
Please note – This transcript was provided to the City of Sydney Archives by Colin Ruffels, the Great Nephew of Arthur James Colyer Ruffels. According to Colin Ruffels, there are several versions held by the family. Colin's mother typed their family's version from the original. Due to some negative references, Colin’s mother altered some of the stories to censor them. Colin has combined the several versions he holds to attempt a complete copy. The version held at the State Library of NSW is the original unaltered manuscript (State Library of NSW, call number: MLMSS7021).

The stories referred to in this transcript relate to Newtown and Ruffels’ time as a Police Officer in Sydney. For the complete manuscript and stories from the Southern Highlands please consult the original manuscript held at the State Library.

Note from Arthur James Colyer Ruffels’ son, Arthur.

The stories in this book are true, stories told by Arthur to his youngsters to amuse them when they were young. They would always say, “Tell us a story, Dad, about what you and Fred did, when you were little boys.”

So it came about that Arthur told the story of his own life, but as they often fell asleep before the story was finished and Artie had forgotten most of them, Arthur wrote them out at his suggestion.
A TRIP TO SYDNEY

On the approach of the cold weather Mr Forrest and the family packed up and went back to his old home at Burwood for the winter and later a stable boy named Tommy Dixon and I started for Sydney by road and had a very pleasant trip. I had two chestnut trotting mares in a light Abbott Buggy and they would trot along for hours. We travelled 60 miles the first day and drove into Burwood quietly the next day. In the Spring I drove them back again and the following Autumn I again drove them from Elmwood to Burwood but this time I left them at Burwood and I never went back to the bush or the people I liked so well. One of the mares above mentioned was a beauty, called 'Sally'. Mr Forrest used to drive her in a long shafted sulky and the only harness used was a bridle backband, traces, breastplate and reins and she was fast. There was nothing in the district could pass her and the only other mare that could run with her in double harness was her team mate Elsa. It was a pleasure to drive them and I thoroughly enjoyed the trips to and from Sydney.

THE PRIORY

The second time I brought the horses and buggy to Sydney I remained and soon found myself in charge of the garden, glasshouse, lawns, grounds, stables and poultry (a big job) at the 'Priory' Burwood Road, Burwood and soon found a mate in Ted Byrnes a Goulburn boy who was holding down a similar job at 'St Cloud' the home of Mr Hoskins of iron fame. It was a beautiful old Tudor House with fine grounds and gardens but far too big for one man to handle and after a few months I got very tired of it. I had worked harder in the bush but the conditions were altogether different in Sydney and as I became more used to these conditions the less I liked them. For instance I soon discovered that young fellows in a similar situation nearby were getting 20/- and 25/- per week and their keep, whilst I was only getting 13/- and keep. Still I boxed on and through the medium of the Church Club, Bible Classes etc. I made many friends, especially, and one of the best, being the Reverend Harry Bryant Rector of St. Pauls (High Church of England) whose teaching and kindly interest soon gave me a much broader outlook on life and in fact it seems to have largely influenced all my after life.

FROM BURWOOD TO MOSMAN

The more I saw of Sydney and its ways the more discontented I became and being convinced that I could hold my own with men here I left the Priory and the same week Ted Byrnes left St. Cloud. We had discussed the position from every angle neither of us had any prospects but we decided to give it a whirl.

I went to Moss Vale for 2 weeks holiday and Ted went to Goulburn and on returning got a position with Marcus Clark & Coy and made good. Later he went to Goulburn and brought his girl friend back with him - a bride - and for years after they lived in Bedford Street, Newtown beside the Catholic Church.
At this time I was boarding with old Mrs Taylor at 20 Wellington Street, Newtown. Ted was very friendly with a young Priest there and of course I was too and we used to spend a lot of time together.

Another thing that went a long way in deciding to leave the Priory was that for the first time in my hectic life I was free and able to think of myself. I mean that Fred and I had practically reared our first family. Bert had left school and was earning his own living and Walter also. Mother had packed up and gone to live with Eadie and the old home was let.

After leaving the Priory and spending 2 weeks at Moss Vale I returned to Burwood and stayed at William Lewis' while I looked for a position. I used to go out each day there were plenty of jobs similar to what I had left but none better. Bill Lewis used to drive the garbage cart for the Council and was known far and wide as 'Dusty Bill' but after tea and on Sundays he was Mr Lewis and also the Vicar’s right hand man; despite his occupation he was spiritually minded and never missed an opportunity of doing someone a good turn, in fact he stuck to me as well at this time of my life and I will never be able to repay him. The last time I saw him and Mrs Lewis they were caretaking St James Church in King Street, Sydney and I can just imagine how happy and contented he would be there.

Well one night Dusty took me around to the Church Club as usual. Now this Club was one of the best ideas of practical Christianity I have ever seen or been associated with. It was run by the Vicar and several gentlemen connected with St. Pauls. These gentlemen used to congregate two nights a week in the Club room and Dusty Bill used to gather up all the working men he could persuade to come and we used to mingle freely there with them. We could box, wrestle, exercise on the bars, play cards, dominoes, chess, drafts or if you liked, have debates. The Vicar had been a Prefect at Oxford in his College days and was a well trained boxer and a member of the eight oar crew and was a good sport.

Well on this particular night I was playing Euchre, 4 handed and the man playing opposite was an old gentleman named 'Alcock' who I had seen many times at the church but had never spoken to. At the finish of the game he asked me if I had got a position yet. I said ‘No’ so he said ‘Well why not join the Police Force, you are just the type of man they want’. I was too surprised at the time to answer so he said – ‘think it over and come round to my place in the morning’. I did and he gave me a letter to the Inspector General of Police, Mr Edmund Fosbery and for a week after I was busy getting my preliminary application in. I first applied for the mounted and was rejected on account of my height, then I applied for the foot and accepted but was told I would not get my appointment until the end of the Financial Year, then 3 or 4 months distant.

On leaving the Police Department I was standing near the corner of Elizabeth Street near a labour agency when a man came out and wrote two 'Positions Vacant' on a blackboard standing near the door. I followed him into the shop and closed down in one of the positions and next day found me installed at 'Kilcreggan' Spit Road, Mosman as gardener and useful for Mr Scott-Fell.

They were very nice people and I had a happy time with them while waiting for my appointment and I had an awful job to get away from them when it did come. Mr Scott-Fell raised my wages three times in one day to try to induce me to stay with them. Mrs Fell was the daughter of a Presbyterian Minister and for awhile I was almost a Scotchman. They had 2 boys named Jack and Brian and a daughter named Myra. These youngsters and I soon became real cobbers. There was a cosy study on the back verandah and every night after tea the three of them would gather there whilst I told wonderful stories of the bush and the things Fred and I did when we were little boys. I never saw youngsters keener on stories and Mrs Scott-Fell remarked that the new gardener was a second Pied Piper the way the children hung on to him.

**I GET MY APPOINTMENT**

The time soon slipped away whilst I was at Scott-Fells and one Saturday afternoon Dusty Bill came over with an official envelope directing me to report myself at Belmore Barracks on the following Monday morning.

It was hard to get away from Fells but eventually I did and on Monday 10th day of June 1901 I presented myself at the Barracks which stood where the Railway Station is now and next to the
Devonshire Street Cemetery. It was being pulled down - the first duty I performed as a Constable being to cut the cemetery fence into stove wood for Inspector Clarke. My next was to help load lorries all day, engaged in shifting the Barracks out to the Showground where the Police were quartered whilst new Barracks were being erected in Bourke Street, Redfern.

When we finally got settled in the Showground I was drilled for 2 days by a Senior Constable named Crow and on the third day I started to lay buffalo lawn around the Inspector's house. It was more in my line than trying to drill and I made a good job of it and was working on this job when Anthony Hordens old store was burnt down.

After joining the 'Force' the very first thing I caught was 'German Measles'. There had been an epidemic of them in the Old Belmore Barracks about 20 years previously and several men had died. There had not been any further trace of them until Prior, Richardson and myself were demolishing the old beds and fittings in the Barracks when we must have picked up some stray germs for one morning Prior sickened and went to bed. I hung out until dinnertime and then went down to it and was followed later by Jim Richardson. The police doctor came and had a look at us and went away and later an ambulance came along and took us both to the Coast Hospital. I was light headed by this time and that trip was the longest I have ever made. It seemed hundreds of miles but was over at last and we were made as comfortable as possible in an old 4 roomed cottage called an ‘isolated ward’ overlooking the Lazarette and facing the ocean. There were 6 beds in this ward, all measles. This was in July again and bitterly cold but the nurse kept a roaring fire going and we were pretty snug but by jingo we were bad. I was very light headed but did not quite lose consciousness and knew that I was getting worse rapidly by the way the Nurse kept flitting around and taking my temperature every now and again and one night I was running a terrific temperature and was crazy as a loon and Prior was worse if anything, the Nurse eventually got the Sister in Charge to come down. They put a rubber sheet under me and then sponged me with delicious cold water. It was a beautiful sensation and they kept at it until my temperature came down a bit, then they rolled me up in nice warm blankets and tackled Prior. Well in five minutes I was sound asleep and did not wake until morning. I'll never forget the look on Prior when he woke up. He was covered from head to foot with black lumps that looked just like mulberries, he was such a sight that I had to laugh, he took one look at me and started to laugh also. The Nurse came in and had a look at us and remarked that 'they had come out beautiful'. Prior snorted, “Beautiful - Nurse why they are enough to make a man spit blood”. She said she was glad to see both of us were much better today and went on with her work.

In a couple of weeks I was well enough to get up, but alas I had no clothes with me so the Nurse hunted up a pair of pants and a sweater and I started to make myself useful about the ward. I used to stoke up the fire, make the beds and potter around. I got to know some of the Lepers as I could talk to them over the fence. They would sit on the rocks in the sun pretending to fish, but they seemed to be always half asleep. Well I got over the jolly thing and returned to the Depot but I was hardly able to walk and did not have enough energy to get out of my own way and it was fully a year before I finally shook off the evil effects.

Prior got a relapse and never properly got over them and has never been the same man since. Richardson's eyes were affected and he lost the sight of them before he was 50. Altogether they were the most malignant brand of measles that I have ever seen or ever want to see. It was a queer start for my new career but after I got back to the Showground they let me lay about in the sun for a couple of weeks then I was sworn in and attached to Newtown where I worked for 27 years.
CONSTABLE A.652

On joining the Service my Registered Number was 7729, but on being attached to No.5 Division, Newtown I was issued with the letter A and three numerals viz 652 to put on the collar of my coat. I was also issued with a revolver which I still carry, a pair of handcuffs, a baton and a whistle and these had to be carried whenever I was on duty.

On being attached to No.5 I boarded at No.20 Wellington Street, Newtown and at this house several other Police also boarded. Amongst them was John Brown Harper (Benbolt), Charles Webb, John Gardiner, William Parker Prior, Fred Ferrier, Ted Truskett and Jim Richardson - quite a happy family and from all of these Constables I learned something and was soon a regular man of the 'Force'. But as a Constable's Official Career is recorded in a proper manner at Headquarters and the history of his cases are all in the Police Gazette I need not touch on them here. Still there are a few incidents that might be of some interest that are nevertheless true, although they were never inserted in the Police or any other Gazette and they are incidental to the lot of any man on his Probation.

WE BUY A CASE OF BOTTLED ALE

The first Xmas I was in the Police, about the middle of December Harper took the hat around and collected 2/6 per head from all boarders for Xmas Beer. I had never tasted drink of any kind but paid my 2/6 to be as good as the mob. Charlie Webb attended the Annual Police Sale and bought a large case of assorted ale and stout for £1, a great bargain. Well it was carted home and guarded carefully until Xmas Day when at dinner time Harper opened a few bottles and filled up a large glass for each of us. Harper proposed a Merry Xmas and both he and Webb took a mouthful, Harper swore, Webb spat his out on the floor, the old landlady roused and the dinner was nearly a failure and no wonder for that beer was so old and flat that it was quite unfit for use. Harper tried it bottle after bottle while Webb pulled the corks and tipped it into the bath and out of 5 or 6 dozen bottles there was not a single drink and Harper's boy Jackie sold the 'Dead Marines' for 1d each thus netting over 5/-. Charlie Webb then went to the Carlisle Castle and returned with a ½ dozen of Reschs best Dinner Ale and of this I had a glass, my first drink and was surprised I did not feel any ill effects.

JACKIE HARPER - 25/12/1901

John Brown Harper, i.e. "Benbolt" was a widower with one son named Jackie. He was small of stature about 10 years of age, soft spoken and suave with the disposition of an imp. But he was the only youngster in that boarding house so scored well that Xmas and amongst the medley of presents found in his stocking was a Daisy Air Rifle.

He had a wonderful time with this, one of his first victims was Mother Taylor's cat asleep on an upstairs window sill, in the sun, which a well placed dart caused to bound 6ft onto the pavement below and then dash up the street as though it was in a hurry. The next was the old woman's pet dog which started chasing its tail around the yard so fast that she thought it was mad. Next the fowls started cutting capers and a pigeon dropped dead for some unknown reason and then the supply of darts ran out but he soon discovered that dry rice made excellent missiles for this type of gun, but the landlady soon cut off his supply and he then turned his attention to the fowl feed, i.e. dried wheat.
One afternoon I was sitting in the sun on the balcony reading when he crept to the other end and taking careful aim fired at me and hit me on the forehead, it did not break the skin but made an impression that could be seen and felt for weeks. Well that put the lid on it so far as shooting about the house was concerned as Jackie had to go out into the streets and lanes to shoot to the great discomfort of the neighbours cats, dogs and fowls.

Now in those days there was no sewerage system in Newtown and between each large pair of streets there was, and is a lane and at the bottom of each yard and abutting onto the said lane was a small structure mostly wooden but sometimes brick and generally referred to as the Parliament House. Now one bright sunny morning Jackie was out shooting in the lane between Denison and Wellington Streets and discovered a knot hole in the woodwork of the back of one of these structures through which he got the muzzle of his rifle and waited patiently. Now Mrs Byrnes was sweeping her yard with a millet broom and eventually went into the said house but almost immediately after she gave one wild yell and fairly flew out of that door, grabbed the broom and dashed into the lane. Jackie started to run at the first yell and he was not a moment too soon, she was a big woman but young and very active and every time she swung that broom it seemed closer to his head and just didn’t he streak it for home and it was only a co-incidence that I happened to stroll out into the street at the psychological moment leaving the front door and gate open. Jackie went through both like a shot slamming them behind him then up the stairs and hid under his bed. Mrs Byrnes waited for his father and made a grievous complaint. He came home and scalped him and sent him to bed, then broke the rifle up and put it in the garbage bin.

Many years later Jackie and Mrs Byrnes’ boy went to the Great War together when it is said they did some good work on motor cycles as despatch riders which they claim they could ride up and down a telegraph post. At any rate on their return she was amongst the first to give him a Welcome Home which prompted me to ask her if she remembered the incident, she said she did and further remarked that she had reared several boys of her own and further that boys will be boys although some are little monkeys.

HECKENBERG GETS A FRIGHT

For a couple of weeks after Constable Guilfoyle was shot in City Road we used to go around at night with our revolvers mighty handy and we learned to draw them at the least unusual sound for the murderers Shaw and Skidmore were still at large and we were continually searching empty houses, sheds and other likely places for them. One Sunday night Heckenberg (the champion wood chopper) was on Duty in Camperdown and about 9pm was met by two youths in Missenden Road near St. John's College who informed him that there was a man behaving in a suspicious manner in the College grounds, a lane separated these grounds from the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital grounds. The College grounds were enclosed with a 6ft galvanized fence and near the fence was a row of big pine trees and it was under these trees that the man was said to be camping.

Heckenberg got his gun out and slipped through the gate and made his way safely to the nearest tree. He was working from one tree to another, tense and ready to shoot at the slightest sound and expecting to see a flash every second and feel a bullet tearing through him, when from the direction of the tree which he had just passed there was a terrific 'BANG'. Poor Hec he bounded 6ft straight up into the air then wheeled around as he came down, let out an awful yell and fired two shots into the trunk of that tree before he could stop himself. After the excitement was over he was very puzzled to know what had happened and was more so when he heard a smothered giggle in the long grass nearby and on
going to investigate 30 or 40 boys jumped up and raced for the College laughing so much that he nearly caught them.

It appears that the Sunday papers were full of the story and what the Police were doing to catch the murderers etc. This gave the students the idea so two of them told the story about the suspicious man whilst another one hid behind the fence with a double bunger and the rest hid in the grass to see the fun.

There was no denying their joke was a success so much so that Heckenberg would have dealt with them summarily if he could have got hold of them, still, when talking about it afterwards he admitted that they gave him the worst 5 minutes he had ever experienced in a hectic life.

**CONSTABLE BARR LOSES HIS CAP**

Constable Barr was working one beat Erskineville and Constable Lloyd two beat. They were both good fellows and both had the same failing - bending the elbow. They met one night on Erskineville Bridge at midnight and whilst having a chat and keeping a wary eye out for the Sergeant the goods train for the South Coast mostly empty coal skips but a lot of them so the engine was puffing like a steamboat. Barr said he could spit down the chimney as the train came under the bridge so he hung over the end and waited for the train to come along. All went well until the engine came from under the bridge and as he was in the act of spitting into it such a mighty puff of smoke and steam caught him in the face that his cap went straight up into the air and later dropped into an empty truck and poor Barr was thrown onto his back on the bridge. He was not seriously hurt but it sobered him.

Anyway he went and knocked the Licensee of the Erskineville Hotel up, had another drink to steady his nerves and borrowed an old felt hat from him and went on around his beat. When he called at the station to report Jimmy Hynes the Station Sergeant nearly had a fit and what he said to that Constable cannot be recorded in a book like this.

**TED MAY**

One of the best known identities at Newtown was Ted May (father of the present City Coroner). Originally he had been a Senior Constable in the Mounted in the early digging days and whilst on a gold escort got a bullet through his arm. He received a lump sum compensation and was discharged medically unfit, later his arm got alright so he came to Sydney and got a position in the Transit Board and performed Traffic Duty in Sydney and later when this Board was taken over by the Government all its members were taken over also. So once again Ted found himself in the Police Force and performed Traffic Duty in Sydney for many years until he applied for promotion. Then it was discovered that he was illegally in the job as it were. However he was transferred to Newtown and allowed to participate in the Pension on condition that he paid in £60 superannuation for the period he was out on pension. He was put on fatigue duty and one of such duties was to destroy stray dogs for which he received 2/6 per head but had to pay the dustman 6d per head to remove the dead bodies. Ted set to work with a will and gathered in all the dogs he could catch between Redfern and Leichhardt, Grace Bros and Cooks River and kept it going until he got that £60 back.

One day he brought one in that looked like a half bred wolf, he was holding the cord with one hand and aiming with the other when the dog sprang at him, Ted fired and cut the cord with the bullet also the top off his finger. The dog bit him and escaped and Ted was on Sick Report for a month. Many months later he saw that dog asleep at the edge of the footpath in Enmore Road so he got his gun under his coat and strolled past with the throng of people passing and as he passed the dog he put a bullet through it and passed on. There was great excitement in the street and everyone was blaming somebody else for firing the shot. Ted drifted away and by the time Sergeant Curry arrived with a couple of Constables he was not in sight and the mystery was never solved.

He used to get me to book up his 'Catch' for him and as I was booking up this particular one he could not resist chuckling 'That's the b....., that bit me. I knew.
And amongst his papers

Petersham Police Station
28th November, 1932

In promulgating your esoteric reports, or articulating your superficial sentimentalities and amicable, philosophical or psychological observations, beware of platitudinous ponderosity. Let your report possess a clarified conciseness, a compacted comprehensibility, coalescent consistency, and a concatenated cogency. Eschew all conglomerations of flatulent garrulity, jejune habiliments and asinine affectations. Let your extemporaneous descanting and unpremeditated expiations have intelligibility and veracious vivacity without rodomontade or thrasonical bombast. Sedulously avoid all polysyllabic profundity, pompous prolixity, peittaceous vacuity, ventriloquial verbosity, and magniloquent rapidity.

In other words write plainly, briefly, naturally, truthfully, purely. Keep from ‘slang’. Don't put on airs. Write what you mean. Mean what you write. And DON'T use big words.

BY ORDER

A STREET ACCIDENT
I was on duty one night on Newtown Bridge from 7pm to 3am, a very hard shift, and about 9.30pm there was a commotion on the bridge and on investigating I found a street urchin about 10 years old unconscious in the middle of the road and a crowd around a motor car accusing the driver of running over the poor boy and killing him. Whilst waiting for the ambulance I got 5 witnesses who saw the car run over him. Just then another motorist drove up and asked what the matter was. On being told he said - Rubbish, and explained that he had been following the car for a mile and with his head lights he could plainly see the boy having a ride inside the spare tyre at the back and that he fell out when crossing the bridge and that the driver of the first car did not know he was on the back. Just then the ambulance arrived and I went to put the boy into it but dashed if he had not come to his senses and buzzed off without being noticed. The ambulance officer suggested that I had been drinking so I went for those 5 witnesses and found they had disappeared also. The driver was getting nasty at the delay and saying things, so I dodged off too.

A MIDNIGHT INCIDENT
Plodding down Missenden Road about midnight one winter's night I saw a man asleep on a verandah, he was drunk so I decided to leave him there until morning and on reaching the corner of Parramatta Road stood there for a few minutes. Just then a tram conductor came down the road and seeing that drunk went onto the verandah and tried to wake him up explaining that if he stopped there the Police would get him. Well that drunk woke up roaring like a bull and charged the Trammie who fled down the street roaring Police. He did not see me and was soon out of sight. The drunk then staggered into Burton Street and went into an old cottage where he lived and I walked quietly up to the verandah to see what he would do. First he lit a candle that was in an old fashioned candlestick. He stood looking at his brother who was asleep in bed and then at another man sleeping in the same room then he walked over to the bed and bumped that candle down hard on the brother's face and then treated the other man the same. Gee just didn't they swear, they came out of bed like greased lightning and rolled into the street, fighting furiously. Well after I got them untangled the two men ducked back into bed as it was cold in the street without their pyjamas. They left me alone with the drunk and as he would not listen to reason I put the handcuffs on to him and started for the lock-up but I caught his sleeve in the lock and when he pulled back it came off. He then started swinging it at my head. I had to keep
circling around him until I could trip him up and put them on properly. He sulked then and would not walk so I backed up to him like a trace horse, got hold of the chain on the cuffs and again started for the Station. He slid along on the road until the seat wore out of his trousers then he began to take notice after another 100 yards he said he would walk so I let him up and sure enough he walked down to Camperdown Lock-up with me and pleaded guilty next morning to being found drunk but did not mention any of the other incidents.

**MY MISTAKE**

About 2am one morning I was going down Australia Street, Camperdown just below Bishopgate Street when passing the first 2 storied house I thought I saw someone at a side window. The streets were not lighted then as they are now and it was difficult to see clearly so I went down along the wall very quietly and arrived at the window in time to see a leg just disappearing through it and by making a bound I was just able to grab an ankle and hang on. Then things started to happen, first there was a series of awful screams and on realising it was a woman I let go suddenly then there was a crash inside as a heavy body and a pile of crockery crashed onto the floor, then the inmates of the house came rushing out in night attire all shouting at once.

After the excitement had cooled down it transpired that the maid had gone to a party without permission and had left the kitchen window unfastened so that she could get in without anyone knowing and it was the window being gently raised that had first attracted my attention. She was feeling her way across the kitchen table when I grabbed her. I was disappointed at losing a case but still it was one of those incidents that I did not put in the Occurrence Book.

**JUST AS WELL**

One Sunday afternoon the Salvation Army was holding a meeting at the corner of Rochester and Church Streets, Camperdown and I stopped for awhile to listen to them. There was quite a large number of the local talent present. A convert was trying to address the meeting. He was very earnest but a poor speaker and kept repeating himself thus:- My dear friends I tell you that God knows your name, I tell you that God knows where you live, I tell you that God knows everything you do. I tell you that God knows everything. The speaker then paused for want of breath and an impressive silence followed - Nutsy Kennedy the leader of the Push leaning against a post with both hands thrust deep in the pockets of his bell-bottom pants and his Monte (?) Hat at a rakish angle on his head expectorated about 6 feet across the pavement and remarked:- 'Blimey it’s a good job that he is not a John'.

**A CLOSE CALL**

Between 2am and 3am one morning I was busy trying the doors and windows on my beat on that section of Parramatta Road between Layton and Park (now Mallett Street) and was just approaching the Hampshire Hotel when two men dashed out of Davis' Chemists Shop at the corner (where Winns Shop now stands) with Old Mr Davis in hot pursuit. As they dashed up Mallett Street he fired 5 or 6 shots at them in quick succession but they escaped through a lane at the side of Bonds Hosiery Mills. He explained that when he heard the shop doors burst open he had jumped out of bed, grabbed his revolver and dashed downstairs, they heard him coming and rushed out and he did his best to stop them. If he had not done so I would have found the door open in another few minutes and as we did not carry torches those days would probably have walked into the shop and struck a match to see what was wrong, as this was the usual practice. There appears to be nothing dangerous in that and I thought little of the incident until one night the following week a young constable named Long did that very same thing at Auburn and in striking a match was shot dead by those same two men. So only for Old Mr Davis I would have met a similar fate.
DIGBY GRAND AND JONES

At this time there was a very strong Push at Camperdown and their leaders were the two men mentioned above. Their names were Fatty Newbold and Digby Grand and Henry Jones, and later they hanged on the same day for the murder of Constable Long at Auburn. As will be remembered they returned to Camperdown after the murder at a very fast pace in a sulky driving a stolen trotting mare and nearly ran over a Senior Constable on the road.

DOUB有哪些EXECUTION.

THE AUBURN MURDERERS.

AN UNFORTUNATE HITCH.

SYDNEY, Tuesday.

Henry Jones and Digby Grand, the men convicted of the murder of Constable Long at Auburn, were executed at Darlinghurst Gaol this morning, at 9 o'clock. The bodies of the men having been demanded by the sheriff in the usual way, their irons were removed and they were pinioned and marched slowly along the corridor from the condemned cells to the scaffold. Jones was attended by Father McGee, and Grand by the Wesleyan gaol chaplain, the Rev. J.W. Collier, who administered spiritual consolation.

Grand was led on to the scaffold by Howard, the executioner. He looked down into the yard below, and catching sight of a group of pressmen, smiled pleasantly and nodded. His air was as jaunty as during the earlier portion of the trial. Howard indicated the position on the trap which he wished Grand to occupy, and the latter stepped smartly on to the spot. Then the rope was adjusted and the white cap drawn just as Jones was led through the door. Jones was pale and haggard, and his eyes were apparently closed. In his case the cap was drawn at once by the assistant, and the rope was adjusted by Howard. A second later the lever was pulled, the trap flew open, and the bodies were swinging at the ends of the ropes.

Jones died instantly, but Grand was less fortunate. For over three minutes he struggled convulsively, and life was then apparently extinct, but a minute later his arms and shoulders could be seen working. These struggles continued for only a few seconds, however. “He's gone,” said a warder to the newspaper reporters as the final tremor passed through the hanging body, and apparently that was the end.

At the expiration of 20 minutes the medical officer examined the bodies and pronounced life to be extinct, and the witnesses signed the necessary certificates. Both the condemned men wore short beards and were attired in ordinary gaol clothing.

(Age, July 8, 1903)

Fred Mitchell was the lock-up keeper at Camperdown and he was walking around the beat with me one evening when a man complained to us that someone had 'sweated' his trotting mare. We had a look at that mare and no doubt she had been driven fast and far. We returned to the Station and rang up the Detective Office and told them and this started a line of inquiries that led to the arrest of these two men.

Although I took no part in it I actually saw Digby Grand arrested by Det. Fullerton, and some other Detectives that I did not know, about 7 am one morning in Mann Street, Erskineville. The house he was living in at the time stood a little back from the road with two Norfolk Island Pines in front and as I came up through Harry Knight's paddock I saw Fullerton go to the front door and later saw them take Fatty away. Jones was later arrested at Ultimo.

THE PUSH AT CAMPERDOWN

After Digby Grand and Jones were hanged for murder Mick Hickey became leader of the Push. They used to frequent a blacksmiths at the corner of Bridge Road and Parramatta Road, Petersham near the milestone opposite Nelson Street. This was kept by an old criminal named Parker who used to disguise himself by dyeing his whiskers different colours. But their luck was out that year as Mick Hickey stopped a heavy sentence for garroting an old gentleman in the Cutaway Hill now the entrance to the Sydney University and was also declared an habitual criminal. His brother Ginger Hickey and Weazel
Connors then took charge. Ginger was arrested for assault and robbery in the University Paddock a short time after and Weazel got away and I have never heard of him since. The other members of this Push broke up then and separated for although they were great fighters when hunting in a pack 40 or 50 strong they were helpless without a leader and from this time have not given the Police any serious trouble or committed any crime worth recording. I often meet some of these men and talk of old times but they are now, even as they were in their youth, just rats - mostly vicious weaklings and quite harmless unless they are in a Push.

Note Old Parker got three years hard labour for false swearing at the Trial.

AN EVICTION 5.6.31

As I had never seen a proper eviction I will record this one here whilst it is fresh in my mind. A woman named Catherine Amour was the tenant of No. 17 Starling Street, Leichhardt owned by Mrs Peters of Hurstville who was in poor circumstances and depending upon the rent of this cottage to a large extent. The rent was £1 per week and was very much in arrears. A summons was issued under the Landlord and Tenants Act and the Court gave Mrs Amour 14 days to quit.

In the meantime the Communists assisted by the Annandale Unemployed decided to resist the eviction. They placed a regular army of pickets around the house, placarded the windows with red signs bearing "No Evictions", armed themselves with pieces of piping and defied the Police. About 30 of them went to the home of the owner and made a hostile demonstration there but were dispersed by the local Police.

The case was reported to the Chief Secretary but he decided that the Law must take its course. As all inducements held out to Mrs Amour to move quietly were futile at 2p.m. on 5th June, 1931 Inspector Fowler, Sergeants Iverach, Dunn and Howard and about 15 Constables went to the premises, read the warrant and after a sharp tussle put that crowd off the premises. When out on the street they tried to rally, urged on by Mrs Mary Clark of 9 Susan Street, Annandale and Edna Stack of 117 Nelson Street, but were soon put out on the street and the two women were arrested as was also Thomas Bell their leader and Ronald James. As the front door was bolted I took half a dozen Constables to the back and forced the kitchen door. There were about 30 men in the kitchen armed as mentioned but on a peremptory order to "drop them" they did so and bundled outside. I then went to the front door and let the owner and Bailiff in and in 10 minutes every stick of furniture was out in the street and the owner in possession.

The owner gave her late tenant a clear receipt for all rent due and also a £1 to pay a carrier to take the furniture away. I don't know what he charged but rumour says there was enough change to allow Mrs Amour and her hubby to call at a nearby hotel and drown their sorrows.

It was a sorry sordid affair and as unlike the evictions one reads about as possible and makes one wonder just how much is solid truth and how much is created by the persons or the imagination of the author of some of these Old Irish books.

THE PRODIGAL SON

The following story happened when I was in the Station at Newtown, the Sergeant referred to is now Inspector 2/C Roser at that time he was Sgt 1/C at Newtown and my very good friend. The Minister is the Revd Massey of the Congregational Church, Newtown. It was re-written by Ena and published in the Police News.

On the fringe of civilization in the far Western District of New South Wales a man, weather beaten, worn and prematurely old eked out a scanty living on a Selection by working late and early and in the grim struggle for existence he was assisted by his good wife and their only son.

As this son grew up he grew restless and often wondered what was beyond the distant ranges and what was doing in the big world beyond the distant horizon. This longing became so intense that one day when his parents had gone to town he made up a small swag of his most cherished belongings and
started over the range to see some of those wonderful things that passing drovers had often told him about. After tramping all day he reached the railway line and as darkness fell he scrambled into an empty truck as a goods train slowly climbed the range and after many adventures he finally arrived at Darling Harbour and was lost in a great City. He was full of wonder at the things he saw and full of thankfulness to be away from the farm with its never ending work whilst on that same farm the father was working harder than ever before and unutterably lonely, working and hoping day by day that the boy would return to the Old Home. And to break the monotony he bought a wireless set and after the days work was done the old couple would sit for hours listening to items of interest in the big world outside and dreaming of their boy.

One pleasant Sunday evening in the Congregational Church, Newtown the Reverend Massey, who was noted far and wide for the passionate eloquence of his preaching, was addressing a vast congregation and his text for the evening was the Prodigal Son and his eloquent address was transmitted by wireless far and wide and it so happened that the father after lighting his pipe had settled down to listen to the wireless and after listening for a few minutes he shouted, “Mother come quick there's a man talking about our boy”, and for the next half hour they listened with tears running down their faces to the words of the preacher telling the old old story and never once doubted but that it was their boy he was speaking of and they at once wrote to that Minister begging him to use his influence to induce that boy to return home. It was one of the most pathetic letters I have ever seen and in due course it reached the Minister and his first impulse was to write and tell them that he was sorry but he had never heard of their son, but in the face of such faith it was hard to disillusion this old couple.

In his dilemma he handed the letter over to Sgt Roser who brought it to the station where he, Lillie and myself held a post mortem on it, looking for clues. But alas the only likely thing to be of any assistance was that this boy was fond of the 'Flicks' and acting on this Roser induced several Picture Show operators to put on the screen "Urgent, if John Jones is present will he please come to the door". For a long time there was no response as show after show was tried until one night happening to be in Erskineville he got the message put on again and waited at the door. After a few minutes a youth came out and said 'I am Jones is anything wrong at home'. The Sergeant said no but a gentleman wants to see you urgently at the Church, come along and I will give you an introduction.

You can imagine the surprise of the Reverend Gentleman when the Sergeant walked in and handed that Prodigal Son over to him. Explanations followed and the Minister then took him to the Church and let him speak into the dictaphone, knowing well that the old couple would be listening in. One can nearly hear their gasp of surprise when they heard John's voice telling them that he would write to them and at once etc. And the Minister saw to it that he wrote that letter before he left him and he posted it himself.

To that old couple the finding of their boy amongst the multitude of people in a big City will always be a miracle but to the parties concerned it is only an incident on the silver screen of human life that is passing constantly before the eyes of an observant policeman and is of far greater interest than the most sensational film that I have ever seen and after watching the stream of human life flow past day by day, year after year one comes to a great understanding and will often lift up the fallen one instead of running them in.

**CABBAGES**

Once upon a time when a deviation was being made around Bulls Hill on the Railway Line between Moss Vale and Werai there were hundreds of navvies camped about the surrounding bush, all more or less honest. On a farm in the district was a beautiful paddock of cabbages, great big "Successions" nearly ready to cut, but alas every night there was many a gap in the rows and the owner Tim Heggarty was very angry indeed and his opinion of navvies in general was worth listening to and as for cabbage eating ones, well 'They were a disgrace to the Old Dart'. He complained loud and long to Jim Torpey the local lock-up keeper who sent Bill O'Reilly the Constable and the strongest man on the Force out to investigate without result.
The cabbages still disappeared and something had to be done about it, so Young Tim Heggarty was put on guard by his father and so he had to wander around that Paddock all night with the old gun over his arm, a job he heartily detested. So one day he bought a pound of common table salt and ground it to a fine powder with an empty bottle, he then put the salt in a jar labelling it ‘Strichnine’ Poison. He next visited Julius Hoare who used to ‘Boil the Billies’ for the navvies and who was simple minded but an awful gossip and after making poor Julius swear that he would never breathe a word to a soul etc. Tim took him to that cabbage paddock and got him to keep count whilst he put a small quantity of the salt into the heart of each cabbage passing a remark now and again about the surprise certain navvies would get etc. and letting poor Julius see plainly the salt bottle marked Poison.

After he had treated 500 head of cabbages he said goodbye to Julius after again cautioning him not to mention a word to anyone, he went home and to bed leaving the cabbages unprotected and when he got up in the morning he found that not a single leaf had been touched and what is even more singular still they never lost a single cabbage after and later when questioned by the Sergeant as to why he had poisoned his cabbages he naively and honestly replied 'Sure I only put a pinch of salt on them to keep the snails away'.

MAURICE HOARE

One of the best known figures in the Berrima District when I was a boy was Paddy Hoare who resided with his wife and family in Irishtown, Moss Vale. He carted firewood with the poorest horse, the oldest dray and the worst harness I have ever seen. One of his boys named Julius used to run the Mail in a sulky to and from Kangaroo Valley for many years. Another son named Maurice was so daft that he was brought to Sydney and placed in a mental hospital for treatment. Then the Master-in-Lunacy began sending letters to Old Paddy asking him to pay for the boy's keep. At first he took no notice but later he received a letter stating that unless he paid up at once proceedings would be taken at once for the amount of Maurice's maintenance. This so annoyed Old Paddy that he wrote right across that letter — 'If ye don't quit bothering me for money I'll send ye Julius too'.

This dire threat was so effective that so far as I know he never got another letter from the Lunacy Department, evidently they considered one of a family was sufficient.

MORE ABOUT CABBAGES

One cold night in July about 1903 I was instructed to pay special attention to a Chinaman's Garden in St Peters as there was no end of complaints of stolen cabbages two or three nights each week and as it was on my beat it did not look too good for me, as I was pretty green those days and liked cabbages. Suspecting local brick burners I hid between the brick kilns and the gardens. All went well until about 3am when there was a deafening report from the garden followed by a blood curdling yell. I raced down to the fence and found a Chinaman wriggling about on his belly and squealing like a pig and a bag of cabbages on the ground nearby. I looked into the garden and saw another Chinaman looking over the manure heap with an old blunderbuss in his hand. He cried out ‘Him no good Constable, he stealam my cabbages, me stop him’, etc. Well I had to cart that wounded Chow to the Hospital where the doctor placed him face down on a table, and got me to sit on his head whilst he got a lance and probed 43 pellets of shot out of his er — back. He was kept in hospital for 3 weeks and the wardsman told me that during that time he never once turned over. There was no prosecution in this case and everyone concerned was satisfied.

HOSPITAL DUTY

Night Duty in midwinter was cold jolly cold, when I paraded at the Station I was detailed by the Station Sergeant Jimmy Hynes for duty at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital to look after two attempted suicide cases. At the Hospital I found twelve men in the ward and one of them was a Chinaman. There was a bonzer fire in the ward and a very nice nurse who after making them all comfortable left me in
charge whilst she went to the next ward to fix them up. It was warm and quiet and a long way better than working the beat so I turned the key in the door and made MYSELF comfortable. All the patients were fairly quiet except the Chinaman who kept sneaking out of bed, and I had to coax him back again.

This went on for a couple of hours until I went to put some more coal on the fire. I found a small hand coal shovel and was fixing the fire when that Chow jumped out of bed and streaked for the door. I took after him with the coal shovel. He could not travel too fast in a long nightshirt like a kimono and I was able to get the flat part of that shovel onto the place where the seat of his pants ought to be but was not. Didn't he squeal and go but before he got around that ward and back to his bed I managed to get close enough to connect with that shovel a couple more times. He dived into his bed and stopped there and the ward soon settled down again.

I settled down by the fire and if that Chink moved in his bed I would reach for the shovel and all would be quiet again. Later on the Nurse brought in a tray with hot coffee and biscuits and complimented me on the peace and good order of the Ward, further said it was a pity I was not a Wardsman as I seemed to be adapted for that class of work.

I remained on duty in that Ward for the rest of that month every night and I never had a scrap of trouble with that Chinaman again. He was never restless while I was on duty and the Nurse remarked one night that I seemed to have a soothing influence upon him.

I often wondered if any of the patients 'put her wise' but I don't think they did, still you have to be up early to put anything over on a nurse, if you don't think so just try smoking in the ward and see.

I was sorry when the two suicides were well enough to go before the court and I had to go back onto the beat and tramp my 2½ miles per hour for 8 hours - without stopping.

MARY LEWIS

At the time my son Artie was a baby and we were living in a small cottage in Baltic Street, Newtown. It was one of 4 cottages facing that street and backing on the fence of St Joseph's Convent. At that time a woman named Mary Lewis used to frequent there. She was a strange character and I have never met anyone like her, she was about 45 years of age, heavy, brawny, hairy and so masculine in appearance that it was hard to realise that she was a woman. She was a mighty worker and could scrub and wash with the best, but alas, she was fond of a drop and when under the influence was a terror. She had a long list of convictions against her and it usually took three or four constables to take her to the Station. She would do her time, come out full of repentance and good resolutions, go straight to the Presbytery and have an interview with Dean Slattery and to prove her sincerity she would scrub and polish that Presbytery until it fairly glistened and when finished she would go to the Convent and classrooms and treat them the same, and all would be well for weeks until she went on the Tiger again when as soon as she was comfortably drunk she would fill her pockets with stones and go looking for the Dean, who she would challenge out to fight. If he did not come out she would taunt him with turning the Presbytery into a harem etc. She would then throw the stones onto the roof and make for the Convent to deal with the Nuns. Usually by this time someone had rung up the Station and a squad of Police would carry her off by force. Bob Porter was the Reserve Constable at that time and told me that he could always manage her by using a little flattery or even making love to her and his tip once stood me a good turn.

I was working 3 beat one afternoon and passing the Convent when a Sister told me that Mary was playing up inside, so I went in and found Mary in the kitchen. She was fighting drunk and the Sisters had got afternoon tea for her. She drank the tea and then threw the cup and saucer at their heads. In fact she threw everything she could lay hands on at them and smashed quite a lot of crockery. Her language was vile and the Sisters fled into the Convent and left me with her. I remembered what Porter had told me and I determined to try it and I told that old she-devil more lies in the next 10 minutes than I had ever told in my life and after suggesting that we go for a stroll I slipped my arm around her waist and asked her if it was not the strongest arm she had ever felt. She admitted that it was and although
she said I was a villain and scoundrel I felt her nestling up against me and we started for that stroll, me with my arm still around her and my face as red as fire and the old girl prancing along like a flapper with every Nun in that Convent watching me. Gee if ever there was a minute in my life that I really needed 'Minties' it was then. However we strolled out of that Convent and down the street without any trouble and we were more than half-way to the Police Station when disaster overtook us as follows. The Licencee of the Court House Hotel where Mary had been drinking had seen her putting stones into her pocket after leaving and had rung up the Police Station and told Jimmy Hynes. He at once sent Senior Constable Micky Farrell and Constable Paddy McGrath, as hard as they could belt to Dean Slattery's, but finding all quiet there they raced to the Convent where they were told Mary and I had left sometime previously and had gone towards the Police Station. They took a short cut and running as if they expected to find pieces of me all over the landscape they reached Australia Street first and as Mary and I turned into that street she was still laughing and talking nonsense and all would have been well if they had only kept out of sight, but they didn't and as soon as Old Mary saw them she dropped down onto her knees and there in the street called down the most awful curses I had ever heard on all Irishmen and those two in particular. Well that put the lid on things properly so Mickey got hold of one arm and I the other and with Paddy pushing behind we again started for the Station. Mary was some fighter, every step we took she kicked me on the shins then she started to swing her head from right to left, deftly spitting in Mickey's ear on one side and mine on the other. I had a stiff neck for a week after from dodging, but after half an hour of this we actually got her into the Dock and while Sgt 1/C Hynes was writing down the charge she struck a terrific blow at me, I ducked and the blow landed on the side of the big blue helmet we used to wear and that helmet went across the Charge Room like a flash and landed on the desk where he was writing, knocked the pen out of his hand and then bounced across the room.

A couple of weeks later when passing the Convent I saw Mary polishing the brass plate in front and she said “Good Morning Constable" very nicely.

MICHAEL BOURKE

Michael Bourke was a dairyman at Cooks River and apart from the paddocks he rented he made a general nuisance of himself by allowing the cows to stray about the streets and even on the railway line and many were the complaints received about them. One evening in the twilight I was working that beat and right in front of the Police Station there were 20 milking cows grazing in the main street. I rounded them up and drove them up to Michael Bourke's Dairy. He was away on the milk run so I shut the gate and went on about my beat. The next time I passed that way I called in and told him that I would have to report the matter. He said that he did not believe a word of it, so I went down the paddock with him and picked out from the herd the 20 cows that had been straying. In due course Michael received a summons for allowing those cows to stray on the public street, and when I met him again he said that he would plead guilty and if I did not call any witnesses the expenses would not be so heavy. I agreed to do this and all went well until it came before the Court when the old villain turned up with a solicitor and three witnesses and pleaded 'Not Guilty', and I realised that he had put it all over me.

However I determined to make the best of it and give him a go for it. Well I stuck to them for hours, the three witnesses swore that the cattle I had seen were stock from the Slaughter Paddock over the river and the solicitor sought to show that I could not tell a dry cow from a milking cow, or a fat steer. Now could you beat that? For if there was anything in this world that I thoroughly understood it was cows. For all my life was spent amongst them, and there was nothing about them that I did not know. Anyway after that solicitor had been cross examining me for half an hour I told him enough about cows to even make the Magistrate take notice and after asking me a few questions himself, he said that he was satisfied and fined Michael £5 and costs.

Afterwards when discussing the case with a few cronies outside the Court Michael said, “Well what do you think of that white-faced looking wowser, the B...... looks more like a Sunday School Teacher or a Sky Pilot than he does a policeman and how in hell was a man to know that he could tell one cow from another, it's enough to drive a man to drink".
A NOVEL DWELLING

Years after the incident mentioned Michael Bourke bought a tram car that had been used on the cable line in King Street, Sydney. He carted it to Cooks River and placed it on the side of a street that was not much used and went to live in it. He continued to live in it for years despite the efforts of the local council to eject him and each time the case came before the Court Old Mick had a victory for the Council could not prove that it was a dwelling house within the meaning of the Landlord and Tenant Act. So he lived on in that old car until one night he went home gloriously drunk and tumbled into bed with the candle still burning near his pillow, and about an hour later a passing Constable noticed that bed clothes were blazing and the car well alight. He dragged Old Mick out, badly burned, about the arms and chest and took him to Hospital where he remained for the next 3 months. When he came out he found the Council had removed the remains of his tram car to the tip and put down a concrete footpath where it used to stand. Nothing in this world will ever convince him that it was not the Council Clerk who 'set him alight'.

A CAT CASE

Once in a small street at Cooks River there lived a Maltese Family with strange ways and one of these ways was to tie the cat up with a cord before going out. There was a tree laden with fruit in the garden and by tying that cat to the chimney pot and letting him run about the roof it frightened the birds away. All went well until one day this family decided to go out for the day and tied the cat up as usual. It was a cool cloudy morning and at first the cat was quite comfortable on the galvanised roof but about 11 am the sun came out hot and in an hour's time that roof was nearly red hot and that cat was bounding up and down like mad and the yells of it could be heard at Arncliffe. A group of neighbours gathered and tried to throw water on to the roof with poor success, then they decided to ‘Fetch a Policeman’. Cock McHugh the Lock-up Keeper was soon on the scene. He got a ladder but could not approach the frenzied cat so got behind the chimney and cut the cord and that cat left the roof and the district at a pace that beggars description. The owner was later fined 20/- and costs for cruelly ill-treating a certain animal to wit a cat, although he proved he was 20 miles away at the time.

SUICIDES AND THEIR WAYS

A Policeman does not go many weeks in the Metropolitan District without meeting with this class of crime and it would fill a book to describe the various ways and means, but for sheer determination and pluck I give the palm to the following three:-

On a bitterly cold morning in midwinter with the frost as white as snow on the ground a middle aged man who used to work at the brickyards and drink at Rogers Hotel jumped out of bed, neglected to get dressed and ran up May Street, St Peters, pursued by a pink mouse or a snake or some such. At any rate he dashed straight across Cooks River Road in front of a tram, thus giving the driver a shock and over the fence near Dave Quirks Blacksmiths Shop and dived head first, naked, into 60 feet of icy cold water in the old brick pits there. It took 4 water policemen and half a dozen of us from Newtown all the rest of that day to recover the body and when we did get it and removed it to the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital the Doctor solemnly pronounced ‘Life Extinct’ and later on the Coroner described it as a most determined suicide.

The second case was one in which a well dressed man who had also been drinking heavily walked onto the railway line under St Peters Bridge and on the approach of the fast train to the South Coast he laid down horizontally to the line with his neck across the rail, the train roared over him and cut his head off as clean as a sword would and later on I found the head 50 yards along the line where it had rolled and later the usual verdict was returned and still another in which a woman quietly walked off the end of the platform at Newtown Station along the line to meet the Western Mail, as it approached she stood in the middle of the line and held out her arms as if to welcome it. She was actually cut to pieces and it
was a gruesome job indeed going along the line with a railway lantern and picking up pieces of her for a quarter of a mile at least.

The usual verdict was returned later but I was never able to ascertain the reason of her rash act. She was not in any trouble or financial difficulty and certainly did not drink and witnesses swore that she was quite calm and normal a few minutes before. Yet their testimony also showed that it was one of the most determined suicides I have ever had anything to do with.

**CYRIL LEE**

A young constable named Cyril Lee was attached to Newtown in the good old days. He was an Englishman who was a bit wild and his people sent him out here. At first his conduct was all that could be desired and he got on well, particularly with the girls, and at least half a dozen silly young things were anxiously looking for him, more in sorrow than anger.

However he was a terror to the Pushes and for a while was in high favour with the Sergeants and the Inspector John McGrimmon, but I soon realised there was something wrong and that he was prone to drink a lot of whisky at times and at these times he was a madman and to illustrate what I mean I will tell just two little stories of what he did at such times and you can imagine the rest.

One night at Newtown I was the Station Sergeant, Daniel McKelvey was the Patrol Sergeant and Cyril Lee was one of a dozen Constables on night duty. Cyril Lee was on 6 Beat taking in L. Avenue a residential area with ornamental trees on both sides and on this night a youth and his girl friend were saying goodnight under one of the said trees when Cyril came along. As they did not notice him he slipped behind that tree and waited until they started to kiss each other good night again when he fired his Police Revolver just over their heads and the way that girl bounded along that avenue screaming blue murder was funny to Cyril, so funny in fact that he was still laughing when he came into the Station and told us all about it. But after Sergeant McKelvey had expressed his opinion of him in several different languages it did not look so funny to Mr Lee. He was ordered to clean his revolver and be very much more careful in future in the use of it. He went into the Muster Room next door to the charge room to clean his revolver and I settled down to work again, but while I was arguing with McKelvey about whose duty it was to report the matter there was a deafening roar and hanged if he, the said Cyril Lee, had not let it off again. We rushed into the room and he was standing near the desk looking silly with a piece of rag in his hand and said, “It went off Sergeant” but what Old Dan replied is quite unfit for insertion in a book like this.

However after getting into dozens of similar scrapes the Department decided that he would never make an efficient Constable and dispensed with his services and for the next couple of years I did not hear of him, although there were many very anxious inquiries from the heartbroken girls before mentioned until one night a huge file of papers arrived from South Africa asking for an urgent report on the antecedents of a man named Cyril Lee on remand at Johannesburg in company with four others charged with robbery under arms.

It appears Lee had thrown in his lot with four other men as reckless as himself and they had planned to hold up the bank and rob it but the night before one of them got frightened and told the detectives and at their instigation changed the cartridges in their revolvers whilst they were asleep from ball to blank cartridges. Next day Lee and his mates drove up to the bank in cabs, Lee went straight to the teller and held him up with his revolver when a detective jumped up from behind the counter and tried to arrest him. Lee fired at his face so close that the powder singed his eyebrows. His mates were quickly overpowered and handcuffed but not so Lee, he fought like a mad man and if his cartridges had not been changed he would surely have got away. As it was he actually forced his way out of that bank and was just getting into the cab when one of the detectives realising he was making good his escape wounded him in the thigh and so brought him down. But just imagine the slaughter there would have been if his gun had not been faked and when he again gets his liberty I would not give a fig for the man's life who double crossed him and rang the change with the cartridges.

It appears they all pleaded guilty and got off with 7 years hard labour each.
If you are ever at Newtown Police Station look in the Muster Room and you will see an old fashioned desk there and note the furrow right across the top where the heavy bullet ploughed its way the night he was cleaning his revolver. And often when I would notice it I would picture Cyril doing time somewhere in Africa. It seemed hard to realise he had gone bad for apart from the mad tricks he would do he was rather likeable and the best pal a man ever had in a scrap.

ON GOING THROUGH A TUNNEL

Between East and West Kangaloon there is a large strip of barren Government land covered with stunted timber and waratahs, the said waratahs being about 10ft high and with 2 or 3 blooms on each stem, made a wonderful sight on the edge of this barren country and between it and the big farms of Andy Lindsay and Bill Noble was a small holding owned and occupied in those days by a man named Haley who was ably assisted in the struggle for existence by his wife and daughter - Mary.

The old couple were plain, very plain folks hard and bent with years of unremitting toil, but the daughter was the finest looking girl in all that district, tall and lithe as the waratahs she was reared amongst. It was no wonder that every boy for miles around would ride that way whenever he got a chance just to have a word with Mary, but they were all the same to Mary and she never took any notice of any of them, and if she knew she was the Belle of the District she gave no sign and went straight on her way.

Now the local butcher was one Charley Rowland who was a young widower fairly good looking, a good businessman and generally considered locally as a good catch. He got on well with the mothers but the girls said he was too cheeky, whatever that might mean. Anyway he made up his mind to marry Mary but Mary had other views and the antics he got up to during the next few months were many and then he lost her in the following manner. One day whilst delivering meat and chatting to Mrs Haley he learned she and Mary were going to Picton on the midday train on Saturday and coming home on the Sunday. Now Charley was full of resource and initiative and he saw an opportunity of travelling a few miles with Mary. So on Saturday afternoon he donned his best clothes and went to Bowral where he bought a ticket for Picton and waited. He saw Mrs Haley and Mary get on the train and just as the train was starting dashed across the platform and caught the same carriage. Of course they were surprised but he explained airily that he was just going to Picton to buy a couple of trucks of fat bullocks. If Mrs Haley was pleased and deceived Mary was not and she seemed to realise that for a while at least he had her in a corner where she could not dodge away on any pretence and seemed ill at ease and restless at the bold way he kept looking at her and making her join in the conversation. Well all went well until they reached the Gib, you know the place on the Old Southern Line where the old line ran through a very dark tunnel, and as soon as the train rushed into that tunnel Mary changed places with her Mother, why? I never knew but the result was disastrous for when the train dashed into the open again poor Charley had hold of the old lady's hand with his right hand, had his left arm around her neck and had kissed her twice and was in the act of stealing another - and Mary sitting opposite looking quite surprised.

Poor Mrs Haley although he released her instantly she could not get her breath for a full minute - talk about injured dignity why she was purple in the face with anger and seemed likely to have a fit, but found relief in a torrent of words before which Charley wilted and shrivelled until he tried to crawl through a knot hole in the floor and as if to assist him she seized her umbrella and started in to hammer him with it panting out something that sounded like 'Insult a decent woman would you, right before my own daughter too, take that and that and that'.

A STREET ACCIDENT

One morning in midwinter I was standing on the corner of Booth and Johnson Streets, Annandale. It had been very frosty earlier in the morning but just then the sun was warm and bright and as the corner is about the sunniest in Annandale I tarried there awhile. Now in the stream of traffic coming from the City was a lorry heavily laden with fruit and Italians coming from the City Markets and going to their
various shops in the suburbs. The driver and owner of the lorry was Tony Cincinnatti who used to do the carting for his countrymen. It was a good pull up Booth Street and around the corner of the North Annandale Hotel into Johnston Street even when the going was good, so Tony came up at a pretty fast clip and swung around the corner. Now on the rear corner of the lorry seated on a case of oranges was Angelo Mirabasso and as the lorry flipped around both Angelo and those oranges went sailing into the air. The oranges fell first and the case burst open and they all started to roll diagonally across Johnston Street spreading out fan shaped. It was a wonderful sight to see dozens of beautiful golden oranges rolling across the street in line with the bright sun glittering upon them and after I had finished admiring them I wondered why Angelo did not rush after them. He was still sitting on the road so I went over to him and found he had fallen in a sitting position with one foot under him and the weight of his body had broken his shin and the bone had penetrated his skin and trousers. It was the worst compound fracture I have ever seen and it happened so simply.

I made him comfortable then rushed to telephone for the ambulance. Couldn't get into the telephone bureau because old Jack the Fisherman was there ringing up the Guardian Newspaper who paid £1.1.0 for the first news so had to bundle him out and soon got the ambulance but in the meantime someone had given poor Angelo a good glass of brandy. On arrival at the hospital the doctor said it made matters worse to give a patient with broken bones any spirits. However I let it go as it was no time to argue and they soon had the poor fellow on the table and that awful break set, but it was many months later before he was able to walk again and in the meantime he had lost his business so had to start over again.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

As is only natural when a number of healthy robust men like the Police find themselves gathered together for a few minutes as in the Muster Room at Newtown waiting for the Station Sergeant to roar “Fall-in” there is often some tall yarn put over and it does not pay to be too sensitive. But as the boys of those days are the Respectable Old Sergeants today I am not going to mention names in the following little instances:-

One morning a young constable came in looking so glum and worried that we all started plying him with questions and suggesting all sorts of fantastic things and under the heavy barrage he broke down and admitted he was the father of a 'Foine Boy' that very morning, so everyone started to congratulate him telling him how proud he ought to be, that he ought to be the happiest man alive and the least he could do would be to shout for all hands. Still he was as glum as a wet week and refused to be comforted so one of the older men said, “Hang it all Old Man you don't seem a bit proud of the nipper, but how about the Missus, what does she think about it”. He thought for awhile and then said – “I am dashed if I know, I haven't told her yet”.

STILL IN LIGHTER VEIN

You can readily imagine the storm of good natured badinage a certain constable had to face when it became known he was the father of triplets and the questions he was asked were numerous and often unanswerable. On being asked what he thought was the cause of such an unusual occurrence he said I don't know, I have asked the doctor and nurse and everyone I can think of but they cannot suggest anything and the only thing I can think of is that the wife is very fond of reading and ever since we were married she has kept on reading one book in particular over and over again until she must know it by heart and it might have influenced her mind – its name is ‘The Three Musketeers’.

There was a dead silence in the Muster Room whilst this problem was thought out and one young married man turned as white as a sheet and looked as if he was going to faint. On being asked what was the matter he gasped, “Good Lord just think of it my wife is very fond of reading also and only last night she was waiting for me to come home and reading ‘Ali Baba and The Forty Thieves’”.

A DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT 17.7.31
In making inquiries today into the needy circumstances of a young woman and her two children I ascertained that about seven years ago she had gone to the country for a holiday, had met a country boy, got married and went onto a farm with him. All went well for awhile but she could not settle down, could not forget the bright lights of the city, the wonderful picture shows, theatres, dances, sales and hundreds of other attractions that bring three quarters of the women of New South Wales to the suburbs of Sydney. Anyway she packed up her things and with the two youngsters came home to mother and refused to go back and when I asked why she said it was too quiet and the picture show was 20 miles away. The awful tragedy of it all she told me that he was a good husband making a decent living on the farm, the only life he knew, and her children are the bonniest boys I have seen for years and the healthiest, yet she cannot see anything in the bush except trees, mountains, rocks and rivers, dead inanimate things and he cannot see anything in the city except hustle and bustle, crime and poverty and misery.

Of course both are wrong but the case seems hopeless so I must recommend her as a suitable case to receive the dole and those two splendid kids for consideration by the Child Welfare Officers and the inevitable maintenance order against the father on the lonely farm beyond the ranges, 20 miles from a picture show.

A sad case and well nigh hopeless yet her simple story aroused such a flood of memories of the bush in my mind that I have been homesick or bush sick all day and am writing this tonight to relieve the pressure and I will try to draw a pen picture of the bush as I knew it, not the miserable bush as it appeared to the city girl, but the beautiful bright sparkling bush, full of beauty and life -so-

One bright sunny morning in early spring a young man was quietly riding along a country road, he was typical son of the soil and little different from dozens of other young fellows in the district and as was usual he was mounted on a very fine specimen of mountain bred horse and as they moved quietly along the road the youth and his horse seemed to be part of the scenery and in perfect harmony and understanding between. They moved along and seemed to be glad, very glad that they were alive.

Now it so chanced whether by accident or design that along that same road a girl came from the opposite direction at a smart gallop. She also was exceptionally well mounted, and a casual glance would show that she was ‘exceedingly easy to look at’ and was also a very fine type of young Australian, tall and lithe and a good rider, very glad to be alive. Neither seemed one bit surprised to meet the other there, but a few minutes chat and the man suggested a trip to the river and they at once turned into the bush to the left and headed towards the river, five miles away. On leaving the road the country was flat, sandy and covered with sea shells although it is nearly 3,000 feet above sea level. It is poor barren country of enormous extent said to be about 64,000 square acres situated between the Bargo Brush and East Kangaloon and winding through it like a streak of silver is the Mittagong River as unspoilt by civilization as when Captain Cook landed here; the further they travelled into this country the more thinly timbered it became and soon there were only small snapping gums and bottle washes but the ground was covered with wild flowers of every description and on every side there were waratahs, 10 or 12 feet high in full bloom and nodding gracefully in the breeze. On reaching this open country the girl said she would see the river first and the boy took up the challenge and the next minute they were going through that bush as though they were in a hurry and to hear that girl laugh as she raced along would convince anyone that it was good to be alive. They both seemed to know the country well for their headlong gallop brought them straight to the river at McGuire’s Ford, here they stopped to let their horses have a drink, loosened the girths and then let them eat the long grass growing on the river banks, while they, glowing with health and happiness sat down on a log. The river at this point runs straight for a quarter of a mile, is about 100 feet wide and flows over a sandstone rock bottom, this rock is traversed by narrow bands of ironstone which is much harder than the sandstone and consequently does not wear down so fast, thus causing ripples on the water about six inches apart and the banks are covered with a dense growth of wattle, now in full bloom and the limbs bending down with their golden bloom until they touch the water and over all the bright sunlight dancing on the ripples and reflecting the gold in the water. The boy and girl had never seen a picture show knew nothing of the big city beyond the distant horizon or cared less, yet it never occurred to either of them that the bush was lonely or that the picture show and everybody else for that matter was 20 miles away. The scene before them was incomparably more beautiful than the best picture ever.
shown on the silver screen and they gazed at it for a long time in almost reverent awe spellbound, neither cared to speak, yet both seemed to understand and to appreciate to the full the wondrous scene. After resting there an hour they caught their horses and started on the return trip riding quietly through the bush enjoying every minute of it. On reaching a fork in the road they went different ways each to their own home and on arriving there being asked the same question, “Where have you been” both answered the same “Just for a gallop through the bush”. How surprised they would have been to learn that over beyond the range there were thousands of people about their own age who thought the bush ‘was too lonely for anything’.

JOHN FOLEY CONSTABLE 28.7.31

For many years prior to 1900 there was an old timer stationed at Newtown and although he is long since dead stories are often heard of him still whenever Old Timers gather together for a yarn. I will endeavour to write two or three of them to give you an idea of the kind of man he was. The night relief had paraded at Newtown Station in two ranks 6 constables in each, one Senior Sergeant in Charge assisted by a Section Sergeant and a Senior Constable, all standing to attention whilst the Station Sergeant Hynes read out the Orders, Beats, Occurrences, Crime Reports and Complaints that no man alive could remember for five minutes. Amongst those Constables was one old veteran with about 30 years service in the Police to his credit, of very fine physique, suggesting previous experience in the Royal Irish Constabulary. He only carried one stripe owing I believe to lack of education but possessed a natural wit that no amount of education would have given him and a kindly disposition that a lifetime in the Police had not warped. Yet withal so full of ways and wiles that the Sergeant was never quite sure whether John Foley was working his Beat or not and some said that John often had 40 winks during the night but as he was never late reporting “All right Sergeant” nobody believed such yarns. Well at about 5 minutes to 10 the Station Sergeant Jimmy Hynes stopped reading and went into the Inspectors Office (Elliott - alias Jelly Belly) and reported “The relief all present and correct” and the Inspector came out to give us the once over and look for fly specks on our boots or beer stains on our tunics and to make himself a nuisance generally. He had carefully inspected the front rank and was just starting on the second rank, you could hear a pin drop in the room, everyone standing to attention like so many statues when like a thunderclap on a calm night the violent ringing of an alarm bell caused consternation amongst N.C.O’s and men alike and even took a start out of the Inspector. Still the dang think kept it up as though it would never stop and following the sound the Inspector soon located it and said in a nasty insinuating tone of voice Constable 1/C Foley what have you got in your pocket? Poor John turned out his pockets and produced a Waterbury Alarm Clock and said “My watch has stopped so I borrowed the clock from the Missus” and the Inspector could not prove otherwise.

One time when Nicholas Larkin was Inspector in Charge of No.5 Division and John Foley was a constable at Newtown the following incident happened: - It was Pay-day which only came once a month and the wages of a constable were 7/- per day and as was expected when old friends met on pay day at Newtown they found ways and means to dodge the Sergeants and ‘Blow the Froth off one’. Old John was popular and jovial and on this Pay-day he was about shot by the time he got home with the money which greatly irritated Mrs Foley and a quarrel started and many nice things were said by both parties, but eventually John went to bed and to sleep but alas Mrs Foley burning with indignation put on her hat and went to the Station and reported Old John to the Inspector who promised to deal with him in the morning and she went home satisfied. Next morning poor John was on the mat and got a good lecture but was not reported and Old John kept his own council and life rolled on as usual until the next pay-day when John went straight home and handed his money over. John perfectly sober but the money was £1 short. Mrs Foley demanded an explanation so John said “D’ye moind the time yer reported me to the Inspector, well he took me before the Superintendent and that gentleman fined me £1 for being drunk and insulting my missus, and he sez - sez he “Tis an awful disgrace Foley to be reported by your own wife and if ever I hear a word from her again I’ll fine ye £2”. Well Mrs Foley did not exactly believe it but was afraid to go to the Inspector about it for fear John would be £2 short next pay so let the matter drop.
But John - At that time one could get a mug of beer for 8d so for 30 days afterwards he had a mug each day and paid for it out of his ‘fine’ and it would appear that they lived happily ever after for there is no record of John ever being reported again by his wife.

Just before Old John went on the Pension he was working 6 Beat. The Railway Station had been shifted to its present position and the old station was standing near where the subway is now at the foot of Watkins Street, Newtown on the said 6 Beat. The hotels were open to 11 pm and the men on night duty used to get all the ‘drunks’ and this meant getting out of bed each morning and attending court. Old John kept his Beat clean yet never once had to attend court for by some means or other he had in his possession the key of that old empty Station House and all drunks found on his Beat were put in there to sleep it off and at 5 o'clock in the morning he would let them out, but it so happened that one night when he had 6 patients locked in there suffering a recovery John was hurried away on Special Duty and had no chance to let them out. About 7 am next morning an engine driver reported something wrong at the Old Station and a Sergeant hurried down and got the surprise of his life to find 6 angry men kicking the walls and demanding to be let out as they would be late for work.

None of the men could give a clear account of how they came to be locked in there and Old John denied all knowledge of them. The case against him was one of suspicion only and fell through but he was never again put on 6 Beat when on Night Duty and eventually the old building was pulled down and Old Timers today will tell you that John Foley was the finest Policeman ever stationed at Newtown.

BERT RUFFELS

Here he has a photo which came from the Sydney Morning Herald, Saturday August 1, 1931. Celebration of Wattle Day — Photo of Albert David Ruffels (Bert) second youngest brother of Arthur. Wattle Day will be honoured today. A tree planted last year in Government House Grounds.

Arthur says underneath the photo - My second youngest brother Albert David Ruffels - Gardener at Government House Sydney for many years and under many Governors is shown above clearing the weeds and grass away from the root of a young wattle tree grown by him and planted by the Governor's Lady on a previous Wattle Day - presently he will fade out of the picture and a vast assembly of visitors will assemble around this tree and many nice things said about the Australian Wattle. Note his mate 'Hawkey' to the right fleeing from the camera.

A FIRE AT ANNANDALE

Sunday 2.8.31 and my turn to work and Inspector Fowler’s Sunday off but of little use to him as he had to go to the Domain where Mr Weaver M.L.A. was addressing the multitude. However I started the day well by patrolling the Division in P.D. car. A man dropped dead on his way to church at Haberfield, cause heart failure and old age (78), otherwise nothing exciting happened so went to Petersham and did the correspondence thence to Annandale and straightened the books up there and at 2pm returned to Petersham via Leichhardt, Haberfield and Ashfield, nothing but correspondence at these places so return to Petersham to fix up the said correspondence, just settled down to work and got my pipe going nicely; always seem to be able to put better minutes on said papers when smoking, when the fire alarm startled everyone. The Reserve Constable shouted into the phone, “Where?” and like a shot the reply came from the Fire Station - Alfred Street, Annandale, a cottage. In two bounds the driver had reached the P.D. car and started the engine, we bundle in as he moves off and he swings in behind the Fire Engine and the excitement is on, Annandale, Leichhardt and Petersham Brigades turned out and a great race ensued to be there first. The Fire Engine clears a track through the traffic for us and we were soon on the scene. There was smoke everywhere but devil a bit of fire could be seen and firemen were running around trying to locate it, until a Policeman looked under the floor of the kitchen and dragged a man out by the heels. He had an apparatus used in the country to smoke out rabbit burrows and was pumping smoke for all he was worth. We stood him up and wanted to know what the devil it was all about. He was almost a dummy and started to talk with his fingers, no good to
us so with one effort he said - Rats - Sewer - floor - mice - spiders - bite - baby - dangerous - me - smoke em out - smoke - like - hell. We appealed to his wife but she could not speak at all, only waggle her fingers but we gathered that a rat had come from the sewer at the back and got under the floor of the house and for fear of its biting the baby he was trying to smoke it out. So there was nothing to do but the Fire Captain wanted some particulars for his report and was soon in hot water, but I had better explain the position a little first.

The scene is a small street running parallel with the storm water canal between Leichhardt and Annandale, on the left hand side are three small cottages facing the street and backing onto the canal, owned by Mrs Donohoe who lived in one, let one to a family who joined the ‘Communists and the other to the Dum Idjets’. Mrs Donohoe noticed the smoke and calling the Communist woman advised her to be more careful with matches or she would burn the street down, the said woman opined that it would be a good job if all capitalistic buildings were burnt and their bloated owners with them etc., so Mrs Donohoe went inside with a snort of disgust but shortly afterwards the Communist woman located the smoke and called out to Mrs Donohoe “Its not my place that is alight, it is Dummy's”. No answer so she called out again, come quick or the house will be burnt down, and like a shot came the reply “I wish the dam place was burnt up and you with it you red …..” And this was the frame of mind the poor owner was in when the Captain started to get the particulars and asked her – “Do you own these premises?” and got the reply “Yes I do, but with a Dummy on the one side of me and a dam Communist on the other, both on the Dole and neither paying me any rent at all I wish I didn’t”. The Captain said “that's all right but what might your name be?”. She said “It moight be Bridget O'Grady but its not - anyway what the devil will you be asking me next? I am a decent woman if I am a widow this 15 year, and it’s my marriage lines you'll be wanting to see next. Such impudence just because you have a bit of gold braid about ye”. “Yes, yes, no offence my good woman I only want the owner's name to put in my report” says the Captain. “Oh” she says and gave her name and address as owner and all went well until he came to the question “Are there any suspicious circumstances?” when the Communist woman says “Yes there is Captain Mrs Donohoe wants these places burned down” - and Mrs Donohoe fairly shouted “Yer a liar”. The C. woman “Didn't you say just before the Captain came that you'd like the place burned down and me with it, now didn't you” Mrs Donohoe said “Yes I did and I still say it, the devil take you”. The C. woman “Well, who is the liar now” and then it took the combined efforts of Police and Firemen to prevent a breach of the peace and all went well again until he came to the question “Fire Brigades called by…… Now Mrs Donohoe who gave the alarm?” “I don't know” says she “and if I did I'd crack his empty skull for him, its a nice bill I'll be getting to pay for a score of you fellows who have nothing better to do than chase about after a poor idiot chasing a rat with a smoke pump and scaring decent folk to death and driving them out of their senses with your fool questions. I don't know what the world's coming to or what a poor body is to do at all, at all”. The Captain hastened to assure her that there were no expenses to be met but he would like to know who called out the brigades and she said “Well go and ask that dam Communist, if there is any mischief afoot she's at the bottom of it” etc.

Well the Captain obtained all the required particulars at last and then asked the Sergeant if he wanted any further information but the Sergeant decided that he didn't want any additional information so he gathered up his men and returned to Petersham and the Captain doing likewise there was peace and quietness in Alfred Street once more.

FACING DEATH 4.8.31

What does approaching death feel like? Well I have had some pretty close calls but the one that impressed itself most vividly upon my mind than any other incident happened 35 years ago. I was a hefty young Australian 35 years ago, my mate at that time was Perce Swan and we had contracted to clear a paddock on the hillside of all scrub and small timber, in time for Old Man Knox to plow for early potatoes, the said paddock lies between the road and the Wingecarribee Swamp in West Kangaloon. We completed the job in 4 weeks by working from the first streak of dawn to 10 o'clock each night and never once let the fires go out. We made 25/- per week each, lived in a tent on the job
and kept ourselves happy and respectable, but as I previously remarked we were hefty young fellows 35 years ago.

One evening after tea and before turning in we went around the fires, stirring them up with hand spikes to keep them going through the night when I noticed that a green tree was burning under the ground and incidentally that if it burned down it would fall across our tent so I took the kerosene bucket and went to the creek and got a bucket of water and poured it into the roots of that tree causing a cloud of smoke and steam to float out over the swamp and after going round the fires we tumbled into the blankets and fell asleep, we could show you how to sleep 35 years ago. Our tent was pitched beside a log on a small level patch of ground on the foothill about 60 feet below and immediately under the tree that had accidentally caught alight, but as we were satisfied that the bucket of water had put the fire out we did not lose any sleep. We had our bunks along each side of the tent and after we had been asleep about 3 hours we were both startled by hearing a tree breaking and at once thought of that burning tree and the way it would fall across the tent. I was unable to move but in a queer stupid way kept watching the ridge pole of the tent expecting it to come crashing down on top of us when the falling tree struck it. I could not shout but laid quite still listening to the swish of the falling tree as it rushed through the air, it seemed like hours since it started to fall although in reality it was only seconds but at last it struck the ground with such force that I felt the bunk vibrate violently and glancing over to the other side of the tent I saw a huge piece of timber come under the log and underneath Swan's bunk. This seemed to give me a new lease of life and I was out of that tent in one bound and 20 yards away before I could stop myself, and when I looked around I saw Swan still bounding in another direction. I tell you we could bound a great distance sometimes, 35 years ago.

Well after the dust and smoke had blown away over the Wingecarribee Swamp we went back to the tent and put our boots and trousers on and then went to see what all the trouble was about and found that tree still standing, but one further up the hillside that we had not noticed had burned out at the roots and had fallen straight towards our tent, but was a few feet too short to reach us but a top limb had actually run under the log and into the tent. Whilst it was falling neither of us seemed able to move and entertained no hope of escape, but passively awaited the end of the trail, but as soon as there was a hope, a possibility of escape we both moved like greased lightning and after it was all over it was a long time before I went to sleep again as I realised the grim reaper had passed close, very close to our tent in the bush, 35 years ago.

A CAMP FIRE YARN

One evening after a hard day's work in the bush splitting slabs four men were resting around a camp fire under the shadow of the Sugarloaf. The two older men were having a quiet smoke before turning into their bunks and the two younger men were lying on the grass watching the moon climbing over the mountain top and listening to the howling of a dingo on the mountain side. The conversation had become desultory until one of the men said, “They are the finest half dozen boys in these mountains” referring to a family of 6 boys and 1 girl who lived on a selection in the neighbourhood and known locally as the Sugarloaf Moloneys.

Old Sam was silent for awhile then knocked the ashes from his pipe and said, “Aye, they are fine lads every one of them, but did you ever hear tell of the story that went around after their mother died. No, well I mind the time well when I was a young man when Moloney came to these mountains and took up yon selection and later when he brought home a young wife, the mother of those boys you just spoke about. Moloney was thick set, short of stature, strong as an ox, fair complexion, light blue eyes, red hair and whiskers, no education but a tiger to work.

Mrs Moloney was tall and dark with skin so clear that it almost seemed to be transparent, her hair was black and glossy so that it would shimmer in the sun and she would go about that farm with the air of a thoroughbred and beyond doubt she was well educated, some say she was reared in a convent. They were as different as it was possible for two people to be, yet they were contented and happy and after years of toil became prosperous and during those long lean years those half dozen boys were reared.
Now as you have noticed 5 of those boys are tall and dark, favouring their Mother whilst the youngest Pat is so different from the other boys - a duplicate of Moloney.

One Sunday morning on the way home from Mass a man jokingly said, “Young Pat is so different from the other boys that I don’t believe he belongs to you at all Moloney”, and often afterwards he found himself looking at the lads when they were together and wondering and as the years rolled on and he was getting old it fairly got on his nerves until at last he told his wife what was worrying him. She looked at him for awhile and laughingly said “You are getting childish in your old age Moloney”.

Still the problem worried him and the poison still rankled until it became an obsession. The next time he ventured to mention it to the Missus she turned on him such a queer look in her eyes that he hurried off into the potato patch and did not return until supper was ready, still he could not rest and so took his troubles to the Priest who rumour said told him that he was an Auld Fool to be thinking of such things. But alas as time went on he used to brood for hours and made himself miserable for nothing.

Things went on like this until the Missus fell sick and it was plain to all that her life's work was finished. The old man was hanging about the farm too miserable to talk to anyone when he saw the Priest coming through the slip-rails and he hurried to meet him and walked him towards the house. Before going in he said to the Priest, “I know poor Mary is dying and that she will tell you the truth, would you ask her if Pat really and truly belongs to me?” And the Priest seeing the misery in the old man's face patted him on the shoulder and said, “Alright old man I will”. The Priest went into the house where all the family had gathered and at the first opportunity the old man went off down the paddock and waited by the slip-rails for the Priest to return; surely now his doubts and fears would be over and he would have peace of mind at last.

At last the Priest came along and after a few words of hope and comfort to the old man went through the rails. Pat hesitated and then said, “but Father an was ye after asking her that question?” The Priest looked at him queerly for a minute then seemed to remember and said, “Yes, oh yes, I asked her, its alright”. The old man was not yet satisfied and said, “Yes but just what did she tell you, what is she after saying” and the Priest said, “Well when I asked her if Pat was really and truly yours” she said, “You can tell the old fool that Pat really and truly belongs to him but none of the other boys do.” As the Priest faded over the range in the distance he looked back and saw the old man standing by the slip-rails as still as the trees around him.

Folks who were present at the bedside still maintain that the Priest never asked the dying woman anything of the sort, and did not think of the old man and the problem that had spoiled the latter part of his life until he saw him by the slip-rails, but as you said they are all the finest boys in these Mountains.

ON SMOKING CHEAP TOBACCO 16.18.1931

Coming home from work today the usual crowd of City workers were on the tram, several men were in the smoker - many of them smoking - one middle aged man apparently did not smoke, so settled down by the window with the ‘Sun’. At Marian Street, Leichhardt a well dressed man joined the tram and sat beside the man with the paper, took out a gold mounted pipe, filled it with some highly scented tobacco and lit up, puffing vigorously he was soon sending clouds of smoke in all directions, the man in the corner reading getting more than his share. After a little while he leaned over, tapped the smoker on the arm and said, “What brand of tobacco are you smoking?” The smoking one glared at him in a haughty insolent way for some seconds and then said, “That is entirely my business”. Like a flash the reader replied – “Yes I know that, I can tell by the smell of the smoke but how in the world did you get it dry enough to smoke?” There was such a roar of laughter in that tram that the haughty smoker got off at the next stop - left in such a hurry that he forgot to pay his fare.
CAN A SCOTCHMAN SEE A JOKE

Sleep and the world sleeps with you, Snore and you sleep alone.

Sandy McClure was an industrious hard working man who would toil on the farm from dawn till dusk and being a true 'Cow Cockie' he hated to see the sun go down, he had a good appetite and was mostly hungry and when he came into tea would eat everything his good wife had cooked but on going to bed would have dreadful nightmares and Mrs McClure complained bitterly about the way Sandy snorted, snored and shouted in his sleep. Fearing there was something radically wrong Sandy consulted the local doctor and explained all the symptoms. The doctor listened patiently and gave Sandy a good overhaul and found him sound in mind and limb and assured him that there was not a thing the matter with him and said "All you want McClure is exercise, and above all sleep on an empty stomach".

Sandy eats as heartily as ever but sends the Missus to bed without her supper every night and strangely enough there has not been any more complaints about his snoring.

ON THE POWERS OF OBSERVATION

Bill Baxter was a pioneer of the Old Colonial School. Although over 60 years of age he was strong and active and his powers of observation were uncanny. Some 40 years previously he had ridden into the mountain in search of some straying stock and after riding through rough country all day he came at night to a shady gully between two spurs of the Mountain, a sheltered strip of country sloping gently towards a creek that came from higher up the range and wended its noisy way to the river many miles below.

It was an ideal place to camp so Bill hobbled his horse and soon had his camp fixed and the billy boiled then setting on a log and lighting his pipe he sat for some time quietly looking over the land. He was struck with the singular beauty of his surroundings and being of a practical turn of mind realised the possibilities of those sheltered sloping hills and was soon lost in thought picturing a homestead on a small rise, cultivating paddocks round about and herds of fat cattle on the hillsides and perhaps a flock or two of sheep in the homestead. So pleasing was the prospect that before going to sleep that night he had made up his mind to take up this section and a month later he returned and started on his life's work. He was 30 miles from civilization but what did that matter, he was far too busy during the ensuing years to notice the lack of neighbours. For the first few years he was too poor to think of getting married and when he became a prosperous man he was too old, consequently he lived and worked and dreamed on that
place for over 40 years and although long since a rich man he never left it.

One morning following his usual custom he caught his favourite saddle horse and went for a ride over his holding to have a look at the huge flocks of sheep grazing in the paddocks and incidentally to see that his men were not falling down on their jobs and on reaching the head of a small gully he stopped his horse and like many men who have lived alone in the bush said, “Well Starlight old man some sheep camped here last night, I wonder why, let me see there were 21 of them but what the devil were they doing away from the flock”. Thinking no more of the incident he rode on and in the next gully came across a small lot of sheep quietly feeding but on glancing noticed that there were only 20 and again remarked to his horse, “Funny, dam funny, what became of the other one”. However he thought no more of it and after visiting some men who were scrub cutting in the next paddock he returned home.

On the Saturday afternoon he was sitting in his favourite place on the verandah smoking and idly watching two crows in the far paddock and wondering just what mischief they were up to when he noticed that first one and then the other swooped down in the same place in the paddock but did not stay long but flew away to where a tree had been burnt off about 20 feet above the ground and they both went into the hollow stump. After watching them for sometime he knocked the ashes out of his pipe and said, “Funny - dam funny” and getting his horse he rode quietly over to where he had first seen the crows. On arriving there he noticed the ground was stained with dried blood so he rode over to the tree and after looking intently at it for some minutes noticed a tiny piece of wool on a knot near the top and said again, “Funny - dam funny”. He returned home and got the ladder and climbed up that old stump and on looking down into the hollow cavity saw the skin of a sheep, also the inside. On Monday morning he rode out to where the scrub cutters were working and sacked them both, saying “I don't mind giving you chaps a sheep to eat, if you want one, but I object to you stealing one and won't have you on the place”. They protested loud and long that they had never been near the sheep and had never killed one but he took them with him and pointed out where they had cut its throat and where they had hidden the hide and remains and suggested that he send for the police so they decided to roll their swags and go on the wallaby once more and as they were leaving one of them said, “If ever I find out the bloody crawler who put us away I'll cut his blanky throat”.

After they had gone Old Bill said again, “Funny - dam funny, I thought I must be getting old when I saw where 21 sheep had camped and yet there were only 20 in the flock”.

TROOPER VERSUS SELECTOR

One sultry summer afternoon a mounted trooper was out patrolling in the Kangarroobie Mountains in the south of New South Wales, visiting isolated homes and selections collecting stock and crop returns, answering questions on law, finance or the weather fired at him by everyone he chanced to meet, and doing his best to keep up the time honoured tradition that a trooper is a blue coated encyclopaedia and towards evening he reached the home of a prosperous old bachelor where from previous trips he had learned he was sure of a welcome.

On arriving there he found the old man preparing the evening meal whilst a rousabout was tending to the stock for the night. After putting up his horse he joined them in the house. The house was built of slabs with bark roof, no floor, and had a large stone chimney in the living room and there were two bedrooms at the back.

After tea was over and the place tidied up the men gathered around the fire and smoked whilst the trooper told the news of the week and after a couple of hours thus spent in yarning the trooper chanced to look up to the rafters above the chimney and was surprised to see a big snake slowly moving along the rafters. He grabbed for his service revolver and would have soon settled it but the old man stopped him and said, “don't shoot it, it won’t do any harm, it has lived up in the chimney for months and has caught every mouse about the place”. This started a discussion about snakes which lasted until bedtime when each of them looked carefully through their bunks for snakes before turning in, but as they did not see any they were soon fast asleep.
When getting dressed in the morning the trooper thought of the snake again and noticing holes under the slabs he rolled up one of his leggings and made a mark on the earthen floor from a hole near the chimney under the bed he had slept on and then to a hole leading into the old man's room.

After breakfast whilst saddling up his horse he asked the old man casually if he could tell a snake's track, he said he could, even if they were a week old. The trooper said “there are some marks in my bedroom that I did not notice last night”. The old fellow went in and had a look at them and at once said “They were caused by the snake, that it must have been after mice and as there was no return track it must be still in the hole under the floor in his bedroom” and remarked that although he did not mind it living in his chimney he'd be 'hornswoggled' if it was going to sleep with him and that he would soon have it out of that. So going to the shed he got a mattock and a shovel and started to dig for that snake. The trooper watched for half an hour and then had to push on and leave the old man to dig up the snake.

The trooper did not come that way again for several months but when he did he asked the old man if he had dug the snake out. He said that although he dug all day he could not find the blamed thing but he must have frightened it as it had not been seen about the place after that night.

As the trooper considered that silence is golden the matter rested there but it would have been interesting to know what the old man would have said if he had known that the trail he had followed was not made by the snake but by a troopers legging.

Arthur ends his memory book suddenly there although he went on to become an Inspector of Police and retired after 34 years service. He married Katie Seely and there were four children born of the marriage Arthur, Ena who became a Nun, Jean and Jessie. After his first wife died in 1933 we were told by Pop (his brother Walter) he married his Mary. He died on 17th June, 1953.
Arthur James Colyer Ruffels

1932

1935

From敬爱的
Arthur J. Ruffels
14th December 1935