THE DISCOVERY, EXPLORATION AND EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE UPPER BURNETT

(A paper prepared by Mr. H. S. Bloxsome, Delubra, Mundubbera, and read at a meeting of the Historical Society of Queensland, Inc., on Tuesday evening, August 25th, 1942.)

Henry Stuart Russell, after having accompanied Andrew Petrie on his exploration of the Wide Bay River in May 1842, decided to explore west from Tiaro and to search for some country suitable for a sheep station, as at that time his property Cecil Plains on the Darling Downs was not looked upon as suitable for sheep. This seems strange as now it is first class sheep country; but, being virgin land at that time, it probably was covered with a very heavy body of grass through which the sheep had trouble to travel.

On November 24th, 1842, Russell and his party left his station, Cecil Plains, and made his way to Tiaro some twenty-one miles south of where Maryborough stands to-day. He had with him William Orton whom he had met on the Severn River in 1840 and a black boy named Jemmy, who was a New England aboriginal. His object was to follow the track which Jolliffe and Last had left by their drays and sheep on the way to the Wide Bay country where they had formed a station for Eales, of Duckenfield Park, Hunter River, N.S.W.

Stuart Russell's party crossed the range near Toowoomba by what was known as the Springs road. They went past Bigge's camp and then on to Kilcoy. They continued their journey through broken, densely brushed, dismal and uninviting country, all the way to where they found Eales' sheep at Tiaro. The sheep were in a terrible mess: the country most unsuitable, the outstations far away and the blacks most aggressive. Already two shepherds had lost their lives.

It should be borne in mind that, at this time, Russell and his small party were going into country which was absolutely unknown to the white man. The course taken from Tiaro was evidently W.S.W. and, when crossing the divide betwen the Wide Bay River and what was later to be known as the Burnett waters, the country became more formidable than they anticipated.

The night of that day, Stuart Russell writes, was the most unpleasant he ever remembered having passed in the bush. "A fearful storm was threatening towards sunset: the heat had been distressing, and the shrill challenge of the myriad locusts which had shrieked all day through our bewildered brains had suddenly become hushed. A moan as of distant wind or thunder portended something at hand, the approach of which, basined as we were among the high broken ridges, patchy-scrubbed heights, penned in a maze of steep sided gullies or gorges—we had no chance of observing it until it came down in hurricane strength."

"It was of no use to seek a place in any way clear, that we might escape the danger from the torn and strained trees around. There was no level spot on which a horse might rest or feed; and, but for the thunderous rain over and on us, there was no water for our thirst relieving. Thunder, lightning, wind and rain such as never yet conspired to appal and unnerve us in our work. And this was Christmas Eve 1842. No fire, no bed, not even a pipe; so terrible that downpour and blast. To keep our powder dry we wrapped it in our one blanket each; to keep our horses we had to hold them all night; not a word, barely a move as we sat side by side on a fallen tree until dawn which brought a sudden quiet and the sun of Christmas Day 1842.

"Slowly but surely did the light and heat descend upon and find us out in our uncomfortable crib. A pot of tea, some sodden damper, and a large iguana shot by Jemmy broke our Christmas morn's fast and then we set on our way no worse for thunder, lightning, hail or rain."

After travelling many days and nights they began to break out into clear country from a most worthless extent of mountains, bush, storm and sand. Not many days after this pleasant view they found themselves on the brink of a precipice; they could not descend, it was quite clear to the bottom, through which was flowing a beautiful stream of water. This was evidently the river that in later years was named the Stuart River after Stuart Russell.

They followed this down to where the bank declined, and here they crossed, and rode up the opposite side. From the lay of the country there was evidently a large stream which it probably joined to the

west. So they travelled in a more cheerful and hopeful frame of mind.

Orton suggested camping a few days to spell man and horse, but it was decided that they should travel due west and try and strike the large river that they thought, from impressions formed, was there. They soon came to their heart's desire and dropped down on the banks of what they thought must be the Boyne River. The channel was very broad; the water reaches undeniable, the black swans innumerable; the scrub wallaby tracks equally so, the grass enticing.

Two Boyne Rivers

When Stuart Russell reached this river, he really thought that it was the Boyne River which disembogues at Gladstone and which was discovered by Lieutenant Oxley from the sea in 1823. That is the reason why to-day we have two Boyne Rivers in Queensland.

So pleasant did they find their camp that they decided to rest another day. They shot some black swans, wallaby, and paddy-melon with their rifle, which was of course a muzzle loader of the type used in those days. They travelled far enough to see that the Boyne flowed into a larger stream. There was at this time evidently some uncertainty as to where the waters flowed from over the coastal range at Wide Bay. It was thought that they probably went into the Condamine. Stuart Russell, thinking that he was on the head waters of the Boyne discovered by Oxley, was sure that he had settled the vexed question. They now turned and followed up the main stream which Stuart Russell called the Boyne, looking for a piece of country suitable to form a sheep station.

While proceeding up the Boyne River they saw the tracks of what evidently was a bullock. Friendly blacks at Tiaro had reported that there were two such animals of which they were much afraid. These evidently had swum ashore from some ship wrecked on the coast.

They eventually came to that piece of country which is to-day known as Burrandowan station. From here they decided to return to civilisation and so crossed the range into the Condamine fall and struck S.W. for that river. After travelling some days they found themselves in some thick brigalow scrubs which spread themselves out over the flat country. For fif-

teen days they travelled through this inhospitable terrain and eventually struck the Condamine River about two days travel below Jimbour woolshed.

I think it may reasonably be assumed that they kept rather too much to the west and got into those dense, brigalow, melon-holey scrubs through which the Western railway to-day travels near a railway station called Brigalow. From here they followed the Condamine up till they came to Jimbour woolshed at a spot where Macalister railway station is to-day. From here they proceeded to Jimbour head station and from thence to Stuart Russell's Cecil Plains station.

Burrandowan Lease

At this time Stuart Russell made arrangements to secure a lease from the Crown of the land he had discovered on the Boyne River and which he called Burrandowan, and this was the first station taken up on the Burnett watershed.

On returning to Cecil Plains after his discovery of the Burnett River just referred to, Stuart Russell immediately made arrangements to set out again with his brother Sydenham, his partner Glover, Henry Dennis (of Jimbour), Orton and the blackboy Jemmy.

From Jimbour they travelled in a northerly direction with the full intention, when they crossed the range, of tracing the river down to its mouth. This, however, the nature of the country and the want of provisions and ammunition afterwards prevented them from entirely accomplishing.

They followed a valley up and with difficulty fought their way through a scrubby pass. On clearing this they burst upon a fine open forest glade, with rich dark soil. Here they changed their course and crossed into the eastern slope of the range. They descended about four miles from the summit, and came to a creek which they followed. This creek to-day is known as Iron Pot Creek. It zigzagged in a northerly direction, becoming larger every mile, and they eventually came to the Boyne River.

Stuart Russell writes that the bed of the Boyne is sandy, with much Ti-tree growing about it, and a great quantity of high reeds grew along the edge of the reaches. On the fourth day's journey down the Boyne they came upon a river flowing in from the eastward in

a full stream. This was the same river that Stuart Russell had struck earlier in the same year. It eventually was called the Stuart after its discoverer. Shortly after this they came upon Stuart Russell's tracks of his first exploration earlier in the year. This would be about the spot where the bridge seven miles from Mundubbera crosses the river to-day. They followed the Boyne to where it joins the Burnett River, as we know it to-day, and passed the sites of what were to be the towns of Mundubbera and Gayndah later, and thence on for about 300 miles, still thinking that they were on the Boyne River of Oxley the whole way. They followed the river till it became navigable, about where Bundaberg city stands to-day; but owing to shortage of food and ammunition they had to return to civilisation, which they did by going back to Jimbour, the same way as that they had already travelled.

In Stuart Russell's first trip, when he discovered the river that afterwards became known as the Burnett, he did not leave any very definite landmarks until he struck the Stuart River (as we know it to-day) by which we in modern times can follow him; but looking at a modern map it would not be unreasonable to assume that, after leaving Tiaro, he travelled in a direction south-west of Glenbar station and crossed Munna Creek and passed a little north-west of Kilkivan and close to Mondure; thence till he struck the Stuart River some eight or ten miles south-east of Proston.

It is interesting to note that although it is within a few months of the centenary of the discovery of the Burnett River a son of Henry Stuart Russell, Mr. W. G. Stuart Russell is at present residing in Brisbane.

Thomas Archer's Travels

After being at Durundur for two or three years the Archer Bros. formed Cooyar and Emu Creek stations up at one of the heads of the Brisbane River. In 1848 Thomas Archer crossed the range and went exploring in the west, going as far as where Roma stands to-day. On his returning to Cooyar he camped one night with a Mr. David Perrier who, with his flocks and herds was on his way from Bathurst in N.S.W. to the Burnett River district, where he had taken up Degilbo station. The next day he came on the camp of Mr.

James Reid, also on his way to the Burnett district where he had explored and applied for a run he called Ideraway.

It was James Reid who gave his name to Reid's Creek. Reid suggested that Archer should explore the Upper Burnett country, which up to this time was "Terra Incognita" to the white man. After a short rest at Cooyar he set off from there for the Upper Burnett with an aboriginal named Jackey Small. He crossed the Bunya Bunya Range and went northwards, passed Nanango station (owned by Borthwick), Barambah station (owned by Ferriter and Jones), Boonara (owned by Ned Hawkins) and then on to Ban Ban (owned by Humfries and Herbert). Ban Ban at that time was the farthest out station. From here he made his way up the valley of the Burnett past the spot where Gayndah town stands to-day. He spent some days exploring the country on the Boyne and Auburn rivers near their confluence with the Burnett River, but he apparently got into some rough country up the Auburn River as he makes the comment, "country here not good enough."

It is probable that he came to much dense brigalow scrub on the Boyne River and considered it worthless for grazing, although to-day all this scrub has been fallen and sown with Rhodes grass and hundreds of cattle are grazing on it. From here he evidently explored the country further away from the river and made his way back to the junction of Barambah Creek and the Burnett. Here he replenished his food supply and again returned up the valley of the Burnett and this time he had with him a Mr. Bruce, a Tasmanian botanist, who had been with Dr. Leichhardt on one of his expeditions, and who had come up to the Burnett with James Reid.

On Archer's previous trip up the valley of the Burnett he had ascended a hill and noticed that the Burnett valley stretched as far as the eye could see northwards, while at his feet the river took a sudden turn eastwards towards the coast. He returned to Ideraway (we may be sure) exploring and scouting out from the river as he went. From Ideraway he resolved to explore northwards and so followed up the valley of the creek which to-day bears the name of Reid's Creek, and crossed the range of mountains separating it from the Burnett and thus avoided going round the long bend

where he had been previously. Having ascended the range he saw a high sugar loaf mountain to the north-east. Many years after, this became known as Mount Perry, and valuable copper deposits were mined there. The range of hills he referred to are now known as the Opossum Creek ranges. After making his way across sundry rocky and scrubby ranges he dropped down upon the head of a small creek running northwards on which he camped. This would be Bilboolan Creek. The next morning he followed the course of this creek to its junction with a large watercourse; this would be what is known as Eastern Creek to-day, it is a sandy creek heavily timbered with She-oak and Ti-tree and about five chains wide. Crossing this creek and proceeding in a north-westerly direction he came to the Burnett River, as we know it to-day, at about a spot where in later years James, Hugh, and Colin Mackay formed Dalgangal station.

Archer explored about here for two days but he did not like the country which he described as mostly poor sandstone ridges thickly timbered, so he determined to follow down the valley. He evidently did not get as far as Mulgeldie in the Monto District, as the country in that vicinity is very good. As he went down the valley he explored on both sides of the river, hoping that he might come upon some open and promising looking country he had seen from his elevated point of view near the junction of the Boyne and the main river. To the north side of the river about four miles below where the railway station Ceratodus stands to-day is a big whinstone ridge which he named Table Mountain. This mountain he climbed and got a magnificent view of the surrounding country.

Ceratodus railway station was named after the curious lung fish which is only known to be in three rivers in the whole world, the Burnett being one of them. The fish was first discovered by a Mr. Forster, a relation of one of the early owners of Mundubbera station. Forster's name is embodied in its scientific name which is Ceratodus Forsterii. It seems a pity that some other railway station on this line was not named Ceratodus and the name that the old time aboriginals gave this spot retained. In the aboriginal stone age the blacks always came to this spot to get a particular class of diorite to make their tomahawk heads, and they called the spot Burgoo which is the aboriginal

name for a tomahawk in the Burnett dialect. The word is pronounced in the same manner that a Scotchman would pronounce that word for his porridge.

Archer and his small party proceeded on their way and the same evening crossed the river between two magnificent sheets of water which are situated about three miles above where the No Go River junctions with the main river. They followed the river down on the north side and came to the No Go River. This was named by Archer and in his letters he refers to it spelt in two words No and Go. As the creek was a large sandy and apparently dry creek he evidently facetiously named it the No Go. Shortly after crossing the No Go they came to a small well watered creek running slightly from the north-west. Archer called this Jackey Small's Creek in honour of his native companion.

Further Explorations

Two days were spent at this spot exploring this nice piece of country which he described as about the best he had seen on eastern waters. The next night they camped at a small waterhole in a gully running into the river from the north. The night was cold and they all slept close to a fire; Archer must have been too close as his blanket caught on fire. This gully was then named "Burnt Blanket Gully." Its name has been lost, but it is that gully that on a modern map is marked as "McCord's Boundary Creek."

From here Archer crossed the river again and travelled over the heads of Lower and Springer Creeks, they went over a rise and emerged on another valley with a sandy creek running through it. This he named "St. John's Creek" in honour of the day on which he discovered it. They travelled down this creek exploring on both sides as they advanced. At that night's camp Archer writes: "Mr. Bunce's botanical attainments were brought into use, for, our supply of tea being exhausted, he discovered a berry on a small shrub growing around us, which when pounded formed a good substitute for tea." The shrub referred to is evidently a plant known botanically as Grewia Latifolia, the aboriginal name of the plant is Boon-doongay, and it is sometimes referred to as wild dates. The next day they ran St. John's Creek down to its junction with the Burnett River, which they crossed; and,

cutting off the sharp bend which Archer had seen on his first trip, the next day they returned to Ideraway, again passing the site of the future town of Gayndah.

After a few days rest Archer and his native companion returned to Cooyar.

Archer writes that he was satisfied with the country that he had discovered which, considering its nearness to water carriage at Wide Bay, was not to be despised. Nevertheless, compared with the Darling Downs and Fitzroy Downs in the Roma district as sheep country, it was unworthy to be named in the same page in history. At Cooyar the Archer Bros. held many talks as to whether they should go out and take possession of the first class country that Thomas Archer saw near Roma, or be satisfied with the second class but more accessible country discovered on the Upper Burnett. It was eventually decided to take the flocks to the Burnett. Thomas Archer agreed to hand over to David Archer and Co. the lower half of the country that he had discovered, including St. John's Creek and making Burnt Blanket Gully and a line drawn about due north from it the boundary between the two runs.

Bunce asked Archer to set apart a small piece of country for the use of a friend of his, E. Pleydell Bouverie, then on his way from the south in search of a run. This Archer did, by setting aside for him the country he had explored on the south side of the Burnett River.

At the time that Archer explored the Upper Burnett he would have been tweny-five years of age. In 1849 he went to the great gold rush in California. Returning to Queensland later, he became manager of the Lake's Creek meatworks and in 1878 he was appointed by Sr. Thomas McIlwraith as Agent-General for Queensland in London.

Surveyor Burnett's Work

It was not till 1847 that Surveyor Burnett received instructions from Sydney to trace the river from its mouth, and the Governor (Sir Charles Fitzroy) named it in his honour, he having traced it as instructed and cleared up a large amount of misconception about its course. It is quite evident that Burnett did not survey the main course of the river, at this time, but that he

mapped out the Boyne and the Burnett, from the Boyne junction to its course. Captain Samuel Augustus Perry made an unsuccessful attempt to reach by sea the mouth of the river Boyne so called by the Moreton Bay settlers under the supposition that it was the same river as that to which the same name had been given by Surveyor General Oxley and which flows into Port Curtis. Mr. Surveyor Burnett, who accompanied Captain Perry on his expedition, was compelled on account of wet weather to abandon the exploration for the tmie being; but, as soon as dry weather set in, Burnett returned to and continued the expedition from the spot whence Captain Perry was compelled to turn back. Burnett succeeded in tracing this river as far as the confluence of fresh and tide water whence owing to the nature of the country on its banks he considered it advisable to turn back and return to Moreton Bay. He then proceeded from Moreton Bay in an open whale boat and succeeded in entering the mouth of the river and traced it to the point which he had reached on his land expedition.

Thomas and Charles Archer left Cooyar with their party of May 14, 1848. They had with them two flocks of sheep—one of 4,300 and the other of 3,800. With the shepherds, bullock drivers and hut keepers the party consisted of sixteen in all. They had two drays drawn by ten oxen each, also three horses and one mare and foal of their own, besides several horses belonging to the men. On the drays were loaded two tons of flour, 1,500 pounds of sugar, and 2½ chests of tea, concerning which Charles Archer wrote: "This will keep us from starving for the next six months." They also had a full supply of bush tools and innumerable other small articles.

On May 31st they camped at what is described in Charles Archer's diary as one of the most remarkable spots that he had ever seen in the colony. It is rather an extensive flat surrounded by hills, which on the eastern side are high and of very peculiar shapes—evidently volcanic. The flat is covered with volcanic stone. In the middle of it is a spring and round the margin of it a gigantic kind of lily grows. There is little doubt that the spot mentioned is what we know to-day as Ban Ban springs.

The next night they camped on Barambah Creek within 1½ miles of Ban Ban head station then owned by

Humphries and Herbert, the farthest out station at that time. Here they leave the beaten track and have to cut their own track up to Mundubbera, Coonambula and Eidsvold. Their next camp was on a small Oakey Creek about half a mile from its junction with the Burnett, in the evening they walked up on a small rugged peak a short distance from their camp. The diary continues: "Beneath us lies the Valley of the Burnett, surrounded by a complete amphi-theatre of mountains, which in some places are very high and assume the shape of immense cones, indicating their volcanic origin. Long reaches of the river are here and there visible breaking the sameness of the low forest country which lies between us and the mountains. Here and there smoke from an aboriginal's fire is curling up from among the timber which (with the exception of our dogs barking at the camp) is the only indication that the valley is inhabited." This undoubtedly refers to the spot where Gayndah town stands to-day.

Site of Gayndah Town

They continue their journey, and Thomas Archer rightly claims that he was the first man to drive a bullock dray through what was to be the town of Gayndah in a short time. They continued on and went between Mount Debateable and the river and on to Deep Creek. The road the Archers blazed in 1848 is still in use to-day. The following day Charles Archer went ahead to burn the grass in a narrow pass between the mountains and the river, through which the road is forced to go to avoid some very broken country. This pass would undoubtedly be what we know to-day as Murdering Bend.

Between Murduring Bend and the foot of what we know as Bouverie's Range, Thomas Archer on his exploration trip marked a tree with a "B." This being one boundary of the run he had set apart for Pleydell Bouverie. (Bouverie's range may be more familiarly known at the present time as Black Gin range.) In the early days a black-fellow named Billy Barlow was driving a bullock dray to Wide Bay loaded with wool from Eidsvold station and when passing over this range he had an argument with his gin. They came to blows and he killed her, but when passing Gayndah some other blacks in turn killed Billy Barlow. They now come to the range in question and the diary reads:—

"To-day the road for four miles was over some stony and pretty steep ridges." It is surprising that the Archers did not find more difficulty in getting over this range as it is very rough. They travelled on for another four miles and struck the Burnett and camped, they were now on Mundubbera station and part of the Coonambula run was just opposite over the river. On Tuesday, May 13th, 1848, they crossed the drays over the river at a spot a short distance up the river from Philpott railway station. Here they set to work to build the first bark humpy in that part of the Burnett. This spot was to be an outstation of Coonambula and it was named Mundouran. I do not think that this is a native name, but that it is the name of a place where Thomas Archer was shepherding sheep a few years previously on the Castlereagh River in N.S.W.

Coonambula Holding

At the spot on St. John's Creek where the Archers formed the head station of their first holding on the Burnett there used to be two cypress pine trees growing and it was from these two trees that the place got its name. "Kunan" being the native word for the cypress pine tree and "Bulla" meaning two, hence the name Coonambulla, as spelt by the original settlers. (I have interrogated aboriginals of this district on this point and I have no doubt that the statement is correct). The aboriginal name for the country embracing Coonambula holding is Boo-borr, meaning something light in weight such as the wood of the cordwood tree.

Between the time when Stuart Russell discovered the Burnett and Archer's exploration of the Upper Burnett many stations were taken up. Clement and Paul Lawless took up Boubyjan and Windera in 1847, and this is the only station in the Burnett district that is still held by the descendants of the original family. Borthwick took up Nanango; Ferriter and Jones took up Barambah; Humphries and Herbert, Ban Ban; Reid, Ideraway; and Ned Hawkins, Boonara. Hawkins was later drowned in California, he having gone there to the gold rush with Thomas Archer in 1849. This station was later purchased by David Jones, the founder of the firm of David Jones and Co., Sydney.

Mundubbera's History

Mundubbera station was taken up by E. Pleydell Bouverie in 1848. The aboriginal meaning of the word

Mundubbera refers to those steps that aboriginals cut up either side of a tree to assist them in climbing. Munda meaning a foot and Burra a step. Bouverie built his head station on the south side of the river about a mile up stream from the present town. Bouverie was a nephew of the then Earl of Radnor. He sold Mundubbera to Peyton and Netterfield and during their occupancy of the property Mrs. Dougherty, the wife of a stockman on the station, was one day left at the homestead with her baby, while the men were away mustering; a blackfellow came and asked her to open the door, and, when she refused, threatened, "if you do not open the door you will see blood all around." The black started to come down the chimney, and just at this time stockwhips were heard to crack and he ran away.

Mundubbera station was later sold to Rutledge and Knox and later still Knox and McCord became the owners. Knox and McCord bought Coonambula and it became the head station, and Mundubbera as a station went out of existence. Coonambula station was discovered by Thomas Archer in 1848 and in the same year was settled by David Archer and Co. They sold to Cameron, Mackenzie, Murrin and Cornish, and in turn this firm sold to Knox and McCord. The town of Mundubbera was part of the old Coonambula lease.

It was on Coonambula that the ceratodus or mud fish, an air breathing fish with lungs, was first scientifically studied by a German professor named Siemon. In 1884 William Hay Caldwell, who died in Scotland in 1941, also studied the ceratodus in the Burnett district, but his main study was the life history of the ornithorhyncus and echidna, two of the lowest forms of mammalia. It was he who discovered that the platypus and echidna were oviparous.

Mr. R. A. Hamilton, of Rockybar station, as a young man in 1884, was attending to some lambing ewes on the No Go River when Caldwell came to camp there, a few miles below Burgoo waterhole. He relates that Caldwell paid a blackfellow £5 to bring him an echidna with an egg in the pouch. At first he thought that the egg was not genuine, but he said to Hamilton: "We'll soon see, and he placed the egg in some preservative and cut the outside shell which was of a white leathery substance and holding it with a pair of pliers and cutting with a pair of scissors, he then in-

spected it microscopically and found that it was genuine. Caldwell then wired his discovery to Professor Liversidge, of Sydney University, in the follow-words: "Monotremes, Oviparous, Ovum, Meroblastic," which means that he had discovered that the monotremes, that is the platypus and echidna, were animals in which reproduction takes place by eggs outside the body. This news was handed on to a scientific conference at the time sitting in Montreal. So the scientific world at last had the solution of a question that had troubled it for more than 80 years. Monotremes laid eggs. Caldwell had as many as 150 aboriginals helping him in his researches. They used to call him the Gecka man, this being the aboriginal name for the echidna or porcupine.

Eidsvold and Hawkwood

Eidsvold station was discovered by Thomas Archer in 1848. It was named after a village of that name in Norway where in 1814 the constitution embodying that country's independence was adopted. It was from Eidsvold that some of the Archer brothers set out to explore further north, when they discovered the site of the present city of Rockhampton. In 1856 Eidsvold station passed into the hands of the Ivory Bros. Later Mr. de Burgh Persse owned it and it then passed to the Joyce family who still hold it. It is thought that the settlement on the Auburn River came up that river and not from the south.

Hawkwood was discovered and taken up by John Kinchela in the latter part of 1848. It was transferred to John Walker and from him to H. A. Thomas who in turn sold to Thomas Lodge Murray Prior. This man seems to have had bad luck in his early occupation, the scab disease breaking out in his sheep and 8,000 head having to be destroyed to check it. The blacks were very troublesome, especially the Dawson River blacks who used to make raids on those of the Burnett. There used to be an old slab hut at Hawkwood with a shingle roof which was said to be the first house of any sort on the station; there were slots cut in the slab walls through which aperture a rifle could be used for protecting the inhabitants from the wild blacks. When the rifle was withdrawn a piece of iron would drop across the hole on the inside so that spears thrown at the hut could not find a way through these apertures.

Mr. Murray Prior sold to Ramsey and Jopp. Captain Louis Hope afterwards became owner and then George Hooper who sold to Mr. de Burgh Persse, in whose family the property remained for over 50 years. Mount Narayen, a prominent peak in the district, is said to have got its name from the fact that a chief among the blacks, who, when he died was buried there in some caves, and his gin, whose name was Narayen, used to go there to sing songs of mourning over his remains.

Fighting Camp Gully on Hawkwood derived its name from the fact that in the early days of the settlement of Hawkwood a marauding tribe of Dawson River blacks who had been trying to steal some gins from the Hawkwood tribe met in combat at this spot. One man was killed on each side and the fight was called off. Some forty years ago there was a police station at Hawkwood, at which two policemen were always stationed. It was later removed to Eidsvold. An old aboriginal named Hawkwood Tommy was king of the Hawkwood tribe many years ago. He had only one eye and the protruding forehead above was missing. He used to tell the story that he, as a little child, was being carried on his mother's back at a time when the black police were rounding up a mob of semi-wild blacks to punish them for spearing some cattle, and a stray bullet grazed his protruding brow and eye, leaving him blind in one eye for life.

At the surveyed township of Pigott on Hawkwood run there formerly was an old public house where the shearers used to knock down their cheques. Very soon after the settlement of Hawkwood and Auburn stations a day's races were held to give the employees of the two stations a day's outing. A long time ago at one of these race meetings, an old blackfellow named Doughboy, a son of Hawkwood Tommy, got very drunk and a policeman handcuffed him round a sapling. Doughboy went to sleep, and on his awaking much refreshed he set about releasing himself. As there was no one about he began to climb up the bare trunk of the sapling, and when he got to the branches he started to break them off with the ultimate intention of getting his hands over the top of the tree and then down to liberty. The policeman, however, came along while this was going on and he ordered Doughboy to come down. When Doughboy refused the policeman pro-

cured an axe and started to cut the tree down. However, he gave Doughboy another chance. But Doughboy with the cunning of his race bargained with the policeman and said: "Sposin' I come down you let me go!!!" and to this the policeman agreed.

Dykehead was taken up in the late forties by Robert Fleming and it got its name from the dyke of rock across the Auburn River a few miles below the old homestead, at a spot known to-day as Auburn Falls. The Auburn station was probably taken up in 1848 or 1849. It has been held by many owners and at one time was a very large holding, carrying as many as 35,000 head of cattle. At this time the boundary came to the junction of the Auburn River and the Burnett and then up the Boyne. At the present time the station is held by McConnel and Kirk. Cooranga was taken up in 1848 by the Strathdee Bros. Cooranga is the native name of the common reed that grows along the banks of the river.

Gayndah township was founded in 1849, a man named le Breton being the principal mover. Maryborough was formed a year previously. Warwick was proclaimed a town in 1849.

Gayndah's Ambitions

In 1854 next to Warwick, Gayndah would have been the centre of a large and promising grazing settlement, and she stepped forth in antagonism to Brisbane as the metropolis of the then confidently awaited new colony of the north.

Gayndah was first known as Norton's camp, Norton being a carrier. A few years after the settlement along the Auburn River convict labour was sent to Gayndah to repair the road from there to Hawkwood. The convicts, however, were recalled after making permanent work of part of the road from Gayndah to Mt. Debateable and their stone work can still be seen on the river cutting of the Flagstone crossing of the Auburn River. The river crossing in Auburn River at Dykehead was also made by them and has stood the floods and traffic of many years. Some years ago a convict leg iron was found in that vicinity.

The aboriginals did not harass Stuart Russell or Thomas Archer in their exploration of the Burnett. Thomas Archer relates that they always went about armed and that they took precautions to ensure that

the blacks would give them a minimum of trouble. It must be remembered that in the period to which reference is now being made the breech loading rifle had not been invented. The rifles used by the early pioneers were all muzzle loaders and once the rifle was discharged it took fully a minute to load again. The revolvers were also muzzle loaders.

It was not till the Archers brought their sheep to Eidsvold that the blacks became really troublesome, and for a time they became so aggressive that it was found necessary to remove the sheep to Coonambula, so that the shepherds would be nearer and have better protection. Stuart Russell's partner Glover describes how, when he and Stuart Russell settled on Burrandowan, the blacks killed the shepherds. He also gives a few impressions regarding the blacks of the Boyne and Stuart rivers. He says: "They are found in considerable numbers and he has seen even 400 men at one time with not an old man amongst them." This must have been at a time when the Bunya nuts were ripe and in season, which was only once in three years, the blacks as far away as the Carnavon Ranges used to visit the Bunya Mountains and ignore all tribal boundaries. Tribes from far away used to form themselves into strong bands so that if they were opposed they were strong enough to fight any tribe whose country they were passing through. "They are generally a fine formed race, both men and women, many of the former six feet high and many of both sexes far from ugly. They, however, are treacherous, cruel and incorrigible thieves. They are a restless race, never remaining above a day or two in one place, except when planning some expedition against a hostile tribe. They kill all within their reach and then move to another ground." There is no doubt that they were a real menace to the early settlers. Eales of Tiaro had several shepherds killed.

In the year 1848 Adolphus Trevethen formed Rawbelle, then the farthest out station in that direction; and on March 29th, 1852, he was killed by the blacks when they made an attack on the station. Just over the range on the Dawson waterfall about this time Maclaren, who had taken up Isla station, was killed, and when his wife, who was left at the station with a small child, found that he did not return at night, she went out to look for him, carrying the small baby, and

found his body. There is a story told in that vicinity that an early settler when he went out to work used to leave his wife and family locked up in the hut with a supply of food, water and firearms with a plentiful supply of ammunition so that they could withstand a siege should the blacks attack the hut. One day, while this woman was left alone, she heard the sound of advancing blacks. She looked between the cracks of the slab wall of the hut and saw a large number all covered with warpaint in fantastic designs. She was quite convinced that they had come to attack her home but they passed quite close by and left her unmolested. This must have been a most trying ordeal for this woman, and unfortunately it was only one of many others.

Hornet Bank Massacre

On October 27th, 1857, the Hornet Bank massacre occurred, when the blacks killed the manager Fraser, his wife and six children, and three station employees. Andrew Scott owned Hornet Bank at the time and he was a Sctochman who was very kindly disposed to the aboriginals. He used to give the black children currants and raisins and little lumps of sugar at times. Scott had taken up Maxwelton station on the Flinders River and he left Hornet Bank in charge of Fraser and went out west to form Maxwelton. Fraser evidently had a different idea of treating the blacks, and was not so kindly disposed towards them as Scott had been, and he would not let the children near the homestead, and on one occasion hit a black child. The tribe resented this and one night attacked the station with the awful result stated. One boy, West Fraser, who had been clubbed and left for dead, rolled over and fell between the bed and the wall and was the only one who escaped alive. Scott had only got as far as Durham Downs on his westward trip and a messenger was sent after him. There used to be a report current that the government of the day gave West Fraser when he grew up 'carte blanche' to shoot any blackfellow on sight. It was said that he shot one such at Harris's gully near Dykehead, but I do not think that for one moment he had ever been given any such permission. After having committed this fearful atrocity the tribe evidently recognised their guilt and split up and went in several directions. It was not long before the black police were on their tracks, and one mob was caught up on the west-

ern side of Mount Narayen on Hawkwood run. Many were shot down there and some others were captured alive. These unfortunate creatures were handcuffed round a big bottle tree and then shot down, the handcuffs were removed, and their bones were eventually bleached white. Some years later other blacks cut a hole in the bottle tree and put bones therein; the hole has since grown over. Many of the remainder of this mob were chased to the Quoggy scrub and shot there. Another mob were tracked to Brovinia station, and finding that they were being followed they made towards Mundubbera and were caught up at a small mountain called Windindi, which is situated not far from the Auburn River, some few miles from its junction with the Burnett. Here they were shot down.

One one occasion a black fellow named Jackey Jackey, who had been one of the ringleaders in the Hornet Bank massacre, was travelling with a Dawson River tribe to the Bunyas for a feast, and when he was passing through the Auburn station some of the other blacks told some of the station people that he was in the mob. As he was a wanted man he had to flee. He was known to make for Mt. Narayen on Hawkwood and from there he vanished for some time. Later he was seen at Camboon and later still at Cracow station. While there a police patrol happened to come along and some of the local blacks betrayed him to them, and as the country round the station was all open and he would be seen if he tried to get away his only apparent means of escape was to climb a large tree, and hide in the foliage which he did. The local blacks however, indicated to the police where he was and when they called to him to come down, he refused and they shot him. Although the blacks did not harass Stuart Russell and Archer in their explorations, there is little doubt that they saw the explorers but kept well out of the way of these strange people riding such strange animals.

About 1870 R. A. Hamilton, of Rockybar, records that as a young man he used to carry rations out to the shepherds on Rockybar. On one occasion he carried rations out to the eight mile camp from the head station. As there was nowhere to tie his horses up at the hut he tied them up some little distance away and carried the rations across to the hut, and as he entered a blackfellow rushed out and passed him and made for

the creek. As he did so, and was disappearing over the bank, Hamilton fired three shots in his direction to frighten him. The aboriginal disappeared among some ti-trees in the creek, and although there was very little cover he was never seen again. He was evidently stealing some flour, as his black hide was marked white with flour.

In conclusion, I would like to say that in my opinion many young people who are now happily and prosperously settled on the land, and this may well apply to those in the towns, fail to realise what we all owe to the wonderful men who pioneered this country for us.