*, published by Leese and Harte for Hunter Bros. [c.1900-1922][n.d.] unpagged.

The Experiment Farm visit itself was executed in a quite informal manner with Hugh Ross, Farm Manager, providing the escort for the Governor’s party. The orchards including drying, packing and canning were viewed followed by stock including Clydesdales from the farm stud and cattle (Jerseys), dairy cattle and the pig styes which were commented upon positively by the Governor for their setup. The party then boarded the cars and toured through wheat breeding paddocks, sheep grazing areas, including Dorset Horn-Merino lambs and poultry pens. They returned by car to the farm buildings [ie in the background of the photograph] where “*after a short rest*” lunch was served in the students’ dining room. The Governor said that his visit had been highly interesting and enjoyable and that, as a training college, the farm was a wonderful place.



Students' Quarters, Experimental Farm.

At 2pm the Governor and Lady de Chair left for a brief inspection of the Lake Albert farm of Major and Mrs Egerton who had dined at the Governor’s luncheon table the day before [60] Egerton had been ADC to Sir Walter Davidson, the previous Governor. *The Experiment Farm became a ‘show piece of the Dept of Agriculture’* – with a number of dignitaries and even Royal visits



into the 1930s. Prince Henry George V's third son 1934 – and the party all rode horses back to Bomen station !! [61] Just after 3pm they returned to Wagga Wagga to be met by Mr Claude Macdonald who conveyed them and Coote ADC by motor car to his Wantabadgery Station where they stayed until Monday engaging in riding and motoring excursions. They came back into Wagga Wagga with the Macdonalds by motor vehicle on the Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August to attend the Murrumbidgee Turf Club race meeting. However, the Governor did not wish to attend this race meeting in an official capacity but, seemingly, to enjoy a day at the races as “*interested spectators...*” [62] The de Chair's were not to make an official visit of this nature to Wagga Wagga again. Though the Governor, Lady de Chair, daughter Elaine de Chair along with son, Lieutenant Henry Graham Dudley de Chair who had replaced Coote as his father's ADC, did tour the Riverina again in 1929 including Boree Creek, Lockhart and The Rock. The Governor told an audience at The Rock that he and Lady de Chair “*had travelled to practically every part of NSW since their arrival five years ago but they had not seen any district superior to that of The Rock*”. Lady de Chair, who was by now President of the Country Women's Association of NSW, received yet another bouquet and the Governor gave speeches and visited schools. The Governor had been driven by motor car from Lockhart to The Rock from whence, after visiting The Rock Public School, caught the mail train back to Sydney. Accompanying Governor and Lady de Chair on this visit was R.T. Ball [the same R.T. Ball referred to re identification of Person 2 in the photograph] by then Minister for Lands and Mrs Ball.[63]

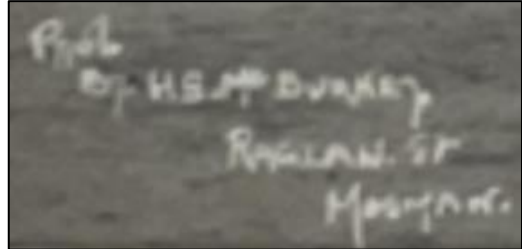
Clearly, much of the 1929 Riverina tour has echoes of five years earlier of the nature, logistics and fervour of his Wagga Wagga visit in August 1924. Five days after leaving The Rock, Governor de Chair was back in Sydney declaring open the Georges River [known as Tom Uglys] Bridge which, by the way, was a toll bridge until 1952. On Monday 1st September 1924, they were driven the 25km from Wantabadgery to Junee, a major railway town 36km from Wagga Wagga, where they rejoined the Governor's carriage for the rail return trip to Sydney.[64] Incidentally, the Macdonalds of Wantabadgery had further interactions with the de Chairs, the Macdonalds being guests of the de Chair's at Government House in October that year, not surprisingly, for the spring racing carnival.[65]

<b>MESSAGE FOR THE PEOPLE OF WAGGA</b>	
<b>GOVERNOR EXPRESSES HIS APPRECIATION.</b>	
<p>When the Governor and the Mayor were parting yesterday afternoon His Excellency expressed a wish that the Mayor should convey to the people of Wagga his appreciation of the splendid reception that had been accorded Lady de Chair and himself.</p> <p>Sir Dudley de Chair said that he wished it to be known by the people of Wagga and district that he and Lady de Chair had thoroughly enjoyed their visit. They were much impressed by the town and its progressiveness, by the happy and contented appearance of the people and the splendid prospects of a good season for the man on the land which were evident. He said that he particularly wanted to thank the people again for the splendid reception that they had given Lady de Chair and himself. His Excellency also stated that he wanted to thank the Mayor and Mayoress for providing them with the opportunity of seeing so</p>	<p>had enjoyed the Show immensely and considered the exhibits to be such as could be produced only in a richly fertile land. His Excellency regarded it, as the result of his observations, as the finest part of the State he had yet visited.</p> <p>The Mayor stated that he and Mrs Byrnes had spent a particularly delightful time with their Excellencies. From the start the Governor had made him feel quite at his ease and Mrs. Byrnes had had an equally delightful experience with Lady de Chair. The visitors put themselves entirely in their hands and generally helped in making all functions pass off most pleasantly. “In fact,” said the Mayor last night, “it was a most delightful experience and I believe that, by her graceful speech on Wednesday evening, Lady de Chair in particular endeared herself to the people of Wagga.”</p>

It is also worth noting that John J. McGrath, President of the Murrumbidgee Pastoral and Agricultural Association, whose wife had organised the Ladies Afternoon Tea for Lady de Chair on Wednesday 27 August, was also a former President of Murrumbidgee Turf Club, had run a successful saddlery business and was a well-known stud master breeding many racehorses. [66] The Governor enjoyed horse racing and the people associated with it including those in Wagga Wagga. The Experiment Farm became a ‘show piece of the Dept of Agriculture – with a number of dignitaries and even Royal visits into the 1930s. [67]

The Governor, on behalf of himself and Lady de Chair, issued a statement to the people of Wagga Wagga, as reported on the front page of the Daily Advertiser 29 August 1924 which speaks of the enjoyment and positivity of the visit and of the qualities of Wagga Wagga and its people.

**Who took the picture?** Once the panoramic photograph was further inspected words in white handwriting said “Photo By H.S. McBurney Raglan St Mosman” – so who was H.S. McBurney – was ‘he’[?] the Governor’s photographer? An official photographer of some fashion? A local newspaper photographer? A member of Experiment Farm staff or student body? The Governor on at least one later regional tour of the norther rivers, NSW, would take an official photographer, H. Roberts.[68] Further investigation found the odd non-photographic mention of H.S. McBurney and nothing linking ‘him’ to this particular visit.



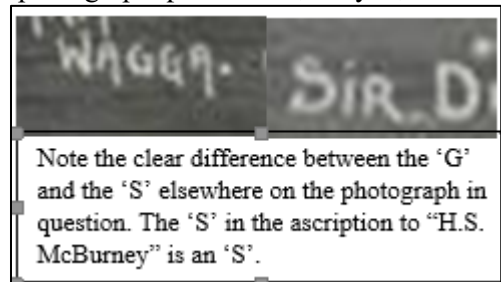
However, a copy of one of ‘his’ panoramic photographs was listed in an online art sale catalogue – “Lot 91 H.S. McBurney (Australian, active 1920s). “Hillside”, Holbrook NSW c1920s. Silver gelatin photograph, panorama, titled with photographer’s line in negative lower left and right, 10.6 x 99.6cm. Original frame.

\$1,100 Photographers line includes address “Raglan Street, Mosman.” Holbrook is a town on the Hume Highway Sydney and Melbourne” [69] This panorama photograph from near Holbrook, NSW, is similar in layout to the one taken at Experiment Farm in that it has ten people, five standing and five on horseback. Two, maybe three, of the people standing look to be female and all five standing as if they knew a photograph was being taken. A vehicle very similar in apparent size, shape and colour tone to that at Experiment Farm is behind those standing – similar in layout to the Experiment Farm photograph, also all the humans in the photograph were well to the left side of the panorama as per the Experiment Farm panorama photograph with a dwelling of substantial size and presence in the background. There is a hint of a possible [flag]pole with a windless flag upon it next to the mounted people. One muses, is this flag in reference to the Governor and indeed is it actually a photograph of the Governor, his wife taken by the same photographer that was with them at Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm and is it part of the same trip or a prior or later trip – even maybe on one of the motoring excursions they went on from Wantabadgery [114km away]? It should be realised that Holbrook, originally called Germanton, had had its name changed to Holbrook in 1915 in indignation to German conduct in the war. It was named after Norman Holbrook [70] who was a Royal Navy lieutenant and the first naval recipient of the Victoria Cross in the Great War having been in charge of Submarine B11 against the Turks in the Dardanelles in December 1914. Norman Holbrook’s brother, Leonard Holbrook, had been Flag Commander when the then Vice Admiral Dudley de Chair in September 1917 took command of the 3rd Battle Squadron with Leonard Holbrook remaining as his Flag Commander

[71] Dudley de Chair and Holbrook had served together in the Royal Navy.... Could de Chair have taken a trip by motor vehicle, quick though it may have been, to visit the village named after his colleague’s [and seemingly his friend’s] brother in far off New South Wales? This possibility seems worthy of further investigation...

In further researching H.S. McBurney, the photographer, the following situation was found. The State Library of NSW showed online a number of photographs by a “H.G. McBurney” - panoramas at that! H.G., not H.S., could there be a mistake though one can only work from the records observable? The abovementioned gallery catalogue said “H.S.” and the photograph under discussion when viewed with naked eye clearly says “H.S.” The photograph being studied ie the one held by the CSU Regional Archives clearly has written on it, un upper case, the photographer as “H.S. McBURNEY” and not H.G. McBurney. Even the item description label from a late 1990s CSU Regional Archives exhibition on the agricultural themes identifies the photographer as “H.S. McBurnett” along with another at the same exhibition, “Massodon”, by the same photographer. [72] the S was clearly seen then... and still is. The ‘Y’ on the end of McBurney is somewhat oddly formed and could have been readily determined to be ‘tt’ It may well be that his name was ‘g’ but the CSU photograph says “S”. A possible explanation of this exploration is that the State Library of NSW has listed on its “About This Item” and “More Information” online pages that the “Author/Creator” was H.G. McBurney and an additional person i.e., Ernest H. Henningham! This photograph just keeps on giving mysteries and conundrums...

Who was Henningham? One of the first photography studios in Wagga was started by Ernest Henningham in 1884, and was taken over by his son Geoffrey in 1924. [73] Some sources have Ernest Henry Henningham dying in 1914, others “1914 / 1925?” However, the State Library of NSW “Full Title” simply states “...photo by H.G. McBurney” without mention of Henningham despite listing Ernest H. Henningham as one of two “Author/Creator”[s]. H.G. McBurney is credited with approximately another twenty photographic items in the State Library of NSW Collection, including another ‘original’/’print’/’copy’ of one of Governor de Chair at the Experiment Farm 28 August 1924, with most collection items said to be panoramas and most of rural towns e.g. Yass, Ilabo, with the Ilabo works are listed as from 1925. [74] It could be that McBurney, a much-travelled photographer, didn’t perform the final processing of the photograph panels and, maybe, it was Henningham [one? of the Henninghams] who processed the photograph and mistakenly wrote H.S not H.G.... The ‘G’s” in WAGGA WAGGA written by the same hand on the CSU photograph are immediately and noticeably different to the “S.” in H.S. McBurney also written as part of the photograph by the same hand. Other works by this photographer clearly show “H.G.” – it would seem that H.G. and H.S. were one and the same.



The mysteries abound and continue. There’s a certain further bemusement about the photograph under discussion. Why would McBurney set up for a panoramic photograph [seemingly involving four panels] yet not set up the people for the group shot, particularly when one of the subjects is the Governor and the Governor’s wife who are not physically central to the photograph? It is not created as an official photograph, nor is it a picture of the Governor and Lady de Chair with a mingling crowd in the background. Indeed, why a panorama if the subject was the people, or the Governor – or indeed Hugh Ross, who managed to purposefully or fortuitously use the dramatic stage technique of being central amongst the people and standing a step back behind all but one of the other six people central to the photo to make it appear as if he is the focus. This does not seem to be ‘a picture of the Governor’. It is more ‘a panoramic photograph with the Governor in it’ but not necessarily in any position of photographic prominence. It is proffered that the group could well have been formed in the order they congregated as they emerged from their two vehicles having either been looking at sheep and pigs etc or indeed about to go and do so – conscious that they shortly will have lunch in the students’ dining room. It is also of note that Lady de Chair is holding a bouquet of flowers – presumably handed to her prior to the photograph, otherwise they may have been left in the car. The group seems to not have unity in its pose nor configuration and seems, in fact, to be five ‘groups’ plus Coote in the background, as he so often was in photographs with the Governor. It seems as if they’d been gathered from the cars into the general area and as if they’d all been asked/told to simply stop where they were for the photograph before they moved on to the next facet of the visit – probably lunch! As mentioned above it was not uncommon for people in photographs in the past to seek to be photographed with face and even body side on to the photographer – the Governor and Lady de Chair have taken this side on aspect as had the mayor and Persons 1 and 2. H.E. Gissing and Mrs Gissing, are dutifully looking at the camera with Ross and Coote focusing straight down the barrel – almost as if the picture is of/about them – though Coote has his arms clasped in the role of ‘humble servant’ the ADC. If you didn’t know who these people were, one could be excused for wondering if the photo was of, for and at the behest of the man in the leather boots, Hugh Ross. The mayor looks happily chuffed, his wife seems less so! The Governor and Lady de Chair, experienced [and increasingly so in NSW] in dealing with ‘occasion’ whether ballrooms, military or agricultural visits, appear at ease and satisfied they are performing ‘their duty’.

The provenance of the framed photograph is that it is currently located at the CSU Regional Archives, Wagga Wagga. The Archives, which were housed in the Blakemore Building, CSU South Campus from 1973 until moved in 2022 from the South Campus to accommodation Level 4 in the William Merrylees Library Building at CSU Wagga Wagga along with the CSU Art Collection.[75] The framed photograph had previously hung on a wall beside a stairwell in the Blakemore Building

at the South Wagga Campus. It seems clear that the lengthy panoramic photograph had, at some stage in its history, been rolled, either for postage, storage or both. It is strongly suggested that at some stage, probably at the time of flattening out for a framing or reframing, that the front surface of the photograph had a narrow vertical crack/tear occur nearly the full height of the photograph showing between Person 6[Coote, ADC] and Person 7[Lydia Byrnes, Mayoress]. The framing is not recent yet not of the vintage nor materials that the framing would date back to the 1920s. It had been previously framed as the rear of the current framing is indicative of the card backing behind the photograph itself being re-attached by tape which could date back as far as the 1970s or possibly a bit earlier and renewing wiring for hanging. The photograph, as framed, had formed part of a curated exhibition at CSU Regional Archives in the late 1990s. There is a thought that the rear of the framing had been repaired and/or reinstated at that time for the exhibition. How the Regional Archives came into possession of the original photograph in the first place is not known. It should be remembered that the regional archives started out in 1973 as a collection as part of the Riverina Special Collection in the Library of the former Riverina College of Advanced Education [76] This panoramic photograph has provided a burgeoning springboard into matters, movements and persons vice regal, political, agricultural, social and economic in Wagga Wagga in 1920s.

While any omissions or errors remain the author's, it is appropriate, having just spoken above of the CSU Regional Archives to thank its wonderful staff; in particular, Jillian Salzke, Collection Management Archivist, for her generous, professional archival assistance and supportive listening throughout the vagaries of researching 'the picture that just keeps on giving'; along with Paul O'Donnell, Reference Archivist, and Thomas Middlemost, University Art Curator, who were only too happy to add pertinent information on occasions. Acknowledgement is also made to all those who have funded and/or digitised items on Trove, an invaluable tool for a huge range of historical research. To Peter Gissing who provided personal information and source material so significantly related to the photograph, his input is appreciated and valued. To Brian Andrews, Geoff Birch and Sherry Morris who, without even realising it, made positive contributions with their listening ear and/or wise counsel. To Wayne Doubleday, Manager CSU Regional Archives and University Art Collection, thank you for your ongoing inspiration to further discover, preserve and share history.

Governor Sir Dudley de Chair went on to continue to travel widely throughout NSW; ran into issues with Premier Jack Lang who sought to add members to the Legislative Council with a plan to abolish it; went through a period where it was thought the Government might have him recalled yet in fact his period of office was extended by a year. He opened many more shows and occasions including presiding over the dedication ceremony of the Cenotaph in Martin Place [8 August 1927] [77] yet it may well not be realised it was Governor Sir Dudley de Chair who laid the foundation stone for the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge! He and his wife, at the completion of his Governorship in 1930, left NSW for Queensland for a holiday from whence they embarked on a world tour of sorts heading back to England where he wrote his memoirs and they lived out their days in comfort. Wagga Wagga continued its development throughout the 1920s including completing its introduction of electricity, benefited from Commonwealth Government improvements in roads and the existence of a range of firms based in Wagga Wagga making Wagga Wagga increasingly the dominant town in the Riverina with it becoming a city in 1946. Mechanised transport increased and several theatres operated in Wagga [78] including the showing of 'moving pictures' such as '*The Shiek*' starring Rudolf Valentino at The Strand Theatre Wagga Wagga [79] and later "The Great Climax in Magnificence of Screen Production", '*Ben Hur*' complete with Mrs Miriam Smith-Pope singing "Star of Bethlehem" during each showing of the Ben Hur season! [80] Issues including the New State Movement came and went and 'The Experiment Farm' continued as a Dept of Agriculture showpiece and its grounds and purpose proudly form part of the site of Charles Sturt University where, alongside and as part of a modern university, grapevines and other agricultural research pursuits continue to this day.

## Notes

- [1] Organised by University of the Third Age Wagga Wagga 25.8.2023
- [2] Chris Cunneen, 'Dudley, second Earl of (1867-1932)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dudley-second-earl-of-7023/text10293>, published first in hardcopy 1981, accessed online 10 October 2023
- [3] *Daily Advertiser* Feb 8, 2020
- [4] de Chair, Admiral Sir Dudley K.C.B. K.C.M.G. M.V.O.; with a preface and epilogue by Somerset de Chair, *The Sea Is Strong*, George G. Harrap, London 1961 p239
- [5] June Sutherland, *From Farm Boys to PhDs: Agricultural Education at Wagga Wagga (1896 - 1996)*, Charles Sturt University, 1996 ISBN 9781875781539 187578536Ref LB01-001 CSU Search Room Library
- [6] NRS-17850 CSU Regional Archives, Copies of letters sent to government offices from Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm 11-3-1897 to 1-04- 1926. These indexed volumes consist of copies of letters sent to government offices from the wagga experiment farm. The majority of letters are addressed to the Department of Agriculture and are generally either reporting on students, employees and the status of the farm, buildings, equipment, livestock or grain and asking for new employees.
- [7] 8.9.24 p631 Records of the Farm and its correspondence with the NSW Department of Agriculture. CSU Regional Archives NRS-17850 copies of letters sent to government offices from Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm 11-3-1897 to 1-04-1926
- [8] 5.9.24 p630 Records of the Farm and its correspondence with the NSW Department of Agriculture. CSU Regional Archives NRS-17850 copies of letters sent to government offices from Wagga Wagga Experiment Farm 11-3-1897 to 1-04-1926
- [9] Newcastle District Vintage and Classic Car Club Inc. ndvcc.com details and photographs of the restoration in the 'Restoration Projects' section of the site. Retrieved 18.9.2023
- [10] Daily News Perth 30 January 1924.
- [11] Sir Dudley de Chair unpublished memoirs Ch 1 p.3 de Chair comments that he welcomed advice from Lord Novar [Ronald Crauford Munro Ferguson 1860-1934 6<sup>th</sup> Governor General of Australia 1914-1920 to enrol Somerset at The Kings School, Parramatta. Draft of unpublished *Autobiography of Sir Dudley de Chair Volume 6 Australia (102pp) 1923-1926 and Volume 7. Australia (120pp), 1926-1930* Filmed as part of the Australian Joint Copying Project, 1969 (AJCP reel M716). Original microfilm digitised as part of the NLA AJCP Online Delivery Project, 2017- 2020. Existence and location of originals - Originally filmed at the private residence of Commander G.H.D. de Chair, Boxmoor, Hertfordshire. The papers of Sir Dudley de Chair, including the drafts of his autobiography, are now held in the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ (Documents 7865). For further information see Sir Dudley de Chair at the Imperial War Museum (<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1030007740>). Existence and location of copies - The original AJCP microfilm of the records filmed from this collection is available at the National Library of Australia [<https://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn333899>] as well as other institutions holding AJCP microfilm.
- [12] Anne Sanders, 'Enid and Elaine de Chair: Government House and Modernism' in Sydney, JRAHS, Vol 105, part 2, pp211-212. Somerset Struben de Chair was enrolled at Kings School 1925-28, The Kings School Register 1831-2019 6<sup>th</sup> edition p149
- [13] *Daily Advertiser* 5 July 1924
- [14] June Sutherland p. 58
- [15] Sutherland p.58
- [16] Sutherland p59
- [17] *Daily Advertiser* 29 August 1924 p. 1
- [18] *Daily Advertiser* 27 August 1924
- [19] Peter Gissing, "Harry Gissing" July 14 2016 on [wwdhs.org.au](http://wwdhs.org.au) retrieved 10.10.23 During his four and a half years' service in World War 1 Harry Gissing kept a regular diary which grew to fill ten volumes which were passed on to the State Library of NSW in 1920. They have been digitised and transcribed by the library and can be accessed here-<http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/item/itemDetailPaged.aspx?itemID=422378>
- [20] *Sydney Morning Herald* 10 July 1920 p 9
- [21] Paul O'Donnell, *Riverina Weekender* February 20-23, 2014 p 12
- [22] *Daily Advertiser* 29 July 1938 p 5
- [23] Sutherland p. 62
- [24] Sutherland p. 52
- [25] Sutherland, p.58
- [26] Sutherland p 58
- [27] Sutherland p 58
- [28] Heather Johnson, *Enid de Chair*, Dictionary of Australian Art, 2011 at [daao.org.au](http://daao.org.au) retrieved 2.11.2023. See also Anne Sanders, 'Enid and Elaine de Chair: Government House and Modernism' in Sydney, JRAHS, Vol 105, part 2, 2019.
- [29] Dudley de Chair unpublished Memoirs Ch 2 p. 21
- [30] for an extensive outline see D. de Chair, *The Sea is Strong* passim. For a quick outline online sources will readily attest to his extensive career]
- [31] Anne Sanders "Enid de Chair" in Joy Hughes, Carol Liston, Christine Wright, eds, *Playing Their Part Vice-Regal Consorts of New South Wales 1788-2019*, Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney, 2020, p. 143

- [32] The State Library of Western Australia website showing this photograph can be accessed at [https://purl.slwa.wa.gov.au/slwa\\_b4689122\\_2](https://purl.slwa.wa.gov.au/slwa_b4689122_2) . In terms of further identification of Coote's role as ADC to the de Chairs, apart from numerous photographic online references there are numerous mentions of him 'attending' to them in newspaper reports which can be accessed via TroveAustralia.
- [33] Note that Henry Graham also has memoirs which include his period as ADC to his father 1929-1930 which can be accessed via the National Library of Australia and Mitchell Library, Sydney.
- [34] Labor Candidate Speaks at Albury, *Border Morning Mail* Monday 16 April 1951 p. 2
- [35] Sherry Morris, *Wagga Wagga A History*, Council of the City of Wagga Wagga, Bobby Graham Publishers, 1999, p238,266
- [36] Rhonda Brownlow & Monica Jones, compilers, *Descendants of James Payne*, [gundaroo.info/genealogy/other/jamespayne.pdf](http://gundaroo.info/genealogy/other/jamespayne.pdf) page 8 accessed 24 Oct 2023
- [37] *Daily Advertiser* Thursday 28 August 1924 p. 1
- [38] *Daily Advertiser* 29 August 1924 p. 1
- [39] Sherry Morris, photograph of Wagga Wagga Municipal Council Staff 1927, p142-143
- [40] *Daily Advertiser* Tuesday 26 August 1924 p.1
- [41] Neil Pollock *Family History* at [npollock.id.au/Kilpatrick/](http://npollock.id.au/Kilpatrick/) accessed 25 October 2023
- [42] [parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/Pages/member-detaails.aspx?pk=1287](http://parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/Pages/member-detaails.aspx?pk=1287) accessed 25 October 2023
- [43] [https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:SLNSW\\_42895\\_Alfred\\_S\\_Henry\\_and\\_Matthew\\_Kilpatrick\\_holding\\_the\\_pelt\\_of\\_the\\_largest\\_dingo\\_ever\\_caught\\_at\\_that\\_time\\_tabled\\_as\\_a\\_document\\_in\\_Parliament\\_Sydney.jpg&action=history](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:SLNSW_42895_Alfred_S_Henry_and_Matthew_Kilpatrick_holding_the_pelt_of_the_largest_dingo_ever_caught_at_that_time_tabled_as_a_document_in_Parliament_Sydney.jpg&action=history) Note image is available from the collections of the State Library of NSW. A slightly cropped version of this photograph is at Neil Pollock Family History at [npollock.id.au/Kilpatrick/](http://npollock.id.au/Kilpatrick/) accessed 25 October 2023
- [44] Premier Bavin Stevens comment on death of Ball *Sydney Morning Herald* 1 November 1937 p.12
- [45] *Daily Advertiser* Thursday 28 August 1924 p. 1
- [46] photo in *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill) Sat 13 Feb 1926 p.7 where photographs of he and his new wife, formerly his secretary were published
- [47] drivers licences had only come in in 1922 in NSW [Australian Government Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, Information Sheet 84, Drivers Licences in Australia p.1 website [www.bitre.gov.au](http://www.bitre.gov.au) retrieved 27.9.23 2017 Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (2017), Drivers Licences in Australia BITRE, Canberra. This was prepared by Dr David Gargett
- [48] *Memoirs of Sir Dudley De Chair (as filmed by the AJCP) [microform] : [M716], 1931-1947./File*. Draft of autobiography: Volume 6. Australia (102pp.)/Draft of autobiography: Volume 6. Australia (102pp.) Chapter 2 p. 34 Originally filmed at the private residence of Commander G.H.D. de Chair, Boxmoor, Hertfordshire. The papers of Sir Dudley de Chair, including the drafts of his autobiography, are now held in the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ (Documents 7865).For further information see [Sir Dudley de Chair at the Imperial War Museum](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1030007740) (<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1030007740>.)
- [49] *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill), Friday 8 August 1924, p. 3
- [50] *Daily Advertiser* 27 August 1924
- [51] *Argus* [Melbourne] Wednesday 27 August 1924 p10 See also, "The Wagga Diamond Jubilee Show", N.S.W. *The Pastoral Review All Over Australia New Zealand and the World*, Volume XXXIV Number 9 September 16 1924 pp808-809 My thanks to Rob Walker, President Wagga Wagga and District Family History Society [WWDFHS] for acquainting the author with this resource held in the WWDFHS Library
- [52] *Daily Advertiser* 5 July 1924
- [53] *Daily Advertiser* Thursday 28.8.1924 p.1
- [54] *Daily Advertiser* 22 August 1924 p2 published a detailed itinerary which did not include a visit to the hospital
- [55] *Daily Advertiser* 30 January 1925 p.1
- [56] *Daily Advertiser* 27 August 1924 p 2
- [57] *Daily Advertiser* 29 August 24 p.1
- [58] *The Pastoral Review All Over Australia New Zealand and the World*, Volume XXXIV Number 9 September 16 1924 p. 808
- [59] *Daily Advertiser* 29 August 1924 p.1
- [60] *Daily Advertiser* 29 August 1924 p. 1
- [61] Sutherland p58
- [62] *Daily Advertiser* 26 August 1924 p. 1
- [63] *Daily Advertiser* 7 May 1929 p2
- [64] *Daily Advertiser* 29.8.1924 p. 1
- [65] *The Tumut and Adelong Times* Friday 10 October 1924
- [66] *Sydney Morning Herald* Friday 14 September 1934 p.12
- [67] Prince Henry, George V's third son visited in 1934 – and the party all rode horses back to Bomen station!! Sutherland, p.61
- [68] *Manning River Times and Advocate* [Taree] Saturday 19 June 1926 p 2
- [69] *Photographic Panoramas Collectors' List* No. 153, 2011. Josef Lebovic Gallery website [joseflebovicgallery.com](http://joseflebovicgallery.com) retrieved 13.9.23
- [70] Source [mhns.wa.gov.au](http://mhns.wa.gov.au) Germanton or Holbrook?
- [71] Rear Admiral Leonard Stanley Holbrook, [navy.gov.au](http://navy.gov.au) retrieved 13.9.23
- [72] Source Tom Ibbotson & Jillian Salzke October 2023 CSU Regional Archives

- [73] Our Early Photographers - Henninghams [https://museumriverina.com.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/11295/Our\\_early\\_photographers.pdf](https://museumriverina.com.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/11295/Our_early_photographers.pdf)
- [74] <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/search?search=H.%20G.%20McBurney&offset=20>
- [75] Ref Regional Archives gets new home at Charles Sturt in Wagga Wagga 6 June 2023 at <https://news.csu.edu.au> retrieved 4.11.2023
- [76] About the Archives at [library.csu.edu.au](http://library.csu.edu.au) retrieved 4.11.2023
- [77] Source [anzacdaydawnservice.org.au](http://anzacdaydawnservice.org.au) retrieved 28.9.
- [78] Sherry Morris, Chs 11 and 12 provide much detail as to the progression of Wagga Wagga throughout the 1920s
- [79] Theatre Card, 'The Shiek', Strand Theatre Wagga Wagga which opened to reveal a full colour picture of heartthrob Rudolph Valentino Source, Forbes Collection, Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society, Museum of the Riverina
- [80] *Daily Advertiser* Tuesday 27 March 1928 p5

### Further references –

For those wishing to explore further matters regarding the history of the Wagga Wagga Show could find the small booklet by Keith Swan, *A Century of Shows in Wagga Wagga* [1965] AN/RIV HIS/12 of use. It does not refer specifically to the 1924 show.

For those wishing to gain further insight to the Experiment Farm Wagga Wagga should find June Sutherland's book; June Sutherland, *From Farm Boys to PhDs: Agricultural Education at Wagga Wagga (1896 - 1996)*, Charles Sturt University, 1996 ISBN 9781875781539 187578536Ref LB01-001 CSU Search Room Library and Tome, Frank, compiler, *Pictorial History of Agricultural Research at Wagga Wagga 1893-1985*, Murray and Riverina Region Department of Agriculture NSW ISBN 0-7305-3579-5 at the library of Wagga Wagga and District Family History Society to be of use.

*Guide to State Archives at CSU Regional Archives*, CSU, 2014 [www.csu.edu.au/research/archives](http://www.csu.edu.au/research/archives)

For a general history of Wagga Wagga: Sherry Morris, *Wagga Wagga A History*, Council of the City of Wagga Wagga, Bobby Graham Publishers, 1999 Note that all dates related to holding of the office of Alderman and/or Mayor of Wagga Wagga are sourced from pp. 263-266 of this book.

With an earlier general history of Wagga Wagga being: Keith Swan, *A History of Wagga Wagga*, City of Wagga Wagga, 1970. N.B. Keith Swan played a significant catalyst role in the establishment of the archives collection.

For those seeking further insights to Sir Dudley and Lady de Chair, see

Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair KCB, KCMG, MVO, *The Sea is Strong*, with a foreword and Epilogue by Somerset de Chair, George G. Harrap & Co, London 1961

Joy Hughes Carol Liston Christine Wright, eds, *Playing Their Part Vice-Regal Consorts of New South Wales 1788-2019*, Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney, 2020, Chapter on Lady de Chair by Anne Sande

# Sister Annie Catherine Cameron

By Sherry Morris

On Anzac Day we should remember not only the soldiers who fought so gallantly on the battlefield but also the nurses who battled in the hospital wards to repair their broken minds and bodies. Whilst an abundance of historical and anecdotal material has been written about the experiences of the soldiers in World War I, the important contribution of nurses has usually been overlooked.

When the Australian Government raised the first Australian Imperial Force (AIF) for overseas service, nurses who were to staff medical units that formed an integral part of the AIF were recruited from the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) Reserve and from the civil nursing profession. The first draft of sisters left Australia in September 1914 and throughout the war the AANS served wherever the Australian troops were serving. In addition some Australian nurses worked as part of the British nursing services in the various theatres of war.

Most enlisted for much the same reason as the men – patriotism and a sense of duty combined with a desire for adventure. On enlistment they were entitled to a free return passage by second-class steamer or military transport and better pay rates than their British counterparts. They also received free uniforms – a dark grey serge dress with starched collars, a white apron, a red or scarlet cape and a white veil for working in the wards and a long grey dress, long grey cape and a chocolate and grey bonnet tied under the chin for outdoor wear. They also wore heavy black or grey stockings and laced walking shoes or boots. A total of 2139 Australian nurses served overseas between 1914 and 1918 while another 423 served in Australia.

One nurse who distinguished herself during World War I was Wagga Wagga-born Annie Catherine Cameron. Annie's father Duncan Cameron had been born in Scotland and had emigrated to Port Phillip (later Victoria) in 1852 with his parents and brothers, Donald and Ewan. The Cameron family settled in Port Phillip (later Victoria), at first near Hamilton and then moved to Geelong. While at Hamilton, Duncan married Flora Cameron, the daughter of John Cameron of Morgiana, one of the pioneers of the western district of Victoria.

The couple moved to the Cross Roads, Currawarna, in the central east part of the Riverina and then to Mundowey Island closer to Wagga Wagga, in the late 1860s. By 1889 Duncan held 3850 acres and was grazing 4018 sheep, twelve horses and seventy-five cattle. Duncan and Flora had at least five daughters and three sons.

Annie was born about 1884. She had three older sisters, Barbara Winifred, Marie McNaughton and Flora Agnes (who died in 1890) and one older brother John Hamilton Cameron. She had two younger brothers, Ewen and Duncan and a younger sister, Grace.



In the early 1900s Annie moved to Tasmania and for four years studied medical and surgical procedures and midwifery at the Launceston General Hospital. She was then employed as a charge nurse for two years at 'Waratah' Private Hospital in Launceston. Then, after private nursing for six months, she was appointed theatre sister at the Launceston General Hospital, where she had completed her training, at the end of 1912. She was still working there when she enrolled as a nursing sister in the Australian Army Nursing Service on 17 May 1915. She was then aged 31 years and 6 months and described as being 155 centimetres tall and weighing 53.5 kilograms; she had a sallow complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair. She embarked on the *Mooltan*, formerly a Royal Mail Steamer, for Egypt the following day.

Annie was engaged at No. 1 Australian General Hospital (1<sup>st</sup> AGH) which cared for over two thousand patients in a palace in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis in Egypt. Formerly a luxury hotel, this was a magnificent building with four storeys and a basement, marble corridors, oriental brasses, electric hanging lamps and alabaster fittings. The medical wards were on the ground floor in the former restaurant, dining room and billiard recesses in the great hall and rotundas. The nurses were accommodated in the hotel rooms on the first floor and had to sleep on army stretchers. They worked long hours from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. with three hours off during the day. The ablution facilities were unsatisfactory and the hot water services depended upon fuel that was not abundant during the war. In addition it was difficult for the young Australian nurses to care for young men with horrific injuries in such a culturally different setting in trying climatic environments. Annie also had some time temporarily attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian General Hospital at Abbassia in Cairo.



Above: Theatre at No. 1 Australian General Hospital. Source: Australian War Memorial



*Above: Nurses at No 1 Australian General Hospital (1AGH) in the former Palace Hotel, Heliopolis, Egypt about 1915. Source: Australian War Memorial*

By March 1916, it was decided that the 1<sup>st</sup> AGH would take over Number 12 British Surgical Hospital at Rouen in France. Fifty members of the Nursing Staff including Annie travelled with the unit to Rouen. Annie disembarked from the *Salta*, at Marseilles on 6 April 1916. She remained at the 1<sup>st</sup> AGH at Rouen apart from a short period when she was detached to 1 General Hospital at Etretat, a small coastal village in north-western France.

By 1917 many of the nurses including Annie were being transferred to Casualty Clearing Stations, makeshift systems of tents located near the front line where wounded soldiers received emergency treatment prior to transfer to a larger hospital. Quite often serious operations were also performed there with the assistance of the nurses.

Annie was posted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Casualty Clearing Station (CCS). She was there when, on 16 August 1917, it was stationed at Brandhoek one mile (1.6 kilometres) behind Vlamertinghe in Belgium, and bombed by the Germans with one officer and one man killed. She was also there when it was shelled five days later. According to the war historian Charles Bean, the nurses at the 3<sup>rd</sup> CCS initially refused to leave and some wept when ordered to safe quarters. Although protected by low fences and sandbags, seven tents had been blown to pieces and the patients had to be cleared to Number 10 British CCS. She was promoted to Sister on 1 September 1917.



*Above: An operation in an Australian Casualty Clearing Station where wounded were taken by ambulance from the advanced dressing stations. Nurses like Sister Cameron formed part of the staff.*

In 1918 she again worked with the 1<sup>st</sup> AGH but worked at other hospitals including the 42<sup>nd</sup> Stationary Hospital and the 12<sup>th</sup> (St Louis USA) General Hospital at Rouen. When the 1<sup>st</sup> AGH was relocated to Sutton Veny in England at the end of 1918 she proceeded there with it. She embarked on the *Matatua* for return to Australia on 19 December 1919. Her appointment was terminated on 7 May 1920.

For her work during the war she was Mentioned in Dispatches for ‘conspicuous service’ (gazetted in *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette*, 30 October 1919).

Annie continued nursing after the war, at Scottsdale Hospital in Tasmania and later at St David’s Hospital in Maffra in the Gippsland area of Victoria. She died at Maffra in 1968.

Nurse Cameron and the other nurses who served overseas enhanced the reputation of the nurses who were no longer regarded as glorified first aid workers. During the war they had cleaned wounds, assisted in busy operating theatres, sometimes performed minor surgery and administered treatments. They worked in trying conditions and were constantly exhausted and often sick themselves. At the same time they maintained a cheery attitude and for each patient became the physical substitute for all the women back home.