

Charlie Bell, Ex-Fisheries Inspector  
Interviewed by Neville Gare on 9th October 1970

This is an interview with Charlie Bell, Ex-Fisheries Inspector who has lived in the Snowy Mountains area for many years.

- NG Charlie, you were born in Tumbarumba, that's right is it?  
CB Yes, I was born in Tumbarumba in 1904, and came to Kiandra in 1914 and went to school there for about three years.
- NG How many were at the school at Kiandra in 1914?  
CB Twenty eight when I first started there.
- NG And what was going on at Kiandra at the time you were at school there, can you remember?  
CB Yes there was a fair bit of goldmining, prospecting and grazing. A lot of snow leases were available at those times and round Kiandra.
- NG Would they have been doing the hydraulic sluice mining on New Chum Hill at Kiandra then?  
CB Yes.
- NG Was this one big company that was running this and they had the sluices only from Three Mile Dam?  
CB That project had finished when we came to Kiandra, but there were other ventures going on there with hydraulic sluicing, like down on Isles Flat and round Bullocks Head Creek, and the Dam was still being used then for that purpose.
- NG Your father was a miner I understand, and I suppose you got involved in the mining business pretty early in life.  
CB Yes I started working with him when I was sixteen. He had a manager in the mine at the Nine Mile and we started work there in the tunnel 2,400 ft. It went in underneath that alluvial lead and eventually it dipped away and they had to abandon it because the water beat them and they couldn't use any machinery in there to get the water out. It meant putting another tunnel in further down to get sufficient floor to drain, so they had to leave it.
- NG Gave it away, so I suppose there's a fair bit of gold in the big hole there if you knew how to get it out?  
CB Yes, the last wash up we had out of there, we got 30ozs gold per fortnight.
- NG Now the Nine Mile, where do you place that today, or what's the nearest wellknown place today to the Nine Mile?  
CB Well the Nine Mile is just west of Tabletop, about two miles west of Tabletop, and its a pretty easy place to find because they've washed half the mountain away there, like New Chum Hill.
- NG I think you can see it from the Kings Cross Road there?

- CB Yes you can see it from the Round Mountain Road going across the Junction Shaft Road.
- NG Now when you had to give it away, where did you go, did you go out to Grey Mare then, did you, from there?
- CB Well we left Kiandra for a short time. In 1930 during the Depression we came back there and we were working the hydraulic sluicing plant in Bullocks Head Creek. My brother and my father and I got 27 ozs. of gold the last wash up we had there. The chap that owned the plant sold it to a syndicate in Tumberumba and closed us down, so we didn't do any more. So we spread out then and split up and during the period that we were at the Nine Mile there was a shortage of machinery and iron rails to work these leads. My Dad went out to Grey Mare and pegged the Grey Mare lease out and took it up and he paid the rent on that lease up until 1935. Kerry Pierce from Tumberumba, he went over to the Grey Mare and pegged the lease out and made an application for the Grey Mare Lease. When he found out that the Mines Department still had it leased to Dad they got their heads together and they formed a company and started developing it again, and that's when I went out there in 1935 and I stayed there all one summer. We were putting the road in there - we had about twenty men working between Happy Jack and the Grey Mare to put the road in. They decided they'd work it all the winter and they got stores, killed a bullock and all these provisions and stuff in there and then when the snow came, all the men cleared out with their horses and pack saddles and everything and the only thing to do was to close it down for the winter and they asked me if I would take the job of caretaker.
- NG What was the rum ration?
- CB Actually I didn't drink much those days, but they I think, they were giving me 4 pound a week and my keep, caretaking. I was out there at the Grey Mare on my own, and during this period I made it my business to get all over those hills and have a bit of a reconnoitre so as I'd know my way round at different times. I'd heard about all these places and I thought I'd go and investigate them. Eventually I tried to get some money out of them for my wages, and they wouldn't pay me, so I finished up getting on my skis and hiking out of the place and I've never been back there since. It finished up I had to summons them for my wages and eventually the old man, he never went back either and everybody went in and helped themselves to everything that was there, and I don't know what has happened to it since.
- NG You sound like you wouldn't care if you didn't see Grey Mare again.
- CB No I don't want to see it no more.
- NG Have you got any idea when operations would have finally folded up, I take it that was more or less the end of

- things, was it?
- CB Well the original company, I think they folded up about 1902 or somewhere thereabouts and since the company that Dad was managing there had been different syndicates in there to try and get it going again, but I don't think any of them were ever successful in getting the gold out of it.
- NG Was it alluvial or reef?
- CB No it was reef gold and the assays we took out of it, a Melbourne chap named Minor, we took assays out of it for about 200 yards along the reef and some places assayed 3 ozs. to the ton and it averaged 30 pennyweights the whole lot of it. It was about six foot wide and I don't know what amount of ore was in there.
- NG I take it that's a pretty high assay?
- CB Yes it's a good assay and when the original company worked it they drove a tunnel into the side of the hill and sloped it from the level of the tunnel to the surface and took all the payable ore from the tunnel level to the surface. They couldn't take any of the other ore out on account of the water and they put a shaft down twenty feet onto it and the leads still going down and the ore is just as valuable down there as what is was at tunnel level. So the only way you could find out what quantity and quality was there would be to diamond drill it. If they diamond drilled they'd get a pretty fair idea whether it was worth developing or not, but I suppose Kosciusko Park Trust wouldn't let them touch it now.
- NG That might be the case. What did you do after you left Grey Mare again? You cleared out on your skis and you didn't have any money, so you had to go and earn a quid.
- CB I went taxi driving then, in Sydney.
- NG Did you get any money down there?
- CB I made enough money to have a good time on.
- NG When did you come back to the Monaro then?
- CB After I had a belly-full of taxi driving, I went to Technical College and learnt electrical oxy-welding and before the war started I got a job at General Motors, welding and I was there for the whole duration of the war, and they called me up for service and when I went over to the military establishment at Carrington Road to get examined they give me an A1 and told me they were going to send for me, and as I was walking out there a chap said "What are you doing now?" I said "Oh I'm working at General Motors." He said "What are you doing over there?" I said, "I'm welding." He said, "well, you getter get back over there and stay there, we don't want you in the Army, we want the work you do over there."

So we were making machine gun parts, 25 pounders and tank parts and all sorts of things and we never had a minute to breath, we worked from 7 in the morning to 10 or 12 at



night, weekends and finished up I was just about finished and when the war was finished and the manpower took their hooks out of me I took off for the hills and I've been up here ever since. That's so they won't get me back there no more.

NG So when you got up here then what did you do, did you get straight into this fisheries business then?

CB No I took a job with the S.M.A. (Snowy Mountains Authority) Fitter and Welder and Maintenance over at a diamond drilling site on the original dam site at Coles there at Adaminaby where they were drilling for the Portal site there, where they were going to put the tunnel through from the dam to Tumut Ponds and they later changed their ideas about it and went down the river, Eaglehawk and put it in there which is a better site.

So anyway I was working there for a fair while and the Supervisor told me he had a house, I wanted to shift up, I was living in Sydney at the time, shift up to Adaminaby and get a house there, so he said he had a house and he asked me if I wanted it. I said yes, it'll do me I'll take that. So I went into Cooma and saw them in there in the office and told them that Mr Stevens had given me his house and they said well, you're not even on the list. So we can't give it to you either, so as I went back, very disappointed, Len Harper the Resident Engineer for the Public Works Department, he said if you come over and work for me Charlie, he said, I'll give you a house within a fortnight. I said you've got a deal!

So I went and left the S.M.A. like a fool and went over there and I was supposed to be the plant operator for the electric lighting system and there was all this hummin' and haaing about starting in on this new dam and where they were going to put it and that and it finished up they decided to abandon this site and the electric light plant never eventuated at all, so in the meantime to fill me in with a job he asked me would I care to do any other work - I said yes I'll have a go at another job, keep busy until you get that job ready for me, and I took a job on as a carpenter and labourer.

And I was up there one day stacking timber, a bloke came out and dumped and the Union Representative came up and he said to me "You belong to the Carpenters' Union?" and I said "No, I'm in the Amalgamated Engineers." And he said "Well you can't do any carpenter's labouring round here unless you're in our Union!" And I said, "Well I'm not joining another Union!" And I lit out. Well I went into Cooma then and drew my money and went up to the Alpine Hotel for dinner and I was sat for dinner and

there was a chap there, cross-eyed old feller and there was old Jimmy Gaden. So we were taking about fish and one thing and another and I said, "By Gee, I wish I was a Fisheries Inspector," I said, "I'd lift some of these blokes around here, I'd stop their skulduggery." And he said to me, "Would you take a job on as Fisheries Inspector?" I said "I might." "I'd go into it anyway." So he said "Alright, you meet me down Macquarie Street," he said, "on Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock," he said "and we'll have a talk with the Superintendent."

NG How long ago was that?

CB 1950. So down I go and went in and finished up they talked me into taking a job and I was in that job until 4th August last year. So it was a pretty good holiday on full pay and I think I wasted my time just the same, because the penalties on different things involved weren't adequate to meet the situation and the result was that these penalties that are imposed on the different poachers and law breakers are not adequate to discourage them from committing these offences.

NG But you never got pelted in the river or anything like that?

CB No, I never got thrown in, some blokes threatened to throw me in but they never got around to doing it, the closest I got, I fell in myself one night trying to drag a bloke's boat into the bank.

NG Well you'd meet some characters of course, particularly in the last few years.

CB When I get round to writing this book I'll really make some revelations and I think it would be really worth reading.

NG You'd better get yourself a good lawyer. Charlie, can you just recall back to your early days at Kiandra, you mentioned you were there about 1914?

CB Yes, in my early days at Kiandra I went to school there but I never had school on my mind. All I had on my mind was going fishing and shooting foxes and doing a bit of prospecting and breaking in the horses and taking fishing parties out on the Tumut River at Benjamin's Flat and the Fifteen Mile and different places.

NG And who was there in 1914? Can you recall the town of Kiandra and what it consisted of in 1914?

CB Yes I could tell you all the families that were there, we'll start at the Police Station. There was Sgt Cook and his wife and Bill Pattinson and his wife, they had the Post Office and Jacob Wilson and his wife, they owned the Alpine Hotel and George Earl and he had the store.

NG Which store would that be, was that the one they called Yans old store?

CB Yes that was Yan's old store and then there was old Charlie Wortz, he was a bullock driver and older Peter Quinn, he was a bullocky and then there was Jack Wortz,

he was old Charlie's son and Bill Wortz, Christie <sup>Rees</sup>, there was George Yan, Frank Yan, old Bob Hughes who used to drive the mail at Kiandra and Bob and Bill, his sons, and there was the Harringtons and Sanko Smith.

NG Bob Hughes, was he actually driving the mail then?  
 CB No.  
 NG He'd given it away, he'd retired?  
 CB Yes, he'd given it away and Jack Larkins was driving the mail and he used to be on the grog pretty often and whenever he was incapable of driving the mail he used to hire some of us young fellows to take it on for a week or a fortnight or a month or whatever the case was.

NG And where did you go from with the mail?  
 CB It went to Adaminaby.  
 NG Between Kiandra and Adaminaby?  
 CB Yes.  
 NG What did you drive?  
 Cb I used to drive a sulky, that was as far as the snowline and I'd ride the horse as far as I could go, and that was about the rest-house and then if there was too much snow to get him over Sawyer's Hill I used to do the rest of it on my skis. I used to carry about a 60 lb. mail bag. Many a time I've had my head pushed into a snowdrift there with that mail bag and had a job to pull myself backwards out of it. And we had no bridge over the river, we had to wade the river with boots off.

NG Was the Post Office going then, I suppose it wasn't?  
 CB Yes there was a Post Office there.  
 NG Who was the Postmaster there?  
 CB Lindsay Patterson, the school teacher, he was looking after the Post Office and doing the school teaching too.

NG And you mentioned three or four bullockies, what were they doing, were they working teams there at the time?  
 CB Yes they used to cart provisions and that from Adaminaby and Tumut and they used to cart in all the winter's wood round the district there for all the families. Of course a lot of families they used to go away for the winter and come back for the summer. and there was a big common there that belonged to the town and all these different families had a fairly big herd of cattle and they were only supposed to have a few for their own use. They used to run quite a ranch of cattle there, some of them had two or three hundred head.

NG Do you reckon Bill Pat<sup>er</sup>erick would be the last bloke running the common?  
 CB Yes, Bill would be one of the last.  
 NG Was Bill there in those days or...  
 CB Yes, Bill was there.  
 NG And what was he doing there?  
 CB Bill used to work at Currango and he used to be a boundary rider out there and he was pretty good on the skis, old Bill.

NG He was a good skier?  
 CB Yes, one of the best. He was one of the best downhill riders I think they ever had. As a matter of fact I don't think you've got anything to hold him now.

NG How many people would have been still goldmining back in 1914?  
 CB 1914, there'd be about one dozen there, but then mostly prospectors.  
 NG Fossicking around for a bit?  
 CB Yes, Old Southern, he had a mine up at the Three Mile and there was another fellow out at Charcoal and then there was Nine Mile that Dad was managing and several other tunnels that had been put in. There was one put in round Garden Gully round Gianderra and mainly the rest was prospectors, old chaps, come there for the summer and migrate for the winter.

NG When did they stop using the water line from Three Mile Dam, do you know?  
 CB That stopped about 1930, that's when Harold and I were sluicing there and they sold all the pipes and the hydraulic plant.

NG Those shafts on Township Hill, you know the ones I mean, now when would they have been worked?  
 CB They were worked before I came to Kiandra, I don't know who put them in, Bill Pattinson put one farthest up Bullocks Head Creek towards Three Mile. He was working that, a fellow named <sup>Winkler</sup> I think was finding the money for it, but old Bill Pattinson was putting the tunnel in. I think they put that tunnel in about 2,000 ft. and I don't think they struck wash or got any gold out of it at all, because the lead was on the other side of the hill, on the Kiandra side of it. That basin that Kiandra is in was round about the bottom of the lead which eroded away from there and was washed down into China Camp Flat and formed all that goldfield there and that's where all the gold come from.

NG Talking about the Chinese, apart from the Yans when did the last of the Chinese go before the Yans, do you know?  
 CB Well there was an old Chinaman at the Nine Mile, old Jimmy<sup>Ah</sup> Young and there was Jimmy Ah Doo and old Tommy Yan, they were the only three Chinamen there when I came there in 1914.

NG That old cemetery there, Harvey Palfrey used to cook up a bit of a story for his visitors about Boot Hill and all that kind of thing, did you hear any stories about violent deaths, fighting, brawling and such?  
 CB Oh yes, they used to have a few skirmishes round there. There was one old chap, he had a bit of a sluice in Duffer's Gully, that'd<sup>be</sup> down from the Nine Mile there toward the Tumut River, and he had a pretty good claim and he used to have to come into Kiandra to get his provisions every fortnight. There was a couple of blokes



there used to watch him and as soon as his back was turned they used to slip into his tail race and wash up all his work and collect the gold and put it in sugar bags and you know, with the wash up and that and take off back here.

He didn't know where his gold was going and at last he found out there was something going on, so one day he doubled back and he had his shotgun with him and he found these two fellows in his tail race. He shot one of them dead and the other bloke reckoned he was taking such long strides down the side of that hill and he was only touching the ground for about every 20 or 30 yards.

NG Where did the arm of the law come when this sort of thing happened?

CB He got ten years jail for that and I always reckoned they should have given him a medal for it. I think they got the wrong idea about that because I think anybody that would go and pinch a man's gold when his back's turned wants shooting.

NG Were the nearest Police, Adaminaby, or Tumut or Cooma in those days?

CB There were Police at Kiandra then. Old Cook was there in 1918 - from 1916 to 1918 I think he was there and he got shifted to Canberra and he was the first Policeman to be established at Canberra. He used to have the Police Station at Molonglo but there used to be a lot of skulduggery going on with cattle duffing and horse thieving and sheep stealing and all that sort of thing. There was a couple of old chaps there named Thomas and they used to live down at Lobb's Hole. They had a very good dog and they'd wait till it came on pouring rain and they'd come up onto the Six Mile and of course there were no fences there in those days and they come up onto the six Mile and ride around the sheep. Then away they'd go towards Lobb's Hole and when they'd get about a mile or so away from the sheep, send the dog back after them and the dog would bring those sheep right down into Lobb's Hole after their boss. They'd get down there in the early hours of the morning, put them up a gully behind a brush fence and they'd keep them until they got a fair herd. Then they used to take them to the saleyard at Tumberumba and sell them.

Anyway they made a mistake one day, they went up there and they done the usual thing and sent the dog back after the sheep. After the dog had got the sheep nicely started and everything it stopped raining. The bloke that was there looking after them got on their tracks and he followed them into Lobb's Hole and found out where they were being cached and got the Police. The Police watched them there for about a week or so until they had

all these sheep yarded up and then took them to Tumberumba. When they took them over there and sold them, they just arrested them and they got six months for sheep stealing.

On another occasions old Johnny Thomas, this old Abe's brother, he was in Cooma and he pinched a bloke's white horse and the Police got onto him and arrested him and they had the horse locked up in the Police paddock. They had races at Kiandra that day and rang up old Abe and told him that Johnny was in jail for horse stealing so as soon as it got dark, old Abe whipped over to one of the stables and pinched one of the race horses they had up there and rode to Adaminaby, changed it for a coach horse, rode to Ryan Falls and changed over again there, rode into Cooma in the early hours of the morning and he took the grey horse out of the Police paddock and out along the road shot it and burnt it and back to Ryan Falls, and got the horse he left previously and back to Adaminaby, picked his race horse up and he was back in Kiandra before breakfast. The case came up on Monday morning and they had to dismiss the case because they had no evidence.

NG What were these brothers doing at Lobb's Hole? How did they live?

CB Well there was a big copper mine down there at Lobb's Hole and this coppermine is very rich and it's still there as a matter of fact.

NG That's the remnants at Ravine there, is it?

CB Yes. And they used to take the majority of the copper out of that on pack horses, they used to pack it out.

NG Which way did they go, Charlie?

CB They used to bring it to Kiandra, and they used to take it up to the top of Talbingo there on the other side of Yarrangobilly turn-off.

NG Did they give police escorts to this sort of thing?

CB No, not for copper. Well there was a hotel there in Lobb's Hole and a Police Station and a fairly big community.

NG Like at Kiandra?

CB Yes there was the Forstrums and the Wilesmiths and the Thomases and the Knielsons.

NG This was about this 1914-1918 period?

CB Oh, previous to that. It was just about folding up when we went there, it was just folding up in 1914. There was a lot of people stayed on there after that but they gradually left.

NG What years were you at Kiandra, from what year to what year?

CB From 1914 off and on until about 1922 and I left there and came back in 1930 and I was there for five or six years and backwards and forwards at various times,

- sometimes you get lonely and go back to Kiandra.
- NG When did the place really start to fold up, what year do you reckon?
- CB It folded up round about the Depression, that was the finish of it, our place, we got burnt out at Kiandra and I lost my sister, got burnt in the fire, and that was the old Kiandra Hotel that we owned.
- NG Kiandra Hotel, not the Alpine?
- CB Not the Alpine Hotel, then there was an old fellow named Jeffries, he bought the Alpine Hotel off old Jacob Wilson and Jacob went to Tumut and old Jeffries was going pretty bad there, he was a bit of a maniac and nobody could get along with him, and he was trying to run the hotel on his own and eventually it folded up, and I think it was going so bad it caught fire one day and burnt down too. There was no pub there then, and when it went, there was a couple of other houses there went with it because they were close to it and that was the finish of that.
- NG What was at Rules Point at this time, was the old guest house there then?
- CB There was a hotel there and Mrs Cook owned the hotel at Rules Point.
- NG Was that the one that Mrs Prosser ran later on?
- CB Yes. She took over after Mrs Cook.
- NG Do you know when Mrs Prosser took over Rules Point? Before World War II?
- CB Oh yes, I don't actually know how long they were there, but she might have taken over after Mrs Cook went out, but I don't know.
- NG What about at Yarrangobilly Village, was there a pub or an inn there at the Village?
- CB There wasn't a pub there, I don't remember it. It wasn't there in my time.
- NG So you had a pub at Rules Point and it was a dry trip until you got to Talbingo I presume?
- CB Yes, Lazy Harry's.
- NG Lazy Harry's? Who was Lazy Harry?
- CB He was before Jack Bridle, yeh! I know him. Can't think of his name. Yes, there was a lot of beer drunk there and some tall stories told.
- NG When did the road finally get connected right through from Adaminaby to Talbingo?
- CB It was connected through there before I ever went there. It would have been before 1900.
- NG The late 1800's.
- CB Yes they had a road right through to both places.
- NG I think when the first Kiandra gold rush was on, you could get through to Tumut from Kiandra, couldn't you, on that track?
- CB Yes you used to come up the old road and it was right up the ridge on Talbingo you know, and they later surveyed it and put that road that is in now and made a pretty

- good job of that I think, in view of the implements and that they had for road building.
- NG Wasn't there some agricultural farming going on there in the mountains, some potato farming, did you see any evidence of that when you lived there? Round towards Cabramurra way somewhere?
- CB No the only person who had a bit of a farm there was old Jack McGregor, he had a sort of a Shetland Pony ranch down there, half-way between Lobb's Hole and Sue City. He was up on that ridge there and he used to have crops in there, oats, and down the river below Sue City about two or three miles on the left-hand side of the river he had a cultivation paddock there, and he had another one up O'Hare's Creek there. What they call the Forty Acres and then I think he was up around The Springs and the section there, and I think he had another bit of an outfit there, and I think they were going to ringbark all that country there on the section. They did ringbark it but the scrub took over, they couldn't keep the trees from growing and it's grown over again now and you wouldn't know it had been improved.
- NG And Currango and Coolamine Homesteads were going in your day?
- CB Oh yes, they were big outfits. The Australian Estates, they owned Currango and Coolamine and a matter of fact, between Lampe and Australian Estates, they owned practically the lot, or they owned the pick of it anyway.
- NG What did you do for entertainment, did you have dances and things in Kiandra, Charlie?
- CB Oh yes!
- NG Who provided the amenities?
- CB I used to play a bit myself once, who told you that?
- NG I could see by the twinkle in your eye, what did you play?
- CB I used to play the piano and the violin and there was old Fred Smiles and old Black Christie and there was Red Sam Thomas, the dingo trapper, he used to play for a waltz or two.
- NG And what were the instruments, you had the piano, the violin and what else?
- CB Sometimes we had an accordion.
- NG And where did you have the dances?
- CB In the hall. There, behind Bob Hughes' place, that was the hall there. He cut it in half when things folded up at Kiandra and made a sulky shed out of it.
- NG In your old papers you wouldn't have a copy of a old map of Kiandra as it was then, would you?
- CB Yes I have got some old maps and I got a Mine Department Year Book regarding all the mining activities that went on there.
- NG Could we copy them?
- CB As a matter of fact it's no use to me I might make a



presentation to you.

NG Well Charlie, if you're like me you're getting dry, so I think we might knock off and I'll talk to you another time.

What we might do is write down some questions about historical stuff.

CB I can tell you about the search for old Mick Shanley, too, he got lost down below the Three Mile there at Wallace's Creek. He was coming back from taking a mob of sheep to old Jack Cheney's. Old Jack Cheney used to have about 15,000 sheep around Happy Jack and places there and he used to keep them there nearly all the winter, hoping there wouldn't be a big fall of snow and then when the snow started to get pretty crook he used to start getting busy trying to get them out. That's how he caught old Mick - old Mick was helping him out and cut over the other side of the Tumut River, the other side of Sue City and it came onto snow and old Mick decided to lie down and come back through Kiandra, but he didn't make it. We got word that he was coming and when he never turned up old Jacob went up to the Three Mile Hut and there was no sign of him there and next day we had a search party out for him. All the townspeople went looking for him and no sign of him, and three days we searched and then the weather cleared up and on the fourth day the snow started to settle down a bit and we could see the horse tracks, just the indentation in the snow where the horses had ploughed through the snow. We followed those and we found the horses down underneath a waterfall there in Wallace's Creek and Zack Harrington, Dave Thomas and Charlie Whilesmith, they took them back to Lobb's Hole, the horses, and we kept on looking for Mick.

About two or three o'clock in the afternoon we went up and down this track where they stumbled down this mountain there, you know, over big mountain ash logs and timber and rocks and cliffs and that and we couldn't find Mick and the Policeman, Cook, the Policeman and old Jacob Wilson decided to walk down the track we made, following this trail and they was half way down and old Mick was laying right alongside the track and the snow had melted off the side of his face and they seen him.

Well then we had to get him on a mountain ash sapling and strap him onto it and he was about 6 feet, and about 14-15 stone and had to man-haul him up to the top of the ridge there. Then put him on a toboggan and take him to Kiandra and three o'clock the next morning we got out, while the snow was hard and put him on the toboggan and took off for Adaminaby with him. There was six of us -

four of us pulling and the other two spelling as we went along, and we got him out there about 9 o'clock to the old Kelly's Saw Mill on Alpine Hill there, and handed him over to the undertaker. Jacob said, "Boys, they've got twelve bottles of rum at the Rest House", he said "Jack Larkins's a mate of mine there." he said "You'd better bring it back with you, two bottles each won't make much difference, don't fall down and break it."

So we got back to the Rest House we decided to have, to knock the top of one of Jacob's bottles of rum. Anyhow we put two shillings in each and Snowy Hetherington put in three shillings, which made up the thirteen shillings and put it in the tucker bag and took it down to the kitchen. Mrs Wilson was sorting things out there and she said, "Hey Snowy," she said "What's this thirteen shillings for, Snowy?" He said "Oh, just stick it in the till, it'll be right." And just then Jacob come down and he said 'I say Snowy," he said, "Only eleven bottles of rum, there, what happened to the other one?" Mrs Wilson, it suddenly dawned on her what the thirteen shillings was for, and she went crook on Snowy of course. Incidentally there's only the three of us left now that was involved in the search for old Mick Shanley.

NG Who are the other two?

CB There's Bert, me brother, and Bill Hughes and Jink Yan and meself. I don't know whether Jink Yan's still alive or not.

NG Is Bill Hughes still around?

CB He was up here last year, I met him in Cooma, one day I run into him. I went to school with Bill.

NG Where does he live?

CB He give me a Hornsby address.

NG He's Bob Hughes son?

CB No, his brother.

NG And of the old Kiandra people, I suppose there's still a few families living in Cooma descended from them, is that right?

CB Not so much Cooma, more down Tumut. There's the Wilsons and the Wortzes, and the Yans and the Reeces and Fred Harris. They all went to Tumut. The Patericks - there's old Bill Paterick and Peter Paterick - I think he's dead now too, but all the rest of the fellows, I think there were about twenty odd I could name them all, the fellow involved in that search and out of all those fellows that's all there is left now.

NG What year was that?

CB 1921.

NG Well Charlie, thanks a lot.