

**HAROLD RIAL****Interviewed by Klaus Hueneker****22 April 1984****Tape 1 of 2****Side 1**

This is an interview with Harold Rial on Easter Sunday at his home in Tumbarumba 1984.

HR: My father, the late A.J. Rial was born in 1860 at Four Mile which is now Glen Tullock. Owned by the Murdoch family who are great friends of mine. And he first went to the mountains at the turn of the century. He was there with the then Minister for Lands on the day when Australia was united and made into a Federation or Commonwealth. 1 January 1901. I have a photo, which I haven't got here at the moment, but I'll let you see it, and he's there on the cairn with the Minister.

KH: On the top of Koşiusko.

HR: On the top of Koşiusko, yeah. I understand they cracked a bottle of McCullens whisky. That's a good ad for McCullens.

KH: Was there a whole gathering of them? I mean was there a whole group of them?

HR: No. I don't know who else was there. The only thing is there is the picture of the two of them on the cairn.

KH: And they'd ridden up presumably.

HR: Oh yeah, there were no motor cars in those days.

KH: No, that's right. But they didn't go up in a carriage or a bullock *dray*, they rode up.

HR: There was no road there, so you wouldn't get in on anything but a horse and saddle in those days. Father built the hut, Farm Ridge.

KH: That's the present, I mean that's the four...

HR: The old hut that you saw that fell down.

KH: The four roomed house. I mean it's practically a house. It was more...

HR: Actually it wasn't four rooms, there were only three. There was the big room that most of us slept and ate in ...

KH: That was where the fireplace...

HR: The fireplace was in the end and there was a brick oven there that they used to bake the bread in. The camp oven was, though I shouldn't say this, but it was taken by somebody who I'm pretty certain I know. It was the biggest camp oven I think in Australia. It was approximately 3 feet or a metre or a yard - call it what you like - in diameter. It was a terrific thing because father had a lot of men there at times. But getting back to the hut, there was this big room and then there were two smaller rooms in what's in this picture here. It's got a leanto on the western side.

KH: Oh, I see, so what...

HR: One was the storeroom. In my time old Gus Murphy, who was the head stockman from Wolseley Park down here at Tumbarumba at the time, used to go up and stay there quite a bit in the summertime, and he used to have one room for himself. But the rest was a storeroom. I remember there was a big box there and I know there was flour that was tipped down with a pine box with a lid on it. And the flour wasn't left in the bag. I remember them tipping the flour into... but you must remember right then I was only twelve years old.

KH: When you went there.

HR: I was only twelve years old then.

KH: When were you born?

HR: I was born in '19.

KH: 1900?

HR: I was 65 here a few days ago.

KH: Sorry, 19..?

HR: 1919.

KH: Right I'm with you. So that was about 1931?

HR: Oh, about thirty... I went there I think it was in 1932 or 33. I could have gone the year the Sydney Harbour Bridge was opened. I was at... I saw De Groot [unclear] ride up and I saw him taken back in the police wagon after he opened the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He tried to let an old J.D. Lang [unclear]. So that's it, so I saw where all that happened.

KH: So you rode out there the first time when you were about 13 or something.

HR: I went with a brother of mine, Percy Rial, who had Toolong, or we knew it as Toolong, or K2 as the Land Department knew it. That hut was a tin hut. The fireplace was built round natural big granite rocks that were there and that was a natural chimney.

KH: Sorry, Toolong was?

HR: Toolong, yeah.

KH: This is along the track, along Broadway Plain is it? From what we now know as Paton's Hut onto Wheelers?

HR: It wasn't very far from Paton's Hut. Allow me to correct you on things like that!

KH: Go right ahead!

HR: Well, I know the Patons pretty well. There's still Patons down here at Cooma.

KH: Right.

HR: That know the country.

KH: Yes, I taught one of the Patons at Yanco. I remember just roughly I visited them once. I haven't been there for a long time.

HR: I see them every time I go down there. They're always pleased to see any of us. But anyhow, there was the salt shed. I forget what the other shed was there. And the horse yards, stockyards, were just down a little from this picture that we're looking at.

KH: Yes, still got bits and pieces of them left.

HR: And I can remember as well as anything Hop Perrott. He's down in Tumut. He's called Hop because his initials are H.O.P., Horace Oscar Perrott.

KH: Horace Oscar Perrott.

HR: And he's called Hop. His brother Bill's here. He owns this book that you wrote, and Bill lent it to me only yesterday. Anyhow, I remember Gus Murphy was sent to Adaminaby or he used to go to Adaminaby to get the stores and everything else like that. He'd never let us go because he had a girl there, you see. He'd spend a couple of nights with her and then he'd come back again. I can remember one night on this particular trip I was on, he came home pretty drunk and he fell into the Doubtful River. You know where the crossing is?

KH: Yes.

HR: He fell in there and I think he almost spent the night in there.

KH: I've nearly fallen in there myself!

HR: I fell in there one night when I was looking for horses that were lost. I don't know. Bright moonlight night about 11.00 at night. But when I got out and shook myself like a dog, I found the horses about a quarter of a mile along the road so we were well paid for the night. But anyhow, Gus came up and he let us work there, Hop and I, for a week preparing the yards, and there were two chaps in riding habit leading a packhorse. They rode right past us. Now, to get between those buildings and the yard, that was not much wider than what the length of the room is and we're working in. Course, we dropped the crowbar and the shovel and that, to have a bit of a yarn, but they rode straight on and never said "G'day" or kissed my foot or anything. But we always reckoned that they were some of the first surveyors to go in surveying the Snowy scheme. And they never said "Boo" to us.



KH: But that was in the thirties. That was when you were a boy. Must have been people from the water - what was it - Water and Irrigation Commission.

HR: Well it could have been some those people, but I reckon they'd be surveyors or something like that.

KH: It wouldn't have something to do with the Grey Mare mine?

HR: I don't know.

KH: Because the Grey Mare mine opened again in 1934. 1934 or 35.

HR: I've got that written down and I'll tell you about that later.

KH: OK.

HR: Anyhow, we worked on there a week after Gus fell in the river and all of a sudden he produced a telegram. Hop and I had to report back to Wolseley Park immediately, signed A.J.. Well we'd put a week in there and I'll tell you, we got into trouble when we got home. It was a day's ride you see. A good day's ride. It was 60 odd miles.

KH: What was the way you came out?

HR: Well, with the stock, we went from Wolseley Park to the railway yards at Tumbarumba. And the next day we went from there to the Burra Reserve, which is about four or five miles out. The next day went to the foot of Clarkes Hill. We left the road then and we cut straight through Maragle, which belonged to Nortons at the time. I always used to ride down and tell Nortons we were going through out of courtesy. My father or somebody from Wolseley Park had already been attacked from the day before. What was his name? Deb Jeffreys. He was the Manager there then. I used to like to ride down there cause you always got a scotch. And I got down and then I'd ride back and stay the night. And from there we'd go straight

through Maragle and down past the old homestead, which incidentally is owned by Georgie Martin. Now it's been cut up, and Georgie will give you... you've met George.

KH: No.

HR: I think you have - he told me all about you.

KH: What's his name?

HR: George Martin.

KH: No.

HR: Yeah, he's the publisher of the paper here.

KH: No. I've never met him. He's probably read some of my stuff.

HR: Well, he knows all about you. Never mind, he told me you're a good skier.

KH: Oh, did he? Well I've never met him.

HR: One of the things he told me. Anyhow, from there we go in this one day from Clarkes Reserve. Clarkes Hill Reserve. We'd go on down through Possum Point. It was owned by a Mrs Jones then. You might have heard of the big furniture people the Nesbits. They said it's sort of faded out now I think. Well, she was a Nesbit. One of her relations was a school teacher at Albury Grammar when I went there. When I left Albury Grammar and went to East Sydney Tech to do wool classing, he left the school teaching and went to do wool classing too. I've been to their home before, they weren't sure of us really. I remember getting terribly sunburnt there with him. I've never seen him since. From the Square, that's where this old chap got burnt, and I'll tell you about it after. We'd go into the mountains then and go up what they called the Devils Elbow. Only a short day,



but it was hell. You went up like that [indicating a very steep hill] and then you got onto this corner and then straight up again. But if you lost your stock over the side you put a man there to make sure they'd turn and stop on the spur.

KH: And what's that called?

HR: The Devils Elbow.

KH: Still called that today?

HR: Well, the only way you got to get in there is to ride in. There's no road that goes near it. We went past an old, you couldn't see it from the track that we took the cattle, the Cooninee Wine Shanty. And we went on to Cooninee Reserve. Now, our cattle used to play up on the Cooninee Reserve. They weren't used to wombats and kangaroos and they used to get frightened. And we'd have to watch them all night. But getting back onto this Cooninee Wine Shanty. Happy Fredericks, who I was with on this first trip I went with, him and my brother Percy, unfortunately they're both dead now. Happy only died 12 months or so ago wasn't it?

W2: Two years.

HR: Two years ago. So, he'd have been able to be a big help to you, but they're all gone. They're all gone. There's very few of us left. And I went and saw it was a chock and log building, and the miners out from Dargals and all out about Toolong and Pretty Plain and all out that way. They used to come to the pool there and cash their gold there probably, buy stores and tobacco. But the last time it was in disrepair when I saw it but all the walls were still standing but the roof was mainly gone. The next time I went up there, someone had put a match in it and burnt it. People like burning things. I don't know why. And from there we'd go on to Toolong and the next day we'd go out over Musical Hill and Oglivies, turn at Sam's Rails and across Cool Plain to a salt through there. And we'd turn at the salt trough

and go down along ridge called Stitz Ridge and across the Tumut river there and then we were on Farm Ridge.

KH: Which ridge again? Stitz...

HR: Stitz Ridge.

KH: Stitz Ridge.

HR: Yeah, S.T.I.T.Z.

KH: S.T.I.T.Z.. Gee. That's not the ridge that Sam's diggings is on?

HR: No.

KH: That's further downstream.

HR: Stitz Ridge runs roughly out towards the Boogong Swamps. It's nearly parallel to the river. It runs into a bend in the river. It's clear water. Well, it was clear in those days. The only thing it had on it was heather and grass. There was a big hole right down the bottom and from there Farm Ridge rose straight up. Now Farm Ridge was called Farm Ridge because father grew a crop all the time. I don't know how big it was. It might have been only a couple of acres. He grew it for horse feed. And to the best of my knowledge it was harvested by scythe and tied up with some hay bands which were tied up with a loose neck of ordinary hay. I was involved when they were doing it at Wolseley Park many years ago. But that's how we used to get to Farm Ridge. But if you were going to ride up or go on the bullock dray, you wouldn't go up over the hill though. Little \*\*\*\*\* You'd go straight on up and go up Roaring Mag.

KH: Uh-huh.

HR: Another mistake you've got in there. You have a picture of a bullock wagon and you've got bullock dray written under it.

KH: At Coolamine.

HR: I don't know where it was.

KH: I am aware there was a picture of one at Coolamine.

HR: It's all in pieces and just hanging together. Well now that's definitely a bullock wagon, not a bullock dray.

KH: Right. A bullock dray was just two wheels.

HR: Two wheels...

KH: Right I'm with you.

HR: Well, we used to have 22 bullocks and Murphy was one of our drivers. I forget another driver we had, but I was always told that he never ever swore. Although he never swore when he was at the homestead, what he said when he got away from there I don't know. There was three tonne of stores all told going up and when they got to the bottom of Roaring Mag they'd take 30 hundredweight off and they'd go up with 30 hundredweight. They'd unload that, come back and pick the other 30 hundredweight up and take it up. When it was over 30 hundredweight they'd unloaded, they'd go on their merry way with 3 tonnes.

KH: This is a dray?

HR: On a dray. Yep. Our dray to the best of my knowledge was altered and chars were put in it and we used it at Wolseley Park as a horse dray with three horses in it. It wasn't carrying 3 tonnes in those days. The same thing was done when we got to the bottom of Stitz Ridge to go up onto Farm Ridge, because it was pretty steep up there.

KH: But you never went as far as the foot of Jagungal and then around?

HR: No.

KH: Well, there wouldn't have been any track there.

HR: There was no track there in those days.

KH: Well there was certainly a track made. As far as I understand in 1934.

HR: I'm wrong. There was a track there...

KH: For the mine.

HR: Yeah, because I'll tell you here about a chap that took a silver anniversary Buick through. His daughters are living in Tumbarumba today. He was a great old friend of mine. He had a taxidermist here.

KH: Where did he start from?

HR: He left here and he went from here to Tumut and then up to Kiandra and out to Happy's.

KH: Happy Jacks?

HR: Yeah. And then back over...

KH: What, out to Happy's via Mt Tabletop?

HR: Well that would be the only way you'd get. And then he came back past the Boobies, Farm Ridge and down under O'Keefe's Hut. He crossed the Boogong Swamps and out to the Grey Mare.

KH: And back the same way?

HR: Well that was the only way of getting anywhere!



KH: Well, I don't know how intrepid he was!

HR: Well, I've done it in a Landrover. There were two of us, and the one bloke got bogged and I thought I'd pull him out.

KH: And when did this person do it in the Buick?

HR: Well, I wrote in on a piece of paper. It was in the 30s. His name was Owen Chillcott. He was just called Chilli, he was. He took Pierce and Bell, I think, into the Grey Mare.

KH: Sorry Chillcott?

HR: C.H.I.L.L.C.O.T.T..

KH: Chillcott? Oh good, because I'm working on a book at the moment on long journeys across the mountains on horseback, on foot, on ski and on pushbike. And the odd car trip, especially like this one, seems very relevant.

HR: I was talking to one of his daughters and they don't remember much about it. But I know that he took Kerry Pierce and Bell.

KH: Which Bell? Was it the father? Because Charlie Bell...

HR: The only Charlie Bell I know was the fishing inspector.

KH: He told me... because he left out there that winter when they...

HR: It would be his father I think. I don't think it would be Charlie. Ding Dong we call him.

KH: Who Charlie?

HR: Yeah, we call him Ding Dong. Ding Dong Bell.

KH: He wouldn't mind that.

HR: I've had a few runs with him in my time!

KH: I'll bet you have!

HR: Anyhow, I think I mentioned there a while ago when he bought these sheep from Traallie, Nockalechie and Dunlop across the Darling. They took them to the mountains and they took them in two mobs. They used to have to close the bridges on the river, the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee, for a day to let each mob across.

KH: Sorry, this is going back to your father back at the turn of the century?

HR: It would be about then, yes. Roughly about then.

KH: Bringing stock from out Cobar way?

HR: He brought them from south of Lous. Traallie, Nockalechie and Dunlop. They drove them all the way and they took them to Farm Ridge and the mountains. Because father had most of the mountains at that time. Sometimes there was hardly any other stock up there, he'd flood it. The year that he had 120,000 sheep there, he pleaded with them to take them back again to the Riverina and that. They had no grass and wouldn't take them back. They lost 20,000 in snowstorms in May. May is a time when you got to get your cattle out. They lost 20,000 sheep.

W1: Do you normally have your sheep out in May?

HR: Oh, yes, you'd have them out there. They'd be home and gone by then. Anyhow, when he took the sheep back again, the ones he bought from the other side of the Darling, they ended up selling the last hundred or so of them, or two or three hundred or whatever they were then, to a chap out at Hillston or Hay, I forget which place



it was now. They made exactly 100 pounds between the three blokes. Well, 100 pounds doesn't sound much, but it was a lot of money in those days. Mother married father in 1909, I think it was from memory. It was father's second marriage. And she spent her honeymoon at Farm Ridge.

KH: You mentioned that on the phone.

HR: Father, he panned the gold up there, or some of his men did, to make a wedding ring.

KH: Oh, I see. On the Doubtful?

HR: I don't know exactly. Mother was the first lady, although they didn't call her a lady at the time, to ride down the main street of Old Adaminaby astride. She didn't ride sidesaddle. She had what they call a divided skirt. And they thought she was a hussy.

W: And what was her name?

HR: My mother, she was Nina Bowen.

KH: What was your father? A.J....

HR: He was Archibald Joseph.

KH: Right. So when was he born? Back in the 1870s?

HR: He was born about September in 1860.

KH: 1860. So when he got married again, he was already well into his 40s. 47 or so.

HR: Well I never worked it out, but I know he married mother in 1909. And you know how I know that is? My sister told me yesterday.

W1: And how old would your mum have been?

HR: She was a lot younger than father. How old was mother when she died?

W2: 80.

HR: How long has she been dead?

W2: 19 years. She was 24 when she was married.

KH: Nineteen years ago is 1965. That takes you back to 1885, when she was born, so she was 24 when she got married.

HR: She had a bad turn on Anzac Day. She was getting dressed to come in here for the Anzac march. She lived about 5 or 6 days after that. She was up there on one occasion and she was snowed in early in the year. This is what I told you on the phone where the birds came into her tent when you pitched the tent.

KH: No, you didn't tell me that.

HR: Well, the little birds used to come in. They had a fire in the end of the tent, you see. They'd come in for warmth and once the blood got circulating again, they'd just keel over and die.

KH: Sorry, where was this camp?

HR: That was at Farm Ridge.

KH: That was before the hut was built.

HR: No. The hut was there but mother had her own quarters out about 100 yards or so away from the...

KH: She had her own tent?

HR: Oh yes.

KH: So the men slept in the...

HR: I know a silly fool that went without a tent. I never felt guilty about taking a tent from a man in all my life.

KH: So the men slept in the house or the hut and she had her own quarters.

HR: Some of them had to sleep in tents too. You say in your book that the Toolong hut was burnt by an old dog trapper that was supposed to be inebriated, and he was burnt to death in it. That is not correct. That chap that you are talking about is Sam Thomas. He was the dog trapper here then, and he got burnt to death in a hut belonging to either Bridle or... I can't think of his name now - I'll think of it after. He only had a square the other side of Tumut. How I know that so well is that we were in the mountains once with my brother Doug, Phil Heinecke the publican, Sergeant Southwell - he was the licensing Sergeant here, and Tommy Webber - a well known family in the district here that did a lot in the mountains. We were going out to what the SMA called River Camp. We christened it Birthday back long before they went there because Allen Burnett, who was a First World War digger wounded in France up in the Votie at the moment, it was his birthday the day we arrived there. And hence we called it Birthday Camp. But anyhow, getting back to riding out. We came to a set of rails and they were let down by Phil Heinecke and the Sergeant rode through and led his pack horse, I rode through and led my pack horse, my brother and Tom Webber, we all rode through. Southwell, he was a mounted Sergeant in the police force, and he then got off when he had got far enough to let everybody over the rails. In perfect military precision - one foot was still in the stirrup when he put his other foot on the ground - he stepped fair into the jaws of a dog trap. It hooked onto him by the heel. Fortunately it had been on the ground for a long time and it

had sticks and that broke the grip on his foot. But he said, "Sam Thomas, you old \*\*\*\*\*", I'll get you for this". He did too. Not long after we came back from this trip, we were away for a week, he was called down to where Sam Thomas had his head burnt off in the fire. <sup>with him?</sup> Willy was a great friend of ours, Texas Webber, a great mountain man, but he was unable to get him out of the fire because the old man was dead. That story about the Toolong Hut burning Sam Thomas is definitely wrong.

KH: But he died in that way. Probably because he'd been drinking too much.

HR: They had been, yes.

KH: And he fell forward into the fire.

HR: Yeah.

KH: And perhaps got knocked unconscious.

HR: He did, yes. I can tell you more about it, but they're all dead and gone now, so better to let sleeping dogs lie.

KH: Anyway, that story has been passed on through various sources and people and then to me.

HR: Well, I got it straight from the Sergeant of Police.

KH: Oh right. That's a pretty good source!

HR: He was a great friend of mine. As a matter of fact, I saw him just before he died up at Taree. He's also passed on now too.

KH: Was there anything unusual about the end of Toolong Hut? I mean, did it burn down or was it just...



HR: To my knowledge, and we can go back to this party at the Dam, it was told to me that some of the authorities up there burnt it down. I'm not going to mention any names or anything like that.

KH: No Yogi Bears for instance? That's alright, we've got it in for them too.

HR: I'm not in a position to, because I'm looking for a job with them again. So you're...

KH: I've been with the Huts Association for a long period of time. We've been fighting to preserve the huts, so we've had many sessions with them.

HR: I'm looking to get back on Youngal again, because I love the mountains.

KH: What, up on the Peters station?

HR: No. On the tower watch there looking for fires.

KH: Oh, is there a fire tower up there is there?

HR: They built a new one this last year but I didn't get to it.

#### BREAK IN TAPE RECORDING

KH: Sorry, Bradley's Hut.

HR: Bradley's Hut. It was more or less built by a Brien. Not that I'm knocking old Yak<sup>Jack</sup> Bradley or Rex or Plummer because they were great friends of mine. Plummer's dead now of course and old Yak's dead. It should be... it's just this side of the Round Mountain. It's on the road going down to...

KH: That's right. It's sort of a rest area now.

HR: Georgie Martin knows more about walking through the mountains than anybody else. There's another chap out here by the name of Brownie that's done a lot of walking out there too, but George has made a study of it. To be honest with you, I think you could lose me up there now. I was there before he even thought about coming to this area.

KH: I'm well aware that the names of huts have changed and the names of bases have changed. Wherever possible when I'm recording I try to put in all the names that places are called. I try to put them all in.

HR: You mention the Broken Dam here. I went through it and I couldn't work that Broken Dam out at all. SMA when they went in there, there was a Broken Dam at the Eight Mile, when you go in round Kings Cross way to Cabramurra. That's where they get the water for Cabramurra now. Well, that's the Eight Mile Dam, but they call it the Broken Dam.

KH: Oh no, the Broken Dam that I'm talking about is very close to Tabletop. It's much smaller than that Eight Mile Dam.

HR: Anyway, there was a hut there at the Eight Mile on the corner of the road. There was a right angled corner of the road and the hut was in there. We came in there on this trip. I told you where the Sergeant got caught with the dog trap - that's probably not on there - but we came back there. We pulled in - he was the licensing Sergeant - and he had to go to the canteen at Tumut Pond and it was only under construction. I've got tonnes of photos of that in construction.

KH: Have you?

HR: All slides. As a matter of fact, I've got them of Eucumbene and nearly all the Dams. Anyhow, we camped in this hut this night and after leaving the Round Mountain, we arrived there on the Sergeant's birthday. My wife Margaret, who's on the phone right



now, we told her about it and she cooked us a cake and I took a bottle of scotch. We always carried rum, no beer. We carried rum because rum was the best drink you could have in the mountains. Our rum we got by the publican Phil Heinecke and it went up to 37% overproof which was getting pretty strong. Once we had a pack horse fall over in Back Creek and somebody yelled "Get her up, get her up, she's got the bread on her". My brother dived in and said "Never mind the bread, she's got the rum on". Anyhow, we camped on the Eight Mile and we had to nail the whole tin on the front of the fire to get it to draw - it smoked it out and everything. After this cake and whisky episode, we cut the cake into about 6 or 8 pieces and apart from our party there was Tex Webber and there was old George Finch who lived in Round Mountain hut and we threw in the bottle of rum and threw the paper away after one drink and that's enough to take one drink out of the bottle.

KH: After you passed it around?

HR: It was pretty powerful booze. When we camped in this hut we rode on and Tex... they had a beast hanging up there, and they fed us some beautiful steaks and that.

KH: This is at the Eight Mile?

HR: No, this is at the Round Mountain. With George Finch and Tex. Tex had some stores brought up and there was a leg of mutton there and it was cooked. He said "You blokes take that on with you, we've got plenty of meat here". We took it on and we had it in the Eight Mile. After we'd sat down and nailed this tin over, we couldn't find Tom Webber and we'd nailed him in the horseshoe, in with the fire. We had to pull it down again to pull him out. We sat down to have tea and all we had was a hurricane lantern then. We were all sitting down and having our tea and one bloke got up, let out a couple of grunts and out the door with his plate he went. He was closely followed by another and then another. Phil Heinecke and myself, the publican he was there, and said "What's wrong with them

blokes?" and I said "I dunno". They came back and I said to Phil "are you gonna have a bit more meat" and these blokes was just coming back in again... the meat was fly blown and we never saw any flies.

KH: And you were alright.

HR: Yeah, we were right. We ate on. We didn't worry about it. We got a good feed. We were on a fishing trip actually, and we used pack everything in and we'd go in for 8 to 10 days. But that's history now.

KH: You mentioned the telephone line. Your father built the telephone line in to Farm Ridge.

HR: Yes. It came from Russell's house. Red Russell - that was the only name I knew him by. He had a big red beard. My aunt, my mother's sister, she was the postmistress at Wolseley Park and they got to know each other pretty well by yacking on the phone, at the Government's expense I suppose, of a night time. The family became very, very great friends of the Russells. One of them later on bought sheep through O'Hares back down here to Cooma about 20-25 mile down the road here. He's left down there now and he's dead too.

KH: But didn't the telephone line come up from Adaminaby way isn't it? It came up over Crooke's Racecourse or something like that, through Happy Jacks.

HR: Oh yeah, it came through there. The first number on the line after Farm Ridge was Red Russell's house. And they had a little country exchange in there. I took mother and my wife to my old aunt there before mother died. After the dam was built. And we called there and saw some of the younger members there. They were older than me. There was sort of a reunion between mother, my aunt and family there. But the homestead, the one they lived in, didn't go under water. That's where the line went to.

KH: Did you come up the Gungarlin Valley?

HR: No, Gungarlin was the way at the time to Dicky Coopers. Right outside the Grey Mare. Adaminaby was in that angle from Farm Ridge and Gungarlin was that way.

KH: The top of Gungarlin is just the other side of Crooke's Racecourse.

HR: I don't know of Crooke's Racecourse.

KH: Oh, you don't. Oh, right.

HR: If we go to this map here on the front of yours, you drop into Guthega Dam after you leave Gungarlin.

KH: Oh, way down the bottom?

HR: Yeah, that's where the mountain is.

KH: Gungarten? No, this is the Gungarlin River. Sorry, not Mount Gungarten. The Gungarlin River is down in there. Down below Ces jacks, Kelly's Hut. That's where the telephone line would come up, wouldn't it?

HR: Yeah. You haven't got Farm Ridge on this.

KH: Near O'Keefe's.

HR: Yeah, well you see the line went out that way.

KH: Towards Kiandra?

HR: Yep, in front of the BoobeeHut. About 300 yards in front of Boobee

KH: Where did it go in front of BoobeeHut?

HR: It went straight on to Adaminaby. Well, it didn't go to Adaminaby... it went about... the Adaminaby Road... it came back into Adaminaby then. In one of the pictures I've got, I don't know whether it's the one you've got in here or not, but there's a post. You can see one post there, a stake. If it's not in here you can...

KH: I have seen posts. I've seen them myself or the remains of them.

HR: In my day, there was an odd post there.

KH: I don't think I've got a photo of them.

HR: As a matter of fact I've got an idea that we were sent to get a bit of telephone wire up there at one day. There's still a bit of wire lying around.

KH: No. I don't have a photo of the posts, but I've seen the remains of them.

HR: I've got one like that, only extended, and there's a post out here. And it's got a little stayer at the end of the post. And that's there. I've seen that myself.

KH: Was that line ever extended to the Grey Mare Mine?

HR: No. Not the mine. No. It was father's private line. I think he spent half his life on the telephone. Happy Fredericks took me and my brother Percy - he was a lot older than me. We went in when I was very young. The hut at Toolong, just outside there was a little bench and a wash basin there and we used to have a wash in it. Sanitation and hygiene were the two things they knew nothing about in those days up there. Anyhow, out there my brother Percy had some old wine bottles or something with the bottom knocked out of them, and he used to blow them like a bugle. Now, he'd get the dingos howling on the ridges near us. The first time I was there, he said "Come out here young fellow and I'll show you something" and he



took me out. It was a moonlight night and he blew it. Next thing I hear these dingos over there and the hackles on the back of my neck come up like that! Frightened the life out of me, because I was only a kid.

W1: They sound really spooky don't they.

HR: He used to get them to howl. There's no pure dingos up there. Never kid yourself - they're all mongrel bred. I can show you out the window here. You just stand up and I'll show you. You see that hill over there? Well, there's a bloke that lives out just beyond that. O'Brien. And he gets dingos on his country there. Mongrel bred things. Just out along the road here towards the Burra, Tim got two here a fortnight ago. They got dingo traces in them, but they're not dingos. They've been like that for years. Anyhow, getting back to Happy Fredericks. He didn't have much to do here at one stage and with a cross-cut saw, he felled some big trees - there is some big trees there at the back of Toolong - and he split them up with hammer and wedges and he put a floor in their hut. He had big slabs. You couldn't hold a dance on it, but it was good. He did all the board action on it with an adze.

KH: This is in the Toolong Hut.

HR: This is Toolong. It was an earth floor when I first went there, but in latter years it was just big, heavy floor there.

KH: Remember that chimney we stopped at? When we took the girls in? That's Toolong Hut. As far as I know.

HR: Well, that's not very far from the dam. You say there it's a kilometre or whatever you like to call them. I'm English, not French - I can't understand that language. Not very far from Paton's hut.

KH: No, it's not. It's only a few kilometres away from Paton's.

HR: It wouldn't be any more than one. But, that's how that floor got put in there. You know where Hannel's Spur is? There's a fellow down here that I can introduce you to, one of the older Bryces - there's two alive. One of them lives under Black Jack, his brother lives down the road down here a bit. About 300 yards from here. Leo, his uncle, he had a camp. He used to take the cattle up Hannel's Spur.

KH: Leo Byatt.

HR: Leo Byatt. He had a camp there. Only black bit on the ridge. <sup>flat?</sup>

KH: Byatt's Camp.

HR: That's Leo Byatt.

KH: Who's Hannel?

HR: I don't know. It's been known as Hannel's Spur as long as I've known it.

KH: What was his christian name? Do you know anything about it?

HR: I don't know nothing.

KH: There's a lot of interest in it at the moment...

HR: The only thing I know about Hannel's Spur is I've never been up it. There's a part of it there that they reckon the cattle have to walk single file, and if you slip over the side you're a gonna. Here the other day, it was in the paper...

KH: Kerry Pierce was with him, wasn't he?

HR: Oh, Kerry Pierce would probably be with him, yes.

KH: And this Hannel guy. Is that your knowledge?



HR: No. I don't know anything about it. No good saying I do cause I don't know anything about it. The only thing I know about it is Dick Smith, you know the guy that flew it, he was going to walk it.

KH: They did.

HR: They did it, did they? It would be all new to the country, was it?

KH: Oh yes, it was all in the Cooma papers.

HR: Oh yeah, but that's not here. We don't buy the Cooma papers.

KH: We'll have to get a copy to you.

HR: We should have been in the Tumbarumba paper. It's closer to Tumbarumba than Cooma.

KH: I suppose it is.

HR: My word it is.

KH: It was in that new one. The Snowy Mountain News one.

HR: Anyhow, I can't help you with Hannel's hut, but I knew Leo well. He was a rough old diamond he was.

KH: Yeah, Byatt. There's still a place called that place where you say. Its the only flat bit of ground called Byatt's Camp.

HR: Well when I was on Youngal, I used to look straight across onto it. You been to the top of Youngal?

KH: We tried to walk up there yesterday but we only got as far as the top of the zigzags. We got to near the top of the last one. It was getting

very late in the afternoon, and raining very heavily, so we came back down again.

HR: I've broken an axle on my Landrover out there. I did my reduction box on the third bend. There I sat with a bottle of whisky and a chook. I had all my gear there. I was going to the camp at the hut up the top, or a caravan as it was then. And the girl was given strict orders that if I didn't call back on the two-way radio to Sawpit Creek, that's the only one that was open or I could have got into touch with Tumut and they would have helped me, and tell them I wasn't there. They had till twelve o'clock. This happened about 11.15 so I had plenty of time to get there, but I would never have walked the last 3 or 4 miles in the time I had so I stopped there. While I was there I changed my boots and put a pair of soft shoes on, and put that pair over the ones I'd got on. I drank half the bottle of whisky and put the other half in my hip pocket. I ate half the chook and waited and waited for 4 hours and thought "They're not going to come and get me". So I walked down to the bottom of the hill and I got a lift with some tourists from New Zealand. When the girl went to work on the Monday morning, they asked her why she didn't send help for me. You <sup>know</sup> Barry at Khancoban? Barry Eliby. He's the Ranger. He and the policeman came back, took me back and took my gear up to the top the next day. There wasn't anybody else that would come and get it. And they bought it back and cost me \$150 or \$250 to get it repaired. To top it all off, it came down in a bog the next day and I'd never seen the bog, just like going on an aircraft. I couldn't see a thing and they had to pull me up. I didn't make enough money on that trip to pay for my repairs let alone anything else.

KH: And you get a really nice view of the Main Range from the top? Is it cleared? Has the timber been cut down?

HR: Yeah, of course it has. You can see Khancoban and that and the Main Range. You can see right out to Guthega. You can see the Big Boogong and Round Mountain. You can see Ink Bottle, the

Dargals, Tumbarumba, Clarkes Hill way down nearly to Albury. Its a fantastic view.

KH: I thought it would be 'cause its very high.

HR: Its only eight mile from Kosciusko as the crow flies. You drop straight down into the Geehi and straight back up again.

KH: Do you get much snow up there in the winter?

HR: Oh yeah, it's covered with snow.

KH: So we might have to ski the last bit up there if we went up in winter?

HR: You've got to get permission to go there.

KH: You can walk up it, can't you, or do they stop you doing that too?

HR: No, but you're supposed to tell them you're going though.

KH: Are you?

HR: Oh yes. You mustn't go up there if you don't tell anyone. Its almost as bad as what Hitler had Germany like. They've got a gate across the bottom.

KH: I know. That's to stop vehicles though isn't it?

HR: Did you see where the bikies go round it? I've never walked up it. I went there once when the Commodores first came out. I took a party up there and there were five new Commodores. No other cars. Three bank managers. A tree fell over the road and stopped the rest of us and I thought "This is it". Who's got an axe? I wasn't in my own car. Nobody had an axe. Nobody had anything. So one of the bank managers backed to one of those hairpin bends and turned there and went off down to the foot of the hill. I gave him the keys

and he went back to a recreation place there where the aerodrome is. He borrowed an old axe off them.

# END OF SIDE ONE

1/2/2

HR: But anyhow, that's Youngal for you.

KH: Oh well, I must go up there again then.

W1: And you pronounce it Youngal.

HR: Yep. Byatt's Camp. I've told you about that. Gus and Ernie Murphy. Gus was our bullock driver. Ted Boon was the other driver. He was the fellow that never used to swear.

KH: That was quite outstanding for those times was it?

HR: My word it was, yeah. Two others that used to go up there a lot was Bill and Hop Perrott together with Jack Perrott but they're not here anymore. But Bill and Hop are both in the district. Jack Clancy. He went with me on a couple of trips. We were shepherding sheep out from the Booby Horns, Spencer's Peaks, there for one year I remember we were there. It rained the whole time we were there I think. Bill Richards was another old fellow. The interesting thing about Bill, or two or three interesting things about him, he used to smoke a pipe. One day I was with him he lost it somewhere on the Yellow Boy I think. You might notice that they call it Yellow Boy and Yellow Bog. Well, both names are correct actually. It was first called Yellow Boy on account of a Chinaman being there, which you mention in this book. I haven't done real bad to read as much of that in such a short time. But then there was somebody that got bogged in yellow mud there, and that's how they called it the Yellow Bog. They're about Roaring Mag. Up past Roaring Mag. You run into some real soft yellow country.



KH: Was that true about the Chinaman dying and being brought out?

HR: I don't know about that bit, but they said they were going to get him.

KH: Do you know any more about that Chinaman?

HR: No. I just know there was a Chinaman there. Going for gold. Another thing about it is that not long ago, I'm going to blame the Yogi bears again for this, but there was an old fellow up there and he was a pensioner. He camped up there. I don't know what his name was. He used to come down to Tumut to get his pension. At least this is what I know. Anyhow, he didn't come down for a while and they were worried about him. They were looking for him. There was nothing wrong with the old crook. He said oh no, this fellow comes down every few weeks, he said, he bought me some seeds to go on my garden. Then he came back and bought the plants that I grew.

W: When was that? How long ago was that?

HR: Only a few years back, not very long ago. One of the Rangers was opposed to him. Anyhow, old Bill Richards, he liked his pipe so he got an old potato and carved it like the bowl of a pipe. He got a bit of string and he wrapped around it. The ti-tree that grows up there in the swamps, it's hollow when it gets dry and that's what he used to stick in the side and smoke. It'd only last about four or five days but he'd use that as a pipe. He cursed and swore that many time - that was the latter years when I was up there with him - I ended up giving him my pipe and cigarettes. I couldn't stand it anymore. There's nothing worse than being in a camp with a bloke who is a heavy smoker and he's got nothing to smoke. His brother used to come up here to the Rosewood saleyards, young husbands used to have saleyards down there, and he decided that it was time for old Bill to go to an old mens home in Sydney. So he went up there. He took him up to the Wagga platform to put him on the train to Sydney. He said "You sit there Bill" and Bill sat on the railway form there. "I'll go and

get you a couple of pies to eat on the train for your tea". When he came back he was dead. He had a heart attack while he was away.

KH: What about this fellow you mentioned you went away with in regard to the Round Mountain hut? Was it French? Finch. I've heard about him before.

HR: Yeah, he was a great old bloke.

KH: George Finch. What's he infamous for? I've heard something about him.

HR: He's one of the old hands in the mountains. He's was there for many years. The thing I remember about him, one of the best things I remember him for, was on this particular trip was - I told you we had the Sergeant with us? Well, once we finished the bottle of whisky we came over to the rum then. We'd fixed our horses and unloaded the packs then. He said "We'd better have a cup of tea" and he had a going billy there. So they put the billy on the fire and when it boiled, George got up and got half a pound of tea and he tipped it in the billy. He was going to pour the boiling water into it. He went away to get the billy and his brother said "Did you know he put half a pound of tea in that?". George had a look in it and said "There's not much tea in that". We had to tell him then that that was half a pound of tea he'd put in.

KH: You complain about my tea being too strong!

HR: I think he worked for Tumut station. I can soon check on that. I think he worked for O'Keefes. Incidentally you mention Rod O'Keefes in the book. Rod's dead.

KH: That's the old man? That's one of the sons.

HR: No, the old man's dead many years. Rod and I, we used to hit the spots at Wolseley Park at night time with a publican from Albury



who's down in Tumbarumba. And we'd drive back there at night blind as bats.

KH: Back to where?

HR: Back down to Tumut. He lived down here at Tumut. There was Austin and Rod. Rod left and he went to Gippsland and he ended up dying of cancer. Austin's still alive but he's crippled. I think I saw him here at the last Tumbarumba Show. Not so long ago that I saw him.

KH: The father was A.S. O'Keefe wasn't he?

HR: The other bloke was Austin too. They're both Austins. One of them is still alive. They've sold Tumut station now. Now, McPhie used to muster his cattle after the snow by going and opening all the gates, cocky gates - wire gates. He'd open them and tie them all back so that the cattle would go straight back and back onto the Monaro. They he'd come back and pick the stragglers up on snow shoes.

KH: Did he? Which McPhie?

HR: I don't know the difference between them. You've only got to look up the old mountain maps and they've got their names on them.

KH: That's true. He must have been one of the few to get out on snow shoes.

HR: No, he was skiing.

KH: Oh, you're using the old description for skiing. Not actual snow shoes as we know them today.

HR: Well, I don't know exactly what he used, but I think he used skis. He probably had both, depending on the snow. Did you ever see the ones in the dining room of the old Kiandra pub? Up on the wall?

When you go through there next time, get them to take you in. You'll see where the cells were and the exercise yards and the great steel doors there. They had snow shoes up in the war didn't they. The real old ones. I don't know what happened to them after that because they had no right to shut that down. What they've done to the mountains now is their business. That's what McPhie used to do. One thing about McPhie. Cecil Willis. He had the Maragle sheep up there the last year that I remember we got badly snowed in there. We had our cattle mustered and we had two feet of snow the night before we were going to move out back home. We couldn't move. The next day, Cecil came across from the Boogong Swamps and he had 4000 Maragle ewes there in the break right on the point of landing. He should have been out but he wasn't. He was in there too long and got caught. Gus Murphy and Hop Perrot went across and cut scrub for him to feed these sheep and they picked up a mob of about 600 head of McPhie's cattle and drove them out towards Toolong. Out towards Sam's Rails and broke the snow down. Then brought them back through the same track again further down so they could let the sheep out the next day. And that's how they got them out. The year that father was badly snowed in there they felled a great lot of bushy trees, big trees and hooked the bullocks onto it. They pulled them out and used them as... like a delver you use in the back country for drains. For boring drains. But there you used a log of steel. That's how they got them back.

KH: What was the main base for the McPhies? The Grey Mare area used to be known as McPhie's country I think.

HR: I don't know which was their area. The cattle were on everybody's block! In my day anyway.

KH: So, you think they did quite well out of mustering too?

HR: Well, they did alright I think. But there was one thing about them. They were honest. If they picked up any of your cattle, they'd bring them back to the mountains the next year. We all did that.

KH: I see. So you all had a chance of getting your own back again.

HR: I remember an old fellow by the name of Mould there. I think I might have spelt his name wrong.

KH: H. Mould? From the other side? Spencer's Peak he had.

HR: Yeah. He had merino sheep there. Anyhow, we were drafting sheep up there to go back to Wolseley Park and Gus Murphy built yards out of snow gums. Felled them and made a brack yard. We were drafting them and Gus Murphy said "What are you doing there, sonny?". He had a great big mustache on him. I said "I'm building a little yard for myself". He said "What are you going to do with it?" Mould had there sheep and they were all over Farm Ridge. We picked up a lot of them and they had beautiful lamb on them. Even the sap was dripping out of them. I told Mould down here in Suez City here years afterwards. I said "I put about three or four of your lambs in our pen". "What did you do with them?" he said. I said "We ate 'em. We were sick of eating salted mutton." Oh geez, they were beautiful. And Murphy said "Your old man'd skin you alive if he caught you sheep stealing." I don't think he'd ever do that again.

KH: They had a bit of a hut over near Spencer's Peak, the Moulds.

HR: I'll tell you what he used to do. We never ever saw him. Murphy used to reckon he'd wait until we used to go round our stock in the daytime, and when we'd come home again of a night-time there'd always be a note on the table with a carving knife found in it if he'd want to leave us a message. He'd sit up in the scrub and watch us as we left and then come down and leave us a note. Whether that's true or not I don't know.

W: What's the significance of the note for him?

HR: Well, he might have wanted to tell us something. Whether he saw our cattle or something. He was a very shy man. The bloke I met down in Suez City, he wasn't too shy. The oven. I don't know where they got the bricks from.

KH: That's right. They were baked bricks. The bricks were on top of stone.

HR: There was all stone underneath.

KH: Basalt I think.

HR: They were taken out of the river I think.

KH: Well they were very square. The ones that are still there today, are very square. It looks like Basalt. Basalt, you'd get it as very square chunks and bases.

HR: Well, if you ride out along towards Farm Ridge, along the actual ridge itself, the waters around the mountain, there's great patches there - they'd certainly be bigger than this room, as big as the two rooms - and they spewed up out of the ground and shoot over the side. Now, they were as square as that table. And some of them would be as long as from here to the television set. They'd make a billiard table. No way known you could lift them. They weren't molten or anything. They just spewed up as though man had gone there with a saw and cut them all into slabs higgledy piggledy. There was thousands of tonnes of them there.

KH: I've seen those. I think they call them block streams or something. The scientists have been investigating them.

HR: If you ride on the top of the ridge, there's three or four of them there. Then you see others where that plain sort of stuff has spewed out of the side and its run away down the side of the hill. But these have just come up out of there like that thing you saw going into Rotorua.



You know, with the steam coming out. There was no steam coming out of these. The big camp oven was taken. Somebody took it.

KH: It was lined with iron in other words was it? A metal lining?

HR: No. The oven was all brick.

KH: The oven was brick? What do you mean by the camp oven?

HR: It was a big one...

KH: To hang over the fire.

HR: Yep. To hang over the fire. That was a camp oven. The other's an ordinary baker's oven. One a baker would use. You could bake loaves of bread or bake a cake or anything, make a meal in there. You put a great big fire in it and have it burning for so many hours and then you'd scrape all the rubbish out. The bricks were red hot and they'd do the cooking for you. We had one at Wolseley Park. That's how all the bread was baked in those days. The hut was one large room and then there were two rooms in that leanto place on the Western side. One was used as a bedroom and the other was used as a storeroom. There were two sheds there. One was a salt shed. I forget what we used the other one for. A set of yards and a horse paddock.

KH: One was presumably for a wagon, a sulkie or something.

HR: It was too big for that. There's a picture of it in there somewhere. Then, of course, we used tents a lot. Now, getting onto the Big Boogong...

KH: What sort of tents sorry?

HR: Ordinary calico tents. With a fly over the top of them. White ones. Didn't you see a picture of one of them in here somewhere?

KH: Yes, but they weren't from the railways or something?

HR: No.

KH: You could buy them?

HR: Yeah, you could go buy a tent same as you can now. They were mostly 10" by 8" in size. Then they had a fly over them. It was separate. There was about that much air space between the tent and the fly. The fly was just a square piece of heavy calico with eyes along the side and you'd just hung it up the top and when the water fell on the top, most of it would run down and what got through wasn't enough to get through your tent. If you were in a tent and it was raining, and you touched the top, the water would come right through where you put your finger.

KH: Did you pack that in your saddle when you went on the horses?

HR: Yeah, it went on the horses.

KH: Across the horses back or in a saddle bag.

HR: Back on the saddle. They were never put in a pack bag. Pack bags are only to put your personal belongings and your food in. If you didn't have enough pack bags you hung ordinary wheat bags. You'd put the whole of the wheat bag in your harness in this sort of fashion. You'd take it and put your hand in the wheat and pull that down and do the same on the other side and you'd pull that down. Then you'd have a thing like that you see. Then you'd take it off. Everything had to be even on either side, but we didn't have scales. We'd pick it up and say that weighs the same as that one and that bit goes in that one. Then you'd hook that over the hoofs, pull it down and there it was. Tremendous.

- KH: I've seen Tom Stacey from Talbingo Trails over by Tumut way. You know, they take the rides through the mountains now? I did a ride with them and they'd hang a branch, a big stick from a tree, sort of in the centre. Then he'd put a saddle bag on each end and balance them that way. Did you ever do anything like that or did you just do it by guess?
- HR: We would pick it up and guess. I've seen a bloke take a set of scales and weigh them, but we never did. I'm going to tell you an interesting thing about the Big Boogongs. My brother Percy, who I went up with the first time I ever went up there, he told me this and I sort of took it with a grain of salt. On a very clear day, you can look out there and you can see the haze over the sea.
- KH: From the mountains?
- HR: From the top of the mountain. The top of the Big Boogong. You could turn around and you could face this way and you could see the rock halfway between Wagga and Albury.
- KH: I could imagine you could see the rock.
- HR: You can see it from Youngal and you can see it from Black Jack. Why can't you see it from the Boogong? It's higher still.
- KH: You can't see the rock?
- HR: Yes, you can. You can see it from both Youngal... As a matter of fact, when I was on both stations, I worked it all out and with this sort of stuff I put the degrees - say for arguments sake I did Tumbarumba. It might have been from memory, 9 degrees and 23 kilometres. And Tumbarumba Hill was 3500 feet or just over that. We did it all from that sort of stuff. And I put it all round the walls in all the conspicuous places and the moment you picked up a smoke, you'd say, now how far's that? It was so far and so far. And you'd say, well that's about as far as what so and so is. You'd get a pretty good idea of

- the distance. I was complimented on picking that up. Somebody went and put under every one a nude woman. A picture of a nude woman and I got the blame for that! Which I didn't do. That's a fact. You can see the sea, well the haze over it, and you can see the rock. Do you know the story about the Boobee? How Cheney got it? I thought it was over a pack of cards, but anyhow I'm not going to argue with that. Ernie Boardman, he was here when we used to have our Tumbarumba rodeo. Great old bloke was Ernie.
- KH: I interviewed his wife.
- HR: Of course, Ernie's gone now.
- KH: Ernie's gone.
- HR: There's a fellow by the name of Jervis who lives up the Tumbarumba Creek here. We call him Jerky Jervis, I don't know why, but that's what his name is. He was written up in the Tumbarumba paper. He worked on the Grey Mare Mine. That's history for you.
- KH: Could well be. I interviewed someone else in Tumbarumba on the Grey Mare Mine. I just can't recall his name now. It's in there.
- HR: Well, Jervis was one bloke. They were both in a full page of the Tumbarumba paper here four months ago.
- KH: Have you still got that page?
- HR: I could get it for you. He told me a lot about you. Georgie.
- KH: That's probably the bush telegraph for you.
- HR: Well, Jerky was at the Grey Mare. Then there was the Bradleys. I can introduce you to some of the young Bradleys. Georgie Martin. Bill Byatt lives under... you can drive to his place in a motor car.



KH: He's a brother of Leo.

HR: No. Leo would be his uncle. Bill or Jack... I was talking to one of the boys down here today. One of the Byatt boys. He lives under Black Jack. He works over at Talbingo. I think his wife works over there too. They come back at weekends. Brian just lives over the hill here. Bridle, you mention him in the book I think.

KH: Jack Bridle?

HR: You know Chisholm and you know old Tommy Sadler. I knew Tommy pretty well here years ago. That Broken Dam. That's the Eight Mile. Who's this fellow Gilder you keep mentioning?

KH: He was a skier. He's a skier from Sydney.

HR: I saw a couple of things that he put in there that I disagree with.

KH: He wrote an article about the huts back in 1935. That's one of the few references to the huts at that time, because no-one else wrote much about the huts.

HR: As I told you before. I was going to get Clunes or, who was the other great writer?

KH: Edress?

HR: To come but never ever got round to doing it. Should have been done. I told you about the bullock dray. It's a dray not a wagon.

KH: Frank Clune went into Pretty Plain.

HR: Did he?

KH: Yeah. He got that far.

HR: I never knew that Paddy Pullin had been up there.

KH: Paddy...?

HR: Pullin. He's the tent bloke in...

KH: Pallin. Paddy Pallin. I'm going to use some of his material in my next book.

HR: Well, I got a tent off him.

KH: Oh, yes. I've got his tents, his packs and everything else.

HR: I told you about the 22 bullocks and the 3 tonnes, when we used to unload half a tonne? Roaring Mag was the first one. Then again coming out of the gulf near Tumut River. The Tumut River from Round Mountain up to the Farm Ridge crossing at the bottom of Stitz Ridge. They called that the Gulf.

KH: Do they? I never knew that.

HR: And down below the crossing at the other end of Farm Ridge that goes up to Round Mountain, that's Douglas' Spur down there. I don't know who it was named after but I've got a brother Douglas. Maybe it was named after him. Irvie Owens, she was on the telephone line at Wolseley Park. She was an aunt of mine. They used to ring up Red Russell's in the old Adaminaby line into Cooma. Now the Yans, they had Lobb's Hole. I don't know which Yan it was but he rode up to the Kiandra Hotel one day, many years ago. I forget the name of the barmaid there. Tied his horse up outside and he went in and he said "G'day Miss" and she said "G'day Mr Yan. How is the Hole this morning?" "Pretty bloody sore" he said "I rode all the way up bareback!" (Aside to wife) You were supposed to be asleep! Now, McGufficke. I never had much to do with the McGuffickes. We did on one occasion. We were coming back, my wife and I, from the coast. We crossed over the ridge there in the car on the

highway just before the road goes off to Tantangara down to Taylor. We'd just got over the top of the hill and there's this car lying with its wheels in the air. It wasn't right over. It was over half way. It fell on the driver's side door. The wheels were pointing straight at the highway. You don't get much reflection off that with your car on a dark, grisly night. And I come to a screaming halt. I got out and went back to the car. I dodged round it - it was lying on the road - and there was a bloke in it. I got up the top and... have you ever tried to open a car door when it's on its side?

KH: It's very heavy I suppose.

HR: It weighs a tonne! I got him out and he got in the back and he started to strike matches and I said "Here, chuck that out." It couldn't hurt. Drunk as a monkey. I said "don't you dare strike a match. I've got a bit of plum cake in here." He wanted a feed. So I got a torch and I found the plum cake and he wanted to have a smoke. He was out of the wind you see. But I wouldn't let him in there because the petrol tank could have been ruptured couldn't it? Anyway, we couldn't roll it back on its feet. No way known. So I said "You stop here. Its not far from here to Kiandra. Make sure that if you see any lights coming up there that you stop any car running into you." He wouldn't leave. So I raced off to Kiandra and I went in and I said "Look. There's a car rolled over on the road" and told them where it was. There was a mob of blokes there and they said "Who was it". I said "I dunno" and I described him. They said "Bugger him. That's McGuffick. He deserves to be dead." They wouldn't help him. So I said "Well somebody else is going to get into a smash." There were a couple of blokes that came over to me and said "Where is it?" So I told them. I forget whether they were DMR or something and they went to get him. I had a drink. They hadn't been gone long and he walked into the bar. He'd got a lift. He'd left his car there. These poor blokes were looking for him. They mightn't like wandering the bush, I don't know.

KH: Which McGuffick is that?

HR: I don't know. He didn't have a licence. He had his licence taken off him.

KH: It wasn't old Norm McGuffick was it?

HR: A thin fellow. From memory he had sandy-coloured hair. He liked his licence and lord knows whatnot. Been up on several charges. Didn't make him any different to his children though. He's the only McGuffick I ever had anything to do with. Strange as it might seem, I still use the sleeping bag that my father had made for me the first time I went in there. It was made at Anthony Horderns. It's heavy canvas - I've had another blanket sown into it. It's got buttons up the side. It used to be waterproof but it isn't any more. It's been dry cleaned three or four times. Lots of weight.

KH: A blanket for the inside?

HR: Yep. It's heavy canvas on the outside. It's got a slit down the side there like that about half way. It's buttoned up there like that with press studs. The top open like that you see, and you put your pillow in there. Or put your head in there. 'Cos you're out in the bush you see. It's practically as good as the day I got it. I've had it for many, many years. When I go out anywhere or I go away rowing for a few days, I take it with me still.

KH: So you've had that, what, 50 years or more?

HR: Yes. I've had it easy 50 years.

KH: It wasn't a Paddy Pallin one.

HR: No. It was made by Anthony Horderns. I had two of them made.

KH: You had them made. They didn't sell them at the time?



HR: They were made to his instructions. Anthony Horner. He had one. I don't know what happened to his, but I know I've still got mine. You mention Dr Schlink. He had it written up in charcoal, and my sister will verify this - Hop Perrot will verify it too - way up on the wall "DO NOT ABUSE THE HUT THAT GIVES YOU SHELTER". Signed Dr Schlink. At Farm Ridge.

KH: He would have written that in 1927 probably when they did the crossing.

HR: And he had Dr Schlink written underneath. Other blokes had their names written on it. You've got there somewhere that Rex O'Brien had his name somewhere in the Pretty Plain or Wheelers hut.

KH: I'd have to check. That's one of the things I've recorded obviously. The names that looked authentic on the walls of the huts.

HR: I'll introduce you to him when you come up here. I'll tell you another thing that was strict law in those days. If you went in there and you had your own tucker, you ate your own tucker. You didn't eat the food that was there. If you used wood, you cut the wood and put it back in there. And if you used matches you replace them or you used your own. So if somebody got there and they were destitute, blowing like hell and they were wet, they could light a fire with matches and wood. Say if somebody came up and they had some bread wrapped up in paper, you didn't burn the paper. You put it in the box there so there was paper to light a fire with. You didn't waste anything. I know we had gone there and somebody had got into the flour box and thrown flour all round the hut and hadn't cleaned it up. That might cost a man his life. There was a notice up in Seaman's Hut that you were only to use it under certain conditions. You're not supposed to camp there the night unless you're there in a blizzard. I've got pictures of my mother and my aunt standing there in the little corner there on the outside and while I was taking the picture they were having to hold their skirts down. They were blowing up. It was blowing a gale.

KH: Did you ever meet Bill Hughes?

HR: No. Hughes Creek would be named after him wouldn't it be? It runs into the Eucumbene there out... I don't know whether you know the road that runs out the back round the Eucumbene Dam itself down over the Poley bridge that was there? Well, Hughes Creek is about the first creek you cross.

KH: The Hughes are an old Kiandra family.

HR: I don't remember meeting him. <sup>like</sup> Look Hennesey, the bloke with the pipe I told you about made out of potatoes. Well, another thing about Bill Richards, rough that he was the old fella, he said the most beautiful sight he ever saw he says was shepherding sheep out near Tabletop. He rode out one morning to the top of Tabletop, I don't know why he rode there but he did, and he saw the sun rise from Tabletop. And he reckoned that was the most beautiful sight he ever saw in his life. He's only just a rough old shepherd. When he'd get his money he'd go straight to town and booze the lot of it, but he could still see beauty in that sun rise.

KH: Did you ever do much burning of the countryside?

HR: We burnt every inch that we could that was coming out every year. I still think it's the right thing. Getting back onto this Bill Richards. His father had the China walls out here and Bill was one of the blokes that was there. They were told they were to burn the China walls and come out. We used to get our matches. We used to use wax matches first, and then they brought these things in. The old man used sent to the grocer's for them after that. And as you were coming out you would have your satchels with your matches in it, or you could do it before you came out - it didn't matter much. We put the match on the box like that and you'd put your thumb on it. You'd be riding along. You'd get that way that I could light it and throw it so that it would

land on a saucer out there where that wood bit is. You'd put it up that way, but you had to make sure it didn't stop on there.

KH: I see, the friction was forcing it up.

HR: But you'd see every one of us with that thumb burnt! I could still throw them but I wouldn't be anywhere near as accurate as I was in those days. We burnt the lot. Anyway, Bill was there on the China walls, or someone was there with him who was looking after the stock there. And they realised by the time they saved it up, someone brought a flagon of wine and someone put some rum in, they were all a bit full and they hadn't burnt the country. So they got a kerosene tin and they cut the top out of it. They got a big punk off a tree. Do you know what a punk is? It's a fungus. It's like a sponge. They got this punk and stuffed it into the open top of the tin full with kerosene and they soaked it. And then they set a noose and they caught a wallaby. Caught him alive. And they got on him and wired the punk to his tail. They let him drag the punk through the country. Of course the first thing he would do it run into a long thicket, round some dead wattle or something and hide and the next thing the fire would burst up behind him.

KH: And you reckon it worked?

HR: Oh, it worked all right. Anyway that was Bill Richards... it was before my time. But he cleaned them up then.

KH: Were there any other things passed on to you like schathings? I mean this is going back a long way but any really bad cattle duffing or anybody who was getting away from them because they did a murder somewhere or anything like that that has been passed down to you?

HR: The only fugitive that I know that was in the mountains was the bloke that found the Southern Cloud. <sup>(Thomas Souter)</sup> Now he was working for Thiess and he went to take a picture of Black Jack on the other side out near Deep Creek. He wasn't up to where he was going to take the photo...

I've been up there. I was up there two days after they found it. I took a party in from Dunbruma. We had to walk the last half or quarter of a mile in there. And I was there when we found a little old watch. Another bloke found a ten cent piece. Another bloke bought a couple of human finger bones home. His wife ordered him out of the house! He just lived down the street here - I won't mention any names!!! One bloke found a toilet seat. Another brought back a piston without a starting plug in it. Took it down to the local garage here, put it on the spark plug cleaner and the spark worked. Nearly all the stuff I had I sent down to Melbourne, pieces of copper pipe and that sort of thing. He <sup>(Souter)</sup> sat on the airplane, he didn't know it was the airplane because there was no skin left on it. The engines were right into the bank. It was only a hundred and fifty feet at the highest. If he'd have that much more weight he'd have gone. For years and years I rode across Emu Plains and saved quarter of a mile. He was only just over the other side. Phil Heinecke, the publican, used to go with us. He spent a week up there riding looking for him. Your version of the chap that saw the fire...

KH: Tom Taylor?

HR: Correct. Definitely correct. I was a kid at Wolseley Park the day he went in and it was a terrible day. No worse than the weather we had here the other day. I was on school holidays. We heard about it the next day. A different one reckons they heard it over the road. He'd gone in up the Tumut Valley, sorry at Possum Point where the Toolong River comes down and he's turned and gone straight into the mountains and smack in there. Mountain ash trees that big when I was in there. They'd grown up through the wings after a time. Just the remains of them. This bloke <sup>(Souter)</sup> sat on them and the wires were still back to the loops on the tail and when he sat, he sat on one of these wires. Frightened the hell out of him! So the story goes. He'd heard the story of this aircraft going in and he went back and he told one of his mates. He packed his port and went in. There was 10,000 pounds in reward or so they told him. He got to the Cooma Airport and he was just about to get on the plane when they grabbed him. His mate



had told them he'd gone to Sydney and that he'd found the plane that had gone down in 1933 or 1934. The police grabbed him and told him that there was no reward. They made him take it back to them and that's how it was found.

KH: He wasn't going to show them?

HR: No. He was after the reward. He was a New Zealander from memory and he didn't do much about it. But that's why they found the Southern Cloud. There was no reward. If there had have been it would have been long defunct by then. I went to a funeral up here in Tumbarumba with a great mate of mine who was killed in a motorcycle accident up near Adaminaby a few years ago. His people own a hotel down near here as well. An old priest was there conducting the burial service and Tom came up to us and said "Hey, they've found the Southern Cloud. We're going out there tomorrow. Shhh. Keep quiet." Never mind about mourning, we're going out tomorrow. We realised the mourners could all hear us, you know. There were about three or four of us that went.

KH: There must have been hundreds of people after that.

HR: The chaps from the Tumut Air Club - I think it was Tumut, it might have been Cooma - they were there and they were getting the motors out in Cooma now. They were all there in white overalls. Lach Kennedy - I was talking to his wife yesterday - he used to go to Peppercorn. Vickery's at Peppercorn, that's out near the Blue Water Holes. This side of Long Plain. He might be able to tell you a bit about that side of it. I know nothing about that. I've been through there. I don't know whether father named Wolseley Park after Wolseley Gap, but the fellow Wolseley Park was named after was the chap that invented the shearing machine and Wolseley's Gap, I think it was named after him too. The year he went through - this was before my father's time in the mountains - he got to the other side of Sawpit Creek and he turned round and came back. He'd had enough. I don't know whether it was the weather or what it was. They called him

Wolseley Pull-Up. There wouldn't be too many people that know that. Gus Murphy told me that and my brother Percy.

KH: Do you remember any incredible rides, any really long rides that people did?

HR: I can recite the "Man from Snowy River" for you. I've ridden from here to Wolseley Park and that's nine or ten mile out. I've ridden to Farm Ridge and that's over 60 miles. Gave the men their orders and got on the same horse the next day and rode back again.

KH: That would be about 120 miles on the same horse.

HR: Two days on the same horse.

KH: Is that the sort of thing they do nowadays on endurance rides?

HR: I suppose they could. From here to the foot of the hills is not bad riding. It's much what they do I think.

KH: How far's Wolseley Park from here?

HR: 19 miles. Others have done more than I have. I tell you what, my horse was tired afterwards. It was too hard on the horse. He was a racehorse and I tell you what, he came in on a stock train from Paddington - that was father's property out near Cobar - and they unloaded these horses. There was two of them there, they were poor as crows. Anyhow, they christened one of them Bones and the other one used to follow him everywhere he went and they called him Bonaparte. Anyhow, I said to the old man, "That horse there Dad. Can I have him?" "Of course you can have the scarecrow" he said. So he was my horse. He was a getting fat, but after a while of hard work he'd lose his condition and it was a hell of a job to get it back. It was hard to get him fat again. He won a horse race in Houston many, many years ago.

KH: Do you remember whether there were any outstanding individuals who did a hell of a lot of riding from one end of the mountains to the other?

HR: Any of the old blokes I've mentioned there - Webbers or Finch, Fredericks - it would take a week to go through them, they all did the same sort of thing. Gus Murphy. Perots. If a bloke had a herd or something, you'd hear about all these colossal rides they did. One bloke got hurt. Another bloke would stop with him. One would ride in to get the doctor and get back in again. I can't remember anything like that ever happening. We had a system worked out where we used to go down into the Tumut River fishing with four or five. If someone had an accident and broke a leg, there'd be two that'd stay with him and two would go out. So that if one bloke got hurt on the way out the other one could keep going you see. There was no way known they'd have to walk. When we used to have to walk out, we'd leave our vehicles at the top of the Sue... City hill and walk down the hill. You didn't take anything with you. You took one blanket and your fishing gear and a bit of tucker, but that's all you'd take because you couldn't get it all back up again. Then they put a bit of a road down there and just ask my wife. I took her down there to the ford and she nearly had the whole ford in one go too! I used to have to get hold of the wheel and stand up and look out over the bonnet of the landrover, then sit down and drive again. It was that steep. Tommy Webber, Tommy Grogan and my brother. Two of them would get out and sit on the back of the landrover and one would sit with the door open ready to jump. They didn't worry about me!

KH: Its alright if you're going down straight isn't it, but if you go down sideways...

HR: They took an old car down there years ago and they had to get horses to pull it up again. A bloke took a twin cart down there and he had to come out the other way. The horses wouldn't go back up again. We used to take sheep through there and cross O'Hares and back up across O'Hare's Creek and they used to go up the Spur then. And we had the

mud holes and come out at Three Mile Dam. That's how they used to go.

This fellow you mention, Harvey Palfrey and dad and Bill Perot and my sisters and Dot, they rode into Farm Ridge, into Kiandra and back down to the Caves. They didn't know and of course we didn't know... we had a cottage at Port Hacking in Sydney. Mother said to us one day "Oh come on, I've had this." During the Christmas holidays. We'd pack up and we'd go for a run in a train somewhere. We were never told where we were going. Anyhow, we packed up, got some cigarettes for the train and got to Tumut and we were picked up there by an old taxi. Went to the Caves. Next thing we were... we were thrilled. Trips to the caves and to Wolseley Park! And the next thing they walked down the wall. Old dad had ridden in from the other side with them and we'd come in from the other side. So it was quite a thrill to us all. This fellow Harvey Palfrey. Have you met him?

KH: Harvey Palfrey. I haven't. Only by heresay. Where is he now?

HR: The last time I saw him I saw him here in Tumbarumba. He came up and he was going to start a bit of a dude ranch either here or Tumut. He got a bit of information off me and went to Tumut and I've never seen him since. He lived in Melbourne somewhere. He used to have the Kiandra Hotel. Then he had the Portal. He opened it I think. The moment I pulled up there, Harvey would come out. "Get the kids and Harold a drink." "Where are you Margaret?" And his arms'd go round my wife and she got more kisses out of him than I ever have! He was a villain, he was!! He'd never let those kids be the whole time he was there. When we were only passing through we might spend a couple of hours there.

2/2/1

HR: Harvey lived in Melbourne.

KH: You don't know where do you?



HR: Do you where Harvey lives, Marg? Can't hear me with the tap running. Well, that's about all I've got written down. You can start and ask me anything you like now. If you want to know more, you can come back again if you give me a few days notice, let me know how long you can spend here and I'll arrange for all these chaps to come out and meet you.

KH: There's a lot of people to get round. It's just an endless job in a way because I'm interested in people who worked on the Snowy Scheme, I'm interested in bushwalkers, I'm interested in skiers, fishermen... all sorts of people who, in some way or another, have been inspired by the High Country.

HR: I know plenty of people who know something about the skiing, especially seeings I've got a son at Selwyn. We know a bit about fishing cause I've done a lot of fishing here. I've got pictures of fish that'd make your mouth water!

KH: Who would be the other people from around here of the ones you mentioned who would know most about the grazing days?

HR: O'Brien and Perrot. Well, any that I've mentioned would. I won't mention any of the blokes in there now. Only my son and he only goes there on account of the snow that's up there now. As a matter of fact, he said he was going to be back early. He should be back 8 or 9 o'clock tonight.

W1: Where there many aboriginal stockmen?

HR: No. The old hands told me that down here at Tumut, the only authentic story I know about aborigines here was there was people there at Possum Point. That's a property down there. We used to go through there on our way to the mountains. The men were all away. It's not mentioned by Mitchells or any of the books they wrote about the aborigines. This old fellow, George Richards. He told me this and

his mother told him because he was one of the babies concerned in it. The blacks were going to come and massacre them you see. These gins they told the white women what was going to happen. Of course, they cleared out and hid the kids. The men came back and tried to stop it. I don't know whether there was anybody killed but the flat on the river Murdering Flat after that incident. Whether they killed any or not I can't tell you, but old Billy Richards and I think his brother Tom - they were only babies at the time - they got it handed down from their mother. The only other thing I know about it is that the tribes used to meet down here and they used to go up and eat the Boogong moths. This business about them going up poor and coming back fat in a few of weeks, I can't come at that one. They might have put a bit on but they wouldn't put it on that quick.

W1: Dicky Cooper is supposed to have been an aborigine.

HR: Oh, the blacks used to walk to Tumbarumba here. I don't know what happened but I picked up one stone with an end sharpened like a tomahawk. I picked it up in an old farmhouse. They must have walked through there too.

KH: Do you know if Farm Ridge was ever used in the winter time? Did anyone ever stay over during the winter?

HR: To my knowledge no-one ever stayed there in the winter. I'm trying to think of his name. He owned the old hut where this fellow was burnt. I know that he stopped at Toolong on more than one winter rabbit trapping. That was in my time even. He stopped there... I can't think of his name now. Anyhow, everyone around Tumbarumba knew him. He stopped and trapped rabbit during the winter. The skins were beautiful in the winter in the snow. Any animal that lives in the snow gets a heavier coat in the winter. Any of those that I wrote down there, Georgie Martin mainly, they'll tell you anything that you want to know.

KH: How old is George Martin?

HR: In his fifties.

KH: When did you last go out to Farm Ridge? Was the grazing lease passed on to you?

HR: No. Father put Wolseley Park in trust for the five of us in the family until the youngest one, there's a sister younger than me, was twenty five. With the Union Trustee Company in Sydney. I was working as a Jackaroo cum Overseer on an outback station. Then they recalled me from there. The pastoral inspector - he was the parks inspector for the Union Trustee Company - and he recalled me when they took over against father's wishes for me to take over the management of the trust. The Union Trustee Company would have nothing to do with the mountains. A fellow by the name of Hedges<sup>(r)</sup> took over after that. Percy still had Toolong. When I came back from the war, Percy said to me "You put in for Toolong and you'll get it". I said "I'm not going to go over your head. You've had it for years." He said "Never mind about me having it. There's enough for you and I and Doug." The three brothers you see. He said "You're only going to put a certain number there and I'm only going to put a certain number there and Doug will be the same. We'll only be paying a third and we'll have the same amount of cattle."

Anyhow, he and I argued about it and I said "You put in for it." And we left it at that. I went to Sydney and I thought now, I'll go and see the land agent. I can't think of his name now. He lived at Castle Race Track. I went into the office there and I said G'day to him and he said Hello. I said, "How did Perce get on with old Toolong this year?" He said "He never put in for it." I said "What?" He said "He never put in for it." "Crikey" I said, "The last thing I told him I wouldn't put in for it before I left home and he had to put in for it and we could work it from there." So he didn't put in and I didn't put in. And Doug didn't put in for it. See, once you've had a block up there or when you came back from the war, even if you'd had a block up there the blokes coming back from the war would beat you. But if you had a block and

had it year after year you paid your money and looked after it and all that. They wouldn't let anybody else cut your throat and go in there. Once you had a block you had it.

KH: Did you ever know Wingy Wheeler?

HR: One Arm?

KH: Yeah, One Arm.

HR: I read where you called him Wingy Wheeler.

KH: Yeah. A number of people have corrected me on that and said he was One Arm.

HR: Do either of you want a cigarette? [Chorus of No's!] Good. I've got enough vices without that!

KH: What do you remember about One Arm?

HR: Not very much. Very little to be honest with you.

KH: Did you ever go to Wheeler's Hut?

HR: I've ridden past it. I don't ever remember<sup>[going]</sup> in though. I think old Sis was in it.

KH: Your sister?

HR: Yeah. I've got a sister who lives in town here. She's been in there I think.

KH: What were the outstanding things you remember about One Arm?

HR: That he had one arm!



KH: Not his cursing and swearing?

HR: Well, he knew a word or two but I was only a little fellow then. I wouldn't know what they were.

KH: He used to smoke cigars occasionally or something.

HR: Don't know. I wouldn't even know him if you showed him to me now. See, most of the time we went straight to Farm Ridge. When I was with Happy Fredericks and we went to Hell Holes or we might go out to Pretty Plains. I think one day we were going out to Pretty Plains, we rode close to Wheeler's Hut. It was on the edge of some pretty heavy scrub wasn't it?

#### AFTERNOON TEA TIME BANTER - UNRELATED

HR: So, how long before you think you'll come back?

KH: It's very hard to say. I'd have to work out what else... you see at the moment I try to get to see people that I hear about when I hear about them. I'd heard about you for some time. That you were over this way.

HR: Well, I'm very well known by the Police!

KH: I don't go to the Police for information. It was Russell Cookson that spoke to me about you the last time.

HR: How'd you get on with him?

KH: I get on well with him personally. He's a nice guy.

HR: Yeah, I like him too. I've only ever met him the once.

KH: I differ with some of their policies and their management.

HR: He knows that!

KH: At the moment I'm trying to work as hard as I can on this other book. This book on long journeys. This history of long journeys across the mountains.

HR: Your best plan for that is to go down to the river and see the blokes down there. They used to go up onto the Monaro, the old blokes. They've probably most died but Mrs. Mitchell would have some information on that. They used to do a bit of droving down that end.

KH: What about any long drives? Any sheep taken in down there?

HR: Those sheep that came from Traallie, Nockalechie and Dunlop. 50,000 of them and they came from the other side of the Darwin. They brought them in two mobs. 25,000 with each. I just forget how many men were with each mob. There was a cook and wagonette and all that sort of thing.

KH: Do you remember when that was?

HR: Before I was born. Around 1900/1910.

KH: Your father took up Farm Ridge in 1909?

HR: No he was here before that. He was in the mountains in 1901, I know that. I don't know the exact date he built Farm Ridge.

KH: This long stock drive was after that.

HR: Yes. To the best of my knowledge, most of the sheep, but not all of them, they came from Yanco and that part of the world. I think they came by train or road. I might be wrong because they must have come through by road because the line didn't come through until 1919.

KH: That's a good indicator.

- HR: They'd have to walk from the Riverina.
- KH: I have heard some people talking about being on the road with a mob of sheep for three months, taking them up to the high country for six months and three months back home again. Long enough back on the property to dip them and shear them and all that and then off they go again.
- HR: Shear then dip. They're sheared first.
- KH: OK. Shear and then dip them. So that the whole year was kind of involved in either being on the road or being in the mountains.
- HR: That would be right too.
- KH: But later on I think, a bloke called Austin and the Lampes that used to go into that Long Plain country, Kiandra, Port Phillip fire trail and back towards old Currango. I think they used to bring their sheep in by the rail.
- HR: They come to Tumut.
- KH: Yeah. To Tumut and then overland.
- HR: There's a picture of a sheep train in that book I gave you.
- W1: Is this the same Wolseley Park as your Wolseley Park?
- HR: Yeah.
- W1: And there's a cheese factory there too isn't there?
- HR: I pulled the cheese factory to pieces and built a wool shed there.

UNRELATED CAKE-EATING CONVERSATION!

- HR: You've got a picture in your book and you mark it Kosciusko. I think you'll agree with me if I can find it quickly enough, its actually... the text is on the page beforehand. A double page picture if I remember rightly. I think you'll find that Watson's Crag.
- KH: Its the Sentinel and Watson's Crag. Its the view across from Carruthers.
- HR: Yeah, that's about where it would have been taken from.
- KH: It's up near the front of the book. It's got snow.
- W2: Is this the first book you've written?
- KH: Of this size? Yeah. I've got very passionate about the mountains now and I've got so many leads and so much information that's never been published that I'll just persevere and bring out more books.
- HR: That one.
- KH: Yeah. That's the Sentinel and Watson's Crag to the right and the Gray Mare range in the distance.
- HR: That'd be looking over towards Munyang and Guthega.
- KH: No. It's looking into the Geehi Valley there. That's the Gray Mare and the Dargals way back. It's looking north.
- HR: That country was all burnt here a few years ago. To the top of the Geehi. You can see all the dead timber. You can see it from Youngal.
- W2: Is that the book on Kiandra?
- KH: "Historic Kiandra"? Yes. I think I've been through most written material. As soon as I started working on the history of the huts, it



became very clear to me that I had to go out and see people and interview them. Especially with regard to the huts, no-one has ever written about them. The people who used them never recorded anything about them, except they might have scribbled their name in charcoal on the rafters or something. But that's about all.

HR: Have you read the book on up to the other side of the river?

KH: Yeah. I've seen the Victorian ones. There's been a lot more documentation. There's always been more documentation on the Victorian side.

HR: The skis that were in the old exercise yard of the old jail which they then used as the dining room, but the skis there, they were made out of mountain timber. They were on the wall there. There was a pair of snowshoes, dog traps and various things. They're still there. That was a terrible let down there. You see, there's nothing between Tumut and Adaminaby now along the road now. Well, there's Talbingo but that's off the road a bit.

KH: You can go into Cabramurra but that's off the beaten track.

HR: If you run short of petrol, you can't get petrol. You take us coming from the coast. We have to fill up in Cooma or Adaminaby and then there's none till Tumbarumba.

KH: If you come by the Elliot way. You can get petrol at Cabramurra.

HR: Yeah, but you've got to go off the road though. And it's hard when the sun goes down. I came in through Happy's, across the Farm Ridge past the Boobies - two landrover loads of us - and went down to O'Keefe's Hut. We went down the side and into the river one night and Jeffrey - he's a big fellow, only a kid, though, about 12 or 14 years old - he started to cry because the landrover was on a pretty steep lurch. His father said "You'd better take him back." We wanted to come down and across the river, missed the Boogong Swamps and

come out over Cool Plain over Sam's Rails and back over \*\*\*\* and back over Dougall's track then. After we left Toolong and back into Cooma and back home that way. That bloke started to howl. Anyhow, there was no room to turn round in. It's a job to turn round there. I got onto the hill going up that you could coast into Happy's. I just started to climb the hill and I ran out of petrol. I used to let her run back a bit and slam my foot on the brakes and hit the starter again. Or when I jammed my foot on the petrol, what was in the tanks would run up the line towards the carburettor and I'd get a few more yards then. And by this time of course the other car had gone and left me. Well, we go to the top of the hill and said "Oh, I thought you did a good job of that." And I said "I've had a lot of practice!" I coasted down the hill and Happy's was shut up for the night. So I went and I knocked on the woman's door there and she came out. I said I had to get back to Tumbarumba and I spun her a bit of a yarn about having twelve people and a sick kid with me - which I did have! - and pleaded with her to give me some petrol. She came out and she was completely dressed in leather. Leather cap, leather gloves, leather coat, leather trousers and leather shoes. I'd never seen anyone dressed like that before. Anyway, she gave me the petrol from her Holden. I used to take parties up there. I charged them a pound a day. I put two of them in the front of the landrover and two of them in the back. A pound a day I charged.

KH: That was to go fishing was it?

HR: No. We'd just go for the day. I'd take them round to all the dams and that sort of thing. I'd supply the rum, the tucker and the petrol. I'd never make any money out of it.

KH: That's what they used to charge back in the thirties.

HR: I did it when I came back from the war. We pulled up at Clover Flat one night and I had an old fellow out here - he was about ninety or so, a World War digger, a mate of mine - and I left the lights on when I got to the Clover Flats Creek and it was only about that deep and as

wide as this room is and running clear water about that deep. Put a bit of a tarp down in the front and got the bread and corn<sup>ed</sup> beef out, pepper and salt, and knives and salt at that. Threw them all down on the tarp and said "I'm going to have a rum." So I got my bottle of rum out and said "Who's having a rum?" Well, him and him and so on. This old fellow said "I'll boil the billy." I said "You please yourself Pete. Don't be too long." He boiled the billy and he came back and said "You're a lousy lot of so and sos. Where's my rum?" I said "There's your rum. Everybody else has got theirs. There's your panikin there." Picked it up and of course it was after dark. He had a look at it and grabbed the bottle and put it in. I didn't take any notice. Put the bottle down and upped it. The rum was already in it and he put Worcester<sup>shire</sup> sauce in it! He reckoned I'd poisoned him!

KH: I thought you might have put kerosene in it or something!

HR: No.

KH: Did you ever meet any bushwalkers in the very early times?

HR: The only blokes I ever met... I think I told you about them... were the two blokes that rode past while we were mending the wool yard.

KH: That were out there, you thought, surveying?

HR: I reckon they were surveying. They had a pack horse each. They might have had a pack horse between them. I forget now.

KH: You never saw any bushwalkers?

HR: No. No-one was silly enough to do that in those days!

KH: There were a few!

HR: I never saw any of them.

KH: What about the miners at the Grey Mare? Did you go to the Grey Mare?

HR: I was in sight of the Grey Mare but I was never inside of the hut. There was no mining on there then.

KH: It's a fellow called Metcalf who lives here who used to work on the Grey Mare.

HR: You mean Andy Metcalf?

KH: Yes.

HR: I don't think the Andy I know ever worked there.

KH: He lives on the other side of Tumbarumba.

HR: No. This bloke lives up Adelaide long Road.

KH: Yeah, the Adelaide long Road.

HR: He's got a big scar on his forehead here.

KH: He might have. It was about three or four years ago that I met him.

HR: He's had it since he was a boy. It's an indentation. You could stick your fingers in it.

KH: Can't remember.

HR: I know him pretty well. He's married to a Baxter so I know him pretty well. I've had him <sup>deep sea</sup> fishing out at Montague Island. We didn't catch a thing, but he came with me.

KH: Well there'd only be one Andy Metcalf.



HR: (To W2) Do you know of any other Andy Metcalfs?

KH: He was only out there for a short time but he told me quite a lot about it. And Charlie Bell told me quite a lot about it.

HR: Old Ding Dong? He lives down here at Cofryong. We were fishing at a place called the Chimneys on Eucumbene. You go up the road that goes right around the back over to Eaglehawk over the Poley Bridge. You turn off there before you get to the Portal. <sup>[Island]</sup> that runs out towards Teal [unclear] or out that way. I met him just past the Poley Bridge and he was coming in. I didn't know him. A young fellow driving a utility. It was an unmarked vehicle. He said "Where're you going mate?" I said "We're going up to the Chimneys. We're going fishing." He says "I'll see you there." I said OK and he drove on. Doug was coming behind me. There's another car behind him. It was a utility. They said "Who're you talking to?" I said "How should I know? I've never seen him before in my life. The only thing he asked me was where was I going and he said I'll see you tomorrow. That's all he said." Tommy said "I'll bet it was a \*\*\*\* fishing inspector." I said "Could have been too. I don't know."

Anyway, I had my license and left it in my jacket in the boat. Someone was away in the boat and we all had our lines tucked in there and were sitting up in the hut. Having a cup of tea and so on. And this vehicle pulled in and I said "Here comes that vehicle that I saw yesterday." Getting back years before now. We'll just leave it at that. Phil Heinke, the publican, was there with us. And he used to say "I'm never worried about getting caught up there without a license. Ding Dong Bell and I went to school together and I lay my bets that I know him well." Tom Webber went to school with him too, but he never used to say anything. Anyway, he knew the day had dawned and he said "Don't worry about Ding Dong. I can handle him. I went to school with him. We were great mates at school." Anyhow, this fellow arrived. He said "I'd like to see your fishing licences." They all produced them. He asked every specific one but he never asked me. The young fellow came over to me and come over to see mine. There

was no use asking me for mine because mine was in the boat." He's alright... [unclear] ... My brother said to him "Would you like a drink?" "As a matter of fact," he says "I wouldn't mind one." So we produced the rum. We all produced our panikins and had a drink with him. Phil Heinke said "You're a fishing inspector. I knew a bloke that went to school with you. Had the name of Bell. We used to call him Ding Dong. I went to school with him. Know him well." "Haven't seen him since I left school" he said. And he went on and Bell took all of this in. After a while, Phil said, did he know him? "Who would you be?" He said "I'm Ding Dong Bell." He was only a little fellow but he was a damn sight smaller then. He came in with his ears back! All he knew was this Ding Dong Bell. Poor old Phil's dead too now.

W1: Your mother must have been quite a gal to live up there in a tent.

HR: She went down on her honeymoon. Her Aunt used to go there to in the summertime. They knew all the men, you see. The men all worked here on Wolseley Park. They were just like brothers and sisters all of them you see. A lot of big properties. The men never mixed...

#### VOICE OVER BY OTHER CONVERSATION

KH: Those pictures you've got there of her being in the snow. Did they ride out again?

HR: I don't know. I wasn't born then.

KH: Sometimes it would snow in May and stay, wouldn't it?

HR: They wouldn't get me out before May.

KH: This was a freak fall of snow?

HR: Phil told me yesterday when we where talking about it, that it was in March. When they were caught, it was a freak fall in March.

KH: I see. So it would melt again.

HR: Phil jokingly said when I asked something about it yesterday, when his mother got snowed in. He said "Ask Dot." Well, that was in March and Dot wasn't born until September! You'd have a job talking to her!

KH: And the maps that you used were just the old grazing lease maps? You never had any other maps?

HR: No.

KH: I suppose you'd learn from the others. Someone would take you out and would show you...

HR: No. They were bushmen. They'd take you to a place and you'd have to learn because you might only be taken there once. We went out here to Upper Maragle - where a couple named Reid used to live and another fellow by the name of Hanna - we camped in Reid's woolshed, which only had a roof and three sides to it I think. We had a beautiful bit of steak and we put it up on the wool bales in the hay shed and the dogs came and ate it during the night. So we didn't have any breakfast. We scavenged around his hay shed and found some eggs. Then we rode out, I think it was old Hanna that came with us, he took us way out in the bush. No track. He got us out onto this ridge which we christened 'Rum Ridge' because we had a bottle of Treasure Island rum. This old fellow didn't drink. We had no water, so we drank 33 or 37, I think, over proof. We drank it neat on a blazing hot January day out in the sun. This old fellow. I think he got on his horse on the wrong side. He was that well.

KH: How long did he stay up there though!

HR: Well he must have, because he got back home again. "Don't get off this Ridge," he said "Get off it when you get to the river." Well we got off it. I can take you to the spot where we rode into the river. You wouldn't believe me. I've shown it to a lot of people and they said "Don't give me that! No horse could ever go down there." Well, we went down there and led pack horses down there. None of us got hurt. We never rode down there again though! We kept on the Ridge the next time.

There was absolutely no track whatsoever. Through hock scrub and that. This old fellow, he knew it, because he'd pulled us up there once and he said "See that wombat hole there?" You could see it in the hock scrub. Then he said "Look along a bit further and you'll see..."

The wombats could dig faster than the Abos could ever dig to dig him out. And they'd sunk a hole down there. They'd listen on the ground to hear him. They'd sunk a hole down to meet him - About from here to my wife or that thing over there - away from the entrance to the hole to get this wombat. Just sunk a shaft straight out.

KH: Who? The Aborigines?

HR: Yeah, the Abos. Well, it was before his time. He never did it. He just rode on it in the bush. Then we used to go round a siding. The basin was a sort of a curve like that. It was pretty steep. It was fairly clear. I can remember my brother - he was riding a brumby, beautiful mare she was, well broken in and quiet - he was going around this siding in front of me and that next thing he got the halter of the pack horse he was leading under the mare's tail. Well she clamped her tail on it and the horse behind pulled back. It burnt her tail and she was into it. He was about two thirds down the hill before he could stop her! There was no track there either. No tracks at all. And he used to say "Look, you go out in front and you lead for a while." I'd say "Pigs. I'm fine behind," because I'd know I'd get home again. Margaret got chicken pox or something one year and they went on their way. Left me behind. They said "We're coming back in a week's time from



today. We'll meet you at the top of Pigs Hut at twelve o'clock. If you're not there, we'll go back to the river and pack up." They came from the river to the top of the hill, you see. And of course, I'm going out through the swampy country around here. No tracks through it and next thing I got into some country and I'm leading the pack horse and I thought "I've never been here in my life before." And I thought to myself "Don't panic old son. You've got to get out of this." Didn't know the country at all. I was singing my heart out. I'll admit that I left Tumbarumba, the horses were out on the edge of the scrub, and my brother-in-law drove me out in the vehicle. Pulled up at the pub and we got a skinfull there. Of course, we had a few more when we packed my horse. I packed some more beer on my horse to give these blokes a beer when I met them. I was pretty worried you know. I was singing my heart out. And that's what happened too. I'd forgotten all about it and I went off the track looking for it. I used to weigh out the billy over the swamps. I knew I had brains enough, so I turned and followed the water. The water was trickling through the swamps. I knew I'd get back to the creek sometime and I'd find my way from there. About half an hour later, I crossed a bit of a cattle pad. And I knew that cattle pad. I hadn't seen it for twelve months. I turned and started to cooe. They'd had their dinner and they were just packing up and going and they heard this cooe coming through the scrub and it was me. I had two or three bottles of beer and I said "Here, have the beer. I never want to see it again!" "What's wrong with you? Why don't you have a drink? You're here. You're right." "No way" I said. So they sat down and drank the beer. But it's awful easy to get lost down there.

KH: What about these huts up on the Elliot Way, when you go back to Sue City? On the top of the ridge there's a power line now. And in towards - I think it's the Maragle Range? - it becomes Black Jack later on.

HR: No.

KH: Doesn't it? Or is it a separate ridge? Further along. This side of the Tumut. There's one or two log huts very close to the old track that goes along there.

HR: Don't know them.

KH: A bloke called Joe Heard sent me some photos of them. I was particularly interested in them because there aren't very many log huts in the mountains. There's only about three or four others.

HR: The only huts I know. There's one at Rubyvale but you can't see it from the road I don't think. There's another one that they use as a salt shed on the Harden's side block out there. The outside block. Just on the right hand side about where you said.

KH: It's on the right hand side two or three miles in off the Elliot Way and just off the track.

HR: I don't know it. There's a little one there just off the track that goes to Black Jack, but it's not a log hut.

KH: No, these are quite big.

HR: It was built by the Forestry brothers. Just to have their dinner and that sort of thing in.

KH: I'm a bit intrigued with these. We might have a look tomorrow.

HR: Get in touch with...

KH: I don't know anything about them.

HR: Billy Goldsmith. Goldspink. He lives up just past the golf club. He's on the phone. He's one of the foresters that knows that country backwards. He might be able to tell you.

- KH: It's in the National Park now.
- HR: He goes in there and he marks the logs for the loggers to cut them. And he measures them up after they're cut. He walks over all of it.
- KH: He's a forester?
- HR: He's a forester. He's in the phone book.
- KH: Are there other old foresters around who have been in this area for a long time?
- HR: Some of them have just retired. There wouldn't be any older than that. Probably 60 or 65. You ask Billy. He knows them better than me.
- KH: Because I also wanted, for my book on the people of the high country, I also wanted to interview some foresters or people who used to do a lot of logging.
- HR: Well, I don't know anybody who's old enough for that. Some of them used to work on... see there were mills out there on the left hand side. The original Back Creek mill was driven by water.
- KH: Back Creek. Is that off Elliot Way?
- HR: Well off it. No, to get to it you have to go up the Adelaide long Road and before you cross the Tumbarumba Creek, you turn into the right. They built another big, new mill there. They came down from the old Back Creek mill - the water driven one. They built the new one, instead of having circular saws, they were all band saws. They burnt it down a couple or so years ago.
- KH: The new one?
- HR: Yep.

- KH: Is there anything of the old one left? The water wheel or anything?
- HR: I've got an idea there could be. Billy would be able to tell you. Any of the Le Cerfs could tell you.
- KH: The who?
- HR: Le Cerf. French name. One of them lived up at the old Back Creek mill - sorry, not the old one, the new one that got burnt. They've just finished building it down here with pine wood. A firm from up the north coast bought them out. Hardy's had it. Then Huckel had a mill out here about charcoal. But Billy'd be your best bet. There's another bloke out here, Wenky, he lives just down the road here, he used to have the electricity business here. It was driven by a... [unclear] ... in a wooden pipe. It was all made of wood the pipe was.
- KH: This was the town electricity supply.
- HR: Yep. Just down off the main street here, they had a power house there. The pelton wheel, it's not there any longer. TRCC have got it now. Then they put in two big... [unclear]. I think they bought them from Dubbo or Wellington or out there somewhere. They didn't have them for very long. And the power came through. Then Gaylards and Wenkys, they ran water from way out Paddy's River. You know Paddy's River that you cross down here? Well, the head of the Paddy's River up there. They put a dam in there. They ran water right all the way through. Through Tumbarumba. It crossed over the road up here somewhere. You can see from here...

#### GENERAL UNRELATED CONVERSATION

- HR: ... See that hill over there? Straight over that tin shed. You see the little hospital there, just to the right of this smoky bit up on the hill? Dead behind the clothes line pole from where you are, there's a house there. That's where Georgie Martin lives. The race crossed the road way up on the Adelaide long road there, it came along that hill and



crossed over here along the railway and it went out to Mannis to get the water to a mine out there.

KH: Good heavens. That would still be there, some of that racecourse.

HR: It won't run any water now, but it's still there... [Unclear] ...You'd see it there at the Bullock Head. Kiandra.

KH: Lots of them.

HR: There's a fellow here by the name of Owens. His grandfather, I think it was, old Stuff'n'all we used to call him. He was supposed to have driven a horse and sulky across the Three Mile Dam when she was frozen. He'd have that on you know. Might be all right in your country where they do freeze, but not here.

KH: There's also a story of a bull-dozer driver or a grader driver who did the same thing. He drove all the way out to pull someone out somewhere else and didn't realise he'd driven across Three Mile Dam until he came back. Saw the error of his ways and went back along the road instead.

HR: I know about the horse and cart driving over it, but I don't know about a bull-dozer.

KH: Then there was the story of three Italians. There is a story of three workers on the Snowy scheme who drowned at Three Mile Dam and broke through the ice. Something like that. Or tried to walk across it. I think after that they put the signs up saying it's dangerous to...

HR: Over in Northern Canada and Northern Europe the water freezes there six or eight inches thick. Whereas over here it doesn't. I've seen it frozen at Three Mile Dam even up above the bridge. On the right hand side you go up from here to Kiandra. I've seen all that frozen. And that doesn't say it's safe.

W2: In New Zealand you hear about lakes and dams that freeze over and they ice skate on them.

HR: You saw the one there that was at Lake Taupo. It was a bit of a bay on the Western side of the lake. I forget the name of the town now.

W2: Tekapo, wasn't it?

HR: I can't remember now. They had poles in it. It used to freeze and they had electricity on it. They used to ice-skate on it in the winter time. But that's not here. That's over there. The rest of the lake wasn't frozen at all. It was just the one piece that was shadowed from the sun the whole day. It used to be.

KH: Did you ever ski?

HR: I'm not that silly.

KH: You never had a go?

HR: Never been on them in my life! My brother had a go once. He built a ladder. When you build a ladder - step ladder - both sides have got to be the same. Not the same, but opposite. You know the slots where you put the steps in, in a step ladder? Anyway, he made a mistake and he made them both the same way...

2/2/2

...it wasn't put together in any way. Just two pieces of wood. He tied them onto his boots you see, then he got a bit of rope and he put it around his middle and I tied him to the back of the truck and away we went. He didn't go very far, of course.

KH: Did he have the ends bent up?

HR: No. Just a ladder. The next thing he fell over and he had the rope around his middle and I never knew. I dragged him! The snow wasn't very thick either.

KH: That would be even worse. Was it gravel underneath?

HR: He wasn't real happy. Fortunately it was a grassy patch. He didn't come back on them anyway, when I got to the foot of the hill... [unclear] ... was a pretty good skier. From what I know and what I've seen. I took them to the mountains when they were young and they used to play in the snow practically since they could walk. He's never given up. He flies to New Zealand sometimes to ski over there. None of the other boys around here are any good at it.

W2: Anthony does a bit.

HR: He's not what you'd call good though.

W2: No, but he doesn't get the chance much. Andrew lives up here. He goes up each weekend. He sort of started to ski... [unclear] ... It's all voluntary. He's only there at the weekends and if he can get a week away from the ... [unclear] ... it's all voluntary. They work hard up there to get the money to keep the patrol going.

HR: One bloke came from Gosford, didn't he? Just for weekends.

KH: They do incredible things to go skiing. It's like a drug.

HR: But it's all voluntary. Nobody pays him. It's the same with Andrew.

KH: Well, he gets free skiing. That was the big attraction when I was a downhill skier. You used to be able to ski for nothing if you were on the ski patrol. So you did it for the love of it, I suppose, apart from that.

HR: [unclear] ... he comes down here with all his bandages, splints and walkie talkies. He told me someone in Wogga has two walkie talkies they want to sell them. They buy all those things themselves. They make money with raffles and all that sort of thing.

W2: I think they do get a grant from the Government and National Parks. They get all their bandages and all that sort of thing from the Government stores.

HR: Look at the two books he had here on first aid. He's passed all his first aid exams with flying colours.

W2: He had to go to Sydney for two weekends running for his first aid exams.

HR: There's no favouritism in them. Our local... TAPE CUTS OUT

THE END