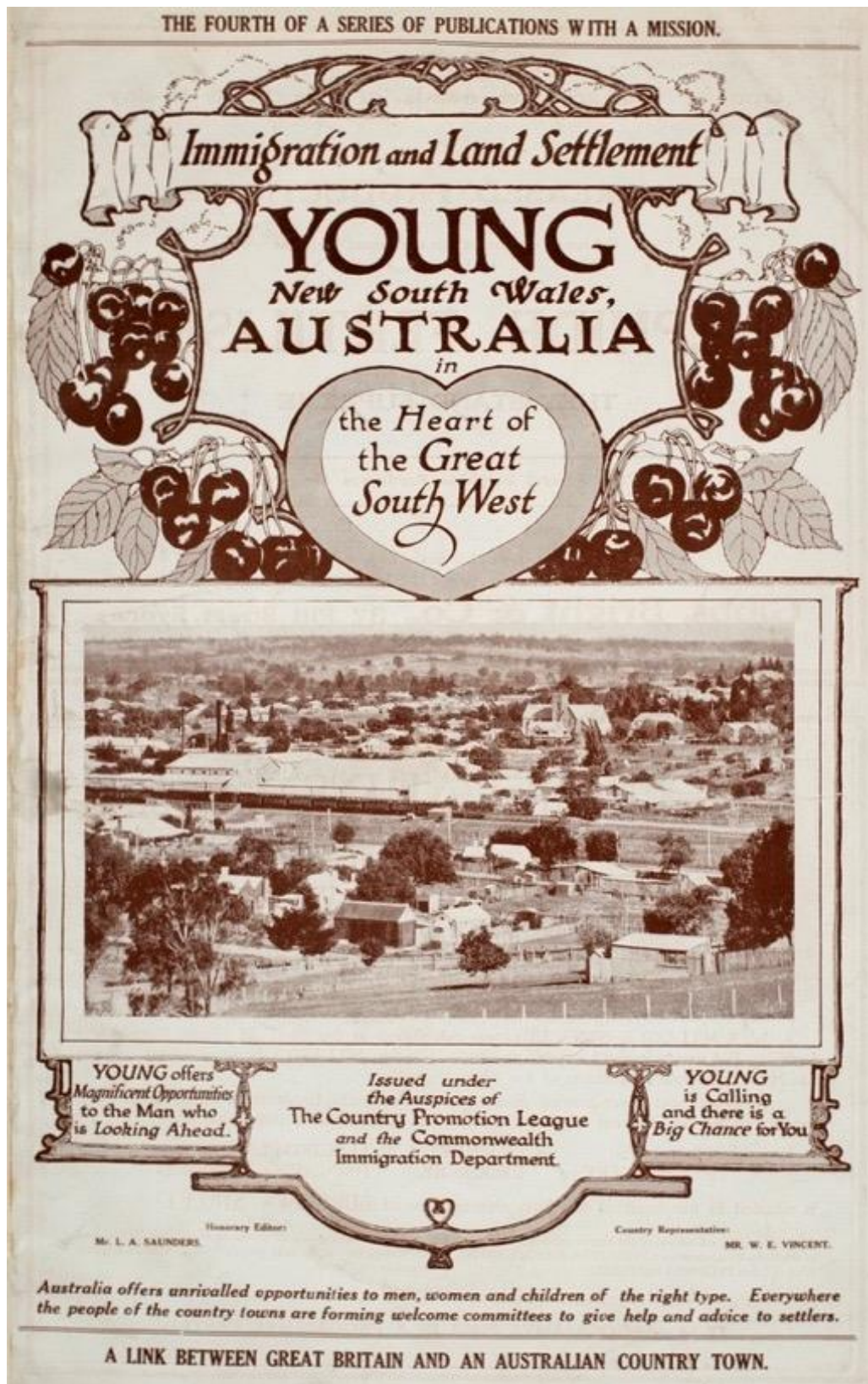


Hilltops Migration Heritage Study



A report prepared for Hilltops City Council by Dr Naomi Parry

Cover: The cover of a promotional booklet issued under the auspices of the Country Promotion League and the Commonwealth Immigration Department in 1922, Young, New South Wales, Australia: in the heart of the great south west, by LA Saunders, held by the State Library of NSW. The booklet, sponsored by super-phosphate companies and Young businesses, including Millard's, Collins & Venn stock and sale agents, and The Young Co-operative Roller Flour Mill Co, aimed to encourage soldier settlers and young able-bodied British migrants to take up land in the interior.

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1 Introduction

Migration to Australia began in January 1788, when two Royal Navy vessels, three store ships and six convict transports, carrying around 1300 convicts, marines and their wives, ships' crews and passengers, arrived in the country of the Eora and named it Port Jackson. The first arrivals were almost exclusively from the British Isles and Ireland, but over the last 230 years people from all over the world have come to live in Australia. All people born overseas – from the humble to the powerful – have left their mark on the culture and the landscape.

In the 2016 Census, the Australian population was 24.13 million, of which 3.3 per cent identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander¹ and 28 per cent were born overseas.² Australia has a higher proportion of overseas-born residents than in any other country in the world and barely half of the Australian population was born in Australia, to Australian-born parents. The Australian Bureau of Statistics attributes this to migration after World War II.³

The cultural profile of the Hilltops Council area is different to much of Australia. Harden resident Gabrielle Chan, herself the child of Singaporean-Chinese migrants says 'our town's demographic is closer to Australia in the 1947 census, when one-tenth of the country was born overseas' and says her region is 'chalk and cheese' when compared with the intensely multicultural capitals of Sydney and Melbourne.⁴ It is not even true to say that one-tenth of the Hilltops population was born overseas – the proportion of overseas-born residents in 2016, when Hilltops had 18,948 residents, was just 6.2 per cent (or 1145 people). This is low even by the standards of regional Australia – the average overseas-born population in other regional areas in NSW is 11.2 per cent and the average in nearby Canberra is 12.5 per cent.⁵ But Hilltops is intensely European in its makeup: the top five migrant source nations by birth are England, New Zealand, Netherlands, Germany and America.⁶

Yet this is still a migration story. By understanding what Hilltops and its main towns of Young, Harden-Murrumburrah and Boorowa are today, and working backwards to see how this area was changed from the ways it was understood by the traditional owners, the Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal people, we get a fresh perspective on what modern-day Hilltops residents now see. The story of migration in Hilltops is the story of the early success of European colonisers who created a stable

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- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 3238.0.55.001 - Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3238.0.55.001>
 - 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Overseas born Aussies highest in over a century, 3412.0 - Migration, Australia, 2014-15, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/3412.0>Media per cent 20Release12014-15
 - 3 Elle Hunt, 'Barely half of population born in Australia to Australian-born parents', *The Guardian*, 27 June 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/jun/27/australia-reaches-tipping-point-with-quarter-of-population-born-overseas>
 - 4 Gabrielle Chan, *Rusted Off*, (Sydney: Penguin Random House, 2018), p 238
 - 5 .idcommunity, Hilltops Council area community profile, <https://profile.id.com.au/hilltops/birthplace>
 - 6 Gabrielle Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 238

Anglo-Celtic community on rich and abundant soils. This community is, like most country towns in New South Wales, shadowed by the dispossession of the traditional owners and tinged with religious sectarianism but it was also enriched by the intellectual and cultural contributions of migrants, including some key non-Anglo-Celtic migrants. It is a history might be seen as peaceful, even bucolic, if it were not for one nationally significant event, which was the catastrophe of the anti-Chinese ‘roll-up’ on the gold diggings at Lambing Flat on Burrangong Station in 1861.

This history was written during the period when the councils of Young, Harden-Murrumburrah and Boorowa were amalgamated to form Hilltops Council and is, in many respects, an amalgamation of many recent studies into cultural heritage in the area. The strength of local museums and historical societies, particularly the Young and Family History Group and the Harden-Murrumburrah Historical Society, means it is not difficult to find well-researched information in Hilltops, or dossiers of migrant history. There were substantial collections of oral history already on file. There were some barriers to finding information – the ranks of post-war migrants have thinned rapidly due to old age and there appears to be a tendency in Italian and Greek families to retire to the urban centres of the Mediterranean-Australian diaspora, such as Marrickville or Dulwich Hill. Official secrecy about internments makes it difficult to assess the impact of wartime incarceration of Italians, and many Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal people were too busy to respond to requests for information. Accordingly, this study used pre-existing interviews and I was particularly grateful to Robyn Atherton for interviewing postwar migrants for me, for the time I spent with the Young and District Multicultural Association, and for Gabrielle Chan’s 2018 analysis of country politics, *Rusted Off*.

The historical record shows the goldfields veterans and their descendants – some who chose a pastoral path and others who were entrepreneurs or political organisers – shaped the politics, economy and progress of the district, and the state, in myriad and enduring ways. One of them, more than anyone else, defined the region – the Dalmatian man Nicola Jasprizza, planter and breeder of cherries. It was this industry that inspired the NSW Government to allocate soldier settlement blocks after the Great War, further dividing large properties, and to build the housing and install the prune sheds that define the landscape in areas like Kingsvale, Maimaru, Wirrimah and Watervale. The soldier settlers themselves were Australian-born British subjects, so were not migrants as such, but their lives have shaped the local area.

The Hilltops region is defined by its stability but it is changing as new people, including Lebanese Muslims, move into town and add their own religious beliefs to the mix. However, the strength of a sense of place, and a passion for it, seems to unite all the communities of the district.

2 Executive summary

- Hilltops Local Government is part of Wiradjuri Country and Ngunnawal lands and every non-Aboriginal person who has lived in Hilltops since the 1820s is a migrant. Conflict in other parts of Wiradjuri country suppressed resistance in Hilltops, making it seem colonisation was successful. European migrants coexisted with Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal people throughout the pastoral period until closer settlement and the advent of the Aborigines Protection Board.
- The strong bushranging history of the region stems from the gold rushes and the lawlessness of life outside the Limits of Location.
- The shape of Hilltops is broadly defined by the runs taken up by Irish and English squatters, and by their religious beliefs, as well as their convict history (or otherwise). The closer settlement that accompanied soldier settlement and post-war migration did not change the cultural profile of the area as much as the landscape. A contemporary real estate boom, driven by Islamic migrants from the Lebanese Muslim communities of Sydney, adds a new religion to the mix of faiths in Hilltops.
- The Lambing Flat gold rush caused local populations to surge, at the same time as the *Closer Settlement Act* opened up possibilities for settlers to claim portions of the large runs. The gold legacy includes the town of Young, and brought a range of migrants whose industry and appreciation of the landscape shaped the future prosperity of Hilltops. The shopfronts and cafes of Hilltops often reveal the layers of migration.
- The presence of the Chinese in Hilltops is part of a broader national story about British-Chinese relationships but while the anti-Chinese riots at Lambing Flat were exceptional in their ferocity, they were not the sole driver of the *Chinese Immigration Restriction Act 1861*.
- The anti-Chinese riots need to be tackled in a sensitive way. Objects like the Roll-Up Flag and artefacts like the film *The Birth of White Australia* are embedded with racist ideology. Interpretation about the riots must not imply that the presence of the Chinese triggered the riots. Past racism should be clearly denounced.
- Cherries are a force for cultural unity in Hilltops, for both growers and pickers. They have long attracted an Aboriginal workforce and a variety of migrants and the Cherry Festival is an expression of this rich past.
- The stability in the area, over a long period of time, has created a deep sense of place and of security for all migrants, whether their family arrived in the 1820s or the 1990s.
- Honesty about the past is more likely to benefit tourism and cultural exchange than transplanted celebrations like the Chinese Festival or monuments.

2.1 Study Brief

This report is prepared in accordance with the Hilltops City Council Study brief, dated 19 May 2017:

The project is to provide a solidly-researched thematic history that focuses on uncovering the story of all waves of migration and settlement to the Hilltops region.

Covering the period from first European settlement to the present, the history should focus on pastoral, agricultural, mining and family history.

The contractor will consult with and build the engagement in the project of the following organisations:

- Lambing Flat Folk Museum;
- Young and District Family Historical Group;
- Boorowa Historical Society;
- Harden-Murrumburrah Historical Society;
- National Parks & Wildlife Service;
- Office of Environment & Heritage;
- Relevant Council staff; and
- Any others identified during the project.

The consultant will research and prepare an illustrated history of migration to, and settlement of, the Hilltops region, from European settlement until the 21st century, as follows:

Undertake research on the Hilltops region, and work with local communities and history organisations drawing on community knowledge and accessing local sources of information such as photographs and archival collections; Develop a positive working relationship and draw the knowledge and skills of volunteers in the local heritage organisations into the history. To achieve this, the historian is expected to become a familiar face, present in the local communities to develop shared ownership of the history; and Identify themes or chapters that reflect the waves of migration heritage to the region, which reflect and identify local relevant sites, stories and objects.

The history will:

Focus on key places and industries - including places of work, recreation, religion and business – that will help tell the story of the region and its distinctive migration and settlement history, township by township; Reference the types of collections held by local historical societies and museums - and donor lists and the places associated with the collections where knowledge exists - for it is anticipated that the history will be used to contextualise migration and settlement collections; The history will include an oral history component to access the knowledge of elderly former migrants or people with recollections that will assist the project. (This is a priority as many post-World War II former migrants are ageing and frail); Be based on extensive primary-source research and will draw on a wide range of sources including archives, maps, letter and diaries, newspaper stories, and interviews with families. Where the history quotes from primary sources, a copy of the source material is to be provided in a resource file. (All images and quotes are to be fully footnoted and sourced). Consult NSW State Government archives, library collections and aerial photos revealing patterns of cultivation, buildings and land usage; Identify and obtain publication quality images suitable for possible reproduction in future exhibitions and publications. Copyright and reproduction permissions will be obtained at a later date as the exhibition content is developed; and Include a summary of the libraries, sources and archives consulted, with indications of the extent of range of the subjects explored.

Key themes in the history are to include, but are not limited to:

Anglo-Celtic migrations (with reference to particular diaspora), the Chinese experience of migration, the influence of central Europeans in the development of the area; Contact history with Aboriginal Australians, including the shared labour histories on farms and in local industries; The early pastoral economy, including settlement patterns and the use of convict labour; Closer settlement and intercolonial migration. The impact of the discovery of gold at Lambing Flat in 1860 and subsequent gold rushes;

The Lambing Flat anti-Chinese riots; The impact of the Chinese Immigration Restriction Act and 'White Australia' immigration policy, and the impact of their abolition; The development of the stone fruit industry and associated soldier settlement; Social groups, friendly societies, worker organisations and religious practice; The experience and impact of migrant women and children; The influence of migrant groups on political activism and ideas; and Post World War II refugees and recent, i.e. within past 20 years, migration including refugees.

8. Outcomes

The research is to be presented in the form of an illustrated history with extended captions and short chapters around key themes, historical periods, places, people, organisations and images. The Thematic Study is intended to inform possible future cultural tourism and economic development opportunities within the LGA and to assist in seeking future grant funding to promote the history and heritage of the area. The Thematic Study should therefore provide a solid base of research in a manner that is both easily accessible to a broad range of readers and sufficiently robust to support future funding initiatives.

2.2 Acknowledgements

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3 Colonising Aboriginal land



Figure 1: An early image of the Wiradjuri [Corroboree], William Curtis, April 1847, Wellington NSW. Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, ML 1374

The land now known as Hilltops sits within the vast sweep of the Wiradjuri Nation, although the Boorowa area borders what is variously described as being Ngunnawal (Onerwal or Dunawal¹) country, which is itself shared between the Wallabalooa (Ngunnawal-speaking) and Pajong (Gundungurra-speaking).² In the terminology of contemporary Aboriginal organisations, the Hilltops Local Government Area is shared between the Young Local Aboriginal Land Council and the

1 Julie Dibden, New South Wales Archaeology Pty Limited, Rye Park Wind Farm Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report, 2013, pp 14–15; Norman B Tindale, Map of the Distribution of the Aboriginal Tribes of Australia, 1940, National Library of Australia, nla.obj-230054338.

2 Ann Jackson-Nakano, 2001, *The Kamberri : A History of Aboriginal Families in the ACT and Surrounds* (2nd ed), Weston: Ann Jackson-Nakano & Associates, 2001; 'Where is Ngambri Country?', ngambri.org, <http://www.ngambri.org/images/Core-Kamberri-Country.jpg> cited and Paul House, When did Ngambri Descendants Reclaim their Identity? ngambri.org, 2014, <http://www.ngambri.org/identity.html>

Onerwal Local Aboriginal Land Council. Local people are engaged in a process of recovering knowledge, including language.

Aboriginal people have occupied the South-Western Slopes of New South Wales for at least 20,000 years.³ The area is rich in archaeological heritage, including camp sites, quarries for ochres and stones, bora grounds for ceremony, and carved trees, some of which mark graves. There are some recorded sites of artefact scatters and special places like the Bigga Rock Shelter are nearby.⁴ In their long occupation of the area, the Wiradjuri and Ngannawal shaped the landscape by actively managing grassland and vegetation, with fire and by seed propagation, and by shaping waterways and building dams.⁵ A 2014 Aboriginal Heritage Study and Cultural Mapping project conducted for Young Shire Council in 2014 identified sites around the waterways and routes through country as being of particular significance to Aboriginal people.⁶



Figure 2: detail from Norman B Tindale's *Map of the Distribution of the Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*, 1940, National Library of Australia nla.obj-230054338. Tindale uses the spelling Dunawal for Onerwal.

In the 2016 Census, 4.4 per cent of the 18,498 people in the Hilltops area identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.⁷ This is a lesser proportion than other areas in regional NSW – nearly 8 per cent

³ Dibden, Rye Park Wind Farm Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report, p 12

⁴ Jo McDonald and Lucia Clayton, *Rock Art Thematic Study: Report to the Department of the Environment and the Australian Heritage Council*, 2016, <https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/90e93195-385b-4e34-89f9-14d44a189b3b/files/rock-art-thematic-study.pdf>; RPS, Young Shire Council Aboriginal Heritage Study with Cultural Landscapes Mapping, 2014

⁵ Bruce Pascoe, *Dark Emu*, Broome: Magabala Books, 2014, p 39

⁶ RPS, Young Shire Council Aboriginal Heritage Study with Cultural Landscapes Mapping, 2014

⁷ Id.community, Hilltops Council Area population insights, <https://profile.id.com.au/hilltops/highlights-2016>

of people in Cowra identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander⁸ – which reflects a longstanding pattern of settler-colonists dispersing Aboriginal communities and moving people into neighbouring areas, such as Yass and Cowra.

This section discusses what written accounts reveal about the impact of the migration of Europeans and other colonists on the Aboriginal people of the country now known as Hilltops and explains the dispersal of those communities. Because this is a migration history, this chapter is not about traditional customs and culture so much as it is about the impact of settler-colonialism and the ways Aboriginal people dealt with those who invaded their land.

3.1 The Wiradjuri

The Wiradjuri nation is the largest Aboriginal language group in New South Wales and its country covers most of the South Western Slopes, stretching between the base of the Blue Mountains and the Victorian border. The Wiradjuri are the people of the three rivers because their territory is bounded by the Lachlan, the Murrumbidgee, and the Macquarie.⁹ Ngunnawal country is an area of about 11,000 square kilometres that covers the area from Yass to Boorowa, through to Tumut, the highlands west of the Shoalhaven and back to Goulburn, and includes the site of Canberra.¹⁰ The sense of country having borders is a modern, European notion for Wiradjuri, Walgalu, Ngario, Yuin, Jaitmatang, Gundungurra and Ngunnawal people travelled through each other's country to share ceremony, including an annual trek to the area of Tidbinbilla.¹¹

A quarter of a century passed between the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 and the crossing of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson in 1813, but the Wiradjuri already knew the stories of the colonisers and diseases likely penetrated the interior well before the white people did. Deputy Surveyor-General George Evans reached the present site of Bathurst in December 1813, and in May 1815 Governor Macquarie visited the area and met with Aboriginal people.¹² Shortly afterwards Evans explored the Lachlan River and named the Oxley Plains. He identified the

8 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census Quickstats, Cowra, http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA12350?opendocument

9 NSW Office of Environmental Heritage, South Western Slopes - regional history: Aboriginal occupation, <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/bioregions/SouthWesternSlopes-RegionalHistory.htm>

10 ACT Natural Resource Management Council, Understanding the Land through the Eyes of the Ngunnawal People: A natural resource management program for ACT Schools, https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/575122/NRM_Aboriginal_Curriculum.pdf, p 2.

11 Ibid.

12 Kia Handley, 2 April 2015, 200 years of Bathurst: The Wiradjuri story, ABC Central West, <http://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2015/04/01/4208763.htm>

Abercrombie and Belubula Rivers and passed through what is now Boorowa and Cowra.¹³ The colonists, with their sheep and cattle, were quick to follow.

While I was researching this study, white residents told me that the colonisation of the Hilltops area was peaceful. Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal people are the most qualified to judge that but it is a fact that Bathurst, just 200 kilometres from Hilltops and within Wiradjuri country, was the site of some of the most severe conflict on the Australian frontier. In December 1823 clashes between Aborigines and settlers culminated in the deaths of two convict stockmen at Kings Plains and soldiers arrested and jailed the man they named as instigator – the warrior Windradyne, also known as Saturday. Seven stockmen were killed by Aboriginal people in the Wyagdon Ranges and Aboriginal women and children were murdered by settler-vigilantes at Raineville. Governor Brisbane placed the western district under martial law on 14 August and ordered British soldiers to quell the Wiradjuri. Some say this conflict led to the deaths of up to 1100 Wiradjuri, and around 30 European people.¹⁴ The conflict only ended when the Wiradjuri warrior Windradyne marched a large number of his people to Parramatta to the annual feast, where Windradyne was officially pardoned.¹⁵ Amidst this intense conflict Windradyne enjoyed a close relationship with the Suttor family that endured until his death in 1829, and he is buried on the family property at Brucedale.¹⁶ The friendship between the two families showed there was another way and may have encouraged other Wiradjuri leaders, and perhaps those in Hilltops, to find ways of accommodating the presence of Europeans.

3.2 First contact at Burrangong

The story told about the colonisation of the Young area by Sarah Musgrave, the first white baby born at Burrangong, fits the narrative of peaceful colonisation. Musgrave says, in her account *The Wayback*, that when her uncle James White arrived at Burrangong he was met by the ‘chief of the Lachlan tribe’, who at first ‘disputed with Mr White the possession of the land’ but was won over by gifts from White’s stores. As Musgrave tells it this chief, dubbed Jackey/Jackie, ‘allowed the embryo squatter to remain, guaranteeing him immunity of attack from the tribe.’¹⁷ The spot where they met was named Burrowmunditroy, on Bulla Creek. Jackey was from Cabonne, near Orange, and when White returned from Sydney in 1827, with staff and livestock, he brought a breastplate that bore the

13 AK Weatherburn, ‘Evans, George William (1780–1852)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/evans-george-william-2029/text2501>, 1966.

14 David Andrew Roberts, ‘Windradyne (1800–1829)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/windradyne-13251/text4471>, 2005.

15 Stan Grant, ‘At Poisoned Waterhole creek I tell my son about the slaughter of our people’, *The Guardian*, 12 October 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/oct/12/at-poisoned-waterhole-creek-i-tell-my-son-about-the-slaughter-of-our-people>; *Talking to my country*, Sydney: HarperCollins Publishers Australia, 2016.

16 Emma Dortins, *The Lives of Stories: Three Aboriginal–Settler Friendships*, Canberra: Aboriginal History, 2018, <http://doi.org/10.22459/LS.12.2018>, pp 157–226.

17 Sarah Musgrave, *The Wayback* (5th ed), West Wyalong: Bland District Historical Society and Young Historical Society, 1984, p 2.

name 'Coborn Jackey' and named him 'Chief of the Burrowmunditroy'.¹⁸ This breastplate was later handed to Sarah Musgrave, who gave it to Young Council.¹⁹



Figure 3: the breastplate James White gave to Coborn Jackey, and which was bequeathed to the Young Council by Sarah Musgrave, as it is displayed at Lambing Flat Museum, Young. (Image: Naomi Parry, 2018)

It is now in the collection of the Lambing Flat Museum in Young – one of many breastplates the colonisers bestowed on Aboriginal people, along with the 'kings' and 'chiefs'. Concepts of kingship and chieftains belong to Europeans and do not reflect Aboriginal cultural organisation but it seems Jackey was a powerful figure. White was wise to recognise his authority.

Musgrave (formerly Regan, née White) wrote *The Wayback* in 1926 and in many ways is an unreliable witness. She never mentioned that her father and uncles were convicts and she said she was 95 when she wrote her book, which would mean she was born in 1830 or 1831, although birth records show that Sarah White, daughter of John and Eliza, was born in the Gundaroo, Gunning and Yass district in 1834.²⁰ However, she is a rare voice, and worth listening to, so long as her words are taken with a pinch of salt. In her telling, when White returned to settle at Burrowmunditroy, the local Aboriginal people welcomed him with a ten-day corroboree and showed White the spot to place his homestead.²¹ The place was named Sandy Creek by White but the locals called it Burrangong. The motives of the local people remain unclear and Musgrave dismissed the corroboree as a 'tiresome

18 Brian James, 'History of Young with Brian James – Coborn Jackey, Chief of the Wiradjuri tribe', *Young Witness*, 20 November 2017, <https://www.youngwitness.com.au/story/5063017/history-of-young-with-brian-james/>

19 Council gets relic of "abo." king (1936, February 13). *Barrier Miner*, p 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article47899119>

20 Ancestry.com. Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010, V18341425 24A

21 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 3.

consequence' but presumably the ten days of dancing at Burrangong was fuelled by the generosity of White's stores. The people seem to have liked him, for they guided him to a good place. Ray Christison told me that he has heard from local people that Lambing Flat was a place where women birthed.²² It was a sheltered spot indeed.

As Musgrave tells it, White and Jackey built a relationship that was founded on trust and reciprocity. Jackey and his people cut trails and collected bark for roofing, and received valuable items like knives, tomahawks, clay pipes, tobacco and ochre in return. The settlers adopted Aboriginal methods to make mia mias, or bark shelters.²³ Interviews conducted by Hazel DeBerg describe Coborn Jackey's skill at marking a beeline through the scrub to join homesteads at Burrangong and Murringo Station, over terrain that was so disorienting for early settlers that it took the life of Sarah Musgrave's father – trees he marked were still visible in the 1980s.²⁴ Heather Goodall has observed that such reciprocal arrangements were commonplace in the frontier districts until the 1850s. The squatters believed they owned the vast tracts of land they had claimed, but their manner of occupation barely interfered with Aboriginal movement or relationship to country. Aboriginal people were able to do without the small parcels occupied by the squatters' homesteads and were willing to trade their labour for goods and rations, while the squatters depended on their labour to manage their territories and tend their flocks. By working this way, Aboriginal people could remain close to the sites that mattered to them, and maintain their economic, social, and spiritual practices on country.²⁵

Early contact could, nonetheless, be fraught. Sarah Musgrave told a story about a group of up to 1000 Wiradjuri camping at Burrangong and asking for rations. White felt this was imposition and rebuffed them by shooting two of their dogs. The people fled, screaming, and complaining about the 'debbil-debbil', leaving behind a sick woman and her child, who was taken into the homestead but frightened the residents with warnings about the consequences of the loss of the dogs. The matter was resolved, unexpectedly, when 1500 people arrived at the station, painted as if for dancing or war. Musgrave believed Coborn Jackey had united the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee people in forgiveness, which they expressed with an all-night corroboree. White was a reluctant guest and Musgrave makes the unfunny observation that 'Before it was over my uncle had cause to regret that he had not killed all the blacks instead of only two of the dogs'. Still, the effort by the Wiradjuri, and their gift of 500 sheets of bark²⁶, shows they valued their relationship with White enough to overlook his transgressions.

22 Ray Christison, pers. comm. December 2018.

23 "A Centenarian Looks Back" *Sydney Mail*, 8 September 1937: 19. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article160496147>

24 Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291

25 Heather Goodall, *Invasion to embassy: land in Aboriginal politics in New South Wales, 1770-1972*, St Leonards: Allen & Unwin in association with Black Books, 1996; Micaela Hambrett, How the Wiradjuri people of Central West NSW survived first contact with European settlers, ABC Curious Central West, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-17/curious-central-west-how-the-wiradjuri-survived-first-contact/10128822>

26 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 14–15

An intimacy grew between the Wiradjuri and the White family, Aboriginal workers became part of the household, as nurse maids, domestic servants and labourers. They united with the Whites against common threats. When the feared bushrangers Scotchie and Whitton arrived dozens of Wiradjuri women – Sarah Musgrave, who was four at the time, says there were 200 – hid in the ceiling of the homestead during the raids.²⁷ The local people honoured the squatters by adopting their names – ‘Jackie Trott’ and his wife took the name of John Trott of Billabong (Marsden), while an elderly man took the name of Billy Glass of Curraburrama.²⁸ When a young Wiradjuri employee of White’s was injured in a conflict between the people of the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Namoi, the Wiradjuri men brought him to be nursed at Burrangong and Musgrave said it was her special privilege to take him his dinner. When he died she watched the women burn and cut themselves while the men bound the corpse with bark in a foetal position before burying him in the earth. This was not the only ritual Musgrave was able to observe – she described initiations on a bora ground at Wyalong, and how mothers carried the bodies of their dead infants for months or even years, until they could be laid safely alongside an adult, as happened when King Congo of Wallendbeen was buried on Burrangong, and the skeletons of four babies were laid with him.²⁹ When Coborn Jackey began dying at the blacks’ camp at Grolan Plains near Forbes in 1874, at the estimated age of 110, Sarah’s daughter Mrs Arthur Johnson went to comfort him.³⁰

There is also plenty of frontier drama in Musgrave’s account. Terry Kass has noted that the extension of pastoral occupation into the lands of the Wiradjuri occurred at a time of drought, which affected food supplies, and by 1839, the Wiradjuri War was in progress.³¹ Musgrave describes the Namoi people raiding Calangan Station in the 1840s, killing the Aboriginal men there and stealing two women and a girl. She tells of ‘Commissioner Bobby’, a rogue native policeman, who was unable to find a criminal so scapegoated and killed an innocent Aboriginal man.³² It is also clear the peace Coborn Jackey negotiated for White did not extend beyond Burrangong, for when White’s overseer Graham went to set up Mitta Mitta Station he was attacked. Graham and a ‘half-caste’ boy called John Reynolds accidentally shut servant Bobandie (or Wobandie) (from the Lachlan River) outside the hut during the attack and the boy was taken over the river and killed.³³ Even the Wiradjuri who lived on the stations could be terrifying figures. The ‘commanding and awesome’ Curruburrama Jimmy attained a ripe old age begging from Morangorell, Curraburrama and Burrangong and ill-treated Aboriginal women on all three stations – Musgrave says his grave was robbed a decade after his death

27 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 10; Edith Medway, Bushranger Thomas Whitton's exploits revisited, *Goulburn Post*, 8 March 2017, <https://www.goulburnpost.com.au/story/4517861/whittons-escapades-recalled/>

28 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 33–35

29 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 17

30 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 79

31 D Green, Wiradjuri Heritage Study, p 109, cited Terry Kass, Thematic History of Harden Shire, p 10

32 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 20

33 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 21–23

and skull and thighbone were taken to Victoria and kept by Mr John McGregor of Geelong.³⁴ Musgrave also tells a haunting, if improbable, story about ‘Billy Glass’ who arrived on Curruburruma with three women and borrowed a pot to cook a ‘half-caste’ infant.³⁵ And, as a young wife with the Regans on the Bland at The Levels, Musgrave was terrorised by Billy Gooralong, who would arrive at her station ‘out of his mind.’³⁶



Figure 4: George Lacy, Portrait of an Aboriginal man holding a spear, ca. 1860, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, P2/558. George Lacy (1818–1878) was a draughtsman and illustrator who travelled extensively on Wiradjuri country, including the goldfields at Bathurst and Sofala, and lived at Braidwood, Wollongong and the Victorian goldfields.

In this period the only government support of Aboriginal people was an allocation of blankets on the Queen’s birthday. They were brought to The Bland by wool teams from Icely’s Munderamen [Coombing at Mandurama], near Carcoar. When the rains of 1854 stopped the wool teams ‘the blacks’ told the Regans at The Bland:

“Wallen tumble down
Wheel-barrow brokit;
Mr Icely very poor,
Baal gibbit blanket.”

The next year Cobborn Jackey made sure he collected blankets from Burrowa and Yass.³⁷

34 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, pp 32–33
 35 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, pp 33–35
 36 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, pp 46–47
 37 “A Centenarian Looks Back”.

3.3 Ngunnawal and early Boorowa

Boorowa was settled sometime in the mid-1820s and Helen Lloyd writes that Ned Ryan of Galong, who brought his own history of oppression from Ireland, had ‘lots of trouble with the blacks’.³⁸ More positive relations are suggested by the breastplate John Howell of Arkstone presented to ‘John, Chief of Burrooa’; one that WH Broughton of Broughtonsworth gave to Jack King, ‘King of the blacks of Burrowa District’; and one Cornelius O’Brien gave to ‘Jackie King of Burrowa’.³⁹ It seems prominent members of the Wallabalooa group such as Jacky King, Billy the Bull and his brother Andy (Audi) Lane forged very good relations and even intermarried with the earliest European settlers on their lands, in particular, the Humes, Broughtons, Kennedys, Walkers and Howells.⁴⁰

From the 1830s, the ‘Yass Blacks’ were dominant in the area and their raiding parties travelled as far afield as Bega and Eden. King Andy raided the Goulburn, Cowra, Molong and Wellington districts, travelling across the vast properties sequestered by the squatters. When he died in 1871 he was eulogised by William Broughton.⁴¹ Broughton remembered Andy as ‘King of the Burrowa tribe of blacks’: ‘a kingly-looking man, tall and straight as a bulrush, an expert at all athletic games’ and recalled how his grandfather took ‘a tremendous fancy to the splendid little chap, with his flashing black eyes, snow-white teeth, and a smile for anyone.’ As a result, Andy was sent to Sydney to be schooled and joined the mounted police.⁴² When his brother ‘Billy Bull’ died, Andy became ‘king’, in a dramatic corroboree. Broughton’s flowery language is filled with the racism and sexism of the period:

The row of warriors made a splendid picture; with their black bodies covered by queer devices painted in white, the bunches of leaves tied to their ankles making a curious swish, swish, as they kept time to the chant of the old men, who sat on the ground rattling boomerangs together, while the gins hammered away at ‘possum skin drums. As the dancers turned their heads from side to side, the extreme whiteness of their eyes and their flashing teeth made a strange line of relief against the black background of their woolly heads.⁴³

Andy stood ‘half a head above any of his fellows, a very model of symmetry in his war-paint,’ although ‘his education and knowledge of the English language was far above that of the average white man.’⁴⁴

This fluency in Ngunnawal and English cultures was a powerful advantage on the frontier. When Andy’s first wife, called Charlotte or Caroline, was murdered by a Molong man called Billy Dolly,

38 Helen V Lloyd, *Boorowa: Over 160 Years of White Settlement*, Panania: Toveloom, 1990, p 2

39 Lloyd, *Boorowa*, pp 3–4

40 Ann Jackson-Nakano, 2002, cited Dibden, p 15.

41 "King Andy's Revenge." *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 27 March 1912: 45.
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/164296014>

42 Lloyd, *Boorowa*, p 4

43 "King Andy's Revenge", p 4

44 Ibid.

Andy took his revenge in an attack on Boree Nyranng Station in Molong, appearing as ‘a half-painted warrior and half policeman’, brandishing a sword the *Yass Courier* said he had acquired while working with the police.⁴⁵ It is possible that Andy also led an attack in Binda, where 100 people ‘headed by a king adorned with a star on his breast, belonging to the Lachlan Tribe’ threatened the Crookwell blacks’, and sought supplies from Mr F Oakes and Mr Marks at Mary Vale before returning to Carcoar.⁴⁶ These campaign tales show how little the Ngunnawal and Wiradjuri were impeded in their travels or the prosecution of their claims by the English and Irish who squatted on their lands. The gold rushes and the Closer Settlement Acts would change that forever.

Figure 5: Taphoglyphs from Dubbo, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW SPF / 1152 / SPF / 1153. Wiradjuri country was once filled with carved trees, also known as dendroglyphs. Taphoglyphs marked graves, whereas teletoglyphs marked initiation sites. Grave trees faced the grave, to warn those passing of the sacredness of the site. These grave trees were photographed by King Photos for Clifton Cappie Towle in the early 20th century. Trees like this were recorded near Young. See Carved Trees: Aboriginal Cultures of Western New South Wales (Sydney: State Library of New South Wales, 2011), <https://www.anbg.gov.au/aboriginal-resources/Carved-Trees-Guide-State-Library-NSW-3449.pdf>



45. *Yass Courier*, 1871, cited NTSCORP, Orange Aboriginal Heritage Report, 2012, <http://www.orangemuseum.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Orange-Aboriginal-Heritage-Report2012.pdf>, p 42

46. "News From The Interior." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 January 1851, p 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12924197>.



Figure 6: Aboriginal Arborglyph, one of four trees carved by the Boree tribe on the death of Yuranigh, 1847 [i.e. 1850] / J.C.L. Fitzpatrick, Esqre. M.P. with compliments, E. Milne 14/10/1912, State Library of New South Wales, SPF/1149



Figure 7: Aboriginal Arborglyph (carved tree) Yuranigh's grave, Gamboola near Molong 14.10.1912 / JCL Fitzpatrick, Esqre. MP with compliments, E. Milne, State Library of New South Wales, SPF/1150. Edmund Milne (1861-1917), railway stationmaster (later deputy chief commissioner for NSW Railways & Tramways) and collector of Aboriginal artefacts also located, documented and photographed Aboriginal carved trees, found at initiation and burial sites. In 1918 Robert Etheridge (director of the Australian Museum, Sydney) published *The dendroglyphs or "carved trees" of New South Wales* largely based on Milne's sites. Aboriginal guide Yuranigh (d.1850), belonged to the Molong district and accompanied Sir Thomas Mitchell on his expedition to central Queensland, 1845–1846.

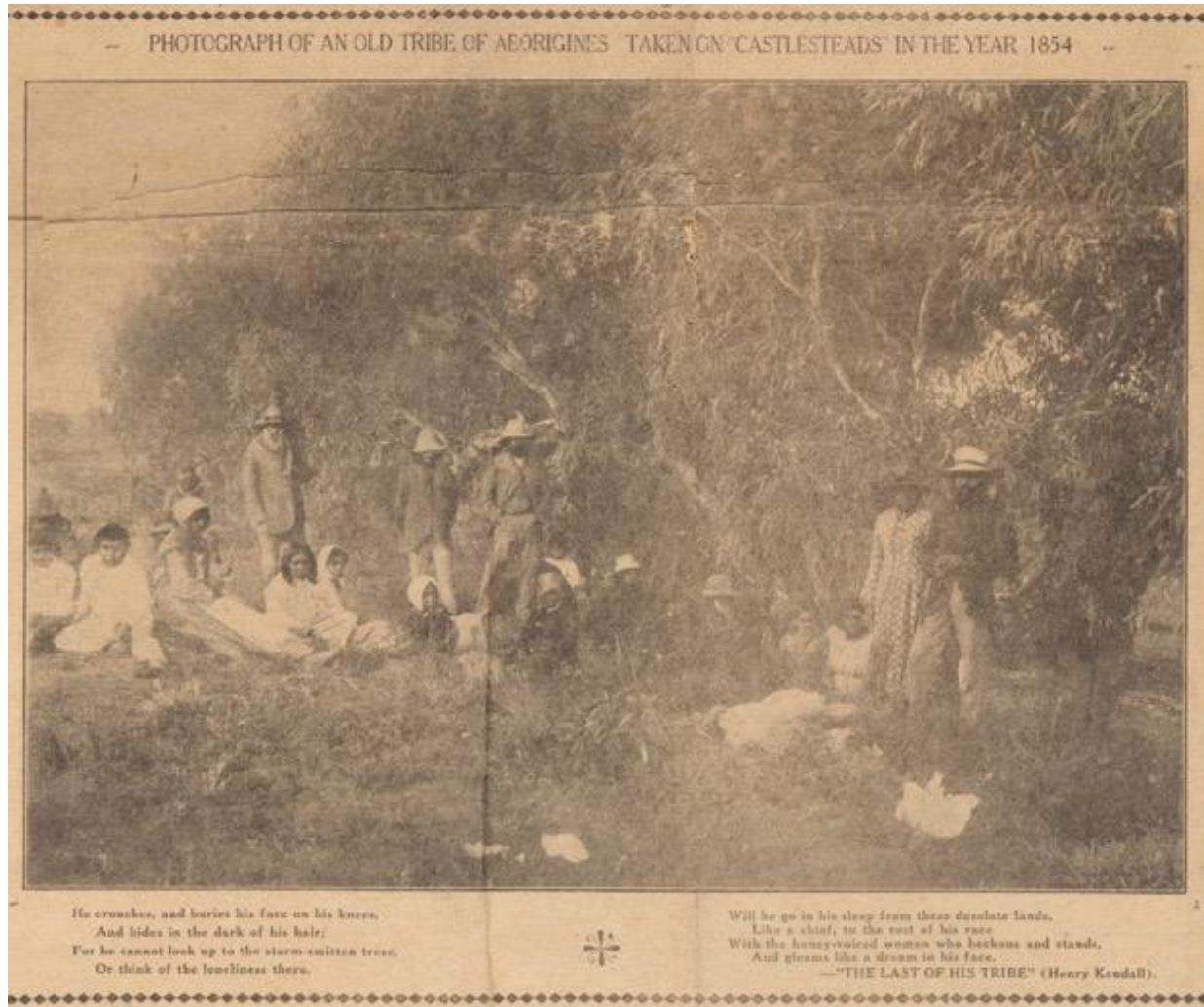


Figure 8: Coexistence. This image from the Burrowa News Diamond Jubilee Special, 10 October 1934 (State Library of New South Wales) is a rare photographic portrait of a community of Aboriginal people on a pastoral station in the 1850s. 'Castlesteads' was taken up by Francis Rawdon Hume, Toongabbie-born son of Andrew Hamilton Hume. Rawdon lived in Boorowa with his wife Emma (née Mitchell) and their 14 children. The property remained in the Hume family until 1933.



Figure 9: Settler-colonists celebrated. Portrait of Francis Rawdon Hume, with wife [Emma Mitchell], circa 1856. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.

By 1850, the largest town in the area was Carcoar, which was boosted by its proximity to gold and other minerals. In January 1851 the Reverend Mr Agnew at the Church of England was hosting services there for 500 people, including the Commissioner and 'a goodly muster of the Lachlan tribe'. It is clear that local Aboriginal people applied the skills they used to support squatters to profit from the diggings:

Nearly all the Cowra, Carcoar, and Molong blacks are encamped at the diggings, together with their gins and piccaninnies, and I believe these sable gentlemen make a good thing of it, by cutting bark, bringing firewood and water, and looking after stray horses. Their tastes have become rather refined of late, and cigars seem to be quite the rage with them; my groom, Grasshopper, of whom I have already made mention, said "baal me smoke pipe any more, smoke it cigar, blackfellow rich now; got it sugar, tea, flour, sheep head along it camp, cabonne times, two, three shillin and tix pence, mind it horse."⁴⁷



Figure 10: "Go it, Frying-pan, head Him down the Flat." Signed "G. Lacy", *Sketches in Australia*, ca. 1851-60? Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, PXD 3.

The gold rushes coincided with another threat to Aboriginal occupation of their traditional lands. The Crown Lands Acts of 1861 enabled the sale of land outside the Nineteen Counties, and the squatters' faced competition for their runs. Prospective settlers could, if they had the capital, select land for one pound an acre, in allotment sizes of 40 to 320 acres, by paying a deposit of one quarter of the price.

47 Sydney Morning Herald, 18 January 1851, p 3, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/12928101>

The population in the Lachlan District increased five-fold by 1871.⁴⁸ The arrival of selectors meant the end of free movement over country for the Wiradjuri and the Ngunnawal, although some families were able to become selectors themselves. Closer settlement ushered in systems of policing and regulation that were antithetical to Aboriginal culture, and which intensified with the creation of the Aborigines Protection Board in 1883 and a system of Aboriginal reserves. Reserves enabled Aboriginal families to maintain connections to country in the Hilltops area, and nearby at Cowra and Yass, but they also became a means of containing and controlling Aboriginal people.

3.4 Aboriginal people after the gold rushes and closer settlement

According to the thematic history of Boorowa prepared by Ruth Longdin, in 1875 Amos Lewis (Aime Louis⁴⁹ [Huon], the illegitimate son of a local settler), of Pajong and French descent, was granted a lease of 80 acres at Flakeney Creek, for himself 'and others'.⁵⁰ Part of the general camping ground further down Pudman Creek was gazetted in 1873 and notified for 'the use of Aborigines' on 5 January 1876. Ann Nakano-Jackson states that Lewis acquired this 48-acre [19.4 hectare] lot, and that it retains his name on a most recent edition of the Parish Map. In the early 1880s ex-convict Henry Wedge and his Pajong wife Clara Woodhouse bought land at Blakney Creek. Ngunnawal man John (Jack) Bell also acquired freehold land at Blakney Creek, where he lived with his eight children with his first wife Janet, who was the daughter of Englishman James Bush, a free settler in the Goulburn and Gunning district with an extensive criminal history.⁵¹ After Janet's death Bell lived with Mary McNally, a Victorian woman of Irish descent who had one daughter. McNally had six more children with John Bell. Bell's farm, filled with his extended family, was often described as a 'camp'.⁵² Lewis and his son James were amongst the families who petitioned for the establishment of the Pudman Creek Provisional School, which was founded in 1880 and operated until the 1930s, catering to European and Aboriginal families.⁵³

In 1995 Peter Rimas Kabaila conducted oral history and archaeology at Pudman Creek, including Russell Hut, which Nakano-Jackson says was granted to Wallabalooa man Albert Lane and his wife, Queen Caroline, or Caroline Chisholm (d. 1909).⁵⁴ Albert Lane was the son of King Andy, or Audi,

48 Lloyd, *Boorowa*, p 23

49 Beyond the Borders Stuart Hamilton Hume (1991) THE ABORIGINAL CONNECTIONS [https://hiddencanberra.webs.com/Locals/Hume per cent 20Family per cent 20Aboriginal.pdf](https://hiddencanberra.webs.com/Locals/Hume%20Family%20Aboriginal.pdf)

50 Jackson-Nakano, *Kamberri*, 32–34, cited R Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, 2015, p 15

51 Ancestry.com, James Bush 1822-1880, <https://www.ancestry.com.au/family-tree/person/tree/27378258/person/5017704240/facts>

52 Dianne Johnson, *Sacred Waters*, pp 141–156.

53 Ann Jackson-Nakano, 142, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 19.

54 Beyond the Borders Stuart Hamilton Hume (1991) f

Lane.⁵⁵ By the 1890s the Lane family comprised 14 people and had three huts that were situated on cleared land with a garden:⁵⁶

The family hut was built next to a large pine tree under which there were sitting benches and washing tubs; a three metre diameter stump remains. In 1995 the hut site contained a built-up earth terrace which marked the approximate extent of the former hut. Flowers such as jonquils grew in planting beds around the hut, and now cover most of the terrace. Several post stumps have been preserved in the soggy ground. Part of a flower bed edge of upturned bottles was found, consisting of two beer bottles with 1927 date stamps. The chimney was made up of sheets of tin riveted together and was found on the ground. ... Russell's hut site is some thirty metres from their 1940s built four roomed weatherboard homestead, half of which has been demolished by its current owners, the Onerwal Aboriginal Land Council.⁵⁷

No such landholdings have been identified in Young, but the advent of the Aborigines Protection Board created a system of records that makes families visible. In 1882, the report of the Protector of Aborigines consisted of a survey of Aboriginal populations across New South Wales. That survey recorded 26 Aboriginal people living at Young, including seven children. Their employment was described as 'In season making opossum rugs, stripping bark, limiting, fishing, &c., others boundary-riding. The settlers act with generosity towards them on all occasions.'⁵⁸ The Protector said he was unable to suggest government aid, as 'there are so few, and these scattered through large districts, and not permanently located in any place.' The Protector recorded that blankets were not sent to the Young sub-district, so people who needed them went to Gundagai (though those provided were often moth-eaten). Medical aid was provided by the Government Medical Officer while the police supplied comforts and provisions when needed. A sour note was struck in the comment that the adults were generally addicted to 'habits of intemperance':

... but I have known males and females who would not take spirits. The liquor is obtained principally at public houses, sometimes from Europeans who take it to their camps. I do not think there is any mode by which drink to the aborigines could be checked.

When musing on 'special information regarding race, likely to be of use and interest in considering their condition', the protector seemed to draw a parallel with other groups he had known:

I have known blacks in the Braidwood and Coast districts very intelligent, who have been and now are excellent farm labourers, and whose aspirations at all times were to be allowed some land which they might call their own in reality; which they might cultivate unmolested for the use of themselves and their families; and where the aborigines of the surrounding districts might meet periodically for the purpose of holding corroborees and other exhilarating games.

This last comment indicates the protector was sensitive to the strength of culture in Young and links with neighbouring groups. While Braidwood is well to the south of Young, to this day it provides a

55 Sam Vincent, 'An Aboriginal Place', *The Monthly*, April 2017, <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2017/april/1490965200/sam-vincent/aboriginal-place>

56 Peter Kabaila, *Wiradjuri places*. ACT: Black Mountain Projects, pp 15–28, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 16

57 Kabaila, p 20, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 17

58 NSW Legislative Assembly, Aborigines. (Report Of The Protector, To 31 December, 1882.) pp 10–11, https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/digitised_collections/remove/91912.pdf

swift route to the coast for people leaving Yass and Canberra and such routes often follow traditional Aboriginal pathways.

In 1884, after the Protector of Aborigines was replaced by the Aborigines Protection Board, there were four adults and ten children living at Pudman Creek in 1884, presumably on the Lewis property. They were in receipt of rations and clothing, which indicates they were struggling to support themselves.⁵⁹ The *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* reported the death of Burrowa Mary at Pudmans Creek on 31 May 1886, describing her as ‘the last of the aboriginal race in the Burrowa district’, although this is clearly untrue. Mary was laid to rest in Rye Park at the same time as Jessie Lewis, ‘a half caste girl’ from Pudmans Creek.⁶⁰ Despite these losses the community remained strong – in 1888, the Protection Board recorded two adults and 37 children living at Yass and Pudman Creek.⁶¹ Oral history accounts describe Queen Caroline (Caroline Lane) as Catholic,⁶² but she is also buried at Rye Park Uniting Church Cemetery.⁶³ The cemeteries of Rye Park contain the remains of settler families and Lane and Lewis families and are monuments to shared histories and the transformations of Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal land by migration.

3.5 Aboriginal people in the twentieth century

In 1893 the Aborigines Protection Board announced it had reserved 107 acres at ‘Flakely Creek’ for Aboriginal people.⁶⁴ The creation of such reserves usually preceded Board coercion of Aboriginal people to live on the sites it preferred. This can be seen at the Lewis and Lane properties at Pudman Creek, which the Board referred to not as a farm, but as a ‘campsite’, as it did with the Bell family.⁶⁵ The Board ignored the recent history of selections and assumed it owned land that was actually freehold, simply because Aboriginal people lived upon it. In 1904 the Board reported:

The Board regret that all efforts to induce the aborigines at Yass to remove from their present camp have proved fruitless, as the camping place is very unhealthy, and there is no wood or water available in the vicinity, and in other respects it is quite unsuitable for an aboriginal camp. Two huts have been erected at Flakney Creek (Pudman Creek), and other dwellings will be provided when the present camp is broken up. As regards the Reserve at the latter place, it was found that one of the half-castes had leased a portion of the land to a neighbouring settler, claiming that it had been set apart for his sole use. As there was no doubt, however, that the land had been reserved for the use of the aborigines generally, the same as all other Aborigines' Reserves, the

59 NSW Legislative Assembly, Report of the Board for Protection of the Aborigines, 1885, Appendix B, p 5.

60 "Burrowa." *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 8 June 1886, p 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98461135>

61 NSW Legislative Assembly, Aborigines. (Report Of Board For Protection Of, For 1888.) p 4, https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/digitised_collections/remove/22828.pdf

62 Nakano-Jackson, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 112

63 Our Footprint - Violet Sheridan, Black and White Films, 2014, https://youtu.be/vLo6Pfb_nIA [screened on SBS TV]

64 "Aborigines' Protection Board." *The Australian Star*, 19 May 1893, p 6. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article227172718>

65 The Bell family are described in the work of Di Johnson and Naomi Parry in Diane Johnson, *Sacred waters: the story of the Blue Mountains gully traditional owners*, Rushcutters Bay: Halstead Press, 2006.

Board declined to recognise the lease.⁶⁶

The Board tried to set up a reserve at Edgerton, that was shunned by locals, but it was exercising other tactics. From 1909 the Protection Board began to develop its system of removing adolescent children, especially girls, from Aboriginal families and established the Cootamundra Girls' Home as a 'training' home and a key institution in the history of the stolen generations of NSW. The vice-president of the Aborigines Protection Board, George Edward Ardill, took a close personal interest in the Cootamundra-Yass-Gundagai region and handpicked girls from the Yass area to place in the Cootamundra Home. In 1912 the Protection Board and the State Children's Relief Department worked together to prosecute more than a dozen children for neglect in the Children's Court, sending Aboriginal girls to Cootamundra and white girls to be boarded out or institutionalised in Sydney, and apprenticing others.⁶⁷ These raids devastated many poor families in the district and Mary McNally, by then a widow, lost her eldest daughter, a white girl, in the Children's Court before fleeing with her younger Ngunnawal children to Katoomba's Gully.

As the Bell family at Blakney Creek dispersed, the Aborigines Protection Board sold off the land to farmers. Such actions were part of a wider story, in which Aboriginal communities across New South Wales struggled as the Board tightened its controls, boxed them into ever-smaller reserves, and restricted their right to move freely. As Sarah Musgrave mused in 1926:

The blacks are now in the remnant stage of existence, and, unless the Government changes its present stupid policy of unsympathetic guardianship, this native race must soon completely die out.⁶⁸

3.6 Claiming country – the opening of Parliament House

Aboriginal people were not about to die out – in fact they were entering a period of protest that hinged around land rights. In May 1927, Parliament House in Canberra was officially opened, and two Aboriginal men – described variously as being from Gundagai and Canberra – walked there to register their presence. Nangar or Yangar, known to white Australians as "King Billy" or Jimmy Clements, was about 80 in 1927 and said he had walked from the Mount Hope Ranges. *The Daily Telegraph* described him and his companion John Noble (Marvellous) as sole survivors of their race. While the depiction of Nangar is less than flattering, his words have a particular power:

"I have opened your Parliament House on my own ground," he said, with an unsteady gesture; "now you can go and look at it."⁶⁹

66 NSW Legislative Assembly, ABORIGINES PROTECTION BOARD. (REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1903), https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/digitised_collections/remove/22888.pdf

67 Naomi Parry, 'Such a longing': black and white children in welfare in New South Wales and Tasmania, 1880-1940, History PhD, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, UNSW 2007, pp 322-323

68 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, 1

69 "Nothing Wrong With Canberra Opening, Says "King Billy"" *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 May 1927, p 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article245750627>.



Figure 11: [King Billy, i.e. Jimmy Clements in foreground of Parliament House], National Library of Australia, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-137073914>

A Fairfax photograph depicted Nangar in a scruffy coat with dogs at his feet, and a librarian annotated it as "King Billy, the last Aboriginal King of Canberra, [Monaro tribe] being turned away from the opening of Parliament, May, 1927. He died shortly after in a mud hovel outside Queanbeyan."⁷⁰ Nangar was also mocked by the execrable 1928 film *The Birth of White Australia*, which was funded by the business people of Young.⁷¹

According to other sources Nangar stayed in the region for about five months, living with the support of the residents of Moore's subdivision at Queanbeyan until he died in Rutledge Street Sunday 28 Aug 1927. But he had made an impact – his passing was reported by *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sun*, *Queanbeyan Age*, *Cooma Express*, *Braidwood Dispatch* and *Bombala Times*, *Temora Independent*, *Jerilderie Herald*, *Orana Advertiser* and *Burrowa News*. As Mark McKenna says of the moment Nangar passed before the Duke and Duchess:

70 King Billy, the last Aboriginal King of Canberra, being turned away from the opening of Parliament, May, 1927 [picture], Lent for copying by EM McDonald, Canberra and District Historical Society, National Library of Australia, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-137183463>

71 "THE BIRTH OF WHITE AUSTRALIA" *The Daily News*, 27 May 1927, p 9. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article78745747>.

As the *Argus* reported, 'an ancient aborigine, who calls himself King Billy and who claims sovereign rights to the Federal Territory, walked slowly forward alone, and saluted the Duke and Duchess. They cheerily acknowledged his greeting'.

A photograph of Clements appeared in the same edition of the *Argus*. This image appeared under the headline 'Demanded his Rights'.

The caption accompanying the photo read; 'This is the member of the Gundagai tribe who, as representative of the original Aboriginal owners of the land, was given a prominent place at the historic ceremony in Canberra yesterday. He carried in his right hand a small Australian ensign'.

The experience of Jimmy Clements at the opening of Parliament House bears the pathos, perseverance and tenacity of all Aboriginal people in the wake of colonisation ... the Aboriginal man who 'claims sovereign rights' at the very moment the sovereignty of the Crown and the Australian parliament is asserted.

The most famous photograph of Clements [Figure 12], a lone figure sitting in the dirt, the whitefellas' sacred site behind him, his hands clutching the flag ... seems like an eerie precursor of the Tent Embassy, founded in 1972. Many in the crowd allegedly acknowledged that Clements, by virtue of his Aboriginality, had a better right than anyone to be present in Canberra on that day. Yet Clements' very presence was a reminder that his better right and the rights of his people had been forgotten in the forging of the Australian Commonwealth.⁷²

Other photographers, such as Sam Hood, depicted Nangar with the dignity he was due.



Figure 12: Sam Hood, Nangar or Yangar of the Wiradjuri Tribe, an Aboriginal known as Jimmy Clements or "King Billy", at the opening of Federal Parliament, 1927, State Library of New South Wales, Home and Away – 5389.*

72

Mark McKenna, The Need for a Reconciled Republic, Manning Clark House, https://web.archive.org/web/20071008002915/http://www.manningclark.org.au/papers/reconciled_republic.htm

3.7 Breaking up communities

The guardianship of the Protection Board gave way to the assimilation policies of the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1940, and many people were pressured, through the scrutiny of child welfare officers and the denial of schooling, pensions and child endowment, and by restrictions on ownership of property and simple pleasures like access to public houses, to move into townships or onto reserves. During this period Erambie at Cowra, a tiny reserve of just 32 acres, attracted people from Hilltops, Brungle (Gundagai), Yass and Cowra because it rarely had a resident manager. In the late 1970s historian Peter Read worked with residents and former residents of the Erambie Reserve at Cowra.⁷³ At its peak, there were eighteen cottages and 145 residents at Cowra Station.⁷⁴ They worked in agricultural industries and as drovers and shearers as far away as Warangesda at Darlington Point and Condobolin, Locky Ingram, born in 1905, recalled the people of Erambie travelling to Young to pick cherries.⁷⁵ and prunes,⁷⁶ and historian Maree Lamb told Ray Christison that Aboriginal pickers worked in family units, as was the case on Clonnel in Maimaru.⁷⁷ Enid Freeman, interviewed in 2003 by the Migration Heritage Centre, picked cherries for 15 years with her husband Keith, a Wiradjuri man descended from Grandfather Baboo, who was paddock boss on the Cunich and Jasprizza properties. She worked with Europeans on working holidays and worked and socialised with Kooris, Murris and Nyungars from Brungle, Tumut, Griffith, Condobolin, Forbes, Cowra and as far away as Robinvale and Shepparton. She described putting her babies in baskets in the trees while she worked from 6am to 4pm every day, picking prunes at Griffith and asparagus at Jugiong, and working the packing sheds. The families that travelled to service these industries were valued by the orchardists, although not all orchardists were fair or provided adequate accommodation.⁷⁸

Eddie Smith, born in 1943 at Cowra but fair-skinned, recalled being harassed by the police in Young for supplying alcohol to Aborigines, despite his protestations that he was himself Aboriginal.⁷⁹

Wiradjuri man Kevin Gilbert,⁸⁰ who was born in Condobolin, wrote the first play by an Aboriginal person in 1968, and it has a name anyone in Young will respond to – *The Cherry Pickers*. It is about spiritual searching and loss – ‘my people pushed into refugee situations, desocialised if you like’ – and depicts a group of itinerant workers, waiting interminably for the opening of the cherry season and a respite from starvation and Board control, and talking of creation myths and tribal ritual, while

73 Peter Read, *Down there with me on the Cowra Mission: an oral history of Erambie Aboriginal Reserve, Cowra*, New South Wales, Sydney: Pergamon Press, 1984, pp 3–4

74 Read, *Down there with me on the Cowra Mission*, p 11

75 Read, *Down there with me on the Cowra Mission*, p 42

76 Read, *Down there with me on the Cowra Mission*, p 52

77 Ray Christison, *Thematic History of Young Shire*, 2008.

78 Ray Gilchrist, *Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW*, 2003, Enid Freeman, Wiradjuri

79 Read, *Down there with me on the Cowra Mission*, p 80

80 Alison Holland and Eleanor Williams-Gilbert, 'Gilbert, Kevin John (1933–1993)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gilbert-kevin-john-18569/text30225>, published online 2018.

engaging in political oratory, dirty jokes and songs.⁸¹ Gilbert's play, and his poetry and activism, was part of the movements for recognition of Aboriginal cultural identity and civil rights that ultimately ended the Aborigines Welfare Board. The lack of decent education and work locally led the Freemans to encourage their children to leave the area.⁸²

The Lanes held onto their land at Pudman Creek until the 1960s, when the last resident, Les Lane, died.⁸³ Elma Pearsall told Ann Jackson-Nakano 'Pudman was our home, we all loved the place, but everybody moved away because we had to get work. The place just got left.'⁸⁴ The people have remained in the area and descendants of the Lanes have intermarried with families bearing the names of the earliest pioneers of the districts.⁸⁵ The Pudman Creek site is owned by the Onerwal Land Council and remains significant to the families of former residents.⁸⁶ Substantial ruins of a mud hut were extant in 2014.⁸⁷ cherries

Culture survives in Hilltops, as local author Gabrielle Chan pointed out in *Rusted Off* in 2018. Jacko Levett is a Wiradjuri man. His father was born in Wombat but left to work on the railways and Jacko was born in Mittagong and spent time in Queensland, far from his own country. He has returned to the Harden-Murrumburrah area and as he relearns the culture of the area, he teaches it to children and local residents, while helping schools support Aboriginal children. Chan writes about Jacko's sense about Murrumburrah [Murrumboola]:

Jacko says there was a local tribe living two doors down on a site beside the Murrumboola Creek, a Wiradjuri word for 'two canoes'. Murrumboola was his people's summer camp. Their winter camp was on a nearby hill, which must have been as cold as charity.

Everything has a meaning, Jacko says. He has found hammer stones and culturally modified trees that mark travelling routes. These tell you where you are. He looks after them for the local Land Council and answers any queries that come through local government. He doesn't want anything for it. It's interesting just tracing it. Jacko makes it his business to get things right, get evidence and 'cover your own tail so it doesn't come back and bite you'.

So much of modern bush culture must have seeped from Indigenous culture. Jacko knows where the Ngunnawal (Canberra) tribe used to come into Wiradjuri country. He knows the natural features of the landscape that act as boundary markers for the edge of Wiradjuri country.⁸⁸

Levett's knowledge makes Chan think of the way country people give directions – utterly confounding to her and her Singaporean-born father, but obvious to people who know a landscape

81 The Academy, 'Cherry Pickers', https://resource.acu.edu.au/siryan/Academy/texts/cherry_pickers.htm

82 The Academy, 'Cherry Pickers', https://resource.acu.edu.au/siryan/Academy/texts/cherry_pickers.htm.

83 Kabaila, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 15

84 Nakano-Jackson, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 20.

85 Beyond the Borders Stuart Hamilton Hume, *Ibid*

86 Ann Jackson-Nakano, "The Weereewaa History Series Volumes I & II: remarks by Ann Jackson-Nakano", *Aboriginal History*, Vol. 26 (2002), pp 214–216

87 Our Footprint - Violet Sheridan, Black and White Films, 2014, https://youtu.be/vLo6Pfb_nIA

88 Gabrielle Chan, *Rusted Off* (Sydney: Penguin Random House, 2018), 47

well. Levett told her about how Aboriginal people have become part of the local community and how white people have occupied their sites:

In the latest census, 8.4 per cent of the local area identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, compared with 3.3 per cent nationally. Jacko says the number equates to a couple of hundred people registered.

‘I don’t know what house they hide under because they are part-Aboriginal and the children are still identifying, but they don’t get involved in anything. I talk at the school and try to tell them what I am doing. They all see me up the street and say, “Hi, Jacko,” and I try to get them involved doing some painting or something, but nuh.’

It is me who steers Jacko’s conversation to the frontier wars and how the Wiradjuri people were pushed off their land.⁸⁹ He doesn’t think there was much violence. But do we know what happened to these particular families living on the creek here? Probably like everywhere else, says Jacko, they moved on. ‘They stayed here and stayed here and stayed here, and eventually most of them moved on.’ Looking for somewhere better, he says. The Murrumburrah post office was built on their camp on the creek.⁸⁹

Chan is also curious about Jacko’s experience of racism:

I want to know what it was like growing up Indigenous in a rural area. ‘I didn’t take any notice. It doesn’t matter to me whether you are green, yellow or white. I used to cop a lot of stick, but I was a good fighter and that’s what it was. If you could look after yourself, you would look after yourself and that’s the way it was in those years.’⁹⁰

For Chan, Jacko’s attitude of looking after yourself reflects a view she finds across Harden-Murrumburrah and in most country towns – as she puts it, the importance and power of having a sense of place. Roy and his daughter Amanda are working to rediscover their cultural heritage in Hilltops and are becoming involved with farmers and building relationships that help them identify scarred trees, artefacts and other markers of their country and Amanda has developed the Yalbinyagirri program for school children. In 2018, Jacko was invited to perform official ‘Welcome to Country’ for the first time and this means Aboriginal voices are beginning to be heard in Hilltops.⁹¹

89 *Ibid*, p 50

90 *Ibid*

91 *Ibid*

4 European land use – beyond the limits of location



Figure 13: detail, showing the Boorowa River, of Thomas Mitchell's 1838 map of the Colony of New South Wales. The south eastern portion of Australia showing the routes of the three expeditions and the surveyed territory, London: TW Boone, 29 New Bond Street, 1838, National Library of Australia, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-230586259>

As soon as the ships of the First Fleet arrived, British expeditioners, surveyors and cartographers began to draw up maps of the terrain. As they travelled, they laid their ideas over the landscape and over the understandings of Aboriginal people. Within a few months of the settlement of Port Jackson the government had mapped Cumberland County, which filled the Sydney basin and was bounded by the Blue Mountains.¹ The Blue Mountains was crossed in 1813 and in 1821 the Australian-born explorer Hamilton Hume and WH Broughton had discovered the Yass Plains, where Hume would later settle.²

1 Ann Moyal, 'Surveyors: Mapping the Distance, Early Surveying in Australia', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/essay/22/text34969>, originally published 25 August 2017.

2 Stuart H. Hume, 'Hume, Hamilton (1797–1873)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hume-hamilton-2211/text2869>, 1966.

The settlement soon overflowed the basin and new counties surrounded Cumberland until, in 1826 Governor Darling defined the Nineteen Counties. In October 1829, Darling proclaimed the boundaries of these Nineteen as the limits of location³ – the line beyond which no land would be sold and the colonial authorities would afford no protection.

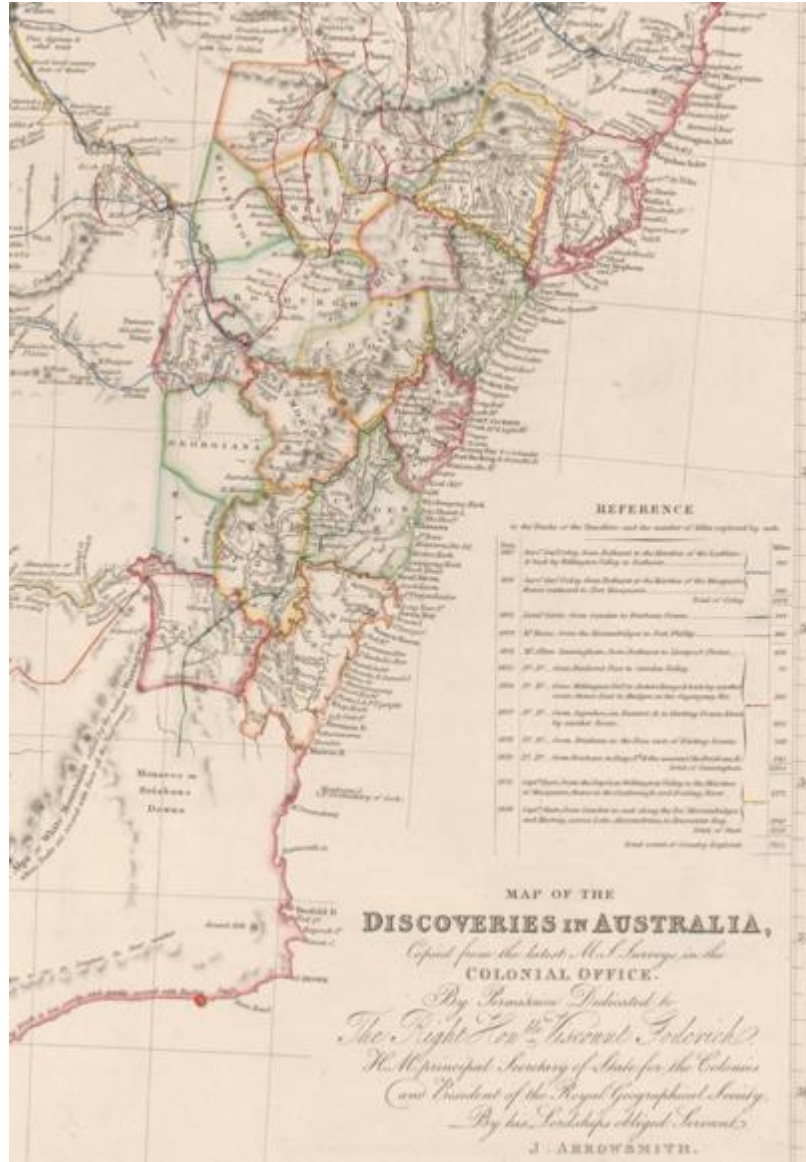


Figure 14: Map of the discoveries in Australia: copied from the latest M.S. Surveys in the Colonial Office / by permission dedicated to the Right Hon'ble. Viscount Goderich, H.M., principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, and President of the Royal Geographical Society, by his Lordship's obliged servant J. Arrowsmith, 1832, nla.obj-231944045.tif

What we now know as Hilltops was outside these limits of location. English cartographer John Arrowsmith drew the Nineteen Counties for the Colonial Secretary in 1832, marking an indistinct line on the western boundary of the County of King.⁴ The Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell and

³ Government Order, No 50, published in the Sydney Gazette, 17 October 1829.

⁴ Map of the discoveries in Australia: copied from the latest M.S. Surveys in the Colonial Office / by permission dedicated to the Right Honble. Viscount Goderich, H.M., principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, and

cartographer John Carmichael drew in that boundary and identified it as the Burrowa/Burrowa River.⁵ The maps of Arrowsmith and Mitchell and Carmichael do not show any towns or property west of the County of King, but migrants had already made their way to Hilltops. They were squatters and chancers, and they had been there for some time.

The first to arrive in the area and take up land was almost certainly the emancipated English convict James White, who seems to have arrived at Burrangong in 1826.

The others came quickly, as Mr Chester Smith told the Young Rotary Club in 1946:

In 1827 John Frost occupied a run called Stoney Creek holding, which passed on to one Mulholland in 1842. By 1830 many leases had been taken up, among the principal ones were: Alexander Mackay (Wallendbeen); James Roberts (Currawong); J. Cummings (Combanning); Dacey and O'Brien (Stockinbingal); E. Ryan (Galong); I. Harris (Callangan); Capt. Grant (Douglas); Mr. Chapman (Callabash); and others. In 1833 came John Wood (Brundah); Gibson Bros. (Bogabogalong and Crackable), Major Stewart (The Gap). The Gap passed on to The Chew family in 1860. In 1835 we find Myles Crowther, who, in 1845, sold to Major General Stewart, and he later sold to John Pring; while in that year also, Henry Owen (Bombaldra) came into view, selling out later to the progenitor of the Watt family. John and Phillip Croaker (Burrowmunditroy); Marsh and Wild (Demondrille), and de Laurel (Wooden Mountain) came into the picture in 1849. By 1860 the whole of the area surrounding James White's Burrangong was taken up.⁶

All these names are the names of migrants, although some of these landowners, like James Roberts, were born in Australia – Currawong is the only property continuously held by the family of the original squatter.⁷ Mackay was a Scot, Ned Ryan was Irish, and many others were English. These cultural divides still affect the nature of the towns today.

Sarah Musgrave described the land grab of the squatting era as if it were the most natural thing in the world:

The taking up of a station in those days was a simple enough matter, after one had reached a desirable place on which to squat, providing, of course, one got a passport from the blacks, and escaped the many dangers that travellers met in the unknown bush. The only legal formality to be gone through was to notify the government that one had squatted and pay the sum of ten pounds a year for the privilege of continuing to squat.⁸

President of the Royal Geographical Society, by his Lordship's obliged servant J. Arrowsmith, 1832, nla.obj-231944045.tif

5 To the Right Honorable Edward Geoffrey Smith Stanley this map of the Colony of New South Wales [1834]. Drawn by T.L. Mitchell; engraved by John Carmichael. [Album view], Mitchell Library, M MC 811/1834/1B, see also <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/collection-items/right-honorable-edward-geoffrey-smith-stanley-map-colony-new-south-wales>; Thomas Mitchell's 1838 map of the Colony of New South Wales. The south eastern portion of Australia showing the routes of the three expeditions and the surveyed territory, London: TW Boone, 29 New Bond Street, 1838, National Library of Australia, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-230586259>

6 "INTERESTING HISTORICAL ADDRESS" *The Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*, 14 October 1946, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115910017>.

7 'Do You Like Twin Town History? Check Out The Story on Currawong', *Twin Town Times*, 10 April 2016, http://twintowntimes.com.au/_/2016/04/do-you-like-twin-town-history-check-out-the-story-on-currawong/

8 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, 2

The hardships were manifold – Musgrave’s own father got lost and died on his way to Marengo and flooding and other dangers cost many lives. Until the 1860s, when the gold rushes created the need for law and order, Hilltops was frontier country, with few protections for settlers. This was ideal for settlers who, like Musgrave’s father and uncle, needed to reinvent themselves.

4.1 Convict stories

The British colonisation of Australia was particularly effective because of the phenomenon of convict transportation, which a form of forced mass migration from the British Isles. Between 1788 and 1842, some 80,000 men, women and children who had been convicted in British courts were ordered to serve their sentences in the Colony of New South Wales. Two thirds of them were English (including Scottish and Welsh), and the remaining third were Irish.⁹ Convicts were sent also sent to Australia from India, America, Canada, Hong Kong, the Caribbean, South Africa and New Zealand, including Indigenous Maori men from New Zealand and Khoi San from South Africa.¹⁰ Along with them came some free settlers and entrepreneurs and the Royal Navy Marines who served the Colonial apparatus. It was a police state, but one with very few walls.

Convicts usually received sentences of seven or 14 years, or life. As most (although by no means all) convicts were poor, they could not afford to return to their home countries at the expiration of their sentences, and in any case, complicated probationary conditions like the ticket-of-leave system constrained them to stay. For the vast majority of convicts, a sentence of transportation meant they were permanently exiled from their homes, their extended family, and everything they had once known. They became a free labour source for people who had capital and at the end of their sentence they were effectively cut loose and had to find their own way. The system contained much abuse, degradation and tragedy, and many of those transported never found their way out of the underclasses. It also created incredible opportunities for those who wanted to make a fresh start.

Even while they were under sentence, convicts married and had children. Once their sentence was over and they were emancipated, they could buy land from the government and start businesses alongside free settlers. Their children were ‘currency’ lads and lasses – a term popularised by Horatio Spencer Howe Wills, the native-born son of a transported highwayman.¹¹ Sterling was the only legal

9 State Records NSW, Convicts Guide, <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/collections-and-research/guides-and-indexes/convicts-guide>

10 Kristyn Harman, *Aboriginal convicts: Australian, Khoisan and Maori exiles*, Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2012.

11 C. E. Sayers, 'Wills, Horatio Spencer Howe (1811–1861)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/wills-horatio-spencer-howe-2799/text3993>, 1967. Wills and almost his entire family were killed by Aborigines when he tried to squat on Cullinlaringo Station in Queensland in 1861.

tender in New South Wales but it was in short supply in the colonies so 'currency' was used, though it was seen as being of inferior quality, and carrying a whiff of subordination.¹²

The stigma of convict heritage is fading in the age of Ancestry.com and *Who Do You Think You Are?* Modern day family researchers often celebrate if they find a convict in their family tree, but most founding families in Australia covered up their convict origins and those long, deep silences are a feature of the stories and written history of Hilltops. Sarah Musgrave (formerly Regan, née White), was the first white baby born in the area and released her recollections of Burrangong Station and the Young District as *The Wayback* in 1927. She depicted her father and uncles as free settlers who worked in the Hawkesbury and Van Diemen's Land before heading over the Great Divide to Hilltops.¹³ James White's story was romanticised by the children's author Nancy Keesing, who adapted *The Wayback* into a rollicking children's story called *Gravel and Gum*¹⁴ in 1963. She never questioned Musgrave's account of her uncle's arrival in New South Wales and his time farming in the Hawkesbury. Nor did William A Bayley when he wrote the Young history *Rich Earth*.¹⁵ But James White was a convict who acquired his Hawkesbury allotment on a ticket-of-leave, and so was Musgrave's father John.¹⁶

The Irish convicts who took up large runs in Hilltops had less reason to hide their origins, as they were associated with political movements that had challenged the British Government. Ned Ryan, founder of Galong, kept his ticket-of-leave, and it is part of the display at St Clement's monastery. He and his cousin Roger Corcoran had both been convicted of an attack on a Tipperary Hospital in 1815. They were revolutionary White Boys yet they were assigned to Deputy Surveyor James Meehan, a veteran of the 1798 Irish Rebellion.¹⁷ Meehan had made good in the Colony and lived in Appin, where he had illustrious neighbours who had all been rewarded for their colonial service with grants from Governor Macquarie. These neighbours included the Broughton family, whose patriarch William had arrived on the First Fleet as a servant to Surgeon James White¹⁸; the family of Scots-Presbyterian Alexander Hamilton Hume,¹⁹ whose chequered career seems not to have hindered his three sons;

12 John N. Molony (2000). *The Native-born: The First White Australians*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing. p 25.

13 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, Young: Young Historical Society, 1984, pp 1–2.

14 Nancy Keesing, *Gravel and Gum: the story of a pioneering family*, Melbourne: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1963.

15 William A Bayley, *Rich Earth: A history of Young New South Wales*, Young: Young Municipal Council, 1956 and 1977, p 16.

16 Daniella White, 'Young's first family rediscovered' *The Young Witness*, 23 February 2015, <https://www.youngwitness.com.au/story/2897441/youngs-first-family-rediscovered/>

17 TM Perry, 'Meehan, James (1774–1826)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/meehan-james-2443/text3257>, 1967.

18 Vivienne Parsons, 'Broughton, William (1768–1821)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/broughton-william-1831/text2105>, 1966.

19 JV Byrnes, 'Hume, Andrew Hamilton (1762–1849)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hume-andrew-hamilton-2210/text2867>, 1966.

along with William Hilton Hovell²⁰ and the noted surveyor John Oxley.²¹ It is worth mentioning that Appin was the location of a horrific massacre of Aboriginal people on 17 April 1816, when, as part of reprisals ordered by Governor Macquarie, soldiers under the command of Captain James Wallis drove at least 14 Gandangara and Dharawal men, women, and children, over the cliffs of the Cataract Gorge. Hume had good relationships with the people who lived on his property but they were tested by that event.²² It is impossible to imagine that the Wiradjuri of Hilltops did not hear of these killings.

Ryan accompanied Meehan on a visit to the Jerringomar Valley in April 1820. Not too long after Ryan received his ticket of leave in 1825 he returned, with his cousin, and carved out a vast area of land – 80,000 hectares – that would shape Boorowa and Hilltops and entrench the influence of Irish Catholicism over the district.

As one old-timer said, Ned Ryan was often depicted in his later life as a “dear little kind old gentleman” but he took up land out to The Bland – ‘you’re not a dear little kind old gentleman if you’re that sort of person can pinch all that kind of country, he must have been tough as nuts ... you get a very wrong impression of him from King of Galong Castle.’ Ryan also had a ‘running de facto relationship’ that his wife nearly discovered when she arrived, and descendants of that family still live in Young today.²³

Hilltops was gradually settled from the mid-1820s until the 1860s, but throughout this period the main towns in the Central West were Carcoar, Yass, Goulburn, Cowra and Bathurst. In this period Boorowa, located on a river, was the most important town in the area, closely followed by Murringo, which was located at a natural passage through the mountains. This changed when gold was discovered at Lambing Flat on Burrangong Station and a wave of urban development was triggered.

20 TM Perry, Hovell, William Hilton (1786–1875)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hovell-william-hilton-2202/text2847>, 1966

21 EW Dunlop, 'Oxley, John Joseph (1784–1828)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/oxley-john-joseph-2530/text3431>, 1967

22 Grace Karskens, Appin Massacre, *The Dictionary of Sydney*, 2015, https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/appin_massacre

23 Local historian Dick Littlejohn interviewed by Steven Guth for the Galong oral history project [sound recording].

5 The gold rushes and mass migration



Figure 15: *Camp scene*, George Lacy, circa 1850–1860. Dixon Library, State Library of New South Wales, DL Pf 135

In February 1851, Edmund Hammond Hargraves, another chancer who had just returned from the Californian goldfields, travelled to the Bathurst area and convinced local stockmen to find alluvial gold, which they did, in an area Hargraves would name Ophir.¹ On 2 May 1851, Hargraves publicised his find and *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported ‘it is no longer any secret that gold has been found in the earth in several places in the western country’.² On 22 May 1851 the government confirmed the find.³ The stage was set for the Australian gold rushes and the colonies were about to be transformed.

The economy tip-tilted from agricultural and pastoral activity into a nascent industrialism.

Agricultural workers walked off the land and abandoned pastoral stations, ships’ crews deserted, the colonial capitals were emptied of men (who often left their wives and children behind, although many women did go to the diggings and live rough). Citadels of canvas and weatherboard grew up around the diggings, and roads were carved into the interior to carry stage coaches and transport the newfound mineral wealth. The gold rushes also created a law and order nightmare that had long been

1 State Library of NSW, Eureka! The rush for gold: Rumours of gold, <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/eureka-rush-gold/rumours-gold>

2 *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 May 1851: 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12926747>.

3 State Library of NSW, Eureka! The rush for gold: Off to the diggings: the gold rush, <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/eureka-rush-gold/diggings>

feared by the new Colonial governments⁴ – while licensing systems were quickly established to ensure miners paid for their claims and policing networks were dramatically expanded, bushrangers became a scourge of transport routes and miners proved themselves only too ready to organise against authority. The gold rushes were a period of dramatic social change.

More than 600,000 new migrants entered Australia during the gold rushes and they came from all over the world – from America, Poland, Germany, Italy, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and China. They had taken enormous risks to travel to Australia and were determined to advance themselves:

... The Australian diggings were a social frontier, containing endless social possibilities, albeit rife with serious racial and cultural problems. They were a contested civic space that initially defied definitive or successful regulation but were typified by a high degree of social transformation that tended to invert the social order experienced in Britain or Europe.⁵

As Keir Reeves has written, “the people who came to the Antipodes represented a cosmopolitan and multicultural group, and the diggings became kaleidoscopic places of cultural complexity and political dissent.”⁶

The community and camaraderie of the white people on the diggings took little account of place of birth and lent itself to politicisation. On the Victorian goldfields, European miners’ resistance against licensing fees grew into Chartist demands for equal rights, democracy, and the vote, and culminated in the deaths of 33 miners and five soldiers in the Eureka Stockade of 3 December 1854. Its significance is contested but the miners’ defiance of the authorities and their demand for the vote at Eureka Stockade are generally seen as powerful moments in the development of responsible government in Australia. The Eureka Flag, with its depiction of the Southern Cross, lovingly stitched by mining women,⁷ remains a beloved symbol of the democratic aims of the union movement and Australian independence, although it has also become a touchstone for a radical and sometimes unpleasant nationalism and racism that persists until the present day.⁸

One of the ironies of the diggings is that cooperative effort and radicalism, and calls for mateship and equality, were accompanied by racism and exclusion, which was mostly directed at Chinese diggers. This was a prime example of populist conflict with colonial authorities, because the free movement of Chinese people helped the British maintain their access to Chinese ports and Chinese labourers were

4 Keir Reeves, ‘15 July 1851 Hargreaves discovers gold at Ophir: Australia’s “Golden Age”’, in Martin Crotty and David Roberts (eds) *Turning points in Australian history* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2009), pp 62–73.

5 Keir Reeves, ‘15 July 1851 Hargreaves discovers gold at Ophir: Australia’s “Golden Age”’, p 66

6 Keir Reeves, *ibid*

7 Stephen Thompson, Migration Heritage Centre, Objects Through Time: 1854 The Eureka Flag, 2011, <http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime/1854-the-eureka-flag/index.html>

8 Ben Neutze, Has the Southern Cross become a symbol of Australian racism?, *Daily Review* 9 June 2017, <https://dailyreview.com.au/southern-cross-become-symbol-australian-racism/60939/>

highly valued in the Imperial economies. However, the NSW Parliament had already rejected one bill to restrict Chinese immigration in 1858 and was again debating the issue in 1860, when gold was struck at Lambing Flat.⁹

5.1 The beginnings of the gold field at Lambing Flat

The diggings began at Lambing Flat in 1860, although the story about who discovered it varies. Sarah Musgrave described her first husband, Regan, in company with Alexander 'the Yank' seeing his horses kick up gold:

Mr Regan saw in the ground where the earth had been broken up by the horses' hoofs a glistening piece of metal which he thought was gold. He and his cook, a man named Alexander, then began prospecting on a little creek close by, and almost at its junction with the main creek. Their prospecting implements consisted of a shovel, a pick, and the lid of a billy can, and while one dug for gold the other washed the dirt. Almost immediately they struck gold. This was in March 1860, and the news of the discovery, travelling quickly, a rush set in and did not abate until the end of 1861. By that time there were thirty thousand miners settled on Lambing Flat, which had been proclaimed a diggings.¹⁰

There is another story about the discovery, from a cousin of Musgrave's. According to Thomas White gold was first discovered "by a man called Portuguese Dick" and a stock keeper named Mick Sheedy, who then reported the find.¹¹ *The Yass Courier* told the story this way:

GOLD FROM LAMBING FLAT.-Mr. Michael Sheedy called at our office on Monday last, for the purpose of showing us a very excellent sample of gold, weighing 7 1/2 ounces, procured from Lambing Flat. The colour is very bright, and many of the grains appear to have been flattened by igneous action. Lambing Flat is thirty-two miles from Bennelong, and about twenty miles from Murrumburrah, and is situate on Mr. James White's squattage. Mr. Sheedy says that it is about four weeks last Friday when he and several other persons were out looking for horses: they camped at this station. An American who acted as cook, and who was familiar with the appearance of many other gold-fields, was struck with the appearance of the place; he washed a few spadefulls of the surface earth, and succeeded in getting a good prospect of gold. The horses having been procured, Mr. Sheedy and party started for Binalong, and a few days afterwards returned with six men, well supplied with tools and provisions, determined to test the auriferous quality of the place. They commenced working, but in a few days some of the party had to leave the place, on account of the influenza. In the second dishful washed was a nugget of 7 dwts. There were about fifty persons at this place when Mr. Sheedy left on Sunday last, but some had come badly supplied with tools and provisions, and had been compelled to leave to procure them. The sample shown us was procured by a party of four, in three feet sinking in the creek.

Gold is also found by surfacing. A good prospect has been found within three or four miles from Lambing Flat.-Yass Courier.¹²

By September 1860 there were 500 men on the field, and the country was reported to be auriferous for twenty miles around.¹³ By October, the same newspaper observed that, 'the labour being light, this

9 "Colonial Parliament. New South Wales." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 April 1860: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13039042>.

10 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 52

11 "101 Not Out", *The Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*, 8 February 1918

12 'Gold News', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 August 1860, p 5. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13043902>

13 'News Of The Day.', *Freeman's Journal*, 12 September 1860, p 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article114839608>

place is likely to be a favourite' with Chinese miners. Still, European miners outnumbered the Chinese by eight to one.

The important feature of the gold mining at Lambing Flat was that it was, for the most part, alluvial gold, that is gold dust found in river sediments. Such gold is referred to as a poor man's diggings – while such goldfields require little effort or capital to work and reward fossickers and those using simple sluicing mechanisms, but they also provide little reward. As Ray Christison observes, alluvial gold rushes attracted large numbers of small prospectors who tried their luck then moved on to other rushes.¹⁴ The nature of the goldfield goes some way to explaining what would later occur with the Chinese at Lambing Flat.

The area of alluvial gold was soon found to be extensive, some 20 by 16 square kilometres. Miners flocked from other goldfields and by October 1860 1,500 men were working the area. By April 1861 this had grown to 10,000.¹⁵ European miners, often working in pairs or family groups, pegged out claims ten feet (approximately 3 metres) square on any promising spot that was not already pegged:

The first job was to sink a hole – about four feet square. In a two--man party one worked below, digging and filling buckets. The other hauled up the buckets on a rope or, with less effort, by windlass, and tipped the mullock onto an ever--growing heap. When the hole eventually 'bottomed' the man below carefully shovelled up the wash dirt and sent it to the top. With his Bowie knife he scraped along small ridges and crevices in the bed of the rock for in them much of the gold could be deposited. On a one or two man claim the 'washing stuff' was stock piled. Saturday was the usual 'washing-- up' day.¹⁶

Mining in this way was water-intensive, precarious and haphazard. The Department of Mines later noted:

As early as the years 1862 and 1863 a few shafts were bottomed with payable, or even rich prospects of gold; but owing to heavy water, soaked drifts, the small shafts, and the poor appliances used by the individual miner in those days, the water could not be overcome, hence the shafts fell in and the claims were abandoned.¹⁷

5.2 Law and disorder

Although the diggings were filling rapidly by the end of August 1860, it was late November before a resident gold commissioner, David Dixon, was appointed. He was based at Roberts' station at Currawong, which was 12 miles from the diggings, with just two mounted police officers. The presence of Dickson lent a semblance of law and order which encouraged Chinese miners to try their

14 H&K McGregor, *Roll Up* 1999, cited R. Christison, Conservation Management Plan, Blackguard Gully, 2016, pp 22–23

15 NSW Heritage Office, 1996. *Regional Histories*, p 141, cited Christison, *ibid*.

16 H&K McGregor, *Roll Up* 1999, cited R. Christison, Conservation Management Plan, Blackguard Gully, 2016 pp 22–23

17 Osborne, I., 1975. Annual Report Compilation. Young Division – Cootamundra Sheet 1887-1975, p 11, cited Christison, *ibid*.

luck at Lambing Flat and 'Wamback' [Wombat]. Weekly gold escorts were finally provided in 1861.¹⁸ However the flimsy legal protections were not enough to provide security on the goldfield.

The miners formed their own 'vigilance committee', modelled on similar organisations on the American goldfields, in early December 1860. It was a mob, really, and their first target was a man called Harris, who had a 'sparring saloon' on Spring Creek and another premises that was considered to be the resort of thieves on Stoney Creek. On 12 December the 'vigilance committee' worked him over and burned his belongings. He was able to preserve his ears by calling for the police. Another man called Clay, who was sly-grogging, was also targeted. At the same time, there were rumours that Chinese miners had been robbed by the mob and one killed and another wounded, but newspapers said these reports were 'unconfirmed.' With indecent haste, Harris' premises were adapted to a rifle range and another saloon.¹⁹

Captain Henry Zouch, superintendent of police, Mounted Patrol, left Yass with six mounted troopers to restore order on Monday 17 December. By that stage there were 3000-4000 persons on the ground but mail deliveries were still haphazard and the truth of killings of Chinese had not yet been ascertained.²⁰ Zouch was an experienced gold commissioner with a strong reputation and excelled himself at Lambing Flat. Journalists reported the peace, and that the township was taking shape:

Picture to yourself a beautifully-wooded country, undulating, and watered by numerous creeks, the trees chiefly gum and box. On one side of a very deep creek is the township, composed of tents, bark huts, and weatherboard erections, on both sides of a wide road extending above a mile and a half, and with the exception of, perhaps, six, every erection a grog-shop, for as yet even the public-houses have not their licenses. There are stores in great number, and all goods at moderate prices. The roads from every part of the country are excellent, and climate equally so, for however intense the heat may occasionally be by day, the evenings and nights are deliciously cool. On the opposite side of the creek from the township are a few tents, inhabited by those who prefer comparative repose to noise, though even there we hear the feet of dancers, the performances in the bowling-alleys-and skittle-grounds, the screams of drunken women, and a few broils of men in similar circumstances, though generally the fair sex are the worst ... Spring and Stony Creeks are not as this place Mr. Scott, the Commissioner, has arrived with his assistants, and, we hear, will pitch his tent near us, which we rejoice at. The Oriental Bank has erected a branch establishment in the township, adjoining the store of Mr. Gibbons, of Burrowa ... All who are conversant with such affairs, say positively that these diggings will prove the most prolific in the whole of Australia. The whole country round is so covered with splendid grass, which is chiefly, what is called wild oats (and not half stock enough to eat it) ...²¹

18 Bayley, *Rich Earth*, pp 23–24

19 "Burrangong (Lambing Flat) Diggings." *Goulburn Herald*, 15 December 1860, p 2 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article102585811>

20 "The Alleged Murder Of Chinamen At Lambing Flat." *Empire*, 22 December 1860, p 8 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60503874>

21 "Lambing Flat Diggings." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 December 1860: 5. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article28626500>.

Zouch found no bodies of any Chinese but he and Dickson established a government camp on the site of the present Young High School, which included a police barrack and a lock-up. A handful of police officers had no hope of containing what was about to happen at Lambing Flat.

6 The Burrangong affray



Figure 16: Dr Doyle's sketch book / John Thomas Doyle & Samuel Thomas Gill, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, FL1002451

Nobody in Hilltops seems to deny that Young was the site of the biggest anti-Chinese riots in Australian history. Why was anti-Chinese rioting so bad here?

The Chinese were not the most numerous of the nationalities in the gold rushes, but they were conspicuous. Their appearance, language and clothing were very different to what European miners were used to and they were often described as Celestials. They also lived and organised themselves differently. The Chinese who arrived in Australia in this period were male Cantonese from Guangdong or Amoy (Xiamen) in Fujian Province who were fleeing political instability and civil war. They did not bring their families and most did not intend to settle. Some came as indentured labourers in the late 1840s, but the gold rushes tempted many more to migrate and try their fortunes in the diggings. They often arrived in organised groups under a credit ticket system – in New South Wales local chapters of the Yee Hing (Yixing) Brotherhood – later the Yee Hing Company and the forerunner of the Chinese Masonic Society – ensured workers paid off the cost of their passage.¹

¹ John Fitzgerald, *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007

By the time of the Eureka Stockade, there were almost 30,000 Chinese diggers on the Victorian goldfields.² Chinese merchants and workers supported the people living on the diggings, selling tools to miners, arranging haulage, and growing food for sale, but the vast majority of Chinese on the goldfields were diggers. They attracted the ire of European miners because, by working in foreman-led crews of 10–30 and adopting a systematic approach, they often managed to find gold on old diggings that had been discarded and yield good finds on fresh claims. In the desperation of the goldfields, success could breed resentment, which was amplified by racism and often the Chinese were accused of taking white men's claims and scapegoated for the disappointments suffered by fellow diggers.³ After anti-Chinese riots at the Bendigo goldfield in July 1854 the Victorian government imposed an entry tax of 10 pounds on Chinese immigrants, although many Chinese evaded this by arriving in South Australia and walking overland. Taxes on Chinese residents were also introduced in Victoria, enabling local authorities to exclude Chinese gold seekers.

Chinese diggers also sailed and walked overland to the diggings in New South Wales, and there was conflict between European and Chinese miners at Turon in 1853, Meroo in 1854 and Rocky River in 1856.⁴ Tensions were heightened in times of scarcity, as was the case in Hill End/Tambaroora in 1858, where the Chinese were accused of fouling water courses, theft, and carrying the feared disease leprosy.⁵ Leprosy, known today as Hansen's disease, is a disease of the skin and nervous system that is endemic to Fujian and Canton, as well as India and Egypt.⁶ Some of the Chinese migrants who arrived in Australia in the 1850s were probably afflicted with it – the Ballarat Benevolent Asylum had the care of ten apparently afflicted men. The bacteria that causes leprosy, *Mycobacterium leprae*, was only identified in 1873, and until then leprosy was often mistaken for other virulent skin diseases, and even scurvy or cholera. Victorians worried that all Chinese carried the disease and would spread it, simply by touching coins and other objects.⁷

Rumours of the disease travelled from Victoria and helped inflame the moral panic about the arrival of the Chinese.⁸ At Kiandra in the Snowy Mountains, Chinese diggers constituted a tenth of the field and their skills as labourers and traders helped ensure the survival of the settlement during the harsh

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- 2 There were 28,126 in 1858 Census, cited Reeves, 15 July 1851 Hargreaves discovers gold at Ophir', p 70
 - 3 State Library of NSW, Eureka! The Rush for Gold: Minority miners, <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/eureka-rush-gold/minority-miners>
 - 4 "The Turon." *Bathurst Free Press And Mining Journal*, 15 September 1858: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article64376784>.
 - 5 "Tambaroora." *Empire*, 20 March 1858: 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60426261>.
 - 6 'Leprosy', Dr Karl's Great Moments In Science, Abc, 2 August 2007, <http://www.Abc.Net.Au/Science/Articles/2007/08/02/1994304.Htm>
 - 7 Ian Welch, Chinese And Leprosy In 19th Century Victoria, Anu Canberra 2016, https://Openresearch-Repository.Anu.Edu.Au/Bitstream/1885/111165/2/01_Welch_Chinese_And_Leprosy_2016.Pdf
 - 8 "The New England Gold Fields." *The Armidale Express And New England General Advertiser*, 19 September 1857: 2, <http://Nla.Gov.Au/Nla.News-Article189959176>.

winter of 1860. Even as they were admired for their resilience, they were blamed for defiling waterholes and suspected of carrying disease:

It is curious to observe ... how the Chinese adapt themselves to adverse circumstances at Kiandra. Mining being just now impossible, we find that these fellows instead of prowling about and loafing, have organised themselves as carriers of goods and provisions from the township (Russell's station) to Kiandra, – a distance of thirteen miles. They sling the goods upon poles which they then shoulder, and carry along with great alacrity. They earn good wages by this means, and bring in provisions, &c, when horses and mules would be useless on account of the snow. Europeans would scarcely be able to endure this strain upon the shoulders, but the Chinese are to the manner born, and carry heavy burdens with facility. It is worth noting that the Chinese have been set apart to lessen the chances of collision with Europeans, who complain of the Chinamen on account of their dirty habits, and particularly for defiling water-holes. As to their dirty habits, we are aware that Chinese wash their feet with far greater regularity than their faces. But that may be a peculiarity of theirs. It cannot be denied, however, considering that leprosy exists amongst them, that it is a wise precaution to make them encamp by themselves.⁹

When gold was discovered at Lambing Flat, the Kiandra diggings emptied, and Europeans and Chinese were part of the exodus. Leprosy had never been at Kiandra, and would not be seen at Lambing Flat, but that did not stop miners raising it when the conflict began.

6.1 The Chinese in Hilltops

Chinese people had been in the Hilltops region for some time, usually working as labourers on properties, and their names appear in court listings in local papers. Hong Kong, recorded as 'a Chinaman', was jailed for stealing from Mr Hassall of Burrowa in 1856.¹⁰ Tommy, 'a very intelligent Celestial' was in service with Mr AG De Lauret of Kenmore and was called to translate at a trial for attempted murder of Sou-He by E-Swa at Wollagorang [Wollogorang] in 1857. Both men were sworn upon saucers. Sou-He and E-Swa were in the service of John Chisholm, the station owner, and shared quarters for some months, until they had a quarrel over money and E-Swa attacked Hou-Se with a tomahawk. E-Swa was a long-term resident of the district, as he told Tommy he had fallen out with the prosecutor some three years previously.¹¹ However, the rush to Lambing Flat brought the Chinese diggers into sharp focus.

Just like their European counterparts, Chinese miners constantly sought better gold finds. The new field at Lambing Flat held such promise. But as payable gold, and the water necessary for its extraction, became scarce, finds and fields were jealously guarded. At the beginning of December 1860, the *Yass Courier* reported from Lambing Flat 'one day last week, a string of Chinamen made their appearance on the ground, but as soon as their presence was known to the diggers, they were

9 Sydney Morning Herald, 21 August 1860, Cited Lindsay Smith, *The Chinese At Kiandra*, Kiandra Historical Society, January 2004, <http://www.kiandrahistory.net/chinese.html>

10 "Goulburn Assizes." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 March 1856: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12982246>.

11 "The Attempted Murder At Wollagorang." *The Goulburn Herald and County of Argyle Advertiser*, 5 December 1857: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article118246899>.

compelled to quit'. The newspaper hoped the appointment of a gold commissioner might afford the Celestials some protection.¹²

The true sources of discontent towards the Chinese were cultural differences – as much about patterns of labour organisation as customs – conflict over water, and jealousy. The Chinese were better at working over ground than other miners, and capable of finding gold where the other miners had left the field. Summers are hot in Young, and as the numbers mounted on the goldfield, resentments simmered.

6.2 Blackguard Gully

During the 1860 gold rush one gully on the eastern side of Victoria Hill, near where travellers from Boorowa passed, was named Blackguard Gully, on account of the 'shanty keepers and bad characters' who inhabited it.¹³ It was not thought to be a high-yielding spot. Some accounts state that Commissioner Dixon placed Chinese miners in this area to keep them separate from the Europeans.¹⁴ Chinese diggers were being pushed around but turned the bullying into new opportunities:

Two new rushes have taken place, both of which are expected to turn out well; but as yet the information received is not sufficiently precise to determine the question. One is to a place between Wombat and Spring Creek, and the other at the Ironbark. They have caused great excitement, as well as some new ground about seven miles from the Flat, between Roberts's and Marengo. At this latter place gold was first struck by the Chinese who had been driven off the old diggings, and who immediately turned to prospecting the country all around. It is said, on good authority, that the new locality is equally as rich as the best part of the ground that has already been worked. The Chinese are, up to the present time, permitted to have quiet possession of their new discovery, but as they are exceedingly unpopular on this gold-field, we expect to hear of their being driven off in a short time.¹⁵

When news spread that a party of Chinese miners had obtained 80 ounces of gold from the bottom of their shaft at Blackguard Gully Europeans rushed in to stake their own claims, which meant pushing back the Chinese who were there.

The first pushes began in December 1860 when the aforementioned 'vigilance committee' was formed, and the story that Chinese men had been killed and wounded by having their pigtails, scalps and ears cut off began to circulate.¹⁶ After Zouch arrived things settled, but not for long. On Saturday 5 January 1861 *The Sydney Morning Herald* editorialised on the *fracas* and condemned the assault and maltreatment of 'a number of peaceable foreigners' and the absence of any inquiry into the

12 "Gold News." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 December 1860: 7. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13050032>.

13 "101 Not Out", *The Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*. 8 February 1918, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/111960713>

14 Maroney, R., Undated. A Short History of the Lambing Flat Gold Rush 1860–1861. p.7, cited Christison, *ibid*.

15 "Lambing Flat Diggings." *The Golden Age*, 24 November 1860, p 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article30630825>.

16 "Lambing Flat." *Sydney Mail*, 22 December 1860, p 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article166693284>.

events. The *Herald* also condemned clergy for failing to denounce the actions of the ‘vigilance committee’:

But what a contrast between the professed sentiments which animate these associations and the language and conduct of those who mislead the popular mind, and stimulate national hate; or who, with cowardice scarcely less culpable, dare not breast it and denounce it!

It is from such crimes as these that countries commence often their career of disorganisation and ruin. The same spirit of antagonism which shows itself to one race is excited towards another. The tyranny of the majority crushes everything that it detests, and soon hates whatever it dis-likes.¹⁷

6.3 The Roll Up



Figure 17: The Roll Up Banner in the Lambing Flat Folk Museum. An item of national significance, but for dubious reasons.

On Sunday 27 January 1861 rioters drove 1500 Chinese off the goldfields and defied Commissioner Dickson to interfere. A rumour was running through Burrangong that the Chinese were planning to attack and make their goldfield a Chinese territory:

From the shoals of sons "of the flowery land" that were daily pouring into every part of the mines, the idea that only at first assumed the character of a rumour, took all the appearance of a positive

17 1861 'The Sydney Morning Herald.', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 January, p 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13050928>

fact.¹⁸

The miners gathered in what *The Sydney Morning Herald* called 'A MONSTER MEETING', complete with a brass band playing martial airs, with the Union Jack on either side floating over them. The 1500 diggers who assembled bore shovel and pick handles.¹⁹ A Mr Stewart addressed the crowd, and whipped them up with a racist diatribe:

The question is — shall the Burrangong Gold-Field (as you have no doubt seen the notices) become a Chinese territory or an European diggings. (Shouts of "European diggings" and "Down with the pig tails.") The question is really becoming so serious that it is now intolerable. (Hear, hear.) To my own certain knowledge there cannot be less than fifteen or sixteen hundred on the Lambing Flat and its vicinity, and the greater number, if not all of them have arrived within the last fortnight. (Cries of "Down with them.") I also have it from reliable authority that the Chinese are on the road to these diggings in thousands. (Cries of "stop them," "turn them back.") Now, gentlemen, shall the Chinese monopolize the gold-field that we have prospected and developed ? — (Cries of "No, no; down with them" — and shall we as men and British subjects stand tamely and allow the bread to be plucked from the mouths of ourselves, our wives, and children by those pig-tailed, moon-faced barbarians — (Shouts of "Down with the pig-tails ;" "drive them before us") — men who would not spend one farthing in the colony could they possibly avoid it — men did I say! — (Oh, my prophetic soul, my comrades!) — monkeys I ought to have said. (Laughter and cheers.)²⁰

The mob was intent on action and proceeded along Spring Creek, 'the band playing the whole time.' Two to three thousand men scoured the creek for any Chinese who remained, then pushed them back to Blackguard Gully, where Chinese tents were burned.²¹ The riot quietened but two or three of the 'celestials' had been seriously injured when a drunkard rode a horse over them as they gathered their traps. When the mob heard Stewart had been apprehended — which he had not been — the mob gathered again and turned on the barracks to demand his release.

Much discussion of 'the Chinese question' ensued in the press while riots continued on the ground in Lambing Flat, disrupting mining activities, stopping traders from working and causing general chaos.²² The NSW Government had to act and on 25 February detachments from the Royal Artillery and the 12th Regiment, with an escort of Volunteer Rifles, three guns and 20 horses, assembled at Redfern Station to board a train to Campbelltown where the troops would begin to make their way to

18 "Flight Of The Chinese! From Lambing Flat." *Bathurst Free Press And Mining Journal*, 2 February 1861: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article62401754>.

19 Monster Meeting, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 February 1861, p 2. from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13052287>

20 "Flight Of The Chinese! From Lambing Flat."

21 Ibid.

22 [By Electric Telegraph.] [From Our Special Commissioner.] Lambing Flat, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 February 1861, p 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13053105>

Burrangong.²³ The Premier, Mr Cowper, followed them on a four-day journey by horse relay, arriving well ahead of the troops, who took two weeks to make the journey.²⁴

It was the first time since the Wiradjuri Wars that a contingent of British soldiers had been sent into the interior to quell a disturbance. The premier's decision to accompany them, while the question of Chinese immigration was being debated in the Parliament, was also extraordinary.

The troops and police gathered from across the Snowy Mountains managed to quell the riot, and Premier Cowper spoke with the rioters, insisting it was his duty to uphold the terms of Britain's treaty with China.²⁵ Ill-feeling remained, despite the Premier's assurances to the Parliament that he thought the miners would allow the Chinese to return to their diggings. The Chinese felt safe enough to petition for losses.²⁶ On 24 May 1860, the troops left. They acted too soon. The legislation to restrict Chinese immigration failed to pass the Parliament, the Chinese returned to the goldfields in great number, despite harassment, and rumours of a new boatload of Chinese arrivals fuelled discontent. On Sunday 30 June the roll-up was called.

By express to Yass on Saturday last it was pretty generally known that a roll-up would take place to-day against the Chinese. ... Some state that the diggers are determined to drive them off these fields, others that it is in consequence of their having struck a lead of gold at Buck Creek, and some assert that it is in retaliation for the Native Dog Creek affair. Certain it is that it took place, and for destruction of property it exceeded any riot that has ever yet taken place on these fields ... at Tipperary Gully, the muster took place. Upwards of a thousand men, most of them armed with bludgeons or pick handles, headed by a band, and carrying several large flags, one inscribed with the words, "Roll up—no Chinese!" formed into procession and marched into Lambing Flat. ... The Chinese took to their heels, but to no purpose, for they were caught, and several of them had their pig-tails cut off, and were otherwise mal-treated.

The mob, now between 2000 and 3000, crossed the main creek, and leaving the commissioner's camp on the right, made for the camp of the Chinese, who were working inside the boundary set apart for them.

The Chinese having taken flight, upwards of forty tents were burned down, and all property of every kind destroyed. They then proceeded to the ground where the Chinese were working, and destroyed all the windlasses and tools they could find, throwing them down the shafts. ... Several shots were fired. It was then proposed they should proceed to Back Creek, a distance of six miles, where several hundred Chinese were working, which was reached in about two hours. The Chinese ... packed up everything they possibly could to carry away, made a hasty retreat. Tents by scores were set on fire; rice and stores of all kinds destroyed, butchers' shops filled with meat set on fire. For a distance of half a mile the burning tents showed the work of destruction. Not content with this, some men on horseback proceeded forward and overtook the Chinese—some 1200. They rounded them up the same as they would a mob of cattle, struck them with their bludgeons and whips, and made them leave all their swags. And now ensued a scene—that defies description. Six or seven immense fires were made with clothing of all descriptions, stores, rice,

23 "Departure Of The Troops For Lambing Flat", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 February 1861, p 5. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13053339>

24 "Law Proceedings This Day, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 February 1861, p 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13053434>

25 Bayley, *Rich Earth*, p 27

26 The Sydney Monthly Overland Mail, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 April 1861, p 5. from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13056336>

blankets, boots, a large quantity of them quite new, being heaped together and set on fire; men with picks and axes destroying everything that would not burn. Having destroyed and burnt all they possibly could, they again formed into procession and returned to Lambing Flat, which was reached about half-past 5 p.m.

... that men connected with business, &c, and supposed to be interested in upholding the law, should have identified themselves with these illegal proceedings is a disgrace upon the colony. But what did the authorities do? Nothing; because there was no force at all adequate to cope with such an excited mass of men.

...

Wednesday, July 3, 6 a.m.

In the telegram I forwarded by express on Sunday, I did not attempt to give any particulars of the atrocities committed upon the unfortunate Chinese.

After they were driven from Back Creek they made for Roberts' Station, distant about twelve miles from this place, perfectly destitute.

Mr. Roberts supplied them with flour, beef, and what clothing he possibly could. Many were seriously injured; two lay there in a very dangerous state, and are not expected to recover. Some three or four are missing.

Up to the present time no measures appear to have been taken by the authorities for the arresting of the leaders of this diabolical outrage. It is openly stated by many on this gold-field that another roll-up is to take place against the Chinese at Wombat, and the storekeepers who have supplied the Chinese with stores.

I have been over a great part of these fields since Sunday, and so far as I can learn, the general feeling is sympathy for the unfortunate Chinese. This roll-up differs from all others in atrocities committed, and the destruction of property is at least £5000. I noticed one man who returned with eight pig-tails attached to a flag, glorying in the work that had been done. I also saw one tail, with a part of the scalp, the size of a man's hand, attached, that had been literally cut from some unfortunate creature; another had his back broken. In fact, the injuries they have received it is impossible at present to arrive at.²⁷

William Lupton was killed by police troopers during the first stages of the riot and the courthouse was burned down. Robyn Atherton notes that in July 1861 the number of Chinese sheltering on Roberts' station Currawong was 1276 but 552 remained at the end of the month.²⁸ It is not clear where they went.

The fighting continued for weeks – The Riot Act was read at Young on 14 July 1860, but ignored. There is no record of the number of Chinese lost. Around 1200 stayed on Currawong until the troops returned to quash the riots once and for all – something for which Roberts later sought substantial compensation. Only two men would ever be convicted of crimes against the Chinese.

6.4 After the riots

The Chinese Immigration Restriction Act was passed in November 1861 and the Chinese were held to mining at Wombat and on the outskirts of the fields. The goldfield at Lambing Flat did not live up to

²⁷ "Latest Intelligence." *The Courier*, 8 July 1861, p 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4599812>.

²⁸ Robyn Atherton and Harden-Murrumburrah Historical Society, *They were more than just gold diggers: the Chinese of Murrumburrah and surrounding districts 1860s-1960s = Wulinbalei de hua ren bu zhi shi tao jin zhe* (1st ed). Harden: Harden-Murrumburrah Historical Society, 2010, p 37

expectations and the rush did not last long. By the end of July 1862 the troops were no longer required, and left again. Some reef mining began in the area, including an ore-crushing mill at Chance Gully in the north of the field but Bayley records that by 1864:

The number working had diminished and the amount of gold won was steadily decreasing. The gold found on the field was always fine with no nuggets and the need for more water for sluicing became more pressing as the gold became harder to find. Gold sent by escort in 1861 was 109,879 ounces and in 1862 reached its peak of 124,648 ounces. It then decreased by half each year until by August 1865 it was reported that 'Burrangong as a goldfield was on its last legs'.²⁹

The rush moved on, to Forbes and other places, and by the mid-1870s, mining at Young had become a part-time activity. Other industries were rising. As Sarah Musgrave wrote:

I am not here concerned with the growth and the decay of this field, for history has already told these facts. I shall, however, mention that when wooden buildings replaced some of the tents, the timber and the bark for these buildings was taken from my uncle's station, and they became the nucleus of the township of Young, for Young was built on the spot where my husband discovered the gold.³⁰

The facts are not so clear and the town of Young is still left with the problem of how to absorb the events that took place at Lambing Flat. Clearly, the riots occurred in the context of longstanding resentments against the Chinese that had been incubated in the Victorian, New South Wales, and even American goldfields. Those resentments burst forth on a hard scrabble goldfield, at a great distance from central authority, amongst a body of politically enlivened miners. They coincided with a sensibility within the NSW Government that Chinese immigration needed to be reined in, even though it served British Imperial interests, and that British, 'white', Australia was threatened by Asian peoples. The events at Burrangong undoubtedly helped ensure the final success of the legislation but did not cause it.

While researching this history I came across many descriptions of the events at Lambing Flat say the riots were caused by the presence of the Chinese. This is a curiously passive construction and bedding down this history requires more attention than that. Interpretations need to say the rioters wanted to expel Chinese diggers, *because they were Chinese*. The outrage expressed by the residents of Sydney, and the kindness Roberts showed at Currawong, only slightly temper this story.

29 Bayley, *Rich Earth*, p 38

30 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 52



Figure 18: The clarion call of Australian racism was heard as far away as Sydney. From the Colonial Secretary's Inward Letters, 4/3452, 61/3086B, NSW State Records.

1969

Department of Lands,
Sydney, 2nd September, 1863.

**CLAIMS OF CHINESE TO COMPENSATION
FOR LOSSES DURING BURRANGONG
RIOTS.**

IT is hereby notified, for the information of the parties interested, that those Chinese whose claims to compensation for losses sustained through the Riots at Burrangong, in the year 1861, have been admitted by the Government, in accordance with the Report of the Special Commissioner appointed to investigate their claims (as more particularly set forth in the Schedule hereunto annexed), will receive the amounts to which they are respectively entitled, upon application at the Gold Commissioner's Office, Burrangong, during the week commencing Monday, 21st instant.

2. The persons applying for payment will be required to satisfy the Commissioner entrusted with this duty, of their identity with the original claimants.

JOHN ROBERTSON.

SCHEDULE.

	£	s.	d.
Fee Ehin, Ying Fong, Pon Chaw, A			
Kin, Wong Lock	200	0	0
Simon San Ling	50	0	0
Ah Foo and 3 mates	16	5	6
Lee Pay	4	15	0
Mhun Ah Mun	97	4	11
Ah Hong and 15 mates	36	5	3
Heung San and 3 mates	23	4	3
Wong Nai Chun and 4 mates	34	8	6
Wong Low and 2 mates	19	9	0
Cheung Koon and 4 mates	29	7	9
Cheung Teen and 5 mates	34	7	9
Wong Ying Kee and 3 mates	20	15	9
Chin Ty Sing and 2 mates	13	19	0
Wong E You and 4 mates	19	5	6
Wong Kwam Kin and 4 mates	21	3	3
Wing Hop and 5 mates	32	9	3
Sen Lum Ying and 3 mates	18	0	9
Ng Onn Hin and 5 mates	28	4	3
Chin Ping and 2 mates	14	13	6
Ng Man Kwong and 4 mates	33	2	6
Ly Ah Yu and 1 mate	12	4	3
Yung Ah Hung	4	17	6
Lon Wan Chan and 1 mate	8	14	0
Chew Wing Hon and 2 mates	12	17	6
Lo Ha Che and 2 mates	2	10	6
Chow San Kow and 4 mates	18	14	0
Chew Sing Ting and 4 mates	19	1	6
Lui Yim Air and 5 mates	25	8	0
Kung Ah Lu and 2 mates	12	17	6
Hong King and 2 mates	15	12	6
Chew Ping and 6 mates	16	13	6
Le Fook Lun and 2 mates	16	16	3
Leung Hung and 7 mates	26	7	9
Leung Yat Sun	6	0	0
Ng Ah Ky	6	16	6
Ma Fook	52	5	6
Leung Ah Woo and 1 mate	14	12	0
Leung Ah Chan and 4 mates	24	11	0
Wong Chow and 1 mate	11	15	0
Cheung Ah Chow and 1 mate	10	4	6
Chow Ching and 5 mates	21	9	9
Chow Kan Sun and 1 mate	6	16	9
Leung Chick Chun and 1 mate	10	12	6
Chin Ah Pu and 5 mates	14	14	0
Yung Ah Chu	3	2	6
Chan Ah Hung	4	19	0
Mok Wing Su and 3 mates	14	13	6
Wong Hoy Hing and 2 mates	14	15	9
Wong Lung King and 1 mate	9	1	3
Chow Ah Shak and 5 mates	24	3	6
Fou Shak and 5 mates	28	15	6
Chin Chung Sam and 5 mates	16	14	9
Chin Lung and 6 mates	13	12	0
Chung Cheen Kang and 1 mate	6	12	0
Leung Lip Cha and 5 mates	21	10	0
Leung Yung and 5 mates	23	2	3
Wong Le Sat	9	15	0
Chan Ping Hong and 2 mates	15	8	6
Ham Ah Yan and 1 mate	11	1	6
Leung Chong Kan and 3 mates	16	8	9
On Hung Chung and 3 mates	11	8	6
Su Choy and 5 mates	20	0	0
Leung Ley Wo and 3 mates	8	12	3
Wong Ga and 3 mates	9	10	3
Choy Hok Foo and 6 mates	22	12	0
Lee Yeen Chaw and 7 mates	15	2	6
Yung Ah Yee	6	1	9
Luung Me Koy and 1 mate	4	0	6
Wong Hun He	23	13	0
Fong Sac Chu and 4 mates	12	7	6
Luung Yeen and 6 mates	33	15	9
Wong Che Yur and 3 mates	12	11	3
Le Kwong Yip	5	10	0
Luung Kim and 3 mates	18	5	0
Luung Yu To and 5 mates	21	3	0
Luung Sing	9	3	0
Luung Ah Po	18	15	0
Woon Kap Sen	11	16	3
Chin Ty Cheen	20	12	6
Woon Ah Kap	11	9	6
Lum Sam	8	4	0
Chan Chik Kun	15	3	3
Hon Kow	13	17	0
Chan Ah Lung	8	4	6
Tang Gee Hun	19	4	0
Luung Pong Sun	14	6	9
Toy Chu Fook	6	3	3
Wong Hing	5	16	6
Ng Ah Hing	7	10	0
Wong Chak You	8	11	0
Wong San Hee	7	3	6
Yin Shing	14	10	6
Chu Yui Sing	10	10	9
Le Heung	11	8	6
Kwei Sing	7	7	6
Chung Leang	9	8	6
Wing Chun	7	9	6
Chin Ah Hung	6	10	6
So Ah Hung	8	0	0
Ng Ah Tu	15	8	9
Hong Ah To	10	15	0
Son Le	8	18	6
Yung Shin	10	15	6
Wong Fu	7	5	9
Chin Ah Kang	10	19	0
Chin Ah Chung	3	14	6
Luung Fan Luk	8	19	0
Chin Kok Ko	8	1	6
Ng Chung	9	14	0
Wong Fat	8	1	6
John Habbuk	48	0	0
Lum Sum	14	5	6
Luung Ah Po	3	10	0
Cheung Ah Fat	11	4	6
Wing Song Tong	11	3	6
Chay Hee	9	9	0
Luung Ah Yin	39	2	0
Tang Chung	14	14	3
Chun Kung Leung	10	19	9
Lui Ah Sun	25	14	6
Lou Ah Huk	11	19	0
Wong Ah Huk	16	1	3
Tang Onn	7	19	9
Chin Ah Yee	5	16	6
Whing E. Ching	5	9	0
Kov Ah See	6	17	6
Mui Ah Yam	13	3	3
Tang King Chi	5	4	6
Ng Ah Keang	11	8	6
Le Ah Sing	6	17	6
Wing Hu Loon	6	10	0
Wong Sen	10	13	0
Chin Kung Ping	14	16	6
Chin Ah Leen	17	2	6
Chin Ning	13	0	0
Ho Ah My	15	15	0
Yeung Ah Sew	4	18	6
Quan Ah Chong	6	12	0
Lou Ah Qui	14	4	0
Yip Chung	13	5	0
Chin Ah Chung	13	11	0
Wong Lung	9	3	0
Sung Ah Yung	8	9	0
Wong Ah Hing	7	12	0
Lou Ah Sun	8	14	3
Ng Ah Chuk	7	16	0
Ho Ah Gee	9	4	8
Lou Ah Yu	11	4	6

Figure 19: The 1863 NSW Government Gazette list of Chinese men who claimed compensation for their losses.

1970

	£	s.	d.
Man Yee.....	3	9	0
Cho Chum Fui.....	101	5	0
Lee Ah Foo.....	15	13	3
Hung Kang.....	11	7	6
Chin Kwing Hang.....	6	11	6
Le Ah Kee.....	10	5	0
Lum Lung.....	4	16	6
Wing Cho.....	11	5	9
Kok Che Nam.....	9	0	0
Wan Yee.....	7	6	0
Chun Kwing.....	7	13	0
Fong Chah Kung.....	12	15	6
Wong King Foon.....	11	10	6
Sung Sam.....	12	9	9
Chin Ah Sut.....	6	7	0
Wing Sin.....	7	16	9
Ma Sam.....	8	7	9
Ng Ah Sing.....	12	11	9
Le Wan.....	9	16	6
Wong Sow.....	11	1	0
Fong Kee Chung.....	12	6	6
Wong Sim Kok.....	34	16	6
Wong Win.....	18	12	6
Fong Mang King.....	11	3	6
Leon My Tuk.....	20	6	6
Wing Tuk Chew.....	21	8	0
Chin Ho.....	20	7	9
Chew Hung.....	19	7	0
Lok Yung Yeh.....	17	9	0
Leung Wy.....	25	16	3
Low To Choui.....	29	16	6
Ah Hung.....	21	13	0
Low Kew.....	36	0	0
Leong Bee.....	18	7	9
Leing Ng.....	7	2	0
Kar Chun Wan.....	5	6	6
Mak Ah Hing.....	7	4	0
Sin Ng Fun.....	9	15	0
Yun Yan Sing.....	17	16	3
Wong Ah Wing.....	13	6	0
Chew Yo Cheung.....	8	15	6
Leong Ah Kew.....	4	11	0
Lung Hin.....	4	3	6
Wong My Kow.....	42	5	0
Chin Quin Po.....	14	14	6
Gun Hong Hong.....	17	10	0
Li Long Fat.....	30	16	6
Cheun A Pu.....	11	14	6
Wong Ah Long.....	20	14	6
Leong Sing Hup.....	11	11	6
Wing Ah Sir.....	104	17	6
Yung Ah Yun.....	14	4	0
Chun Ti Nun.....	40	9	9
Leung Hin.....	13	12	0
Ah Sue.....	300	0	0
Yung Tuk Sing.....	14	17	6
Leong Cho.....	200	0	0
Chin Yui Chun.....	49	19	6
Chung Hin Fat.....	33	4	9
He Pak Sung.....	20	17	0
Chin Ma Hung.....	20	18	0
Leo Pak Hing.....	20	19	0
Leong Ah See.....	33	9	0
Wong Ah Wy.....	14	13	6
Wong Chan See.....	72	16	6
Wong Chuk Wa.....	35	4	9
Chun Ah Tuk.....	23	1	0

Tenders.

The Treasury, New South Wales,
9th September, 1863.

FORAGE.

THE Contractors for furnishing the Forage
required in the Districts of—

Bathurst, Orange,
Diamond Swamp, Boree, and
Wyagden, Molong,
Carcoar,

having received three months notice, that their
Contracts will expire on 31st October next;
Tenders will be received at this Office until noon of

Tuesday, the 6th October, from persons willing to
supply the undermentioned articles in such
quantities as may be required in the abovenamed
Districts, during the period from 1st November,
1863, to 31st March, 1864, under the conditions
specified in Treasury Notice respecting Forage,
dated 6th January last.

Maize per bushel of 60lbs. or
Oats " 40lbs.
Bran " 20lbs.
Hay per ton of 2240lbs.
Straw " "

T. W. SMART.

The Treasury, New South Wales,
1st September, 1863.

CONVEYANCE OF MAILS.

CONVEYANCE being required for the Post-
Office Mails to and from the undermentioned
places "for one or three years," with the exception
of those lines for which a special term is named,
from the 1st January, 1864, persons disposed to
Contract for providing the same, are invited to trans-
mit their offers, in writing, to the General Post
Office, before 12 o'clock on Wednesday, the 7th
day of October next, endorsed "Tender for Con-
veyance of Mails."

WESTERN ROADS.

- 1.—To and from Windsor, Pitt Town, and Wilber-
force, six times a week.
- 2.—To and from Pitt Town, Wiseman's Ferry, and
St. Alban's, twice a week.
- 3.—To and from Wiseman's Ferry and Mangrove
Creek, once or twice a week.
- 4.—To and from Windsor and Richmond, twice a
day (twelve times a week.)
- 5.—To and from Richmond and Camden, *via*
Castlereagh, Penrith, Greendale, Mulgon, and
Luddenham, three times a week.
- 6.—To and from Wilberforce, Ebenezer, and Sack-
ville Reach, three times a week.
- 7.—To and from Wheeny Creek and Colo, once a
week.
- 8.—To and from Parramatta, Prospect, and
Eastern Creek, six times a week.
- 9.—To and from Railway Station and Post Office,
Penrith, Hartley, Bathurst, and Orange, six
times a week.
- 10.—To and from Hartley, Bowenfell's, and
Mudgee, six times a week; or
- 11.—To and from Bowenfell's and Mudgee, six
times a week.
- 12.—To and from Bathurst, Peel, and Sofala, three
times a week.
- 13.—To and from Kean's Swamp and Rylstone,
three times a week.
- 14.—To and from Fryingpan and Mitchell's Creek,
twice a week.
- 15.—To and from Frederick's Valley and Goddai,
once a week.
- 16.—To and from Orange and Ophir, once a week.
- 17.—To and from Forbes and Young, three times
a week.
- 18.—To and from Orange, Stony Creek, Ironbarks,
Black Rock, Wellington, and Montefiores,
three times a week.
- 19.—To and from Orange, Molong, Black Rock,
Wellington, and Montefiores, three times a
week.
- 20.—To and from Dubbo and Cobbora, once a
week.
- 21.—To and from Dubbo, Warren, and Cannonbar,
once a week.
- 22.—To and from Warren and Drungalee, once a
week.
- 23.—To and from Molong and Ironbarks, three
times a week.
- 24.—To and from Molong and Obley, twice a week.
- 25.—To and from Mudgee, Grattai, Windeyer,
Pure Point, Campbell's Creek, Long Creek,
and Upper Pyramul, with a branch post to and
from Grattai, Arisford, and Louisa Creek,
twice a week.

7 The European migration legacy of the goldfields



Figure 20: Photographs of Young, New South Wales, [187-], Dr Watson, State Library of NSW

The enormous population boom resulting from the Lambing Flat was the impetus for the foundation of Young, and Wombat and Kingsvale. The vast majority of miners chased their dreams to other goldfields like Forbes, or took work labouring on properties, building railroads, or in coal mining. Yet Lambing Flat never emptied out the way other towns like Sofala or Demondrille did, or fade like Wombat. Some of those who came to Hilltops had arrived with business on their minds, while others came to ensure law and order. Many were able to perceive the richness of the soil, and the coincidence of the goldfields with the Closer Settlement Acts meant they had a chance to establish permanent residences. While most of those people were humble and their lives are hard to trace, many notable people came to the area for the gold rush and made a difference to the town. This chapter is about some of them.

Mining agitator Ezekiel Baker (1823–1912) was born at Middlesex, England, the son of a firearms manufacturer who had contracts with the East India Co. and the Board of Ordnance. Baker worked in his father's business and studied mineralogy and mining. In 1853 he emigrated to New South Wales as mineralogist to an English company that failed after prospecting for gold in the Tamworth district. Baker then prospected for himself at various diggings between Bathurst and Burrangong, where he became a mail contractor. Baker, along with James Torpy, was chosen to represent the miners' case in Sydney. He was opposed to the Chinese but deprecated their ill treatment; he also stressed that the riots reflected the need for reform of the mining regulations and claimed strongly that, since the great

majority of miners were peaceable, they should be protected by law against the harsh military action ordered. In 1866 he founded the *Mining Record* at Grenfell and in 1870 was elected as MLA for Goldfields South. He served on the royal commission on the goldfields and served variously as secretary for lands and mines. The Parkes-Robertson coalition government of 1878 passed Baker's *Duty on Gold Abolition Act 1879*, *Mining Act Amendment 1880*, and *Ringbarking on Crown Lands Regulation Act 1881*. Baker brought down the coalition over a scandal about the distribution of the proceeds of the sale of a copper mine Baker had leased at Milburn Creek near Cowra. He was dismissed from Parliament, returned for Carcoar in 1884 and retired in 1887, continuing as a successful mining engineer.¹

Mining agitator James Torpy (1832-1903) was born at Fermoy, County Cork, Ireland, and was the son of a miller. He worked in Manchester and Liverpool before sailing for Victoria in 1853 then mining at Turon (Sofala). He was a hotel-keeper at Lambing Flat (Young) in 1861. As a leader of the Miners' Protection League he addressed a meeting in March 1861 that was called to explain the miners' position to the premier (Sir) Charles Cowper. Stating that 'the instinct of self-preservation impels us to oppose their coming here', Torpy argued that if the Chinese were allowed to flood on to the diggings the Europeans would be forced off and the gold quickly exhausted. In July he was chosen as miners' delegate to present a petition to Governor Sir John Young, but while in Sydney was arrested and charged with riot, unlawful assembly and wilful destruction of Chinese property on 30 June at Burrangong; denying the allegations, he was allowed bail and appeared in the Burrangong court. The charges were dismissed as the prosecution's witnesses could not be found.

Torpy lost much support when a mining claim in which he was principal shareholder was sold to some Chinese and he was accused of acknowledging the right of the Chinese to work on the field. In a letter to the *Miner and General Advertiser* he asserted that he had not been inconsistent and that he 'would rather make a profit out of an enemy than a friend'. Torpy moved to Orange, became mayor, and later entered the NSW Parliament.²

Gold Commissioner George O'Malley Clarke (1836-1899) was born in Paris, son of an Irish medical practitioner. He went to New South Wales after the gold discoveries and in January 1854 entered the public service as clerk of Petty Sessions at Goulburn. In 1860 he was appointed a junior gold commissioner at Lambing Flat (Young) where his duties were to issue miners' rights and business licences, put down disturbances and sit on the bench in Petty Sessions. With his Irish persuasiveness, publicly spoken of as 'qualities of tact and zeal', he was popular among the miners; he

1 Bede Nairn, 'Baker, Ezekiel Alexander (1823–1912)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/baker-ezekiel-alexander-2919/text4213>, 1969.

2 Deirdre Morris, 'Torpy, James (1832–1903)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/torpy-james-4736/text7863>, 1976.

needed no armed escort and was said to have never once been sworn at. After the anti-Chinese riots at Lambing Flat, he and Commissioner Lynch were temporarily suspended, 'in consequence of their want of decision and judgment in dealing with the rioters' and because their telegraphed report to the government in Sydney was 'incomplete'. Clarke was soon reinstated; by 6 August he was on the bench, examining prisoners taken during the riots, and in June 1866 was promoted a senior gold commissioner of the southern fields. Early in 1875 he moved to Adelong as chief warden to organize a mining office but by September was back in Young as police magistrate and commissioner of conditional purchases under the Land Acts. The stream of petitioners who filed through his office was as much evidence of his 'unflinching integrity and sound judgment' as of his local repute.

Clarke believed 'any man in a public position who was worth his salt always lent tone to a movement, when his utterances and opinions would command respect and carry weight' and participated fully in local affairs, where his platform manner made him a flamboyant chairman of public meetings. In October 1865 he was gazetted a trustee of the newly-consecrated Church of England and in 1866 of the parsonage and school; in July 1870 he convened the meeting which established the Young School of Arts; in March 1874 he was chairman of the local board when the public school was opened; he chaired the hospital committee which built several brick extensions; in October 1870 he was founding president of the Pastoral and Agricultural Association whose annual shows after April 1871 helped to foster cotton and tobacco growing, market gardening and sheep breeding; in January 1868 he was the first president of the Turf Club and in September 1876 of the Cricket Club. An energetic townsman, he did much toward the incorporation of Young in October 1882. He moved to Sydney in 1890 and died in Melbourne.³

Anglican benefactress Mrs Margaret O'Malley Clarke was the Australian-born daughter of Charles McLachlan, a Scottish businessman with extensive interests in the West Indies, Sydney, and Hobart. She was educated in England but returned to Sydney and arrived on the goldfields with her husband, Captain John Lunan Wilkie of the 12th Regiment. She was horrified at the misery on the goldfields. She was widowed when her redcoat soldier husband fell from his horse in a fit of apoplexy in 1862, possibly due to heart failure. Left independently wealthy, she returned to her family in England and studied at Florence Nightingale's training college at St Thomas' Hospital. She came back to Lambing Flat in the 'famine season' of 1865 and founded a Ladies Relief Society to support the less successful families, particularly large ones, to survive the vicissitudes of winter.⁴ Reverend B Ellerman, formerly connected with the Lambing Flat Museum, told National Library of Australia interviewer Hazel De Berg in 1983 that Mrs Wilkie wanted something better than a bark hut in

3 Ruth Teale, 'Clarke, George O'Malley (1836–1899)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/clarke-george-omalley-3221/text4811>, 1969.

4 "Original Correspondence [Margaret J Wilkie]", *The Burrangong Argus*, 10 February 1866, p 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article247264219>.

Boorowa Street for the faithful Anglicans. She returned home to England and trained under Florence Nightingale, and came back to minister to the goldfields. She was extremely concerned about the lack of religious ministry on the goldfields and encouraged Reverend William Pownall, a close friend of the Goulburn Bishop Mesac Thomas, to visit Young, where Pownall conducted his first service on 14 August 1864 in 'a little iron room with mud floor, borrowed forms, and dingy kerosene lamp.'⁵ Mrs Wilkie raised 600 pounds in the UK and that enabled her to build the first brick church in Young, on the site of the bluestone church, and also founded a school.

In memory of her first husband she gave £500, a third of the total cost, for building the Church of St John. She also raised £200 in the colony, engaged a London architect, imported the encaustic tiles, font and other furnishings, and herself did all the needlework. Until replaced in 1893 it was known as the Wilkie Memorial Church. With 'the indefatigable skill with which [she] prosecutes her begging designs', she helped to raise funds for a Church of England school in 1866, a parsonage and a public school at Young in 1870 and an Anglican Church in 1873 at the near-by village of Wombat.⁶

Mrs Wilkie married gold commissioner George O'Malley Clarke and stayed in the district, apart from visiting the United Kingdom twice, until 1882. She moved with her husband to Sydney and helped to found the Home and Training School for Nurses before her early death. Reverend Ellerman said in 1983 that he thought she should be better remembered in Young.⁷

Carlo Marina (1832-1909) came to Young as a butcher but became a vigneron, orchardist, cattle exhibitor and sheep breeder. He had a dramatic life in Europe and became one of the most colourful figures in Young. He was born at Piacenza in the Duchy of Parma and was the son of a merchant and farmer. After some years as an engineering apprentice he left home at 15 to go to the Milan College of Music but joined the Piedmontese army and served in the Lombardy campaign of 1848. He fought at the battle of Novara, became a prisoner in Tuscany, escaped, was with Garibaldi at the siege of Rome and again taken prisoner. On his release he visited Malta, returned to Italy and in 1855 received a contract from the British government to supply meat to troops in the Crimean war. In 1856 he arrived in Melbourne.

By 1861 Marina was at the Burrangong goldfields where he set up as the 'Real Diggers' Butcher' until 18 August 1861, when he married a widow, Eliza Tout (1821-1902), née Harcombe. In 1862 they

5 Barbara Thorn, 'Pownall, William Henry (1834-1903)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/pownall-william-henry-4413/text7203>

6 Ruth Teale, 'Clarke, Margaret Turner (1836-1887)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/clarke-margaret-turner-3340/text4811>

7 Reverend B Ellerman, Residents and descendants of pioneering families of the Young district interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291 [not for publication without consent]

leased the Moppity run. Thirty years later they held 11,255 acres (4555 ha). Marina improved bloodstock from the flocks of John McArthur.⁸

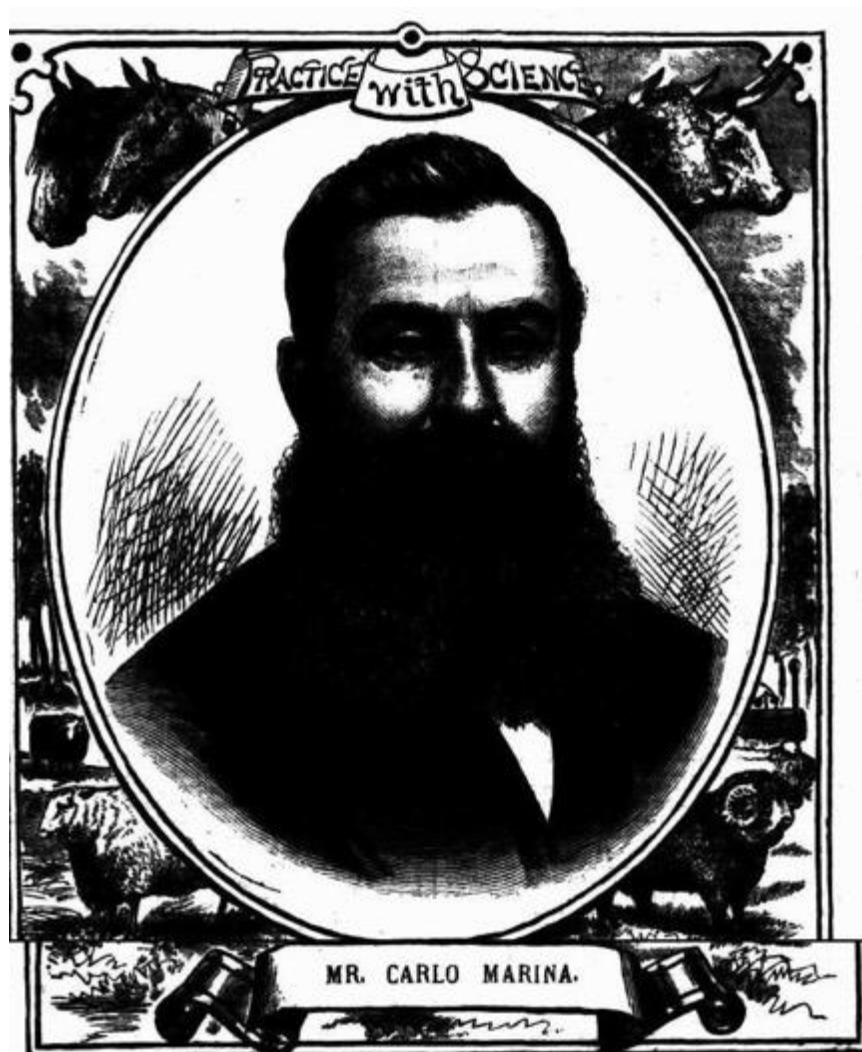


Figure 21: from "Our Studmasters." *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 21 June 1884: 1161, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article164386887>

Marina also bred horses and in 1890 won first prize for blood stallions at the Young Show. In 1894 Marina's prize stud stallion Stratagem, a half-brother to the champion Cremorne, was killed when it was castrated and partially disembowelled by unknown assailants. *The Burrangong Argus* referred to the brutal event as 'The Moppity Outrage' and reported Marina was set on a vendetta against the perpetrators.⁹

Marina was prominent in Young society for years and known for his generosity. His estate was a showplace; its entrance gates were bedecked with flowers which spelt the word 'welcome'; once

8 "Our Studmasters." *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 21 June 1884: 1161. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article164386887>.

9 "The Moppity Outrage." *The Burrangong Argus*, 5 December 1894: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article247682529>.

inside, itinerant journalists and visiting celebrities were shown over Eliza's gardens, the spacious homestead, dairy, vineyards and wine cellars, then entertained over dinner by Marina's repertoire of songs and stories; later they were driven back to town in a sulky pulled by three ponies named Charge, Light and Brigade. He hosted the governor, Lord Carrington, Sir Henry Parkes and Alexander Oliver at different times and local enthusiasts even suggested Moppity should become the site for the federal capital.

By the time of his death in 1909 Marina's family was thoroughly Australian. His brother Camillo was a hotelier in Young, Murrumburrah and Kiama and was married to the widow of a police sergeant shot by bushrangers. Carlo's daughter-in-law Helen (1860-1940), known as the 'digger's friend', was made MBE for her charity work during and after World War I and his grandson Bertie was president of the Returned Servicemen's League in Young before he died in 1920 from wounds received at Gallipoli. Part of Carlo's original property is still owned by descendants.¹⁰

Police Superintendent Martin Brennan (1839-1912) was born in September 1839 at Kilkenny, County Kilkenny, Ireland, son of Martin Brennan, farmer, and his wife Sarah, née Tobin. He migrated to New South Wales in 1859 and joined the mounted patrol under Captain Zouch. Stationed at Braidwood, Brennan ran the gold escort to Goulburn for two years, and distinguished himself at the Lambing Flat (Young) riots, where he was wounded in the arm and had four horses shot under him.

In 1862 Brennan became a senior constable at Moruya, and on 4 July 1865 he married Elizabeth McKeon, from Galway. He was one of the first policemen to use Aboriginal trackers successfully. Promoted sergeant, he was transferred to Araluen and from 1872 was in charge of the Queanbeyan station; while there he became senior sergeant. In 1880 he became a sub-inspector in the Young district, and served at Wagga Wagga before moving to Newcastle in 1886.¹¹ Brennan later wrote a book called *Australian Reminiscences*, where he narrated tales of the 'Almond eye Mongolians' on the goldfields.

Commissioner Henry Zouch (1811-1883) was born in Quebec and educated at Sandhurst before he was commissioned ensign, by purchase, in the 4th (King's Own) Regiment on 10 November 1829 and reached Sydney in the Asia on 2 December 1831. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant on 1 July 1833 and became commander of the first division of the Mounted Police at Bathurst on 1 October 1834, where he served until 1837, before settling at Bungendore. From 1851–53 Zouch was assistant commissioner of crown lands for the gold districts, based on the Lower Turon. He returned to

10 BG Andrews, 'Marina, Carlo (1832–1909)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/marina-carlo-4153/text6663>, 1974.

11 M. Imelda Ryan, 'Brennan, Martin (1839–1912)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/brennan-martin-5349/text9045>, 1979.

Goulburn in 1853 when appointed superintendent of police, Mounted Patrol, southern districts, including the Gundagai and Braidwood gold escorts.

Zouch is known for his fearless handling of the Lambing Flat riots. On 30 June, when the miners tried to storm the police quarters to release three arrested men, Zouch ordered his troopers to charge. In the mêlée one miner was killed and many injured. That night Zouch ordered the withdrawal of the commissioners and police to Yass to avoid further bloodshed.

In March 1862, under the new Police Regulation Act, Zouch was appointed superintendent of police for the south-eastern district at a salary of £500. 'Through his discretion, courage and horsemanship, Zouch won praise in parliament, at a time when the police were proving generally ineffective' against bushrangers, including Ben Hall.¹²

Germans were also a significant cohort of the gold miners drawn to Lambing Flat in the early 1860s. Among them was Joseph Schmidt, jeweller and watchmaker, and Hermann and Johann Tiedemann who, with others, established the Victoria Hill sluicing claim in the 1860s and constructed the reservoir now known as Chinaman's Dam. Descendants of the Schmidt family remain in the district today – Joseph's granddaughter Jean Maroney, who was chosen by to speak on behalf of migrants from the United Kingdom to the Migration Heritage Centre in 2003, remained closely connected to her German heritage and relatives throughout her life.¹³ Former Liberal MP and Askin government minister George Freudenstein's ancestor Martin also arrived with the gold and became a wealthy agriculturalist and scion of a family whose name is equally well-known in the district, and who fought in both world wars for Australia.¹⁴

The best-known Italian name in Young is that of AA Patroni, the engineer who brought electricity to Young. He is associated with the Boorowa Powerhouse and his domestic residences. As the man who turned the lights on in Young, and as a property investor in Boorowa, he is well-known but Patroni was Australian-born, from Melbourne, and not, technically a migrant. Italians have migrated to the Hilltops region since the gold days. Pietro (Piedro or Peter) Lazzarini and his Australian-born wife Annie (Hannah Stubbs) moved to Young in around 1885, from the Araluen goldfields, and became orchardists. Three of their seven surviving children went into politics – the youngest, Hubert (Bert), preceded Gough Whitlam as Member for Werriwa, and it was he who wrote them into the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Pietro was a labourer who was born in 1827 and emigrated after the fall (1849) of the Roman republic, first to the United States of America and then, in 1858 or 1859, to

12 Harold Royle, 'Zouch, Henry (1811–1883)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/zouch-henry-4911/text8223>, 1976.

13 Ray Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Jean Maroney, United Kingdom

14 Ray Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, George Freudenstein

Australia. His children were born at Wombat and Young and educated in Young. Bert and his older brother were active in the Labor Party, the union movement, Catholic organisations and Italian and Irish associations – Charlie went into state politics and Bert went into federal politics.¹⁵ Herbert F (1870–1948) was a master tailor and orchardist who became a controversial, though long-serving alderman and mayor of Young.¹⁶ Pietro and Annie left Young around the same time that Bert entered politics and settled in the Dulwich Hill and Marrickville area.

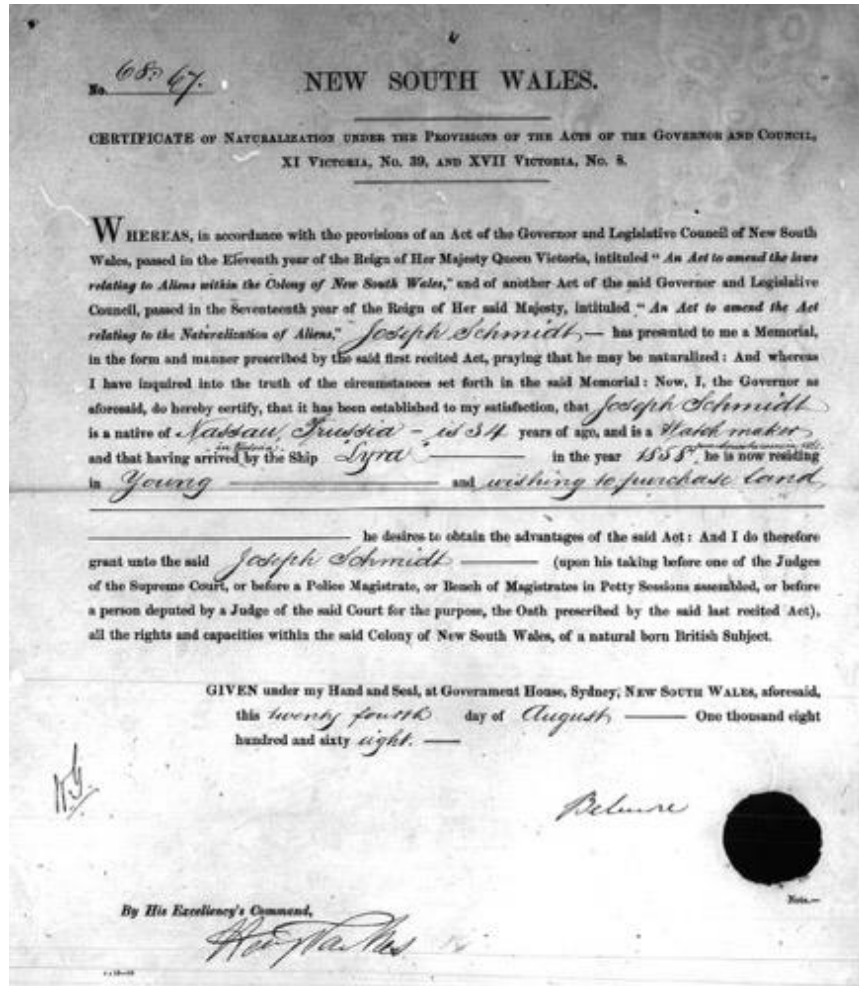


Figure 22: The naturalisation certificate of Joseph Schmidt, jeweller, of Young, 1868, State Records NSW, 4/1190

- 15 EG Whitlam, 'Lazzarini, Hubert Peter (Bert) (1884–1952)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lazzarini-hubert-peter-bert-10797/text19147>, 2000; Bede Nairn, 'Lazzarini, Carlo Camillo (1880–1952)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lazzarini-carlo-camillo-7129/text12301>, 1986.
- 16 "Apology To An Alderman." *Leader*, 14 September 1917: 6. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article117831545>. "Municipal Politics." *Young Witness*, 28 September 1920: 1 (LATEST EDITION). <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113620924>. "Business Men Assert That Young's Progress Is Solid: Statements by Ex-Alderman H. F. Lazzarini Cause A Stir." *The Young Chronicle*, 17 July 1936: 1. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article233925281>; "Mayor Heckled At Young Council Meeting." *The Evening News*, 11 May 1931, p 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article200648376>; "Stormy Petrel of Municipality" *The Young Chronicle* 14 July 1936, p 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article233935579>.

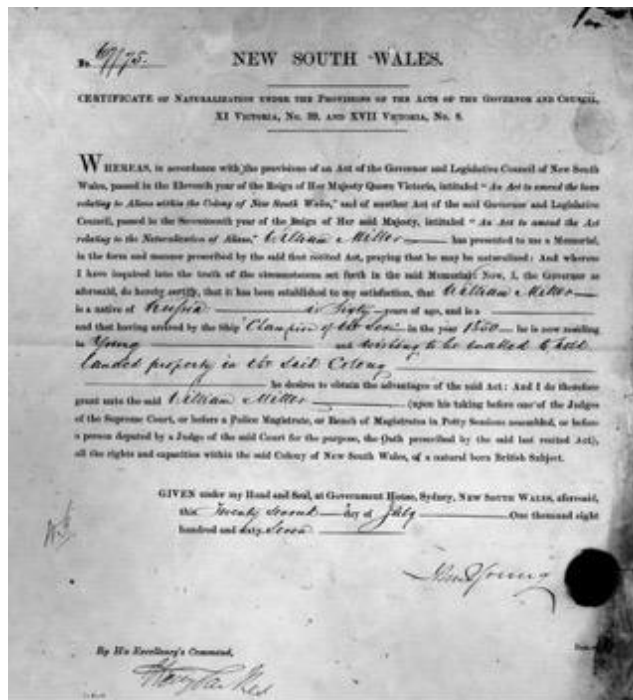


Figure 23: Naturalisation certificate of William Miller, native of Prussia now resident at Young, 1867

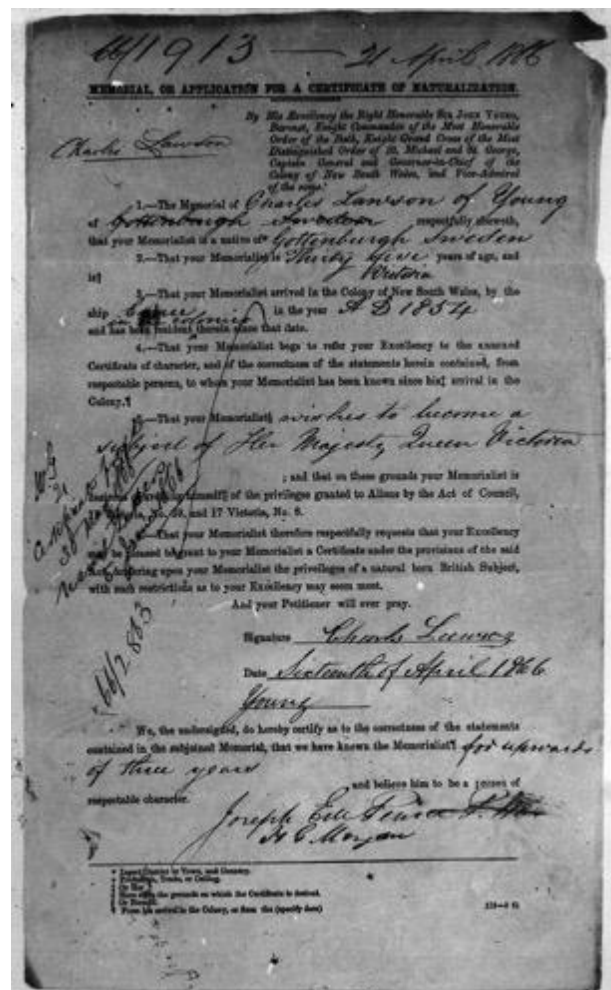


Figure 24: memorial, or application for a certificate of naturalisation, Charles Lawson, native of Sweden, resident at Young, 1866, State Records NSW 4/1188

8 Bushrangers



Figure 25: Frank Gardiner and John Gilbert, circa 1863–1868, Charles Percy Pickering, State Library of NSW

The bushrangers of the Central West are some of Australia’s most notorious, and the exploits of Ben Hall and Frank Gardiner continue to grip the contemporary imagination, fuelling endless histories, cinematic renditions, and novels.¹ Central West bushranging stories are a boon to the tourism industry, and a source of much fascinating and creative interpretation, as is the case with the growing Goolagong business Blind Freddy Bushranger Tours, named after Sir Frederick ‘Blind Freddy’ Pottinger who haplessly pursued Ben Hall.² Bushranger tales are dramatic, and the stories of pursuits and hideouts add resonance to the landscape, especially when we hear stories of cooperation with Aboriginal people. As well, they are stories of the underclass. Bushrangers presented a bold challenge to the squatters who were fattening their livestock and horses and growing rich on the country they held. This section will not present a comprehensive history of bushranging – the topic is too vast – but bushranging was a phenomenon born of the convict and migrant history of the area and is an important element of migration heritage. While Ben Hall was Australian-born one of the area’s most famous bushrangers, Frank Gardiner, was a migrant, as were some of his associates.

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- 1 Ben Hall has been immortalised in the television series *Ben Hall* (1975), the movie *The Legend of Ben Hall* (2017) and Trevor Shearston’s *Game*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin 2013, which was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award.
 - 2 Blind Freddy Bushranger Tours, <https://www.blindfreddytraveltours.com/>; see also The Corridor Project, Big Little Histories of Canowindra, October 2018, <https://www.thecorridorproject.org/big-little-histories-of-canowindra?fbclid=IwAR2KLL5JpGVSm03GuqnThE1hozl2bRz54DxGdfeOv-G4Rd-ywp6JKtlyT>

Bushrangers were a feature of life in Hilltops long before gold arrived. The term 'bushranging' was coined to describe escaped convicts who lived by their wits off the land and by robbing the homes of settlers and accosting travellers.³ Many escaped convicts took to the desolate highways in the hope of wresting a living from passing travellers and isolated pastoralists. The Weddin Mountains provided an excellent refuge from the earliest days, and later, when gold transports made bushranging worthwhile.

Scotchie (Scotty) Thompson and Thomas Whitton were first two and worst, according to oral history. They were convicts who had escaped their assignments at William Redfern's Waugoola Station at Bathurst.⁴ Around 1838 they attacked a store in Boorowa, then attacked the White property.⁵ They then went to Robertsons at Currawong, where they shot five men, one fatally. They went to the Fry property as well, but he was ready for them, and Scotchie was shot dead, while Whitton was hanged in Goulburn.⁶ Whitton, who may have killed his partner (who may have also been his lover) as part of a pact they had made that neither would face the hangman's noose, is buried near the McDermott Centre in Goulburn.⁷



Figure 26: System of bailing mail in New South Wales 1863 / Samuel Thomas Gill, State Library of NSW

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- 3 Jane Wilson, 'Bushrangers in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/essay/12/text31129>, originally published 14 April 2015.
 - 4 Edith Medway, Bushranger Thomas Whitton's exploits revisited, *Goulburn Post*, 8 March 2017, <https://www.goulburnpost.com.au/story/4517861/whittons-escapades-recalled/>
 - 5 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 10
 - 6 Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291]
 - 7 Kathleen Ferguson, 'Bushranger Thomas Whitton's remains may threaten major redevelopment in Goulburn', ABC Central West, 8 June 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-08/bushranger-holds-up-historic-nsw-town-from-the-grave/9848508>

Bushranging intensified with the gold rushes, as the yields were much greater. Gardiner and two gold-diggers started their campaign at Tipperary Gully, Lambing Flat.⁸ Francis (Frank) Gardiner (1830-1903?), described by Lyster Holland as less of a bushranger than a flash gentleman, came to Australia from Scotland with his parents Charles and Jane Christie as a four-year-old. The family reached Sydney in the *James* in 1834 and settled at Boro near Goulburn. As Francis Christie, he was sentenced in Geelong to five years' hard labour in Pentridge 1850 for horse stealing but escaped and returned to New South Wales. In March 1854 he was convicted as Francis Clarke at Goulburn on two charges of horse stealing and imprisoned on Cockatoo Island. In December 1859 he was given a ticket-of-leave for the Carcoar district, but broke parole and went south. By the end of 1860, as Frank Gardiner, he had a butchery at Lambing Flat but skipped bail. Diggers organised a race meeting on a course that is now occupied by the Young Railway Station, Zouch Street and Great Eastern Hotel and Frank Gardiner stole the winning mare from Mrs Sells, the wife of the Spring Creek publican, who had helped organise the event.⁹ Six months later Gardiner robbed John Eastlake's store at Spring Creek, the Pring's station Crowther near Burrangong and Croaker's property Burrowmunditroy, where Mr and Mrs Croaker and Mr Richards were held up.¹⁰

Known as 'The Darkie', Gardiner began highway robbery on the Cowra Road, with a group of young men. In July 1861 at a sly grog shop near Oberon he shot and wounded Sergeant John Middleton; Trooper Hosie was also wounded although was allegedly bribed to let Gardiner escape. Gardiner joined up with Johnny Piesley; after ranging the old Lachlan Road they moved to the Weddin Mountains and were joined by John Gilbert, Ben Hall and others. The police under Sir Frederick Pottinger could not catch the gang for it moved too rapidly aided by 'bush telegraphs'.

On 15 June 1862 at the Coonbong Rock near Eugowra Gardiner's gang held up the gold escort and got away with £14,000. Soon afterwards Gardiner, while visiting his mistress Kate, wife of John Brown of Wheogo, narrowly escaped from Pottinger. With her he went to Queensland where as Mr and Mrs Frank Christie they ran a store and shanty at Apis Creek near Rockhampton. In February 1864 he was traced by the New South Wales police and arrested. Tried for wounding Sergeant Middleton with intent to kill, he was acquitted by the jury but found guilty in July on two non-capital charges. He died free in California.¹¹

Burrangong, remote as it was, was safe harbour for the bushrangers, even in the gold rush period, and many horses and supplies were purloined from the station. A year after the Eugowra robbery Gilbert and O'Meally approached Regan, whose husband had just died, and asked for food and safe harbour,

8 The Wayback, p 59

9 The Wayback, p 60–62

10 The Wayback, p 62–64

11 Edgar F. Penzig, 'Gardiner, Francis (Frank) (1830–1903)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gardiner-francis-frank-3589/text5561>, 1972.

but she declined as she did not want to be drawn into supporting them. She had known Gilbert as a stockrider for Mulholland at Stoney Creek Station near Marengo and O'Meally since babyhood and listened to their stories of their inability to escape Gardiner's orbit, but although she blamed Gardiner for leading them into the life, she was unsympathetic.¹²

Sarah Musgrave alludes to the relationships between local Aboriginal people and the bushrangers. Near Marsden Station, Ben Hall's gang, which then comprised Hall, Gilbert, Davis and McGuinness, hid near Marsden Station. They came upon a camp of Aboriginal people and McGuinness pretended to steal the wife of Pilot, one of the Aboriginal men. Musgrave says McGuinness was joking but he said he would take the woman and got off his horse as if to lift her into the saddle. Pilot shot McGuinness dead then hid with his wife in the Wyalong Ranges [Booberoi Hills] for three years. Government trackers were unable to convince Pilot to come in as he feared reprisals from the gang. In any case, as Musgrave pointed out, the trackers 'were, perhaps, the best friends the bushrangers had', as they tipped off the bushrangers about police movements and led troopers away. Only Billy Dargan and Jackie Watson were considered trustworthy, and other trackers were dismissed, which later led to Watson being attacked and having his arm amputated.¹³

Stories like this are a reminder of the covert aggression suffered by Aboriginal people in Hilltops, and the fear bushrangers invoked in the communities of the district. Bushrangers were arrogant criminals but refusing to support them could be fatal, for black or white people.

12 The Wayback, 66–67

13 The Wayback, p 65

9 Chinese residents of Hilltops after the gold rushes

A common belief that emerged from talking to people in Hilltops was that many of the Chinese stayed on after the gold was exhausted at Burrangong and Wombat. It is clear that Chinese people did stay – they fossicked, gardened, ran shops, intermarried with locals and made lives in Hilltops and over time, their Chinese identity was anglicised into names like Sinclair – but the numbers may be exaggerated. In 1881, the Census recorded just 239 in the whole district of Young, Marengo, Wombat and Murrumburrah.¹

Max Quay is one of Young's better known descendants of the goldrushes. He was interviewed by Ron Gilchrist for the Migration Heritage Centre in 2003 and spoke of his ancestors, who were market gardeners Thomas Ah Young and George Quay. He also spoke about the interpreter William Seng Chai, who came to the area for gold and married Irishwoman Hannah Fogarty from Bathurst, causing a permanent rift with her family. Quay's family took on the trappings of Australian life, joining the Anglican Church and Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows' Lodge and socialising in the town, but although they maintained solid Chinese identities and recipes into the third generation, they were few in number. When asked if he could remember other Chinese families in Young, Quay said, "No, no. I can only remember us and the Youngs and the Hayes and they were all integrated." Quay attributes his ancestors' successes in Young to hard work, and developing a reputation for being willing to lend a hand.²

The more modest families are the hardest to trace. The State Heritage Inventory Form prepared by Ray Christison for the ruins of a single-jian dwelling on Olde Milong Station points out that gangs of Chinese labourers were employed across the west to ringbark trees and carry out the three to four years of sucker bashing required to ensure no regrowth occurred.³ Chinese market gardens were also a feature of the landscape, as Helen Lloyd writes:

The Chinese who turned to the market gardens when the gold petered out, were the only ones successful in vegetables production when all others had failed. They travelled the districts from the 1860s with their carts, selling or exchanging their produce for all types of saleable goods, especially sheep and later rabbit skins. The Chinese who had gardens at Boorowa were George Ah Sing, Charley Ah Tun, Joe Ah Jaun, Le How, See Hoy, Lee Sum, Ah Yue, Charley Chong and George Ah Sand who all resided in Boorowa between 1874 to 1900. At the turn of the century, Chang How supplied vegetables to the hospital. One old Chinaman, named Cowie, died at the hospital in 1904. Charlie Ah Yick, Tommy Wah Sue, and George Yew, purchased in 1926 the Boorowa market garden from George Nom Chong.⁴

Young district resident Lyster Holland remembered:

... after the gold pegged out, a lot of these Chinese stayed in the district. They had shops here in

1 Atherton, *More than just gold diggers*, p 37

2 Ray Gilchrist, *Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW*, 2003, Max Quay

3 Buxton, cited Ray Christison, *State Heritage Inventory Form, Chinese single-jian dwelling, Young Shire*, 2011.

4 Lloyd, *Boorowa*, pp 47–48

town. ... every district had a Chinaman garden. Anywhere there was a dam or creek where they could get a bit of water, and they worked damned hard. They lived there under stressful conditions, living in little huts. I remember old Jimmy, an old neighbour of ours, a Chinaman, had his garden there and he'd load his cart overnight, before daylight in the morning walked his horse to go round all the farms, round the sawmills, round the road gangs, round the shearing sheds, and round the villages. 'Cause in those days people didn't have water to grow much vegetables, and these Chinamen they'd provide us with veg. They were our main supplier of vegetables ... they were a great asset to the district.⁵



Figure 27: American & Australasian Photographic Company, On Lee On Hing's Wholesale & Retail Store, Gulgong, 1870s, State Library of New South Wales Holtermann Collection. This business may have been linked to On Lee's store in Young but in any case is typical of a goldfields store. It is unclear to whom the two women in the image are married.

The belief the market gardeners were goldminers who stayed on may be misguided. In 1861, the NSW Government passed the *Chinese Immigrants Regulation and Restriction Act*. This Act required every vessel arriving in New South Wales to report how many Chinese were on board and mandated that only one Chinese man per ten tons of freight could be carried by any ship, or a fine of ten pounds per person was payable and the ship was liable to be confiscated. All arriving Chinese, whether by land or sea, had to pay a fee of ten pounds and those already in the Colony were to register with a

Gold Commissioner or Clerk of Petty Sessions by 28 February 1862. Naturalisations, and therefore land purchases, were prohibited.⁶ The Act was repealed in 1867, but restrictions continued.

9.1 Naturalisations from Hilltops, 1869–1885 [State Records NRS 1040–1042]

Name	Arrived	Naturalised	Ship	Profession	Lived	Reason stated
Hor Ping Nam	1856	1885	in colony	Gardener	Young	
Loo Too	1857	1885	in colony	market gardener	Young	
Lang How	1859	1870	–	gardener	Young	wishes to purchase land and settle
On Lee	1859	1869	–	market gardener	Young	has a large general business, translator
James Sing Quay	1860	1875	in colony	merchant	Young	desires to purchase land
Lim Ah Keong	1861	1874	in colony		Young	
William Robert George Lee	1861	1875	Wilson & Company	market gardener	Young	
James Sing Yeun	1864	1882	–	storekeeper	Young	desirous of having a vote
Park Yuk	1864	1873	Barwon	general storekeeper	Lambing Flat	
Wong Pin Tat	1864	1873	Brisbane	gardener	Wombat	wishes to purchase a house and land
Ah Geang	1865	1875	in colony		Young	
Choy Quin	1865	1884	in colony	gardener	Young	
Tommy Ah Kay	1874	1882	in colony		Young	
Ah Tue	1877	1884	Menmuir	market gardener	Young	
Low Ching		1869	–	storekeeper	Young	
Hong [Hung] Foot	1875	1883	Bowen	hawker		(Identified by Atherton as local)
James Ah Foo	1870	1883	In colony	storekeeper		(Identified by Atherton as local)

6 "Chinese Immigration Act." *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, 28 November 1861: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article18685277>.

The policy behind this framework, while not always directly stated, became known as the ‘White Australia Policy’. Acts directly aimed at restricting the influx of Chinese were passed in 1881 and 1887, and naturalisation was again stopped for Chinese migrants. Chinese migrants could not become citizens again in Australia until 1957.

This study included a search of naturalisation certificates in State Records [NRS 1040 to 1041], which contained an address in the Young area. This search identified just 15 men from the region who sought naturalisation in the window open to them, plus another two identified by Robyn Atherton. These naturalisation certificates can be readily accessed online at the Chinese Naturalisation Database, which was compiled in 2008.⁷ Of the 17, 12 possibly worked the Young goldfields. The details on the registers are scant, but they show that all these men came from Canton or Guangzhou. One, James Sing Yeun was keen to vote. On Lee, who was one of the earliest arrivals and one of the first to seek citizenship, appears to have been particularly fluent in English, as he translated for others, and was apparently prosperous in business. On Lee was possibly related to Dr George On Lee, who was well known in the Parkes area and later moved his practice to Sydney.

It is worth noting that William [Wee] Seng Chai does not appear on that list. He was the Government Chinese Interpreter for the Western Districts of New South Wales and is believed to have been sent to Young during the Lambing Flat riots as an interpreter. His son Alfred Alexander Seng Chai [Yuen Lim Seng], born at Sofala in 1866, followed in his father’s footsteps, translating for a delegation from Guangzhou who toured Sydney, Melbourne, Ballarat, Sandhurst, Adelaide and Queensland, and serving as aide-de-camp to General Wong Yu Ho, and even visiting China himself.⁸ Chinese-Australian families often maintained links between the two countries, even in the age of the *Immigration Restriction Act* and the White Australia Policy.

7 Terri McCormack, Chinese Naturalisation Database, NSW 1857-1887: A Research Tool for Chinese-Australian History, <http://arrow.latrobe.edu.au/store/3/4/5/5/1/public/naturalisation.htm>

8 Young Family History Society file, citing ‘Honouring the Past’, *The Young Witness*, 11 April 2014.



Figure 28: General Ho & Tsing [with unidentified Chinese male, 1887 / photographed by Freeman Studios], State Library of NSW. The Young Family History Society thinks the young man is Alexander Sen Chai.

Robyn Atherton's extensive research into the Chinese of Harden-Murrumburrah is a model for family and local historians. Her painstaking research has revealed the lives of more than 200 immigrant Chinese and their descendants who did live in Harden-Murrumburrah area from the 1861 until the 1960s. A few examples: Sun Kim Hang had a sizeable store in Main Street Young in the 1870s, apparently in premises owed by a Mr Quin.⁹ Yan Lee Chan Kee set up a store in Wombat that was a branch of the business of Jor Jack Tong. Chinese market gardeners supplied Burrangong Hospital, and other Young Chinese stores identified through newspaper reports include Sun Quong Tiy and Chan Fung Tiy.¹⁰ One of Chan Fung Tiy's employees was described as Jas Sing Quong, which could be the James Sing Yeun, storekeeper, who was naturalised in 1882 because he wanted to vote. Chan Fung Tiy was, in 1879, declared insolvent, along with Jor Tack Tong.¹¹

Atherton records a steady flow of newspaper reports of prosecutions for petty crimes and minor drug offences, murders and assaults, and deaths by natural causes. Her work proves Chinese were very

9 Atherton, *More than just diggers*, pp 29–31.

10 Quarter Sessions, *Burrangong Argus*, 4 June 1879, cited Atherton, p 31.

11 State Records Insolvency Index, cited Atherton, *More than just diggers*, p 31

much a part of the Hilltops community. She also identifies a magical piece of multiculturalism – a Chinese conjurer, Ah King ‘the only Chinese wizard in the Australian colonies’, performing at the Temperance Hall in October 1880 with Irish comic singer, Mr D Burns, and the Young Town Band.¹²

When the Chinese people of Young died, their bodies were interred in the cemeteries. Some of their bones may have been removed, to be repatriated to their home villages, under a scheme organised by the charity Tung Wah Hospital in Hong Kong.¹³ There are a number of surviving graves at Lang’s Creek Cemetery and Atherton has faithfully documented the Chinese section of Harden-Murrumburrah Cemetery. Those whose bones had not been removed were still cared for by compatriots – in 1915, *The Young Witness and Burrangong Argus* reported that the Chinese residents held a feast of roasted pig and gin in the portion of cemetery that held the bones of ‘departed Celestials’ whose spirit had ‘been wafted away to the Flowery Land.’¹⁴

It seems likely that most of the market gardeners remembered by Lyster Holland, and by oral history informants in Ruth Longdin’s study, migrated after the gold rushes, either directly from China or elsewhere in Australia. One of the best known local Chinese residents was George Moo Hing, who arrived in Australia in 1884, when he was in his 30s, and kept a store at Grenfell. When he registered as an alien during World War II his papers showed he was married but there was no other indication that he had a wife. He lived to advanced old age – either 98, as records seemed to show, or 107, as he claimed – retiring to live on the Tout property at Wambanumba and at Tommy Young’s property at Wombat. He lived a strange and solitary life and died in an accidental grass fire on Young’s property. He was commemorated by the Young Family History Society.¹⁵ Elderly market gardener Young Lee Jup also died horribly, mown down by a car in Burrowa Street in 1931.¹⁶ Such men had slipped through the tightening of immigration regulations that occurred as the colonies began to form into a federated Australia and lived quiet lives in Hilltops.

12 *Burrangong Argus*, 13 October 1880, cited Atherton, *More than just diggers*, p 33

13 M Williams, *Chinese Settlement in NSW A Thematic History*, cited Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*.

14 "Current News", *Young Witness*, 19 October 1915, p 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113673133>;

15 Young Family and District Historical Society Collection, inspected 27 June 2018

16 "Chinese Killed." *The Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*, 6 August 1931, p 2
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112837882>

No. 10.8.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION
 UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE ACTS OF THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL, 11 VICTORIA, No. 39,
 AND 17 VICTORIA, No. 8.

Whereas, in accordance with the provisions of an Act of the Governor and Legislative Council of New South Wales, passed in the Eleventh year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, intituled "An Act to amend the laws relating to Aliens within the Colony of New South Wales," and of another Act of the said Governor and Legislative Council, passed in the Seventeenth year of the Reign of Her said Majesty, intituled "An Act to amend the Act relating to the Naturalization of Aliens," Lang How

has presented to me a Memorial, in the form and manner prescribed by the said first recited Act, praying that he may be naturalized: AND WHEREAS I have inquired into the truth of the circumstances set forth in the said Memorial: Now, I, the Governor as aforesaid, do hereby certify, that it has been established to my satisfaction, that Lang How

is a native of Canton, China—is thirty years of age, and is a _____ and that having arrived by the Ship _____ in the year 1859—

he is now residing in at Young—
 and wishing to purchase land and intending to settle in this Colony he desires to obtain the advantages of the said Act:
 AND I DO THEREFORE GRANT unto the said Lang How

(upon his taking before one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, or before a Police Magistrate, or Bench of Magistrates in Petty Sessions assembled, or before a person deputed by a Judge of the said Court for the purpose, the Oath prescribed by the said last recited Act), all the rights and capacities within the said Colony of New South Wales, of a natural born British Subject.

Will GIVEN under my Hand and Seal, at Government House, Sydney, NEW SOUTH WALES, aforesaid, this seventeen day of January—
 One thousand eight hundred and seventy.

By His Excellency's Command, *Belmore*
Charles Cooper

NOTE.—This Certificate is required to be enrolled in the Supreme Court, and the Oath referred to should be taken before one of the Judges, or in the manner herein mentioned, within 60 days from its date.

Figure 29: The naturalisation certificate of Lang How, of Young, 1870, State Records NSW, 4/1192

10 Closer settlement, agriculture, and towns

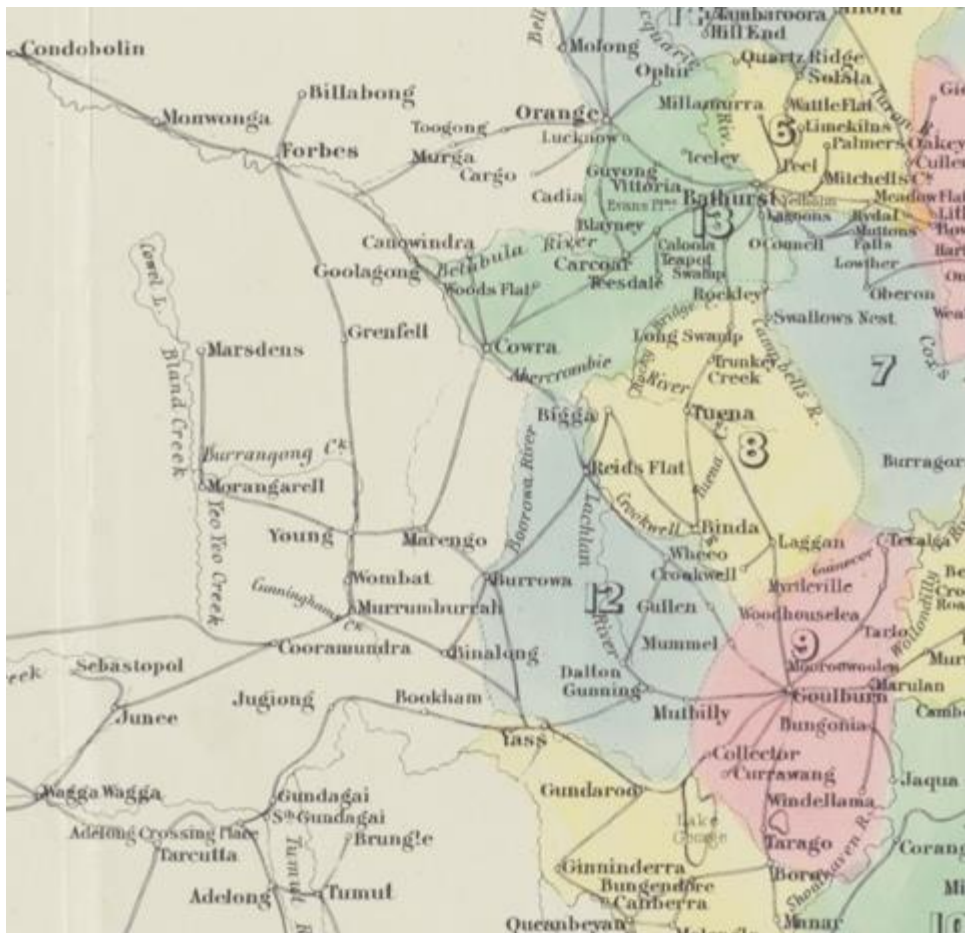


Figure 30: Detail of Map shewing the roads & distances in New South Wales / [cartography by George Bishop, Surveyor-General's Office], [Sydney: Basch & Co., 1872], nla.gov.au/nla.obj-231005543.

The only town inside the settled districts is Burrowa.

The gold rush brought thousands of people to Hilltops but the efforts of the NSW Government to reduce the landholdings of the squatters with the *Closer Settlement Act 1861*, which enabled selectors to buy lots for a reasonable price, ensured the new arrivals had a place to stay. The rich soils in Hilltops ensured success for many selectors and descendants of many of these early families remain in the area today. At the same time, the creation of travelling stock reserves and other transport routes, and the coming of the railway, quickly transformed Hilltops from a frontier to a settled district. Squatter families, like Sarah Musgrave's, were on the back foot:

The Act put an end to large stations, for it prevented any squatter from holding more than sixteen thousand acres. The squatters, naturally, did not welcome with open arms the free selectors who came and took up large portions of their runs, but as this has long been a sore point, I shall say no more about it.¹

1 Musgrave, *The Wayback*, p 58

The closer settlement acts divided the area into smaller properties, that averaged 90-acres. The only way to make a good living from a comparatively small allotment was to engage in mixed farming or relatively intensive agriculture, such as orcharding. The Hilltops area was well suited for mixed farming and orcharding and remains so to this day. In the early 1980s, Young was one of the largest prune and cherry district in Australia, producing \$2 million of cherries and \$1.5 million in prunes. The area also had an enormous poultry industry, worth around \$2 million, and robust wool, cattle and horse breeding industries. A magnesite mine was worth \$1.75 million a year and the ore was milled at Young. According to oral history, Young was once an inland sea, so the magnesite was rich in deposits of fish and shells – all of which were ground up for mineral powders and road base.²

The families of those who stayed on the land reaped the rewards as each property was handed to the next generation. Some farmers bought out their neighbours, others prospered from mechanisation. Farm labourers, many of whom came as new immigrants from Ireland, had long relationships with their employers. Some became landholders themselves, or worked in trades that supported rural industries, like shopkeeping and valuation.³ Those who stayed speak of enjoying the feeling of being well known, through reputations passed down from father to son, and mother to daughter.⁴



Figure 31: Shearers' huts, "Redbank" Station - Harden, NSW, October 1934, State Library of NSW.

Oral history records, like those recorded by Hazel De Berg in the 1980s when she interviewed her cousins and other local historians in the Young community, reveal the hardships of life on these small lots, particularly before mechanisation. Poultry farms, dairies, piggeries, wheat fields, and sheep, cow

2 Residents and descendants of pioneering families of the Young district interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291

3 *Ibid*

4 *Ibid*

and horse studs were all carved out of the land, by hand. The tools of the farmers' trades were scythes and horse-drawn ploughs, and water had to be carted by hand in kerosene tins. These small farmers also dealt with the worst the climate could dish out – endless droughts spent on the long paddock, rabbits that ate the scrub and pasture down to below the topsoil, and apocalyptic dust storms that rolled in from the west and blackened the sky. The women worked as hard as their husbands, and often worked as well to improve their menfolk, by educating them and hosting school teachers. Children went to public and religious school on foot or, if they were lucky, in the family sulky, but few of them spoke of going without shoes. The life was hard scrabble, but it was not often impoverished.

10.1 Forming the towns



Figure 32: A still recognisable streetscape. Burrowa Street, Young (formerly Lambing Flats), American & Australasian Photographic Company, 1870-1875, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.

There is a logic to the formation of towns, for there is always a reason why communities of people have decided to cluster together. The towns in Hilltops have distinct characters, which reflect the forces that drove their formation – the inclinations of a landholder, an industry, a transport route or a river, or a religious sensibility. The various Christian sects that arrived in the area throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century reflected the geographical origins of migrants, and, to a lesser extent, their class. Co-religionists clustered together, and also tended to gravitate to particular industries. Methodists, for instance, were often involved in the mining industries. There are towns that play

Rugby Union, and towns that don't.⁵ This has put a particular shape on Hilltops, and the locations of churches, religious institutions and graveyards reflect clusters of influence within the region that have, in a stable community, lasted for a long time. Young became the most prominent town simply because of the gold rushes. It has been shaped by civic investments like the grand courthouse that followed in the wake of the Lambing Flat riots. Young has also been shaped by significant investment from the Catholic Church during the era of Father Hennessy, but this Catholic influence long preceded Hennessy, or Young.

Catholics

Irish convicts were amongst the first settlers to Hilltops, and their influence remains marked today. Ned Ryan was of the Irish Catholic social elite, but less well-off co-religionists clustered around his property Galong, and still form the congregation of St Clement's Monastery. These relationships shaped the town into distinct areas – The Marsden Street side of Boorowa was earmarked for the development of the town centre, with the court and government buildings marked in the early 1850s. The current Catholic Church, school and convent are on land that was dedicated from the Ballyryan estate in the late 1860s, so the shape of the town reflects that today. Ryans Creek divided the town and was referred to as 'Dissention Creek'. People who engaged in oral history with Ruth Longdin said when they were school children it was made very clear to them that during the week they could attend school on 'the other side' of the creek but they were not to cross on the weekend or at other times.⁶ I was told 'Irish Catholicism sits at the foundation of community problems' in Boorowa and longstanding resentments had formed over, for instance, who got the best and worst cuts of meat.⁷

In the late 1980s Canberra-based oral historian Stephen Guth (1943-2018) prepared *The Galong Centenary Book* (Galong: Galong Public School, 1991). While writing, and for some years afterwards, Guth and others like Brother Clement, Robert Guth, Laurie and Brendan Grovenor, Mary Ann Halasz, Alf Lewis, recorded 74 interviews in the Galong area. The interviews took place in the Monastery, at the school, with old time residents, at St Lawrence's Retirement Village and at auctions. Guth called this work the Galong Oral History Project and the interviews are now held by the National Library of Australia, in audio format.⁸

Most interviewees arrived in the area in the twentieth century, although most were Australian-born. Almost all of them were Anglo-Irish, and provided lovely insights into the culture surrounding Galong, including the Convent and Public Schools.

5 Leanne Leihn, pers. comm., February 2018

6 Longdin, *Thematic History of Boorowa*, p 188–189; Lloyd, *Boorowa – 160 Years of White Settlement*, p 80

7 Leanne Leihn, pers. comm., February 2018

8 Galong oral history project, Steven Guth and Lorie Grovenor, 1989–1990, National Library of Australia (audio available, some online), National Library of Australia, ORAL TRC 2472, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn1930672>

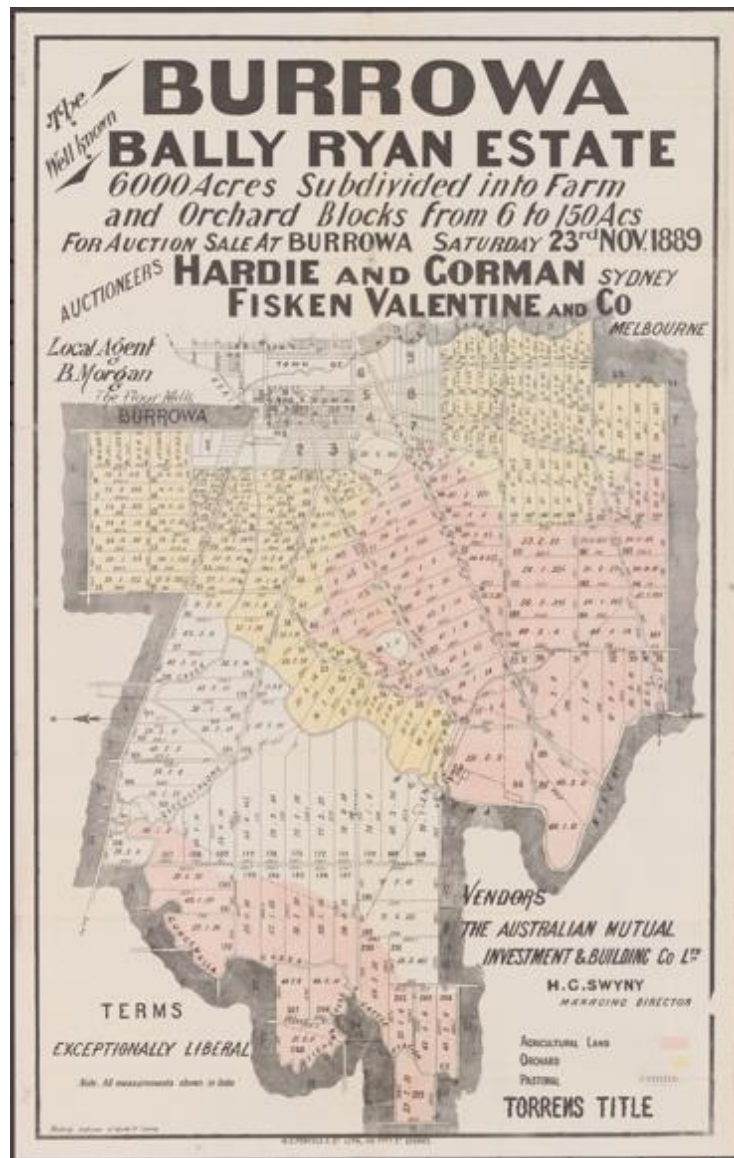


Figure 33: The subdivision of the Ballyryan estate, which clearly shows the town footprint of Boorowa. [nla.obj-230110286](#)

The 1990 Centenary Day at Galong Public School and the 1992 reunion of St Clement's Monastery provided a wealth of information about the lives of lay and religious Catholics. As part of that project Chris Sullivan recorded Lee Cusack at Oakleigh near Murrumbidgee, and heard about life at the Convent, the Gaelic sung and spoken in the district, St Patrick's Day and Orangemen, and Irish attitudes to conscription. He also sang fragments of songs, like the Wild Colonial Boy, which seem to have a particular resonance in this district. Maud (Molly) Menzies (1910-1993) – was Irish and was born Shea. At first she went to the Convent School (St Lawrence's) in the family sulky where they were referred to as 'the poor little Sheas' and made their first holy communion – she married there and christened her babies there and her daughters were both married at Galong. When she was at the school she was not allowed to mix with the kids at the public school – although they did speak to the children, the nuns did not like it. "My father, a born Irishman, you wouldn't get away with it." Even though the public school shared the same grounds there was no mixing between public and Convent

children and the kids played hopscotch and other games without ever playing together. She was then sent to the Kalangan School – her mother boarded the teachers. When Maude was at the public school she and her four siblings milked 19 cows, separated the milk and fed the calves before heading inside to her mother who had made a hot breakfast of chops and gravy and sent them to school. They would get hot scones once they got home and then milked the cows again. One teacher was not so nice and would criticise them for being “poor Sheas”. Maude’s husband Bob was of Scottish origins and a distant relative of Bob Menzies, although they very much disagreed politically. Her husband bought 48 acres, later supplemented by 100 acres of a reserve block, and worked for Gregson’s for 27 years.⁹

Gabrielle Chan lives in Harden, which grew up around the railway line when it came near to the bottom of Murrumburrah. Gabrielle Chan interviewed the Stadtmiller family about their marriage, because it was ‘mixed’ – an unusual phenomenon in the district.¹⁰

Trish’s father migrated from England to the Harden district in 1926. He was the second son of a wool merchant from Manchester. He married a local girl whose father was a share farmer. ... He was a bulldozing contractor, building dams for farmers around town. He converted from the Anglican Church to Catholicism for the sake of his wife, and quickly became a more committed Catholic than many born to it. It was a big thing to convert in those days, when there was still a strong sectarian feeling around here – a division that has since calmed down as churches have combined in ecumenical services to try to increase attendance. If proof was ever needed of her father’s commitment to the faith, it came when Trish’s brother married an Anglican woman. The family had planned to go to the wedding but their parish priest forbade their attendance. Her father acquiesced. ‘It was the only day I saw my father cry. It was dreadful.’

Adrian was also raised Catholic. He and his four siblings, his parents and his grandparents lived in the old Binalong convent west of Yass. His father had a falling-out with the priest, prompting an argument at the presbytery door, after which he left the Church and declaring he was an atheist. The Stadtmiller family was denounced from the pulpit, according to Adrian. His father never returned and would not let a priest see him on his deathbed.¹¹

Young has also been shaped by the Catholic Church, particularly under the oversight of the Reverend Father Hennessy. St Mary’s Catholic Church and the complex of buildings surrounding it stand as a testament to the solidarity and faith of the district’s Roman Catholic community, which was largely drawn from Irish stock. The focus of these buildings on education, including the former Convent, reflects the passion and commitment of people of the Catholic faith – a faith which is not restricted to the Irish but which also includes Italians and southern Europeans, Austrians, and others.

Hilltops remains strongly Catholic today, with nearly 34 per cent of people identifying this as their religion, which compares with 25 per cent in the rest of regional NSW.¹²

9 Maude Menzies interviewed by Steven Guth in the Galong oral history project [sound recording] 1989, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-221212757>

10 Residents and descendants of pioneering families of the Young district interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291

11 Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 70

12 <https://profile.id.com.au/hilltops/religion>



Figure 34: Sacred Heart Hospital and St John's Church, Young, circa 1927, State Library of NSW

Anglicans

Anglicanism is also strong in Hilltops, with more than 25 per cent of people identifying with that faith, compared to 22 per cent in the rest of NSW.¹³ In the nineteenth century Anglicanism was very much the official religion of New South Wales and it is associated with the English and Northern Irish.

William Henry Pownall (1834-1903) was a leading Anglican clergyman in the Goulburn-Young area from 1863 until his death in 1903. He was friends with Mesac Thomas, secretary of the Colonial and Continental Church Society, and agreed to join him in New South Wales. In 1864 in London Pownall married Sarah Sophia Swayne. With the encouragement of Mrs Wilkie, he reached Goulburn in June and held his first service at Lambing Flat on 14 August in a 'little iron room with mud floor, borrowed forms and dingy kerosene lamp'. The physical demands of his large parishes were exacting and sheer exhaustion often overcame him, but he created a vigorous church community. He laid the foundation stone of St John the Evangelist's Church, Young, on 21 March 1865 and next year added a schoolhouse. In the turbulent mining community he preached and expected high standards of spiritual life from his people and worked to improve their education by weekly lectures in English history. In 1867-69 by arrangement with the Sydney diocese he also held services on the new goldfield at Grenfell. He spent time in Tumut, Adelong and Wagga Wagga before becoming archdeacon of the western part of Goulburn diocese and one of three commissaries to administer the diocese when Bishop Thomas was absent in 1874-75. Despite the illness of his wife, Pownall ably handled the complex problems of the diocese. In 1874 he was granted the Lambeth B.A. degree and in 1884 made a canon of St Saviour's Cathedral, Goulburn. Although he found synods an 'abomination', he took a

¹³ <https://profile.id.com.au/hilltops/religion>

leading part in their affairs. In 1889 he was appointed vicar-general and took charge during Bishop Thomas's last illness until the consecration of William Chalmers in November 1892. In 1891 he had become dean of St Saviour's Cathedral and as registrar of the diocese in 1892-95 assisted Chalmers in the settlement of the cathedral dispute. He returned to Young in 1895 and when Chalmers died in November 1901 acted again as vicar-general. As acting registrar with temporary charge of the parish of West Goulburn, he gave invaluable help to the incoming bishop, C. G. Barlow. In September 1903 Pownall resigned from the Young parish but died of diabetes in Goulburn two months later.¹⁴

Protestantism

Particular diasporas specialise in particular trades, so become concentrated in areas where those trades are practiced. So it was with mining. There are fewer Protestants in Hilltops than in other parts of regional New South Wales, but those who did come, often followed minerals they were familiar with from their home countries.¹⁵ Rye Park, Frogmore and Rugby are unusual villages that were each developed on private property in response to the commercial opportunities created by mining and related transport needs, but which also have a particular religious flavour. Each has a general cemetery which was established on the only remaining Crown Land in the locality. Rye Park's cemetery is located within a former Forest and Mining Reserve, Rugby General Cemetery was developed within a Travelling Stock Reserve and Frogmore General Cemetery was established within a Forest Reserve. Rye Park is a strong Methodist community, as the town was owned by Methodist Alfred Bembrick and the mining he established attracted Methodist workers from Cornwall.

Confucianism and Islam

Despite the presence of Chinese people from the 1840s, Confucianism has left no obvious trace on Hilltops today. Islam is growing within Hilltops, but is tiny. The development of an Islamic school is in accordance with the strong tradition of Catholic and Anglican religious schools in the district.

Judaism

There is no sign of a synagogue in Hilltops, but there is a record of Jewish names in the region. Lazarus Cohen of Goulburn established The Diggers Arms Hotel on Main Street in Lambing Flat in 1860, and Abraham Cohen built a weatherboard Albion Hotel that was destroyed by fire in 1875. It was replaced by a brick hotel, which was later managed by his son Aaron. It was on the site of the IGA in Young. Thomas Solomon was convicted of selling sly grog at Chance Gully in 1861 and Meyer Solomon was a storekeeper at Big and Little Wombat.¹⁶ Ray Christison has recorded others,

14 Barbara Thorn, 'Pownall, William Henry (1834–1903)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/pownall-william-henry-4413/text7203>, 1974.

15 Leanne Leihn, pers. comm., February 2018

16 Young Family History Group files, inspected June 2018.

including the Meyers/Myers family and the Isaacs family. David Isaacs Myer was the son of Rabbi David Myer Isaacs, a renowned orator and the first Rabbi in England to deliver his sermons in English. David lived at Young in the 1860s where he worked for *The Miner and General Advertiser*. An able journalist and powerful orator, he served as secretary of the Burrangong Race Club, founded the Burrangong Amateur Dramatic Society, and was President of the Burrangong Prospecting Association and the Diggers' Mutual Society. In 1861 David organised a committee for the relief of the 'Victims of the Recent Murderous Outrage'. He was also active in pressing for better police protection of gold transports and for better roads in the area.¹⁷

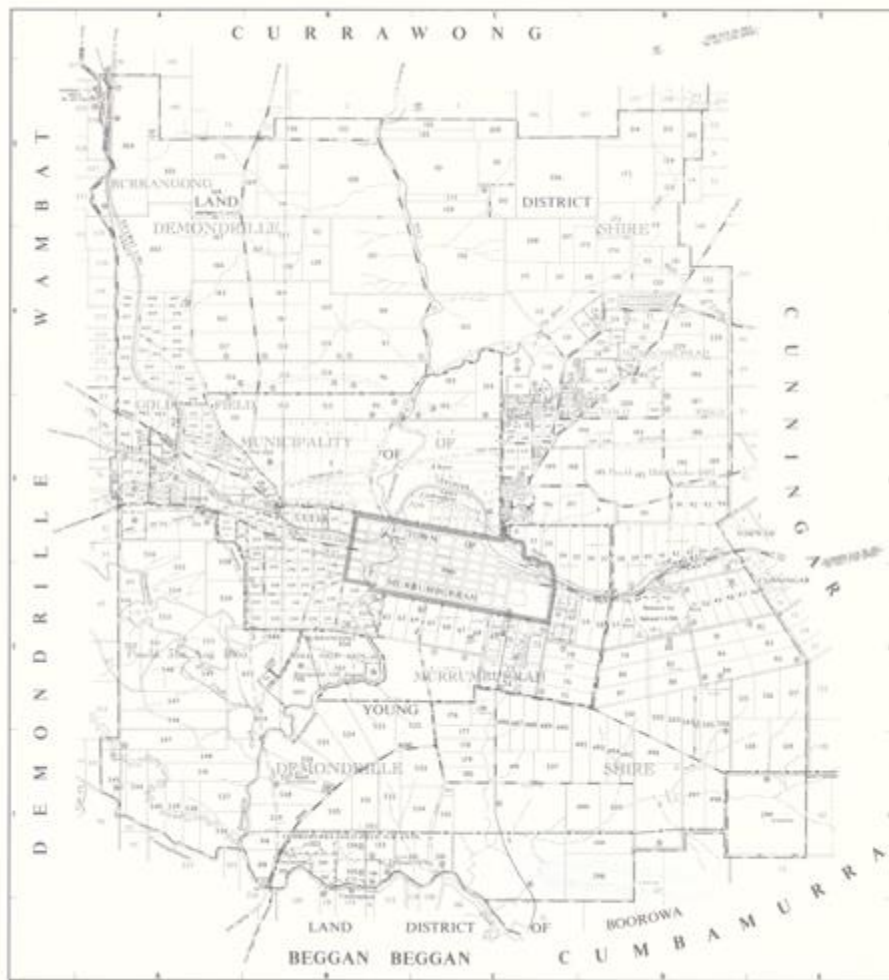


Figure 35: Department of Lands, Parish of Murrumbidgee, County of Harden [cartographic material]: Land Districts of Boorowa and Young, Demondrille Shire and Municipality of Murrumburrah, 1964, National Library of Australia

17 Christison, Report on the Community Based Heritage Study of the Boorowa District, High Ground Consulting, May 2015, p 35

Villages



Figure 36: On Murringo race course, 1927, State Library of NSW

The Hilltops area is characterised by small settlements, many of which remain intact. Murringo is an unusual town, as it has been frozen in time. It was a natural stopping point for travellers but became redundant when better transport routes pulled traffic away. Reid's Flat is another time-warp town, that was bustling in the 1860s and 1870s.

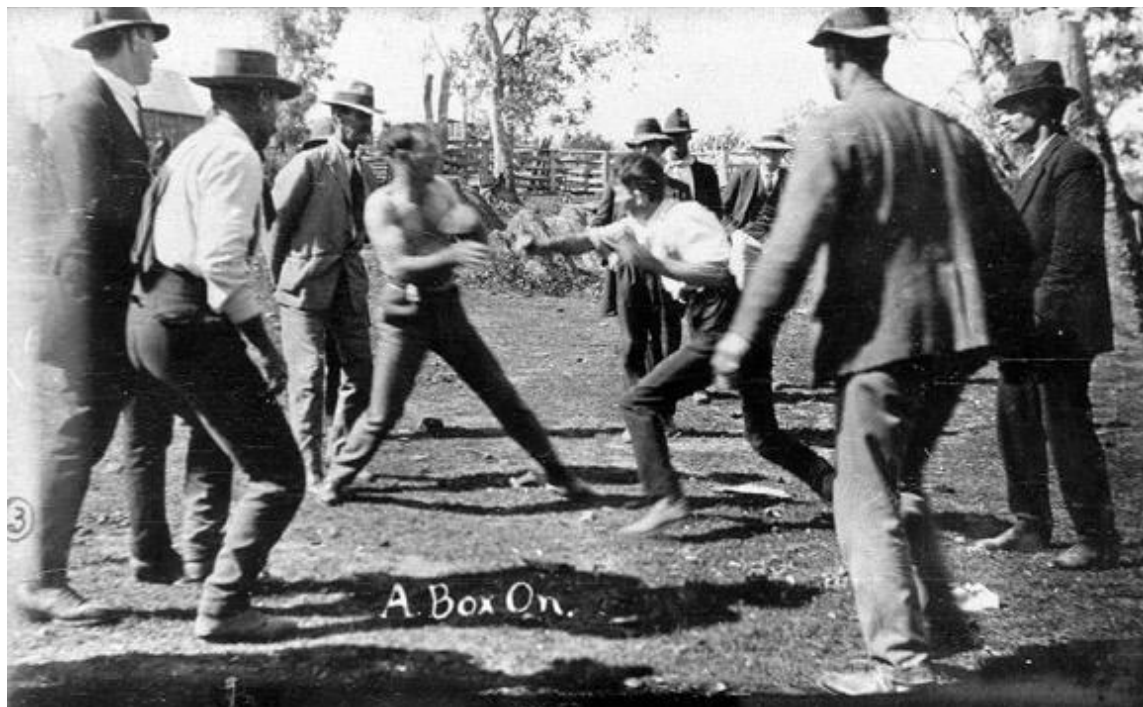


Figure 37: 'A box on', Reids Flat, State Library of NSW, bcp_03474. The man in riding britches and leggings in front of rock was the local policeman and started the fight by firing his revolver. He later lost his job over the incident.



Figure 38: Men watching the boxing, State Library of New South Wales, bcp_03473

Some of the towns in Hilltops have faded away. Wallah Wallah grew along the early transport route that crossed the Lachlan River, connecting Crookwell to Boorowa and settlements beyond until the 1860s, but was abandoned. The Old Graham Inn marks the old route that ran from Cowra through Hovells Creek. The Village of Rugby developed on a Travelling Stock Route that followed Five Mile Creek and Rugby Public School and General Cemetery were established within a Reserve for Travelling Stock located east of the village. Demondrille lost out when Murrumburrah expanded. Every town must have a logic, not only to be founded, but to survive.

11 Cherries and stone fruit



Figure 39: Girl framed by Cherry Blossom, Young New South Wales, 1968. This image was taken by the Australian News and Information Bureau, part of what is now the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. National Archives of Australia.

The cherry sculpture at Young, erected in the 1980s as a tribute to Sid Thornhill, breeder of the famous Ron cherry, is a daily reminder for Young residents of the value of the industry to the town.¹ In a way, Young's cherries are a reminder of the legacy of the goldfields, because one digger has always been given the credit for establishing them, but the cherry industry has been embraced by so many different cultures over time that it is truly a marker of the migration history of the area.

The famous cherry grower **Nicholas Jasprizza (Nikola Jasprice) (1835-1901)** came to New South Wales on *The Lightning* in 1860, headed to Lambing Flat, and ended up at the Three Mile diggings. His *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry states that he came from Dalmatia (Croatia) but his naturalisation certificate records him as declaring he came from Holstein in Lower Saxony.² He realised he could make more from feeding miners than digging for gold so planted vegetables on a

1 Residents and descendants of pioneering families of the Young district interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291

2 Nicholas Jasprizza, certificates of naturalisation and declarations, Young Family History Group records, viewed June 2018.

quarter-acre (0.1 ha) plot. Drought and floods reduced his capital from £25 to one shilling, but when he hawked his first crop of vegetables around the diggings he made £50 profit. He then a planted vines and fruit trees, planting cherries in 1862. He sought naturalisation in 1865 so he could buy land, at which point he had 4000 vines.³ By 1884 he had accumulated 900 acres (364 ha) and also ran 20 head of cattle and 600 sheep.

Cherries had been grown in Young since at least 1847, when they were planted in Edward Taylor's home orchard, but Jasprizza commercialised them.⁴ In 1876 he planted Kentish cherries but by experimenting with grafting produced a suitable variety. By 1893 he had 100 acres (40 ha) under cherries with 7000 full-grown and 300 young trees and 60 acres (24 ha) under vines.

On 8 May 1901 Jasprizza was shot dead through the window of his house at McHenry's Creek, Three Mile. A young man was acquitted of his murder at Young Circuit Court on 30 September. The government then offered a reward of £100, which the family increased to £300, for information leading to a conviction, but the crime remains unsolved. He was buried in the Catholic cemetery at Young.

Jasprizza's life, apart from its unfortunate ending, was typical of many early pioneers: obscure beginnings, disappointed gold digger, small selector and success through shrewd judgment and hard work. He was survived by four sons and two daughters of his first wife Bridget Mary Bowles (d.1884), née Tunney, whom he had married on 18 February 1867 at Sixteen Mile Rush, near Young, and by his second wife Rosetta, née Johnstone, whom he had married at Young on 7 February 1886. His estate was valued at £9500 and his sons took over the cherry orchard which in 1907 was said to be the largest in Australia. By 1960 he had 106 living descendants, and many still live in the Young district.⁵

Baldo Cunich was a nephew of Jasprizza's and arrived in the mid-1880s, when he was just 15, with his two brothers. He fell in love with and married Annie Jasprizza and the two sought their fortunes in a gold rush at West Wyalong and opened a store there before returning to Young.⁶ Baldo established 'Peachbloom', which in the 1930s and 1940s was the largest cherry orchard in the world. He had

3 *Ibid.*

4 'Pioneer Cherry Growers', *Monument Australia*, <http://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/technology/agriculture/display/106339-pioneer-cherry-growers>

5 G. P. Walsh, 'Jasprizza, Nicholas (1835–1901)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/jasprizza-nicholas-3851/text6119>, 1972. The ADB article gives Jasprizza's arrival date as 1864 but his naturalisation certificates, held in NSW State Records and the Young Family and District Historical Society, indicate he arrived in 1860 on board *The Lightning*.

6 South West News Cherry Festival Feature, Young Family and District Historical Society Collection.



"Jean and I are great friends. She loves work, and, believe me, there's plenty of that at 'Peach bloom,' " he laughed, before his marriage yesterday.

Not long after the homecoming, however, "Peachbloom" would be invaded by 40 Land Army girls, for the picking season in November or December Mr. Cunich said. He sent 25,000 cases of

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cherries to Sydney last year, and usually employed 60 or 70 pickers.⁸

From 1929, cooperative societies were developed to market cherries and prunes, which proved an advantage to local farmers. The cherry industry is still enormously important but peaked in 1930, and by the 1980s the poultry industry had become equally important to the region, second only to Tamworth.⁹ The orchards have long attracted a temporary workforce of backpackers, grey nomads and itinerant workers, who stay in caravans or camp in roadside parking areas.¹⁰ As mentioned above, Aboriginal people have also been part of the seasonal movement to the cherry orchards, and Enid Freeman described getting along well with the Vietnamese workers who came in the 1970s, and with the Fijians who arrived in the 1990s. One of her daughters married a Fijian. Two Swiss teachers who came as backpackers stayed and helped Enid with the Koori preschool she established.¹¹

Around the time Cunich started out he employed a 15-year-old Austrian, Barisa Batinich. His descendant Noel Batinich recalled that Barisa arrived in Sydney in the late 1890s with “a prayer book and a dilly bag and this photo of his mother and father” and found his way to Young, where he had a family connection with Baldo Cunich. Barisa was a legendary cherry picker, who was able to pick 23 baskets of 60 pounds [27.2 kilograms] of cherries in a day and got his start buying a 20-acre block near Cunich’s property on what was then known as The Common, but is now known as Batinichs Road.¹² Barisa married Betty Apps, had seven children, and later moved to Orange.¹³ His descendants returned and operate the orchards Valley Fresh and Cherrymore – family-run businesses that have survived in an era of corporatisation of agriculture.¹⁴

Noel Batinich, Barisa’s grandson, told oral historian Ron Gilchrist in a 2003 interview that he believed it was easy to be a Yugoslavian migrant in Young in the 1890s:

I think that particular time, Young being an area of the riots and the Chinese riots and most of the people in the Young area were migrants from overseas anyway. So, I mean, they did mix in fairly well because there was no outright Australians.¹⁵

While some Germans experienced harassment during World War II, Batinich considered the Young district to be a harmonious place, where people from many cultures rubbed along together in the schools and workplaces. The industry remained multicultural as, alongside the retirees that regularly worked in his orchards, were backpackers from all over Europe and Canada. By 2003, Batinich noted, few Aboriginal families picked cherries any more, as the era of land and civil rights meant they no

8 "The Cherry King marries at 75" *The Sun*, 5 September 1943: 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article231602453>.

9 Residents and descendants of pioneering families of the Young district interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291
 10 Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 241

11 Ray Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Enid Freeman, Wiradjuri

12 Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Noel Batinich

13 "Mr. B. Batinich" *Catholic Weekly*, 1 February 1945: 17. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article146480697>.

14 EB Batinich and Co, Cherrymore, 2016, <http://cherrymore.com.au/about/>; Valley Fresh Cherries and Stonefruits, <http://www.valleyfreshcherries.com.au/about.html>

15 Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Noel Batinich

longer had to do the work. In more recent years, Lebanese families had arrived and were picking fruit and buying into orchards.¹⁶

One of those families was led by Roy Alnaha, a Muslim from Tripoli in Lebanon. Roy had learned English at school and worked for Kuwaiti oil companies as a mechanic for 10 years and as a delivery driver in the Middle East before deciding to follow his relatives to Australia and leave the conflict in Beirut in 1972. He worked in a whitegoods factory in Milperra before returning to driving trucks, then taxis, and then the family tradition of butchery at Sefton in Sydney. He moved his mother and sisters to Australia in 1975. In the 1990s, when his butchery business failed, Roy decided to move to the country and bought land in Young, where there were 100 Lebanese families. He began to volunteer to help these families navigate Australian businesses and services like solicitors. He found it was a friendly place – the sunshine generally made people smile. Even so, it was not always easy for Lebanese people to adjust to the different climate and ways of using the land, including government regulation, but younger people were adapting and making a go of farming in the area.¹⁷

Noel Batinich, who was 65 at the time of the interview, was very proud of his family's century-long contribution to the cherry industry in the district, and the employment of so many people, despite the challenges of a casual workforce and an age of dwindling water resources.¹⁸ Still, the traditions of cherry growing were not enough to ensure the Jasprizza family held onto their ancestor's properties. In 1997, after years of drought, crippling interest rates and recession, creditors forced the sale of Cherry Hill Orchard, evicting Don and Dawn Jasprizza.¹⁹ Great-great-granddaughter Arna Hay continued to farm the original orchard, Cherryhaven, with her husband Ian, president of Cherry Growers Australia. Mrs Hay told ABC's *Gardening Australia* program that her ancestor had arrived as a 27-year-old single man, with no English, but hoped to strike it rich.²⁰ In finding the red granite soils and the cold winters and dry springs of Young, he did. Unfortunately for the Hays, modern financiers forced the sale of the cherry orchard to a private company in 2011.²¹

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ray Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Roy Alnaha

19 'A cherry dynasty is uprooted as bank moves in', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 September 1997.

20 'Cherry Ripe', *The Daily Telegraph* 29 October 2011, <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/cherry-ripe/news-story/>;

Prominent cherry farmer fights for Young property, Country Hour, ABC Radio, 13 August 2010,

<http://www.abc.net.au/site-archive/rural/nsw/content/2010/08/s2982356.htm>; Cherryhaven Olympic Highway

North, Young, sold November 2011, <https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-horticulture-nsw-young-7327039>

21 Costa in the Community, SBS TV, 2010, <https://www.sbs.com.au/shows/costa/tab-listings/detail/i/1/article/6167/Costa-in-the-Community-Cherry-Festival>

12 Politics and power in Hilltops

Founded on fertile soil and located close to railway links, Hilltops was able to furnish a number of residents who were influential in government affairs in New South Wales.

Pastoral elites

The large stations in the Hilltops region are illustrations of the nexus of power in the Hilltops region, and the early station owners names are often found through generations of local politics. Samuel Tout, for instance, who owned Calabash near Marengo, was one of a large family of brothers from Somerset who acquired land in the district. His brother John who owned Moppity, and although the two flirted with the idea of prospecting for gold, their wealth came from wool.¹ Tout and his wife had their own large family and were highly respected.² Their sixth son Sir Frederick Henry Tout (1873–1950) was educated in Sydney and became a solicitor also took over Wambanumba and developed it into a highly productive sheep and wheat-station, as well as establishing a successful Aberdeen Angus stud. He was chairman of the Young Pastures Protection Board and repatriation committee, president of the local branch of the Graziers' Association of New South Wales (1918–33), a member of the Burrangong Shire Council and long-time president of the hospital board.³

George Henry Greene (1838–1911) did not technically live in Hilltops but exercised enormous sway over the affairs of the district. An Anglican and a member of the colonial English elite, he was born at Collon, Louth, Ireland as the fifth son of Lieutenant William Pomeroy Greene, R.N., and his wife Anne, née Griffith. Greene's father was wealth enough to charter a vessel to bring his entire household to Port Phillip in 1842. One of the first students to receive a BA from the University of Melbourne in 1858, Greene was a pastoralist in southern NSW before buying Iandra, a 32,600 acre (13,193 ha) estate between Grenfell and Young. He was a member of the Young Pastures and Stock Protection Board in 1881–84 and chairman in 1885–88. In 1888 Greene called the meeting at which the Young and Lachlan District Sheepowners' Association was formed, and on 9 July 1890 became a foundation member of the Pastoralists' Union of New South Wales. He was not opposed to unionism but favoured conciliation with the Amalgamated Shearers' Union of Australasia.

In 1893 Greene introduced share-farming and by 1911 Iandra had some fifty share-farmers working 18,000 acres (7284 ha); with another 5000 acres (2024 ha) fallow and 20,000 sheep being run. The farmers supplied the labour and machinery, while Greene provided land cleared for ploughing, the

1 "The Old Pioneering Days" *The Land*, 27 January 1933: 24. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104214486>.

2 "DEATH OF MR. SAMUEL TOUT." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 September 1895: 5. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article14015315>.

3 AF Deer, 'Tout, Sir Frederick Henry (1873–1950)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/tout-sir-frederick-henry-8832/text15495>, 1990.

seed and some fertiliser, and closely controlled the farming practices. In 1903 Greene was the first to grow William Farrer's 'Federation' wheat commercially. Greene represented Grenfell in the Legislative Assembly and successfully advocated a branch railway line from Koorawatha to Grenfell. He was an ardent supporter of Federation. As Iandra prospered, Greene started building a village at the Iandra rail siding that became known as Greenethorpe. In 1910 he completed his magnificent mansion Iandra.⁴

Trade unionism

Niels Rasmus Wilson Nielsen (1869-1930) was influential in the formation of the Amalgamated Shearers' Union of Australia. He the son of a Danish cabinet-maker who had migrated to Australia in 1854 and married an Irishwoman, Susan, in Hobart, and was born when his parents were visiting Denmark. The family settled at Young on their return. Niels went to the local public school and was apprenticed to his father at 13. He was also a bushman, shearer and fencer and married Maria Booth at St John's Anglican Church on 8 August 1888. He joined the gold rush to West Wyalong in 1893 and lost his savings there. From 1894 the Nielsens had a small farm on the Young-Grenfell road and he worked intermittently as a carpenter.

Young was a centre of important activity for the new Labor Party from 1891 until 1896. Shearer activist JM Toomey had moved there from Wagga Wagga in the 1880s and in March 1888 was elected secretary of a new branch of the Amalgamated Shearers' Union of Australasia. Soon after, he established a branch of the Amalgamated Miners' Association and the Young District Carriers' Union. Toomey then formed a trades and labour council from his three unions.⁵ Nielsen had joined the Amalgamated Shearers' Union of Australasia in 1887 and in 1894 was an officer of both the Shearers' and the General Labourers' unions and helped to amalgamate them into the Australian Workers' Union. In 1892 he was a delegate to the party's first annual conference.

At a by-election in 1899 Nielsen won Boorowa to become the twentieth Labor member in the Legislative Assembly. Following a redistribution, in 1904 he held Yass. He was on the party's executive in 1903, 1907-08 and 1910-11, and was whip in 1902 and caucus secretary in 1911-13. He lived at Dulwich Hill, Sydney, in 1902-11. A dedicated, if verbose, parliamentarian, Nielsen became an expert in the State's labyrinthine land legislation, favouring leasehold tenure and eventual nationalization. He was influential in the formation of the *Land Act 1903* and coached Labor's deputy

4 Ian Carnell, 'Greene, George Henry (1838-1911)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/greene-george-henry-441/text11091>, 1983.

5 John Merritt, 'Toomey, James Morton (1862-1920)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/toomey-james-morton-8829/text15489>, 1990.

leader WA Holman in land law. When the party won the 1910 elections he became secretary for lands.⁶

In June 1888 Toomey arranged a conference between the Young branch of the A.S.U. and the Young and Lachlan Districts Sheepowners' Association, which was led by Greene of Iandra. The result was a formal agreement which specified shearing rates and working conditions for local sheds – the first such agreement between the union and a pastoralists' association and a model for the four-colony agreement negotiated by the A.S.U. and the Pastoralists' Federal Council of Australia in 1891.⁷

Although he described himself as a socialist, Toomey was at heart a pragmatic reformer, with a gift for reconciling differences. He was instrumental in the success of the Labor Party at the 1894 elections and helped Labor to develop a strong rural base in New South Wales. Defeated for the Legislative Assembly seat of Boorowa in 1894 by the adroit Protectionist organizer T. M. Slattery, Toomey might have won if he had contested Young, but in the interests of unity he had persuaded J. C. Watson to stand for that seat.⁸ His political career ended in 1896 when the A.W.U. abolished the Young branch to cut administrative costs.⁹

12.1 Immigrant politicians

Thomas Michael Slattery (1844-1920) was from Greenane, Tipperary, Ireland, the son of a police officer who emigrated to Queensland. He was educated in Sydney and became a lawyer. A prolix speaker with a reputation for cleverness, which was infected with fussy vanity, he was attracted to politics and in November 1880 became Member of the Legislative Assembly for Boorowa, a strong Irish-Catholic area. He entered the Stuart ministry and joined the boards of important public agencies such as the State Children Relief Board, Sydney Hospital (1882-87), He was also a commissioner for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London (1886), and the Centennial Celebration (1888), was appointed a papal knight of the Order of St Gregory, served on the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in 1888-89 and became minister of justice in (Sir) George Dibbs' cabinet of January-March 1889. He was secretary for mines and agriculture in Dibbs' government of 1891-94—he was also acting minister of justice from December 1893. He resigned from parliament in 1895 to concentrate on his practice. Slattery was nominated to the Legislative Council in 1900 but he soon attracted ignominy, when his love of horse racing and his chairmanship of Tattersall's Club collided and he was charged with malversation of £6959 entrusted to him by a legatee. He was sentenced to

6 Bede Nairn, 'Nielsen, Niels Rasmus Wilson (1869–1930)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nielsen-niels-rasmus-wilson-7849/text13633>, 1988.

7 John Merritt, 'Toomey, James Morton (1862–1920)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/toomey-james-morton-8829/text15489>, 1990.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

3½ years, but on appeal was released after serving 3½ months. He travelled to the United States and returned to live in Mosman, where he died in 1920.¹⁰

James Watson (1837-1907) was working for a solicitor in his home town of Portadown, County Armagh, Ireland, when he and his youngest brother decided to follow their elder brothers to Victoria. They arrived in Melbourne on in 1856 with £100 and went from rush to rush at Pleasant Creek (Stawell), Dunolly, Mountain Hut and other Victorian goldfields with little success.

In 1861 they moved to Lambing Flat (Young) where the Watson brothers found the secret to wealth was not gold but supplying diggers and the growing community of Young. They opened a store, Watson Bros, which they provisioned in partnership with Sydney-based Irishman James Frazer, and later added a flour mill.¹¹ James became a trustee of the School of Arts and a church warden of St John's Church of England. In January 1869 he bought a quarter-share in John Frazer & Co. with Scot James Ewan, and moved to Sydney, leaving his elder brother William to run the firm in Young. Watson married Ewan's sister Margaret Salmon Ewan, who also happened to be Frazer's sister-in-law.

On 28 December 1869 Watson was elected to the Legislative Assembly for the Lachlan; he represented the seat until it was divided in 1880 when he won Young. Throughout a tumultuous period in NSW politics he served many premiers, while living at Glanworth in Darling Point. He was also prominent in Sydney commercial circles, as a New South Wales commissioner for the exhibitions in Philadelphia (1876) and Melbourne (1888), trustee of the Sydney Bethel Union, and a councillor of the New South Wales Academy of Art.

In 1877 William and James Watson invested in two cattle stations near Young. Watson became a close friend and creditor of Parkes and from 21 December 1878 to 4 January 1883 served in the Parkes-Robertson coalition as colonial treasurer, where he was known for being self-willed and 'full of confidence in his own resources; and he is not a man to be played with in any sense'. In December 1883 he was defeated for the seats of Young and Illawarra but the following year won a by-election for Gundagai, which he held until October 1885. He remained in Parliament until 1889.¹²

10 Bede Nairn, 'Slattery, Thomas Michael (1844–1920)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/slattery-thomas-michael-8454/text14865>, 1988.

11 Back in time, *Young Witness*, 3 June 2013, <https://www.youngwitness.com.au/story/1545095/back-in-time/>; Martha Rutledge, 'Frazer, John (1827–1884)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/frazer-john-3573/text5529>, 1972.

12 Martha Rutledge, 'Watson, James (1837–1907)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/watson-james-4811/text8021>, 1976.



“MILONG” YOUNG, New South Wales.

THE property of Mr. A. W. Scott is one of the most picturesque estates to be found in the Young district. It is situated nine miles south-west of the township of Young. This property contains 10,000 acres, which is subdivided and netted into 32 paddocks, and is famous for merino sheep raising. Five hundred acres are under insecticide, and a portion mixed farming. There is one orchard on the estate with 6,000 fruit trees of all descriptions. It is the richest soil, timbered with box and kurrajong. The homestead is one of the most modern country houses in the State. It is substantially built, containing 36 rooms, and is extensively equipped with electric light throughout, has its own cooling chambers for meat and butter. The whole of the dairy equipment—separator, churn and butter worker, etc.—is driven by electricity. Vacuum cleaners, fans, and even sewing machines are also worked by electricity. An enormous water service, which is raised by electric pumps, with hot and cold water, is installed throughout the premises. There are extensive lawns and gardens, which add to the beauty of this magnificent home.

Mr. A. W. Scott is a grandson of the late William Scott, of Mulloon, Brindwood district, one of the early pioneers, and who came to this country in Governor Phillips' time. He was the first man in charge of cattle in New South Wales, 25 head, at the Cow Pastures near Sydney. He afterwards took up land at Mulloon, and became a large horse and cattle breeder. Many blood stallions he imported from England.

It was men of this calibre who blazed the track in the early days and laid the foundation of the pastoral industry of this country, notwithstanding the thousand and one obstacles that stood in their way compared with the generation which are commencing in this sunny land to-day.

The residence of the late Mr. William Scott was erected at Mulloon nearly a hundred years ago, and is still substantial and good, and is now the property of his grandson.

Mr. A. W. Scott, like his grandfather, is noted for being a keen judge of all classes of stock, and an adviser and breeder of some excellent merino sheep.

Milong Station Merino Stud



**CHAMPION MERINO
RAM,**

Three Years.

Sheared at large on naturalised grasses only. Bred by, and the property of, A. W. Scott, Milong Station, Young. Took First and Champion Prize, also Collins Cup, Young show, 1909, and again in 1911. Cut 30 lbs. of wool for 255 days' growth, September, 1911. The Milong Merino Stud was bred from pure Murray South Australian rams. These sheep are famous for their robust constitution, large symmetrical frames, and heavy fleeces of profitable wool.



Milong Bred
STUD MERINO EWES.

Two and Four Tooth.

The fleece wool off the Milong Stud Ewes sold in Sydney, 1909, by the N.S.W. & M.A. Co., Ltd., made 25 pence per lb., and averaged 32 lb. per sheep.



**THREE MERINO STUD
RAMS,**
Milong Bred.

Flock Rams, Four Guineas,
Selected Rams, Six to Eight Guineas,
Stud Ewes, Twenty Guineas and
upwards.

For full particulars apply to—

A. W. SCOTT,
MILONG STATION,
YOUNG, N.S.W.

Figure 41: By the end of the Great War, Young was a well-established area. Property advertisements like these were used to attract new migrants. Country Promotion League and the Commonwealth Immigration Department in 1922, Young, New South Wales, Australia: in the heart of the great south west, by LA Saunders.

13 Twentieth Century migration patterns

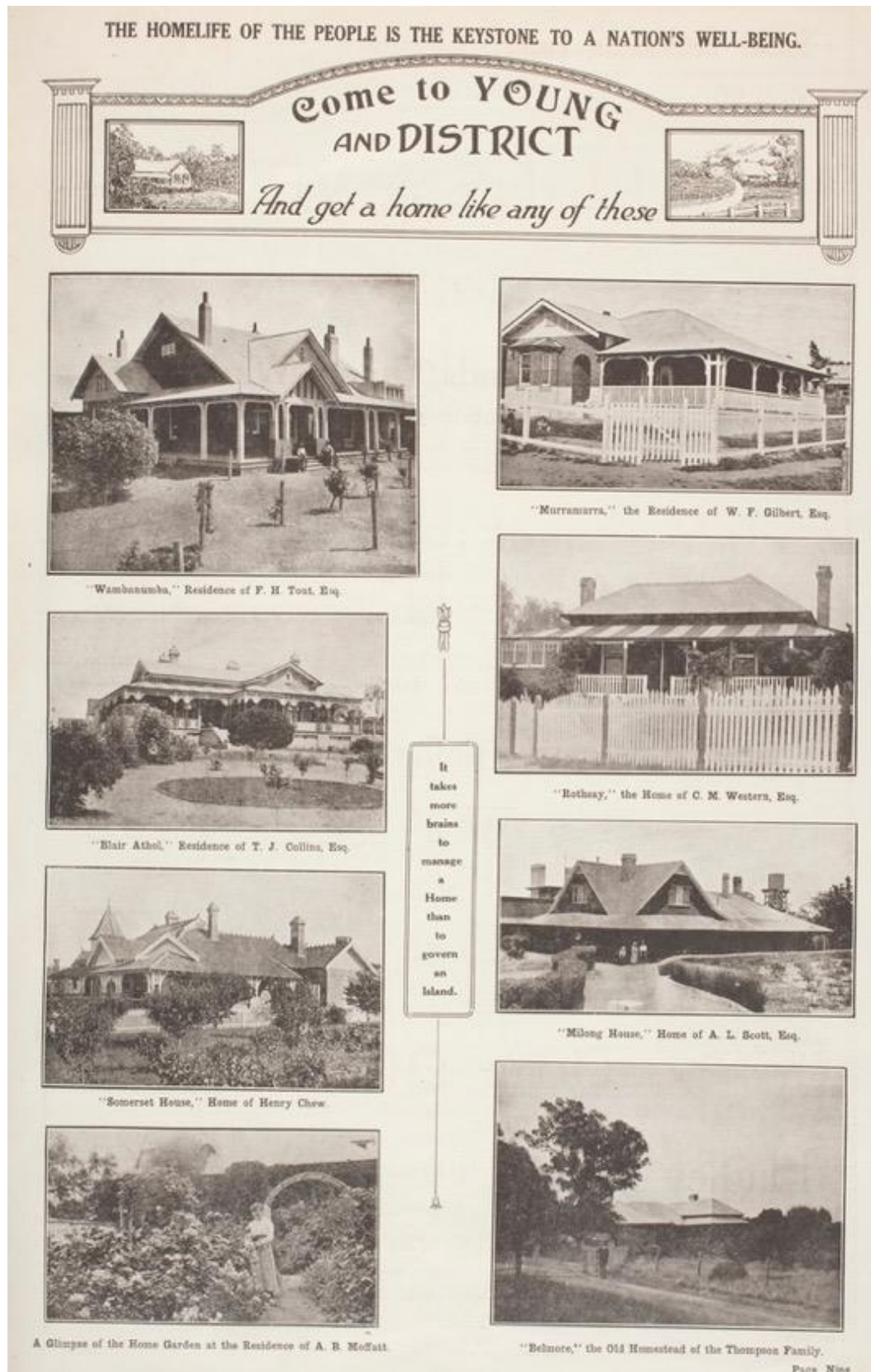


Figure 42: Country Promotion League and the Commonwealth Immigration Department in 1922, Young, New South Wales, Australia: in the heart of the great south west, by LA Saunders.

13.1 Soldier Settlement and immigration after the Great War of 1914–1918

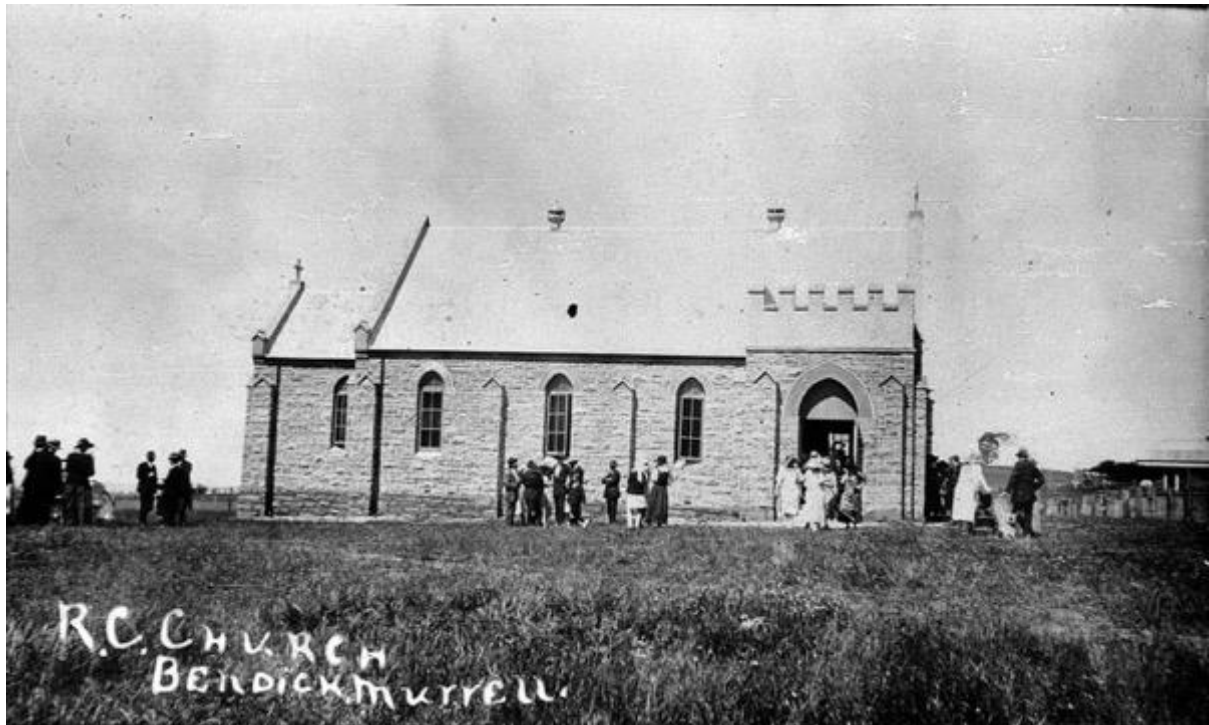


Figure 43: Two images from the blessing of the new Roman Catholic Church at Bendick Murrell, Jack English 1926, State Library of NSW



Soldier settlement was introduced after the Great War as an aid to repatriation. In the Hilltops area, the scheme bolstered the process of dividing large estates and provided an impetus to the creation of new townships, like Bendick Murrell and Kingsvale. Almost by definition, returning soldiers were not migrants, as they had served in the Australian Imperial Forces, but the soldier-settler schemes left characteristic markers on the local landscape – small allotments carrying little weatherboard houses with a front gable, small schools for the children of veterans, and prune sheds for the orchards the returned soldiers were supposed to know how to establish.

At the same time, various non-government organisations within the British Empire sought to boost rural migration from England. One of the earliest schemes in New South Wales was established by the Dreadnought Trust from 1909. It brought boys to New South Wales from 1911 until the outbreak of the Great War. The scheme resumed in 1921 until it was stopped by the Great Depression.¹

"Dreadnought" Boys

SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION SCHEME.

The manager of the Cowra Experiment Farm informed the Young and Kingsvale visitors on Monday that 120 of the boys who came to Australia from England under the Dreadnought migration scheme had been sent to that farm, for the purpose of gaining first hand and all-round knowledge of the work in the various branches carried on there. Of that number 110 boys had been sent to work on farms, about 70 of whom were at present in the Cowra district. ... He thought that the boys would all be a success, as there was a continuous demand-for them by farmers who knew of the thorough training they received in agricultural work. Twenty of the Dreadnought boys were at present employed on different sections of the farm, being changed from one occupation to another from time to time. He could never understand (continued Mr. Kelly) why Australian boys did not take up farm work as readily as those from Great Britain. (A voice: They seem to prefer work in the towns)'.²

The Cowra Training Farm was part of the scheme but not the only experiment established for young migrants in the region – from 1938 until 1973 the Fairbridge Farm Schools ran a substantial training farm for child and youth migrants at Molong.³ There is every likelihood that young people in the Dreadnought Scheme and Fairbridge found their way onto farms within the Hilltops region.

It proved difficult to trace the impact of assisted migration for this study. In 1951 *The Boorowa News* reported that 460,000 new migrants were packing into Australia after World War II, but gave no examples of the phenomenon affecting Hilltops.⁴ As most new migrants arrived in Sydney or Melbourne before dispersing to regional areas, it is a fruitless task to read shipping lists and the like.

1 Dreadnought Trust (1909–1930?), Find & Connect web resource, 2014, <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE00509b.htm>; see also Child and Youth Migration to New South Wales (c. 1911 - 1983), Find & Connect web resource 2015, <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE00507b.htm>

2 "'Dreadnought' Boys." *Daily Witness (Young, NSW: 1923 - 1924)* 7 November 1923: 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article128244027>.

3 Fairbridge Farm School, Molong (1938 - 1973), Find & Connect web resource, 2015, <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE01357b.htm>

4 *Boorowa News*, Friday 11 May 1951, page 4

Suffice to say, new migrants from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales would have faced little trouble settling into the communities of Hilltops, so long as they picked one that had the right congregation for their particular religious persuasion.



Figure 44: Country Promotion League and the Commonwealth Immigration Department in 1922, Young, New South Wales, Australia: *in the heart of the great south west*, by LA Saunders. This pamphlet was obviously a man's pamphlet, pitched at men. The names of the men on this list go deep into the history of Hilltops.

13.2 Italian prisoners of war 1943-1946

The Australian Government interned 'aliens' from combatant nations during World War II. The most famous of these camps was Cowra, which was the site of an infamous breakout of Japanese soldiers, but Italians were interned there too – some had been living in Australia, but others were brought to this country by British authorities. Country areas struggled with a critical shortage of manpower in

this period, so soldiers below the rank of officer were given farming and construction tasks in various areas. The prisoners were to be paid by the employing farmers and provided with accommodation and food. To administer this program Prisoner of War Control Centres (PWCCs) were established in regional centres. Each Control Centre was operated by:

... an army complement of seven whose task was to supply prisoners with their needs, maintain supervision and deal with employers' complaints and liaise with police in the event of a POW running away. Up to 200 Italians were to be placed with private employers on farms within a radius of 40 kilometres from each Control Centre.³⁸³⁵

Initial PWCCs were established at Parkes, Coonabarabran and Orange in June 1943. A Control Centre was established at Young in March 1944. This operated until November 1945.⁶

Prisoners of war were employed at a cost of £1 per week to the host farm. The employer was also required to provide full board and lodging in accommodation approved by the Department of Defence, and suitable clothing for work. Each PWCC was responsible for a minimum of 100 POWs allocated to farms. Officers from the PWCC visited farms to inspect the conditions and conduct of prisoners and resolve disputes. A truck from the PWCC travelled to farms, distributing pay to the prisoners and providing them with mail, sweets, tobacco, and clothing. In most cases the prisoners of war and their employer families developed strong and positive relationships. Young resident Jean Maroney, whose young husband was on active service in World War II, had only a faint sense of the presence of Italians, and wondered if her obliviousness to the Cowra breakout was because the authorities wanted to keep things quiet.⁷

13.3 Post-WW2 migration

George Brenner was born in Hungary in 1929 and was caught in the conflicts in eastern Europe during World War II. He fled to Germany to escape the advancing Russians in December 1944 and returned to Hungary after the war by foot in late 1945. In January 1948 he was sent to East Germany as a forced labourer and while he managed to escape in August to West Germany, he was separated from his family. He applied to migrate to Canada but was offered a place in Australia. He embarked in October 1950 and arrived in Melbourne in November, on the *Fair Sea*. From Bonegilla, he was sent to 'Benangaroo' at Jugiong as a stockman. He found work with the Public Works Department, married, and built and operated a service station at Jugiong, and ran the Harden High School bus service. Naturalised in 1957, he was elected to Demondrille Shire Council in 1971 and the NSW Legislative Council in 1982. In 2017 he was still living at Jugiong.⁸

5 Cited Christison, Report on the Community Based Heritage Study of the Boorowa District, High Ground Consulting, May 2015.

6 Cited Ibid.

7 Ray Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Jean Maroney, UK

8 Kerry Menz, personal communication with Robyn Atherton, 27 November 2017.

Nic Nadycz came to Harden with his parents Anna (1923–1994) and Myron (1922–1994). Anna was born in the Ukraine and Myron was Polish, and both were affected by the Russian takeover of Eastern Europe in 1944. They met in a refugee camp in Germany and migrated to Australia in 1950, on the *General Stewart*. Myron learned to be a locksmith on the voyage and the family was first placed at Bathurst Migrant Camp. Myron worked as a farm labourer in the Cunnigar area then secured work at the Hume Pipe Works in Harden.⁹

13.4 Migration and hospitality

Greek immigrants introduced their particular style of hospitality to Hilltops. George Demos, surely a Greek, had a 'Fish and Oyster Saloon' in Marsden Street in Boorowa, next to the *Burrowa News*, in a building owned by FF Fahey. In 1918 Con Pappas (Papadopoulos) took over the Boorowa Café, previously run by Sam Creeny. Con and his brother Jack also ran the White Rose café in Court Street.¹⁰ The Pappas café was mentioned in oral history recorded by Ruth Longdin in 2014:

Keith Well I remember Con and the story about when Chifley was the prime minister and when he went home every weekend to Bathurst and he stopped at Pappas' for a meal and Pappas didn't know it was the prime minister for some time but we told him and he was 'The Prime Minister eat at my place, the Prime Minister eat at my place...'

Len And there were some young fellas there, I rode the horse to town and tied it up where the paper shop is now before they built the bank – there was a vacant block there – and Mr Chifley went over and got up on Ruben's back. He wouldn't ride him round and I just had to hold him so he said. 'I just want to sit on a horse'.

Thellie Somebody told me that the girl was getting married and her father had the garage alongside Pappas' and the day of the wedding the PM dropped in to Pappas' and Jock went out and had his photo taken with the PM and sent it home to Scotland. Could you imagine it today?¹¹

Con left Boorowa but Jack returned from Greece with a wife in 1950 and they had a daughter named Poppy before the family returned to Greece. Poppy married Sam Cassims who had worked at the Pappas café and returned to Boorowa and re-opened the café in 1962. This building was later renovated to a Chinese restaurant. Amr Doulgeris took over the café in Marsden Street.¹²

Ioannis Spyros (John) Tzannes ran the Empire Theatre in the Guild Hall:

Tzannes bought the business in 1946 and ran it for about 9 months before looking around for other things to occupy his time. Screening being only a few nights a week he found himself with lots of spare time. He hired a projectionist and manager and went to Sydney in 1947. He then took over the milk bar in the Regent Theatre at Bondi Junction. During the 1950s Tzannes went into partnership with his brother Stratis at the Black and White Milk Bar in Martin Place. He sold the Cinema in 1960.¹³

9 Nic Nadycz, personal communication with Robyn Atherton, 27 November 2017.

10 Lloyd, *Boorowa*, p 94; www.kythera-family.net records the owner of the White Rose Cafe and the Café de Lux as Kostas Phot Papadopoulos

11 Longdin, Oral History taken during site visits as part of the thematic history project 04.11.14, Thematic History of Boorowa, 2015

12 Lloyd, *Boorowa*, p 94

13 www.kythera.net

It would appear that Mr Tzannes also bought the Burrowa café in 1937. The *Burrowa News* reprinted an article originally published in the *Hellenic News* of that week announcing the opening of a new refreshment shop in one of Mr Patroni's 5 new shops.

Les Pinney told the Galong Oral History project about a Greek café in Galong operated by Arthur Casseris:

That was the you know the building straight across from where Devines is now, well that was a café, for years [what kind of food did they sell] well they would he would sell anything there you could go and get a meal you get cool drinks or an ice cream papers that sort of thing oh you'd have to go into a fairly big town today to get what you'd be able to buy off him and uh that was back in the early days once the boys had a few beers at the pub they were always going to go down and clear the dago up ... that was before the Devines came down here at all I think something to do with Archie Regan the fellow that had the first cafe in Binalong ... Con the fellow that's got the café in Binalong, his brother Arthur was the first to come there he bought it off Archie Regan, Arthur Casseris he bought Con out and then he took the café over, I think he was another Casseris, he had the café for a long time, I think he went to Leeton or Griffith ...¹⁴

Nicholas Laurantis, licensee of the Koorawatha Hotel from 1915 until 1919, became quite wealthy and was a substantial benefactor to the Greek Orthodox Church and Sydney University. A donation of £100,000 to the university supported the establishment of a Chair of Modern Greek Studies. In 1935 James Mechalopoulos erected a large café on the corner of Railway and Boorowa Streets in Koorawatha. He operated this establishment until 1957. Under new ownership it became the Koorawatha general store in 1959 and the Koorawatha Roadhouse in 1982.¹⁵

This tradition of Greek hospitality has continued well into the late 20th century. Nikki Danassis, from Lasta in Greece, overstayed her tourist visa in the 1990s but became a permanent resident. Her brother Tony moved to Harden in the 1990s to open The Garden of Roses Café in Neill Street, and Nikki and her mother followed. Tony ran the café for 17 years, until his death in 2012.¹⁶

The food industry today continues to attract migrants from different countries. In the 1980s the Nwesser family, Arabs from Jerusalem who had migrated to Australia via Germany, moved to Murrumburrah for a quiet life. Sons Jamal and Tony currently and respectively run the pizza café in Murrumburrah and a kebab shop in Young.¹⁷

14 Galong oral history project, Steven Guth and Lorie Grovenor, 1989–1990, National Library of Australia (audio available, some online), National Library of Australia, ORAL TRC 2472, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn1930672>

15 Christison, Young Shire Study.

16 Nikki Danassis, personal communication with Robyn Atherton, November 2017.

17 Jamal Nwesser, personal communication with Robyn Atherton, February 2018.

14 Hilltops migration profile today



Figure 45: John Immig, Afghan refugees [having a meal break] Abattoir, Young, New South Wales, 19 March 2002, National Library of Australia (in copyright)

Anglo-Celtic influences remain strong in Hilltops today. Alongside the Aboriginal population, there is a minority group of first and second-generation migrants. It seems apparent from tracing many family stories that older migrants are inclined to leave Hilltops once their working lives are over and move to the city where they find more people of their country of origin – many Italian and Greek migrants who were prominent in the towns of Hilltops in the post-war period moved to Marrickville and Dulwich Hill to live out their twilight years in that southern European diaspora. Even Sarah Musgrave went to Auburn in her old age and is buried there.

In the 2000s, large populations of Hazaras who were fleeing the conflict in Afghanistan made their home in Young. They often worked in the abattoir. An earlier wave of refugees was from the civil war in Bosnia. Roy Alnaha, from an older wave of Lebanese migrants, noticed that the Afghani people did not mix with the Lebanese community. He felt they kept to themselves, partly because they were single men, and partly because “I have that feeling like these people, they had a hard time back in the country there and left scars, they can’t just drop it.”¹⁸

18 Ray Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre NSW Work and Migration – Young NSW, 2003, Noel Batinich

Young town also hosts a growing Lebanese community, many of moved from Sydney for the cheaper rents and property prices.¹⁹ Hilltops is attractive to young migrant families, because of the ready availability of skilled and unskilled work. Young, in particular, is a drawcard, because it is an established town with good housing stock and schools and many opportunities – Gabrielle Chan says it is experiencing a mini-real estate boom as a result.

An important element of the migration story is women who have come to Hilltops because they have married a local – Councillor Rita O'Connor was born in Italy and remains fluent in the language of her birth. She came to the area after meeting her husband at the University of New England and although she had lived in the area for two decades, had never heard anyone speak Italian on the street until very recently. The food and country traditions were very new to her, and her husband's relatives were at times reluctant to eat the food she cooked for them.²⁰

The recent formation of the Young and District Multicultural Association has pulled together a group of people who provide opportunities to connect, socialise and eat together. They are mostly women, from the Philippines and Thailand, but also from Lebanon, Austria, Korea and other countries. I was able to visit YADMA during this study and some of its members were kind enough to talk to me about their experiences of migration to the Young area.

14.1 Pacific experiences

Joy Carter Kovajcic, vice-president of YADMA, was born on the Cook Islands of Maori and Tahitian heritage, and was raised in New Zealand. She migrated to Australia and married in Sydney. Her husband is a Bosnian Muslim; Joy is Christian and speaks with a soft Kiwi-Polynesian accent.

Joy told me the couple moved to Young because her husband and mother-in-law were refugees from the Bosnian conflict and her mother-in-law wished to be amongst the strong Croatian and Bosnian community that lived in Young at the time. Joy says her husband still suffers depression and poor mental health because of his childhood experiences but would like to go home to Bosnia, one day.

Joy's son attended Monteagle Public School but suffered severe bullying. Joy considers the bullying was driven by the adults, rather than the children. He was excluded from many school activities and suffered criticism from teachers and other adults because he grew his hair long, as boys do in the Pasifika culture of Joy's family. Joy persisted because her son wanted her to and his persistence was rewarded when he achieved his goal of becoming school captain. He is a keen tennis player, and wants to be a professional, although he experiences racism whenever he plays.

19 Personal communication, June 2018

20 Forum with Councillors at Hilltops Council Chambers, Young, November 2017

Joy feels the family has also suffered discrimination within the community, and even within Christian churches she has attended. She said it is not easy to do anything in Young because people ask, ‘what are you doing, and when are you going?’ Joy says it’s a hard world, but it is what you make it. They hope they are teaching their son good values.

14.2 Philippinas in Young

Josie Johnson is the president of the Young and District Multicultural Association (YADMA). She was born in Luzon in The Philippines and came to Hilltops 35 years ago when she married a local. She arrived on Australia Day, 1983 and flew into Young Airport during a dust storm. She saw lots of buildings on the property at Thuddungra and thought she would have lots of neighbours, but the buildings turned out to be silos. Thuddungra, which only had a phone box and a hall, was a culture shock and the weather was very difficult to deal with. The nearest neighbours were three kilometres away and she could not work.

Josie says she was not lonely but was determined to have a good life. It took a year before she saw another Philippina, in Canberra, but she managed to build links with the embassy there, which helped her settle.

Josie went into town twice a week. At first she could not drive, which was hard but by the time her second baby arrived she had learned. While she was unable to drive her husband, who needed to go away from the house to tend the paddocks, suggested she hang a sheet on the shed if she got into trouble, so he could see it and rush home. Her mother came when the babies were born and she her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law lived in town and were supportive. She had no other friends, but developed relationships when her children went to school in Young.

Josie’s husband was a mixed farmer, growing sheep, canola, oats, triticale, barley and wheat but none of their children have wanted to farm and their father wanted them to have a good life. The farm was sold in 2005, after her husband got cancer. He died aged just 68 – Josie thinks a lot of farmers in Young and Griffith get cancer because of the chemicals.

Josie is one of eight, but only two sisters and a brother remain in Manila. Three of her sisters now live in Young and one lives in Grenfell.

Josie has built a community of non-Anglo-Celtic migrants in Young. She formed a family group when the local veterinarian adopted Taiwanese children and people who came from other countries to work in Young began to socialise together. After Josie was widowed she moved into Young and built strong connections with different nationalities. This led to Council asking her to help with future planning.

Josie feels it is important to bring people together and that people who are new to the town should not have to wait so long to make connections. YADMA comprises 30-odd nationalities; mostly Asian, but

also Germans, Austrians, Italians and Lebanese. She said Indian-Australians are growing in number but have their own networks.

Josie believes social life is essential to having a good life, and being accepted and belonging. She says people need someone to talk to, lunch and party with. She likes the parties and that she doesn't have to travel to taste authentic food. She has reached out to Muslim Lebanese women and to a Taiwanese woman who had not spoken to other people since moving to the area. When YADMA visited her she said, "for the first time in four years I am happy."

The cultural profile of the area is changing. The Philippino community is growing and people are skilled workers in health, as well as piggeries and chicken farms and welding/fabrications and the magnesite mine.

I asked her about racism and she said she didn't experience it, although in the early years she was stared at. She didn't feel victimised. Josie says that the racists amongst the locals are those who never leave the country – "they've been in whoop-whoop for a long time". She believes getting to know people reduces racism.

14.3 An Austrian artist in Murringo

Erna Hiebl and her husband Helmut came to Australia from Austria in 1976 and visited Helmut's brother, who was living in Young. Helmut was a highly skilled glassblower and engraver who had studied at Innsbruck. Their arrival was a happy coincidence, for Murringo was looking for a live-in artist and the Hiebls were attracted to the area. The wide open spaces and the availability of sheds and other buildings meant were not constrained to living in an industrial area so they could combine their home life and Helmut's artistic practice. They stayed, and in Helmut's Murringo studio he made some of the finest art glass produced in Australia.

Starting out as a glass blower in Murringo required ingenuity. The Hiebls found the summers very hot, especially given the furnace-bound life of glass blowing. They could not find enough glass so Helmut would collect bottles from the motels, while receiving some very funny looks from locals. Helmut built his own kiln, using high-firing bricks from Young. They found it very difficult to order tools and equipment, as they could not translate easily, but they were helped a lot by locals. They started producing glass in August 1976 and by October had their first sale ready.

Erna said she had a hard start but she worked in her husband's business and her outgoing personality helped her make connections and friendships that saw them through the early years. She worked in cherry orchards and waitressed at the Townhouse Motel. They bought a Kingswood and Helmut would load it up with the things he needed to craft his business. His capacity to make things himself and his art earned him the respect of locals.

In 1982 the Hiebls bought their own land in Murringo and were able to install a large gas tank. Eventually Helmut was able to build a furnace large enough to make his own glass from Australian materials, and that increased his range of colours and his capacity to produce art glass. They served tourist buses and ran their shop but he was now able to make goblets, art glass and work on commissioned pieces – he finest piece he produced was for the bicentenary of Broken Hill. The Leyland Brothers featured Helmut and Erna Hiebl's workshop in Murringo in their series *Ask The Leyland Brothers*.²¹

Erna says they were proud they did it all without grants. The business ceased in the mid-1990s when Helmut became too ill to work for extended periods. Her children had a good upbringing, attending local schools. Their location gave Helmut the privacy and the quiet he needed to be creative. She has many friends locally, and feels it is good for Young to sponsor activities that enable connections.

14.4 Two Muslim doctors

Gabrielle Chan describes the experiences of two doctors, Yusuf Khalfan and his business partner, Mirza Dato, who arrived in the late 1970s and were family doctors in Harden-Murrumburrah for twenty years. Yusuf grew up in Kenya and was of Indian, East African, Zanzibar and Persian Shia Muslim heritage. After earning a medical degree in Uganda, he worked in remote parts of Kenya. His fellow graduate Mirza Dato was from Tanzania but the turmoil of East African politics led him to consider emigrating. Khalfan and Dato ended up visiting the Australian High Commission in 1976 and Malcolm Fraser's government paid the pair's airfares to Sydney, where they were put up in the Endeavour Migrant Hostel in Coogee.

A fellow medical graduate had a practice in Grenfell, and as Yusuf waited for his postgraduate course at the University of New South Wales to start, he and Mirza were told of a practice that might be for sale in Harden. The two doctors bought the practice with a bank loan but very little collateral and started treating in the town the year after.

Yusuf remembers being welcomed by most local people, though a few were hostile, and they happened to be from the more influential families in the district. Their reaction to the young doctors' presence caused a split on the Harden-Murrumburrah hospital board – some of whom supported a doctor who had arrived after them. The state government stepped in to broker a resolution, and it kept Mirza and Yusuf in town. And here they stayed for the next three decades. Yusuf married Jenny, a self-described working-class nurse, and Mirza married Sherryn, also a nurse. They sent their kids to

21 Hans and Erna featured on *Ask The Leyland Brothers*, Episode 57
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8f8LBitthxk&feature=share;>
https://www.murringovillage.com/uploads/2/6/4/9/26496887/murringo_matters_-_issue_71_-_september_2015.pdf; Helmut Hiebl of Murringo, *Australian Glass*,
<https://australianglass.blogspot.com/2015/06/helmut-hiebl-of-murringo-nsw.html>

local schools. They joined community groups, while tending the young, the sick and dying. Yusuf was Rotary president for years. He helped establish the Bendigo Bank branch as other banks pulled out of town, served on numerous health boards and played cricket in his younger days. Mirza helped set up the local bridge club. Together with the nurses and allied health workers, the doctors' presence and advocacy meant the hospital continued to function and the nursing home residents received attention. Mirza worked as an anaesthetist throughout the region. As Chan puts it, the two became sewn into the fabric of their little town. They have retired, but both have been awarded an Order of Australia medal for medical service to rural communities.

Chan asked Yusuf about racism and migrant experience and says there were moments of racism: We agree that minorities have to jump a higher bar to prove themselves. That's how it is. Yusuf did not consider it consciously. Who would when they are making their way from the Kenyan highlands to Harden in their twenties? Like so much stuff in life, gut instinct ensured that he survived. That and a bloody-mindedness to make his new life work, and to prove to people 'I am here to stay, whether you like it or not.'

'I think that as a minority you have to really expose yourself,' Yusuf tells me. 'You have to go above that, and I still remember telling people when I came to this town, "I am the biggest wog," and that killed everything. The word "wog" has now gone off, but it was very prominent at that time.'

Chan herself says being able to laugh off such remarks is a gift of having cultural capital, or power:

Like Yusuf, I was always proud of my heritage and put that cultural pride out there in our little town. I had as much fun as anyone, batting back racially loaded comments, intended or innocent. When I first arrived, I was picking up something in town when a man remarked on my arrival as the new bride. After I introduced myself, he said without malice, 'I often thought I'd get me a Chinese wife.' I stifled my laugh and guffawed with the farmer when I got home. I could laugh because racial divides are also about power. When you have power, as the town doctor, or, like me, when you are secure in your economic, cultural and professional place, it is possible to laugh those comments off because we are cushioned by a web of other supports. But it is crippling for those without power.²²

14.5 The Lebanese in Young

One of the members of YADMA is a Lebanese Christian, who was at pains to stress his intolerance for the newest group of arrivals in Young, who are Lebanese Muslims. Many of them are Australian-born. As Gabrielle Chan writes:

The community's pioneers came to Young forty years ago for the orchards. They were older migrants who had lived a semi-rural life tending citrus and olive orchards in Lebanon before coming to Australia in the 1970s. The old Young drive-in cinema site was purchased for a mosque in 1996 with very little opposition. In the past decade, the next generation has begun to arrive, sick and tired of the congested city, worried about the effect of urban crime and drug rates on their children. When these families talk about their reasons for leaving Sydney, they fit the quintessential tree-changer mould.

While I was in Young I spoke to an Indonesian woman who was married to a Lebanese man from Sydney who had tired of the exorbitant rents and crowding in Sydney and had come for a better life

22 Chan, *Rusted Off*, pp 227–230

for his family, which included sending their children to the new Islamic school in Young. Chan interviews a man she calls Ayoub, an Australian-born Lebanese Muslim who also tired of Sydney.²³

... When Ayoub chose Young, his mate thought he was weird. Then he came up and saw the land. The space. 'He said, "Ayoub, I never thought looking at the landscape was the same as looking at the ocean. Looking at this gives you exactly the same feeling as looking at the ocean. It's even better." He ended up buying here.'

Chan reports that the local schools are better at accommodating Muslim children and Ayoub says he has experienced very little religious or racial intolerance, although his wife and daughters wear hijab:

Someone did make a critical comment to Ayoub about the Islamic school – that it could foment division. Ayoub sat down with the complainant and they discussed how it was no different from any other religious school. The resident had not realised that, like Catholic or Anglican schools, anyone can attend.

Despite the interventions of Sydney-based media, who have run some adverse reports, the locals have accepted the Lebanese. However tolerance was tested when a 42-year-old Australian-Muslim electrician was arrested for allegedly helping Islamic State develop laser missile detection equipment. The controversy, and the arrival of television crews who targeted the Muslim bakery, forced one young Muslim businessman to close his doors, but the community has recovered.²⁴

... The proactive approach of Young has paid off not only for the community but the economy. Ayoub says the town's real estate agents are actively targeting the Muslim community in Sydney, and he estimates local house prices have risen 8 to 10 per cent. 'I think the majority want to get out of Sydney. A lot of people had houses paid off in Sydney, but they tell me they are over it.'²⁵

14.6 A Singaporean-Chinese bride

Gabrielle Chan, wife of a Harden farmer and Canberra journalist, is herself a migrant. As she writes:

In 1996, as John Howard's government came to power and a nervous but defiant Pauline Hanson arrived in Canberra, I married a farmer from a stable conservative Protestant family – something I had never seen before. He lived outside a small town called Harden-Murrumburrah, on the South West Slopes of New South Wales. In my first, wide-eyed visits to the farm in the early 1990s, I had heard [Pauline] Hanson's sentiments bandied around at dinner parties before she'd got anywhere near Parliament. Indigenous people received better treatment than 'the rest of us'. We were being swamped by Asians.

I knew nothing about the town when I married. I knew there were people in the country, but it was Another Country. Rural Australia was a land in a fairy tale, existing only in books and movies. My father had absolutely no experience of it. Neither did my Anglo mother, who, like an increasing number of Australians, had no relatives in the country. We had no wish to go there.

When Chan first arrived she experienced severe culture shock.

One of my first experiences here was walking into a pub to buy a bottle of rum for cooking. There was a barman as thin as a whip, and he was chatting to a couple of drinkers. I might as well have been an alien by the looks on their faces. I asked for the rum. The barman was speechless. I asked again. He shook his head. I walked out.

23 Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 241

24 Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 248

25 Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 248

If he was surprised at this new inhabitant, I was more surprised. The whole place was so far outside my comfort zone, as laid down by a migrant Sydney suburban childhood. There was no diversity to be seen, but there were unexplained cultural divides. I saw a hangover from sectarianism for the first time. I saw class up close for the first time. I saw wider socioeconomic gaps than I had seen in the city. Not because these things do not exist in the city, but because I was cushioned by the suburbs I had lived in as an adult. A country town is like the ant farm, all dirt and ants pressed between two panes of glass. Life is on show.

My children, born in this rural town, pushed me into the school community and its attendant requirements – school councils, cake stalls and incidental chats at afternoon pick-ups. All of these demand involvement and create friendships across class, education and income in a way that rarely happens in a city suburb.²⁶

Chan has made a happy home in Harden, but the conversations she has had have made her question how politics is done in Canberra so she has literally written a book about the divide between the political class and rural areas. Her book also identifies a common theme amongst the families who have come to the area – a sense of independence and resilience born of a deep sense of place.

26 Chan, *Rusted Off*, p 11

15 Stories told so far: interpretations and critiques

Part of the impetus for this study is to gather information that drives interpretation and fosters visitation to the area. During the project I set up a Facebook group, and I received this wonderful comment:

I teach Year 5 kids about migration and the gold rush. I have always wanted to know more about the Chinese: how many stayed in Australia and are there any descendants still here, especially those who were targeted at Burrangong and Lambing Flat. BTW, I'm such a history nerd and love showing students the picture of the riot act sign outside of Young High and telling them my friends and I sat behind it for two years every lunch time without knowing or caring what it was about!

Hilltops is well-served by passionate historians and community activists who have a deep understanding of the value of their part of the world in the national story. I did not meet anyone who wanted to shy away from the interpretation of the events at Lambing Flat. While moves are at foot to celebrate the humanity displayed at Currawong, and to preserve the remains at Blackguard Gully, there is no sense that this history is to be swept under the carpet or diminished. This chapter is a critical reflection on some of the interpretation I observed during my visits.



Figure 46: A lovely little sign but how many people know what The Riot Act means?

15.1 A 90-year-old celebration of 'The Birth of White Australia'



Figure 47: "AUSTRALIAN FILMS." The Sydney Morning Herald, 23 February 1927: 16. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16356765>.

In 1927, a group of pastoralists in Young, including the former MP John Lynch, formed a company called Dominion Films Co Ltd, with the intention of producing 'films of historical interest'. Its first project employed British film-maker, Phil K Walsh, to produce a silent movie initially called *The Birth of A Nation*¹ and finally released as *The Birth of White Australia* in 1928, the year it was made. The silent film, which purported to be an 'historical romance' of the creation of a British Australia, ranked the Lambing Flat riots as an achievement as profound as the invasion of the British and the exploits of the Anzacs. A print of 180 surviving minutes was released in 2000 by the National Film and Sound Archive.² It makes for tedious and charmless viewing.

The Birth of White Australia was a critical and commercial failure – it screened once in Sydney at a private preview for the Governor in July 1928 and only a few times at the Strand Theatre in Young in September 1928. Walsh went bankrupt and never made another film.³ Nevertheless, it has been restored and released on VHS and DVD by the National Film and Sound Archive. It has also been screened internationally, at the Pordenone silent film festival in Italy in 1994, as both an example of early Australian film-making and of early Australian racism.⁴ I purchased a copy of the National Film and Sound Archive DVD at the Lambing Flat Museum and watching it was a painfully slow experience, despite the shocking nature of the racist depictions of Aboriginal and Chinese people.

1 AUSTRALIAN FILMS. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 February 1927, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16356765>

2 Percival, L, Sully, W, Walsh, Phillip K, Trawley, B, McConville, Dot et al. *The birth of white Australia*. National Film and Sound Archive, [Canberra], 2000.

3 Oz Movies, <https://www.ozmovies.com.au/movie/birth-of-white-australia>

4 Tom O'Regan, *Australian National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2005), p 317.

The production must have been a huge event in for the townspeople of Young, as hundreds of residents were involved in the filming.⁵ The landscapes of Burrangong became the backdrop to enormous reconstructions of the diggings at Lambing Flat and Tipperary Gully and longstanding residents of Hilltops will no doubt recognise the faces of their ancestors amongst the cast and assembled extras. Members of the Young Hockey Club became crinolined ladies for a day which almost ended in disaster when a hessian dance hall set, saturated in kerosene, caught alight.⁶ Walsh employed a world-class cinematographer, Lacey Percival, and took excellent archival images of the opening of Parliament House Canberra in 1927, including footage of the Aboriginal elder 'King Billy' (along with an appalling pidgin English intertitle) and accidental footage of another Aboriginal man claiming citizenship rights. Walsh travelled as far as Queensland to capture footage of musters. The plot, such as it is, starts with the opening of Parliament House before portraying Captain Cook, the expedition of Hamilton Hume, the founding of Burrangong by James White, war against the Aboriginal people, the discovery of gold at Lambing Flat, Ben Hall, Johnny Dunn, Gilbert and O'Meally, the Lambing Flat riots, the Chinese Exclusion Act and White Australia, the Great War and it includes a love story, set off with a touch of fear about white slavery.⁷ Walsh travelled to the North Coast and Queensland to find Aboriginal people who were prepared to re-enact attacks, corroborees and hunting.⁸ His interest in Aboriginal people was far from celebratory, but intended to underscore the success of white dominion. One of the inter-titles reads "The ethnic age has passed away, the primal race is with the old and, visitants of yesterday the white "invaders" rule instead."

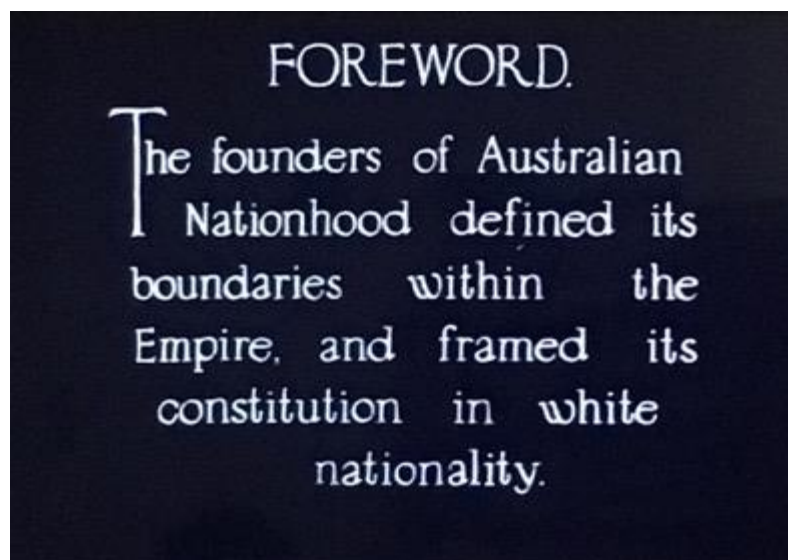


Figure 48: One of the intertitles from *The Birth of White Australia*

5 "THE BIRTH OF WHITE AUSTRALIA" *The Daily News*, 27 May 1927: 9. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article78745747>.

6 Residents and descendants of pioneering families of the Young district interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection [sound recording] 28 April to 22 June 1983, National Library of Australia, DeB 1268-1291

7 *Yass Courier*, Thursday 2 December 1926; *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, Monday 12 December 1927

8 *Northern Star*, Monday 29 August 1927.

The website Oz Movies says ‘As a work of art, it’s a disaster, so amateurish that a Young Dramatic Society presentation of G and S would have looked like a world class professional production ready for the West End or Broadway.’⁹ The acting is truly terrible and the ‘human interest’ story designed to hold the narrative of the Lambing Flat riots together is particularly wooden and childish.¹⁰ The costumes include some of the worst fake beards ever committed to celluloid and the acting is hilariously hammy. But there is a much more sinister element in the ‘yellowface’ of the actors playing the Chinese, the story told about the motivations of the miners, the celebration of the passage of the *Alien Restriction Act*, and the vicious racism of the narrative. National Film and Sound Archive curator Liz McNiven points out:

Imagine if this film could talk. What would the dialogue be like? If the intertitles are any indication, I am sure most Australians today would prefer to render the film silent again. As it is, this film will make most people’s skin crawl.¹¹

Critic Paul Byrnes says the film was intended as an apologia for the Lambing Flat ‘riot’ or ‘massacre’ but points out that it does not show the deaths of anyone, Chinese or white: “the biggest fight sequence concerns an attack by miners on the police troopers who have locked up their mates after an attack.”¹² It would be easy to dismiss the film, if it wasn’t made in Young and if it hadn’t been financed by well-to-do and educated townspeople of Young. In the 1920s, just 65 years after the riots, and still within living memory, Lambing Flat was being celebrated as a triumph of White Australia. The DVD is still being sold at the Lambing Flat Folk Museum, without any sort of warning about what might be found within it.

15.2 The Lambing Flat Folk Museum and the Roll Up banner

The Lambing Flat Folk Museum is a lovely museum that has benefited from state and national funding and tells the story of the district well. Its centrepiece, and most significant object, is the Roll Up Flag, which is beautifully preserved. I felt the custodians of the museum understood the complex history of this object but it is vital it be displayed with sensitivity and that its imagery is used wisely. As Karen Schamberger has pointed out, the banner was reproduced in signage at places like Blackguard Gully and on brochures without context or reflection and that reproduces the racism that led to the creation of the banner in the first place.¹³

9 Oz Movies, <https://www.ozmovies.com.au/movie/birth-of-white-australia>

10 "NEW FILM." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July 1928: 17. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16481753>.

11 Liz McNiven, ‘Secondary Curator’s Notes: The Birth of White Australia (1928)’, National Film and Sound Archive, Screen Australia: an NFSA website, 2018. <https://aso.gov.au/titles/features/birth-of-white-australia/notes/>

12 Paul Byrnes, ‘Curator’s Notes: The Birth of White Australia (1928)’, National Film and Sound Archive, Screen Australia: an NFSA website, 2018. <https://aso.gov.au/titles/features/birth-of-white-australia/notes/>

13 Karen Schamberger, Identity, belonging and cultural diversity in Australian museums, PhD thesis, Deakin University School of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2016

15.3 Local festivals



Figure 49: Boorowa Street, decorated for Cherry Week, Young, NSW 1950, photographer, W Pedersen, National Archives of Australia. Note the British Union Jacks, that literally fly in the face of the multi-cultural origins of the cherry industry.

Events like the Irish Woolfest at Boorowa celebrate the ethnicities that have shaped Young and festivals like the Harden Kite Festival bring people together, but the pinnacle is the Cherry Festival, which brings together school children, farmers, pipe bands, vintage vehicles, draught horses, tractors, and clubs and societies. I was not able to attend a Cherry Festival while I worked on this project – the 2017 festival was rained out and the 2018 festival coincided with my own significant birthday. This year the festival is in its 70th year, which is an enormous achievement, particularly as government regulation tightens around street festivals and parades.

The Cherry Festival truly represents the migration and multicultural history of Hilltops – so many cultures have been involved in the cherry industry. While tourism promotions, such as the one overleaf, have sought to link the cherries to the traditions of other countries, Hilltops has its own traditions. The sense of community generated by the cherry industry is expressed in the Festival – long may it continue.



Figure 50: Cherry Blossom Festival held in Young, New South Wales, 1968, National Archives of Australia. A strange combination of Japan and Bali – as a Commonwealth Government image, this was presumably pitched at the international cherry tourist, and bore almost no relationship to the community of Young.

15.4 The Lambing Flat Chinese Tribute Garden and Chinese memories in Young

Young's Chinese Tribute Gardens were initially developed in the 1990s with Federal Government funding and are the fruit of collaboration between the Lambing Flat Museum and Young Shire Council with overseas Chinese and local Chinese Australians.¹⁴ Karen Schamberger notes that the gardens were created at a time when people were coming to terms with the awkward elements of the past in Hilltops. While the creation of the gardens attracted protests from far-right groups like Jim Saleam's National Action, a large group of Young locals mobilised to call for an apology on the 150th anniversary of the Lambing Flat riots in 2011.¹⁵

The dam is, as Ray Christison has said, a marker of shared history. The body of water that forms the centre of the garden was originally constructed in the 1860s by Hermann and Johann Tiedemann and others to provide water for the Victoria Hill sluicing claim. Christison calls it 'a bizarre irony [that] the most notably Chinese site in Young, Chinaman's Dam, was actually constructed by German gold miners.'¹⁶ The dam later supplied water to Chinese market gardens situated nearby and became part of the story of the Chinese in Young.

It is a peaceful spot, with many sculptures and monuments that reflect Chinese-Australian relationships, but it feels like an island, rather than part of the story of Hilltops. The site might tell a stronger story if it added interpretation that captures some of the research of Robyn Atherton and the Harden-Murrumburrah Historical Society into the lived experience of the Chinese people who arrived in Young after the gold rushes had passed. As Schamberger has pointed out, locals such as Max Quay, a Chinese-Australian descended from goldmining families, felt they were not consulted in the creation of the gardens – an instance Schamberger sees as symptomatic of a failing of government agencies to be truly multicultural.¹⁷

In recent years, and certainly since 2011, there have been calls for a more honest appraisal of the past of Young. As Schamberger points out, the 2011 Gold Trails Pioneer Festival changed tack somewhat, by celebrating the sheltering of more than 1200 Chinese people by James Roberts at Currawong. Around this time many Chinese Australian organisations were calling for an apology for the long history of Australian government discrimination against Chinese people. Robyn Atherton showed great imagination and flair by inviting the Chinese Women's Association of Australia and Daphne Lowe Kelly of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia to participate in the 2011 festival. The result was a play called *The Quiet Brother* by Ivy Mak, about memories of Lambing Flat, and the

14 Schamberger, Identity, belonging and cultural diversity in Australian museums, p 165, p 203

15 Schamberger, Identity, belonging and cultural diversity in Australian museums, p 232

16 Christison, Young Thematic Heritage Study, 2008, p 14

17 R Gilchrist, Migration Heritage Centre of NSW & Lambing Flat Folk Museum, Real Stories: Migrating for Work Final Report, MHC-NSW, Sydney, 2003.

engagement of the broader Chinese Australian community, including artists like William Yang, with the history of the area.¹⁸



Figure 51: The Chinese Tribute Garden in July 2018, image Naomi Parry

Schamberger is critical of recent initiatives to stage Chinese-themed events in the district, such as the Lambing Flat Chinese Festival which began in 2014, especially when they require the employment of lion dancers and other performers from Sydney. She points out that such activities, while well-intentioned and enjoyable, gloss over the awkwardness of the past. They make Chinese people seem ‘other’ and exotic, rather than part of the community. They do not connect with the actual local history of the Chinese of the area, or describe this history to either locals or visitors. Yet there is potential to tap the Chinese tourism market. Many visitors to Australia, particularly those from

18 Chamberger, *Identity, belonging and cultural diversity in Australian museums*, pp 204–218

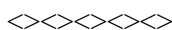
Guangdong and Fujian, can identify family connections with the Chinese Australians of Young. They may be able to build on shared experiences, while celebrating more enlightened approaches to Chinese-Australian relations.

Younger Chinese-Australian artists are also offering a way of engaging with Blackguard Gully, and its legacies of the past. In the middle of 2018, Jason Phu and John Young Zerunge travelled to Young to research the history of Blackguard Gully, the Lambing Flat riots, and anti-Chinese sentiment:

... the artists started the project with a Community Offering. Inviting the local Young residents to the Chinese Cemetery and Blackguard Gully ... they burned incense and made peace offerings as a tribute to the sites and the memories they hold. Amongst the landscape pot marked from mining, Young Zerunge covered himself in earth and a blanket, symbolising the need for mourning and comfort. In contrast, Phu braided the word 'queue' in rope and set it alight on the site where a man named James Roberts had provided shelter for a multitude of fleeing Chinese.¹⁹

They created a photographic exhibition that was displayed at 4a Centre for Contemporary Asian Art near Chinatown in the Sydney CBD. It was a moving exhibition, and builds its own legacy:

the next chapter of the project will be a publication and a public monument in Young supported by the council. Tai concludes, 'it's hard to attack something so heavy. But if you can do it within a comfortable, supportive environment then it's easier and [can lead to a] very robust and supportive conversation.' In this way, 'The Burrangong Affray' illustrates how we can enliven histories, which, whilst painful, can be wrapped in solidarity.²⁰



While I was finalizing this study, in March 2019, a terrible shooting in two mosques in Christchurch left 51 people dead and broke many hearts. Along with the flowers taken to the Young Mosque in the days that followed was a card reading "sorry to hear of your loss to your NZ family. You are welcome in this community. This is your home. You are loved." The already planned open day at Young Mosque became a memorial service, led by community liaison officer Eahab Arja who said all were united in prayer: "Always together in humanity." Hilltops mayor Brian Ingram was there and said, "To the Australian Muslim community and the Muslim community of this region, we know that you are suffering and we stand with you. We will not allow division, we all belong." In the words of Hume Police District Superintendent Christopher Schilt, the day was an example of the "strength that the Young community has."²¹ This study has shown many instances of such solidarity. Unifying the past and the future and creating shared understandings seems very possible in Hilltops.

19 Vanessa Lowe, Jason Phu & John Young Zerunge: The Burrangong Affray, <https://www.art-almanac.com.au/jason-phu-john-young-zerunge-burrangong-affray/>, 28 June 2018

20 Ibid.

21 "Invitation to come together in remembrance of Christchurch victims", *Young Witness*, 22 March 2019, <https://www.youngwitness.com.au/story/5962578/invitation-to-come-together-in-remembrance-of-christchurch-victims/?cs=1540>; "Young's remembrance service for victims of Christchurch terror attack", *Young Witness*, 2 April 2019, https://www.youngwitness.com.au/story/5978792/youngs-remembrance-service-for-victims-of-christchurch-terror-attack/?fbclid=IwAR2qP4l0JpwliaOn44EGUOC7BLaUEP149_FcFh_07uTVi_K7kMJp71uCRM

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16.2 Collections

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Young Family and District Historical Society Collection

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16.10 Films and AV resources

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