

Central West New South Wales 1891-1893
'A Regional History from Below'

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the
Australian National University.

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I hereby state this thesis to be my own work; all sources have been duly acknowledged.

(Marjorie Anne Mitchell)

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ABSTRACT

The last decade of the nineteenth century is widely viewed as one of the most momentous in Australian history. There are many studies which focus on the period, thematically or as broad historical narratives of the Australian colonies. There are none that explore how the events and themes were manifested in rural NSW, nor are there any analyses which reveal the experiences of ordinary people. This thesis explores the suppositions about the early years of the 1890s in Central West NSW through the lens of ordinary people. What is evident in this study is that it was day-to-day affairs that dominated the lives of most people who were concerned that the stability, trust, cohesiveness and prosperity of their communities, characteristics associated with Tönnies' concept of *gemeinschaft*, were not undermined.

This is an account of the Central West during this period. As a regional history, a genre that has been largely ignored in recent years, it is a worthwhile narrative on its own account but it also enables an analysis of larger themes and their impact on daily life. In addition to concentrating on a specific area, I have focussed on a short span or a 'slice' of time – 1891 to 1893 – as a means of more effectively dealing with a multifaceted and almost overwhelming eventful decade. It is a history 'as lived' highlighting everyday experiences without the benefit of hindsight, but without neglecting a full historical analysis.

Ordinary people are habitually overlooked in most traditional and social histories of colonial NSW. Biographers have chronicled individual lives but there are few collective biographies, the study of which could shed light on wider historical issues. Hundreds of individuals appear in and are pivotal to this study. They come from a broad range of occupations and different socio-economic backgrounds and represent diverse communities of interest. Hitherto many have been chiefly anonymous and often there are scant personal details. Nonetheless, it is their stories that enrich and enlighten this study.

Acknowledgements

My thesis is dedicated to my parents, Cyril and Marjorie Mitchell. It was their love, support and sacrifice that made education a priority in our family home. For this, I will be forever grateful.

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Most of all I wish to thank my family, especially Steve, Pete, Catherine and Jo. We finally got there!

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*These maps were drawn by Hamid Rezakarimi. Hamid also provided assistance in producing other maps to scale.

Note on maps: The maps are also provided on CD. This offers an opportunity to view those maps which are at a small scale with greater clarity. The postal, telegraph and roads map is particularly useful in that it shows most of towns and villages mentioned in the text. Given the nature and scale, it was not possible to provide a legend for this map. In addition the school map, although difficult to read, shows the multitude of schools in the district, the location of which would otherwise not be known. The digital copy helps to clarify these.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

NSW	New South Wales
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly of NSW
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council of NSW
LEL	Labor Electoral League
JS Bank	Joint Stock Bank
Bank of New South Wales	NSW Bank
Australian Shearers Union	ASU
The Pastoralists' Union of New South Wales	PU
GUOOF	Grand United Order of Oddfellows
IOOF	Independent Order of Oddfellows,
UAOD	United Ancient Order of Druids,
MU	Manchester Unity,
RAOB	Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes

£1 is one pound

1/- is one shilling

1d is one pence.

1 Acre equals 4047 Square Metres

1 Mile equals 1.6 Kilometres

NOTES ON SPELLING

Lake Cargelligo: This is the present day name for this township, officially adopted around 1919. During the nineteenth century, there were various spellings but during the period under study, it was generally Lake Cudgellico. This is the name used in the thesis.

Between 1891 and 1893 there was no official Labor Party. Labour members of parliament were elected under the auspices of the Labor Electoral League (frequently called the Labour Electoral League). Nonetheless during this period, the terms Labour Party or Labor Party were frequently used. Unless used in a specific quotation, I have used the terms Labour Party or Labor Electoral League.

In a similar vein, 'our' or 'or' in words were variously used. I have retained the spellings as per its contemporary use.

PREFACE: THE ABORIGINES

On 29 January 1892, the *Cowra Free Press* reported the death of an “aboriginal bearing the name of Eliza”. The newspaper described Eliza as a “somewhat remarkable woman” who had been in the Cowra district for 45 years having come there with a “band of fighting natives” from the Murrumbidgee. According to the report her foot was mutilated “with barbaric simpleness” to curb her propensity to wander. When she was ill children in the district visited her “comforting her in her loneliness” otherwise Eliza lived in the blacks’ camp. She had spent some time at the Ophir gold fields and had married a white man. Eliza, the newspaper suggested “although aboriginal in type, [her] beauty...set off by a good figure, was remarkable, and it was no doubt on this account that she won the sobriquet of ‘Queen of Cowra’, a title which she kept until the last.”¹

Three months later the *National Advocate* respectfully noted the passing of “an old identity”, Sally Medley, the widow of miner, James Coutts, who had predeceased her by twelve months. The newspaper noted that Sally was “one of the last aboriginals in the district...and was well known in several parts of the country”. A quite different account appeared in the *Bathurst Free Press* which described Sally as a black gin and the “last of the Bathurst tribe”.²

Eliza and Sally were Wiradjuri people and they are among the few individual Aborigines that feature in this thesis. People like Eliza and Sarah were barely visible but Aborigines in general and their lifestyles were mostly hidden in the broader community. It is for this reason that they are largely absent in this study, not because there is a paucity of information (which there is) but because they largely went unnoticed by ordinary white people and hence their lives shed little light on everyday life in the district as a whole. Furthermore, it is arguable that Aboriginal people were principally untouched by the major historical themes of the time. The political upheaval is likely to have gone unnoticed by most Aboriginal people. Equally it is difficult to imagine that they had any interest in the federation of colonies. None of these events altered or offered any positive change to their circumstances. The deteriorating economic conditions put pressure on their employment opportunities in the region’s rural industries, possibly more than other population cohorts, but Aboriginal people were already among the most impoverished in the colony and bankruptcies and bank failures would not have been of great

¹ *Cowra Free Press* 29 January 1892.

² *National Advocate* 26 April 1892. Sally (Sarah) Medley was born c 1918 and lived in the Orange and Bathurst districts. Both reports note she had been “compassionately” cared for by the Anderson family at Killongbutta. *Bathurst Free Press* 25 April 1892. The *Bathurst Free Press* 16 February 1891 reported that “an old man named Coutts, who had been living for some time near the Forge, died rather suddenly last Sunday morning. He had been ill for some time”. Also see Orange City Council *Orange Aboriginal Heritage Report* (February 2012).

but beyond the frontier, she argues, pastoral properties eventually afforded “a form of retreat” from violence and the ravages of disease.³ The Aborigines provided much needed labour with men engaged in occupations such as scrub clearers, labourers, drovers and shearers while women carried out domestic activities including cooking, cleaning, laundry and even child minding for station owners.⁴ At the same time the Aborigines were able to maintain something of a traditional lifestyle. But as land use intensified following the gold rushes and closer settlement legislation, Robert Castle and Jim Hagan note, the “process of dispossession in the settled areas” accelerated and the Wiradjuri people were driven onto residue land away from the rivers.⁵ In addition the demand for their labour was reduced with white settlers managing their farms with the help of their families. They also faced competition from many of these farmers who undertook seasonal work off farm to supplement their incomes.

By 1894 there were approximately 500 aborigines recorded as living in the district although according to the Aborigines Protection Board (the ‘Board’)⁶ the itinerancy of much of the population made it difficult to obtain an accurate data. How many of these people were Wiradjuri is unknown but people from other groups were known to have lived within or transited through Wiradjuri country. The more sedentary populations lived at Brungle station and Warangesda mission⁷ both of which were located outside the Central West. Although there would certainly have been interaction between Aborigines living within the Central West and those at these settlements in this discussion, I focus on the communities located within the district. These people lived on unmanaged residential reserves, farming reserves where people became “independent farmers and rural labourers” and fringe camps near townships.⁸ According to Peter Kaballa there were also many “small unreported camps...along rivers (by

³ B Burbidge *Contemporary Wiradjuri relatedness in Peak Hill, New South Wales*” (PhD thesis University of Sydney 2014) 40.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ R Castle and J Hagan ‘Settlers and the State: The Creation of an Aboriginal Workforce in Australia’ *Aboriginal History* 22 (1998): 29.

⁶ The Aborigine Protection Board was formed in 1883. In establishing the Board Colonial Secretary Alexander Stuart stated that it was the “duty of the State to assist in any effort which is being made for the elevation of the race by affording rudimentary instruction, and by aiding in the cost of maintenance or clothing where necessary as well as grants of land, gifts of boats or implements of industrial work”. *Sydney Morning Herald* 3 March 1883. Also see Appendix 2 for Aboriginal population in Central West counties, according to the 1891 Census.

⁷ Brungle was a government settlement established in 1888. It was situated 1 km from Brungle town, midway between Tumut and Gundagai. Warangesda which was situated on the Murrumbidgee River about 2 km from Darlington Point was established in 1880 by John B Gribble and managed by the Aborigines Protection Association. This Association was formed in 1880, the nucleus of which was an organisation formed to support Maloga Aboriginal Mission (located on the Murray River near Moama). See P Read *A history of the Wiradjuri people of New South Wales 1883-1969* (PhD thesis Australian National University 1983) and N Cato *Daniel Matthews and his mission, Murray River, 1864-1902* (St Lucia: University of Queensland 1976). See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of John Brown Gribble.

⁸ Read *A History of the Wiradjuri people*, 36.

the river at Gooloogong)...under bridges (Ryan's Place near Cowra)...and along railway lines (for example the Railway Gates near Cowra)".⁹ He also notes that Forbes, Condobolin, Eugowra Wellington, Peak Hill and Orange were other locations for camps and reserves.

In mid-1893, the Board fostered the creation of reserves on the Wellington common and at Coobang Creek near Parkes. The latter was for "the use of aborigines generally" after the Board rejected an application by a "half-caste" for a grant of land in the area. Upon the recommendation of the police at Peak Hill another area was set aside on the eastern bank of the Bogan River.¹⁰ Earlier in the year the Department of Lands at the behest of the Board, reserved 78 acres at the junction of the Wollondilly and Cox's Rivers where a number of aboriginal families had been farming for some years and were making "a fair living on it, rearing stock and growing maize".¹¹ According to Heather Goodall "the reason the government responded favourably was that Aboriginal demands for land were seen as compatible with its own aims for Aborigines and for the population in general".¹² Land was set aside for cultivation by the Aborigines so that they could derive "an income to support their families" and encourage them "to settle and make comfortable homes for themselves".¹³ The Board was also prepared to act to safeguard its efforts such as seeking the reservation of the land at Wollondilly concerned that "an application by a neighboring selector to secure the land as a conditional purchase" would be successful.¹⁴ In another instance, acting on advice from the police at Obley, the Board referred the matter of a "European ...endeavoring to deprive two half-caste women of their selections".¹⁵

Diana Mudgee was one of the few Aborigines who owned land in their own right. Her situation was unusual in that she held approximately 500 acres near George Henry Cox's properties near Mudgee. But whether Diana acquired the land through the largesse of Cox (who acted as guarantor) or whether her name was used by him as a "dummy selector" is impossible to say.¹⁶

⁹ P R Kaballa *Archaeological Aspects of Aboriginal Settlement of the period 1870 – 1890 in the Wiradjuri Region* (PhD Thesis Australian National University 1999) 187.

¹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 12 May 1893, *Evening News* 7 May 1892, *Evening News* 8 April 1893, *Sydney Morning Herald* 8 December 1893.

¹¹ *Evening News* 18 February 1893.

¹² H Goodall 'Land in our own country: The Aboriginal Land Rights Movement in South-Eastern Australia 1860 to 1914' *Aboriginal History* 14 (1990): 8.

¹³ *Illawarra Mercury* 23 June 1892.

¹⁴ *Evening News* 18 February 1893.

¹⁵ *Daily Telegraph* 29 December 1893. Reserves at Canowindra and Sofala were revoked. *Daily Telegraph* 9 November 1892.

¹⁶ Diana Mudgee [(c1820s-1902) The first written record relating to Diana was in 1840 when she was purportedly living in "concubinage" with a servant (James Knight) on George Cox's property. It appears though that Diana was possibly only 13 years of age and she already had a daughter (Sarah). In 1840 Diana married another man, convict William Phillips who had been assigned to Cox. Phillips and Sarah



ILLUSTRATION 2: JANE RAYNER (née VITNELL) (1857-1919)



ILLUSTRATION 3: ELIZABETH BLACKALL (née RAYNER) (1848-1917)

Aboriginal people worked in a wide range of occupations although, unsurprisingly, there is little any information on the public record of their working lives and rarely are individuals identified. For example, the *Molong Express* noted that a drover was involved in an accident near the town in 1893 and around the same time, the *National Advocate* reported that an employee of a Cobb and Co driver was injured at Hereford but there were no names

had two children (Mary Ann and Emma) before he left her in 1845. In 1847 Diana became involved with Robert Rayner a former convict. He and Diana had seven children including Jane and Elizabeth. Robert Rayner acquired land at Piambong (near Mudgee) but when he died in 1874 his land did not pass to Diana because they were not married. After Rayner's death Diana acquired land with George Cox as guarantor. "Whatever the circumstances surrounding Diana's land-ownership, the land was kept in her name for 10 years. In 1895 Diana's lands passed into the ownership of Reginald Belmore Cox, the third son of George Henry Cox". <https://aiatsis.gov.au/collections/collections-online/digitised-collections/diana-mudgee/dianas-story.>]

mentioned.¹⁷ Alexander Stewart a drover and station hand in the Orange district,¹⁸ John Ross Brown, a cook at John A Gardiner's pastoral station 'Gobolion'¹⁹ at Wellington and skilled horse breaker, Jack Cave, were exceptions.²⁰ Others such as Fred Suttor and Ned Lambert described as "aboriginal sons of the soil" were gold miners.²¹



ILLUSTRATION 4: JACK CAVE

Some men, such as John Phillips, were Aboriginal trackers.²² As noted by Bennett trackers had been employed since early settlement by "explorers, surveyors" and the public at large. They were "were mainly employed in the prime agricultural and pastoral central and north-western

¹⁷ *Molong Express* 16 December 1893, *National Advocate* 6 November 1893.

¹⁸ Alexander Stewart born 1830s in Orange died in 1919...married Agnes Dray (non-indigenous) at Mudgee in 1871...moved to the Dubbo and Wellington district around 1880...Alexander worked as a drover and station labourer. Orange City Council *Orange Aboriginal Heritage Report*, 141.

¹⁹ John Ross Brown (died 1891). The *National Advocate* noted in his obituary that John Ross Brown was well known in the Condobolin district and had been a cook at Gobolion station for several years. The newspaper described him as "a very old man, and ... always known (after his own calling) as 'a man of honor'". *National Advocate* 19 January 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Gardiner.

²⁰ Jack Cave (c1865-c1950s) born in Bathurst district. "He grew up on local properties and learned the skills of a horse breaker. Around the turn of the century he moved to the Walgett district and took up the job of tracker at Mogil Mogil in 1900. He was later the tracker at Glencoe from 1904 to 1907. A talented jockey, he once rode five winners at a Walgett race meeting. He later tracked at Bathurst and in 1925 saved two valuable racehorses from a fierce stable fire. As noted by Percy Gresser, Cave was greatly interested in native animals and took a job at a wildlife reserve at Balwyn, Victoria. He later moved to Coolangatta, Queensland, and worked at Coolangatta Zoo before passing away in the 1950s." *Pathfinders NSW— A History of NSW Aboriginal Trackers* is a project by Dr Michael Bennett <http://pathfindersnsw.org.au/>.

²¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 12 March 1889.

²² John Phillips was employed as a tracker in 1891 and 1892 at Orange. *Orange Aboriginal Heritage Report*, 147

areas of NSW”²³ but were also employed by the police mainly in the western districts. For example, the hunt for the murderer of bank manager John Phillips and family friend Fanny Cavanagh was delayed while a tracker was brought from the “blacks” camp near Carcoar.²⁴

Many Aborigines were shearers. A delegate from the Board reported to a meeting held in the Bathurst Baptist Church that an Aborigine from the Brewarrina station had left on “the shearing tour” and there were similar reports at other times. Doubtless, others from the district also joined the tour.²⁵ Aboriginal shearers were also admitted to the Australian Shearers’ Union, something pastoralist Francis Chesney Hopkins ridiculed. At a meeting held in Bathurst in 1891 to form a branch of the Australian Pastoralists Union, he declared that “if the shearer unionists had such a strong objection to colored labor why did they allow aboriginals to join the union” noting that the only reason for this would be that unionists were carrying the motto, “Australia for the Australians”.²⁶

Most of the Aborigines who undertook seasonal work would have travelled through what Kaballa notes as “the sub-regional or inter-regional circuits”. These linked places such as Cowra, Gooloogong, Forbes and Condobolin on the Lachlan River and Bathurst, Wellington and Dubbo on the Macquarie River. Moreover, he suggests the “distribution patterns of settlements in the historical period parallels with Wiradjuri settlement before European arrival”.²⁷ According to Read this “movement of people” through these circuits (and Warangesda and Brungle) was “a feature of everyday life”.²⁸ In addition to work, this circulation was due to factors such as visiting and kinship obligations, forage and water. Uncovering other aspects of everyday life is more problematic although Kaballa’s analysis constructs daily activities such as lighting fires, collecting water, communal cooking and eating, drinking, gardening and care of animals.²⁹ Social life included dancing, music and story-telling. As discussed elsewhere men occasionally participated in town sports, travelling throughout the district generally competing in pedestrianism and other athletics.

Camp living, particularly in the ‘permanent’ fringe camps, could be hazardous. With sedentism, a lack of a clean water supply and inadequate facilities for waste disposal came ill-health due, in particular, according to Janet McCalman and Rebecca Kippen, “increased exposures to

²³ <http://pathfindersnsw.org.au/>.

²⁴ *Boorowa News* 6 October 1893. I discuss the murders of John Phillips and Fanny Cavanagh later.

²⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 21 November 1891.

²⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 9 May 1891.

²⁷ Kaballa *Archaeological Aspects of Aboriginal Settlement*, 314, 336. He also notes connections along the Murrumbidgee lines.

²⁸ P Read *A Hundred Years War* (Canberra: Australian National University Press 1988) 42.

²⁹ Kaballa *Archaeological Aspects of Aboriginal Settlement*, 209-211, 215.

respiratory and gastro-enteric diseases".³⁰ In addition, as Read states the camps "came to be associated in the minds of townspeople with squalor, alcoholism and low quality of life"³¹ and as Goodall suggests, were "places in which Aboriginal people should be confined...and kept firmly out of sight" unless or until their labour was needed.³² Complaints from town populations about the camps or the Aborigines were not unusual. At the height of the 1892 diphtheria epidemic in Cowra, there was an attempt to move the camp³³ and in 1894, residents complained to the Board about Aborigines being about the town.³⁴ People in Temora, alarmed by a proposal by John Gribble to relocate Aboriginal children from Cowra to that town, were concerned that there would be a "black camp or harem". These townspeople need not have been concerned as the Board "firmly" opposed the suggestion noting at the same time "that the parents of the children...emphatically refused to part with their care."³⁵ There were complaints in some areas about the attendance of Aboriginal children at public schools although there are no documented complaints from parents within the Central West between 1891 and 1893.³⁶

Approximately 500 children attended the colony's public schools and 47 were "educated privately", while 163 children attended specially established Aboriginal schools. In 1892 only six children were present at the local public school at Cowra and this attendance was sporadic. In response to representations from the local police, the Board established a school on the reserve. The police suggested that the children did not go to school because "the aborigines did not like mixing with the whites" and if there was a special school it was likely another fourteen children would attend. The Board and the Department of Public Administration accepted the advice and the Mulyan Provisional School opened in early 1893.³⁷

³⁰ McCalman J and Kippen 'Population and Health' in A Bashford and S Macintyre *The Cambridge History of Australia Volume 1 Indigenous and Colonial Australia* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 2013) 302.

³¹ Read *A History of the Wiradjuri people*, 256.

³² H Goodall *Invasion to Embassy: Land in Aboriginal Politics in New South Wales 1770-1972* (Sydney: Sydney University Press 2008) 108.

³³ Two members of the Cowra Council moved a motion to take steps for the removal of the "blacks' camp" because they believed the town water supply was being contaminated. The Council did not support the proposal. *Cowra Free Press* 15 April 1893.

³⁴ P Read 'Fathers and Sons: A Study of Five Men of 1900' *Aboriginal History* 4:1(1980): 99.

³⁵ *Cootamundra Herald* 22 March 1890.

³⁶ There was a well-publicised campaign at Gulargambone (located to the north-west of the district) to have Aboriginal children excluded from the school but the children could not be excluded as they were "habitually clean, decently clad and they conduct[ed] themselves with propriety". A Cadzow A *Chronology of Aboriginal Children's Education at Gulargambone 1891-1965* 2007 <https://ab-ed.nesa.nsw.edu.au/files/2008329b-case-landing-&-gulargambone.pdf>. Also see *Bathurst Free Press* 19 April 1891.

³⁷ *Daily Telegraph* 7 Nov 1892, *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 December 1892. The first teacher was Charles Lazelle. *Sydney Morning Herald* 14 April 1893.

There was a special school at the Warangesda mission but the overall management of the station and the standard of the school were poor leading to conflict between the Board and the Aborigines Protection Association. In its 1891 annual report, the Association believed that the Board's handouts and the "plentiful supply of drink" hampered its efforts to "induce" the Aborigines to live at their stations.³⁸ Between 1891 and 1893, such "handouts" included clothing at Wollar, Wellington, Peak Hill, Bathurst and Forbes.³⁹ Rations were also provided to a destitute half caste family at Eugowra following a report by MLA George Hutchinson⁴⁰ and another family at Hargraves who had been fossicking at Crudene Creek.⁴¹ Police at Rylstone asked the Board for advice about providing rations to "able-bodied" aborigines. The Board was unhappy but ruled "if during the winter season there was no work obtainable, those in camp should not be allowed to starve and the matter was left to the discretion of the police".⁴²

Camp dwellers could find themselves on the wrong side of the law. Newspaper reports of court proceedings were as stereotyped as for other marginal groups such as prostitutes. At Bathurst, Maud Brennan had the misfortune to be both. Not only was she "of the Aboriginal type" she had no visible means of support and "had a bad reputation and mixed with Chinamen of bad repute".⁴³ The *Cowra Free Press* reported on a fight that erupted in the street between two "unruly blacks", John Phillips and Mary Collett. A day of "indulging in nobblers from the rum cask" ended in the "gin [promising] to mend her ways and [being] sent off to the blacks' camp". Phillips was sentenced to three months gaol.⁴⁴

What constituted everyday life for aborigines in the district is almost impossible to determine. Local newspapers where the ebb and flow of everyday life of ordinary people were most apparent, were for the consumption of white communities. Unsurprisingly then there was hardly ever any mention of aboriginal activities other than in the coverage of court reports or the rare obituary of people such as Eliza and Sally. Between 1891 and 1893, the exploits of the "Dora Dora blacks" captured the imagination of local newspapers as well as attention in

³⁸ New South Wales Aborigines Protection Association *Our Black Brethren: Their Past, Present and Future being the Annual Report of the Aborigines Protection Association* (Sydney: William Brooks The City Printer 1892). Unsurprisingly relations between the two organisations were strained such that in late 1892, the Board assumed control for the management of the mission stations. *Australian Star* 27 April 1893.

³⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 December 1891, *Daily Telegraph* 27 June 1892.

⁴⁰ *Daily Telegraph* 18 March 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of George Hutchinson.

⁴¹ The family sought "monetary assistance to enable them to purchase a small orchard" a request not acceded to by the board which decided to supply the family with rations. *Australian Star* 22 January 1892.

⁴² *Sydney Morning Herald* 12 May 1893.

⁴³ Maud who had several convictions, was released on the condition she left Bathurst. The police magistrate suggested that there should be "some kind of home for these girls". *National Advocate* 10 November 1893.

⁴⁴ *Cowra Free Press* 17 June 1892.

colonial and intercolonial newspapers.⁴⁵ Some metropolitan newspapers reported on the weekly meetings of the Board where issues such as the distribution of rations and blankets, the declaration of reserves, management concerns at Brungle and the testy relationship between the Board and the Association were canvassed.

The Wiradjuri people were variously ostracised, pitied but mostly ignored. The extent to which people in the Central West shared the *Sydney Morning Herald's* statement that Aborigines were "one of the lowest types of humanity with which this globe happens to be encumbered" cannot be known⁴⁶ but it is probable that many shared the widely held view that the Aborigines were a dying race. Still, regardless of their poverty and diminution of culture, there was, as Read suggests, "a solidarity of kinship"⁴⁷ that sustained Aboriginal communities throughout the district.

⁴⁵ In 1891 two Aboriginal men, Boolyal and Thunimberri also known to Europeans as Jacky and Willie, murdered a woman at Benalla in Victoria and a Polish settler at Dora Dora near Albury. The men, described as the "Dora Dora blacks", evaded capture for over two years. Colonial newspapers chronicled the manhunt and as time went on, showed a begrudging respect for their exploits and disdain for the authorities failure to arrest them. M Rolls and M Johnson *Historical Dictionary of Aboriginal Australians* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press 2012) 65. In 1892 the *National Advocate* reported that "The Forbes police arrested three black fellows yesternight, who are supposed to be the Dora Dora fugitives". They weren't. *National Advocate* 14 December 1892.

⁴⁶ The newspaper was editorialising on the purpose of sending Aborigines as an exhibit to a fair [The Chicago Columbian Exposition] that was supposed to promote commercial and other friendly relations". *Sydney Morning Herald* 13 January 1892.

⁴⁷ Read *A history of the Wiradjuri people of New South Wales*, 73.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1891 and 1893 diarists, Mudgee orchardist Peter Rheinberger, Cowra miner Thomas O'Shaughnessy and Louisa Walsh daughter of 'Havilah' pastoral station manager James Walsh, chronicled their everyday lives.¹ Over the three years Peter records his efforts, supported by wife Aboline and family, to cultivate their orchards. He describes the engagement - business and pleasure - with the family's neighbours and friends, the health of his family, his religious devotions, the birth of his and Aboline's son Leo and the death of his mother Catherine. We sense his empathy with his son Gustavus, forlorn on his first day at boarding school and with his sister Katy who had to abandon her hopes of becoming a nun. We also feel his pride in his election as mayor of Cudgegong and the recognition of his expertise as a vigneron. Thomas details his mining activities, including discoveries of mineral specimens and the miscellany of other work with which he made a living. Community events, interaction with family and with work partners, the weather, births, deaths and marriages also feature. Louisa notes similar kinds of minutiae, as well as social occasions including picnics and dances, visits by friends and family, interaction between the 'Bungalow' (her home) and 'Havilah'. Occasionally, as seen below, she frequently mentions events outside her usual purview.

Each writer records occurrences that touch on the broader themes discussed in this thesis including law and order apparent in Louisa's comments on the execution of murderers, Peter's service on a jury and Thomas as a witness in an arson case. Economic concerns are reflected in Louisa's diary entries on the presence of unemployed men seeking gold on Havilah station and her suggestion that bank failures were impacting on activity in Mudgee. Thomas takes advantage of the prospecting vote instituted by the government to encourage mining activity and Peter enters his farm in the agricultural prizes scheme established to support best practice farming. Education (Gustavus Rheinberger at boarding school and an "old man" considering establishing a private school near Mudgee); health (Catherine's death from influenza and Thomas' home remedies); politics (Peter's attendance at the candidates' nomination meeting for 1891 election and Thomas' observation that there was not much excitement on polling day at Cowra); and, religion (the Rheinberger family's interaction with the church, the visit of the

¹ Peter Rheinberger *Unpublished diaries* (1891-1893) copy held by Mudgee District Historical Society; Louisa Walsh *Unpublished diaries* (1891-1893) copy held by Mudgee District Historical Society and Thomas O'Shaughnessy *Unpublished diaries* (1891-1893) copy held by Cowra and District Historical Society also transcript published by Frank Murray *My Early Pioneers and their Lives* <http://www.frankmurray.com.au/xxx-2>. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Peter Rheinberger, Thomas O'Shaughnessy and Louisa and James Walsh.

priests John O'Donovan and Patrick Doran to go shooting at Havilah and Thomas' handy work at the Catholic convent), are all evident in the lives of the diarists.²



**Illustration 5: Aboline (née Shipp) and Peter Rheinberger
Louisa (née Cross) and James Walsh (Louisa's parents)**

Peter Rheinberger, Thomas O'Shaunnessy and Louisa Walsh were ordinary people living in the colony between 1891 and 1893. How they and a multitude of others lived during the early years of the last decade of the nineteenth century (the '1890s') are central to this study. As discussed below, many observers suggest that the 1890s which were characterised by severe economic depression, political and industrial turmoil and cultural change, was one of the most dynamic periods in Australian history. While these issues have been taken up in broad narratives and thematic studies there are few accounts of how ordinary people lived, from either colonial or regional perspectives. My thesis is offered as a contribution to redressing this shortcoming. In my exploration of the lives and experiences of ordinary people in a rural district in NSW, I argue that the previous hypotheses about the 1890s, at least for the early years, are not borne out to the extent as would generally be supposed. Inevitably colonial macro concerns had an impact but it was day-to-day affairs that dominated the lives of most ordinary people who, all the while, were concerned that the stability, cohesiveness and prosperity of their communities were not undermined.

This thesis is a regional history of Central West NSW. I chose this district for no other reason than I was born and grew up there. It is where my Irish, English and German immigrant ancestors settled from the 1860s onwards and I have a natural curiosity about where and how they lived. Hence the Central West is foremost in this analysis of everyday life. My regional

² See Appendix 1 for biographies of John O'Donovan and Patrick Doran.

study is like many others. It is not, in the words of Debbie Applegate, “many small pictures accumulating and mystically bending into a composite portrait of a nation”.³ And it is more than what Stephen Tuck calls a “thick history of small areas”.⁴ Geoffrey Bolton’s premise that the purpose of regional history is to “illustrate and amplify”, and perhaps modify “our understanding of major themes and questions”,⁵ is pertinent. This is also the case with Elize Van Eeden’s hypothesis that regional history’s “optimal epistemological value... is in combining it with a particular theme or themes with the intention of reflecting its local, regional, national and international impacts”. But she also argues that it “serves its own purpose” of telling the history of its own people and the places in which they live.⁶ In this vein I am drawn to Bent Flyvbjerg’s thesis, in his discussion on the merits of a case study in social science, that a case study (in this instance a regional history) has a “value in and of” itself.⁷

Establishing what comprises a district is not straightforward. As Susan Armitage suggests “a region is one of those words whose meanings everyone knows until they actually have to define it”.⁸ I find John McCarty’s definition of a formal region as having “one or more dominant characteristics that are evenly spread” limiting although he qualifies this by adding that the most “dominant characteristic is the region itself”.⁹ Bill Lancaster suggests that “space; language; culture; economic; society; political movements and traditions; and the changing relationship to the nation state all can play a part”¹⁰ while Sulevi Riukulehto ascribes a plethora of characteristics – geographical, artificial, intuitive, pliable, fixed, embryonic and/or evolving.¹¹ Jim Hagan notes that most definitions of regions are somewhat arbitrary, suggesting, in the case of NSW, that overtime there have been many “administrative divisions” such as school, police and land districts, and political electorates.¹² In this sense the maps in

³ D Applegate “Europe of Regions: Reflections on the Historiography of Sub-National Places in Modern Times” *The American Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 4 (October 1999): 1173.

⁴ S Tuck ‘Historiographical Review The New American Histories’ *The Historical Journal*, 48, 3 (2005): 815.

⁵ G C Bolton ‘Regional History in Australia’ in J A Moses (ed) *Historical Disciplines and Cultures in Australasia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press 1979): 218.

⁶ E Van Eeden ‘Challenging Traditional Ways of Constructing Local/Regional History Research in South Africa: Some Global Learning and Sharing’ *International Journal of Regional and Local History* 9:1 (2014): 37.

⁷ B Flyvbjerg ‘Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research’ *Qualitative Inquiry* vol 12 no (April 2006): 220.

⁸ S Armitage (S Hodge) ‘From the Inside Out: Rewriting Regional History’ *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* vol 22 no 3 (2001): 32.

⁹ J W McCarty ‘Australian Regional History’ in *Australian historical studies* 18 issue 70 (1978): 91, 92.

¹⁰ B Lancaster ‘The North East, England’s most distinctive region?’ in B Lancaster, D Newton and N Vall *An Agenda for Regional History* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Northumbria University Press 2007): 24.

¹¹ S Riukulehto “Regional History Between Time and Space” in S Riukulehto (ed) *Between Space and Time* (Cambridge: Scholars Publishing 2015) ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.virtual.anu.edu.au/lib/anu/detail.action?docID=3563604> 4.

¹² J Hagan (ed) *People and Politics in Regional New South Wales Volume 1 1856 to the 1950s* (Leichhardt: Federation Press 2006) 2.

which the colony's regions are depicted are, as described by Doreen Massey, "places caught in a moment...slices of time"¹³ as is the case with the Central West. For example the maps of the district between 1891 and 1893 show counties, land divisions and districts which contextualise the land legislation being keenly debated at the time and the electoral boundaries drawn before and after the electoral redistribution of 1893, reflect not just shifting demographics but political and community awareness that followed the emergence of the Labour Party in 1891.¹⁴

It could be argued that the Central West region in the late nineteenth century had a very limited pedigree. It did not strictly conform to Geoffrey Buxton's depiction, represented by Margaret Kiddle's "Men of Yesterday" and his own "Riverina", as being centred on "geographical, political social identity and unity".¹⁵ Indeed David Goldney describes the district's geographical boundary as "an historical oddity".¹⁶ Yet in many respects the Central West is an ideal region in inland NSW to study. The district comprised areas with the highest inland densities and others with close to the lowest. It had fertile and less productive agricultural land, large pastoral stations, considerable deposits of gold and other minerals scattered throughout the district and a coal-mining industry. Urban communities ranged from the largest town west of the Blue Mountains (Bathurst) to rural settlements that were among the smallest in the colony. Between 1891 and 1893 the district had similar and disparate attributes in settlement, social and cultural networks, political affiliations and economic conditions. The regional mosaic comprised a settlement pattern which was not replicated elsewhere in the colony. Consequently, this presents an opportunity to canvass a broader range of issues impacting on rural NSW than may otherwise have been the case.

Many regions that are the subject of historical study are in the first instance defined geographically. As Weston Bate suggests, a region "without geography is like a boat without a rudder".¹⁷ As I previously stated, the Central West is located within Wiradjuri country. It is crossed by two major rivers- the Lachlan and the Macquarie which, at the time, were entrenched in the region's psyche. The district has a land area of over 65,000 km² and is

¹³ D Massey 'Places and Their Pasts' *History Workshop Journal* issue 39 (1995): 188.

¹⁴ The Central West was divided into a number of different areas, districts or sections. These include counties, land divisions and districts, municipalities and courts. A list of these is at Appendix 3. Also see Maps 2, 3 and 4.

¹⁵ M Kiddle *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria 1834-1890* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1961); G L Buxton *The Riverina 1861-1891* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 1967).

¹⁶ D C Goldney 'Introduction' in D C Goldney and I J S Bowie (ed) *The National Trust of Australia (NSW) Scenic and Scientific Survey of the Central Western Region A Report to the Australian Heritage Commission Volume 1* (Bathurst: Mitchell College of Advanced Education 1987): 2.

¹⁷ W Bate 'The Urban Sprinkle: Country Towns and Australian Regional History' in *Australian Economic History Review* 19 no 2 (September 1970):204.

situated in the central portion of NSW west of the Blue Mountains and east of the Darling River. The upper reaches of the Bogan River form part of the northern boundary as does the Abercrombie River in the south.¹⁸ The district's settlement pattern reflects the topography of the area comprising the mountainous areas in the east, through undulating tablelands to extensive plains in the west, and as Goldney notes, as one moves eastwards, altitude and rainfall decrease concurrent with an increase in evaporation.¹⁹ It is, in part, these geographical features that shape the regional boundary I adopt in this study. This boundary comprises an amalgam of the NSW Heritage Office's historical regions – the Lachlan and Central Tablelands.²⁰

Regional and local history are sometimes indistinguishable. Maurice French cites histories by Kiddle, Bolton, Buxton, D W Meinig, Ronald Heathcote and Duncan Waterson as regional histories but excludes Bill Gammage's study of Narrandera, his distinction appearing to relate to scale and degree of analysis.²¹ Local history according to Davison is "the history of local communities, often written for and by the locals themselves".²² Massey describes local history's chronicles of the 'development' of a community as "beads of sequential time like a rosary"²³ that is exploration, early white settlement, pioneer settlers, establishment of towns, municipal progress, construction of infrastructure such as the first railway and cultural institutions. There are many local histories of towns and villages in the Central West, most of which are typical of the genre. Commemorative volumes on schools, churches and local government are plentiful, many of which have been beneficial to this study. But, although there are some thematic studies, there are no comprehensive regional histories, a circumstance remedied here.²⁴

¹⁸ See Map 1 for location of Central West.

¹⁹ Hagan *People and Politics*, 190; Goldney *Scenic and Scientific Survey*, 5.

²⁰ NSW Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning *Regional Histories of NSW* (1996).

²¹ M French 'Regional History' in G Davison G, J Hirst and S MacIntyre (eds) *The Oxford Companion History of Australian History* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press: 2003) 549; D W Meinig *On the Margins of the Good Earth The South Australian Wheat Frontier 1869-1884* (Adelaide: Rigby 1962); R L Heathcote *Back of Bourke* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1965); Buxton *The Riverina*; D B Waterson *Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper A History of the Darling Downs 1859-1893* (Sydney: Sydney University Press 1968); B Gammage *Narrandera Shire* (Bill Gammage for the Narrandera Shire Council 1986).

²² G Davison 'Local History' in Davison et al *Oxford History of Australian History*, 397.

²³ D Massey 'Places and Their Pasts', 191.

²⁴ Some studies include R Tierney 'The Central West' in J Hagan *People and Politics in Regional New South Wales Volume 1 1856 to the 1950s* (Leichardt: The Federation Press 2006): 192; Hagan *People and Politics in NSW, Regional Histories of NSW*; T Kass *A Thematic History of the Central West Comprising the NSW Historical Regions of Lachlan and Central Tablelands* (Sydney: NSW Heritage Office 2003); Goldney *Scenic and scientific survey*.

Riukulehto and Van Eeden both review the historiography of regional history. While Riukulehto acknowledges that it may be premature to contemplate a “spatial turn in history” he states that “new spatial connections can clearly be seen in various forms of history from below”. Likewise Van Eeden believes that the “many varieties of ‘history from below’...should be considered as complementary to regional histories”.²⁵ As will be seen, through this confluence of regional history and history from below, my thesis contributes to historical scholarship.

History from below emerged from the discipline of social history in the 1960s. John Tosh loosely defines the latter as the “history of everyday life in the home, the workplace and the community”.²⁶ For Peter Stearns, this involves exploring a range of behaviours, institutions, events and processes, an approach that I follow in this study.²⁷ In that tradition I also examine interrelationships and interactions between individuals and with and between communities in order to establish the nature of society in the Central West. But while an exploration of the elements and symbolism of the everyday provides the framework, it does not reveal, in the words of Martyn Lyons, the “personal and private voices of ordinary people”.²⁸ It is through history from below that I give the assemblage of the Central West’s ordinary people, many of whom were “lost within historical processes or in anonymous crowds”,²⁹ their voices.

Tackling a history from below is not simple given its various practitioners see the methodology differently. Andrew Port, for example, includes it with microhistory and *Alltagsgeschichte* (‘the history of the everyday’) in his catch-all description of “people’s history”. Each of these, he suggests, involving “a dramatic reduction of historical scale, focusing on a single, individual, community or spectacular event”.³⁰ Ann Curthoys describes it, following E P Thompson’s iconic *Making of the English Working Class*, “as recovering the historical agency of powerless

²⁵ Riukulehto ‘Regional History’, 4, 5; Van Eeden ‘Challenging Traditional Ways’, 36.

²⁶ J Tosh *The Pursuit of History* fifth edition (Oxon and New York: Routledge 2013) 70. Geoff Ely provides a comprehensive overview on the evolution of social history in G Eley ‘The Generations of Social History’ *Encyclopedia of European Social History. Encyclopedia.com.* (retrieved 4 January 2018), <http://www.encyclopedia.com/international/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/generations-social-history>; Charles Tilly’s ‘Retrieving European Lives’ in O Zunz *Reliving the Past The Worlds of Social History* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press 1985) is also helpful.

²⁷ Stearns suggests that a “fundamental premise” of social history is that “ordinary people not only have a history but contribute to shaping history more generally”. P N Stearns ‘Social History Present and Future’ *Journal of Social History* 37 no 1 special issue (Autumn 2003): 9. Peter Stearns is the founding editor of the *Journal of Social History*.

²⁸ M Lyons *The Writing Culture of Ordinary People* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2013) 16.

²⁹ J Brewer ‘Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life’ *Cultural and Social History* vol 7 (2010): 97.

³⁰ A Port ‘History from Below, the History of Everyday Life, and Microhistory’ in Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (eds in chief) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, online second edition vol 11) accessed via <https://www.scribd.com/document/323922182/History-From-Below-the-History-of-the-Everyday> p 108. See David Crew ‘Alltagsgeschichte A New Social History ‘From below’?’ *Central European History*, 22, no. 3/4, *German Histories: Challenges in Theory, Practice, Technique* (Sep. - Dec., 1989): 394-407 for a discussion on *alltagsgeschichte*.

and hitherto invisible people.”³¹ Tim Hitchcock and Martyn Lyons distinguish between ‘old’ and ‘new’ history from below.³² Hitchcock claims the ‘new’ history from below refocuses on the poor, away from “an increasing concentration on the writings and thinkings, musings and actions of the middling sort and elite.”³³ Lyons argues that the ‘old’ form tended to focus on ordinary people collectively rather than the individual and Paul Pickering suggests that “the ‘new’ history from below is best seen not as an alternative but as an adjunct to the study of ‘Ordinary People’ by other means”.³⁴

A focus of history from below is to coalesce the experiences of individuals with broader historical explanations of social change and larger political and economic movements³⁵ as well as the placement of cultural events in wider societal systems, apropos ethnographer Clifford Geertz.³⁶ These objectives are also pertinent to biography. In the volume *The Biographical Turn in History*, a number of contributors examine the historiography of biography and its contribution and value to historical research. Enny de Bruijin, for example, notes that biography assists historians gain “empathy and identification” with the past³⁷ and Applegate surmises that “the primary strength of biography as a historical genre is its ability to depict the interplay of the intimate and broad historical trends”.³⁸ This is consistent with the views of Barbara Caine who considers that “individual lives can tell the story of a particular individual while illustrating wider historical patterns”.³⁹ Alice Kessler-Harris and Gaye Tuchman also share these opinions, the latter noting biography allows the “universal” to be encompassed within the “particular”.⁴⁰ While these observations primarily relate to the study of individual subjects, the same can be said for collective biography which is the approach I have taken in my work.

³¹ A Curthoys ‘History from Down Under E P Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class*’ *Historical Reflections* 41, issue 1 (Spring 2015):26.

³² T Hitchcock ‘A New History from Below’ *History Workshop Journal* issue 57 (Spring 2004): 294-298; M Lyons *The Writing Culture of Ordinary People*, 14.

³³ Hitchcock ‘A New History from Below’, 296.

³⁴ P Pickering ‘History from below An excellent study of scribal culture’ *Australian Book Review* (December 2013 – January 2014) 347.

³⁵ G Iggers *Historiography in the Twentieth Century* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press 2005) 113.

³⁶ Geertz coined the phrase “thick description” to describe a Balinese cock fight to demonstrate his theory that cultural events cannot only be understood in their wider cultural context. C Geertz ‘Thick Description: Towards an Interpretative Theory of Culture’ in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books 1973). He also formulated the theory “web of significance” as a concept of culture “where man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun”. *ibid*, 5.

³⁷ E de Bruijin ‘Building bridges to past centuries: Religion and empathy in early modern biography’ in Hans Renders Hans, Binne De Haan, Jonne Harmsma *The Biographical Turn Biography as a critical method in the humanities and in society* (Abingdon, Oxon New York: Routledge 2016) 130.

³⁸ D Applegate ‘From academic historian to popular biography: Musings on the practical poetics of biography’ in Renders et al *The Biographical Turn* 1989, 130.

³⁹ B Caine *Biography and History* (Basingstoke New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2010) 113.

⁴⁰ A Kessler-Harris ‘Difficult Woman: The Challenging Life and Times of Lillian Hellman’ (New York: Bloomsbury Press 2012); G Wolff ‘Minor lives’ in Marc Pachter (ed) *Telling lives, the biographer’s art* (Washington: New Republic Books 1979) 64.

As highlighted by Krista Cowman, collective biography “retains a focus on the individual even when it sits within work which aims to use individual lives to explore collective experiences or within studies of communities (geographically, socially or culturally defined)”.⁴¹

The lives of hundreds of individuals are interwoven in the pages of each chapter of this study. Some are well-known. Others are identified through vignettes, sketches, fragments, snippets and even, as described by Wolff, “data drops”,⁴² from a miscellany of sources but precious little is known about many more. People from all corners of the district and a throng of occupations illuminate the broader historical themes. For example, the stories of prostitutes Clara Whittaker, Ruby McAlpine and women who frequented the Ranken Street precinct at Bathurst not only uncovers lives hitherto unknown but illustrate societal concerns, as I discuss shortly, that morality and the respectability of communities were being undermined.

Similarly, the adverse economic conditions of the time are revealed through teachers Albert Mitchell and Archibald McNaught fulfilling their duties collecting school fees. And the deaths in a typhoid epidemic of Henry and Mary Jane Fuller and their new-born son Henry (leaving behind six children) draw attention to the fragility of communities during such epidemics and attitudes towards communal responsibility and resilience. All these examples and the people who experienced them, as suggested by Caine, demonstrate the “recognition of the value and importance of stories as a way of depicting and explaining the past”.⁴³

The single characteristic individuals in this collective biography share, is that they lived in or had a direct connection with the Central West. Beyond that there are a multitude of often overlapping sub-groups including farmers, members of Schools of Art, railway workers and bandmasters. They come from various socio-economic backgrounds, religious denominations or political affiliations. An examination of their lives demonstrates both the homogeneity and the disparate nature of the district, offering a blueprint for similar studies of other regions. The poor and disadvantaged such as Cowra indigent Alfred Atkinson, those eking out a living fossicking (Charlotte Adams), church workers (Annie Draper) and respectable town clerks (Henry Chippindall) populate this biography ‘from below’.⁴⁴ But the ‘elite’ are not neglected.

⁴¹ K Cowman ‘Collective Biography’ in S Gunn and L Faire *Research Methods for History* second edition (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2012) 85.

⁴² Wolff ‘Minor Lives’, 64.

⁴³ Caine *Biography and History*, 124. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Albert Mitchell, Archibald McNaught, Henry and Mary Ann Fuller.

⁴⁴ P Pickering ‘Review D Langmore’ *Labour History* no 95 (November 2008): 272. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Charlotte Adams, Annie Draper and Henry Chippindall.

Wealthy pastoralists (Thomas Edols), prominent businessmen (Thomas Dalton) and government ministers (Francis Suttor) also have a place.⁴⁵

I have adopted a slice methodology in this thesis in that I focus on short period of time – 1891 to 1893. My inspiration for this way of thinking was two-fold. Firstly, I found that an examination of everyday life over a ten-year time span, particularly the 1890s, daunting and concluded it was more practical to shorten the study period. Secondly, in my search for sources I came across a collection of 215 newspapers (hereafter ‘Chicago collection’) printed in 1892 and put together by the Newspaper Press of NSW for the World’s Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. The editions were chosen at random and were intended “as far as single specimens possibly can...to represent the local Newspaper Press in the present day under average normal conditions”.⁴⁶ The collection provides a ‘snapshot’ of the colony in 1892 and consequently the possibility of a slice approach, similar to that used in *Australia: A Historical Library*, a major history project published to coincide with the Australian Bicentenary in 1988, became apparent.⁴⁷ Those associated with the project and subsequent writers have variously argued the merits or otherwise of the undertaking but the comments are generally on the same theme. Marion Aveling, co-editor of *Australians 1838*, notes an opportunity to see society “in terms of being rather than becoming” and as a means of addressing the issue of “history read backwards” while Graeme Davison who co-edited *Australians 1888*, states that the project’s intent was not to look at society “in terms of known outcomes”.⁴⁸ The most common criticism of the slice approach, as espoused by Kay Daniels, is that it shifts “away from analysis and debate towards description and narrative”. She also notes that the methodology precludes “an explanation of the nature of Australian society... and the forces which determined it”. What remains is “a proliferation of images of popular culture and everyday

⁴⁵ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Thomas Edols, Francis Suttor, Thomas Dalton and other members of the Dalton family.

⁴⁶ Newspaper Press of NSW: Collection of multiple editions of 214 newspapers published in NSW in 1892, held on microfilm at State Library New South Wales. Most editions were printed in July, others were in August and January.

⁴⁷ *Australia: A Historical Library* comprised 12 volumes. Four of these - *Australians 1838*, *Australians 1888*, *Australians 1938*, *Australians 1988*, adopted a slice approach. Two volumes- *Australians to 1788* and *Australians from 1939* are more traditional narratives. The remaining six volumes are reference works: *Australians: a historical atlas*, *Australians: a historical dictionary*, *Australians: events and places*, *Australians: historical statistics*, *Australians: a guide to sources*, *Australians: the guide and index*. A more recent example of the slice methodology is *Glorious Days Australia 1913*. This book contains seventeen thematic essays on various aspects of Australian society in 1913 is a companion publication to the National Museum of Australia’s exhibition marking the centenary of Canberra. M Hetherington (ed) *Glorious days: Australia 1913*, (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press 2013).

⁴⁸ M Aveling ‘On Slicing the Historical Tide’ in *The Push from the Bush, A Bulletin of Social History devoted to the Year of Grace 1838* (1988): 10, 13; M Aveling ‘Writing History for Bicentenaries’ in *Making the Bicentenary Australian Historical Studies* 23/91 (1988) 103-113. G Davison G ‘Slicing Australian History Reflections on the Bicentennial Project’ in *New Zealand Journal of History* (1982): 13.

life”.⁴⁹ Critiques of some overseas histories are also pertinent.⁵⁰ These works generally adopt a year as a threshold or window rather than a slice but claims of the risk of “oversimplification”, “artificiality”, and a “highly synchronic type of historical analysis” are relevant to the slice used in this study.⁵¹ Notwithstanding these comments, I believe the methodology provides an opportunity to view the history of the Central West as lived revealing as suggested by Greg Denning “the experiences of people as they experienced them and not that experience as we in hindsight experience for them”.⁵²

My selection of 1892 as a slice year is essentially random but my decision to extend the period of study from one to three years is not. The nature of the years that ‘bookend’ 1892 provides an opportunity to address perceived short-comings of the slice approach, in particular, the criticism that focusing on such a short span of time does not enable a comprehensive analysis of broader themes. For example the extraordinary political events of 1891 cannot be ignored if one is to grasp a fulsome understanding of the district at the time. The *Bathurst Free Press* predicted in December 1890 that “the prospect of industrial calm” would progress “material prosperity”.⁵³ Like most people living in the colony, it did not foresee that the “ruinous strikes” of the previous twelve months would facilitate the election of labour men to parliament in an unanticipated election. The impact of this political upheaval resonated throughout the colony, including the Central West. Three years later economic havoc blighted the colony. In January 1894 regional newspapers within and outside the district reflected on 1893 with despondency. The year was described as “a period of depression, desolation, panic and failure... villainy”.⁵⁴ The financial troubles impacted on almost all aspects of life. Bank failures, bankruptcies, unemployment and poverty were widespread although the extent to which these misfortunes impacted on everyday life in the Central West is unknown. Focusing on the years 1891 to 1893 provides an opportunity to more fully examine these and other issues in depth and address the central research question of this thesis.

⁴⁹ Daniels ‘Slicing the Past’ in *Making the Bicentenary*, 136.

⁵⁰ For example K Stamp *America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink* (New York: Oxford University Press 1990); B Devoto *The Year of Decision 1846* (St Martin’s Griffin 2001) (first published 1943); L Masur *1831: Year of the Eclipse* (Hill and Wang 2001); and C Emerson *1913 The World before the Great War* (London: Vintage Books 2013).

⁵¹ G Martin ‘Year One in the History of British North America’, *Keynote address University of Edinburgh Centre of Canadian Annual Conference in 1999*, <http://www.gedmartin.net/published-work-mainmenu-11/13-1849>; W Johannsen ‘Review: A Nation on the Brink’ *Reviews in American History* 19 no. 4 Dec, 1991): 500; L Masur “Seeing Civil War” *American Quarterly* 43 no 3 (Sept 1991): 511.

⁵² A Mayne and S Lawrence ‘An Ethnography of Place Imagining “Little Lon”’ *Australian Journal of Australian Studies* 57/22 (January 1998): 104.

⁵³ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 December 1890.

⁵⁴ *National Advocate* 1 January 1894, *Nepean Times* 30 December 1893, *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* 2 January 1894.

An understanding of a sense of community in the Central West is fundamental in this analysis but theories on the meaning of the concept abound. Indeed as Graham Day points out some sociologists believe the term 'community' has been so overused, its connotations so disparate and its meaning so elusive it has ceased to be useful in "any serious social analysis". He rejects these assertions arguing that it is the flexibility and variability of the idea that allows us to explore how people exist together and the bonds that bind them.⁵⁵ Within the district's geographical boundaries there was a miscellany of communities. Even within the smallest rural settlements they were rarely if ever finite. People could be members of a church and at the time share social ties such as a debating society or economic connections such as a farmers' organisation. Electorates had constituents, unions had members, sporting clubs had participants and towns had ratepayers. All had shared interests. As I have already suggested, much of the Central West was a homogeneous society partly through *gemeinschaft*, as defined by German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies approximately 130 years ago.⁵⁶ Tönnies' twin concepts of *gemeinschaft* and its antithesis, *gesellschaft*, have been influential in social science since his work, *Community and Society* was first published in 1887. Tönnies was most unlikely to have devoted any time to contemporary Australia, let alone rural NSW, but the fact that he was pondering the notion of community at almost exactly the same time as the subjects of this thesis were living their lives, is perhaps a fortunate coincidence. Steven Brint describes various features of a *gemeinschaft* community as including "common ways of life, common beliefs, concentrated ties and frequent interaction...familiarity... emotional bonds".⁵⁷ Setting aside interpretative debates on Tönnies' theories, I argue that these characteristics of *gemeinschaft*, and the ensuing dynamics such as stability, respectability and cohesion were manifest in the district at this time.

Russell Hogg and Kerry Carrington, in their discussion on violence and crime in rural NSW, note the impact of *gemeinschaft* in the colony in the nineteenth century. They suggest government policies, such as land legislation and public works which were intended to promote orderly settlement and establish an agricultural yeomanry, fostered such communities. The intended outcome, they argue, was "a virtuous circle of like-minded small-holders [that] would naturally form cohesive communities in which the civilising pillars of church and civic authority would be

⁵⁵ G Day *Community and Everyday Life* (Oxon: Routledge 2006) 2.

⁵⁶ In 1887 Ferdinand Tönnies (1855-1936) introduced the concepts of *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft* in his work *Community and Society*; Loomis and McKinney note in the introduction to 2002 unabridged reprint edition, that "the volume pointed into the Middle Ages and ahead into the future in its attempt to answer the questions: What are we? Where are we? Whence did we come? Where are we going" C P Loomis and J C McKinney 'Introduction' *Community and Society* Dover Edition (New York: Harper and Row Publishers 2002): 1.

⁵⁷ S Brint 'Gemeinschaft Revisited: A Critique and Reconstruction of the Community Concept' *Sociological Theory* 19 n 1 (March 2001): 2, 3.

added to those of agriculture and the family". The "civilising pillars" would be complemented by towns and villages which grew up around the farms. The built form of these urban settlements was fashioned on a grid layout providing for the "institutions and symbols of civil and religious authority" to be strategically located. Conversely the "less governable spaces" occupied by public houses were "a source of considerable anxiety and moral threat to the virtues of the idealised rural community".⁵⁸ Hogg's and Carrington's hypothesis holds true for the Central West and in the chapters that follow, I demonstrate the influence of *gemeinschaft* on almost all aspects of everyday life in the district.

In a review of Thomas Bender's *Community and Social Change in America*, Michael Katz notes that some "social theorists" have misused Tönnies in defining "community solely in terms of locality".⁵⁹ But ties to locality, in particular localism, are important. Erik Eklund, Greg Patmore and Ian Gray describe the concept in the contexts of class and political and industrial landscapes in Port Kembla, Lithgow and Cowra. Erik Eklund in his work on Port Kembla defines localism as "an ideology that elevates local interests above all others" or promotes "unity and common interest." Greg Patmore argues that it is a "sense of place which can influence behaviour" and Ian Gray, in his study of local politics in Cowra, refers to "locality consciousness".⁶⁰ As we will see later, locality is at work in many aspects of everyday life from politics to cricket matches. More broadly, parochial quarrels between communities are surpassed by the city versus country divide. Angst over admittances to the benevolent asylum, agricultural shows subsidies and municipal loans are examples of what Don Aitkin describes as "countrymindedness", that is an awareness among country people "of common interests and common problems".⁶¹

By exploring the diversity of communities in the district I reveal a great deal about the nature of society during the study period. The texture of everyday life is seen through the interaction of people going about their business, pursuing their interests and interacting with others in the context of the broader occurrences which are variously portrayed in historical accounts of the

⁵⁸ R Hogg and K Carrington 'Violence, Spatiality and *Other Rurals*' *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* vol 36 no 3 (2003): 296.

⁵⁹ M Katz 'Review of T Bender *Community and Social Change in America* 1978 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press (1978)' *The American Historical Review* vol 84 no 2 (April 1979): 590.

⁶⁰ E Eklund 'The "Place" of Politics: Class and Localist Politics at Port Kembla, 1900-30' *Labour History* No 78 (May 2000): 95; E Eklund *Steel town the making and breaking of Port Kembla* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press Carlton 2002): 112; G Patmore 'Localism and Labour Lithgow 1869-1932' *Labour History* no 78 (May 2000): 53; I Gray *Politics in Place Social power relations in an Australian Country Town* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press 1991) 161. Gray is quoting Gretchen Poiner *The Good Old Rule: Gender and Other Power Relations in a Rural Community* (Sydney: Sydney University Press 1990). Poiner's study is of Marulan in NSW.

⁶¹ D Aitkin 'Countrymindedness – The Spread of an Idea' in S L Golberg and F B Smith (ed) *Australian Cultural History* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 1988): 53.

decade. In “Rethinking the 1890s” Melissa Bellanta provides an overview of these issues. She describes the industrial ferment, ruinous depression, political upheaval, radical campaigners, feminism, racism, the awakening of a national identity reflected in culture and the march towards federation.⁶² Most of these overarching themes developed in intensity over the decade but all were present in one way or another in the colony in the early years. For example Bellanta states, in relation to the colony’s economic circumstances, that although the “bleakest days would not come until the middle of the decade...even in the summer of 1890 there was sufficient warning of the coming austerity”.⁶³ In the paragraphs below I provide an overview of some of these issues as manifested in the years 1891 to 1893 and a synopsis of how other researchers have approached them.

In July 1891 local farmer C P Laurence wrote to the Bathurst *National Advocate* bemoaning the excesses of banks, government ineptness, the recklessness of the populace at large and warning of the “utter smash impending over us”.⁶⁴ Unsurprisingly many economic historians have scrutinised the factors which led to the “utter smash” that followed over the next two years.⁶⁵ In the three decades leading up to 1891 the colony had enjoyed a period of sustained economic growth although there were periodic downturns.⁶⁶ In Andrew Wells’ view, these

⁶² M Bellanta ‘Rethinking the 1890s’ in A Bashford and S Macintyre *The Cambridge History of Australia Volume 1 Indigenous and Colonial Australia* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 2015): 218-241. Other works on the 1890s include John Docker *The Nervous Nineties Australian Cultural Life in the 1890s* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1991); Bruce Scates *A New Australia Citizenship, Radicalism and the First Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997) and Vance Palmer *The Nervous Nineties* (South Yarra: Currey O’Neil Ross Pty Ltd 1954).

⁶³ Bellanta Rethinking the 1890s, 221.

⁶⁴ This may be Charles Phillip Laurence of Elder Grove near Oberon. He was born in New South Wales and died in 1899 aged 71. *Sydney Morning Herald* 28 December 1899. Laurence stated in his letter that he had been a farmer in the Bathurst area for 28 years. *National Advocate* 18 July 1891.

⁶⁵ These include A E Boehm *Prosperity and Depression in Australia 1887-1897* (London: Oxford University Press 1971); K Buckley and T Wheelwright *No Paradise for Workers Capitalism and the Common People in Australia 1788-1944* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1992); N G Butlin *Investment in Australian Economic Development 1861-1900* (London: Cambridge University Press 1964); N Cain ‘Pastoral Expansion and Crisis in New South Wales 1880-1893: The Lending View’ in *Australian Economic Papers* 2 issue 2 (December 1963); L Davis and R Gallman *Evolving Financial Markets and International Capital Flows Britain, the Americas, and Australia 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Cambridge 2001); L Frost ‘The Economy’ in Bashford and Macintyre *Cambridge History of Australia*; H L Harris ‘The Financial Crisis of 1893 in New South Wales’ *Royal Australian Historical Society Journal and Proceedings* XIII, pt VI (1927); R V Jackson *Australian economic development in the nineteenth century* (Canberra: Australian National University Press 1977); A Kelley ‘International Migration and Economic Growth: Australia 1865-1935’ *Journal of Economic History* 25 (1965); I W McLean ‘Recovery from Depression: Australia in an Argentine Mirror 1895-1913’ *Australian Economic History Review* Vol 46 No 3 November 2006; DT Merrett ‘Australian banking practice and the crisis of 1893’ in *Australian Economic History Review* Volume 29 1989; G D Snooks ‘Economy’ in Davison, Hirst Macintyre *Australian History*; A Wells *Constructing Capitalism An Economic History of Eastern Australia 1788-1901* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin 1989); G Wood *Borrowing and Business in Australia* (London: Oxford University Press 1930).

⁶⁶ Butlin states that there were “very slight recessions in 1863, 1871, 1876, 1884 and 1886” Butlin *Investment in Australia*, 10

years were marked by “large scale public works expenditure, steadily increasing overseas borrowing and the resultant overseas debt escalation”.⁶⁷ Coghlan describes government spending from 1884 onwards as “a riot, unlimited in its violence”.⁶⁸ There was also rapid and unchecked pastoral and mining expansion and speculation in the development of housing spurred on by substantial population growth and increasing urbanisation. The gold rushes, Robert Jackson notes, had “left Australians as probably the richest people in the world” but he argues that this wealth was “inherently precarious” masking a growing structural instability.⁶⁹ Gordon Wood describes the unhindered “rise of prices, the spread of extravagance, the rush of imports, and the evils of inflation” as “crisis breeding prosperity”.⁷⁰ The onset of the inevitable crisis in 1891 brought widespread unemployment, bankruptcies, bank failures and despair. By mid-1893 George Greene manager of the Bathurst branch of the Commercial Bank of Sydney, declared that “the disaster had happened [and] it was the greatest calamity in the colony’s history”.⁷¹

A crisis of a different kind led to the upheaval in NSW politics in 1891. The election of Labor Electoral League (LEL) candidates which followed the widespread industrial action in 1890 triggered the formation of the first Labour Party in the Australian colonies. The genesis, failure and consequences of the 1890 strikes have been amply discussed in many studies so there is little to be gained from a detailed analysis here.⁷² Be that as it may, there are two issues that are worthwhile revisiting. Firstly, as noted by Mark Hearn and Harry Knowles and John Merritt, the disastrous outcome for the unions led to falling membership, competition from the ever-expanding throng of unemployed and newly emboldened and organised employers.⁷³ In addition Ken Buckley and Ted Wheelwright argue that the middle-class, hitherto having some empathy towards the workers, became nervous because they “were shocked by reports of

⁶⁷ Wells *Constructing Capitalism*, 97.

⁶⁸ T A Coghlan *Labour and Industry in Australia* III (Oxford University Press 1918) 1411.

⁶⁹ Jackson *Australian economic development*, 11, 12.

⁷⁰ Wood *Constructing Capitalism*, 25.

⁷¹ *National Advocate* 16 May 1893

⁷² These include Buckley and Wheelwright *No Paradise for Workers*; M Hearn and H Knowles *One Big Union A History of the Australian Workers Union 1886-1994* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 1996); J Merritt *The Making of the AWU* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1986); Skates *A new Australia Citizenship*; J Phillip ‘1890- A Turning Point in Labour History’ and J O’Connor ‘1890 – A Turning Point in Labour History: A reply to Mrs Philipp’ and B Nairn ‘The Role of the Trades and Labour Council in New South Wales 1871-1891’ in M Beever and F B Smith (compilers) *Historical Studies Selected Articles Second Series* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1967), R Gollan *Radical and Working Class Politics A Study of Eastern Australia 1850-1910* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 1966); R Markey *The Making of the Labor Party in New South Wales* (Kensington: New South Wales University Press 1988). Markey suggests that membership of over 50 or so unions had “by 1891 covering 60,000 workers representing a membership density of about 21.5 percent of the total workforce in 1891, the highest density in the world at that time”, 140.

⁷³ Hearn and Knowles *One Big Union*, 62, 63; Merritt *The Making of the AWU*, 9.

violence or threats”.⁷⁴ As we will see later these issues had consequences for relations between capital and labour in the district.

All political historians of the period agree that the most far-reaching impact of the strikes was the facilitation of the entry of organised labour men into the colonial parliament.⁷⁵ Thomas Roydhouse and Henry Taperell, contemporary observers of the Labour Party, stated that “in so far as there is any connection between the strike and the political Labour upheaval, we are entitled to congratulate the country upon the fact that the law-breakers of last year are the law-makers of this year”.⁷⁶ But in charting the presence of labour politicians in the colonial parliament, observers have noted other precursors. Bede Nairn and Ray Markey chart the “political flirtations” of the Trades and Labour Council (TLC) from as early as the 1870s, its emergence by 1890-1891 as a clear unprecedented “working-class” leader in NSW and its oversight of the formation of the LEL.⁷⁷ In addition, Rickard sees the payment of members enacted through the *Parliament Allowance Act* 1889 as an enabler for labour representation in parliament.⁷⁸ As well as these, the evolution of the sixteen planks of the LEL’s electoral platform, of which Nairn gives a comprehensive account, launched the campaigns of its parliamentary candidates and subsequently formed the policies of the elected members. Regardless, the first months of the new party were challenging. Roydhouse and Taperell chronicle the early trials of the labour members and the near imploding of the new party over the troublesome tariff question, something that is also discussed by Markey and others.⁷⁹ In addition, Michael Hogan’s collection of the detailed reports by the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the first two annual conferences in 1892 and 1893, and a special conference held in November 1893 documents the LEL’s efforts to take control and bring discipline to the party in the wake of the 1891 adversities.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ J Rickard *Class and Politics New South Wales, Victoria and the Early Commonwealth* (Canberra: Australian National University 1977) 24; Buckley and Wheelwright *No Paradise for Workers*, 183.

⁷⁵ These include Gollan *Radical and Working Class Politics*, J Hagan and K Turner *A History of the Labor Party in New South Wales 1891 – 1991* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire 1991); Hogan *Labor Pains*; Markey *Making of the Labor Party*, R McMullin *The Light on the Hill The Australian Labor Party 1891 – 1991* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1991); B Nairn *Civilising Capitalism The Beginnings of the Australian Labor Party* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 1989) and Rickard *Class and Politics*.

⁷⁶ T Roydhouse and H J Taperell *The Labour Party of New South Wales* (Sydney: Edwards Dunlop Co Pty 1892) 22. Thomas Roydhouse (1862-1943) was the editor of the *Sunday Times* and Henry James Taperell (1864-1925) was a journalist with the *Daily Telegraph*.

⁷⁷ Markey *The Making of the Labour Party*, 157.

⁷⁸ Rickard *Class and Politics*, 267.

⁷⁹ Roydhouse and Taperell *The Labour Party of NSW*. The feuding over the merits of free trade versus protectionism had overshadowed colonial politics from the late 1880s and was a pre-eminent political issue in NSW during the study period. Free-trade and protectionist organisations were located in several towns in the district.

⁸⁰ Hogan *Labor Pains*, 50.

These summaries of the broad economic and political issues are consistent with the wide-ranging analyses generally discussed in most histories of the period. Given that there are no comprehensive histories of the district at this, or any other time, the extent to which they are germane to the Central West remains to be seen. Similarly, as stated previously, there are few accounts of the social condition of ordinary people living in the colony and none that focus on the Central West. Law and order, education, religion, health, culture and entertainment are elements that shaped everyday life and in the following pages, I provide a thematic synopsis of those fundamental aspects as portrayed in the relevant literature. I also indicate where the concept of *gemeinschaft*, a major theme in this study, is apparent in the broader view.

Gemeinschaft is most obvious in the forces of law and order. As John Hirst points out, a priority of early colonial officials was to establish the rule of law which they believed would bring civilisation to the frontiers of inland NSW as European occupation spread⁸¹ and in Mark Finnane's words, define "identities, boundaries and norms".⁸² Alastair Davidson extends this argument suggesting that the general population were just as determined to protect their "property and personal rights which made them individuals and citizens".⁸³ By 1891 little had changed to the extent colonists expected order to prevail and that justice would be appropriately administered if it didn't. The rule of law kept communities secure and cohesive, characteristics consistent with *gemeinschaft*. In accord with this a "common law culture" was in place, one which according to Ian Holloway, Simon Bronitt and John Williams, represented "the values that shape[d] the belief systems of the individuals (litigants, public officials, lawyers and judges) participating in the colonial justice system".⁸⁴ Various studies address the roles of these protagonists. Davison et al point out that the colony's "legal tradition was founded in British law and procedures and the profession in form and dress was a replica of the English".⁸⁵ Holder, on the other hand, notes the peculiarly Australian role of local magistrates which was viewed as a cornerstone of respectability and authority but not the "lynchpin of local law and order and administration" as per their English counterparts.⁸⁶

⁸¹ J Hirst 'The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy New South Wales 1848-1884' in J Hirst *Freedom on the Fatal Shore: Australia's First Colony* (Melbourne: Black Inc 2003) 207.

⁸² M Finnane 'Law and Regulation' in Bashford and McIntyre *Cambridge History of Australia*, 398.

⁸³ A Davidson *The Invisible State The formation of the Australian State 1788-1901* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press 1991) 142.

⁸⁴ I Holloway, S Bronitt and J Williams 'Rhetoric, Reason, and the Rule of Law in Early Colonial New South Wales' in H Foster, B Berger and A R Buck *The Grand Experiment Law and Legal Culture in British Settler Society* (Vancouver: UBC Press 2008) 80.

⁸⁵ Davison et al *Australians 1888*, 422, 423.

⁸⁶ H Golder 'The Making of the Modern Magistracy' in *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 77 (1991):30.

Mark Finnane and Stephen Garton, Russell Hogg and Hilary Golder, Evans Ray, Clive Moore, Kay Saunders and Bryan Jamison and John McQuilton have examined the place of police in colonial society. In addition to enforcing or managing a host of colonial or local administrative functions and “repressors of crime” Finnane and Garton describe the mediating role between competing interests such as “politicians, police, authorities, local business...and local populations”.⁸⁷ In this context, according to McQuilton, alliances between police and squatters emerged, not just with the latter as magistrates but a bias against selectors who were often accused of stock theft.⁸⁸ Hogg and Golder suggest that it is in these capacities that the “non-repressive aspects of the police in the role in the construction and reproduction of the social order” is evident.⁸⁹ But this is also relevant to their roles as regulators of what are described as “social infractions”, for instance, prostitution, gambling and sly-grogging.⁹⁰ Social order is foremost in the policing of drunks, larrikins and even public bathing.⁹¹ It was the role of the police to deal with these miscreants who had turned “their backs upon respectability and seemingly choosing to walk an irresponsible, lustful or immoral part in life”.⁹² Women who made this choice were seen as particularly reprehensible. In noting the construction of a “female criminal stereotype” in the police courts, Straw states that such women were viewed “as dangerous types threatening the social order”.⁹³ By and large the general population, particularly the respectable middle-class, few of whom, as suggested by Davison et al, “would ever come into contact with the law”⁹⁴ were comfortable with the administration of justice. With the reports of “criminal trials and civil disputes” and the proceedings of the police courts published in “the myriad of colonial newspapers”,⁹⁵ up-right citizens could be assured, as argued by Evans that the path to a “happy, heath and productive life”⁹⁶ was rightly theirs.

Similarly, the concept of *gemeinschaft* is applicable to education in late nineteenth century NSW. The numerous public schools located in rural settlements, villages and towns across the

⁸⁷ M Finnane and S Garton ‘The Work of Policing: Social Relations and the Criminal Justice System in Queensland 1880-1914 part I’ *Labour History* no 62 (May 1992): 53; R Evans, C Moore C K Saunders and B Jamison *Documenting Australia’s Federation 1901 Our Future’s Past* (Sydney: Macmillan Australia 1997) 22, 23.

⁸⁸ J McQuilton ‘Police in Rural Victoria A Regional Example’ in M Finnane *Policing in Victoria Historical Perspectives* (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 1987): 47.

⁸⁹ R Hogg and H Golder ‘Policing Sydney in the late nineteenth century’ in Finnane M (ed) *Policing in Australia*, (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 1987), 61.

⁹⁰ Finnane and Garton ‘The Work of Policing’, 56.

⁹¹ On 8 January 1892 23 boys and youths were unsuccessfully prosecuted by police for bathing (within sight of a public road) in the Lachlan River Cowra. *Cowra Free Press* 8 January 1892.

⁹² Evans et al *Documenting Australia’s Federation*, 22, 23.

⁹³ L Straw “‘The worst female character’: Criminal underclass women in Perth and Fremantle, 1900–1939’ *Journal of Australian Studies* 37:2 (2013): 213.

⁹⁴ Davison and Bashford *Cambridge History of Australia*, 365.

⁹⁵ Finnane ‘Law and Regulation’, 398.

⁹⁶ Evans et al *Documenting Australia’s Federation*, 22, 23.

colony was an integral part of small and large communities reinforcing shared traditional values. These values remained steady even though there were sharp differences between the state and some churches, mainly the Catholic Church, on how children should be educated. Geoff Sherington and Craig Campbell note that the public-school system was founded in the tradition of a “colonial liberal middle-class Protestant agenda” and that the Catholic Church had to respond by building schools “based on local parishes and religious orders pledged to uphold the faith against the threat of the secular state”.⁹⁷ With the passage of the 1880 *Public Instruction Act* that saw the end of state aid for denominational schools this sectarian divide widened. Maree Murray and R J W Selleck note the focus of public education was “discipline, routine, order, cleanliness, honesty and punctuality ... obedience and respect for authority”.⁹⁸ These objectives were also important in Catholic education but as suggested by Julia Horne and Geoff Sherington, these schools had “their own inherited traditions [they] were authoritarian in approach, religious in tone, practice and symbols”.⁹⁹

Unsurprisingly most accounts of education in the colony in the latter years of the nineteenth century address the state/church issue and the all-pervasive sectarianism.¹⁰⁰ They also examine the overall system of public education, how it functioned, its objectives and shortcomings, in a system described by Edward Dowling as “perfection itself”.¹⁰¹ Alan Barcan briefly describes the reforms to elementary education post the 1880 *Education Act* as well as developments in technical education, collegiate schools and secondary schooling¹⁰² while Eric Dunlop reviews the difficulties encountered by state high schools which had to contend with the indifference of the state authorities and competition from both the public superior and collegiate schools.¹⁰³

State authorities exercised firm control over their teachers. Andrew Sullivan and Martin Spaul note the indifference and occasional antagonism of the Education department and its

⁹⁷ G Sherington and C Campbell ‘Australian Liberalism, the middle class and public education From Henry Parkes to John Howard’ *Education Research and Perspectives* 31 no.2 (2004): 62.

⁹⁸ M Murray ‘Children and Schoolwork in New South Wales 1860-1920’ *University of Wollongong Department of Economics Working Paper Series* (1999): 20; R J W Selleck ‘State Education and Culture’ in Goldberg and Smith *Australian Cultural History*, 79.

⁹⁹ J Horne and G Sherington ‘Education’ in Bashford and Macintyre *Cambridge History of Australia*, 371.

¹⁰⁰ For example, see A G Austin *Australian Education 1788-1900 Church, State and Public Education in Colonial Australia* (Melbourne: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd 1961); P O’Farrell *The Catholic Church and Community An Australian History* (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 1992).

¹⁰¹ E Dowling *Australia and America in 1892 A Contrast* (New South Wales Commissioners for the World Columbian Exposition Chicago 1892/1893), 58.

¹⁰² A Barcan *Two Centuries of Education in New South Wales* (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 2003).

¹⁰³ Dunlop ‘Public High Schools of New South Wales 1833-1912’ in *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 51 issue 1 (1965).

inspectors in their study of the hardships of teachers in Queensland.¹⁰⁴ The same hardships were experienced by NSW teachers which, as Selleck notes, were closely monitored to “ensure they worked the narrow paths of social and cultural propriety” thus creating bonds with the communities in which they lived.¹⁰⁵ Respectability was, of course, even more essential for women. Marjorie Theobald, Noelene Kyle, Anne O’Brien, Tanya Fitzgerald and Josephine May examine the place of women working in state elementary and secondary schools, nuns in Catholic schools, women who ran private “ladies’ academies”, governesses and, the largely invisible and exploited wives of teachers.¹⁰⁶ These women Kyle suggests were responsible for disseminating “the message of state schooling, morality and thrift” beyond the metropolitan areas.¹⁰⁷ Some studies examine the place of parents in the education system. Murray, for example, discusses the conflict between compulsory schooling and child labour needed to sustain households.¹⁰⁸ But Malcolm Vick argues that most parents were eager for their children to be educated, noting for instance that parents were the first to lobby for a school in their community.¹⁰⁹ He also describes the positive effect of parental and communal involvement in the provision and maintenance of school buildings.¹¹⁰

Religion played an important role in educating the colony’s children but it was divisive one. Winsome Roberts analyses the factors that influenced the relationship between the churches and the state, including education. She explains that churches were seen “as the nucleus of an ordered social existence and rudimentary community life to the masses”.¹¹¹ Roberts also notes that religion “in a cultural sense... [the] spiritual and festive” had a “profound influence” in the establishment of communities.¹¹² Patricia Grimshaw and Anne O’Brien discuss the invaluable work undertaken by women sustaining churches not just as worshippers and Sunday school

¹⁰⁴ M Sullivan and A Spaul ‘The Teacher’s Lot in Queensland 1880-1930’ in M R Theobald and R J W Selleck *Family School and State in Australian History* (Sydney: Allen Unwin 1990).

¹⁰⁵ Theobald and Selleck *Family School and State*, 82.

¹⁰⁶ M Theobald *Knowing Women’s Education in Nineteenth-Century Australia* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press 1996); N Kyle *Her Natural Destiny The Education of Women in New South Wales* (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 1986); A O’Brien *God’s Willing Workers Women and Religion in Australia* (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 2005); T Fitzgerald and J May *Portraying Lives Headmistresses and Women Professors 1880s-1940s* (Charlotte NC: Information Age Publishing 2016).

¹⁰⁷ Kyle *Her Natural Destiny*, 139.

¹⁰⁸ Murray *Children and Schoolwork*. Also see M Murray *Working Children: A Social History of Children’s Work in New South Wales 1860-1916* PhD Thesis (Macquarie University 1995).

¹⁰⁹ M Vick “Their Paramount Duty” Parents and Schooling in the Mid-Nineteenth Century’ in Theobald and Selleck *Family School and State*, 179.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ W Roberts ‘The Churches’ Role in Constituting an Australian Citizency’ in B Howe and P Hughes *Spirit of Australia II: Religion in Citizenship and National Life* (Hindmarsh: ATP Press 2003): 56.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

teachers but through their indispensable role as fund-raisers.¹¹³ In addition O'Brien also maintains that they were considered to be best suited to these duties because their "influence in public life would lead to social betterment".¹¹⁴ Their contribution, according to Richard Ely, provided for "for a sound social order, in which moral and spiritual purity would foster intellectual and material progress". Women were seen as guardians of morality, safeguarding societal morals against the threats posed by intemperance, gambling and the preservation of the Sabbath but, Phillips considers, these were also the concern of a broader community cohort including churches.¹¹⁵ Ultimately, in Ely's view, religion was seen at the end of the nineteenth century as "the key to morality and morality the key to social happiness and material prosperity".¹¹⁶

Roy Porter associates morality with health linking sickness with part of larger "cultural sets... self, salvation, destiny, providence, reward, punishment".¹¹⁷ In this thesis, though, my principal focus is on those more tangible elements that impacted on the health of ordinary people. There are various ways of exploring health issues in everyday life. Milton Lewis describes a "tripartite system" of health care - the poor treated in public hospitals sustained by charity and the state, the "well-to-do" privately in their own homes, and "the respectable working class and provident lower middle classes" accessing private care through their membership of friendly societies.¹¹⁸ But Lewis does not mention other options. For instance people consulted chemists whose treatments were often less expensive and more accessible and, as suggested by Lynette Finch, Jennifer Hagger, Judith Rafferty and Porter,¹¹⁹ proprietary medicines were also highly favoured. Above all home remedies were often the most trusted and in the first instance at least, the most called upon by people to treat ailments. It is difficult to determine

¹¹³ G Grimshaw 'In pursuit of true Anglican Womanhood in Victoria, 1880-1914' in *Women's History Review* 2:3 (1993): 336. Also see A Shiel *Fundraising Flirtation and Fancy Work: Charity Bazaars in Nineteenth Century Australia* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing House 2012).

¹¹⁴ A O'Brien 'Religion' in McIntyre and Bashford *Cambridge History of Australia*, 430, 435. See also O'Brien *God's Willing Workers* and A O'Brien 'Faith, Fetes and Domesticity in Australia' *Women's History Review* 15:5 (2006): 719-735.

¹¹⁵ W Phillips *Defending a 'Christian Country' Churchman and Society in New South Wales in the 1880s and After* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press 1981), 25. Also see W Phillips 'Religious Profession and Practice in New South Wales 1850-1901 The Statistical Evidence' *Australian Historical Studies* XV (1972) and W Phillips 'The Social Composition of the Religious Denominations in Late 19th Century Australia' in *Church Heritage* 4 no 2 (1985).

¹¹⁶ R Ely *Unto God and Caesar Religious Issues in the Emerging Commonwealth 1891-1906* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 1976) 6.

¹¹⁷ R Porter 'The Patient's View: Doing Medical History from below' *Theory and Society* 14, no 2 (March 1985): 193.

¹¹⁸ M J Lewis 'Introduction' in J H L Cumpston *Health and Disease in Australia A History* (Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service 1989): 7.

¹¹⁹ L Finch 'Soothing Syrups and Teething Powders: Regulating Proprietary Drugs in Australia 1860-1910' in *Medical History* (1999); J Hagger *Australian Colonial Medicine* (Adelaide: Rigby Limited 1979); J Rafferty 'Keeping Healthy in Nineteenth-Century Australia' in *Health and History* 1 no 4 (December 1999) and Porter 'The Patient's View'.

how effective domestic therapy was in treating serious and infectious diseases such as diphtheria which was a significant cause of death, particularly among children. Lewis, John Cumpston, Janet McCalman and Rebecca Kippen discuss the sources of morbidity and mortality in the colonial population and the “epidemic periodicity” that occurred in the latter part of the nineteenth century.¹²⁰ According to Rafferty outbreaks of influenza, diphtheria and typhoid had a severe impact in “small, comparatively isolated communities with little immunity [and] could cause widespread panic, empty schools, devastate families, and cause sudden regional upswings in infant and child mortality rates”.¹²¹ Women were at the vanguard in safeguarding community health, whether their own families or as nurses in homes or hospitals. Wendy Madsen examines the linkage between the ideals of womanhood and nursing by Florence Nightingale while Susan Crea notes the appeal of nursing as an occupation in the context of the “Cult of New Womanhood”.¹²² There were broader responsibilities. Colonial and municipal governments were often at the forefront, particularly during epidemics. Above all individuals and communities were expected to be accountable for their own well-being particularly in the case of personal and communal hygiene. In this context Deborah Lupton argues that, aside from the practical benefits of removing rubbish, eliminating sources of bad odours and promoting cleanliness, these actions “ensured social order and bolstered hegemonic moral values”.¹²³ Hence through these collective endeavours *gemeinschaft* is visible and reinforced in local communities.

Several researchers have examined the cultural milieu of Australians in the 1890s. Richard Waterhouse describes the gamut of experiences and events that constitute what he considers as “webs of significance” in accord with Geertz’s description of culture noted earlier.¹²⁴ These include a host of events such as sport, theatre, concerts and balls while agricultural shows, hunting and ploughing matches combined work and pleasure. Some of these activities are

¹²⁰ M J Lewis *The People’s Health Public Health in Australia 1788-1950* (Portsmouth: Greenwood Publishing Group 2000); Cumpston *Health and Disease*; J McCalman and R Kippen ‘Population and Health’ in Bashford and McIntyre *Cambridge History of Australia*.

¹²¹ Rafferty ‘Keeping Healthy’, 274-297.

¹²² S Crea ‘Changing Ideals of Womanhood during the Nineteenth-Century Woman Movement’ *General Studies Writing Faculty Publications Paper 1* (2005): 194; W Madsen ‘The age of transition: nursing and caring in the nineteenth century’ *Journal of Australian Studies* (January 2003): 43. The concept of the “Cult of True Womanhood” was devised by Barbara Welter who defined its attributes as one “by which a woman judged her-self and was judged by her husband, her neighbors and society could be divided into four cardinal virtues-piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity. Put them all together and they spelled mother, daughter, sister, wife - woman. Without them, no matter whether there was fame, achievement or wealth, all was ashes. With them she was promised happiness and power.” Barbara Welter ‘The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860’ *American Quarterly* 18 no 2 pt 1 (1966): 152.

¹²³ D Lupton *The Imperative of Health: Public Health and the Regulated Body* (London: Sage Publications 1995) 34.

¹²⁴ R Waterhouse *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure A History of Australian Popular Culture since 1788* (South Melbourne: Longman Australia Limited 1995); Geertz ‘Thick Description’.

examined in general histories and many are the subject of specialist study. Stuart Macintyre's view is that the specialists emphasise "broader historical themes" such as "social hierarchy...moral purpose...social discipline" while general practitioners tend to focus on "those aspects that are somehow emblematic of a distinctive way of life".¹²⁵ Consistent with the former, sport historian Brian Stoddart addresses characteristics of sport he believed "raised, formed and preserved social expectations, attitudes, behaviours and codes".¹²⁶

Waterhouse, Bellanta, Colin Tatz, John O'Hara and David Kirk examine several sports that were popular at the time including horse racing, pedestrianism, football, tennis and cricket.¹²⁷

Community bonding, parochialism, social inclusion and exclusion are evident in these analyses such as in Katz's description of Aboriginal participation in foot racing or Kirk's premise that working class men were more likely to take part in "spontaneous...or ad hoc" games than organised competitions.¹²⁸ Similarly many of these themes are apparent in other forms of recreation including parades and banding both of which fostered a sense of identity and communal belonging.¹²⁹

Schools of Art also had an important place in the cultural life of communities, providing venues for concerts, meetings, valedictories and the like. They were, in the words of Philip Candy, "about as ubiquitous as country pubs, local churches and one-teacher schools".¹³⁰ Davison and Michael Canon discuss their role providing intellectual stimulation for pre-dominantly middle

¹²⁵ S Macintyre 'Sport and Past Australasian Culture' in J Mangan and J Nauright J (eds) *Sport in Australian Society Past and Present* (Alsington: Frank Cass Publishers Digital printing 2000): 4, 5, 7.

¹²⁶ B Stoddart 'The Hidden Influence of Sport' in V Burgmann and J Lee (eds) *Constructing a Culture A People's History of Australia since 1788* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble/Penguin Books 1988):, 135.

¹²⁷ R Waterhouse *Private Pleasure*; R Waterhouse *The Vision Splendid A Social and Cultural History of Rural Australia* (Fremantle: Curtin University Books 2005); Bellanta 'Re-thinking the 1890s'; J O'Hara 'The Jockey Club and the Town in Colonial Australia' in *Journal of Gambling Studies* 7(3) (Fall 1991); C Tatz 'Aborigines in Sport' *The Australian Society For Sports History* 3 (1987); D Kirk 'Gender associations: sport, state schools and Australian culture' *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17:2 (2000); W Peake 'The significance of Unregistered Proprietary Pony Racing in the Social History of Sydney Racing' in *Sporting Traditions* 20 no 2 (May 2004).

¹²⁸ Kirk 'Gender associations', 12.

¹²⁹ On bands see J Whiteoak "'Pity the Bandless Towns": Brass Banding in Australian Rural Communities Before World War Two' *Rural Society*, vol 13, no 3, 2003; D Bythell 'The Brass Band in the Antipodes' in T Herbert (ed) *The British Brass Band and Musical and Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002) 230, and on parades see A Brown-May and M Graham 'Better than a play: Street processions, civic order and the rhetoric of landscape' *Journal of Australian Studies* 30:89 (2006): 3-13.

¹³⁰ P Candy "'The Light of Heaven Itself" The Contribution of the Institutes to Australia's Cultural History' in P Candy and J Laurent (eds) *Pioneering Culture Mechanics Institutes and Schools of Art in Australia* (Adelaide: Auslib Press 1994).

class men but the institutions also made reading material, particularly fiction, available to the general public.¹³¹

Hotels, as well as Schools of Art, were venues for community events. Clare Wright contends they were a “hub of community life [and] purveyed spaces for a broad range of leisure and civic pursuits, ballrooms, dance halls, billiards and bagatelle rooms, even theatres, hair salons and bath houses”.¹³² Hotels were also respectable places of work for women as discussed by Wright, Glenda Strachan and Lindy Henderson.¹³³ Wright concludes, for example, that most of the “nuts and bolts of pub-keeping...were essentially women’s work” but she also notes that running a hotel “facilitated economic independence, bolstered political identity and elevated their personal status”.¹³⁴ Not all hotels were considered respectable. Many attracted ‘disreputable’ people such as labourers and navvies come to town to spend their pay on alcohol, dancing and cards. This “‘corrupting’ environment of working class pub-culture”, Garton asserts, provided temperance activists with even greater motivation in their campaign for prohibition. Gambling was another popular, if slightly seedy, pastime popular with the working classes. But in O’Hara’s view it had wider appeal. People of all classes, he claims, gambled on horse racing and other sports while tattersalls and totalisers also had widespread appeal.¹³⁵ Sweepstakes could be played within the privacy of one’s own home which is where most ordinary people spent their leisure hours. Recreation within people’s homes and shared between family, friends or workmates not only strengthened interpersonal relationships but provided the foundation for a broader *gemeinschaft* community.

The regional mosaic of the district provides the context for this thematic analysis. As with most of rural NSW, the Central West and its communities as they were in the early 1890s, had been shaped by the triumvirate of gold discoveries, land settlement and railway construction. Most histories of NSW and the Australian colonies address these issues in varying levels of detail. Dennis Jeans, for example, provides a neat summary and Kingston provides an overview in her narrative history of the colony and she places events within her thematically organised

¹³¹ M Cannon *Life in the Country Australia in the Victorian Age: 2* (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson 1975) 253; G Davison ‘Mechanics Institutes’ in Davison et al *Companion History of Australian History*:422.

¹³² C Wright, *Beyond the Ladies Lounge Australia’s Female Publicans* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 2003) 109.

¹³³ G Strachan and L Henderson ‘Assumed but rarely documented: women’s entrepreneurial activities in late nineteenth century Australia’ in J Shields and N Balnave (eds.) *Presented at The Past is Before Us: The Ninth National Labour History Conference Sydney 2005*.

¹³⁴ C Wright ‘Of public houses and private lives female hotel keepers as domestic entrepreneurs’ *Australian Historical Studies* 32:116 (2001): 62, 63.

¹³⁵ J O’Hara *A Mug’s Game A History of Gaming and Betting in Australia* (Kensington: New South Wales University Press 1988) 91.

national history. Davison et al also 'salt-and-pepper' these themes as they affected life in the colonies in 1888.¹³⁶

Gold rushes in the Australian colonies, particularly those in Victoria and NSW, loom large in many accounts of colonial history.¹³⁷ Academic studies document the influx of gold-seekers, the establishment of new towns, the growth of others, and the continuing importance of gold to the colony's economy with mini rushes and reef mining, particularly by entrepreneurs and consortiums. Unsurprisingly the precious metal is a theme in many local histories given its importance in the foundation and growth of many communities.¹³⁸ Land settlement is equally central to many of these histories. As argued by David Goldman, "the settler invasion" which followed the gold discoveries was "even more intense than the earlier pastoral invasion".¹³⁹ But the path was not always smooth. Notwithstanding official visions of creating a yeomanry class, would-be agriculturalists were denied land which was held in freehold and leasehold by squatters. Several studies examine the efforts of successive governments to free up land, of squatters to defend their holdings and of settlers to secure farms. There are divergent views on the objectives and effectiveness of the various land acts -particularly the *Robertson Land Acts*, introduced to deal with these competing interests, but there is consensus that the outcome for 'yeoman' farmers was, at best, mixed.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ D N Jeans *An Historical Geography of New South Wales to 1901* (Sydney: Reed Education 1972); B Kingston *The Oxford History of Australia Glad, Confident Morning 1860-1900* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1988); B Kingston *History of New South Wales* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 2006); Davison (et al) *Australians 1888*, See also S Macintyre *A Concise History of Australia* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 2004); R Linn *Battling the Land 200 Years of Rural Australia* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin 1999), Cannon *Life in the Country*.

¹³⁷ In addition to the above, others include S Lawrence 'Poor Man's Diggings: Subsistence Mining in the Nineteenth Century' *Australian Historical Archaeology* 13 (1995); J W McCarty 'Gold rushes' in G Davison (et al) *Companion History of Australian History*; B McGowan *Dust and Dreams A regional history of mining and community in south east New South Wales 1850-1915* (PhD Thesis Australian National University 2001); P Pickering "'The Finger of Gold" Gold's Impact on New South Wales' in J McCalman, A Cook and A Reeves *Gold Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press 2001); G Blayney *The Rush that never ended* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 1978) and G Serle *The Rush to be Rich A History of the Colony of Victoria* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1971).

¹³⁸ K Cook and D Garvey *The Glint of Gold A History and Tourist Guide of the Gold Fields of New South Wales* (Pymble: Glenlin Investments 1999) is a particularly useful local study.

¹³⁹ D Goodman 'The gold rushes of the 1850s' in Bashford and Macintyre *Cambridge History of Australia*.

¹⁴⁰ Studies on closer settlement include C J King *An Outline of Closer Settlement in New South Wales Part 1 The Sequence of the Land Laws 1788-1956* (Sydney: Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics, N.S.W. Dept. of Agriculture 1957); S Roberts *History of Australian Land Settlement* (South Melbourne: McMillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd 1958); D W A Baker 'The Origins of Robertson's Land Acts' *Historical Studies: Australia & New Zealand* 2008); B Gammage 'Who gained, and who was meant to gain, from land selection in New South Wales' *Australian Historical Studies* 24 (1990): 104; C Karr 'Mythology vs. Reality: The Success of Free Selection in New South Wales' *Journal of the Royal*

Many of the histories already mentioned also consider the impact of railway construction which either accompanied or facilitated closer settlement. The economic benefit was such that there was often fierce competition between communities for railway lines to pass through townships or settlements. According to Gunn the competing interests of government, business, agriculture, mining and pastoralism could be hard to reconcile but the interdependency between townsfolk and farmers was usually clear-cut.¹⁴¹ Railways facilitated economic, social and cultural ties between both large and small towns and their rural hinterlands. Towns located on railways often grew beyond immediate and basic service provision with the establishment of manufacturing and large businesses.

Buxton's analysis of town growth in the Riverina demonstrates that various factors, not just railways, contributed to the progress or demise of individual towns. Changed land use patterns, in particular, were important, as is discussed by Waterson.¹⁴² Perhaps unexpectedly most people in rural NSW lived in towns and villages. Australian colonies were among the most urbanised places in the world and according to Davison, a sizable portion of the population lived in non-metropolitan urban communities with a significant number of these with fewer than 500 inhabitants.¹⁴³ The hierarchy of towns in terms of population reflected their importance to a region's economy. Also, in the view of Jeans and others,¹⁴⁴ the size of the country towns and villages dictated the type and extent of the services and businesses and hence the livelihoods of their inhabitants. As discussed, the regional mosaic of the Central West in the early 1890s was moulded by historical dynamics of gold, land and railways but these factors continued to influence the vagaries of everyday life. Interdependencies and interrelationships between towns and their rural hinterlands were dictated by the intensification of settlement, gold mining and the railways. So too did *gemeinschaft* which fostered the interaction of communities and the cohesiveness of society.

This synopsis of the central issues that impacted on colonial society at the outset of the 1890s provides the context for my examination of everyday life in the Central West. But it is ordinary people who are central to this study and their stories illuminate these broader themes. Finding these individuals can be problematic, one of difficulties being the paucity of sources. Yet as

Australian Historical Society 60 (1974); Buxton *The Riverina*, Gammage *Narrandera Shire*, Hancock *Discovering Monaro*. The extent of settlement is shown in Map 5.

¹⁴¹ J Gunn *Along Parallel Lines. A History of the Railways of New South Wales 1850-1896* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1989).

¹⁴² Buxton *The Riverina*, 214-216, Waterson *Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper*.

¹⁴³ G Davison 'Country Life The Rise and Decline of An Australian Ideal' in Davison G (et al) *Struggle Country: The Rural Ideal in Twentieth Century Australia* (Monash University ePress October 2005) 0.12.

¹⁴⁴ See also Canon *Life in the Country*; Davison (et al) *Australians 1888*; Buxton *The Riverina*; Davison 'Country Life' and M Keneley 'The Dying Town Syndrome A Survey of Urban Development in the Western District of Victoria 1890-1930' in Davison and Brodie *Struggle Country*.

Charles Tilly observes, “if ordinary people left few narratives of their lives, innumerable documents of great diversity bore traces of those lives...and with care and expertise [can be fitted] together into skeletal histories of a great many lives”.¹⁴⁵ I have found individuals in a host of official documents including enquires into proposed railways, questions in Parliament, census collector books, gaol description books, government gazettes, annual reports of government agencies and school archives. On-line searchable indexes including Birth, Deaths and Marriages, Bankruptcy, Schools, Teachers and Police records have also been invaluable.

Life writing affords one of the most insightful ways of viewing the past. Unfortunately there is no way of knowing how many people in the district kept diaries during the period under study but fortunately at least three of these are publicly available. In this thesis the chronicles of Peter Rheinberger, Louisa Walsh and Thomas O’Shaunnessy not only portray how they and their families and friends went about their daily lives, they afford the opportunity to contextualise the everyday with the broader issues of the day. There are two useful contemporary biographical sources. W Frederic Morrison’s *Aldine Centennial History of New South Wales*, which includes around 350 biographies of “prominent inhabitants” in the district and *Australian Men of Mark*, a biographical commemorative work which contains “hundreds of pocket biographies” or “small lives” of citizens living in the Central West in 1889. The individuals, although self-selected, whose biographies are included in these publications are often viewed as influential in their community, generally in the villages and townships but also in the surrounding rural areas. The details of these mostly men’s lives include occupations, place of birth, migration date, political and religious affiliations, marital status, educational background and membership of community organisations and institutions. The piecing together of this information together with material from other sources such as obituaries has been helpful. The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* which includes biographies of over 10,000 individuals has been of some assistance although few people in this thesis appear in its volumes.

The 1891 Census, statistical registers and various directories, almanacs and handbooks are important not just in the data they contain but also in identifying individuals. For example some collectors’ books for the 1891 census not only record the number of people in a dwelling but also the head of the household. Other contemporary works that have been useful include a series of pamphlets prepared for the Chicago Exposition. They provide a comprehensive compendium of statistical data, a geographical encyclopaedia, descriptions of the history,

¹⁴⁵ C Tilly ‘Retrieving European Lives’ in O Zunz, ed *Reliving the Past. The Worlds of Social History* (Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Press 1985) 32.

resources, drama and music; trade and commerce; social, industrial political and co-operative associations and one describing *The Aborigines of New South Wales*. The largest pamphlet is a somewhat rambling essay, *Australia and America 1892 A Contrast* authored by Edward Dowling. Although Dowling repeats some of the content contained in the other pamphlets, his work provides some insight into the various social issues of the day.¹⁴⁶

Digital technology including the online indexes mentioned above for example, has transformed historical research in recent years and this thesis is no exception. Family histories contained in genealogical websites such as *Ancestry* can impart information not easily found elsewhere or at all. Similar kinds of material can be accessed from the web sites of local historical societies. Journal articles are made more accessible through digital libraries such as JSTOR. The HaithiTrust Digital Library publishes full texts of some, often obscure, books, James Cameron's *Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church* published in 1904, being one. Archive Digital Books Australasia is yet another medium which holds over 2,000 publications including a set of *New South Wales Police Gazettes* from 1862 to 1900, which are available on a variety of media.¹⁴⁷

Newspapers were the most important source for my research and I would not have been able to undertake this thesis if they had not been available digitally. In addition to the twenty-seven-single edition local newspapers included in the Chicago collection available on microfilm, I have perused editions of the *Cowra Free Press* and the *Parkes and Forbes Gazette* and others at the National Library or State Library of NSW. Unquestionably, though, Trove has been indispensable.¹⁴⁸ In being able to access multiple editions of local, other regional and metropolitan newspapers online, particularly with the aid of a search function, I have been able to retrieve the lives of many individuals who would otherwise have gone unnoticed and hence present a comprehensive account of ordinary life in broader historical themes.

¹⁴⁶ F C Brewer *The Drama and Music of New South Wales*, E Dowling *Australia and America in 1892 A Contrast*, J Fraser *The Aborigines of New South Wales*, W A Hanson *Geographical Encyclopaedia of New South Wales*, E W O'Sullivan *Social, Industrial, Political and Cooperative Associations etc of New South Wales Australia*, E Pulsford *The Rise, Progress and Present Position of Trade and Commerce in New South Wales*, G Tregarthen *The Progress and Resources of New South Wales* and *New South Wales – History and Resources* compiled by the editor of the Year Book of Australia. All published by the Authority of the New South Wales Commissioners for the World Columbian Exposition Chicago 1892/1893. See *Australian Dictionary* for biography of Edward Dowling.

¹⁴⁷ See <https://about.jstor.org/>, <https://www.hathitrust.org/> and <http://www.archivedigitalbooks.com.au/>

¹⁴⁸ Trove is a website hosted by the National Library of Australia in collaboration with multiple institutions across Australia in which over 550,000,000 “books, images, historic newspapers, maps, music, archives and more” are accessible See <https://trove.nla.gov.au/?q=>

In the first bulletin of *Australia 1888* Ken Inglis contemplated what “careful decisions” would need to be made by contributing authors on “how to relate the public events that happened to happen in that year to the texture of everyday life.”¹⁴⁹ I had a similar dilemma in determining how to link the broader historical themes to ordinary lives in the Central West. I adopted a conventional approach of organising chapters under the headings of those major themes. In this way, I present a cohesive study which addresses concerns about the disjointedness of the slice approach. The thesis is presented in two volumes. Volume one comprises the main body of the thesis and the second volume includes appendices and maps.

Given the importance of newspapers as a source for this thesis the first chapter deals with the place of newspapers in colonial society. All the issues canvassed in this thesis appear in the local newspapers. As Rod Kirkpatrick notes newspapers were not only “an organic part of society” they “were significant forces in achieving social cohesion and a distinctive ‘countrymindedness’”.¹⁵⁰ Local newspapers, metropolitan dailies and weeklies provide a window through which ordinary people and the ebb and flow of daily life in the Central West during the study period are laid bare.

The second chapter establishes the overall context of the thesis- the regional mosaic. I describe those places that defined the district- the rural areas, mines, village settlements and towns – and analyse those issues which impacted on where and how people lived and worked. The chapter introduces individuals who loomed large in these communities. In chapter three the primary focus is on the impact on individuals and local businesses of deteriorating economic conditions amid suggestions that the district was less exposed than other parts of the colony. In chapter four, I provide the setting for the political environment in the district and examine the role and engagement of people in the political process. This chapter also addresses the relationship between capital and labour at a local level in the aftermath of the industrial disruption in 1890.

My discussion on law and order in chapter five illustrates the underlying societal anxieties providing insight into community attitudes and values. I also examine the plight of women caught up in poverty and moral outrage. A discussion on larrikinism extends in the next chapter which examines the place of education in the district. The theme of the Central West as a morally upright, cohesive and stable society is continued in this chapter. The role of state and church, principally the Catholic Church, in maintaining societal values is discussed as are

¹⁴⁹ K S Inglis ‘How to write about 1888?’ in G Davison, J W McCarty and J Powel (convenors) *Australia 1888 A journal for the study of Australian history centred on the year 1888* (February 1979).

¹⁵⁰ R Kirkpatrick ‘The House of Unelected Representatives Provincial Press 1825-1900’ in A Curthoys and J Schultz *Journalism Print Politics and Popular Culture* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press 1999) 35.

the inherent tensions between the two and the pressures brought to bear on teachers and parents. Morality and social order are also central themes in chapter seven in which I examine the place of religion in the community.

Chapter eight transitions from the spiritual to the physical with an examination of the health of the community. The interplay of local and colonial officials, doctors, patients and other individuals during epidemics is discussed. I demonstrate the frailties and pathos evident in the community during these difficult times. The chapter also explores the power plays and prejudice apparent in hospitals, involving doctors, board members, clergy, matrons and nurses. Beyond the hospital, I consider the role of doctors, chemists and 'quacks' in the provision of health care and conclude with a discussion of what most people did when they got sick.

In the final chapter I explore how people spent their leisure time including private and personal recreations such as, visiting and playing music and a host of public entertainments including sport, agricultural shows, Sunday school picnics, parades, gambling and drinking. I demonstrate the place of these and other activities in the social fabric of communities through the enhancement of a sense of belonging and shielding people from the evils of dissipation and idleness.

This thesis is a history of ordinary people and their everyday lives. In the succeeding pages I retrieve the lives of hundreds of individuals, many of whom had been "lost within historical processes or in anonymous crowds".¹⁵¹ To borrow E P Thompson's well-known words, many have hitherto been confined to the "enormous condescension of posterity".¹⁵² Their stories illuminate the broader historical themes and address the central argument of the study, specifically whether the accepted understandings of the 1890s were as evident in the Central West as in the colony generally. I focus also on the concept of *gemeinschaft* and how this shaped communities in the district. I have set out to bring academic rigour to my analysis through the congruent methodologies of regional history, history from below and biography. I believe I have eschewed anecdotalism, "romanticizing the past [or] focusing on picturesque detail".¹⁵³ On the contrary, it is in the minutiae of everyday life that ordinary people are found thus providing the framework for the analyses that ensue in the following chapters.

¹⁵¹ Brewer 'Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life', 97

¹⁵² E P Thompson *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books 1966) 12.

¹⁵³ Port 'History From Below', 111.

Chapter 1- Newspapers

Parochial newspapers are arguably the most accessible medium for uncovering the lives of ordinary people and how they went about their everyday lives during the years studied here. Hence it is no surprise that these are the major source for this thesis. A quick perusal of a single edition of one of the 27 newspapers circulating in the Central West at the time reveals the rich texture of everyday life. Individuals, often about who little is known, appear in articles and advertisements providing an impetus for further research. In the 17 January 1891 edition of the *Molong Express*, for example, we learn Cudal chemist Walter Gwennap Way's supplementary use of his own drugs probably hastened his death and that Elizabeth Barnett whose husband Edward, owned the Commercial Hotel at Wellington, died prematurely at the age of 45. The notice of Elizabeth's death appeared in the Molong newspaper because her brother Matthew Williamson was a local farmer at nearby Booney. Thus we are introduced to Walter Way, Elizabeth and Edward Barnett and Matthew Williamson and with other sources can search out greater detail of their lives and what they tell us about the communities in which they lived.¹

The diversity of everyday life is apparent in this same edition through articles and advertisements. The pattern of land settlement in Molong's rural hinterlands is reflected in advertisements for wool, and grain merchants, market information on latest produce prices and carriage rates. Local industries – flour and saw mills and a foundry – and services including solicitors, doctors and undertakers feature prominently in the advertising columns. Public notices alerting the populace of pending municipal elections, stock impounds, sports, community meetings and church services, reflect the minutiae of everyday life. Equally news items including police court reports, a rash of petty burglaries and a poorly attended commons meeting contribute to this mosaic.

A salient feature in this edition is the editorial which censures the people of Molong for their "spirit of indifference". With annual meetings of several civic institutions including the Pastoral and Agricultural Association and hospital due, editor Marion Leathem, urges the population to shake off their "don't care lifelessness" and support the otherwise neglected community organisations for "their own sake [s] and for the credit of the town and district".² The sentiment expressed in the editorial illustrates one of the multiple functions of newspapers in local communities.

¹ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Walter Way, Elizabeth and Edward Barnett and Matthew Williamson.

² *Molong Express* 17 January 1891.

Rod Kirkpatrick describes parochial newspapers as an “an organic part of society”.³ Many, as suggested by newspaper owner and journalist Henry Mortimer Franklyn, “struggle[d] into existence” in the early days of a town’s establishment⁴ while Kirkpatrick states that they were born out of necessity, not just as “commercial ventures” but to foster the interests of the community they served.⁵ In Robin Walker’s view, as townships developed, the newspapers were intent upon the “vigorous promotion of the material and social advancement of their town and district”.⁶ Newspapers had other elemental social, economic and political roles. Perhaps building a sense of community was the most significant of these. Marion Leathem appealed to the residents of Molong to support organisations which existed for communal betterment and self-reliance thus contributing to the cohesiveness of local society.⁷ These characteristics are consistent with the theme of *gemeinschaft* which filters through this study. In the following paragraphs, I explore the nature and content of Central West newspapers, their insight into daily life and their contribution in the maintenance of a strong and homogeneous society.

The first newspaper in the district was the *Bathurst Advocate* (a precursor to the *Bathurst Free Press*) founded in 1848. By 1893, 27 newspapers were in print, the most recent being the *Cowra Guardian* and the *Rylstone Advocate* both of which began publication in 1892. Bathurst had four newspapers (*Bathurst Free Press*, *National Advocate*, *Bathurst Times* and *Bathurst Sentinel*), Mudgee three (*Western Post*, *Mudgee Guardian* and *Mudgee Independent*), Orange two (*Western Advocate* and the *Orange Leader*), Blayney two (*Blayney Argus* and *Blayney Advocate*), Cowra two (*Cowra Free Press* and *Cowra Guardian*), Forbes two (*Parkes and Forbes Gazette* and *Forbes Times*), Parkes two (*Parkes Examiner* and *Parkes Independent*), Grenfell two (*Grenfell Argus* and *Grenfell Vedette*) and Wellington two (*Wellington Times* and *Standard of Freedom*). Molong (*Molong Express*), Carcoar (*Carcoar Chronicle*), Condobolin (*Condobolin Argus*), Lithgow (*Lithgow Mercury*), Peak Hill (*Peak Hill Times*), Gulgong (*The Unionist and Gulgong Advertiser*) and Rylstone (the *Rylstone Advocate*) all had one newspaper.⁸ Some of these publications had what Kirkpatrick describes as “startling small circulations”. Of those for whom statistics are available, the *Condobolin Argus* had only 300 subscribers and the *Grenfell*

³ R Kirkpatrick ‘Advocate or supplicant? Survival in the New South Wales provincial press to 1900’ in *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 3 no 1 (2001): 78.

⁴ H M Franklyn *A Glance at Australian in 1880* (Melbourne The Victorian View Publishing Company 1800) 37, also quoted by M Canon *Life in the Country*, 239.

⁵ Kirkpatrick ‘Advocate or supplicant’, 78.

⁶ R B Walker *The newspaper press in New South Wales 1803-1920* (Sydney: Sydney University Press 1976) 176.

⁷ See Appendix 1 for biography of Marion Leathem.

⁸ *The Cowra Guardian* and the *Rylstone Advocate* were only established in 1892 and thus were not included in the compilation. See Appendix 7 for information on circulation, ownership and editors.

Vedette had 320. The *Bathurst Free Press* and the *Mudgee Independent* had 1,800 subscribers against an overall figure of 1,109 for NSW provincial newspapers.⁹

These publications had a similar imprint in layout and in the form of content. Other than the two Bathurst daily papers, approximately the same number of editions in the district was published on either one or two days. Most newspapers had a minimum of four pages while the *Western Post's* Friday edition usually contained eight pages. Front pages were entirely or substantially given up to advertisements for local businesses or Sydney emporiums such as Hordens, Palings pianos and patent medicines.¹⁰ Hoteliers were among the most prolific advertisers. In some publications, an 'odds and ends' column with one sentence items including witticisms or international and/or local news, either satirical or factual, often appeared on the right column of the front page. On the inside, all had editorial columns and reports from correspondents located in the surrounding towns and villages. Most of the intercolonial items from overseas and the colonies described as being via 'telegram' or 'telegraph', were syndicated, although as Elizabeth Morrison suggests, some "took on the role of *interpreting for the locality* [some] of the news carried in the daily paper".¹¹

A great deal of the content included proceedings of courts, land boards, reports of meetings and/or activities of civic and community organisations, entertainment reviews, stock and mining reports, postal, telegraphic, railway and church information and more advertising particularly of patents. Many published syndicated fiction, farming advice and self-help columns, and often bizarre accounts of international people, places and events. A considerable portion including advertisements, lifestyle articles and prose, was non-specific. This material catered for as wide a readership essential for a newspaper's existence. According to the *Nepean Times*, there were "residents who do not care to read country correspondence, while there are many in the outside settlements who have no sympathy with what takes place at council or hospital meetings or indeed with anything connected with the town". The newspaper also suggested some readers took no interest in anything "except, perhaps, a pugilistic encounter, a dog fight, or some other form of ruffianism".¹² Still newspapers engendered a shared identity. By browsing through the papers readers were reminded, in Sam

⁹ R Kirkpatrick *Country Conscience A History of the NSW Provincial Press 1841-1995* (Canberra City Infinite Harvesting Publishing Pty Ltd 2000) 97.

¹⁰ A reduced size of the front page of the *Mudgee Independent* of 30 July 1892 was entirely taken up by advertisements for the Horden emporium and J C Howard a farm implement maker in Sydney, while the *Mudgee Guardian* in a similar format carried a single advertisement for a local store.

¹¹ E Morrison *Engines of Influence Newspapers of Country Victoria 1840-1890* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press 2005) 271. Morrison's emphasis.

¹² *Nepean Times* 20 November 1897.

Hutchinson's words, "of their participation in communities....and allow[ing] them to communicated shared meanings, fears and ambitions".¹³

The breadth of local issues and how they were reported by newspapers reveals the extraordinary in daily life. The Carcoar murders, the devastating diphtheria epidemics, Bathurst's "absconding town clerk" and the visit of the Governor and Lady Jersey to Mudgee, all of which are discussed in later chapters, were unusual occurrences and newspapers in and outside the district covered these in detail. But it is the everyday items in the newspapers that tell us about ordinary lives. Sport and other entertainments were an intrinsic part of the everyday. Newspapers carried paid advertisements for a host of events including horse races, pedestrianism, friendly society sports and such like, but they also had follow up articles attesting to the success of the occasions. Reports on annual agricultural shows, probably the most all-encompassing community event in country centres, were expansive. In July 1892 the *Grenfell Times* published the catalogue for the town's upcoming show. The show was a conduit for locals as well as people and businesses from outside the area to compete for a large list of prizes which reflected the breadth of business and domestic activity in the areas. In addition to notifying the forthcoming events, the largesse of town businessmen and women supporting the event by offering the prizes was made known. All the hoteliers offered prizes.¹⁴

People and their livelihoods loom large. In Wellington Miss Nellie Jackson offered music tuition and Miss Grey had a draper's shop.¹⁵ Mrs Halesbury at Mudgee offered "Private Rooms for Ladies during Accouchement and Good Attendance"¹⁶ and Miss Sweet conducted Queen's College at Orange. Frustratingly little more is known of these women than what appears in the advertisements but at least there is some indication of the kind of respectable employment available to women. Women such as Forbes resident Agnes Friend whose circumstances bring them before magistrate courts also feature but again there are almost no details on their lives. More information on some women hoteliers such as Honora Maloney is available from obituaries and similar sources, most likely because they were prominent in the business sector.¹⁷

Men obviously filled the pages of newspapers. Businessmen, doctors, aldermen and office holders of community organisations were well known at the time but some of these are not

¹³ S Hutchinson *Settlers, War and Empire in the Press Unsettling news in Australia and Britain 1863-1902* (Palgrave macmillan ebook 2017 <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63775-4>).

¹⁴ Eliza Clear donated £4 4s for the best Tandem Turn-out. See Appendix 1 for biography of Eliza Clear.

¹⁵ *Standard of Freedom* 30 July 1892.

¹⁶ *Western Post* 30 August 1892.

¹⁷ See Appendix 1 for biography of Hanora Maloney.

readily identifiable in other sources. Newspaper articles provide a starting point in searching out particulars of their lives. This is the case with some people such as Thomas McCabe, an employee of Wigglesworth's store in Forbes, James Appleby, Bathurst railway worker and bandsman and, William Lenehan Blayney, Council Clerk and convicted embezzler.¹⁸ These are people about who little is known. Through the medium of local newspapers their lives can be revealed and can contribute to an understanding of the nature of society in the Central West at the time.

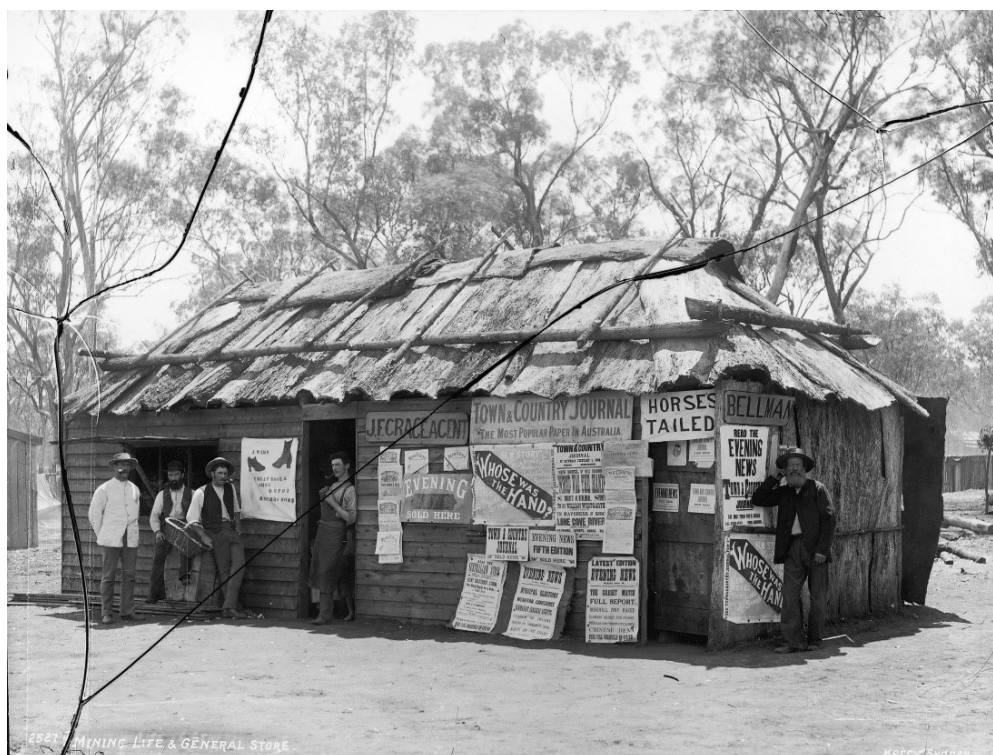


Illustration 6: J Winns Shoe Store and J F Grace's Newsagent Caswell Street Peak Hill c.1890

Newspapers also promoted the interests of their districts to the outside world. Stephen Tanner, Shawn Burns and Marcus O'Donnell argue that localism helps “to explain the role of newspapers in linking [groups of people] and then promoting and representing the rights and interests” of particular communities, brought together because of where they live or because of their dependence on common industries for their “economic wealth”.¹⁹ But with the proliferation of newspapers in the district, shared economic interests did not always overcome more narrow parochial issues. When the *Western Advocate* argued that the proposed School of Mines should be located in Orange rather than the nearby mining village of Lucknow, a

¹⁸ See Appendix 1 for biographies of James Appleby and William Lenehan.

¹⁹ S Tanner, S Burns and M O'Donnell 'The role of special edition editorials in forging and maintaining links between newspapers and the communities they serve' *Rural Society* 21:2 (2012): 148.

correspondent to the *Orange Leader* described the *Advocate's* writer as a “scathing ... egotistical ... [and] jaundiced detractor”.²⁰ The *Mudgee Guardian* accused the Public Works Department of “playing into the hands of the Bathurst builders” when local builders were purportedly prevented from tendering for repairs to the Round Swamp and Hill End schools.²¹ And, the newly founded *Rylstone Advocate* “open[ed] the vial of its wrath and pour[ed] its venom” at the *Katoomba Times* when the latter scoffed at residents of the “one horse place” (Rylstone) for calling for the dissolution of parliament.²² The lingering resentment between Forbes and Parkes over the Molong to Parkes railway occasionally flared in their local newspapers with opposing stances on matters as minor as a church tea and entertainment.²³ Even so according to Robin Walker, by the end of the nineteenth century the parochial role of newspapers in promoting the “narrow allegiances” and interests of one town over another had diminished, replaced by “a general feeling of resentment of the country against the metropolis”.²⁴ Certainly, the *National Advocate* persistently railed against the “fungus of centralisation”.²⁵



ILLUSTRATION 7: HECTOR LAMOND

²⁰ *Orange Leader* 8 August 1892.

²¹ *Mudgee Guardian* 12 August 1892.

²² *Katoomba Times* 24 March 1893.

²³ The *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* and the *Forbes Times* (through the medium of the minister William Roberts) exchanged barbs over the suitability of a particular song “The little Nipper” performed at Church of England tea meeting, the *Gazette* arguing that it was more suitable for a ‘smoke night’. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 30 May and 13 June 1893.

²⁴ Walker *The newspaper press*, 240.

²⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 2 March 1892, *National Advocate* 9 August 1893, 4 March 1892 and 23 February 1891.

By 1891 most of the local newspapers had become more pluralistic. Fourteen of the seventeen editorials in the Chicago collection dealt with colonial rather than local issues, particularly politics.²⁶ All newspapers in the district considered it their business to be involved in politics. Some owners and editors, James Torpy and Henry Newman, were members of parliament while others such as Hector Lamond and Michael O'Halloran had political ambitions.²⁷ Several publications declared their principles and allegiances on the front page or headlined with editorials. The *Carcoar Chronicle*, for example, advertised as the "Chief Exponent of Democracy in the Carcoar Electorate. It acknowledges no leaders and is bound to no party" while the *Orange Leader* devoted almost two columns asserting its independence, support for free trade, popularity and quality.²⁸ Substance often belied ideals with rivalry between editors and proprietors in towns where there were two or more papers. The fiscal issue was often forefront in their squabbles with one favouring free trade and the other protection but at times this was a secondary concern. In Bathurst, the *National Advocate* and the *Bathurst Sentinel* were persistent and vitriolic critics of the conservative *Bathurst Free Press* and the *Bathurst Times* while the latter two could be as equally obdurate.

As suggested by Kirkpatrick and Morrison, the political content in the newspapers intensified during parliamentary elections.²⁹ Advertisements, requisitions, comprehensive reporting on candidate meetings and of course editorials swamped many publications. Few subscribed to the *Molong Express'* approach in covering the 1891 election. It declared that it would show "equal favour to the candidates and had confidence the electors were fully competent to form their own opinion ... [and that] it should be the aim of every straightforward journalist to avoid fermenting rash and hasty party spirit, but rather to promote as far a possible calm mature, and deliberate judgment".³⁰ The *National Advocate* adopted a different approach ahead of the 1892 by-election in the East Macquarie electorate. It urged "miners of East Macquarie, professional men and tradesmen do your duty...canvas your friends...Mothers of young families to persuade your husbands to protect the rights of your children and vote for the protectionist candidate John Boyd".³¹ The role of newspapers in colonial politics was not limited to the lead up to elections and the results of the polls. Meetings of the LEL, freetrade and protectionist organisations and other such interest groups were

²⁶ These included the colony's finances, protection/free trade, the Broken Hill strike and the depression. Local concerns covered included anti-social behaviour of local boys, the local show and the fire brigade.

²⁷ See Appendix 1 for biographies of James Torpy, Henry Newman, Michael O'Halloran and Hector Lamond.

²⁸ *Carcoar Chronicle* 26 August 1892.

²⁹ Morrison *Engines of Influence*; Kirkpatrick 'The House of Unelected Representatives'.

³⁰ *Molong Express* 27 June 1891.

³¹ *National Advocate* 9 August 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Boyd snr and jnr.

The Orange Leader.

Vol. 2. No. 106

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1892.

Price Three Pence

THE ORANGE LEADER.

The Livest Paper on the Western Line.

THE ORANGE LEADER

CIRCULATES IN

ORANGE.	MILLTHORPE.
BATHURST.	FOREST REEFS
BLAYNEY.	SPRING HILL.
MOLONG.	CUDAL.
WELLINGTON.	CARCOAR.
DUBBO.	CARGO.
STUART TOWN.	GARRA.
LUCKNOW.	CUMNOCK.

And all over the WESTERN DISTRICT.

THE ORANGE LEADER has the widest circulation outside of the district whence it takes its name of any provincial paper in the colony.

THE ORANGE LEADER is the most often quoted provincial paper in Australia. Its crisp and original paragraphs are reprinted in newspapers all over the continent.

THE ORANGE LEADER studies its advertisers by printing *first-class readable matter on every page*; this gives advertisers a chance of having their advertisements read by the public.

THE ORANGE LEADER is a staunch and unflinching champion of absolutely free and unrestricted commerce.

THE ORANGE LEADER courts no man's favor and fears no man's frown.

THE ORANGE LEADER truckles to no party and to no individual. It is run by no clique, and dominated by no party.

THE ORANGE LEADER speaks the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

THE ORANGE LEADER has for its metropolitan correspondent the ablest paragraph writer south of the line.

THE ORANGE LEADER was established in the *cause of freedom*, and will fight for freedom to the triumphant end.

THE ORANGE LEADER has doubled its circulation within the last six months.

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Illustration 8: Orange Leader Banner

routinely reported. Readers were informed of the movement and activities of local members and visiting politicians throughout the electorates and probably the most absorbing was the perpetual feud between the *Bathurst Free Press* and MLA Paddy Crick.³² Political partisanship

³² See Appendix 1 for biography of Paddy Crick.

was also evident in reporting clashes between labour and capital, farmer and pastoralists organisations and most commonly, aldermen in the municipal councils.

Most of the newspapers bore the imprint of their editors and proprietors. Patrick Ryan, manager of the *National Advocate*, was a rabble-rouser and a thorn in the side of many conservatives in Bathurst. Michael O'Halloran the founder of the *Wellington Times and Australian Liberator* "which advocated the cause of the Workers" was closely involved in the labour movement and a "great Irishman". In Orange, protectionist James Torpy, owned the *Western Advocate* while freetrader Henry Newman, had a share in the ownership of the *Orange Leader*.³³ Kirkpatrick suggests that "nineteenth-century colonial journalists did not belong to the upper echelons of society" and quotes Henry Mayer's description of many not being highly educated, as lacking in self-respect and "cosmopolitan experience". Mayer also attributes the low esteem in which many editors were held was partially due to their "constant and mutual insults public and private".³⁴ Certainly, the behaviour of some owners and editors was, at times, reprehensible. The Ryan and *Bathurst Times* libel trial, for example, was as tasteless as Ryan's erratic and importune allegations.³⁵



Illustration 9: Patrick V Ryan and John C Ryall

³³ In an aside on the School of the Mines issue, the *Orange Leader* commented "Mr Torpy says if a School of Mines is established in this district it will be in Orange. Why, certainly. Let us all study geology and then we'll all know a fossil when we see one" *Orange Leader* 8 August 1892.

³⁴ H Mayer *The Press in Australia* 1964 quoted by Kirkpatrick 'Advocate or supplicant', 81.

³⁵ Ryan sued Alfred John Dowse and George Halkerston McDougal, owners of the *Bathurst Times* for defamation after the newspaper implied that Ryan, when he was mayor, had given preferential treatment to Catholics in hiring labourers. Follow up articles in both newspapers were also part of the case. The presiding judge, Sir George Innes, "had no hesitation in saying" that "the language which had been used [by newspapers] was a disgrace to journalism. They had both descended to exceedingly low, dirty and indecent things". The jury found in favour of Ryan on two of the five counts and he was awarded one farthing on each. *Bathurst Free Press* 17 and 19 October 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Patrick Ryan, Herbert MacDougal and Alfred Dowse.

Notwithstanding this and other incidents, most editors and owners were seen as respectable citizens in the town. There were mayors and aldermen including Thomas Crowe and John C Ryall, magistrate William Brooke and members of various community and civic organisations including James Ryan, Sydney S Smith, Hugh Kear, Dennis Madden and Robert Porter. Nelson Paget Whitelocke and William Goodge were prolific writers of poetry and prose. Women in the newspaper business were rare and the Central West was no different. Marion Leathem, owner and editor of the *Molong Express*, was the only female proprietor in the district.³⁶

Newspapers printed in the Central West between 1891 and 1893 were respectable publications. As could be expected the content could be partisan, sensationalist, derisive, distasteful and spiteful. Although some editors challenged the status quo, they did not publish any material which was likely to undermine social order. The extent to which the newspapers were influential in their communities is difficult to judge but they were a valuable source of information. They fostered community spirit and contributed to connectivity between groups of people, sometime with diverse interests. From their pages we gain an insight into the social fabric of society but also grasp the importance of shared values and social order.



Illustration 10: Arrival of newspapers – Peak Hill 1891

³⁶ See Appendix 1 for biographies of John C Ryall, James Ryan, William Brooke, Sydney S Smith, Hugh Kear, Dennis and Henry Madden, Robert Porter, William Goodge and Nelson Paget Whitelocke.

Chapter 2 The Central West – the land and the people

Part 1

In this chapter I focus on the regional mosaic of the Central West between 1891 and 1893. I explore the lives of the people who lived there and review the places and spaces of work. These are the fundamentals of this regional history and by telling the stories of individuals and communities I draw out some of the themes contained in this study. The premise of *gemeinschaft*, for example, is evident in the quest for the yeoman farmer and the sense of community is apparent in the lobbying for railways. Spatial connections between gold miners scattered throughout the district and the economic interdependencies between and within communities shed light on the broader pecuniary concerns of the time. The Central West also had similar and disparate attributes in settlement, social and cultural networks, political affiliations and economic conditions, a pattern not replicated in any other district, making it an ideal subject for a regional study.

Although land settlement, gold discoveries and the spread of railways are almost clichéd subjects in histories of inland colonial NSW, their significance in this region in the latter part of the nineteenth century is palpable. European colonisation of the district began with breaching the barrier of the Great Dividing Range followed by the first white settlers spreading westwards from small clusters around Bathurst.¹ By 1891 approximately 95,000 people most of whom were native born, lived in the district.²

In addition to the geographical and natural environment, early settlement was dictated by the vagaries of successive imperial administrations and colonial governors. Initially squatters occupied large tracts of land beyond the 'nineteen counties' with the tenure of many of these runs later legitimised through leasehold title, while land grants enabled some people such to build up extensive holdings.³ As Coghlan noted in 1893, "some of the finest freehold estates in New South Wales" could be found in parts of the Central West and that this land had

¹ See Appendix 4 for a timeline of relevant milestones for white settlement of the district.

² It is difficult to get the exact number of the population because of the various statistical areas used in the Census and the overlap of these areas. See Appendix 5 for a schedule of the population in counties and see Appendix 6 for a schedule of birth places.

³ The 'nineteen counties', introduced in 1829 as an expansion of the 'limits of location' that had been established by Governor Macquarie in 1826. The latter was simply designated as one "within which white settlers could seek land grants but beyond which they could not". The measure did not contain settlement as squatters spread westward in search of good grazing land. See G Poiner and S Jack 'Introduction: Setting the scene' in G Poiner and S Jack *Limits of Location Creating a Colony* (Sydney University Press University of Sydney Library www.sup.usyd.edu.au 2007): 8.

“remained in the hands of the original grantees or their descendants”.⁴ Considerable land suitable for aspiring yeoman farmers was locked up by these early opportunists and their wealthy successors. The enactment of the land legislation known as the *Robertson Land Acts* in 1861 was an attempt to redress this inequity and provide for closer settlement but the legislation was flawed, not surprisingly, given the need to deal with the conflicting interests of squatters, farmers, capitalists and the government.⁵ The introduction of ‘selection before survey’ intended to facilitate closer settlement was widely abused in some areas.⁶ The efficacy of the Acts across the Central West was mixed but it was effective in some parts of the district. For example, although substantial areas of land around Bathurst had already been alienated, the legislation enabled many selectors to settle in the fertile areas near Orange.⁷ In the drier regions, though, pastoralists seized the most arable lands along the rivers and waterways all but ensuring the failure of closer settlement in those areas.



Illustration 11: “On the land at last”

The inadequacies of the *Robertson Land Acts* did not dampen widely-held aspirations for the establishment of a yeomanry and this was no different in the district during time considered in

⁴ T Coghlan *The Wealth and Progress of New South Wales 1892* (Sydney Charles Potter Government Printer 1893) 264. See Appendix 1 for biographies of the Cox and Suttor families.

⁵ The Acts were *Alienation of Crown Lands Act 1861* and *Occupation of Crown Lands Act 1861*.

⁶ ‘Squatters and selectors alike deployed ‘dummyism’ to acquire more land or to speculate. Under the land legislation it was to obtain a holding using the names of one’s family or even servants and transfer ownership after a time, hence building up a larger property of often the best land and in the process disadvantaging smaller selectors.

⁷ In this area, the legislation facilitated “943 selections between 1862 and 1870...covering an area of some 50,000 acres”. Tierney ‘The Central West’, 192.

this study. In October 1893, for instance, John G Marlin was the subject of a short item which appeared in several of the colony's newspapers. Marlin, an "old resident of Forbes", had taken up a 'special areas' selection and the article describes "what a man can do on six acres".⁸ The farmer transformed an unproductive piece of ground by clearing "seventeen big trees, about 500 stumps and six acres of Chinese thistle" in the space of a few months. In the true spirit of the yeoman settler, he had erected one house and was constructing another. He had planted wheat, fruit trees, vines and a vegetable garden. Marlin also set up an apiary with fifty-eight hives and excavated a water tank.⁹

The purpose of the article, aside from commenting on the industriousness of the farmer, was to criticise the government's policy of holding back land for mining purposes seen as curtailing settlement and impeding the growth of the district.

The admiration for John Marlin was in stark contrast to the indignation expressed at a public meeting in Molong at farmer Joseph Wren's comments on the plight of farmers in the area.¹⁰ In a letter to the editor of the *Bathurst Free Press*, Wren dismissed his detractors and claimed he was describing the difficulties faced by farmers with low prices for their produce, the prohibitive cost of getting it to the Sydney market and the unfair competition from overseas producers.¹¹ But his criticism was seen as a slur on the whole community undermining trust and confidence, hence prompting the public condemnation.

Regardless of the outrage of some Molong residents, the fortunes of settlers throughout the colony fluctuated during this time because of the vagaries of the weather, fiscal and land issues, low prices, the unfairness of railway freight charges and the usury of banks. Indeed journalist William Melville suggested that banks lacked confidence in the farmers who were "rapidly failing".¹² The *Western Advocate* declared that many farmers would face ruin unless they embraced modern or more scientific methods on their selections and the *Cowra Free Press* urged local farmers to cultivate more land, including for fruit and vegetables.¹³ A correspondent to the *Bathurst Free Press* lamented that tenant farmers in the district would be

⁸ Section 18 of the *Crown Lands Act* 1889 provided for land "within the suburban or population boundaries or population areas of any cities, towns, towns, or villages to be set aside as special areas". See Appendix 1 for biography of John G Marlin.

⁹ *Molong Express* 4 November 1893.

¹⁰ Wren's comments were included in a newspaper article written by William Bede Melville. The article appeared in the *Australian Star*. The meeting was chaired by the mayor and attended by both leading townsmen and farmers.

¹¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 February 1891, *Molong Express* 28 January 1891, *National Advocate* 18 March 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Joseph Wren and William Bede Melville.

¹² *Molong Express* 28 February 1891, *National Advocate* 18 March 1891.

¹³ *Western Advocate* 7 April 1891, *Cowra Free Press* 26 November 1892.

unlikely to modernise given the conditions of their tenancy. Some farmers would not put up decent improvements because of rent-racking by landlords. Others did not form co-operatives which would be beneficial because it would only benefit the landlords and they viewed new labour-saving machinery as the enemy for the same reasons.¹⁴ The *National Advocate* was sympathetic noting the unequal competition farmers faced from “the open markets of the world through the iniquitous policy of government”. The newspaper was also concerned about the unfair rental system but did not blame local landlords who, it said, were simply exercising their rights under current laws.¹⁵ These landlords described by the *National Advocate* “as probably as lenient as any to be found in the colony”, included Bathurst townsmen such as Edmund Webb and pastoralists John McPhillamy and John Gilmour.¹⁶ Struggling farmers sometimes found little sympathy from their landlords. Stephen Joseph O’Connell of Evans Plains, for instance, was forced into bankruptcy when Gilmore distrained on him. O’Connell could not survive when his 200-acre crop of wheat was destroyed by hailstones. Even though his Bathurst debtors, John Meagher, George Fish and Benjamin Edye, were not pressing him for payment, the landlord was not so “lenient”.¹⁷

Tenant farmers could be found throughout the district, but some large landowners had no interest in leasing their estates. Richard Rouse, who managed the 10,000 acre Guntawang station, had never rented his land nor intended to. His view of some farmers in his district was scathing. In evidence given to the parliamentary committee enquiry into the Mudgee to Gulgong railway, Rouse declared that “if they were poor it was of their own doing”, complaining that he had tried, to no avail, to “stuff into the ignorant people of this district for their own advantage” the benefits of dairying.¹⁸ His cousin, Richard Rouse Jnr who managed the nearby 20,000 acre estate was less disparaging. He was not averse to renting, he said, but the farmers would be unable to pay the amount he currently received from grazing and it would be a good deal of trouble collecting rents.¹⁹

Evidence given to railway extension inquiries provides useful information on the state of farming. Committees examined witnesses to assess future prospects and impediments to prosperity but because communities competed for the railway they were wont to exaggerate

¹⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 October 1893.

¹⁵ *National Advocate* 14 July 1891.

¹⁶ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Edmund Webb, John McPhillamy, John Gilmour and James Horne Stewart.

¹⁷ *National Advocate* 27 September 1894. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Meagher, William Tremain, George Fish and Benjamin Edye.

¹⁸ *Report of Public Works Committee on the proposed railway from Mudgee to Gulgong 1890 (Railway report Mudgee to Gulgong)* 45, 55, 56.

¹⁹ *Railway Report Mudgee to Gulgong*, 34. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Richard Rouse and Richard Rouse jnr.

and double-count making it difficult for claims on density of settlement, land under acreage etc., to be substantiated. The incidence of dummyming was an important issue and during the Mudgee to Gulgong hearings, committee member, Edward O'Sullivan, asked several questions to establish whether the line was primarily intended to "benefit monopolists".²⁰ But extending the line to Gulgong was viewed by many of those giving evidence as a lifeline. The district had stagnated since mining slowed in the area and the construction of the railway line was expected to provide better access to markets and boost the fortunes of the district. Most settlers grazed stock and cultivated only a small portion of their land, something the *Pastoralists' Review* railed against in its campaign for the extension of leases in the Central Division.²¹ One settler, James Atkinson, who had been in the district for thirty years, described himself as a "small grazier". He grew eighty acres of lucerne for his own stock on his selection of 960 acres and stated that he was one of many who did this.²² The reason, and this was replicated throughout the Central West, was the problem of transporting his produce. There was differing evidence on the condition of farmers. To ensure committees had a favourable opinion on the prosperity of the area, some witnesses such as storekeeper Christopher Young were upbeat.²³ Young declared Gulgong farmers to be "in a grand position". On the other hand, Richard Rouse Jnr described local "wheat farmers [as being] in a state of distress".²⁴

There was a sense of resignation at these hearings that the line was unlikely to be approved contrasting with the railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes railway inquiry. This line was scheduled for construction but it was the preferred route that was the business of hearings in 1890. The land through which the railway was to traverse was in the densely settled county of Ashburnham. There were many small settlers in the area but also some larger land holders such as John Smith MLC.²⁵ As with settlers close to Gulgong, most farmers also grazed stock, particularly sheep. Statistics provided to the committee by the Manildra and Garra Railway League had only 11% out of a total acreage of 71,848 under crop. This data can be misleading given that there were larger holdings in the district but some material is useful. Joseph Wren, one of seven collectors, collated information from 27 land owners around Gregra. Here, the average holding was 250 acres and it had the highest amount of land under cultivation and this

²⁰ The line had very little chance of being built. It was seen by many as a step towards Wellington or Dubbo. The existing line from Bathurst to Mudgee was the worst paying in the colony and considered a 'white elephant'. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Edward William O'Sullivan MLA Queanbeyan.

²¹ *Australasian Pastoralists' Review* 15 April 1892.

²² *Railway report Mudgee to Gulgong 1890*, 3. See Appendix 1 for biography of James Atkinson.

²³ See Appendix 1 for biography of Christopher Young.

²⁴ *Railway report Mudgee to Gulgong 1890*, 45, 34.

²⁵ See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of John Smith.

was only 17%.²⁶ Pioneer farmer, John Rubie, was the exception to the rule, growing 250 acres of wheat on his 340-acre block. He deposed that he had had to go into debt to make improvements but he was making a living and hoped to make more.²⁷ Rubie had previously been a shopkeeper in Garra before moving into farming. While he severed his commercial connections, it was not unusual for others to have businesses and farms. William Williams grew wheat as well as running the Junction Hotel at Meranburn and Bumberry farmer Henry Packham was also an innkeeper and postmaster.²⁸

Many farmers had to supplement their farm income. Gulgong police sergeant George Steele reported that many settlers supporting families on forty acres were also labourers, shearers or worked on the roads.²⁹ James Corbett a teacher at Brolgan Public School, suggested numerous families had “little homesteads” on two to three acres at Billabong Creek where the breadwinners survived by doing labouring work in the hope that their applications for ten acre blocks would be successful.³⁰ Francis Nichols and his son held 1,200 acres on Coobong Creek near Parkes upon which they grew 100 acres of wheat and hay and grazed 600 sheep. They supplemented their income “stripping, threshing and chaff-cutting” other people’s crops.³¹ According to Alexander Huie³², a labourer who gave evidence to the proposed extension of the railway from Temora to Cootamundra, few farmers around Lake Cudgellico made a living on the land alone but had to go out contracting and carrying.

The role of women in these activities is almost impossible to determine. Marilyn Lake suggests the yeomanry emphasised “family production and self-sufficiency” but, of course, the “yeoman mode” was rarely realised.³³ Still selectors often relied on their wives and family, particularly sons, whether to survive or flourish. Without doubt, Sara Williams supported William as he managed his selection and his hotel.³⁴ Certainly Aboline Rheinberger was active at the Rheinberger’s farm and orchard. Peter noted in his diary that she regularly went by cart to sell potatoes and fruit and occasionally to take milk to the co-operative. She also made jams

²⁶ *Report of Public Works Committee on the proposed railway from Molong to Parkes and Forbes 1890*, 24 (*Railway report Molong to Parkes*). The population of this area was 1,211 and included the villages of Garra (population 317) Meranburn (195) Green Grove (110) Gregra (147) and Manildra (55). There were schools in each of the villages.

²⁷ *Railway report Molong to Parkes (Minutes of Evidence)*, 35. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Rubie.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 43. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William and Sarah Williams and James Curran.

²⁹ *Ibid* p 36.

³⁰ *Railway report Temora to Wyalong (Second Report) (Minutes of Evidence)* 21, 22, 23, 83.

³¹ *Railway report Molong to Parkes (Minutes of Evidence)*, 69, 111, 112.

³² See Appendix 1 for biography of Alexander Huie.

³³ M Lake ‘Helpmeet, slave, housewife: women in rural families 1870-1930 in P Grimshaw, C McConville and E McEwan *Families in Colonial Australia* (North Sydney: George Allen and Unwin 1985): 176.

³⁴ W Banham *Eugowra Its History and Development* (Eugowra: The Eugowra History Group 1994) 84.

and often noted that she spent the day washing, sewing or mending. Other women who worked on family farms can sometimes be identified through family or local histories and the occasional obituary, but as Glenda Strachan and Lindy Henderson note, recovering individual lives and the work they did is problematic.³⁵

Fruit growing as carried out by the Rheinbergers and their neighbours was a more intensive and challenging activity than grain cultivation. According to the *Town and Country Journal* the industry was a “most promising one” potentially “affording a living to hundreds of thousands of people”.³⁶ However in late 1893, the *Molong Express* considered that this time was a long way off in most areas of the Central West with many farmers facing “the prevalence of prejudicial elements such as climatic drawbacks, insect pests and other noxious visitations...and of obtaining remunerative markets only after years of labour, uncertainty and consequent suspenses.”³⁷ Oranges and grapes were successfully grown in Ashburnham county and vines flourished around Mudgee in Wellington county. Edwin Ezzy of Newgrove Millthorpe was one successful orchardist, though not to the same degree as Tom Tozer. Tozer sold his fruit to Forbes, Parkes and outlying towns travelling up to 250 miles to dispose of his produce.³⁸ Not all were as skilled as Ezzy, Tozer and the Rheinbergers. The government inspector of orchards, Thomas G Tresder, reported that while he had seen “some exceedingly good properties, some containing from fifty to eighty or ninety acres” at Orange and Millthorpe, he had never seen such a “miserable lot of orchards” as he found around Bathurst.³⁹

Many Chinese market gardeners including Ah Now at Bathurst and Ah Foo at Forbes lived at the outskirts of towns.⁴⁰ They supplied vegetables to local storekeepers and households and were an integral part of the economy. The *Town and Country Journal* noted, for example, that people in Condobolin were dependent on “the Chinese for a vegetable supply”.⁴¹ This was also the case in Cowra but the Cowra newspaper reported, disapprovingly, that “the cultivation of vegetables is left wholly to Chinamen” who “usually amass large profits”.⁴²

³⁵ Strachan and Henderson ‘Assumed but rarely documented’.

³⁶ *Town and Country Journal* 13 February 1892.

³⁷ *Molong Express* 14 October 1893.

³⁸ *Town and Country Journal* 14 March 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Edwin Ezzy and Tom Tozer.

³⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 3 October 1892.

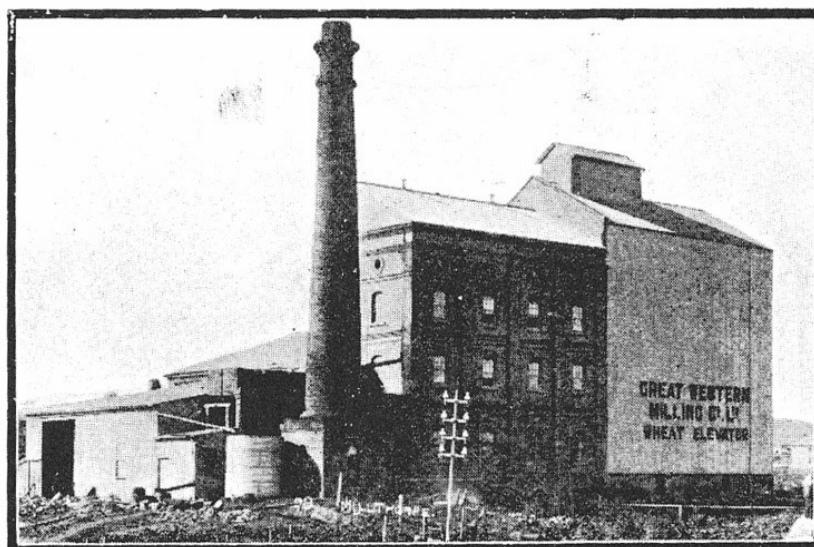
⁴⁰ Ah Now (1864 – 1919) married Ellen Heffernan in 1884 and they had 7 children. B Hickson, H Nichols and T Rheinberger *100 Lives of Bathurst: a memory in marble* (Bathurst: City of Bathurst 2005): 106. “Ah Foo 1889” *Forbes Times* reported in the *Western Herald* 17 April 1889.

⁴¹ *Town and Country Journal* 30 July 1892.

⁴² *Cowra Free Press* 26 November 1892.

The *Molong Express* urged fruit growers and others to form co-operatives. Clarence Karr argues that one reason farmers formed cooperative organisations was to get access to “expensive sophisticated machinery”, through “communal ownership” thus providing a “means of increasing efficiency and decreasing the cost of production”.⁴³ In addition he suggests that “these local co-operatives were often established by a farmers’ union or by people who had become a social unit through such an organisation”.⁴⁴ This was the case with farmers in the close-knit community of Spring Hill where members of the Spring Hill Farmers’ Union formed the Great Western Miller’s Company in 1884. By 1891 the Spring Hill farmers company was one of the most successful flour milling businesses in the area with a substantial mill erected at Millthorpe. However, efforts by Mudgee farmers and investors to establish a co-operative ended in disaster. A £10,000 flour mill commenced operations in June 1892 but in October 1893 the mill was being offered for sale by the mortgagees.⁴⁵

GREAT WESTERN MILLING CO., LTD.



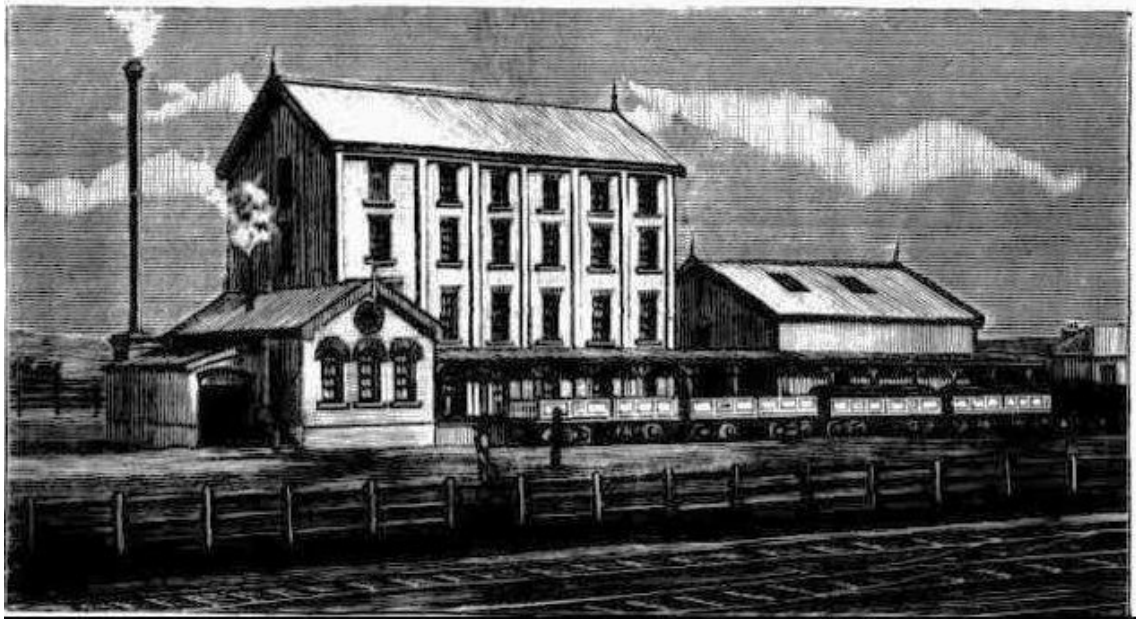
Great Western Mills and Silo, 3131 feet above Sea Level.

Illustration 12: Great Western Milling Co Ltd Manildra

⁴³ Karr ‘Mythology vs. Reality’, 203.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 204.

⁴⁵ *Town and Country Journal* 28 October 1893.



MUDGEE FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE FLOUR MILL.

ILLUSTRATION 13

Cooperative dairy factories were common. Peter Rheinberger had an interest in a Mudgee co-operative which farmers from Rylstone, Wilbertree and Cowra inspected before setting up their own.⁴⁶ Proponents of a factory at O'Connell convinced doubters that it would "primarily benefit them more than any other class".⁴⁷ MLA John Haynes urged his Gulgong farmer constituents to support their local factory. He stressed the advantages of having a cash flow throughout the year, becoming "independent of the local shopkeeper" and thus not "paying through the nose for credit". According to Haynes, the farmers would then be able to have enough funds to buy good equipment such as buggies and give work to local industries.⁴⁸

By 1891 farmers and pastoralists alike were still frustrated with the colony's land laws. The *Crown Lands Act of 1884 (1884 Land Act)* had been enacted after what Charles King describes as "twenty years of class hatred and internecine struggles" that followed the *Robertson Land Acts*.⁴⁹ The *1884 Land Act* divided the colony into three districts (Eastern, Central and Western), partitioned squatters' runs into Leasehold Areas and Resumed Areas, introduced fixed term for leases, restricted the sizes of selection blocks and established local land

⁴⁶ Jeans *An Historical Geography*, 268. Peter Rheinberger had an interest in the Mudgee Dairy co-operative. In January 1893, he noted the receipt of £5.8s for the previous month (6s notes for 10 shares).

⁴⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 8 October 1891 and 11 January 1892.

⁴⁸ *Gulgong Unionist* quoted in *The Horsham Times* 13 June 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Haynes. Between 1891 and 1893 other cooperative factories were proposed at Cudgegong, Mount Macquarie and Oberon, the latter opening in December 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 13 December 1892.

⁴⁹ King *An Outline of Closer Settlement*, 96.

boards.⁵⁰ In the Eastern Division leasehold areas could be held by the pastoralist for a period of five years before they were thrown open for selection. In the Central Division, the term was ten years and in the Western District, fifteen years. The Central West fell within two divisions – Eastern and Central - but when the land in the Eastern Division became available in 1889, there was limited impact as much of the land had already been alienated.⁵¹

The only significant amendments to the *1884 Land Act* prior to 1891 were enacted in 1889 with the introduction of the Land Appeals Court and measures to deal with vexatious issues such as land rent and forfeiture of selections. The Appeals Court was generally welcomed as the politicisation of appeals to local land board decisions by the Minister for Lands had been a source of considerable dissatisfaction. Shortcomings in the legislation remained with the *Bathurst Free Press* complaining in 1890 that “bona-fide selectors are harassed beyond endurance”.⁵²

The complexities and contradictions of the law coupled with ignorance and duplicitous land transactions kept land boards, when they met, fully occupied. Over an eight-day period in April 1893, the Mudgee Land Board comprising Charles E Finch and Herbert Lowe dealt with 600 matters including confirmation of applications and conditional purchasers, forfeitures, appraisals, rents, value of improvements and a “heavy list of miscellaneous cases”.⁵³ Members of these boards were appointed by the Department of Lands. Charles E Finch took charge of the Bathurst, Mudgee, Molong, Carcoar and Cowra areas with Nathaniel Connelly also appointed to the latter two.⁵⁴ There were some concerns with the boards which even the introduction of the appeals court did not allay. The *Molong Express* described them as a farce which subjected applicants or appellants to “vexatious delays” and “unnecessary expense while providing “a lucrative existence for a number of officials” and a “repository for favoured drones”.⁵⁵ However, William Kelk, a member of the Bathurst Land Board, protested that problems were “largely due to the want of common care on the part of selectors”.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ When a pastoral lease expired the land became a resumed area and special conditions applied including the issue of licences to the lessee, Leasehold land exempt from conditional purpose or conditional lease (pre-expiry).

⁵¹ Of the 7,000,000 acres which became available, only 231,000 (Cowra 20,000 and Molong 211,000) were in the Central West. *Bathurst Free Press* 19 July 1890.

⁵² *Ibid*, 1 October 1890.

⁵³ *Sydney Mail* 1 April 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Charles E Finch and Herbert Lowe.

⁵⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Nathaniel Connelly and Thomas Pearce.

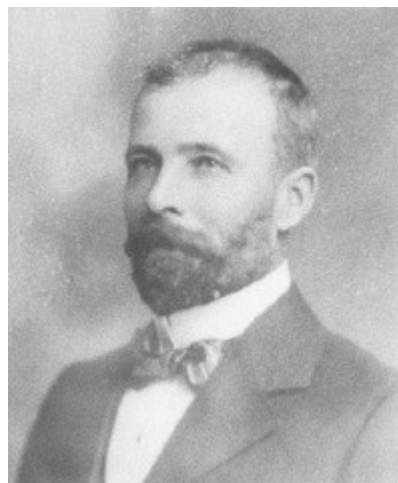
⁵⁵ *Molong Express* 4 October 1893.

⁵⁶ Kelk made the comments at the 1893 Farmers’ conference *Sydney Mail* 8 July 1893. See Appendix 1 for a biography of William Kelk.

In 1891 the Forbes Land Board, comprising John Edwards (Chair), Walter Stone and Alexander Rae attracted attention over a land transaction involving the Burrawang Station. The property, located approximately 25 miles from Forbes was owned (or rather mortgaged to Goldsborough Mort and Co) by Thomas Edols.⁵⁷ Burrawang was arguably the largest pastoral station in the district, comprising 300,000 acres including 100,000 acres of freehold.⁵⁸ Edols lodged an application for a land transfer of 26,000 acres which according to the recommendation of the government surveyor would be more advantageous to settlers as the land to be transferred “would be above the floodmark”.⁵⁹ The land board refused the transfer as being against the public interest and agreed to the transfer of 960 acres only. The applicant successfully appealed with the Land Appeals Court sending the application back to the land board which again refused the transfer. Following the intervention of the Minister the land board considered the matter for a third time and on this occasion approved the transfer of 11,000 acres. Many local residents were appalled by the decision, with the Forbes Progress Committee protesting both the process and the outcome.⁶⁰



Illustration 14: Thomas Edols



Thomas Brown

Forbes farmer Thomas Brown was one of the most vocal critics of the transaction. As a representative of the Forbes Farmers and Free Selectors Union, he attended a conference at Wagga in 1892 following which a farmers’ union was formed. Brown moved the first resolution

⁵⁷ See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Richard Edwards, Walter Stone and Alexander Rae.

⁵⁸ *Town and Country Journal* 26 November 1892, *Australasian Pastoralists’ Review* 14 January 1892.

⁵⁹ Edols had one of the finest irrigation systems in the colony.

⁶⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 1 August 1891, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 2 October 1891, *Sydney Mail* 28 November 1891, *Town and Country Journal* 6 May 1893.

at the conference which, he said, had been endorsed by a public meeting at Forbes.⁶¹ He declared that “no district suffered more than Forbes did from the locking up of lands” and his motion reflected concerns over renewal of leases in the Central Division. He argued that squatters had abused the *Robertson Land Acts* by failing to improve their runs and provide opportunities for labour. In the Lachlan valley, Brown asserted, “crown lessees held forty miles of frontage to the river, while the back lands, not good enough for the squatter, were held to be good enough for the selector”, clearly a reference to Burrawang transaction.

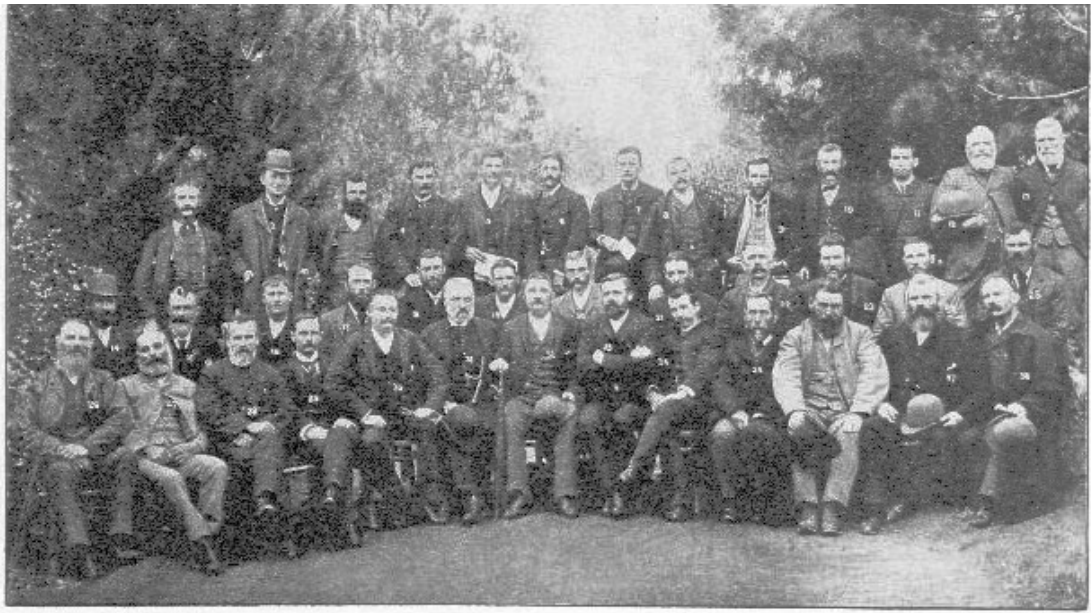
The Wagga conference dismissed pastoralists’ arguments that extensions of their leases were needed to halt the rabbit invasion.⁶² The farmers believed the only way to deal with the rabbits was to “put the people on the land” and opening up the land provided a solution to the unemployment problem.⁶³ The *Town and Country Journal* praised the initiative of the farmers in coming together to collectively consider the pressing issues they faced and applauded the conciliatory approach taken at the conference. While there was unanimous support against the renewal of leases in the Central Division, the newspaper noted, the farmers “prudently” opposed “glutting the market and adopted a conservative position on other issues such as voting to restrict the special area provisions of the *1889 Land Act* and seeking changes to the proposed boundary of the rabbit proof fence than rejecting it out of hand.”⁶⁴

⁶¹ The conference was instigated by the Mundawaddera and Yerong Farmers’ Association (located in the Riverina district). See Appendix 1 for biography of Thomas Brown.

⁶² Control of the rabbit pest in New South Wales was a major concern at this time. By March 1893 the government had spent over £50,000 on the construction of 632 miles of barrier fencing and committed a further £22,000 on approximately 400 miles on fences under construction. *Sydney Morning Herald* 6 March 1893. Fences were being constructed in Wellington, Stuart Town, Orange, Blayney and Cowra. *Daily Telegraph* 11 March 1893. Farmers and selectors in some parts of the district objected to their areas being declared as “rabbit infested” under the *Rabbit Act* 1890 due to the additional fencing requirements, for example Condobolin *Sydney Mail* 5 September 1891, Grenfell *Daily Telegraph* 21 June 1892 and Forbes *Daily Telegraph* 2 October 1893.

⁶³ *Town and Country Journal* 2 July 1892.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*



GROUP (I) OF THE DELEGATES TO THE FARMERS' CONFERENCE AT WAGGA WAGGA.

- | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 1. J. O'Keefe, Tomberambe. | 2. E. J. Gorman, Berrigan. | 3. G. H. Rodman, Boggy Creek. | 4. P. Kelleher, Devil's Sliding. | 5. D. Gorman, Sovereigns and District. |
| 6. A. J. McDougall, Sverrnake and District. | 7. E. J. Gorman, Cocoma. | 8. M. O. O'Halloran, Nyngon. | 9. K. Skinner, Parkes. | 10. D. Robertson, Cootamundra. |
| 11. M. Cleary, Adelong. | 12. Jas. Lowe, Murrumbidgee. | 13. A. Crawford, Urangilina. | 14. I. P. Foreyth, Cootamundra and District. | 15. P. Maguire, Cootamundra. |
| 16. S. Harrison, Devils Den. | 17. J. F. Quiller, Junes District. | 18. E. J. McCarty, Junes. | 19. W. J. Cartwright, Teroona. | 20. M. Paton, Gribben Gully. |
| 21. W. F. Morphy, Carrawana. | 22. J. McCauley, Narrandera. | 23. J. T. Naughton, Crookwell. | 24. W. Day, Brookong. | 25. W. T. Lewis, Young. |
| 26. B. B. Hanson, Wagga Wagga. | 27. E. W. Nicholls, Girang Grogg. | 28. W. Graham, Wallendbeen. | 29. K. McKay, Wallendbeen and Murrumbidgee. | 30. J. T. Williamson, Wagga Wagga, Secretary. |
| 31. D. Reid, J.P., Howlong, Vice-President. | 32. G. F. Plunkett, Young, President. | 33. J. J. Miller, Cootamundra, Vice-President. | 34. M. M. Ryan, Mandawalders, Secretary. | 35. J. P. McCulloch, Urana. |
| 36. K. Marchion, Giralambone. | 37. A. F. McDonald, Grogg. | 38. T. B. Cox, Albany. | | |

Illustration 15: Delegates to the Wagga Wagga Farmers' Conference (Parkes representative Edward Skinner⁶⁵ is 5th from the right in the last row.

Conversely the *Pastoralists' Review* commented on the "greed and selfishness" of those at the conference and described farmers' unions as "obscure and disconnected associations some of which threw in their allegiance with the shearers' union in their unjustifiable attack on the pastoralists" the previous year. Pastoralists such as David Scott of Mowabla Station near Condobolin and James Govan owner of Weelong Station near Forbes were concerned that they would lose their land and improvements and that the fragmentation of their runs would render them unviable. They believed opening up so much land would be calamitous arguing that it would not only encourage dummieing, it would leave vast areas unoccupied and exacerbate the rabbit menace.⁶⁶

Lobbying was intense by both settlers and squatters, eventually forcing the government to revisit the legislation with the *Pastoralists' Review* arguing that having "good" legislation would help ameliorate the clashes of interest.⁶⁷ In December 1892 in the concluding stages of a censure motion, the Minister for Lands Henry Copeland, unexpectedly announced the Government's intention to introduce a new land bill which would provide incentives for

⁶⁵ See Appendix 1 for a biography of Edward Skinner.

⁶⁶ *Australasian Pastoralists' Review* quoted in *Goulburn Herald* 26 July 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of David Scott and James Govan.

⁶⁷ *Australasian Pastoralists' Review* 14 May 1892.

pastoralists to have a “vested interest...in improving their holdings”. Selectors would be provided with additional rights but in such a way as to discourage speculators.⁶⁸ When the details of the bill became known in February 1893, neither side was happy. In Parliament John Chanter (MLA for The Murray) declared the appropriate title for the legislation should be “A bill to still lock up the land from the people of New South Wales” while Thomas Williams (MLA for the Upper Hunter) suggested it be called “Dummyism made Easy”.⁶⁹ By the end of 1893 the *Crown Lands Bill* had not been passed, although one initiative, Village Settlements, had been excised and enacted as the *Labour Settlements Act* in June 1893.⁷⁰

One issue both sides agreed on was the evil of speculation or ‘jobbing’. This was an ongoing concern for the government as demonstrated in the taking of evidence during railway hearings. Many witnesses deposed that their districts comprised *bona-fide* settlers. Barmedman miner Robert Cassin told one committee that he knew of only one land jobber and he didn’t know any “man in the district who could be considered a dummy”.⁷¹ On the other hand, according to Brown, it was not the “land jobbers from Victoria” but the government’s “monstrous” sale terms that were causing problems for locals.⁷² Not all Victorians were speculators. According to Stephen Roberts, by 1880 most land suitable for agriculture in Victoria had been alienated and Victorians with capital had pushed into NSW competing with locals for land, particularly in the Riverina, but also in the western areas of the Central West.⁷³ Settlers such as brothers Walter, Arthur and George Berry came from Victoria to settle in the Trundle district in 1889. Each selected the maximum allowable area of 2,560 acres which had been part of the Barmedman Station and within two years, they had sufficient sheep to need seven shearers and two roustabouts at shearing time. John McKeown and his wife Matilda travelled from the NSW and Victorian border in 1886 to settle on the land but they also established the first blacksmith’s shop and “built one of the first cottages in the town”.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ *National Advocate* 24 December 1892. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Henry Copeland.

⁶⁹ *Town and Country Journal* 11 February 1893.

⁷⁰ The *Labour Settlements Act* provided for the grant of land, for a maximum term of 28 years, to a “board of control” of between 8 and 16 people to establish a settlement. The Act, which also provided loans for would-be residents, was seen as a measure to ease unemployment.

⁷¹ *Railway report Temora to Wyalong*, 37.

⁷² *Australian Star* 18 June 1892.

⁷³ Roberts *History of Australian Land Settlement* 112.

⁷⁴ J Watts and C F Wright *The Story of Trundle: a country town and its people* (Trundle: I Berry and J Curr 1987) 51, 57. *Western Champion* 14 July 1911, *Freeman’s Journal* 3 October 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of the Berry brothers and John and Matilda McKeown.

The movement of people between Victoria and the Central West was at its most intense during the gold rushes of the 1850s and 1860s. The discovery of the first payable gold in the Australian colonies at Ophir near Orange in 1851 triggered a massive influx of people and momentous change to the political, economic and social milieu of the Central West.⁷⁵ Over the next two decades or so many small settlements sprang up near the diggings or their population expanded massively and as the gold was worked out they just as quickly deflated. Other townships further west such as Forbes, Parkes and Grenfell which were established during this period, became permanent townships and while some of the towns initially suffered from the exodus of many of their residents to the goldfields, Orange and other townships flourished.

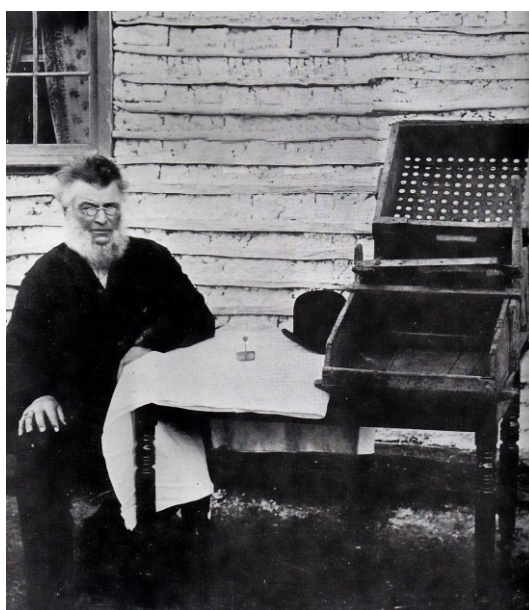


Illustration 16: William Tom jr with the heart-shaped nugget found in April 1851 and the cradle that he built to the specifications supplied by Hargraves. The photograph was taken about 1895 outside his house “Sunrise” at Byng

In 1892 a “special commissioner” for the *Sydney Morning Herald* toured the district’s mines and suggested “the attractive sentiment of mining – the halo of romance – flickered out years ago,”⁷⁶ but gold remained important to the district’s economy. Although many of the alluvial fields had been worked out, reef mining was thriving and was “more and more becoming a

⁷⁵ The discovery of the first “payable gold” at Ophir was credited to Edward Hargraves but many people disputed this and declared that local men, William and James Tom and John Lister, were never properly acknowledged and recompensed for their role. Even in 1891 there was some lingering resentment but a recommendation by a Parliamentary Select Committee that the trio be recognised and rewarded was rejected by the government. *Legislative Assembly of NSW Report from the Select Committee on Claims of William Tom, James Tom, and J.H.A. Lister as the First Discoverers of Gold in Australia* (Sydney: George Stephen Chapman Acting Government Printer 1891).

⁷⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 14 July 1893.

permanent industry”.⁷⁷ According to Coghlan, the Bathurst and Mudgee districts and areas fed by the Upper Lachlan were among the principal alluvial gold mining districts in the colony while the some of the most productive quartz-veins were found near Bathurst, Hill End and Mudgee. The newspaper published its commissioner’s reports in a series of articles in July and August 1892. His overall assessment of mining in the area was positive but he condemned the mining laws and their administration which he said, encouraged speculation. The entrepreneurial enterprises pursued by individuals and syndicates and the cooperative ventures between workers as shareholders and mine directors were praised, commending Frame Fletcher’s Lagoon Paddock Limiting Company and Henry Newman’s Aladdin’s Lamp Mine at Lucknow both with significant paid up capital from foreign investors.⁷⁸ The commissioner criticised the lack of confidence from “Sydney” as ill-informed and was so impressed about the opportunities presented by properly conducted and resourced mining in the Mudgee area, he suggested farmers could better their lot by forming “a farmer’s prospecting company” or putting their “little bit of surplus cash into mining ventures”.⁷⁹ While some farmers may have been members of syndicates it was common for local businessmen to form companies and be shareholders and directors. Storekeeper, William Henry Bond credited as being the “oldest miner in Hargraves”, still mined on his own account and as part of a syndicate. George Bryant, a butcher, invested in mining operations at Hill End and newspaper owner George Davidson at Mudgee. John Medlyn and Parkes mayor John Rose were heavy investors in the Parkes district.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Coghlan *Wealth and Progress 1893*, 81.

⁷⁸ Frame Fletcher formed a syndicate in London which was funding three mining undertakings. The English speculators were told there was a fair chance to open up a rich lead of gold...at Gulgong” and if successful stood to make £100,000. *Town and Country Journal* 10 October 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Frame Fletcher.

⁷⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 22 July 1892, 27 July 1892.

⁸⁰ Miller George Crossing and solicitor George Davidson both of Mudgee were also investors at Hill End. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Henry Bond, George Bryant, George Crossing, George Davidson, John Medlyn and John Rose.



Illustration 17: Mining Family Airly near Lithgow in the 1890s.

The government was keen to encourage mining and provide aid to miners via a prospecting vote. Prospectors such as Thomas O’Shaunnessy were regular applicants.⁸¹ Newspaper reports noted where mining ventures were in receipt of funds and politicians lobbied on behalf of frustrated miners and were quick to claim credit for the number of applications approved in their electorates. But the major frustrations for miners were the unwieldy mining laws and restrictions on mining on private land. Despite the rhetoric, successive governments could or would not enact the necessary legislative reform. Disputes were common. Timing of applications and the issue of miners’ rights, moving pegs and erecting humpies on claims were among the ploys used by prospectors. Counter accusations of dummies and claim jumping arose during a dispute over a claim in Forbes. Miners Frederick Foster and Peter McDougall out-manoeuvred the local chemist Eugene Vanzetti by lodging a claim in dubious circumstances over Vanzetti’s Britannia Reef mine. Notwithstanding Vanzetti’s plea that he had put “his heart and soul and all my money [£15,000] ...in developing the mine”, the defendants’ claim was eventually upheld. Foster and McDougall were at best opportunists. Vanzetti described Foster as a blackmailer who was not a genuine miner and that it was

⁸¹ The government established a prospecting vote in 1887 to encouraging gold prospecting. Subsequently the scheme was extended to include all minerals. “The amount set apart for the year 1891 was £20,000; for the year 1892, the amount was increased to £40,000. Miners desiring a grant from the vote have to satisfy the prospecting board that the locality proposed to be prospected is one likely to yield the mineral sought for, and that the mode of operations is suitable for its discovery. Aid is given in deserving cases up to 50 per cent of the value of work done and of the necessary implements and materials. Miners who have been assisted from the vote are not entitled to claim any reward that may be offered for the discovery of new gold or mineral fields.” Coghlan *Wealth and Progress 1893*, 74, 75, 81.

“probably owing to his being a unionist and an agitator among the discontented, that he has secured the good offices of our local member of Parliament [George Hutchinson] in his support of his application.”⁸²



Illustration 18: Eugenio Vanzetti

Miners were united on the issue of mining on private land, particularly in the eastern portion of the district. Permission to prospect on freehold land was entirely at the discretion of the land owners who could refuse access, impose a rental charge or royalty or allow access without cost on the proviso that the land be made good after mining was abandoned. Henry White was one of the latter. *The Bathurst Free Press* lauded White, dubbed the “Squire of Havilah” and suggested that other landowners would do well to follow his example. White was generous in allowing access to his land. Louisa Walsh records many examples of miners, mostly local, prospecting on the property. In one case two of these (Messrs Lipscombe and Baker) stayed in James Walsh’s stable before moving into their tent.⁸³

Mining on private land was a sensitive political issue with the usual class divisions. While many of the conservative voices accepted the need for legislation, the question of compensation,

⁸² As discussed later Vanzetti and Hutchison were political opponents and Hutchinson certainly lobbied on behalf of Foster and McDougall. Legislative Assembly of New South Wales ‘Report on Gold Mining Leases near Britannia Reef near Forbes’ *Votes and Proceedings 1893* Volume II: 426-447. See Appendix 1 for biography of Eugene Vanzetti.

⁸³ *Louisa Walsh Diary* multiple entries May to December 1893. White had differences with some prospectors, securing a conviction against John Abbott for trespass in March 1893. In default of a fine, Abbott served twelve hours imprisonment in the Mudgee gaol. Notwithstanding this he appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court asserting he had a *bona-fide* right to prospect on the land, a claim not tested as he had already served time. *Bathurst Free Press* 23 November 1893. Some months later White unsuccessfully prosecuted Robert and Ernest Abbott for trespass. See Appendix 1 for biography of Henry Charles White-

preferably royalties or tribute, was a sticking point and not surprisingly bills which made no such provision sent to the Legislative Council were rejected. The principle was a plank in the LEL's platform, and in 1893 when the latest iterations of the legislation were debated, lobbying groups such as the 'Carcoar Mining on Private Property League' were established. Carcoar hotelier John M Callen and newspaper proprietor Hector Lamond attended the meeting where the league was formed and were instrumental in drafting a petition, one of many presented to the parliament urging the need for reform.⁸⁴

The major issue for reformers was equity, but the future prosperity of the colony and a potential solution for the unemployment problem were also put forward. In this context, the government instituted a different way of dealing with the unemployed. In July 1893, it established a 'Fossickers' Board'⁸⁵ to oversee the implementation of a scheme to despatch the unemployed to the goldfields. The scheme was lauded as an opportunity for the unemployed to work rather than rely on hand-outs. Only those men who were "practical" miners were meant to participate and this was most likely the case with the 1,000 men despatched from Newcastle and Lithgow in early August.⁸⁶ Unfortunately, whether through ignorance and misrepresentation of their skills or whether there was no gold to be found, many struggled. In Mudgee, for example, there were reports that some men were "asleep on seats opposite the court house" and some old hands stated that the men sent there would either "starve or steal".⁸⁷ Notwithstanding this example, it is not evident by the end of 1893 whether the scheme was a success or failure, there being mixed reports although it appears many miners were earning enough "for their tucker". Regardless of whether the scheme was a success, the *Bathurst Free Press* saw it as yet another example of city versus country, complaining that country people could not access it and that it was a "means for Sydney [to get] rid of their unemployed".⁸⁸

Coal was important to the economy of the Central West though unlike gold, it was concentrated in one area, around Lithgow. In 1891, 346,000 tons were raised but the industry was vulnerable.⁸⁹ It was dependent on Government railway contracts for the western districts and the companies could not compete with Newcastle or the Southern coal mines in the

⁸⁴ *National Advocate* 14 October 1893, *Bathurst Free Press* 3 August 1893, *National Advocate* 14 August 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Callen.

⁸⁵ *Report of the Government Labour Bureau Half-yearly end August 1893*. The board comprised the Under-Secretary of Mines Harris Wood, Chief Inspector of Mines William H J Slee, Superintendent of Labour Bureau Joseph Creer and MLA for Tamworth William Springthorpe Dowel.

⁸⁶ *Illawarra Mercury* 9 August 1893.

⁸⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 18 August 1893.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 26 July 1893 and 2 August 1893.

⁸⁹ Patmore 'Localism and Labour', 57. Coghlan *Wealth and Progress 1893*, 104.

metropolitan markets. According to mine owners Thomas Talbot Wilton, miner William Rickard and townsman Samuel Gannon, this was due to the high cost of railway freight rates across the mountains and unfair concessions provided to the southern mines.⁹⁰ In October 1893, appeals to the railway commissioners were unsuccessful. They argued that the viability of the mines was due to the depression, demonstrated in part by the fall-off in the mines' trade with the western districts, and "not the rate of carriage or to the competition from the Illawarra mines".⁹¹

Access to railways was eagerly sought but their construction was widely viewed as extravagant and unsustainable. In January 1891, prompted in part by a letter from Molong pastoralist John Smith, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reflected on the dilemmas of dealing with the "millstone" that was the colony's burgeoning public debt, "chiefly railway debt". The newspaper acknowledged that expenditure on railways was essential for the "general progress of the colony – in population, in settlement, in production, and in wealth" but warned the colony could potentially become bankrupt if railway construction continued ad hoc in response to "the demands of localism, or by the cry for employment".⁹² In addition, the colony's railways were not particularly profitable and in 1893 many lines, including the Orange to Molong, Murrumburrah to Blayney and the Wallerawang to Mudgee routes, ran at a loss.⁹³ Between 1891 and 1893 at least seven lines connecting towns within the Central West and to other parts of NSW, and other colonies were being contemplated in one form or other. One was under construction. Some proposals were being actively considered at an official level while communities and their local railway leagues were busy petitioning politicians, the commissioners and the Public Works Committee, for the establishment of others. This lobbying was as intense during this period as it had been at any previous time. Indeed, probably more so as the tangible benefits accruing to areas which already had access to railways, were clear to those missing out.⁹⁴

The first section of the railway to connect the district New South Wales with Sydney, from Penrith to Wentworth Falls opened in July 1867 and the last stage was completed in

⁹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 29 November 1893, *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* 27 May 1892, *Australian Star* 10 October 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Samuel Gannon, Tomas Talbot Wilton and William Rickard.

⁹¹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 31 October 1893.

⁹² *Ibid*, 2 January 1891.

⁹³ *Evening News* 11 August 1893.

⁹⁴ The lines were Temora to Cootamundra (impacting Lake Cargelligo and Barmedman), Mudgee to Gulgong, Cowra to Forbes, Parkes to Condobolin; and the beginning of discussions on a through connection between the Southern Western and Northern branch lines (the preferred routes being Young via Dubbo to Werris Creek and Mudgee to Walgett) to the advantage of Grenfell and the mining towns of Peak Hill, Alectown and Stuart Town, among others. See Map 6.

September 1885. In the intervening years, the Great Western line connected Bowenfels, Lithgow via the famed Zig-Zag railway,⁹⁵ Bathurst, Blayney, Orange, Bathurst and Mudgee. The branch line linking Molong and Cowra was completed by 1888 and the Molong to Parkes line opened in 1893. Other projects in the district stalled. Costs and engineering issues, the prioritising of other districts including a focus on the Southern line to Goulburn to combat Victoria's trade incursion into the Riverina, combined to delay construction. Not even the railway's position as the "single greatest facilitator of closer settlement" seemed to have any effect on hastening construction.⁹⁶

The impact of the railway on towns and settlements was significant. The increase in Cowra's prosperity contributed to it gaining municipal status in the same year of the railway opening in 1888 and Millthorpe's fledging flour mill received a considerable boost when a railway station was routed there. It is little wonder that envious neighbours banded to secure a railway for their communities. Competing interests meant differing opinions on proposed routes. As John Gunn notes, selectors needed easy access to a close network of lines for their produce to replace expensive bullock or horse transport to sidings but squatters with their vast holdings and valuable wool could afford to transport their bales over a hundred miles to the nearest railway.⁹⁷

The establishment of the Public Works Committee tempered political influence in the determination of railway routes but the lobbying of parliamentarians, government departments and the railway commissioners was still to be reckoned with. The process to secure a railway line usually began with the formation of a local railway league by the town's leading citizens and farmers and graziers in the surrounding rural settlements. The same protagonists would provide evidence to the committee's inquiries. During the inquiry into the Molong to Parkes railway, a sectional committee visited eleven towns and heard from 192 witnesses.⁹⁸ Bowan Park farmer Thomas Seale and Eugowra beekeeper William Niven, Parkes resident Mark Coleman (who described himself as a gardener "at present") and publican and horse breeder James Glazier, were among those who argued why the railway should pass through their towns and villages.⁹⁹ Representatives of the various railway leagues, local police,

⁹⁵ "The Zig Zag Railway had a profound influence upon the development and economy of western New South Wales. At the time, it was the greatest civil engineering work in Australia and was considered worldwide as an engineering marvel". Construction commenced in 1863, opened in 1869 and extended in 1880 *NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=5045513>.

⁹⁶ Gunn *Along Parallel Lines*, 81.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 194

⁹⁸ Orange, Manildra, Tichborne, Parkes, Forbes, Eugowra, Murga, Cudal, Cudal, Bumberry, and Cowra

⁹⁹ . See Appendix 1 for biographies of Thomas Seale, Mark Coleman and James Glazier.

land agents, mayors and others provided data on their local communities, including population, number of settlers, sizes of holdings, schools and interminable information on the quantity of freight. People in and around Cudal felt so strongly that “they declared their determination not to have anything to do with any other route”¹⁰⁰ and that they would rather take their produce thirty to forty miles by cart than use the railway only ten miles away.¹⁰¹ The committee reported that witnesses were so anxious to “exhibit their particular district in its most favourable light...they have, in almost every instance, collected their statistics without due regard for boundaries” leading to an overlap which rendered a considerable amount of information inaccurate at best.¹⁰²



Illustration 19: James Glazier

The availability of land for sub-division was an important consideration in railway approval. In the more densely populated areas around Cudal, little leasehold land suitable for agriculture remained, though there were gold-field reserves particularly near Cargo, some of which could potentially be released. Thus a railway in that area would advantage the farmers but not provide as much benefit for the government. Ultimately the committee rejected the Cudal route and supported the route recommended by the railway commissioners on the basis that it would be “generally beneficial ... serve the largest population ... [and] open up extensive tracts of good land.”¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ *Railway report Molong to Parkes 1890*, 9.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 6.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 8.

¹⁰³ These were four recommended routes from Molong to Parkes and then Forbes, from Borenore via Cudal and Eugowra to Forbes, Cowra via Canowindra to Forbes and Young via Grenfell to Forbes. One unfortunate drawback was that there would be no benefit to Canowindra or Grenfell and to that end and the Standing Committee noted that the line which would link Canowindra with Forbes was proposed for extension soon. *Railway report Molong to Parkes 1890*.



Illustration 20: A group of railroad construction workers standing around the equipment used for the railway line construction Molong Parkes Railway

Despite their protestations, it is likely the Borenore and Cudal communities used the railway after its opening in 1893. The economic gain could not be ignored. But the resentment remained, not just in that district but also in Forbes. Their inhabitants, joined by people from Eugowra, Murga, Toogong and Cheeseman’s Creek, took the opportunity of a delay in the tender process “for that monster job – the greatest that was ever perpetuated in the colony”, to petition the parliament to reconsider the decision.¹⁰⁴ There were similar differences over the proposed railway connection between Dubbo and Coonamble (impacting on Mudgee)¹⁰⁵, Cootamundra to Temora (to favour Barmedman and Lake Cudgellico)¹⁰⁶ and Parkes and Condobolin which would bypass Trundle in favour of Bogan Gate. The latter “agitation” according to a correspondent to the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* threatened to “outrival even the historical feud between Forbes and Parkes”.¹⁰⁷

Railway workers constituted a significant portion of the workforce in some parts of the district. In addition to those directly employed by the railway commissioners, many more people were

¹⁰⁴ As described by the Borenore correspondent to the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 10 July 1891.

¹⁰⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 8 September 1892.

¹⁰⁶ *Cootamundra Herald* 5 October 1892.

¹⁰⁷ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 25 November 1892.

engaged as contractors or workers involved in railway construction.¹⁰⁸ Thus the austerity measures embarked upon by railway commissioners Edward Eddy, William Fehon and Charles Oliver¹⁰⁹ to turn “a very unprofitable railway system into a well-managed and paying concern”¹¹⁰ had an impact on the region. According to Gunn, “the price for past extravagances was paid most heavily by individual workers”.¹¹¹ This was the case in 1892 when fifty men, some of whom had worked in the service for upwards of ten years were discharged. Some were re-employed, on reduced remuneration, after a “large number of temporary employees engaged at repairing” were sacked. The *National Advocate*, appalled at this state of affairs, declared that retrenchment should start at the top not with navvies earning £3 per week.¹¹²

The extent of railway employment in the region can be gauged to some extent from reports on the annual railway picnics held in different locations. In 1891 approximately 2,000 workers and their families picnicked at Wallerawang, the same number travelled to Carcoar in 1892 and to Eskbank in 1893.¹¹³ Railway employment encompassed multiple occupations. In the Bathurst workshop, there were “cheerful [and] efficient” engineers and fitters such as John Main and Arthur McGuinness described by the *National Advocate* as “brawny armed sons of Vulcan”.¹¹⁴ There were station masters including John T Bates who came to Cowra after having spent seven years at Trangie where he filled “the position of stationmaster, post and telegraph master, deputy registrar of births, deaths and marriages, manager Government savings bank [and] Government meteorologist”.¹¹⁵ Other occupations comprised porters (34 year-old Gordon Clarke at Brewongle) and gatekeepers like Mary Houghton of Cowra.¹¹⁶

While there were many railway workers, more people worked in primary industries.¹¹⁷ Farmers, settlers, market gardeners, orchardists and farm labourers were the most common. People engaged in these pursuits throughout the district but principally in the central and eastern and most densely settled counties of Ashburnham (28%), Bathurst (26%), Roxburgh

¹⁰⁸ In 1891, it was reported that 7,000 men were engaged on railway contracts in the colony. *Bathurst Free Press* 5 March 1891.

¹⁰⁹ See *Australian Dictionary Biography* for biographies of Edward Eddy, William Fehon and Charles Oliver.

¹¹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 27 February 1889.

¹¹¹ J Gunn *Along Parallel Lines*, 207.

¹¹² *National Advocate* 29 November 1892.

¹¹³ *Sydney Morning Herald* 20 October 1891.

¹¹⁴ *National Advocate* 13 January 1892. As set out in Chapter 4 working conditions in the workshop were not as cordial as this may suggest. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Main and Arthur McGuinness.

¹¹⁵ *Leader* 13 August 1917. See Appendix 1 for biography of John T Bates.

¹¹⁶ *National Advocate* 11 November 1892, *Cowra Free Press* 15 July 1892. Women frequently held the post of gatekeepers. According to the 1891 census 139 women were employed in this capacity across the colony.

¹¹⁷ As noted previously the overlap of counties and other statistical cohorts means the data is not exact but it is sufficiently inclusive to reach meaningful conclusions.

(26%) and Wellington (22%).¹¹⁸ This is reflected in the size of rural holdings in each of these counties where most holdings were within the range 101 acres to 200 acres while Wellington (267) also had the highest number of holdings sized between one and five acres. Ashburnham (114) and Bathurst (200) had significant numbers of holdings in the higher category 201 to 300 acres.¹¹⁹ In evidence given to the Molong to Parkes railway inquiry, farmer Edward Taylor deposed that in the Toogong district “there was a man and his family on every 300 acres and sometimes less”.¹²⁰

In the western portion of the district a greater percentage of people were engaged in pastoral pursuits. The neighbouring counties of Gipps (36%) Dowling (27%) and Cunningham (18%) had the highest percentage of pastoral workers. The obvious inclusions in this category are the pastoralists themselves and shearers with other stock related occupations including stock boundary riders, drovers and teamsters. Thomas Edols had fifty permanent employees on his Burrawang station. In addition to the usual work such as managing stock and pastures, ancillary operations (including the extensive irrigation system) he required blacksmiths, wheelwrights and the like. During the shearing season, the workforce substantially increased. In the 1892 season he expected to shear 350,000 sheep and lambs and employ up to 100 shearers and many roustabouts, wool scourers and others.¹²¹ The number of workers employed on the station was significant but they are largely anonymous. In a visit to the station in November 1892, a correspondent for the *Town and Country Journal* described the ambience of the homestead, the hospitality of the Edols family, the woolshed, the irrigation system and the lagoon used for boating and fishing but there was little mention of any of the workers. “A faithful old servant with one leg” who managed the harness room and “another old servant with one leg” who looked after the firearms store were singled out as were Lovell, the bookkeeper and Potts the principle overseer and wool-classer.¹²²

Shearers, as itinerant workers, were equally unlikely to be identified. At Burrawang station “upwards of 200 shearers” were addressed by the Anglican Bishop of Bathurst in October 1892, one of them being a young Burranga resident Alfred Fulton.¹²³ On the smaller Errowanbang station, owner Francis Chesney Hopkins recorded the names of some of his

¹¹⁸ See Appendix 10 for detailed occupations data.

¹¹⁹ The number of holdings sized between 101 and 200 acres in each county are Ashburnham 208, Bathurst 350, Roxburgh and Wellington 166. T Coglean *Statistical Register 1892*, 390, 391.

¹²⁰ *Railway report Molong to Parkes*, 159.

¹²¹ *The Australasian Pastoralists’ Review* 14 January 1892. Edols’ woolshed was described in the *Town and Country Journal* as “the largest in the world” and “the finest in the colonies”. *Town and Country Journal* 26 November 1892.

¹²² *Town and Country Journal* 26 November 1892.

¹²³ *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 6 October 1892. Alfred is only known because his untimely death was recorded in the *Bathurst Free Press* 30 December 1892.

employees in his account books. Cooks Matilda Proctor and Phillip Mueller were paid the same rate of 25/- per week, but Ah See and Charlie Ah Ming were paid 20/-. Theresa Donnelly was engaged as a housemaid while H Gardiner was engaged as a house and parlour maid through the Sydney agency "Governess First".¹²⁴ At Charles McPhillamy's property, Warroo, Annie Williams was engaged as a nurse girl.¹²⁵



Illustration 21: Wool Classing at Burrawang

¹²⁴ *Errowanbang Station (Carcoar NSW) records 1875-1971 Ledgers 1892-1893 SLA MLMSS3293.*

¹²⁵ Annie who relocated to Forbes and worked as a domestic servant at Nestor's Hotel is only known because she was brutally murdered in Forbes by John Ahearn who had also been employed at Warroo *Bathurst Free Press* 16 December 1891. Nurse girls who were often around 14 years of age, looked after children and were expected to do housework. Advertisements sought girls who were respectable, reliable, strong and useful. According to *The Worker* (2 September 1893) nurse girls in Brisbane were paid 5/- to 4/- per week.

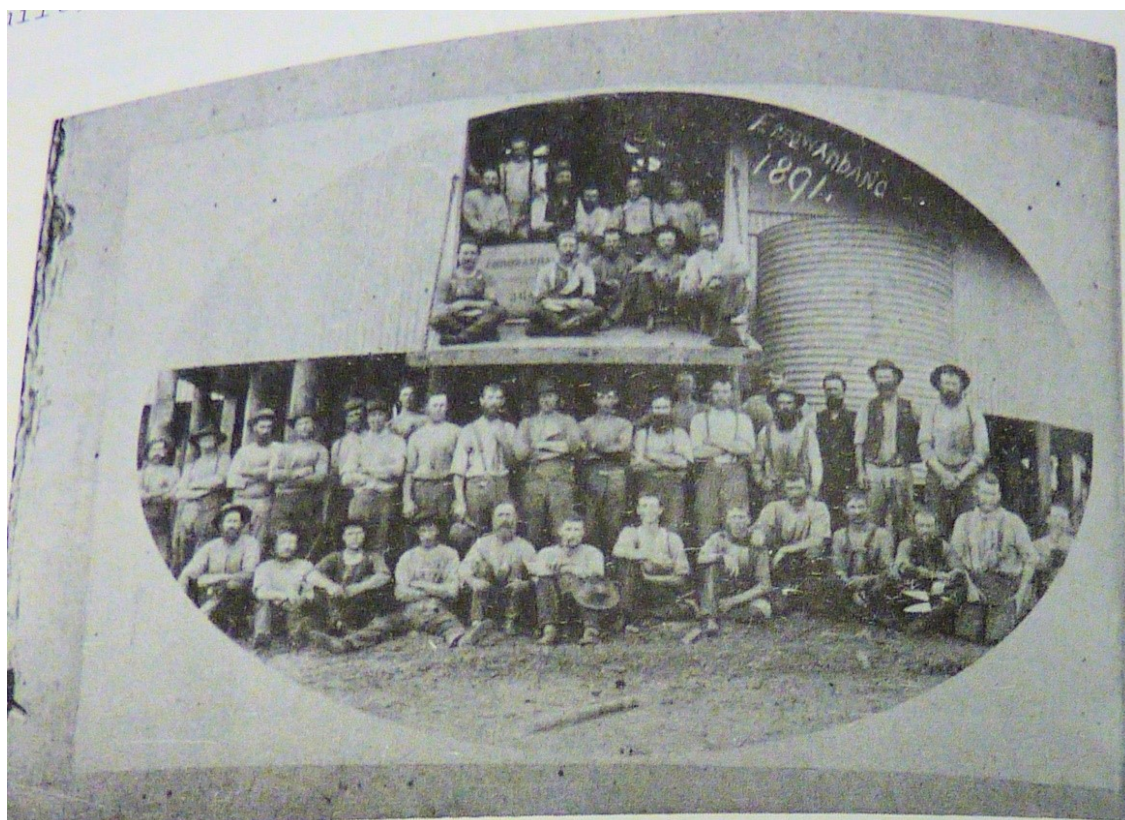


Illustration 22: Shearers at Errowanbang

Mining was the third group in the 1891 census occupations' category 'Primary Industry'. In the colony overall, approximately 7 % of breadwinners worked in the mining industry with a comparable number (7%) in the Central West. There was significant variation between counties with approximately 23% engaged in mining in each of Roxburgh and the adjoining county of Wellington while the lowest was in Cunningham. In 1893 over 50% of mining activity in the colony was in the mining districts of Bathurst, Lachlan, Mudgee and Tambaroora and Turon, an increase of 5% over the previous year reflecting new finds in both quartz and alluvial gold but also more people seeking employment in the deepening depression. The 5% decrease in the number of people working in silver mines was due to the sporadic opening and closing of the mine at Sunny Corner.¹²⁶

The significance of gold mining in the regional mosaic of the district was not restricted to the present-day mining activities. Not only did gold make or break fortunes during the gold rushes, it was still part of the psyche of many people in the district. Over 25% of the men whose biographies are featured in *Men of Mark* and approximately 30% of those included in *Aldine* allude to their gold mining endeavours and journeys between and within colonies. People such as butcher Edward Price who migrated to Victoria from England in 1856, was “variously

¹²⁶ *Minister for Mines and Agriculture Annual Report 1894.*

occupied as a goldminer” before he established his own business in Blayney. Others did likewise with hoteliers and publicans among the most common occupations. Several, including John Fullerton Armstrong (chemist, Forbes), Thomas Quirk (shopkeeper, Wellington) and William Kellett (shopkeeper, Mudgee) became prominent townsmen. Many settled down as farmers. Isaac Woolard settled at Morilda (Teapot Swamp) in around 1867 and Michael Teefy selected land at Cargo. Farmer George Stott who mined a rich deposit of gold discovered in one of his paddocks at the Canadian and Henry Newman at Lucknow were involved in mining activities well after settling in the district.¹²⁷

There were self-employed miners, some of whom could be described as “subsistence” men ,or women such as Charlotte Adams, working on “poor man’s diggings” as discussed by Susan Lawrence in her archaeological analysis of Dolly’s Creek goldfield in Victoria. Lawrence identified these miners whose numbers were sufficient to sustain a small community like Home Rule, as working on mostly worked-out fields with low but regular returns.¹²⁸ While resilient prospectors eked out a living on what remained of the alluvial fields in the east of the district, the discovery, or purported discovery, of gold triggered mini-rushes reminiscent of the gold rushes of the 1850s and 1860s. In May 1893 the *Bathurst Free Press* reported that the “major portion of the male population of Condobolin” set off to Burra Burra near Parkes upon reports of a major gold find. They were soon joined by “hundreds of old experienced miners, raw new chums and others to wend their way thither from the neighbouring towns of Parkes, Forbes, Peak Hill, Molong, and Condobolin, in addition to many from distant parts of the country”.¹²⁹ At the rush’s peak, some 1500 people had come to try their luck. A reporter from the *Town and Country Journal* described the hopefuls he met on his journey including well laden plodders with tents and provisions, joggers “humping the familiar bluey” and young men moving at a “rattling pace” anxious to get to their destination. At the settlement, there were upwards of 600 men entertained at night by “a company of bellringers”. Merchants in tents or vans sold their wares and there was no shortage of fresh food. Ominously he noted the hundreds of “fresh shafts” abandoned without any encouraging results being obtained.”¹³⁰

¹²⁷ See Appendix 1 for biographies Edward Price, Isaac Woolard, John Fullerton Armstrong, Thomas Quirk, William Kellett, Isaac Woolard, Michael Teefy and George Stott.

¹²⁸ Lawrence ‘Poor Man’s Diggings’.

¹²⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 May 1893.

¹³⁰ *Town and Country Journal* 3 June 1893.

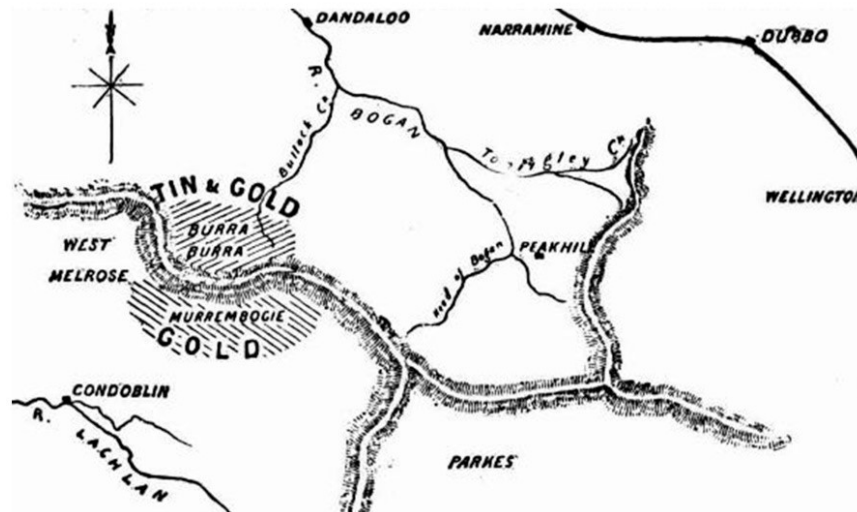


Illustration 23: Burra Burra gold field

Hopes for a major find were soon dashed and the disheartened miners gradually dispersed. In August 1893, the *Australian Star* reported that the diggings were “almost deserted” with “colors” in the reefs insufficient “to make tucker out of” although it appeared prospectors were still finding “payable gold”.¹³¹ Some miners moved further west where large deposits of tin had been unearthed near Melrose Station, sixty miles west of Peak Hill at about the same time of the Burra Burra rush. The discovery had already attracted 300 miners who had already set about pegging out a township on the field.¹³²

The many towns and villages in the district owed their existence to mining, land settlement and the spread of railways. According to Don Aikin, railways and the telegraph “created a colony-wide polity out of what had been simply a scattered population”.¹³³ The western train line from Bourke to Sydney stopped at several towns including Borenore, Dripstone, Molong, Orange, Stuart Town, and Wellington. These areas were in turn connected to others by branch lines, roads (however bad) and bridges. By 1891 there were approximately 119 towns and villages in the district¹³⁴ where most people lived rather than in the rural hinterlands. This is consistent with the settlement pattern for the colony overall where 65% of the population lived in towns and cities. As Graeme Davison notes, more people lived in “non-metropolitan

¹³¹ *Australian Star* 26 August 1893.

¹³² *Bathurst Free Press* 22 May 1893.

¹³³ D Aikin ‘Country-mindedness – The Spread of an Idea’ in Golberg S L and Smith F B (ed) *Australian Cultural History* (Melbourne Cambridge University Press 1988) 53.

¹³⁴ *Census 1891*, 127. There was also a host of villages with populations less than fifty were not included in the “specified locality”. See Appendix 8 and 9 for analysis of towns and villages in the district.

communities of between 500 and 20,000 than lived in the capital cities or the bush”.¹³⁵ In the Central West 62% of inhabitants could be found in settlements with populations of between fifty and 9,400, though predictably, there were significant variations between the predominantly agricultural based counties and the sparse western portions of the district. For example, in Bathurst and Wellington counties 73% lived in the towns against the drier pastoral districts such as Gipps (14%) and Gordon (28%).

Bathurst was the largest town in the district. It was also the first, having been proclaimed by Lachlan Macquarie in 1815. Other towns such as Orange and Carcoar emerged over the succeeding decades in concert with “the simplistic nature of the regional economy”.¹³⁶ From mid-century, the diminution of squatters’ monopolies, the fluctuating fortunes of mining, the resilience of settlers and the hard won or lost railway extensions coalesced into the configuration of urban settlement of 1891. By this time there were sixteen towns with a population of over 1,000 (69%) or 61% of between 50 and 200. Orange (5,064 including East Orange), Lithgow (3,865) and Forbes (3,011) were the largest towns after Bathurst while Mutton Falls (52) near Oberon was listed in the census as having the lowest population of the categorised townships in the district.¹³⁷ The smallest settlements not included in the census were usually postal towns such as Bumberry which consisted of a receiving office, a public house and Cobb and Co stables.

During the inquiry into the Molong to Parkes railway extension, Edward Nathan, a manager with Cobb and Co, described several small villages and rural settlements, all of which had populations under fifty, on the company’s routes. One of these was Meranburn which had postal, telegraph, money-order and Government Savings Bank services. It also had a small public house, a blacksmith’s shop, two small stores, a “farmer’s hall” and Cobb and Co stables. Murga and Cheeseman’s Creek were simply postal villages.¹³⁸ Details of amenities in larger towns were published in annual almanacs, directories and year books.¹³⁹ In addition to information on government and municipal services, they often itemised community facilities such as churches and hospitals. Description of rail and coach services emphasised the prominence of a town by the number of surrounding towns connecting to it. While the

¹³⁵ G Davison ‘Country Life’, 0.12.

¹³⁶ M Keneley ‘The Dying Town Syndrome A Survey of Urban Development in the Western District of Victoria 1890-1930’ in Davison and Brodie *Struggle Country*, 10.3.

¹³⁷ 60% of the towns and villages listed had populations of less than 100.

¹³⁸ *Railway report Molong to Parkes*, 8.

¹³⁹ The significance of some of towns in the district is reflected by their inclusion in *The New South Wales Western Districts Weather Almanac and Business Guide 1892* published by W McKenzie Bookseller Molong. 1892. The towns included Bathurst, Orange, Wellington, Molong, Lithgow, Mudgee, Cowra, Blayney, Dubbo, Forbes, Grenfell, Carcoar and Parkes

accessibility of a town to regional centres and the metropolitan area was indicative of its superior commercial status. The prominence and progress of townships were reflected in descriptions of the quality and permanency of buildings, parks, length of roads and the value of rateable property.



Illustration 24: Edward Nathan

According to John Alexander, the place of urban settlements in the structure of a society is best understood by exploring the economic, social and political relationships between the urban and rural. He suggests the “economic bond” is one of the strongest because the “economic life of a [town]... is inextricably interwoven with the economic life of its region”.¹⁴⁰ Certainly during the years studied here, economic ties sustained urban and rural communities alike. By the end of the 1880s the typical country town in the Central West retained a degree of social and economic autonomy, sustaining the population of the urban area and hinterland.

Trundle was one of those urban settlements sharing close economic linkages with the farms and pastoral stations which encircled it. Although only approximately forty people lived in the village it was the third largest urban centre in the sparsely settled county of Cunningham, the others being Burrawang (91) and Condobolin (742). The genesis of the village was a nearby travelling stock route and the Trundle Lagoon.¹⁴¹ Settlers began to take up land in the 1880s and by 1892 there were 131 of these within a radius of twenty miles.¹⁴² The 1891 census records 200 people living in the area, with 38 village residents, 29 of whom resided in either Hanora Maloney’s or the Gilchrist brothers’ hotels. Hanora Maloney was the first to recognise the business opportunities of the settlement. She moved her hotel (The Troffs) from the

¹⁴⁰ J W Alexander ‘The Basic-Nonbasic concept of Urban Economic Functions’ in *Economic Geography* 30 no 3 (July 1954): 246.

¹⁴¹ In May 1892, the town became known as Trundle rather than Trundle Lagoon when the post and telegraph offices combined. Watts and Wright *The Story of Trundle*, 81.

¹⁴² *Sydney Mail* 20 April 1889, *Town and Country Journal* 15 July 1893, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 22 April 1892.

travelling stock reserve to the fledgling village. Maloney also had a hall and stables and she opened a shop as did James Leadbitter and Edgar Austen.¹⁴³

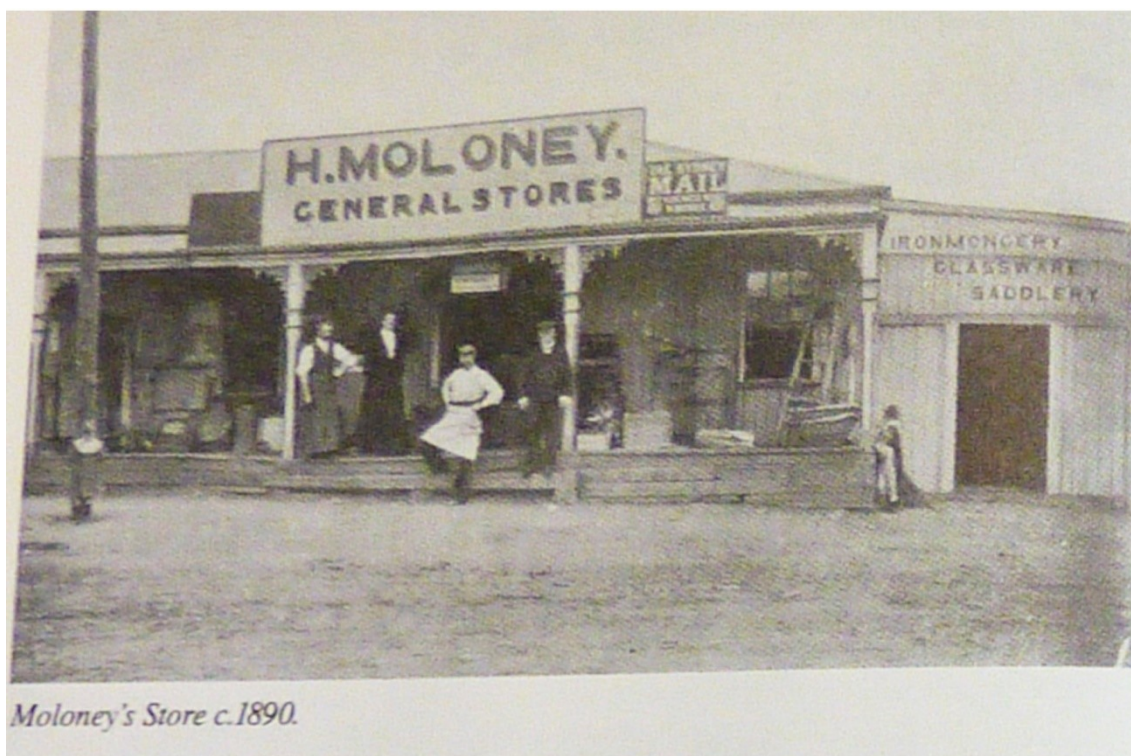


ILLUSTRATION 25

At the time of the census the township was set for further growth. Over the next two years, the hotels and shop were augmented by combined post, telegraph and savings bank services, police station, a self-styled doctor (Albert Florance), blacksmith's shop and a small Catholic Church. A public school had been established in the area in 1887 and in 1892, Anne Conroy taught 22 pupils.¹⁴⁴ These were mainly the children of selectors such as Patrick Purnell's children, John and Honora. Some of scrub-cutter Herbert Beuzeville's twelve children were also at the school.¹⁴⁵ There was a reasonably large Chinese population in the area. They worked as scrub-cutters and ring-barkers but they also established market gardens at the old Troffs Hotel which they purchased from Hanora Maloney. According to Watts and Wright, Char

¹⁴³ Ibid, 85. *Town and Country Journal* 3 June 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Solomon, Alexander and James Gilchrist and James Leadbitter.

¹⁴⁴ See Appendix 1 for biography of Ann Conroy.

¹⁴⁵ John McKeown and his family had a property of 7,680 acres and they also took on sinking and dam building contracts. They also built the first house in Trundle, Watts and Wright *The Story of Trundle*, 58, 37. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Herbert Beuzeville.

Nong and Tommy Ah Soon seemed to have been the head men on this site but, as with most Chinese in this and other districts, there is very little information.¹⁴⁶



Illustration 26: Herbert M Beuzeville and Family

The relationship between Trundle and its surrounds extended beyond economic interests. There was often little distinction between rural and town affairs. In November 1892 the Trundle correspondent for the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* reported on an “epidemic of meetings” attended by townfolk and selectors alike. There was a public meeting during which George Hutton (a newly appointed JP), Henry Croft, Christopher Francis, Michael Kerin and Patrick Parnell were elected as trustees for the racecourse, recreation, hospital and school of arts, reserves and the town common. The meeting also discussed the proposed railway extension. Afterwards, the progress committee convened with members Messrs Croft, Francis, Kerin and Richard Pilling joining townsmen John Gilchrist, Albert Florance and one of Hanora Maloney’s sons.¹⁴⁷ Shearers’ sports followed by a dance in aid of the progress committee extended the relationship to itinerant workers. And, social occasions including a bachelor ball held Mrs Maloney’s hall, with master of ceremonies being farmer Dan Goodwin, and a dance in Victor Foy’s woolshed, brought settlers and town residents alike.¹⁴⁸ Taken together, economic ties, lobbying for the railway, sharing of civic responsibilities and social interaction created a community of interest. There was confidence in and a shared vision for the future. Even though, or perhaps because, closer settlement in the district was relatively recent, these

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 101, 102. According to a retrospective published in 1927 “the Chinese did a great deal of the ring-barking and clearing...The boss made the hotel his headquarters and the Chinamen gathered there when them in from the bush. *Forbes Advocate* 27 May 1927.

¹⁴⁷ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 25 November 1892. Croft, Francis and Kerin were also Cemetery Trustees. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Henry Croft, Christopher Francis and Patrick Parnell

¹⁴⁸ *Town and Country Journal* 1 August 1891.

issues underscored a cohesive society in the Trundle district, the hallmark of *gemeinschaft* communities.

A social connection between Lake Cudgellico (population 347) and its rural hinterlands was apparent in several ways. Given the propensity of the wealthy landowners to be involved with horse racing, local squatters are likely to have attended or even fielded horses at the “fine racecourse” in the town. In addition, some of the pastoralists who occupied the ten pastoral runs in the vicinity may well have used the lake for leisure. Naturally, all townsfolk and those in the vicinity would have been able to indulge in “sailing and rowing” to their “hearts’ content”.¹⁴⁹ At yet another level, C McGroder and other members of the Shearers’ District Committee, organised sports and even a ball.¹⁵⁰

As with many other towns in the district gold was the impetus for the development of the township and in 1891 Lake Cudgellico still provided services for resilient miners on Erebendery and other goldfields.¹⁵¹ This was also the case for the approximately forty settlers in the area. Churches and government services such as a police court land board sittings and “a neat public school”, with 84 pupils, under the charge of William Perkins¹⁵² served the rural hinterlands. One of these, Benjamin Timothy Prior, had “‘dabbled in gold’ all his life but was also a storekeeper, farmer and orchardist”.¹⁵³ Prior was a member of the Labour Electoral League as was Alexander G Huie whose “people kept a small shop”. Correspondingly, people in the surrounding areas supported businesses such as Charles Phillips’ wheel wright and blacksmith’s business and the four hotels, including William Byrnes’ Commercial, Henry Champion’s Albion and Robert S Whatley’ Australian Hotels.¹⁵⁴ Thus one sustained the other. Although, according to the *Wagga Wagga Express* “the principle harvest of the “industrious inhabitants” of the town was not agricultural or mining but, during the shearing season, “shearer’s cheques”.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁹ *Wagga Wagga Express* 2 June 1892.

¹⁵⁰ *The Sydney Mail* 12 July 1890. The secretary of the committee was probably Ned McGroder, the “popular Cudgellico [shearers’] agent”. *Hummer* 7 November 1891. McGroder unsuccessfully challenged James Toomey for the position of Secretary of the Young branch of the ASU. *Shearers’ and General Laborers Record* 15 July 1893.

¹⁵¹ The *Worker* quoting Coghlan noted “In the county of Dowling (Hillston and Lake Cudgellico chief towns) 4 people own 58 of every hundred acres alienated. In the county Gipps (the same chief towns) 10 people own 45 of every hundred acres alienated.” *The Worker* 16 September 1893.

¹⁵² *School Archives Lake Cargelligo*. Perkins withdrew his application for a transfer when he when he married twenty-year-old local girl, Ida Jane Prior in November 1892.

¹⁵³ *Back to Lake Cargelligo Centenary Celebrations 1973*. Prior declared himself a candidate for the upcoming 1894 election. *Freeman’s Journal* 23 June 1894.

¹⁵⁴ *Back to Lake Cargelligo Centenary Celebrations Committee The dusts of time (gold dust, red dust, and bull dust) Lake Cargelligo and district, 1873-1973* (Lake Cargelligo 1973) 126, 127.

¹⁵⁵ *Wagga Wagga Express* 2 June 1892.

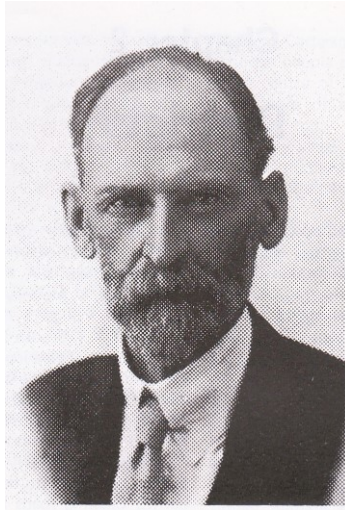


Illustration 27: Alexander Huie

Condobolin had a range of business and services, including eight hotels, consistent with a population of 750. The *Town and Country Journal* noted that the land office was one of the “most important in the colony”, reflecting the demand for land and associated transactions. However the newspaper observed that residents had “done comparatively nothing towards making their homes attractive and the town bears a bare and barren appearance in consequence”.¹⁵⁶ Wellington was another town in the district to attract unfavourable attention. According to a correspondent for the *Bathurst Free Press*, it had a reputation as “being the slowest town in the western district”.¹⁵⁷ It was one of the oldest urban settlements in the district, having originally been a convict settlement and a little later an Aboriginal mission station. The township slowly evolved supported by pastoral activities, its location on a Cobb and Co route and an extension of the railway from Orange in 1880. While there was the usual range of stores, hotels, banks, professions and churches, there was relatively little industry. Indeed, the writer noted “there is a lack of enterprise that, in short, ‘stagnation is the term most appropriate to the life of the district’”. An exception to this according to the writer was Edward Fitzgerald who established a butter factory in 1890. Fitzgerald sold his product to “Bourke, Cobar and other western towns” supplied by local farmers who found it was more profitable “to dispose of the milk from their small dairies for ready cash at the factory than to make it into butter for disposal in a precarious local market”.¹⁵⁸

Orange arguably had one of the most prosperous and most diverse economies in the district. The town survived the initial depletion of its population with the discovery of gold at nearby

¹⁵⁶ *Town and Country Journal* 30 July 1892.

¹⁵⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 10 December 1892.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 10 December 1892.

Ophir, protected to some extent strength by the mixed land use in its hinterlands. The proximity of the gold fields was an advantage when miners came to town to cash in their gold and when the alluvial gold had been worked out some of them stayed in the district hoping to secure land. Others, such as Henry Newman, set up reef mining operations. As with other locations, the railway provided an impetus to the town's economic base. Residents and the inhabitants in the nearby areas were well served with extensive businesses and services plus there were ancillary industries such as ironmongers, soap and candle makers and cordial factories. Manufacturers Elwin and Company (brewery)¹⁵⁹ and the Dalton family (flour mill) exported their products beyond the local region, including to the metropolitan area. In 1892 the Daltons opened a new mill which according to the *Sydney Mail* greatly increased the "milling capacity of our country districts" but not necessarily employment, with the newspaper noting "mill machinery takes the part of labour from beginning to finish".¹⁶⁰

The influence of the Dalton family was considerable with an influx of Irish settlers following them to Orange in its early years assisting the town's growth.¹⁶¹ In an article published in the *Bathurst Free Press*, Mary Cameron noted that although many expressed the view that the Daltons' were largely responsible for the prosperity of the town, others "aver that Orange has made them what they are...Farm after farm" she wrote "has been added to the Dalton territory, and field has been laid to field until the Orange magnate can drive over twenty miles of territory in one direction without trespassing upon anyone else's property. Indeed, after driving about the neighborhood of Orange and being told in nine cases out of ten the farms we enquired about belonged to Dalton, we came to the conclusion that the Dalton is a sort of Octopus who stretches his long feelers in every direction".¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ The company's partners were William H Elwin, Charles Wilkinson Bromilow and H Maud (probably Alwyn J Maude). *Town and Country Journal* 26 March 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Elwin and Charles Bromilow. The brewery's product was described as the principal beer drawn in the western and north-western portions of NSW won three prizes at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition and subsequently submitted an entry to the Chicago exposition.

¹⁶⁰ *The Sydney Mail* 30 April 1892.

¹⁶¹ Hughes Truman Ludlow *Orange City Council Heritage Study Volume 1* (Orange City Council November 1986).

¹⁶² *Bathurst Free Press* 15 April 1893. Mary Cameron, later Mary Gilmore. Mary's uncle was Gloster White owner of the *Bathurst Free Press*. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for a biography for Mary Gilmore. See Appendix 1 for a biography of Gloster White.



Illustration 28: James Dalton and Thomas Dalton

Gulgong was another town that survived the mayhem of the gold discoveries. In 1892 the *Town and Country Journal* noted that the Gulgong economy comprised exchanges between some businesses in the town and its hinterland. It extolled hotelier, storeowner and mill-owner Christopher Young as “a splendid example of the class of men who have made Gulgong the prosperous and thriving town it is today”. The newspaper explained that the

lines on which his business is worked describes the business of every store and workshop in ‘Union Gulgong’. He buys the farmer's wheat and sells the farmer his stores. He buys the producer's produce and sells the producer flour. And so the world wags on, as far as Gulgong is concerned. Each man helps his fellow, and in helping him makes a living.¹⁶³

The economy of Gulgong which had a population of 1,283 was far more complex than this. In 1891 the town was flourishing. Mary Powell¹⁶⁴ who was one of eight hotel licensees, ran the Commercial Hotel, Mary Barrett's drapery shop was one of at least six stores and there were three chemists including Albert Souter who was gaining a “big reputation” for a cure he devised for foot rot in sheep. In that year a new Catholic church was consecrated, a residence for the public-school teacher completed as was the Gulgong Dairy Company building. “Several substantial buildings” had been erected by the Gulgong Building and Investment Society and

¹⁶³ *Town and Country Journal* 29 April 1893.

¹⁶⁴ Mary Powell died 1894 aged 50 years at her residence at the Tattersalls Hotel. *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 July 1894 Mary was the widow of police detective Charles Powell who died at Gulgong in 1873.

land for selection was thrown open.¹⁶⁵ There was still gold to be found with some 200 miners working in the district.¹⁶⁶ Businessmen such as Richard Stear, baker and produce merchant, the manager of the local Australian Joint Stock Bank William Randolph Bentzen and another chemist Charles Theodore Frederick Zimmerler talked up the district at the Mudgee to Gulgong railway inquiry.¹⁶⁷ When the proposal for the railway was abandoned in 1892, a railway league with mayor and saddler Robert Heard as chairman, was established to lobby for the town's interests in the proposed construction of the Mudgee line to Coonamble.¹⁶⁸ The town's interests were foremost when the Leadville Progress Society sought the support of the Gulgong Council in lobbying for a road between Mudgee and Leadville. The *Unionist and Gulgong Advertiser* supported the proposal but only if the proposed route benefited Gulgong and warned if "there were any 'hanky panky' tricks such as previously attempted by another body to take the traffic that would leave Gulgong out and would only gratify a fad our friends in that locality can rely upon a howling row being raised".¹⁶⁹

Gulgong was surrounded by prime agricultural and grazing land. Agriculture had been boosted by the recent opening up of gold field reserves for selection and local farmers such as Arthur C Garling¹⁷⁰ who had 120 acres under cultivation and was one of those supplying Young's flour mill. Pastoral activities were dominated by the Rouses' Guntawang and Biragambi properties, the former being the location of the 'Lagoon Paddock' mine. The social interface between Gulgong and its hinterlands is reflected in the 1892 shearers' demonstration held in the town. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that the event was a "great success" with "150 horsemen and numerous other vehicles" participating in a "procession around the town headed by a band and banners" and more than 1500 people attending the horse races.¹⁷¹ Some of the shearers would have been local men but many more were itinerant workers whose identities are generally unknown as was typical in other parts of the district.

¹⁶⁵ *Freeman's Journal* 10 January 1891, *Australian Star* 29 September 1891. The Building Society was formed in 1888. Richard Stear was one of the first directors. *Sydney Morning Herald* 13 June 1888. Charles Edward Souter died 1941. See Appendix 1 for biography of Richard Stear.

¹⁶⁶ *Australian Handbook* (1891) 202.

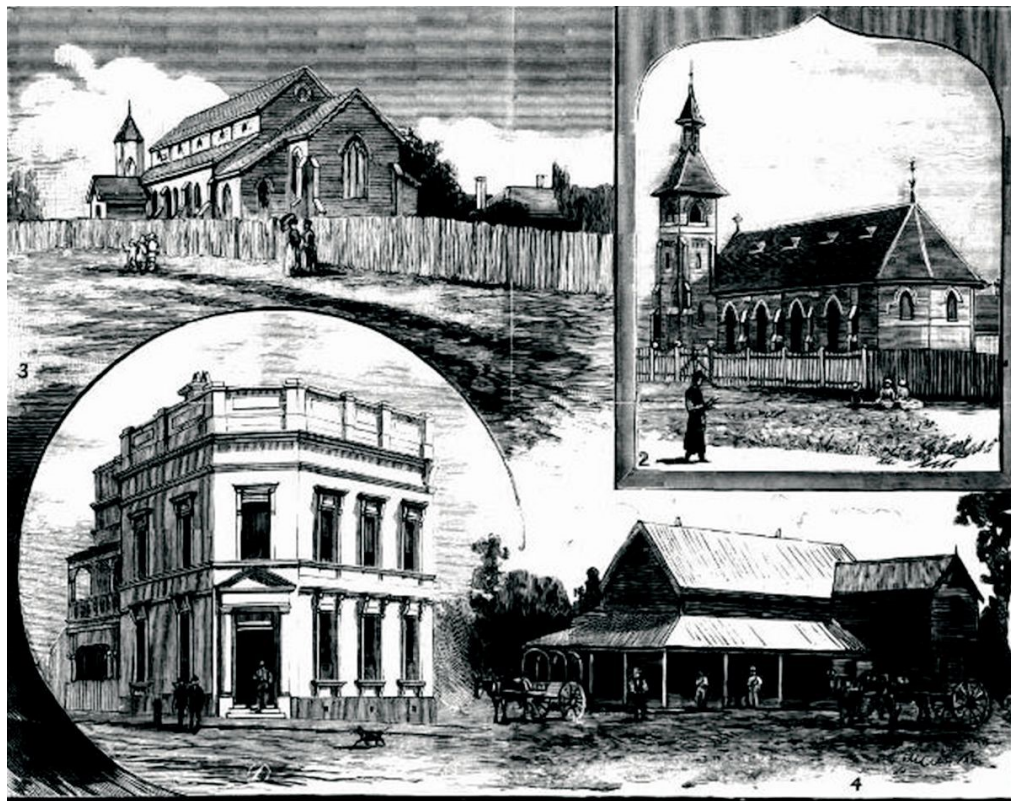
¹⁶⁷ *Railway report Mudgee to Gulgong 1890*, 26, 52, 58. Bentzen expanded his interests there two years later, by leasing "a large tract of land" from Richard Rouse. His intention was to supply milk to the Gulgong factory by planting superior grasses and crops for the stock. *Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser* 9 November 1893. Bentzen was the son of Mudgee Archdeacon Hans Thorvald Bentzen. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William and Hans Thorvald Bentzen and Theodore Zimmerler.

¹⁶⁸ *Mudgee Guardian* 30 July 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Robert Heard.

¹⁶⁹ *Unionist and Gulgong Advertiser* 2 July 1892.

¹⁷⁰ *Railway report Mudgee to Gulgong*, 38. See Appendix 1 for biography of Arthur Garling.

¹⁷¹ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 2 January 1892.



1. Bank of New South Wales. 2. St. John's Roman Catholic Church. 3. Church of England. 4. Butter Factory.

Illustration 29: Gulgong 1891

What is apparent from this examination of some of the towns and villages in the district is the robust connectivity between people living in the urban settlements and those in the rural hinterlands. These relationships appear to be closest in the fledgling township of Trundle where its immediate future was dependent on such cooperation. Co-operatives at Wellington and the Land Office at Condobolin demonstrate joint interests. Rural workers are attracted to Lake Cudgellico when the shearing cuts out with social events and other entertainment on offer, probably at the four hotels. The economic benefits shared between the people of Gulgong and those working on the pastures, the farms and in the mines are revealed by those giving evidence to the railway enquiry. Christopher Young's assertion that "each man helps his fellow, and in helping him makes a living" points to emotional attachment. Such relationships are less evident in Orange, not only because of the size of the town but possibly because of the dominance of the Daltons in much of the area's economic activities.

The individuals participating in these interactions through work, civic organisations, government services and community events have been uncovered through a variety of sources such as newspapers, local and family histories and almanacs. Many others who worked as domestics in the hotels, shop assistants, factory workers or other such occupations generally remain anonymous in spite of the occupations of these workers being categorised in the 1891

census as having the one of the highest participation rate in most of the district's counties.¹⁷² The extent of employment, if not the identity of those employed, in some of these occupations can be gauged from the biographical entries of business owners in *Aldine* and the newspaper feature articles. Within the mercantile group Bathurst store owner John Meagher employed thirty hands while rival Edmund Webb had 100 employees including 31 ladies in the workroom and twenty three in the men's department. William M Tibbs employed eight workers at his "Australian Stores" in Blayney, Horace Bracey had between fifteen and eighteen at his Lithgow shop and nineteen people worked at James Loneragan's "Commercial Warehouse" in Mudgee.



Illustration 30: John Meagher

Other employers of labour included cordial manufacturers and brewers. In Orange William H Elwin employed fifteen people at his award winning Standard Brewery and six workers were engaged by cordial manufacturer William Stabback. James Douglas, builder and contractor employed between fifty and 150 hands depending on the "rise and fall of business" and John H Gain, timber merchant, undertaker and general contractor who had twenty regular staff and up to seventy more, again depending on trade, were among the largest employers in Orange.¹⁷³ Doubtless the Daltons employed many more with their stores and flour mill. And, of course, across the district people worked for small business owners such as Carcoar dressmaker Margaret Hall.

¹⁷²After primary industries and mercantile pursuits *1891 Census*.

¹⁷³ *Aldine Centennial History*. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Tibbs, Horace Bracey, James Loneragan, John Gain, William Stabback and James Douglas.

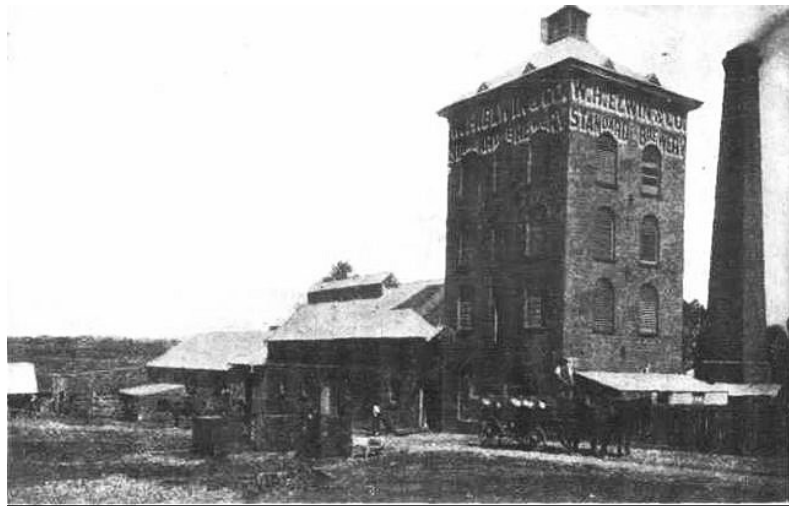


Photo. by W. H. Barde, Orange.
ANOTHER ORANGE INDUSTRY—ELWIN'S STANDARD BREWERY.

Illustration 31: Elwin's Standard Brewery



Illustration 32: Margaret Penhall Carcoar

Just who these hundreds of workers are is a mystery. We know from newspaper advertisements that Mrs Fitzgerald had “a large skilled staff under her control” at Webb’s store but there are no other details.¹⁷⁴ Other workers can occasionally be identified through court reports, newspaper accounts of accidents, unexpected deaths and bankruptcies.

¹⁷⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 5 September 1893.

This is the case for Ellen Tindall, an “old lady...employed as a servant who died of heart disease at Mrs Eyles’ Standard Hotel” in Orange.¹⁷⁵ Another servant 21 year-old Gertrude Walsh, a maid for Mrs Hart of Hart’s store in Mudgee, was jailed for attempted suicide in September 1892 with the *Sydney Morning Herald* noting she was “well known in Salvation Army circles.”¹⁷⁶ Elizabeth Clancy and Jane Scott, employees of Richard Glasson of “Athol”, were also associated with the Army. In July 1892, when she and Elizabeth were on their way home from the barracks Jane alleged that she had been raped by eighteen -year-old Joseph Patterson “the son of one of the most respected residents in the Blayney district”.¹⁷⁷ Mary Nugent who was employed as a domestic servant by Charles H Smith attracted attention because she was mixed up in a land transaction in Molong almost certainly at his urging¹⁷⁸. Martha Ann Hickson, on the other hand, had a trustworthy and benevolent employer in Bishop Charles Camidge.¹⁷⁹ A shortage of domestic servants such as Gertrude, Elizabeth, Jane, Ellen, Mary and Martha was often alluded to in newspapers. The *Bathurst Free Press*, for instance, noted that “great complaints are heard of every hand as to the scarcity of work, but while this may apply to men, the demand for servant girls is very different” and that “competent cooks and other domestics” could command “high wages”.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁵ *National Advocate* 22 September 1892.

¹⁷⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 September 1892.

¹⁷⁷ Shortly afterwards Thomas Clarke was also named as a perpetrator. In August 1892, it was reported that the Attorney-General declined to prosecute the cases. *Bathurst Free Press* 2 July 1892, 16 August 1892.

¹⁷⁸ Mary’s application for the conditional purchase of land was disallowed by the Molong Land Board on the grounds that it was not *bona fide* and the Board’s decision was upheld in a subsequent appeal to the Appeal court. Mary’s selection “formed part of the station on which she was employed” and even her (and Smith’s) solicitor) conceded “that the fact of Nugent being in Smith’s employ raised a strong element of suspicion, but [he argued] the Board was not justified in so acting on mere suspicion”. *Molong Express* 14 February 1891.

¹⁷⁹ *100 Lives of Bathurst*, 163. See Appendix 1 for biography of Martha Ann Hickson.

¹⁸⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 10 September 1892.



Illustration 33: Martha Hickson

Men who made their living in similar commonplace occupations are equally difficult to identify. Once again court and accident newspaper reports provide some information. Forty year-old John Wren, for example, was convicted of damaging the Fitzpatrick Crown Brewery after having been dismissed and Alfred White, a jockey and labourer in Bathurst, was convicted of assault.¹⁸¹ Contractor John O'Brien worked at Dunphy's stone-crushing works, James Neasmith was a dayman for the Molong council, Louis Byrne was employed at Lithgow Pottery Works, George Goodwin worked as a porter at Treanor's Grand Hotel and Frederick Orth was a country delivery van driver for Loneragan's store in Mudgee. Each of these men was involved in serious workplace accidents. They also shared a common fate in that they are largely unknown in the narrative of everyday life in the Central West.¹⁸²

The stories of Gertrude Walsh, James Neasmith and the others, brief as they are, have value in themselves in that they recover the lives of individuals up until now, nameless. Their circumstances shed light on day-to-day life in the towns and villages between 1891 and 1893 but also raise questions. For example, why were Gertrude Walsh, Elizabeth Clancy and Jane Scott identified as being connected with the Salvation Army? Perhaps in Elizabeth's case by associating her with the Army, often viewed as attracting disreputable individuals, it was to cast doubt on her allegations against the denials of the 'respectable' Joseph Patterson. Were

¹⁸¹ *Sydney Mail* 3 September 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 15 May 1891.

¹⁸² *Town and Country Journal* 23 May 1891, *Molong Express* 23 June 1894, *National Advocate* 15 August 1892 and 9 October 1893, *Sydney Mail* 1 October 1892.

the men who were injured able to afford to pay for their treatment in hospital, did they have insurance with friendly societies, what impact did their injuries have on their capacity to work and were they dependent on the benevolence of charitable institutions to support themselves and their families?

I have used the lives of ordinary people to analyse the regional mosaic of the Central West between 1891 and 1893. Early settlement patterns are characterised by the large landowning families including the Coxes and Rouses, whose ancestors acquired swathes of land restricting attempts to create a yeomanry. By 1891 this ideal had not diminished since successive colonial governments had enacted poorly crafted land legislation to foster closer settlement. In the west of the district, the struggle was contemporary with the likes of Thomas Brown and Thomas Edols facing off over a land grab near the Lachlan River. Independent farmers Thomas Seale and Christopher Francis joined forces with their peers and the residents of nearby towns and villages to lobby for a railway which was seen as the key to their future prosperity. They were joined by small-time miners and managers of larger enterprises but the former were more concerned with shortcomings in mining legislation. The relationships between town and country ranged from the immediate where business owners such as Parkes mayor John Rose also owned land, to selectors and residents of Trundle where there appeared to be no divergent views on what was needed to advance the community. Such communities of interest were less evident in the larger towns. We have had glimpses of everyday life and in the discussion on other themes in the following chapters, we gain a better understanding of the lives of ordinary people.

Part 2 Local Government

In June 1893, the Peak Hill Progress Association petitioned the government for the incorporation of the town.¹ The formation of a municipality was an important milestone in the development of this mining town which grew out of the nucleus of a gold rush in 1889. The early excitement of the rush “under the expectation of its turning out another Lambing Flat”, brought approximately 7,000 people to the diggings but the alluvial gold finds were limited and the diggers drifted away.² Reef-mining remained profitable and a steady population of around 1,500 settled in the area. Between 1891 and 1893 the township matured and according to the *Sydney Morning Herald* it was “alive and flourishing”.³ By the time the petition was presented the town boasted a courthouse, police station, two banks, two churches and a public school with 250 pupils. Several hotels and stores, numerous other commercial enterprises and trades had been established and a social stratum mirroring those in other townships had emerged.⁴ Community leaders including hotelier Thomas Ring, storekeeper Hector Norman, auctioneer and agent Jacob Williams, blacksmith James Shiels and butcher Henry Madden were variously members of the Progress and Hospital Committees or trustees of the town common and were well placed to assist the community assume greater responsibility in managing its own affairs.⁵

The importance of local government extended beyond a community’s self-reliance. On the eve of the 1891 Bathurst municipal elections the *National Advocate* declared

the prosperity of a district is the prosperity of its people — that which is for the good of the common wealth is for the aggrandisement of the individual, and every ratepayer and every resident is an equal sharer in the benefits which are inseparably associated with progress and prosperity.

The newspaper then suggested that prospective aldermen needed to be aware of their “grave responsibility” to act in the interests of the public.⁶ “Progress and prosperity” was a catchcry in colonial society, achievable through shared middle-class values of respectability and morality, hallmarks of *gemeinschaft* communities. Local councils administered municipal laws, the objectives of which were community security, safety, comfort and amenity but the

¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 June 1893. The area was approximately 36 square miles.

² *Town and Country Journal* 20 August 1892.

³ *Sydney Morning Herald* 15 August 1892.

⁴ *Australian Handbook Shippers and Importers’ Directory and Business Guide 1893* (Archive Books Australasia 2011).

⁵ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Thomas Ring and Hector Gibson.

⁶ *National Advocate* 27 January 1891.

enforcement of the voluminous by-laws and regulations frequently alienated disgruntled residents. In addition, ill-advised actions of councils and the poor discipline of some aldermen undermined community confidence, while others, according to the *Australian Workman*, viewed “municipal administration” as a “swindle” in which “a small propertied class...extort as much rent out of their unfortunate tenants”.⁷ In the following paragraphs I examine local government in the Central West. In particular, by exploring the lives of those people involved in municipal affairs between 1891 and 1893, I reveal the impact of its rituals and conventions on everyday life.

Not all townships had been as anxious as Peak Hill to incorporate. By the early 1890s local government in NSW had been sporadic. Incorporation was not compulsory. Many communities fearing the imposition of additional taxes were content to rely on the benevolence of the central government and the lobbying of their progress associations and local members to secure public works and services. Some people were simply indifferent but for others the incorporation of a township brought order and an awakening of public interest from which “many physical, moral, and intellectual benefits of necessity ensue”.⁸ Others had different reasons. In Cudal which was one of the most recently incorporated municipalities in the district, residents pushed for “home rule” before the enactment of the Local Government Bill, so that the town would not be “subject to Molong” control.⁹

Local government as it existed in NSW during years studied here was administered by the *Municipalities Act 1867*. There were few amendments of any consequence from its enactment to 1891, and politicians, both local and colonial, and many people in the wider community were generally united on the need for new legislation. Most lamented the lost opportunities in taking forward the *Local Government Bill* which had been sitting in parliament for ten years. The bill was unwieldy encompassing some 400 clauses and seven appendices addressing issues that had been frustrating local authorities for many years. Its complexity sapped the will of legislators to deal with it but the principal difficulty was money, specifically the degree of endowment needed to help councils become self-sufficient. The main objective of reform was to provide local councils with the wherewithal to undertake their own public works by providing them with the capacity to raise their own taxes. For the government, lobbying by

⁷ *Australian Workman* 24 January 1891 quoted by Markey *The Making of the Labor Party*, 408.

⁸ Quoted by Wild in R Wild *Bradstow A Study of status, class and power in a small Australian town* (Cremorne Angus and Robertson 1974) 13 but also see *Bowral Free Press and Berrima District Intelligencer* 20 June 1885.

⁹ *Molong Express* 19 December 1891. The phrase “Cudal Home Rule” was coined by the Cudal correspondent for the *Molong Express*, a persistent critic of the council.

“pettifogging ‘roads and bridges members’”¹⁰ for the construction of roads, bridges and such like were considered a nuisance though promises of concessions also helped keep political factions together.¹¹

Colonial treasurers were reluctant to give the matter priority. In the lead up to the 1891 election, the call for reform was a frequent catchphrase on the hustings. Central West candidates championed greater control over public works, less extravagance and waste as the advantages of improvements to local government. Bathurst hopeful William Paul believed the Bill would address the disadvantages of centralisation to country districts.¹² Yet in 1892 when the next iteration, this time the *District Government Bill*, was introduced into the Assembly, John Haynes declared the legislation to be “a scheme to scourge the country districts”. Because, he lamented, the Bill did not apply to the Sydney metropolitan area, city people were relieved of making any contribution to the development of the inland districts from which it had drawn its “life blood”.¹³ Dr Walter Spencer,¹⁴ at a meeting of the Bathurst Progress Association, echoed these sentiments stating that the bill “was bad as it could be ... [for] country districts”. Spencer did not just take exception to the metropolis. Inequities in the Bill he said, also favoured newly formed country shires which would receive greater funds, leading to any “cock-a-too settler” in the newly incorporated back blocks benefiting, to the detriment of the established municipalities.¹⁵

When the Bathurst Council received six copies of the Bill from the Municipal Association, the aldermen were reluctant to tackle the task of examining it and they left it to the mayor to call any meetings he saw fit. But parochialism was of greater importance. When the Orange Council proposed convening a conference of the district municipalities, Bathurst alderman James Simmons was less concerned with the legislation than with the suggestion that such an event be held in Orange rather than Bathurst.¹⁶ Orange Council proceeded with its meeting. Eleven of the eighteen municipalities in the Central West and a number from outside the

¹⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 9 June 1891.

¹¹ See N B Nairn ‘The Political Mastery of Henry Parkes New South Wales Politics 1871-1891’ *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 53 pt 1 (1967).

¹² *Ibid*, 11 June 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography William Henry Paul.

¹³ *Ibid*, 23 January 1893.

¹⁴ See Appendix 1 for biography of Walter Spencer.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 18 January and 23 January 1893.

¹⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 12 January 1893. *Western Herald* 1 March 1893. *Town and Country Journal* 4 March 1893. There were eighteen municipalities in the district, Orange (1860) being the oldest with Condobolin and Cudal (both) the most recent; while in July 1893, 143 potential ratepayers in Peak Hill petitioned the Governor for the incorporation of their locality. See Appendix 11 for dates of incorporation.

district promised to attend but only the mayor of Bourke and one alderman each from Molong and Blayney turned up.¹⁷

Given the gamut of municipal functions, the breadth of the proposed legislation was hardly surprising. Councils were responsible for the administration or delivery of services such as waste disposal, drains, water supply, maintenance of roads and in some locations, street lighting. They also dealt with the minutiae of everyday lives such as straying cows in Cowra.¹⁸ Construction works were funded by rates occasionally supplemented by grants and loans from the colonial government particularly for major works such as water supply. In the latter case, a few municipalities including Bathurst, Orange and Forbes, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, had “no scruples” in accepting money provided by the government in the “boom times” with apparently little intention of repaying it¹⁹, particularly when the lack of sufficient funds was a problem. Councils were constantly reprioritising expenditure and dealing with retrenchment. Their decisions often caused resentment within the community with such frustrations given voice in the local press. The latter reported on meetings and often editorialised on specific issues or more generally on the ineptness of the council, mayor and aldermen.

Canon describes the social hierarchy of country towns in their early phase of development, as consisting of proletariat and bourgeoisie. These he split into those “who performed manual labour and soiled their hands [and] those who provided business services and kept their hands clean”.²⁰ This hierarchy evolved as the town matured but the core membership of councils was squarely within the middle-class. Municipal honours offered those in business and ‘employer trades’ the opportunity to boost their status within the community. Ronald Wild suggests that Bradstow’s local council was the purview (in part) of a limited number of “businessmen who share[d] the same basic values and social characteristics”.²¹ In the Central West, of 144 aldermen I have identified as holding office in the district’s municipalities in 1892 most were shopkeepers (23), followed by hoteliers (sixteen) and agents/auctioneers (twelve). Manufacturers and those in trades dominated the 26 other occupations. There were also four newspaper proprietors, three solicitors, one grazier and one ‘gentleman’. All these individuals were overwhelmingly part of the proletariat (even the ‘gentleman’), the only exceptions being

¹⁷ *Western Herald* 1 March 1893, *Town and Country Journal* 4 March 1893.

¹⁸ Alderman Thomas Walsh of Cowra Council thought they had better things to do than persecute “a few poor women getting a living by keeping cows” whereas Alderman Hyams complained that the council was “being done out of commonage fees” *Cowra Free Press* 13 May 1893.

¹⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 August 1893.

²⁰ Canon *Life in the Country*, 240-242.

²¹ Wild *Bradstow*, 18.

the five miners at Hill End.²² It is hardly surprising that the majority of councillors were businessmen. As ratepayers they had a direct interest in how council funds were spent but their livelihoods could be affected if nuisances such as unsafe footpaths and roads impeded customer access to their shops, hotels, etc. Doubtless they all subscribed to underlying values of stability and social order but the behaviour and petty differences of some individuals revealed schisms and even sectarianism.



G.F. Oll's general store and newsagency.

Illustration 34: Cowra Alderman Gustavus Oll

Newspaper coverage of municipal elections occasionally included candidates' statements setting out what they could offer the town. In the Forbes election in February 1892, grazier John Flint, John Muir (blacksmith) and Emanuel Bollinger (watchmaker) were replaced by Charles Rowley (fruitier), Thomas Crowe (auctioneer) and chemist Eugenie Vanzetti. Rowley described himself as a "young man, willing to learn, a native of the town [who] had time on his hands [and] wanted to devote this to the interests of the town and district" while Vanzetti declared he would "devote his time to the interests of the town to the best of his ability". Curiously Crowe stated "personally he would be better out of the Council but having been asked to stand he would endeavour to do his duty".²³ Flint was miffed that a "a boy [was] put in in preference to old experienced men" such as himself who "had been in the district for fifty years and had spent fifteen of these on the council" walking "two miles through mud and water to get to meetings". Girdham and Bollinger complained of foul play with the former claiming to have been "sat on" by other alderman because he did not belong to any "clique".

²² See Appendix 12 for schedule of mayors and aldermen.

²³ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 6 February 1891.

Bollinger was affronted that there were suggestions he had used his position to “get cheap labour for himself in exchange for council work”.²⁴

Similarly, during the Carcoar 1891 election, brewer William Derwin slammed an allegation about his questionable involvement in some work undertaken by the council describing it as a “low mean contemptible cry to get up” and that “he had never done a dishonest thing in his life”. Fellow candidate Hector Lamond declared he had no regrets in his assertions referred to by Derwin. Lamond vowed to throw himself on the will of the ratepayers, declaring “if he failed it would teach him that it was useless any longer to fight the battle of people. If he succeeded it would be a victory for honest administration and public rectitude”. He was not elected.²⁵

Once in Council, novices such as Rowley, Crowe and Vanzetti, soon became aware that council meetings were not all plain-sailing. Aggressive debates over trivial matters, disputes and personality clashes were common. Many meetings descended into farce. Cowra Mayor Harry Mawby struggled to keep order during an acrimonious argument over public works²⁶ and acrimony was the order of the day at Bathurst, generally involving Patrick Ryan.²⁷ Between 1891 and 1893, unseemly incidents at Carcoar, Cowra and Blayney were reported, the latter in the metropolitan press.²⁸ Occasionally, the disagreements became physical such as in Lithgow when aldermen David Brown and George Donald left the meeting for the footpath and fought for several minutes with the remainder of the council looking on.²⁹ It would hardly be surprising then that citizens frequently found fault with their aldermen. The *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* complained that inconsistencies in council decisions were “not calculated to create

²⁴ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 13 February 1891. Flint was defeated at the next council elections in 1892, once again complaining that he “was not surprised at his defeat as some slanders were going about”. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 9 February 1892.

²⁵ *Molong Express* 6 February 1892. The public nomination proceedings became quite lively when mayor and returning officer, John Hade (hotelier), refused to move the meeting, as was customary, to the verandah where about half the ratepayers were waiting”. James Bembrick (storekeeper), an incumbent, relied on his record but Hector Lamond refused to address those few inside and proceeded outside to hold forth to those who had gathered there. The crowd quickly doubled in size to hear Lamond complain of the high-handedness of the returning officer. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Flint, John Muir, Emanuel Bollinger, Charles Rowley, Thomas Crowe, William Derwin and John Girdham.

²⁶ *Cowra Free Press* 1 April 1893.

²⁷ In one instance during a futile discussion on whether Ryan had the authority to represent Bathurst in a Municipal Association deputation to the Minister on the Local Government Bill, Alderman James Simmons called Ryan “a jackass”. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Henry Mawby.

²⁸ *Carcoar Chronicle* 6 February 1892, *Cowra Free Press* 20 November 1892, 1 April 1893, *National Advocate* 30 March and 12 May 1891, *Daily Telegraph* 5 June 1891.

²⁹ *National Advocate* 30 November 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of David Brown and George Donald.

much respect for municipal government” and that “ordinary people would have expected the Council to have stood upon its dignity”.³⁰

Mayors were not immune from the antics in council chambers but they usually commanded greater respect. In addition to presiding over council meetings and fulfilling a host of municipal administrative duties, they called and chaired public meetings on various issues, in one instance, to support of a campaign by the Bourke Council on dealing with “alien Afghans”.³¹ They were the public face of the town greeting visiting dignitaries and occupying the primary position at many public events. Some were magistrates and they were always members or office holders of other civic and voluntary organisations. The occupations of the district’s mayors in 1893 comprised four shopkeepers, four hoteliers, two general agents, two millers, one cordial manufacturer, one brewery manager, one property owner, one farmer, one saddler; and one solicitor. Although this cohort was generally proportional to the occupations of the aldermen in the council this was not the same in all areas. Between 1891 and 1893, there were fewer storekeepers and hoteliers with thirteen different occupations (out of eighteen municipalities) and in 1892 there were twelve (out of ten municipalities) in office in both 1891 and 1892. Mostly though, the proclivities of mayors were little different than other aldermen.

Council workers ranged from the town clerk to day labourers but as with many ordinary people information is scant. Reports on council meetings occasionally included payments for workers’ wages but details were limited. Town clerks such as Frank Stevens Flint in Cowra and Thomas Lovejoy in Mudgee were better known and mostly well regarded in the community. They could also be influential. During brouhaha over the ‘poaching’ of Orange’s head gardener Andrew Patterson, Alderman John Paul declared, amid uproar, that during Henry Larance’s term as mayor, it was the town clerk, Thomas Reeves, who was in charge.³² By 1891 Thomas Reeves had been a trustee employee of the Orange Council for seven years but longevity and trust was not a guarantee of faithful service. Charles Evans who had been the Molong’s town clerk “for many years” was sentenced to six-months imprisonment for embezzlement of Council funds.³³ The inaugural town clerk in Lithgow, John Frederick Flood, was gaoled for

³⁰ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 30 June 1893.

³¹ Lithgow Council in the first instance, *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 March 1893, and then Condobolin Council *Western Herald* 15 November 1893.

³² *Bathurst Free Press* 25 May 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Frank Flint, Thomas Lovejoy, John McCutcheon Paul, Henry William Larance, Thomas Reeves, James Tough and Samuel Burrows.

³³ Evans was also secretary of the local hospital and capital of the local volunteers. *Evening News* 8 August 1892.

embezzling £50.³⁴ Careless accounting was the undoing of James Tough the first town clerk in Condobolin³⁵ but the most notorious case was that of the “absconding town clerk” Samuel Burrows who stole £100 from the Bathurst Council.³⁶



Illustration 35: Cowra Town Clerk Frank Flint and Mary Flint (née Langfield)

The position of town clerk offered stable employment and was keenly sought. At Lithgow 235 people applied for the council clerkship.³⁷ Similarly competition for lesser clerical positions was “keen” prompting the *National Advocate* to complain that competition for council clerical work was “unhappily induced by the eagerness of parents to make their sons ‘gentlemen’ instead of mechanics or skilled laborers”. Nonetheless, the newspaper supported an increase in their salaries to enable them to “maintain any sort of a decent social position”.³⁸

³⁴ After Flood was charged he “lost his head” and went to Fiji. In addition to the theft, Burrows abused the trust of his benefactor Thomas Brown of Bowenfels who had posted £80 bail. Flood asked for clemency stating he had “held position in the Army in England, on the continent and NSW...he had held positions of trust in different finances houses”. *Bathurst Free Press* 27 April 1891. Flood died from consumption in Maitland Gaol in March 1892. *Town and Country Journal* 19 March 1892.

³⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 11 July 1893. Tough declared he was being victimised and that alderman William Johnson had vowed to ruin him. Tough suggested during the meeting that Johnson should “step outside”.

³⁶ Burrows left Bathurst after he was suspended by the council and was described as the “absconding town clerk” in several colonial newspapers. He handed himself in to Brisbane police and was brought back to Bathurst to face trial. He was sentenced to 4 years in prison with hard labour. *Bathurst Free Press* 17 March 1891, 29 and 30 April 1891.

³⁷ “There were 75 clerks, 12 licensed surveyors and engineers, besides architects, journalists, aldermen, draughtsmen, ex-bankers, builders, hotelkeepers, contractors and others, while one applicant described himself as a local preacher”. *Bowral Free Press and Berrima District Intelligencer* 18 October 1893.

³⁸ *National Advocate* 17 January 1892.

Our Absconding Town Clerk



SAMUEL MANTLE BURROWS.

Illustration 36

Other council employees were not as secure in their jobs as town clerks with day labourers the first to bear the brunt of retrenchment. In July 1891 Mayor Francis Crago decided to save the Bathurst council some money by laying off the day labourers until the weather fined up. In response, he received a letter containing a threat to shoot him. The proceedings that followed in council included expressions of outrage, disbelief that any of the municipality's men could have sent it, suggestions that a reward (up to £100) be offered to anyone unmasking the blackguard and the resignation (temporarily) of the mayor who was miffed because two aldermen were less than supportive.³⁹ Nothing came of the affair other than the sacking three months later of two of the labourers, Patrick McCabe and William Elbourne, "to save expense". A correspondent to the *Bathurst Free Press* pointed out that McCabe and Elbourne had been residents of Bathurst for at least 20 years, were known to be good workers and should not have been the first to be laid off.⁴⁰ There were also claims of nepotism. James Cripps was accused of employing his son when other labourers were laid off while Patrick Ryan used

³⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 16 July 1891. At the next meeting the mayor tabled a letter from the corporation's labourers who resentfully and categorically denied any involvement in the affair. Alderman James Cripps though was convinced that it was either one of the workers or their wives who sent it. See Appendix 1 for biographies of James Cripps and Francis Crago.

⁴⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 28 September 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of William Elbourne.

accusations that he gave preference to Catholic day labourers during his term as mayor, as support for a libel action.⁴¹

Sectarianism was evident in local politics at Bathurst between 1891 and 1893 but it is difficult to establish to what extent it was discernible elsewhere. It was an issue at Parkes where the council discussed an application by the ladies' committee of the Church of England to use council premises once a week for "Dorcas purposes". Although there was some concern that if the council room was let to any church committee it would be the "means of introducing of introducing sectarian feeling" the application was granted.⁴² In Orange, the town's correspondent for the *Bathurst Free Press* observed that there had been an attempt to "give the Ratepayers' Association a sectarian color".⁴³ Forbes defeated candidate John Flint alluded to "misrepresentations" that "he was an Orangeman and a Mason [which he wasn't] to prevent him from getting elected".⁴⁴

Councils and councillors were also involved in broader colonial politics. George Donald, Denis Donnelly and George Hutchinson were incumbent MLAs, Edmund Webb was previously in parliament and Hector Lamond harboured parliamentary ambitions. Mayors chaired meetings on political issues such as mining on private land and aldermen were often at the forefront of requisitions supporting parliamentary candidates.⁴⁵ Occasionally wider political issues seeped into the minutiae of council business. In 1891, for example, the National Protection League in Molong sought use of the Town Hall free-of-charge. Some aldermen argued that the request should be granted because there was no charge for a recent meeting of free-traders. Alderman George Windred opposed the request, noting the freetrade meeting was different because it had been called by the mayor. John McGroder argued that the protectionist farmers had no place to meet when they came into town and when the request was turned down, he declared it unfair.⁴⁶

Notwithstanding the almost obligatory but apparently half-hearted commitment to enact the *Local Government Bill*, the colonial parliament and parties showed little interest in municipal government although complaints about money paid to councils and the progress or otherwise of projects peculiar to certain municipalities were common. Reform of local government was

⁴¹ *National Advocate* 22 October 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 28 January 1892 and 2 February 1892.

⁴² *Sydney Mail* 13 June 1891.

⁴³ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 January 1894. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Denis Donnelly.

⁴⁴ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 13 February 1891. Flint was defeated at the next council elections in 1892, once again complaining that he "was not surprised at his defeat as some slanders were going about". *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 9 February 1892.

⁴⁵ *Sydney Mail* 12 December 1891 and 27 August 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of George Windred and John McGroder.

⁴⁶ *Molong Express* 14 March 1891.

one of the original planks of the LEL and was retained as part of its Fighting Platform in 1893. Markey notes that some in the LEL saw local government as an important political base by using council premises such as at Molong but also with municipal candidates using the LEL platform in their campaigns. However, there is little evidence of any significant impact of colonial politicians or policies having much impact in the Central West local politics during the study period.

In 1893 Peak Hill was on the cusp of being declared a municipality. The townsfolk or at least those who had any interest were looking forward to their township being recognised as a mature and cohesive community ready to take control of their own affairs. Meanwhile in many of the more established towns, local councils and their members were variously well-regarded, pilloried or treated with indifference. The lofty ideals of some such as Charles Rowley could be overshadowed by the antics of Patrick Ryan, David Brown and George Donald. At times, regional parochialism and even sectarianism were evident. In many ways, local government was a microcosm of society with responsibility for basic services such as water supply, safeguarding of public health, maintenance of order (enforcing municipal by-laws), entertainment (provision of venues) and economic wellbeing. Councils were employers, and not always just. It could be argued that the petty disputes played out in the town hall were of themselves a reflection of daily life. Newspapers were at once disapproving and yet relished the theatre of council meetings which made good print. Still the Orange correspondent for the *National Advocate* stated that he wouldn't be an alderman at any price" stating that he didn't see what fun there is in staying out at night arguing about kerbs and gutters" when he could be comfortable at home.⁴⁷ This would in part point to their motivation. While being elected as an alderman or holding mayoral office often conferred the status of community leader most shared the same basic societal values and the common objective of ensuring prosperity for their communities.

⁴⁷ *National Advocate* 20 January 1893.

CHAPTER 3 – The Economy

In December 1890, the *Bathurst Free Press* predicted that 1891 would bring “a favourable turning in the wheel of general prosperity”¹ but twelve months later the *Sydney Mail* noted the “gradual working-up of [the colony’s] affairs towards a crisis” making it “difficult to repress the conviction that a change for the better or for the worse cannot long be delayed”.² At the same time, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Bathurst Free Press* and the *Australasian Business and Insurance Record* were more buoyant suggesting that “recuperative powers were still active”, there were “brighter prospects”, “fair promise” and an expectation that “the financial wounds” of 1891 would be “healed”.³ Unfortunately for many, overall economic conditions weakened over the next two years such that at the end of 1893, the worst depression hitherto witnessed in the colony was entrenched. According to the *Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate*, 1893 was marked by “widespread misery and destitution” with many people facing starvation and many more losing their livelihoods. “The financial crisis”, it lamented, “has directly or indirectly affected every member of the community”.⁴ It is the impact of these deteriorating economic circumstances on communities in the Central West that is my focus in this chapter.

An examination of macro-economic situation in the colony during the years under discussion provides the context for an analysis of the Central West’s economy and whether the calamitous circumstances described by the Dubbo newspaper were as keenly felt in the district. Some, like postmaster Silas Bellamy, were cushioned from the penury, by being employed in a secure position but the sequestration hearing reveals other hardships in his life. Madame Maria Rigaut was one of the many women who devoted their time to benevolent work mainly directed towards the deserving poor such as Martha Ely. Then there were the bank managers and their wives including Edward and Caroline Collins, who were upstanding and valued members of the Grenfell community. It is through the lives of these individuals that I explore the financial condition of the district and assess a claim by the *Sydney Morning Herald* that the pressure had not been “as widely felt as other places”.⁵

¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 December 1890.

² *Sydney Mail* 2 January 1892.

³ *Bathurst Free Press* 2 January 1892, *Sydney Morning Herald* 1 January 1892, *Australasian Banking and Insurance Record* XVI no 1 (1892): 2.

⁴ *Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate* 3 January 1894.

⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald* 9 January 1894. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Silas Bellamy, Maria Rigaut and Edward and Caroline Collins.

In 1892, Edward Dowling saw no such danger. He eulogised that Australasia along with the United States and Canada were “admitted to be the three wealthiest communities founded in modern times” and “in natural and acquired wealth New South Wales is the wealthiest Australian Colony”.⁶ He admits Australia had been “touched” by the financial crisis and consequently there were many people out of work, land company failures and “injury” to the colony’s credit. Yet he is unfailingly optimistic about the progress of the colony, the prosperity of its people and future prospects. Later in the decade, an English ‘traveller’ wrote

the inhabitants of New South Wales, as of several other Australian Provinces, lived for many years in a fool's paradise. They had received a magnificent inheritance in the land and were able, owing to the proved mineral resources of the country, to draw upon a practically inexhaustible fund in the willing advances of British capitalists.⁷

In the three decades leading up to 1891, NSW enjoyed a period of sustained economic growth. There had been periodic downturns but no severe depression. Unfortunately, the general prosperity masked a growing structural instability.⁸ In addition to extensive public works, falling revenue and excessive debt, there was rapid and unchecked pastoral and mining expansion and speculation in the development of housing spurred on by substantial population growth and increasing urbanisation. Gordon Wood describes the unhindered “rise of prices, the spread of extravagance, the rush of imports, and the evils of inflation” as “crisis breeding prosperity”⁹ and by 1889 according to Noel Butlin, “most current indicators of economic activity suggested the onset of a severe depression”.¹⁰ The beginning of the inevitable crisis in 1891 brought widespread unemployment, bankruptcies, bank failures and despair although it appears that some parts at least of the Central West’s economy were sufficiently resilient to the worst of these circumstances.

Until the gold discoveries, the economy of the Central West was underpinned by the pastoral industry, small-scale farming and limited commercial activity in townships. In these early days mining was already important in some areas such as Molong where the Copper Hill Mine was the first commercial metalliferous mine in the colony.¹¹ As towns grew and wealth accumulated, shops, services and small-scale manufacturing provided a large degree of urban

⁶ Dowling *Australian and America*, 68, 69.

⁷ H de R Walker *Australasian Democracy* (London: T Fisher Unwin 1897), 34.

⁸ Butlin states that there were “very slight recessions in 1863, 1871, 1876, 1884 and 1886.” Butlin *Investment in Australian Economic Development*, 10.

⁹ Wood *Borrowing and Business*, 25.

¹⁰ Butlin *Investment in in Australian Economic Development*, 10.

¹¹ *Regional histories of New South Wales*, 94.

and rural “economic autonomy”.¹² The mining of other minerals including silver at Sunny Corner and kerosene-shale at Hartley occurred with spasmodic success while coal mining, supplemented by William Sandford’s iron works, was the mainstay of Lithgow and its district. By the end of the 1880s, primary industries remained the lifeblood of the district. As previously discussed, while some of the large pastoral holdings such as Hopkins’ Errowanbang station, had been partially resumed for closer settlement many had consolidated their acreage upon which grazed hundreds of thousands of sheep. Settlers were well established in the east of the district around Cowra, Molong and Bathurst. Other farmer and graziers, boosted by Victorian colonists, were taking up land in the environs of Parkes, Forbes and Trundle. Worked out alluvial gold fields in Gulgong and other places had given way to reef mining carried on by small partnerships and middling size companies.

Molong farmer Joseph Wren was concerned about the extent of farmers’ indebtedness but town luminaries and bank managers vigorously defended the prosperity of the district.¹³ John Roche Ardill¹⁴ supported Wren’s position claiming that “the yeomen and farmers [in the Western Districts] are hopelessly in debt, in fact over ears and head in the mire of insolvency”.¹⁵ Many farmers, particularly in the west were experiencing difficulties. Attempting to make a living on land not suited to agriculture with little capital and obligations to meet the requirements of the *1884 Land Act*, left many people no alternative but to borrow. Some supported their farming activities by working off-farm. But this work was not always easy to get. In February 1892, several of the *Sydney Morning Herald’s* regular country correspondents made it clear there was no scarcity of labour in their areas.¹⁶ The Molong correspondent stated the demand for labour was suppressed by a “large influx of men (ten to one being men from Victoria and the adjoining colonies)” attracted by the construction of the railway. Moreover the fall-off in demand for agricultural labour was due to the “failure of crops generally”. Overall, the correspondent concluded “the prospects of the labour market throughout the district is stagnant and at a standstill”.¹⁷ Unfortunately it is difficult to establish the extent of the indebtedness among farmers without considerably more research.

¹² Davison *Country Life*, 01.1–01.15.

¹³ *Molong Express* 28 February 1891.

¹⁴ See Appendix 1 for biography of John Roche Ardill.

¹⁵ *National Advocate* 5 March 1891.

¹⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 13, 15, 16 and 19 February 1892.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 13 February 1892.



Illustration 37: Reef mining Wyalong



Illustration 38: Lithgow Colliery

There is no question about the impact of the depression on the district's mining sector. Periodic mine closures and some futile industrial disputes led to widespread unemployment and dislocation. The fluctuations in the fortunes of the collieries at Lithgow, for example, took their toll. Lithgow miner Samuel Penna¹⁸, in an interview printed in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, described the situation of the "great mass of miners out of work":

¹⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of Samuel Penna.

Some of them who in the better days now passed, purchased allotments and built themselves little homes out of their thrift savings have had to break them up and leave them in order to seek work elsewhere. Others have temporarily gone away prospecting leaving their wives and children behind. But the bulk of men have nothing to do and are without the means of getting away. It is a sad sight to see these involuntary idle men standing around in groups discussing the situation, cursing railway rights...and parliament and politicians.¹⁹

But while employees of coal mines, gold reef operations and other metals mining were badly affected, gold fossicking was seen by the government as a partial solution to the burgeoning unemployment problem. The Government Labour Bureau, described by John Haynes as “The White Slave Market of Sydney”,²⁰ sent numerous men from hard hit areas, particularly the metropolis, to the goldfields.²¹ In July 1893, 1,000 men were despatched from Lithgow and Newcastle armed with railway passes, miners’ rights and information on the most promising locations with the Lithgow miners farewelled with much ceremony by principals of the so-called ‘Fossickers’ Board’.²² Unemployed people from outside the district seeking work in the region, either on their own account or with the assistance of the Labour Bureau, competed with locals and the district’s seasonal workers.

Throughout 1892 and 1893 local newspapers reported details of the colony’s financial position (and that of Victoria), the privations of the unemployed in the cities and the excesses of the banks. Items on the local economy were generally short, with little analysis hence, it is problematic to test the *Sydney Morning Herald* claim of the limited impact of the financial crisis on some parts of the district but some reports are pertinent.²³ In 1892 the *Cowra Free Press* reported the township of Gooloogong was “terribly dull ...and upon every side the cry of hard times is heard”.²⁴ The hard-pressed “business people” in Forbes welcomed the earlier than usual start to the shearing season which they hoped would “put more money in

¹⁹ *Evening News* 11 November 1893.

²⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 14 June 1893.

²¹ The Government Labour Bureau was established in February 1892. The scheme was lauded as an opportunity for unemployed to work rather than rely on charity for their subsistence. For a detailed analysis of the working of the Bureau see M Kerr *New South Wales Public Employment Services 1887-1942* (PhD thesis University of Sydney 2012). The ‘Under-Secretary of Mines, Harris Wood, Chief Inspector of Mines William H J Slee, Superintendent of Labour Bureau, Joseph Creer and MLA for Tamworth William Springthorpe Dowell.

²² *Illawarra Mercury* 9 August 1893. *Report of the Government Labour Bureau Half-yearly end August 1893*.

²³ *Sydney Morning Herald* 9 January 1894, *Sydney Morning Herald* quotes Bankruptcies in 1891:90; 1892: 153; and 1893: 138.

²⁴ *Cowra Free Press* 10 June 1892.

circulation”²⁵ but it appeared “the depression of the last twelve months was lifting”.²⁶ In Wellington, “notwithstanding the depressed state of the times, several new houses were being built, [Morrel’s] Club House Hotel was nearing completion and work was about to start on additions and renovations of the Catholic church”.²⁷ At Bathurst, even in December 1893, it was reported “the shopkeepers’ takings were said to be the best for many years”.²⁸

It is indisputable though, that people in many communities were in dire circumstances and one reason why it is problematic in quantifying this is, according to the *Cowra Free Press*, “people suffering privation very often keep it from their neighbours, and as they do not noise their misfortunes abroad, such distress remains unknown”.²⁹ Similarly, the *National Advocate* observed there was a different cohort to the class usually identified with poverty. The newspaper noted that “amongst clerks/warehousemen, shop assistants of both sexes and others whose labors are of a similar nature” are many “who would rather suffer in silence than make public their indigent circumstances”.³⁰ Some individuals whose “indigent circumstances” were revealed in magistrate court proceedings had little privacy. These people, particularly the aged, were prosecuted for vagrancy, or having no visible means of support, and were often incarcerated pending orders for their admittance to the Benevolent Asylum. In one case, the *National Advocate* reported that seventy year-old “Jane Grief, alias Mary Cross, an old and feeble Irishwoman, described as a domestic” was remanded with a “view to having the poor old woman removed to a Benevolent Asylum”.³¹ This was also the case with Ellis Peters in Forbes, Molong resident Edward Childs and Neil Brett who lived in Newbridge.³² Not even in death was their anonymity protected such as when the *National Advocate* recorded the deaths of Frank Young and Martha Ely, both approximately eighty years old, noting they had been regular recipients of aid for many years from the Poor Relief Society. The newspaper also

²⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 26 July 1893.

²⁶ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 11 September 1892.

²⁷ *National Advocate* 5 June 1893.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 21 December 1893. One attendee, Barnard, identified as unemployed, gave a “long speech” on fair wages and when he seconded John Meagher’s motion not to establish the labour bureau, he was challenged by Cripps on the basis that he was not a ratepayer or citizen. Barnard retorted that he “had no money” to the former and that he was “a man of New South Wales” to the latter. W H Paul pointed out that “it was a public meeting and any one could vote”. The exchange between Cripps and Barnard with the latter asking, “how can you tell a genuine workingman from a loafer” to which the Mayor responded, “He has been looked for by Mark Twain, but he can’t be found”.

²⁹ *Cowra Free Press* 27 August 1892.

³⁰ *National Advocate* 12 July 1892.

³¹ *Ibid*, 27 September 1892.

³² *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 7 July 1893, *Molong Express* 17 October 1891, *Newbridge Bathurst Free Press* 15 April 1891.

commented it hoped that they were going to a hereafter where “the necessity of begging for the wherewithal to sustain life will be unknown”.³³

There was no suggestion in newspaper reports that Jane Grief and others were undeserving. There were several benevolent societies in the district, including at Bathurst and Orange, ministering to the needs of the “deserving and self-respecting poor”.³⁴ The activities of one of the organisations, the Gulgong Ladies’ Relief Association, prompted the *Mudgee Guardian* to urge Mudgee ladies do the same.³⁵ Subsequently “ladies of all denominations” met and a “cosmopolitan” society was formed to ameliorate distress, notwithstanding the view that it was “the fault perhaps of the sufferers”.³⁶ Mary Loneragan, Edith Beith and two members of the influential Cox family were among those who comprised the membership of the association.

Between 1891 and 1893, as the depression intensified, new societies or committees were established in Cowra, Mudgee, Forbes, Canowindra, Sunny Corner and Blayney, where in the latter case “distress is said to be extensive”.³⁷ These societies were principally organised and managed by women, often the wives of local clergymen or men who were prominent in the activities of the Protestant churches.³⁸ According to Dickey, one objective of the lady members of the “social prestigious” benevolent societies in metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne when they visited the poor was to inculcate class qualities of “thrift, cleanliness and morality” contributing he suggests, to “to the maintenance and reinforcement of existing social values”.³⁹ Whether people such Ellen Donnelly, Madame Maria Rigaut and Davinia Geer in Cowra and Harriet Stewart, Elsbeth Cooper Geikie (née McPherson) and Johanna Treanor in Bathurst, all of whom would share the same middle-class values, preached self-improvement and self-respect to those they helped is not so easily determined.⁴⁰ Perhaps though as Dickey argues, the “turbulent economic pattern” gave some pause to reconsider societal attitudes.⁴¹ This view is demonstrated in an editorial in the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette*. The newspaper

³³ *National Advocate* 18 May 1893.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 22 July 1893.

³⁵ *Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative* 5 May 1890.

³⁶ *The Sydney Mail* 8 August 1891.

³⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 15 August 1893, *Cowra Free Press* 6 May 1893, *Sydney Morning Herald* 28 June 1893, *Bathurst Free Press* 24 June 1893 and *Molong Express* 9 November 1893.

³⁸ One exception to this was the Orange Benevolent Society. In 1891 Methodist, William Symington, was elected as president and “the various clergymen of the town vice-presidents”. *The Sydney Mail* 28 February 1891.

³⁹ B Dickey *No Charity There A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia* (North Sydney: Allen and Unwin 1967) 69.

⁴⁰ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Harriet Stewart, Ellen Donnelly, Davinia Geer, Miss Annie Ousby and Annie and Robert Daly and James Ousby, Michael and Johanna Treanor.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 72.

disparaged “the stock phrases of ‘want of thrift’, drunkenness’, ‘laziness’, ‘want of economy’ etc. [that are] trotted out as the reasons for poverty, misery and wretchedness” when the true cause was the unequal distribution of wealth.⁴²

The extent to which bankruptcy was due to factors beyond some people’s control is debatable. In 1891 approximately ninety individuals in the district were declared bankrupt. There was a significant increase in 1892 to 149, with the number decreasing slightly to 141 in 1893. These statistics, compiled from the New South Wales *Bankruptcy Index* differ considerably from those published in Coghlan’s *Statistical Register* which reported the place of registration rather than the bankrupt’s location. The disparity is significant in some areas such as Bathurst, where according to Coghlan, sequestrations fell from forty in 1892 to thirty in 1893 and at Cowra, from eleven to five.⁴³ The numbers of bankrupts via place of residence as listed in the *Bankruptcy Index* are greater in 1892 and 1893 than those in the *Statistical Register* and it is not possible to reconcile the data.⁴⁴

Other than the yearly increases mentioned above there is no discernible pattern in the data or explanations for regional variations. In Canowindra, there were no bankruptcies in 1891 and only one in 1893 while there were ten in 1892 but there does not appear to be any incidents to account for the differences between the three years. Miners comprised 55% of the bankrupts registered in the township in 1892⁴⁵ but the largest mining venture, the Blue Jacket mine, was operating profitably. An increase in mining activities due to the several miners being granted aid from the prospecting votes may have led to some failures.⁴⁶ Others included farmer Thomas Brown, squatter Charles Henry Smith, publican Thomas Pearse and engine driver John Webber.⁴⁷ There was a similar range of occupations among bankrupts in Forbes where hardship was such that a benevolent society was formed in the same year.⁴⁸ At Parkes, although the *Parkes and Forbes Gazette* observed that business was improving there was

⁴² *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 29 April 1892.

⁴³ Coghlan *Statistical Register 1893, Bankruptcy Index New South Wales Records* <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/state-archives/indexes-online/bankruptcy-insolvency-records/index-to-bankruptcy-records> See Appendix 13 A, B, & C. The Statistical Register includes registrations in 13 locations while a minimum of 50 locations have been compiled from the Index. A reconciliation of the data is almost impossible as it is difficult to identify where the registration of bankruptcies in the various towns, villages and rural settlements have been registered.

⁴⁴ Given the specific nature of the information in the index, I use this data in the thesis

⁴⁵ The mining locations of Boney’s Rock and Gum Creek are included in these numbers.

⁴⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 2 August 1892.

⁴⁷ Thomas Christopher Brown (1864-1932) died Nyrang Creek near Canowindra. Charles Henry Smith of Mogong Station. By 1893 this property was in the hands of the Bank of New South Wales. *The Australian Star* 18 October 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Thomas Pearse.

⁴⁸ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 28 June 1893. These organisations were supported by subscriptions, donations-in-kind, benefits such as concerts and football matches and, in some cases, by a £ for £ government subsidy.

significant increase in numbers (nine in 1891 to 25 in 1892 reducing to fifteen in 1893). In 1892 these included James Wasson who was letter carrier, Tiy Kin a market gardener, Joseph Weston a carrier and jewellers Charles and Edwin Wait.⁴⁹ This was generally the case across the region with the largest categories being labouring (ten, 21 and 27) and mining (nine, 25 and 27).⁵⁰

While people from various backgrounds fell into financial difficulties, many of the causes given were similar. Depression in trade, failure of crops, unavailability of work, pressure of creditors and illness in the family were among the reasons stated. For instance, John Bingham, a compositor in Forbes, deposed that he had had to pay £50 to Dr Horace Sandford⁵¹ and smaller amounts to other doctors and despite taking out a bill for £50 and running a boarding house, where he incurred substantial losses, he could not meet his obligations.⁵² John Kelly of Yeovil Station lost money on a fencing contract, Coats Creek farmer Thomas Nesbitt's crops failed, Patrick Gooley a miner from Sunny Corner couldn't find work, and bad debts and bad times were the undoing of Cowra publican John Wallace.⁵³ Alexander McPhee who was a monumental mason and farmer incurred debts in obtaining his tools but he compounded his situation by playing "dice, euchre, crib and loo" and having problems with the Australian Joint Stock Bank.⁵⁴

Details, beyond the bankrupt's name and occasionally, occupation, were not usually reported in newspapers. Some sensational cases such as those of Michael Treanor and Sydney Webb attracted considerable coverage. Treanor ran a livery, coach building and the Grand Hotel in Bathurst. The hotel was an ambitious undertaking and he was supported in the venture by Sydney Webb, the solicitor son of Edmund Webb, and a "noble army of creditors" involving no less than ten financial institutions. Treanor was unashamedly extravagant and willing to ensnare anyone he could join in his grandiose schemes.⁵⁵ The consequences of his failure, and Webb's, extended beyond the banks and business and trade creditors. Farmers and others

⁴⁹ Two of the latter, Charles and Edwin Wait, suffered the misfortune of having had their premises destroyed by fire. *Sydney Mail* 10 September 1892.

⁵⁰ In 1891, there were nine labourers in seven locations; 1892, 22 in twelve locations with most in Orange (six); and, 1893, 27 in 15 locations with most in Bathurst and Orange. In 1891 there were nine miners in five locations; 1892, there were 25 miners in eleven locations, 5 of these were in Canowindra, and 4 each in Lucknow and Peak Hill; 1893, 20 were in 18 locations (3 in Lucknow).

⁵¹ Dr Horace Sandford of Forbes had died in 1890.

⁵² *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 27 June 1893.

⁵³ *Bathurst Free Press* 14 June and 8 July 1892, *Molong Express* 28 March 1891.

⁵⁴ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 21 July 1893.

⁵⁵ When sequestered Treanor had net liabilities of approximately £31,000 and Webb, £17,000, plus a great deal more he owed his father. Webb's involvement in Treanor's convoluted financial affairs was at best naïve, but more realistically greed, taking advantage of his father's good will in the community and repeatedly deceiving his trust.

were distrained for rent by Webb, endorsement of bills and promissory notes. The Bank of New South Wales and the Bank of Australasia sued Sandy Creek farmer Alexander McLennan. Banks also pursued James Cruickshank of White Rock farmer who deposed that he was “now reduced to working for Chinamen” for a wage and Bathurst bus driver William Edwards was bankrupted “by being mixed up with Sydney Webb in his business by endorsing bills”.⁵⁶

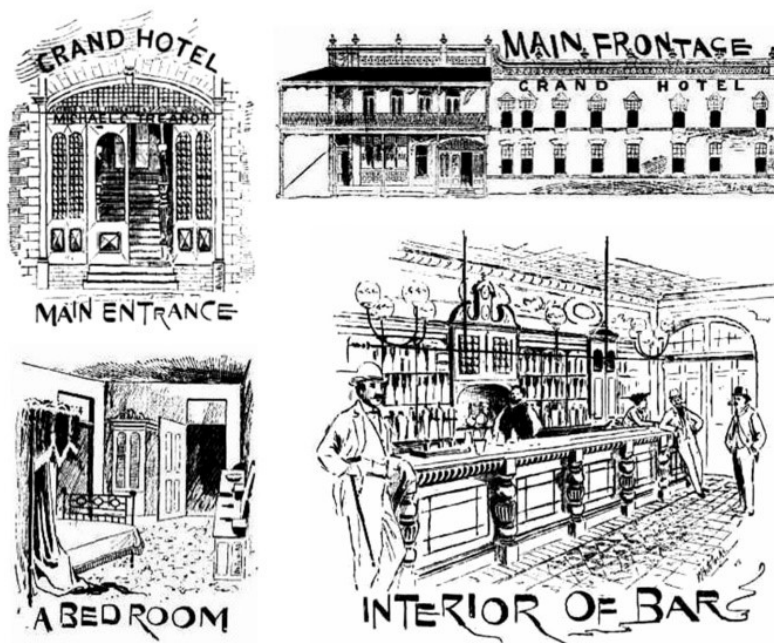


Illustration 39: Michael Treanor’s Grand Hotel

There were some people in communities who benefited from others’ misfortunes. The *Cowra Free Press* reported that “farmers and others ...with ready cash” take advantage of the sale of bankrupt estates to obtain goods “at their own prices”. The newspaper complained that this was “manifestly unfair” and “a very rotten state of affairs” which advantaged the unprincipled men who travelled throughout the district to the disadvantage of established and potential new businesses alike. Clearly the disloyalty of some locals and dishonourable outsiders alike was an affront to the cohesiveness and trust shared in local communities that in another context, E P Thompson famously calls the ‘moral economy’ of local communities.⁵⁷

The *Sydney Morning Herald’s* intimation that the district was less affected by the financial troubles than some other places is possibly borne out more by the banking crisis than bankruptcies. The presence of banks in country towns as with many public institutions was not just a mark of prosperity but also a sign of a community’s maturity. Small towns in the district

⁵⁶ *National Advocate* 2 December 1893 and 28 April 1894. *Bathurst Free Press* 24 February 1894.

⁵⁷ *Cowra Free Press* 12 August 1892. E P Thompson ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century’ *Past & Present* 50 (Feb 1971): 76-136.

lobbied for the opening of banks for status as well as convenience. By 1891 approximately 25 towns had branches of one or more banks, particularly the Commercial Bank, the AJS Bank and the Bank of NSW. We can therefore assume there would be some effect on locals from the changing fortunes of financial institutions.

The crisis in banking has been fully discussed elsewhere.⁵⁸ It is sufficient to note here that the monetary excesses of governments and the operations of foolhardy financial institutions compounded by crises in international financial affairs, led to wholesale failures of land and mortgage companies, building societies and banks. According to Wood unrestrained spending and unsustainable borrowing marked “in a definite and drastic fashion the end of a phase of riotous living and unsound banking”.⁵⁹ However “riotous living” was not evident in the Central West and it is difficult to establish whether “unsound banking” was widespread. Initially banks fared better in NSW than Victoria, although the suspension of various financial institutions was infectious. Between July 1891 and April 1892, twenty building or finance companies suspended payment. There were others in 1893 and several banks including the Commercial Bank and the AJS Bank suspended trading or ceased operating altogether. Three major and respectable building societies had had to suspend operations but, according to Coghlan, there was surprisingly little panic in the colony and the public seemed reassured when trading recommenced.⁶⁰

In early 1892 there was an ‘infamous’ run on the Savings Bank of NSW. Both contemporary observers and economic historians concur that the run was unjustified, although there was clearly sufficient disquiet in the metropolis for depositors to panic. The bank continued to trade and to meet its obligations. The government, with Premier George Dibbs appearing at its doors, writing “in his own hand a proclamation guaranteeing its deposits” and other banking institutions publicly declared their financial support. The commotion quietened almost as quickly as it began.⁶¹ There was no ripple effect in Bathurst, Orange, Mudgee and Carcoar

⁵⁸ See for example, S J Butlin *Foundations of the Australian Monetary System 1788-1851* (Sydney: Sydney University Press 1968); Cain ‘Pastoral Expansion and Crisis’; Cannon *The Land Boomers*; D T Merrett ‘Australian banking practice’; Wood *Business and Borrowing*; and, a contemporary account - George R Dibbs *The Imperial State Paper on The Australian Crisis of 1893* (Sydney: NSW Government Printer 1894).

⁵⁹ Wood *Business and Borrowing*, 62.

⁶⁰ T A Coghlan *Labour and Industry in Australia Volume III* (Macmillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd 1969) 1658-1680.

⁶¹ The panic was said to have been started by the “scandalous utterances” of someone (purportedly a delegate of the Trades and Labour Council) “haranguing the unemployed” at a public meeting. He was alleged to have said “he had heard that the Savings Bank of New South Wales in Barrack-street had gone bung” but later he insisted he was seriously misquoted. Anarchists, unionists, loafers, larrikins and pick-pockets were variously named as being involved in instigating the panic. *Sydney Morning Herald* 12 February 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 12 February 1892, *Town and Country Journal* 20 February 1892.

where the bank had branches and it was reported that “there was not even the semblance of a run on the Mudgee branch” or “anxiety” in Bathurst”.⁶² There was little sympathy in many newspaper accounts of depositors attempting to enter the bank’s premises in Sydney. Women in particular were ridiculed. The *National Advocate*, without a scrap of empathy or a thought for the desperate circumstances many would be in if they lost their savings, reported that despite a large police presence, “women fought desperately to get to the counter and clawed and scratched each other in their excitement”.⁶³

In April and May 1893 many communities throughout the district were alarmed when two of the colony’s largest banks suspended trading. The AJS Bank that had more branches (22) in the district than any other closed its doors in early April 1893. The Commercial Bank which operated in fifteen locations followed shortly after”.⁶⁴ In Orange the AJS Bank closure caused many people “the greatest inconvenience imaginable” but the panic soon “fizzled out”.⁶⁵ The bank closure was more than an inconvenience for the thirty miners who lost their jobs at the Kohinoor mine near the town.⁶⁶ The *Australian Star* reported that the suspension of the AJS Bank prompted “an excitable” rush on the other banks in Cowra. This quickly abated on the “action and advice” of the managers of the Commercial Bank, Edward William Hulle, and the Bank of NSW, James T Evans. Also, a “large printed notice” outside Murray and Smith’s store “offering 20s 6d worth of goods for AJS Bank notes, went far to allay the excitement by giving depositors a feeling of confidence”.⁶⁷ In Grenfell, several “influential people and large customers of the bank” visited the manager of the local branch [Edward Collins] to express their confidence in the institution”.⁶⁸ George H Green, manager of the Bathurst branch of the Commercial Bank, received the news of the bank’s suspension with “feelings of utmost astonishment” after having assured readers of the *National Advocate* just one month previously of the unquestionable security of the institution.⁶⁹ Some customers throughout the district were hard hit. At Condobolin, it was feared that the bank would “cause an almost total collapse of business” particularly as many residents had opened accounts at the Commercial

⁶² *Sydney Morning Herald* 16 February 1892, *National Advocate* 13 February 1892.

⁶³ *National Advocate* 13 February 1892.

⁶⁴ Between July 1891 and May 1893, 22 banks failed in both colonies. Commercial Bank of Sydney branches were in Bathurst, Blayney, Carcoar, Canowindra, Condobolin, Cowra, Cudal, Forbes, Lithgow, Molong, Mudgee, Orange, Parkes, Sunny Corner Wallerawang, Wellington. Australian Joint Stock Bank branches were in Bathurst, Blayney, Cargo, Condobolin, Cowra, Cumnock, Cowra, Cumnock, Forbes, Grenfell Gulgong, Lake Cudgellico, Molong Mudgee, Newbridge, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Peak Hill, Rockley, Rylstone, and Sunny Corner.

⁶⁵ *National Advocate* 24 April 1893.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 10 May 1893. The mine was located near Orange.

⁶⁷ *Australian Star* 24 April 1893.

⁶⁸ *The Sydney Mail* 6 May 1893.

⁶⁹ *National Advocate* 10 April 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Edward Hulle, James T Evans and George H Green.

when the AJS Bank suspended trading. The *Sydney Mail* reported that many business people in the town were “making for the Burra Burra [gold] rush”. While in February 1893, the trustees of the Bathurst hospital experienced difficulties with the “failure of the Anglo-Australian Bank, and the consonant depreciation of the amount deposited by the trustees in that unfortunate institution”.⁷⁰

The experience of individuals reminds us of the importance of understanding the macro through the lens of the micro. Louisa Walsh observed that business in Mudgee “was very slack” and that “the failure of the banks is responsible for a good deal of the depression at present existing”.⁷¹ Joseph Irvine who was already in financial difficulties with the Bank of Australasia was concerned about the impact of the closure of the AJS Bank on “other Banks and their customers”.⁷² Meanwhile Thomas O’Shaughnessy’s less than amicable relationship with J K Morrice, a Sydney-based shareholder in one of his mining ventures, was further tested when Morrice asserted he was unable to pay monies owed to O’Shaughnessy due to the closure of the AJS Bank.⁷³ There were also mixed reactions to the reconstruction proposals both banks submitted to depositors. In Wellington, some prominent citizens including David Scott and Thomas Quirk were in favour of trusting “the liberality of the bank directors” but the majority did not agree. Depositors at Grenfell, for example, believed that they were “being sacrificed in the interests of shareholders”.⁷⁴

Peter Rheinberger was a depositor with the Commercial Bank. He renewed his deposit of £240 with 4½% interest in February 1893 and there is no expression of concern in his diary when trading suspended.⁷⁵ Miners in Lucknow were sufficiently concerned about their meagre savings deposited in banks that in May 1893, they withdrew their funds and prevailed upon their local member Henry Newman to “act as banker till a government savings bank was opened”. Reminiscent of the women seeking to recover their savings from the Bank of NSW, the *Goulburn Herald* described the scene as one of considerable excitement “despite assurances that there was no cause for alarm”. Newman deposited the money in his own account at the Union Bank and immediately applied to the government for a post office bank

⁷⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 1 February 1893.

⁷¹ *Louisa Walsh diary* 13 May 1893.

⁷² *Joseph Irvine correspondence* 8 May 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Joseph Irvine.

⁷³ *Thomas O’Shaughnessy diary* 17 April 1893.

⁷⁴ *Sydney Mail* 7 May 1893 and 13 May 1893.

⁷⁵ *Peter Rheinberger diary* 15 February 1893. Rheinberger used the Savings Bank as a working account regularly depositing and withdrawing small amounts and maintaining a balance of approximately £120-£200

to be established.⁷⁶ The post office banks provided greater security for lower income earners. William Bellamy, deposed at the inquiry into the extension of the railway from Parkes to Condobolin that the deposits at Condobolin increased from £1,444 in 1892 to £3,702 in 1893, reflecting the uncertainty of the times.⁷⁷

Building societies, in addition to banks, funded residential building activity throughout the colony with the former diminishing in importance in the metropolitan area from the 1870s onwards but according to Butlin “they continued to thrive...in country towns”.⁷⁸ A small number of building societies and at least one land investment company operated in the district.⁷⁹ The latter which was formed in 1888, was a major developer in Bathurst with the *Illustrated Sydney News* noting in 1890 “the pile of buildings being erected” for the company in William Street. In January 1893, the directors of the company reported a successful year’s trading despite the difficult times and boasted that it was “one of the best securities in New South Wales”⁸⁰. Just how well the company fared during the rest of the year is questionable with the *National Advocate* reporting five months later that many depositors “thought it desirable to withdraw their deposits” totalling £,1000.

Most building societies were Starr Bowkett’s which were co-operative, non-profit and terminating societies. These originated in London in the 1840s and were founded on the principle of providing interest-free loans to the less-well off extending, as stated by Maxine Darnell, the “consumptions possibilities of, and ... [providing] economic independence to, a broad spectrum of society”.⁸¹ An editorial in the *Bathurst Free Press* in November 1892 gives weight to Darnell’s view, suggesting that “the working classes of the community appreciate the advantages offered ... as an investment for a portion of their weekly wages”. Indeed the four Starr Bowkett societies in the town, it declared, “promoted thrift” and provided “scores of

⁷⁶The *Goulburn Herald* reported that the miners had “invaded Mr. Newman’s private residence, bringing, in many small amounts, money up to £760... The money was brought in in old stockings, shirt sleeves, felt hats, etc”. *Goulburn Herald* 5 May 1893. By the end of the month, the Government had agreed to open the bank. *Evening News* 31 May 1893.

⁷⁷ *Parkes to Condobolin Railway Inquiry*. Prior to his bankruptcy Bellamy divorced his wife Susannah and he deposed that it his financial woes were partially due to her extravagance.

⁷⁸ Butlin *Investment in Australian Economic Development*, 249.

⁷⁹ There were several Starr Bowkett societies located in Orange Forbes, Mudgee and Bathurst. Other building societies in the district included the Mudgee Building and Investment Society, the Gulgong Building and Investment Society, the Orange Permanent Building and Investment Society and the Grenfell Terminating Building Society. *NSW State Records Index of Defunct Building Societies Files Series 1304*. <http://search.records.nsw.gov.au/series/1304>.

⁸⁰ *Illustrated Sydney News* 17 April 1891. The directors included James Rutherford, Thomas Machattie and Henry Barham. Shareholders included Walter Spencer, Charles Toole and Eugene Parker *National Advocate* 25 January 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Eugene Parker Charles Toole and James Rutherford.

⁸¹ M Darnell ‘Attaining the Australian Dream: The Starr-Bowkett Way’ *Labour History* No. 91 (November 2006): 29.

men of small means who would under ordinary conditions remain rent payers for the remainder of their lives today the possessors of comfortable homes". These organisations were not benevolent but they were part of the self-help ethos that prevailed at the time. The directors generally comprised a different cohort than those who managed civic organisations and provided a community service to aid those who aspired to become "home owning artisans".⁸² In January 1891, most of the twelve directors of the No 4 Starr Bowkett society were tradesmen or had businesses in trades.⁸³ James Cripps, James Simmons and Alfred Dowse were trustees but the "upper echelons" of Bathurst society usually present when the self-improvement of the working-classes was at stake, presumably considered the trades could handle it on their own.

If there were few concerns about the steadfastness of the local societies, the frauds perpetrated by the directors of some of the larger colonial financial institutions, in particular the Australian Banking Company of Sydney, outraged communities. The company suspended payments in November 1891 and in July 1892 it was revealed that "all the banks directors, nine of its employees and its solicitors were indebted to the company for £62,000, the security for these loans being almost worthless".⁸⁴ Many of those concerned with the company had political connections, including John Hurley and Francis Abigail.⁸⁵ The drama of the various arrests and criminal proceedings was repeatedly reported in the local newspapers.⁸⁶ The arrest of Arnold Mathey at Peak Hill in August was a local sensation.⁸⁷ Neither Hurley nor Mathey were convicted. Abigail and Roderick McNamara, the manager, were found guilty and sentenced to five years and seven years hard labour, respectively, in Darlinghurst gaol. The presiding judge Sir William Windeyer was said to be distressed when sentencing Abigail and even the *National Advocate* consistently a strident critic of the fraudsters, lamented the severity of Abigail's sentence but only because of "the already shattered health of a semi invalid".⁸⁸ Lithgow correspondent for the *Bathurst Free Press* had little sympathy for Abigail

⁸² *Bathurst Free Press* 28 November 1892

⁸³ They were Joseph Thomas Slack (blacksmith), James Simmons (baker), John Tremain (flour miller), H Rendall (plumber), J R Jones (stationer/bookseller), James Dewar snr (bricklayer), P S Shanks (blacksmith), Arthur Henry (Harry) Sherman (railway employee), Arthur B James (cordial manufacturer), William O'Keefe and M Morris (occupations unknown), Samuel Mantel Burrows (town clerk). The secretary was Robert William. *National Advocate* 15 June 1895. See Appendix 1 for biographies of James Simmons, Arthur James John and Henry Sherman and Peter Shanks.

⁸⁴ Cannon *The Land Boomers*, 123.

⁸⁵ See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biographies of John Hurley and Francis Abigail.

⁸⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 15 October 1892.

⁸⁷ At the time of his arrest, he was a "shareholder in a claim at Barabadeen" (near Peak Hill) where the *Blayney Advocate* reported he had gone "wither to try his luck". Unfortunately, "fortune... did not smile upon him, and when the police found him he appeared to be in any but affluent circumstances." *Blayney Advocate and Junction Advertiser* 6 August 1892.

⁸⁸ Canon *The Land Boomers*, 123; *National Advocate* 4 November 1892.

when reporting that the widows of the eight miners killed in two accidents at the Lithgow colliery in early 1886, were creditors. The writer was just as scathing of the trustees, one of whom was Abigail as treasurer,⁸⁹ for the foolish investment, asking whether they would be “responsible to the widows” for their financial loss.⁹⁰

In contrast to the “glib and well-dressed scoundrels” involved in bank collapses and scandals, bank managers in local communities were well-respected. They, with their wives, were generally active in community affairs. John Dowling-Brown was president of the Millthorpe Progress Association and secretary of the Horse Parade and Ploughing Match Committee.⁹¹ Edward J Collins, manager of the Grenfell branch of the AJS Bank from 1888, was a member of the hospital committee and School of Arts, and his wife Caroline was involved in the usual fund-raising and donations as befitted respectable women in the community.⁹² Similarly William Ashman Stokes (AJS Bank) had spent most of his sixteen years in managerial positions in Cowra. When he retired in December 1893 he was described as having “identified himself usefully with every local progressive movement” and was “deservedly popular as a townsman and in his capacity as a bank official”.⁹³

As with school teachers and clergy, many bank managers were stationed in towns only for short periods. Their departures were often marked by testimonials and presentations indicative of the respect in which the position was held. John William Phillips had only been manager of the Carcoar branch of City Bank for twelve months when he was posted to Young. At a farewell banquet, he was lauded as someone with “uprightness, genial presence, and gentlemanly bearing” that had “identified with many movements for the advancement of the town”.⁹⁴ The sentiment expressed in the illuminated address signed by four of Carcoar’s leading citizens Thomas Fitzpatrick, William J Derwin, James Bembrick and Hector Lamond is indicative of the position bank managers occupied in communities. It recognised his “unvarying courtesy... willingness to oblige...your anxiety to advance the interests of the Institution you

⁸⁹ *Nepean Times* 11 April 1891. Another prominent member was Edward James Howes Knapp (1836-1931). Knapp was a licensed surveyor. He was honorary secretary of the Local Option League and was involved in other charitable funds including the Bulli Colliery and the NSW Flood Relief Funds. Knapp was also a prolific correspondent to newspapers as diverse as payment of members, divorce and a proposal for a fruit market in Sydney. *Sydney Morning Herald* 13 January 1931, 26 February 1891, 14 July 1891, 8 July 1891; *Evening News* 26 January 1891 and *Illawarra Mercury* 26 January 1891.

⁹⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 29 July 1892. One of the consequences of the bank failures was greater momentum in the movement to establish a National Bank. This was the 9th Platform of the LEL and it remained a priority when it was included as the 6th plank of its fighting platform in 1893 but there did not seem to be much debate on the issue in the district.

⁹¹ *National Advocate* 15 September 1892 and 19 January 1894.

⁹² *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser* 14 March 1903.

⁹³ *National Advocate* 18 December 1893.

⁹⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Phillips and Thomas Fitzpatrick.

represent”.⁹⁵ Phillips’ murder four days later at the bank outraged the community, not just for the brutality of the crime and the identity of the killer, both of I discuss elsewhere, but that such act could be perpetrated against someone so intimately concerned with the affairs of everyday citizens.



Illustration 40: Testimonial to John W Phillips

Between 1891 and 1893 economic conditions in the colony deteriorated. Financial institutions’ failure, increases in unemployment and bankruptcies and businesses closures brought about the ruin of numerous people. Based on some newspaper reports and bankruptcy data it is reasonable to concur with the *Sydney Morning Herald’s* assessment about the uneven impact of the deepening depression on the district. Businesses shut in some towns and areas but not in others. Bank suspensions were an inconvenience for some but devastating for others. Much

⁹⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 25 September 1893. An article in the *Bathurst Free Press* noted that Phillips was “universally esteemed, as was also his amiable wife [Annie]. He was not in robust health, and was remarkably short-sighted, and by artificial light could scarcely recognise anyone the width of an ordinary room away”. *Bathurst Free Press* 27 September 1893.

of the misery was hidden. Benevolent societies were established in several towns in the district to support the deserving and undeserving poor and communities had to deal with the influx of jobless workers from the metropolis. Newspaper reports of dire economic predictions, bankers' treachery and the aggression of an ever-growing army of unemployed in Sydney, ensured people were alert to threats to the prosperity and social order of their communities. The *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* denounced the "unequal distribution of wealth". At the same time, in many areas it appeared that those underlying tenets of society were intact. Local bank managers could be trusted, members of benevolent societies were able to impart middle class values in their charitable works and the dislocation of communities did not appear to be widespread. Hence, while there were anxieties for the future, the status quo prevailed and the social fabric of Central West society remained intact.

Chapter 4 Politics and Labour

Part 1: Politics

On 3 January 1891 the *Richmond River Herald* reported that the Department of Public Instruction decided to institute an inquiry into a complaint by the newly re-elected member for West Macquarie, Paddy Crick, that one of the masters of the Bathurst Public School had encouraged his pupils to “hoot” at him.¹ The incident had allegedly occurred on 9 December 1890, the day of the declaration of the poll for the by-election brought about by Crick’s expulsion from Parliament two months earlier.² According to Crick a large number of children “acting under instructions” had lined up and “hooted” him while he was stepping into a carriage and he vowed to “bring the originator of the dastardly act” to justice. While the Department confirmed that the incident had occurred, it was unable to substantiate whether it was specifically directed towards Crick. In any case the Department attached no blame to the teachers noting that they actually took steps to “stop the noise”.³ Crick was the most controversial political figure in the district throughout the years studied here. His outrageous behaviour offended many people in his electorate and throughout the colony but he was also very popular. According to Cyril Pearl, his “pugnacity, irreverence [and] unconventionality” garnered wide appeal.⁴ Crick fulsomely engaged with his constituents during election campaigns as did many others but his capacity to elicit responses such as “hooting” from his detractors was singular.

¹ *Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser* 3 January 1891.

² *National Advocate* 10 December 1890.

³ In a letter to Crick the under-secretary of the Department advised him that the head teacher had been instructed “to impress upon his pupils the necessity for better behavior in the playground in future, and that he and the teachers under him will be expected to exercise greater control over the children so as to prevent any unseemly conduct on their part.” *National Advocate* 5 May 1891.

⁴ Cyril Pearl notes that “During his 17 years of political life, the violence of his tongue and the irresponsibility of his behaviour involved him in countless brawls, many of them physical, with his fellow legislators, and libel cases, criminal and civil...[his qualities] pugnacity, irreverence, unconventionality. He dressed like a tramp, talked like a bullocky and to complete the pattern of popular virtues, owned champion horses which he backed heavily and recklessly.” C Pearl *Wild Men of Sydney* (Melbourne: Lansdowne Press 1970) 39.



PADDY CRICK, 1906
". . . licensed larrikin".

Illustration 41: Paddy Crick

This account of the politician, the teacher and the school children chronicles probably the most bizarre grass-roots interaction of ordinary people with politics in the district between 1891 and 1893. Contesting elections, participating in the hustings, voting, joining political or special interest organisations, attending meetings, lobbying politicians and even debating in local societies, were more commonplace ways in which ordinary people appeared in the political narrative. A complete account of society in the Central West between 1891 and 1893 must include such a narrative and as suggested by Samuel Hays, examining how political forces are manifested in a community provides an opportunity to draw "connections between smaller and larger contexts of life".⁵ Thus by studying the interaction of people in political processes, we can gain a better understanding of broader themes. In this chapter I explore the political landscape of the district and engage with some of the individuals involved in the theatre, rituals and institutions. What is evident from this discussion is that politics could be a divisive

⁵ S P Hays 'Politics and Social History' in J Gardner and G Adams G (eds) *Ordinary People and Everyday Life* (Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History 1983) 173.

force uncovering resentments and fissures in society, leaving a firm imprint on the everyday life. The self-interest and duplicitous conduct of some protagonists threatened community values and trust and undermined the cohesiveness and stability that were characteristics of *gemeinschaft*. Still, notwithstanding the divisions, emotions and rhetoric, there was no threat to the good order of the Central West.

Debating societies were one of the most low-key opportunities for ordinary people to participate in political activities. While the extent of memberships of the many societies scattered throughout the district was not substantial, these organisations were part of the social fabric of communities. A number of towns including Wellington, Grenfell, Bathurst, Millthorpe, Molong, Meranburn, Lithgow and Perth boasted associations variously known as debating, literacy, mutual improvement societies and dramatics. Residents of Kelso formed a society in association with the local football club. Between 1891 and 1892 one of the most commonly debated topics was the extension of women's suffrage, although the tariff, Eight-hour day, federation and land tax also featured. In July 1891, the Orange correspondent to the *National Advocate* reported the newly formed society at Orange debated whether the Labour Party should "support the Government at the present juncture". In noting that the organisation had been formed under the auspices of the local LEL the newspaper suggested it would benefit "young men who only needed to overcome natural shyness to become good speakers and ready debaters".⁶

Women had access to the societies although details are scant. At Millthorpe about the same number of women and men adjudicated a discussion of women's franchise and at Cudal Martha Mockett and Dr Robert Broom led a debate on "women's rights" at a meeting of the IOGT Lodge.⁷ Elizabeth Willis, wife of local Presbyterian minister Charles Willis was an active participant in the Lithgow Literary and Debating Society.⁸ Similarly, Annie Furness and Ada L Mutton were members of the Perth Mutual Improvement and Debating Society. Together with teacher Frederick Berman they produced a journal, *The Vale Star*, which according to the *Bathurst Free Press*, was "instructive" and dealt with "a variety of subjects".⁹ Clergymen such as John Alldis and Ernest Flecknoe were also well-represented in these societies.¹⁰

⁶ *National Advocate* 15 July 1891.

⁷ *Molong Express* 23 September 1893.

⁸ *Lithgow Mercury* 22 July 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Martha Mockett, Elizabeth Willis and Ada Mutton.

⁹ The *Bathurst Free Press* noted that "the most striking feature...is that it has been printed without type or press". According to the journal's editorial "We have selected the name 'The Vale Star,' because we trust sincerely our paper will be the means of shedding a light— may be a very mild and gentle one, but a light nevertheless— on many subjects that will interest and instruct our members ; it will at all times

Many of these societies conducted ‘parliamentary’ debates where office holders and debaters adopted the roles of premier, leader of the opposition and such like. While newspaper reports refer to lively or spirited debates there were no suggestions of any unruly behaviour which was not the case for the colony’s parliament. At times parliament was paralysed by continuous changes of governments and ministries, stalling tactics of the opposition and other members through frivolous censure motions, interminably long speeches and abuse of process. Factions depicted by Peter Loveday and Allan Martin as being incoherent and indistinct “without doctrine, principle or belief”, and “lacking in structure or organisation”, dominated politics and contributed to the volatility of parliament up until the late 1880s.¹¹ Ministries typically survived or fell as ambitious leaders manoeuvred to muster disparate forces based on personality, loyalty, allegiances and patronage. This had been the situation since the inception of responsible government. But despite what Bede Nairn describes as “confusion, incoherence and general ineptitude”,¹² the business of governing the colony, according to Geoffrey Hawker, was secure and surprisingly productive.¹³

The interplay of competing parochial interest groups organised to promote commercial, temperance and land settlement issues, and the lobbying of local members to obtain concessions, public works and the like for their electorates, kept all involved alert to the possibilities or the perils. Committees were formed and agents appointed to lobby voters and provide incentives to secure votes. Still, by 1892, Queanbeyan MLA Edward W O’Sullivan claimed “many problems which still vex older communities have been solved and doctrines once considered dangerous to society have been applied with beneficial results to mankind”.¹⁴ The “problems solved and doctrines...applied” included the Eight-hour day, state socialism with the ownership of important infrastructure, a labour bureau, courts of conciliation and

twinkle kindly and cheerily upon members, who are anxious to improve, and need a word of encouragement now and again : it will shine brightly and steadily as a beacon-light to help to guide the society through the shoals and quicksands that so often threaten such institutions, and — though may the day be long distant— should abuses creeping, or darkness obtain a foothold anywhere in connection with our meetings, it will, blaze upon them with a light clear as the sun”. A second edition was produced in January 1892 but there does not seem to be any others. *Bathurst Free Press* 10 September 1891, 8 January 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Frederick Berman.

¹⁰ Other participants included storekeepers such as Harold Elkington at Millthorpe and Thomas Bembrick at Carcoar, William Train compositor and secretary of the LEL (Bathurst) and John Connelly proprietor of the Royal Hotel at Wellington. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Train, Harold Elkington, Thomas Bembrick and John Alldis.

¹¹ Loveday and Martin *Parliament Factions and Parties*, 4.

¹² N B Nairn ‘The Role of the Trades and Labour Council in New South Wales 1871-1891’ in M Beever and F B Smith (compilers) *Historical Studies Selected Articles Second Series* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 1967): 10.

¹³ G Hawker *The Parliament of New South Wales 1856-1965* (Ultimo: Government Printer 1971) 22.

¹⁴ O’Sullivan *Social, Industrial, Political and Co-operative Associations*, ii.i

arbitration, and the government's process for approval of public works.¹⁵ Festering issues around the tariff crystallised loosely into parliamentary groupings converging on free trade and protection and these 'parties' emerged as a new force in the colony's political arena.¹⁶

According to Loveday and Martin, the mantra of free-trade first emerged as a political issue in the early 1880s suggesting "the mercantile strain in the colony's liberalism [explained] the strength of the free trade dogma". Over the intervening years to 1891, issues including drought, poor prices for their produce, unfair competition from other colonies and increasing unemployment prompted farmers, some unionists and others to take up the protectionist cause. Free-traders on the other hand opposed trade restrictions with a subsequent increase in the cost of living and undue interference of government on private lives. Those concerned with industries such as the wool or mining industries which were less likely challenged by cheap overseas imports, were more inclined to support free-trade.¹⁷ During the study period, freetraders suggested that unionists in industries such as coal mining were working against their own best interests.¹⁸ In 1891 almost all parliamentary candidates in the district's electorates had entrenched freetrade or protectionist leanings and there were pockets of supporters of these principles in various electorates reflecting the population cohort and principal occupations.

Between 1891 and 1893, parliamentary business was as would be expected. Most statutes related to revenue, appropriation, administration, railways including the *Molong to Parkes Railway Act* 1890 or other public works and related location specific issues. Other legislation concerned crown lands, arbitration and electoral legislation. There were some important social issues addressed with the passage of the *Children Protection Act* 1892 and the *Divorce Amendment and Extension Act* 1892 and the Legislative Council continued to be obstructive passing only one-third of those Bills presented.¹⁹ This left a great deal of significant legislation including the regulation of local government, described by the *Bathurst Free Press* as another of the "slaughtered innocents", unfinished or abandoned. The newspaper noted in June 1893

¹⁵ Ibid. Hawker notes that the franchise was extended, the constitution made easier to amend, the secret ballot and payment of members won, and the electoral and educational systems slowly reformed. Complex Land Acts regulating the shipping and mining industries, trade unions, friendly societies and employers were implemented...The House sanctioned negotiations with Victoria...to remove duties on intercolonial trade". Hawker *The Parliament of NSW*, 22.

¹⁶ Loveday and Martin *Parliamentary Faction and Parties*, 121.

¹⁷ Ibid, 122. Also see A W Martin 'Free Trade and Protectionist Parties in NSW' *Australian Historical Studies* 54 no 23 (1958).

¹⁸ See *Bathurst Free Press* 24 January 1891 and *Australian Star* 30 October 1891 for contemporary arguments. Also B R Wise *Industrial Freedom* (London Paris and Melbourne: Cassell and Company Limited 1892).

¹⁹ New South Wales Government *NSW Legislation*

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/table/catalogue/18910101/18931231>.

that the second session of the fifteenth parliament “sputters and flickers out with a magnificent record of unfulfilled plans, unperformed work and unredeemed promises”.²⁰

The *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1893* (‘1893 Electoral Act’) was arguably the most important reform enacted during these years.²¹ Prior to this, the *Parliamentary Representatives Allowance Act 1889* was the most far-reaching change to the electoral laws since the 1858 *Electoral Act*.²² The 1889 legislation provided for the payment of £300 per annum for members and gave ‘working men’ and those of limited means a realistic opportunity to enter parliament. Only a short period had elapsed before these people, mainly those representing the LELs, took advantage of the reform. Although trade unionists had procrastinated over the need to enter the parliamentary arena since the mid-1880s, no definitive proposals had materialised. Lobbying by the New South Wales Trades and Labour Council (TLC) and unions, the occasional alignment with other interest groups, together with some parliamentarians apparently willing to take up union issues, provided some exposure.²³ The latter though, failed to impress. Thomas Roydhouse and H J Taperell lamented that “there were several members in the New South Wales Parliament ...who claimed to represent ‘the working man’ or the ‘Trade Unions sometimes they put it one way and sometimes another’”.²⁴

With the introduction of the parliamentary allowance, plans for direct political representation gathered momentum particularly when the NSW Labour Defence Committee (of the TLC) declared that, with the barriers having fallen with the failed industrial action, reform could only be obtained in Parliament.²⁵ In October 1890 the TLC began making contact with country centres. For example, letters were sent “to the mining and pottery unions at Lithgow asking them to confer with the Eskbank Engine Drivers’, Fireman’s and Cleaners’ Association to select and assist in the return of a Labor candidate at the next elections”.²⁶ In November William Guthrie Spence urged union members to join electoral rolls and support the TLC’s proposed labour electoral leagues²⁷ and, in the wake of the establishment of a Balmain league, branches

²⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 3 June 1893.

²¹ Hawker *The Parliament of NSW*, 14

²² The 1858 *Electoral Act* instituted virtual adult male suffrage (except Aborigines) and the secret ballot.

²³ Markey *The Making of the Labor Party*, 172.

²⁴ Roydhouse and Taperell *The Labour Party of NSW*, 12.

²⁵ Quoted by Gollan *Radical and Working-Class Politics*, 128.

²⁶ Nairn *Civilising Capitalism*, 44 (quoting TLC minutes 30 October 1890). A few months earlier the Lithgow potters had been involved in a bitter strike. William Stritch was the secretary of the union. *Evening News* 1 July 1890.

²⁷ Gollan *Radical and Working Class Politics*, 165. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of William Guthrie Spence.

were formed in several towns in the district, including Orange, Condobolin, Forbes, Lithgow, Cumnock and Peak Hill.²⁸

Prior to the 1891 election, James Toomey, secretary of the Young branch of the Amalgamated Shearer's Union of Australasia (ASU), canvassed nearby towns, "to organise branches of the Shearers' Union, the General Labourers Union and the ELEs".²⁹ At a mass meeting in Forbes, he reiterated the need for labour to have friends from their own ranks who would "alter a lot of bad laws" some of which were made "in the time of George IV and Queen Elizabeth when men had their heads chopped off for trifles".³⁰ A branch of the LEL with bootmaker Ignatius Bell elected as secretary, was formed immediately after the meeting. A similar meeting in Cowra did not attract quite the same enthusiasm or results. Questions about the use of the term 'scab' and the merits of freedom of contract indicated that not all his listeners were sympathetic.³¹

The 1891 election was the foremost political event during these years and provides an opportunity to examine society in the context of broader historical themes. The election was unexpected, not only in timing but also the issue (federation) that triggered it. At the opening of the May 1891 session of the 1889-91 Parliament, the Governor outlined the Parkes Government's proposals and priorities – electoral and local government reforms and thirdly the *Constitution Bill*. In his 'address-in-reply' George Reid ridiculed Henry Parkes' actions in reprioritising the federation issue although George Dibbs, in the ensuing censure motion, condemned the Government "not for postponing the consideration of federation, but for ever having touched it".³² The censure motion failed on the vote of the speaker but Parkes resigned thus triggering the election. Although labour protagonists had been touring the colony for some months helping to establish LELs, the labour platform was only finalised in April 1891 and

²⁸ Orange *Bathurst Free Press* 1 August 1891. There were two personality-driven and competing leagues in Orange. By late 1893 it appeared their differences had been resolved. *National Advocate* 13 December 1893, Condobolin *Town and Country Journal* 27 June 1891, Forbes *Parkes Gazette* 1 May 1891, Lithgow - *Sydney Morning Herald* 24 July 1891, Cumnock - *Molong Express* 15 August 1891, Peak Hill - *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 20 June 1891. This latter article noted the disappearance of the secretary of the Peak Hill, J H Towder. Towder who was also the managing director of the *Peak Hill Times* allegedly absconded with approximately £80 of the newspaper's funds and an unknown amount of the LEL's funds.

²⁹ *Cowra Free Press* 15 May 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Ignatius Bell and James Martin Toomey.

³⁰ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 1 May 1891.

³¹ *Cowra Free Press* 15 May 1891.

³² *Sydney Morning Herald* 29 May 1891. Henry Parkes, a freetrader, was premier of NSW on several occasions between 1870 and 1891, including 1887-1891, and protectionist George Dibbs was premier between 1891 and 1894. George Reid succeeded Henry Parkes as party leader in 1891 and was leader of the opposition to George Dibbs' ministry. He was later premier between 1894 and 1899. Both Reid and Parkes were prime ministers. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biographies of Henry Parkes, George Dibbs and George Reid.

many potential candidates were still building their supporter base.³³ All of the major issues that dominated the election were contained in the LEL's inaugural sixteen-plank platform. These included local government reform, local option and the Eight-hour day, all of which I discuss elsewhere. Here I am concerned with the extent to which the other major issues of electoral reform, federation and, despite Labour's attempts to sink the fiscal issue, protection and freetrade, interested ordinary people in the Central West.

As would be expected in a district the size of the Central West, there were differing views on these issues and on the fledgling Labour Party. Even before the election had been called, the *Cowra Free Press* unequivocally declared that "Capital v Labour will be battle cry" and that labour would score a victory in the next electoral contest.³⁴ Two months later, the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* also predicted the election would be between "capital and labour" but was pessimistic about the Labour Party's chances.³⁵ As it turned out, LEL candidates prevailed in Forbes but not in the Carcoar electorate, where Cowra was located. The *Bathurst Free Press* was unequivocal that the issues before the electors would be "first Free-trade versus Protection and second Federation versus Provincialism".³⁶ The previous election had been fought principally on the fiscal issue but when the election was called in June 1891, the choices before the electors were not clear. As described by the *Sydney Morning Herald*

What with free traders who are federationists and others who prefer protection to federation, protectionists who are for federation and others who are opposed to it, those who put the fiscal issue before federation and those who put federation before the fiscal issue, and labour candidates who put the claims of labour before everything else, the elector admittedly sometimes has a perplexing task.³⁷

Many candidates were ready to put themselves forward with similar bewildering platforms and in some of the district's electorates, personal animus often obscured policy. While the endgame of the colony's electoral process was to form a government, of equal importance to local communities was the election of members who would best represent their local interests.

³³ Hogan *Labor Pains*, 11.

³⁴ *Cowra Free Press* 10 April 1891.

³⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 12 June 1891.

³⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 6 June 1891.

³⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 June 1891.

RULES AND STATUTE
OF THE
LABOUR ELECTORAL LEAGUE
OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

—RULES.—

OBJECTS.

1. To secure for the wealth-producers of this colony such legislation as will advance their interests, by the return to Parliament of candidates pledged to uphold the platform of this League.

2. To secure the due enrolment of all members of the League who may be entitled to a vote in any electorate.

3. To bring all electors who are in favour of democratic and progressive legislation under one common banner, and to thoroughly organise such voters with a view to concerted and effective action at all Parliamentary elections in the future.

QUALIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP.

Any duly qualified elector of this colony, who is prepared to subscribe to the following platform, to be eligible for membership upon payment of subscription. No person to be eligible for membership in more than one branch of the League.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION.

The subscription to the League to be 4s. per annum, payable half-yearly in advance.

APPLICATION OF FUNDS.

The funds of the League are to be devoted to expenses of thorough and effective political work.

TREASURER AND TRUSTEES.

The Treasurer and Trustees of the Trades and Labour Council of New South Wales to be the Treasurer and Trustees of the funds raised by the Central Committee of the League.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE (HOW CONSTITUTED).

The Central Committee of the League shall be the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades and Labour Council of New South Wales, with the addition of one delegate from each branch.

BRANCHES.

Branches of the League shall be instituted in every electorate within the colony where practicable, said branches to elect their own officers and have absolute control of all funds raised by their own members, save and except the sum of 1d. per member per year, which shall be forwarded to the Treasurer of the Central Committee for general purposes.

DISTRICT CANVASSING COMMITTEES.

Canvassing committees to be established in connexion with each branch at every polling booth in the electorates in which the branch is instituted.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES.

Each branch to have absolute freedom in the matter of selecting candidates for Parliament in its own electorates. The Central Committee of the League to advise in the matter of such selection only when requested to do so by any branch.

EXPENSES OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

Branches shall devise such means for raising the necessary funds for contesting Parliamentary elections as may be deemed most expedient.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT NOT TO HOLD OFFICIAL POSITIONS.

No Member of Parliament shall hold any office in connexion with the League, and upon any office of the League being elected to the Legislature his office shall be deemed vacant.

CANDIDATES FOR PARLIAMENT (HOW SELECTED).

Candidates for Parliamentary honours shall be selected by ballot. Ballot papers to be sent by post to every member of the branch in which the election takes place, the name to be returned to proper officers within such time, and under such conditions, as shall be deemed necessary to prevent fraud. All candidates to give a written pledge to resign on being called upon to do so by a two-thirds majority of the voters.

LABOUR MEMBERS.

All Labour Members elected to the Legislature to sit on the cross benches.

RULES OF DEBATE, &c.

The rules of procedure and debate observed by the Trades and Labour Council to be the rules of this League.

PLATFORM.

1. Electoral reform, to provide for the abolition of plural voting; the abolition of money deposits in Parliamentary elections; extension of the franchise to seamen, clerics, and general labourers by means of a provision for the registration of votes; extension of the franchise to policemen and soldiers; abolition of the six months' residential clause as a qualification for the exercise of the franchise; single member electorates and equal Electoral Districts on adult population basis; all Parliamentary elections to be held on one day, that day to be a public holiday, and all public houses to be closed during the hours of polling.
2. Free, compulsory, and technical education, higher as well as elementary, to be extended to all alike.
3. Eight hours to be the legal maximum working day in all occupations.
4. A Workshop and Factories' Act, to provide for the prohibition of the sweating system; the supervision of land holders and machinery; and the appointment of representative workmen as inspectors.
5. Amendment of the Mining Act, to provide for all applications for mineral leases being summarily dealt with by the local warden; the strict enforcement of labour conditions on such leases; abolition of the leasing system on all new goldfields; the right to mine on private property; greater protection to persons engaged in the mining industry, and inspectors to hold certificates of competency.
6. Extension to seamen of the benefits of the Employers' Liability Act.
7. Repeal of the Masters and Servants Act and the Agreements Validating Act.
8. Amendment of the Masters and Apprentices Act and the Trades Union Act.
9. Establishment of a Department of Labour, a National Bank, and a national system of water conservation and irrigation.
10. Elective magistrates.
11. Local Government and decentralisation; extension of the principle of the Government as an employer, through the medium of local self-governing bodies; and the abolition of our present unjust and injurious method of raising municipal revenue by the taxation of improvements effected by labour.
12. The federation of the Australasian colonies upon a National, as opposed to an Imperialistic basis; the abolition of the present Imperial Force, and the establishment of our military system upon a purely voluntary basis.
13. The recognition in our legislative enactments of the natural and inalienable rights of the whole community to the land—upon which all must live, and from which by Labour all wealth is produced—by the taxation of that value which accrues to land by the presence and needs of the community, irrespective of improvements effected by human exertion; and the absolute and inalienable right of property on the part of all Crown tenants in improvements effected on their holdings.
14. All Government contracts to be executed in the colony.
15. Stamping of Chinese-made furniture.
16. Any measure that will secure for the wage-earner a fair and equitable return for his or her labour.

Prior to the 1891 election, twenty members represented the Central West in thirteen electorates.³⁸ Of these, eleven were free-traders and nine were protectionists. Candidates vying for parliamentary honours consisted of sitting or previous members, local identities or those who had a high profile within their communities. LEL candidate Cornelius Lindsay, who unsuccessfully challenged Andrew Ross in the Molong electorate and Sydney ferry-boat owner Charles Jeanneret, came from outside the district. John Hurley was one of many candidates throughout the colony who having been defeated in their own electorates, seized the opportunity for a second chance.³⁹



Illustration 43: Charles Jeanneret

Electioneering in the Central West took much the same path as in other country districts. Once an election was announced or was imminent, aspirants declared their intentions or put out feelers through supporters or newspapers. Requisitions with the names of sponsors were also published in newspapers. In Cowra, for example, 500 people, plus a further forty on his Mount McDonald committee, were listed as supporters of Denis Cornelius Donnelly.⁴⁰

Donnelly was a protectionist and would have faced strong opposition from Mary Garland who was one of the very few women whose role in politics was acknowledged in the local

³⁸ These were Bathurst, Carcoar, Bogan (The), East Macquarie, Forbes, Grenfell, Hartley, Molong, Mudgee, Orange, Wellington and West Macquarie. Lake Cudgellico and Euabalong were located at the very edge of the Balranald electorate. The incursion of the Central West district into this electorate is minuscule and I have not included this in my analysis.

³⁹ The latter was possible because the election was conducted over several days. One of the electoral reforms being sought was to conduct elections on one day. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Andrew Ross, and Charles Jeannerett.

⁴⁰ *Cowra Free Press* 16 June 1891.

newspapers. According to the *Cootamundra Herald* which described her as “the plucky journalist of Carcoar,” Mary travelled through the district during the 1889 election campaign canvassing for her husband Charles when he was absent. Known as “Carcoar Mary” she was an ardent free-trader so much so that the Cowra Freetrade and Liberal Association presented her with a gold-watch.⁴¹ Marian Leathem owner and editor of the *Molong Express* also had political influence through the medium of her newspaper. Undoubtedly there would be been other women working for candidates but unfortunately, as usual, information is scant.⁴²

LEL candidates went through a pre-selection process such as occurred in Hartley where clergyman George Smailes⁴³ who subsequently retired due to ill health, was selected over Joseph Cook. During the campaign, mass meetings were held across the electorates. Typically prominent identities or sponsors chaired meetings, introduced candidates and spoke of them in florid terms. Candidates then addressed listeners setting out their positions on the major issues. At the end of the meetings, on a show of hands, votes of confidence as to whether the contender was a fit and proper person to represent the community, were called. At the meetings of a lack lustre or unpopular hopeful, the show of hands was usually dispensed with.

Although Dowling suggested there was no rowdiness at political meetings in the colony as experienced in the “wigwams” in the United States, political gatherings throughout the colony and in the district, could be far from orderly.⁴⁴ During a nomination meeting at Perth, Charles Boyd threatened to fight Patrick Crick after a vitriolic attack by Crick⁴⁵ the doors of a hall at Molong had to be closed when John Hurley began an onslaught “against union shearers and spoke about burning down woolsheds and cutting horses throats”⁴⁶ and at Orange “wild excitement ensued” when Thomas Dalton was named as a preferred candidate even though votes were apparently even among three who spoke.⁴⁷

Raucous incidents aside and notwithstanding the short lead time to the 1891 election, candidates had the opportunity to address a good number of their constituents. In most electorates, they visited numerous small towns and villages, several of which were polling

⁴¹ *Cootamundra Herald* 20 February 1889. The watch was inscribed: “VICTORY 1889. FREETRADERS ADMIRE COURAGE Hence this tribute to Mrs C L Garland”. *Bathurst Free Press* 3 March 1890. Mary owned the *Carcoar Chronicle* between 1880 and 1890. She left Carcoar sometime in 1891. See Appendix 1 for a biographies of Mary and Charles Lancelot Garland.

⁴² Henrietta Wyse who married Hector Greville in 1894 at Wyalong helped set up a branch of the LEL there. See Appendix 1 for biography of Hector Greville. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for a biography of Henrietta Greville.

⁴³ See Appendix 1 for biography of George Smailes.

⁴⁴ Dowling *Australia and America*, 54.

⁴⁵ *National Advocate* 17 June 1891.

⁴⁶ *Molong Free Press* 11 July 1891.

⁴⁷ *National Advocate* 19 June 1891.

stations. Donnelly conducted meetings in twenty locations in the Carcoar electorate over a space of five days and Jeanneret visited seventeen places in eight days. In Cowra, along with the other candidates Ezekiel Baker, John Plumb and Alfred Fremlin, they addressed crowds of some hundreds of people on consecutive evenings.⁴⁸ The speeches delivered at these gatherings were similar to those in other parts of the district, although there was little of the acrimony or attacks on other candidates that occurred elsewhere. Each speaker touched on the major issues of the day and the ineptness of the government or the opposition. They fielded questions on those matters neglected or perhaps studiously ignored in their speeches and defended or promoted their records. In the Carcoar district, as with every other electorate in the colony, the fiscal question was pervasive. Candidates variously addressed federation, electoral reform, labour versus capital, conciliation and arbitration, the *Masters and Servants Act 1840*, the Eight-hour day, local option, mining on private land, appointment of magistrates, local government reform, land or single tax and freedom of contract, all of which were also on the agendas of many candidates outside the district. Occasionally candidates touched on other matters including free education, administration, water conservation and differential railway rates. Notably, women's suffrage was seldom mentioned.

In the Forbes electorate, labour candidates Albert Gardiner and George Hutchinson had different views on women's right to vote.⁴⁹ Gardiner was in favour "as he believed the influence of women would be for good" but Hutchinson thought it was a "question for the future".⁵⁰ Gardiner and Hutchinson campaigned tirelessly on the LEL's platform which, given the electorate's profile and economy, clearly struck a chord with many.⁵¹ Miners, shearers and other itinerant workers and many small farmers were sympathetic with electoral, labour, land and mining reform policies. In the large towns such as Forbes, Parkes, Alectown and Condobolin, small towns and villages where seventeen other polling stations were located, the same issues were debated but fiscal issues and personal loyalties emerged.

⁴⁸ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Ezekiel Baker, John Plumb and Alfred Fremlin.

⁴⁹ The Forbes electorate was the one of the largest in the district comprising an area of approximately 2,500 square miles with 3,589 people listed on the electoral roll.

⁵⁰ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 19 June 1891.

⁵¹ See Appendix 1 for biography of Albert Gardiner.

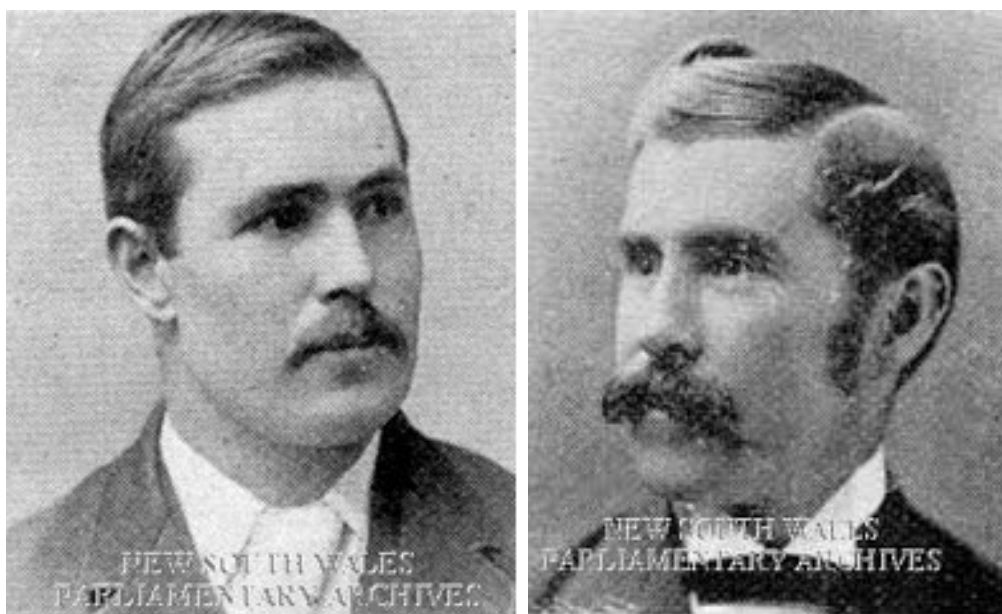


Illustration 44: Albert Gardiner George Smailes

Four candidates vied for two seats in this electorate.⁵² Only one of the existing members, Henry Cooke (freetrader) sought re-election with the other member, Alfred Stokes (protectionist) retiring. Joseph Reymond (protectionist) was the other candidate.⁵³ Cooke was a prominent citizen of Parkes and an unflinching supporter of Henry Parkes. He appealed for votes from working men declaring him to be in favour of most of the LEL's platform. His suggestions that "the most objectionable part" of the *Masters and Servants Act* was its title, an Eight-hour day should be optional, and magistrates should be appointed not elected did not endear him to workers. As an ardent freetrader, besides being a resident of Parkes, Cooke faced a hostile audience at his campaign meeting at Forbes and the chairman, mayor William Thomas, struggled to keep order.⁵⁴

French-born Reymond was more cautious in his approach to the LEL's platform declaring "there were a lot of catch words used and he would not like to be misunderstood".⁵⁵ He was a prominent businessman in Forbes and had previously and unsuccessfully contested the seat in 1887. He had been encouraged to stand in the 1891 election by locals, almost 200 of whom publicly announced their support in newspaper advertisements and pledged to use their "utmost exertions to secure [his] election".⁵⁶ Despite Reymond's protestations that he was a

⁵² John Young from Trundle was a fifth candidate but withdrew as "he did not want to split votes" from Hutchinson and Gardiner. *The Australian Star* 15 June 1891.

⁵³ Alfred Stokes initially supported Hutchinson but switched to Reymond because Hutchinson stood as a labour candidate. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Henry Cooke and Joseph Reymond

⁵⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Edward Whelan and William Thomas.

⁵⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 23 June 1891.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 13 June 1891.

working man, his labour opponents were having none of it, asserting that his requisition included only a small number of working men's names. Indeed, his supporters included several storekeepers, agents and auctioneers, at least two solicitors, a buggy maker, jeweller, builder and chemist.⁵⁷ Pastoralist Thomas Edols and other members of the Edols family also appeared in the list. Eugenio Vanzetti in his motion nominating Reymond as a fit and proper person to represent them, declared voters should "elect a man held in esteem by the capitalists to plead the cause of the working man". Storekeeper George Hart's amendment to the contrary was carried and Vanzetti left the podium amid uproar.⁵⁸

The labour candidates prevailed despite assertions by the Parkes correspondent to the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* that "labour candidates were unlikely to do much as the mining population that were far and beyond the average shearer in education and intelligence and which would vote in a single lot".⁵⁹ The correspondent also believed the miners would not have much truck with the local LEL which had been "engineered by some of the small local shopkeepers".⁶⁰ Gardiner (freetrade) polled highest in Parkes while Hutchinson (protection) topped the poll in Forbes. Cooke polled well in his home town of Parkes and in Alectown as did Reymond in Forbes but collectively Gardiner and Hutchinson won 55% of the total vote.

In East Macquarie, it was miners versus farmers rather than shearers. Several small towns were in this electorate with the largest being mining centres Sunny Corner and Sofala and farmed-based and Wattle Flat and Kelso. In the 1891 election, three candidates (two freetraders – Sydney Smith and James Tonkin and one protectionist/labour - Alfred Hales) stood for election.⁶¹ Smith who had represented East Macquarie since 1882 was the Secretary for Mines in the Parkes ministry when the election was called and his message to the electorate was based on his record as minister.⁶² Smith's running mate, James Tonkin did not garner the same level of support in the electorate as Smith and his speeches were frequently interrupted with interjections or 'barney' disturbances such as in the "paddock round the back

⁵⁷ Alfred Stokes was at the head of the requisition and included such prominent citizens as Charles Prow (storekeeper), Thomas A Crowe and Josiah R Strickland (auctioneers/agents) and George C Driffield and Charles Pearson Sowter (solicitors). *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 12 June 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Charles Prow, Josiah Strickland and George Driffield.

⁵⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of George Hart.

⁵⁹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 1 May 1891.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 19 June 1891. Gardiner (freetrade) and Hutchinson (protection) had opposing view on the fiscal issue.

⁶¹ See Appendix 1 for biographies of James Tonkin. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Alfred Hales.

⁶² Some of his actions included these opening up more land for miners, bringing forward a bill for the regulation of coal mines, soil testing and seed wheat distribution for farmers. He favoured the government's position on Federation and did not support the *Electoral Bill* because it did not deal with single-member electorates and the rights of migratory workers. *Bathurst Free Press* 16 June 1891.

of the hustings".⁶³ Hales did not stand a chance. He had no ties to the electorate and while he did not identify as a labour candidate, many of his views were in accord with that platform.⁶⁴ Smith and Tonkin dominated the poll with over 70% of votes mainly attributable to returns in the mining communities of Sunny Corner (over 75%); Sofala (approximately 75%); and, Wattle Flat (83%). A similar outcome at a by-election in 1892 prompted Colin Alex Grant, a station manager at Eglinton, to comment that farmers were disadvantaged by having the miners in the electorate and suggested that it be divided into two parts with Sunny Corner, Wattle Flat and Sofala on one side and the district between it and the river on the other.⁶⁵

Newspaper reports of meetings throughout the district's electorates and on the hustings indicate community participation in election campaigns was widespread. The culmination of the whole proceedings, the declaration of the poll, embraced whole communities in good humoured celebrations, sparked spontaneous processions or was the trigger for a good deal of anti-social behaviour. At Orange, Torpy and Dalton addressed the crowd from the Club House Hotel while Newman's supporters gathered round the Royal Hotel amid an "intense cheering and hooting of the wild whiskied mob" and at Wellington the police had hard work to keep order with "free fights... going on all over the place".⁶⁶ The *National Advocate* description of Kelso after the 1892 by-election in East Macquarie demonstrates how the community could be swept up in the event. It reported that

Kelso would hardly have been recognised by a native on Saturday, and was as different from its usual sleepy appearance as it is possible for any town to be. All day long buggies and traps came down the street from Bathurst and all surrounding districts. All day long, the road between Mortimer's and Peers' Hotel was blocked by chattering and excited electors and amateur politicians. All day long the local publicans were

⁶³ *Bathurst Free Press* 9 June 1891 and 16 June 1891. For the electoral landscape following the 1891 election see Map 7.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 16 June 1891.

⁶⁵ *National Advocate* 22 August 1892. The by-election campaign was due to the insolvency of the sitting member James Tonkin. The protectionist candidate was Bathurst baker John Boyd (jnr). Tonkin was re-elected. In 1891 Central West voters returned 21 members. Of these 10 were sitting members, 6 were defeated, and eleven were new. There were 6 labour members with only 1 of these, Robert Vaughn, having any previous parliamentary representation, 7 free-traders and 8 protectionists remained. An additional member was added in the Hartley electorate for the 1891 election See Appendix 14 for an analysis of voting patterns in the various electorates.

⁶⁶ *National Advocate* 22 and 24 June 1891. Other examples include Forbes where supporters of Gardiner and Hutchinson "despite the mud and rain...formed a procession with torches and Chinese lanterns and headed the Forbes Brass Band drew those gentlemen through the main streets of the town in a buggy. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 3 July 1891. Similar processions occurred in Lithgow and Mudgee. At the latter protectionists on horseback attempted to disrupt the proceedings but the labour supporters forced them back with torches. *Sydney Morning Herald* 24 June 1891.

doing a roaring trade, and no one would have supposed the cause was anything less than a general election, or an invasion by the Chinese.⁶⁷

When Parliament opened in mid-July 1891, in line with its motto – “support in return for concessions” or “squeezing policy”, the Labour Party supported the Parkes Government which included much of the LEL platform on its legislative agenda. It was always going to be difficult for the fledgling party to maintain unity and withstand the tactics of the more experienced politicians.⁶⁸ The resolve of those with protectionist leanings was tested early on resulting in the ‘defection’ of eight members, including Vaughn. Some months and a change of Premier later, the party split (seventeen/eighteen) over the fiscal question.

Community reaction in the Central West to these political manoeuvrings is difficult to gauge. It is likely many people had lost interest after the excitement and theatre of the election campaign. Others, perhaps initially optimistic the labour politicians would bring change, drifted into indifference or cynicism. In July, when the labour members placed their support behind Henry Parkes, the Orange and Lucknow LELs telegraphed Henry Newman to express support⁶⁹ and in August, a public meeting at Peak Hill approved of James Morgan’s support for the government.⁷⁰ Meetings at Mudgee, Molong, Forbes and Lithgow expressed support, while the Grenfell branch of the LEL was indignant about Vaughn’s defection and called for his resignation.⁷¹ The most virulent opposition reported was at Bathurst at a meeting attended by five delegates of the LEL where there was a “scene of disorder, confusion and blackguardism ...uproar ...jeering, hooting...and a barney”.⁷² The meeting was abandoned and a subsequent gathering, with entry via a ticket only, supported the Party’s action.⁷³

In December, reactions were mixed. A meeting of the Condobolin LEL which ended “in blows” between the chairman and secretary, demanded Hutchinson resign⁷⁴ and in Forbes, members of the LEL voted in the majority on a motion that Hutchinson had “forfeited the confidence of the Forbes Electorate”.⁷⁵ According to a report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* it was Parkes’ action that “created intense disgust amongst the freetraders” at Orange. In Lithgow, the

⁶⁷ *National Advocate* 15 August 1892.

⁶⁸ “Squeezing policy” Black speech published in Roydhouse and Taperell *The Labour Party of NSW*, 62. According to Roydhouse and Taperell this meant “knickerbockers coming into the House to ‘squeeze’ an old Parliamentary hand like Sir Henry Parkes”, 62.

⁶⁹ *Evening News* 22 July 1891.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 6 August 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of James Morgan.

⁷¹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 29 July 1891.

⁷² *Bathurst Free Press* 25 July 1891.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 27 July 1891.

⁷⁴ *Sydney Mail* 26 December 1891.

⁷⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald* 8 January 1892. It appears, though, at the latter meeting only single-taxers “spoke for the resolution” and the outcome was disputed.

protectionists were “jubilant but the actions of the labour members were not mentioned in the newspaper report.⁷⁶ The *Bathurst Free Press* was elated declaring “the Labor Party is completely wrecked”.⁷⁷ Not only was this assessment premature but over the ensuing two years, the Labour Party actively pursued measures in the Assembly sympathetic to the labour cause and consistent with the LEL’s platform.

An analysis of the political content of the Chicago collection provides an indication of the issues of interest to communities in various areas of the district in 1892. The *Forbes Times*, the *Western Advocate* (Orange), the *Blayney Argus*, the *Carcoar Chronicle* (in the context of Imperial Federation) and the *Grenfell Vedette* editorialised or had items on Premier George Dibbs’ trip to Britain and his subsequent knighthood.⁷⁸ The *Vedette’s* editorial addressed the tariff which was also of interest to the *Mudgee Independent* and the *Unionist and Gulgong Advertiser*. Land issues including the rabbit-proof fence, were canvassed in the *Wellington Times*, *Condobolin Argus*, the *Parkes Examiner* and the *Unionist and Gulgong Advertiser*. Other matters comprised the Broken Hill Strike (*Cowra Free Press* and *Grenfell Record*), compulsory arbitration (*Lithgow Mercury*) and the depression (*Orange Leader*). Many newspapers reported on meetings and representations on local public works, including railways. Others carried accounts of local members’ or other politicians’ meetings such as Mudgee MLAs John Hayne’s and Robert Jones’ addresses on protection, land monopolies and coloured labour from the balcony of a hotel in Hill End.⁷⁹

Those newspapers commenting on Dibbs were scathing about the proposal for Imperial Federation, but in early 1891, federation of the Australian colonies was a serious proposition.⁸⁰ A Federation Convention held in Sydney over a six -week period in March and April ended with delegates from each of the colonies agreeing on a draft constitution to be taken to their respective parliaments.⁸¹ However, as suggested by Helen Irving, “progress with the 1891

⁷⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 12 December 1891.

⁷⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 11 December 1891.

⁷⁸ The main purpose of Dibbs’ 6-week trip to England was to talk up the colony’s economy. He was made “an honorary member of several clubs” and knighted. *Town and Country Journal* 18 June 1892. Attempts in the Assembly to censure him over purported unauthorised expenditure of £1000 failed.

⁷⁹ *Forbes Times* 30 July 1892, *Western Advocate* 23 January 1892, the *Blayney Argus* 4 August 1892, *Carcoar Chronicle* 6 August 1892, *Grenfell Vedette* 30 July 1892, *Mudgee Independent* 30 July 1892, the *Unionist and Gulgong Advertiser* 2 July 1892, *Wellington Times* 30 July 1892, *Condobolin Argus* 6 August 1892, the *Parkes Examiner* 3 August 1892, *Orange Leader* 2 August 1892, *Lithgow Mercury* 30 July 1892, and *Mudgee Independent* 30 July 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Robert Jones.

⁸⁰ Imperial federation was a scheme, widely panned in the Australian colonies, to unite all the colonies of the ‘British Empire’ under an Imperial Parliament located in London.

⁸¹ H Irving *The Centenary Companion to Australian Federation* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press 1999) 365, 366. Mayors of each local government municipality were invited to attend the Federation Banquet. *Sydney Morning Herald* 3 March 1891.

Constitution Bill stalled in the months and the years following the convention".⁸² In the wake of the event, there was enough interest three months after the convention, for almost all aspiring election candidates in the district to declare their positions.

Andrew Ross declared that federation was one of the three most important questions before the country.⁸³ Although Denis Donnelly strongly believed in Federation, he also said it was not "understood by the people" and was concerned that the move from the convention to legislation was hasty.⁸⁴ Most candidates were in favour of federation either supporting the draft Convention Bill, described by Hales as the "most monstrous...ever submitted to Parliament", with or without amendments, or not agreeing with the draft Bill at all.⁸⁵ In addition to the concerns expressed by Donnelly and Ross, state rights and the fiscal question were commonly raised. James Tonkin was a staunch supporter as he suggested "no man of common sense"⁸⁶ could fail to do so which is possibly why Paddy Crick declared himself to be the "strongest Anti-Federationist" in the House.⁸⁷ By the end of the year the *Sydney Morning Herald* observed that the Federation movement had "progressed backward"⁸⁸ and it was not until over eighteen months later, with the convening of the Corowa conference, that there was any tangible advancement.⁸⁹ Throughout the years covered in this study it is fair to say that in the district, and the colony generally, there was a sense of inevitability if not urgency to federate the colonies. In the face of other more pressing and immediate concerns it was a subject best left to the occasional editorial, debating societies and essay competitions.⁹⁰

Other than a letter to the editor of the *Mudgee Independent*, there was no mention of electoral reform in the Chicago collection but with only limited editions available, this may not indicate a lack of interest. Although the enactment of legislation in June 1893 attracted little comment in the *Bathurst Free Press*, both the *National Advocate* and the *Parkes and Forbes Gazette* welcomed its passage. Some people in the district were alarmed by the re-drawing of the electoral map due to the abolition of multi-member constituencies. The colony was divided

⁸² H Irving *To Constitute a Nation A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press 1997) 134.

⁸³ The others being local self-government and electoral reform. *Molong Express* 13 June 1891.

⁸⁴ *Cowra Free Press* 16 June 1891.

⁸⁵ *Bathurst and Free Press* 16 June 1891.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 9 June 1891.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 17 June 1891.

⁸⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald* 31 December 1891.

⁸⁹ Irving describes Corowa Conference "as an unofficial gathering of supporters of Federation in 1893 which devised the mechanism whereby the federal movement was rescued from the impasse which followed the 1891 the Federation Conference". Irving *Companion to Australian Federation*, 351.

⁹⁰ At Blayney 14-year-old schoolboy William Gladstone Mellor won 1st prize of £3 3s for his essay on 'Federation'. William was the son of Margaret and John Mellor, the editor of the *Blayney Advocate*. See Appendix 1 or biography of John Mellor. The prizes were provided by local MLA's Charles Garland and John Plumb. *Town and Country Journal* 18 July 1891.

into 125 Electoral Districts based on a population quota, existing boundaries, lines of communication, physical features and “community of interest”. Overall, the number of electorates in the district increased while the number of members decreased. Some communities objected to intended boundaries and name changes. The first proposals triggered meetings across the Central West to consider the benefits or otherwise of the proposed changes. Rylstone voters, among the “first grumblers”, were surprised to be excised from Mudgee and added to Cassilis⁹¹; Hill End residents declared they had nothing in common with Wellington, although Wellington residents were happy with the new boundaries;⁹² and, at a meeting at Newbridge, people expressed dissatisfaction with the renaming of West Macquarie to Blayney.⁹³

In the Orange electorate voters at Forest Reefs and Millthorpe, and some businessmen in Orange, were alarmed that their areas were to be excised from that district. One concern was that the change would disrupt their commercial activities as Orange was their nearest and cheapest market. The other, and more likely reason, was the shift in the balance of power with these protectionist strongholds removed from the Orange electorate.⁹⁴ Attendance at many of meetings in the townships was generally not large but at Forbes there was considerable indignation. At a large gathering to protest the changes, Joseph Reymond declared “we are wiped out”.⁹⁵ Some objected to the conclusion that there was a “community of interest” between Parkes and Forbes, reiterating the claim that Parkes was a mining community and Forbes was pastoral. Henry Cooke, for example, suggested Parkes had greater affinity with the mining towns of Alectown, Kadina and Peak Hill as “the miners go from one town to another so there is a perfect community of interest for them”.⁹⁶ Many of the attendees at a Parkes meeting considered the new electorate to be “neat and compact”. Resolutions supporting or objecting the boundaries were equally divided, much like the views of the sitting members, with Gardiner in support of the new electorate and Hutchinson opposed. The meeting adjourned with the matter unresolved.⁹⁷

While the electoral boundaries were being finalised, would-be candidates for the 1894 election were emerging throughout the district. Indeed, electioneering had been well underway for

⁹¹ *National Advocate* 24 August 1893.

⁹² *Ibid*, 5 September 1893.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 26 August 1893. Electorate boundaries before and after the 1893 re-distribution are shown on Maps 8 and 9.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 24 August 1893.

⁹⁵ The proposal was to significantly change the existing electorate of Forbes to join Parkes and Forbes together into new electorate to be called Parkes with the balance including Condobolin, Peak Hill, Tomingley, and Dandaloo into a district to be called Condoubolin.

⁹⁶ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 29 August 1893.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, September 1893.

some months with several people declaring their intention to stand for election. Solicitor Michael J Loughnane won the Grenfell LEL ballot over Charles Burton, shearers' agent, and John F Jenkins a former station manager at Boree Park.⁹⁸ Prominent businessman and Methodist William C Kelk announced his intention to stand for Blayney⁹⁹ as did Hector Lamond for Cowra¹⁰⁰ and William Bede Melville for Molong.¹⁰¹ The *Molong Express* reported that the "aspiring gentlemen...mentioned for the Condobolin electorate" included Humphrey Grey Innes, Thomas Brown, William Johnson (Condobolin blacksmith and member of the LEL) and 'labor lecturer William Hughes.¹⁰²

Apart from electoral reform and conciliation and arbitration, the issues being canvassed were much the same as during the 1891 election campaign, that is the tariff, taxation, the Eight-hour day, local government, mining on private land and federation. Land reform including Lands minister Henry Copeland's proposed legislative changes, was of more immediate concern and free education was an emerging topic. The cry of capital versus labour was much diminished due in part to the passage of the conciliation and arbitration legislation. In addition, as observed by Richard Sleath speaking at Parkes on the calibre of some of the labour representatives, the last election had taken place in the "turmoil of a strike".¹⁰³

Some sitting members regularly addressed their constituents between elections. According to newspaper reports, the parliamentarians spoke to their constituents on broad political affairs rather than local issues. They met with a mixed reception. At Forbes, only a "small attendance and total lack of enthusiasm" was evident when Hutchinson came to "give an account of his stewardship" and Cook and Donald addressed a very small crowd packed with "opposition partisans" at Wallerawang.¹⁰⁴ According to Premier Dibbs, when the House was sitting the duty of a member of Parliament was to "aid in passing those laws upon the foundation of which the grand future of this country was to stand". Instead, they were "harassed from Monday morning to Saturday night by mayors and aldermen, progress committees, and citizens and individuals and free selectors, to worry and get certain things for them".¹⁰⁵

Members represented the interests of their communities and pursued parochial matters of individual constituents in the parliament through questions, presentation of petitions and

⁹⁸ *Town and Country Journal* 15 April 1893.

⁹⁹ *Evening News* 15 September 1893.

¹⁰⁰ *National Advocate* 6 October 1893.

¹⁰¹ *Molong Express* 14 October 1893.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 18 November 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Humphrey William Grey Innes.

¹⁰³ *Forbes Parkes and Gazette* 10 October 1893.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 21 July 1893, *National Advocate* 14 March 1893.

¹⁰⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald* 24 July 1893.

seeking the tabling of documents. Andrew Ross was a prolific questioner. While resolutely concerned with public health matters he routinely sought information on roads, bridges, postage, railways and such like.¹⁰⁶

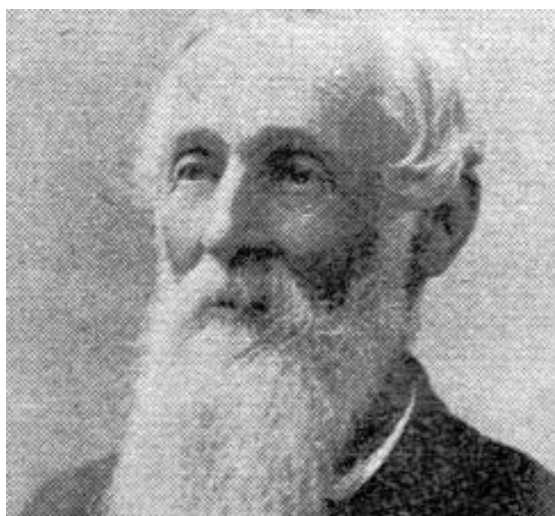


Illustration 45: Andrew Ross

Haynes and Crick generally pursued issues of wider political import and were persistently to the fore because of their outrageous behaviour, singularly or in tandem, in and outside of Parliament.¹⁰⁷ Away from the House some members raised issues with the government departments and lobbied ministers on behalf of their communities. Although of different political persuasions, Jeanneret and Donnelly worked closely together and the *Cowra Free Press* published their 'official' responses on matters such as Thomas Kelly's mining claim at Woodstock and a request by Charles Britten, postmaster at Gooloogong for a savings bank to be established there. Haynes was a habitual correspondent to newspapers throughout the rural areas concerning country issues but his activities within the boundaries of his electorate are less apparent.

¹⁰⁶ Andrew Ross's candidature for the Molong electorate was unassailable. He had represented the protectionist stronghold since 1880 and used his experience and expertise to promote the interests of the community. When Canowindra was unexpectedly excised from the Molong electorate a correspondent to the *Molong Express* noted that Ross had always looked after the interests of the town (described as the "extreme portion" of his electorate) and expressed doubt that Cowra would be equally attentive". *Molong Express* 11 November 1893.

¹⁰⁷ In something of a cause célèbre Crick and Haynes fought each other in the "vestibule of the Parliament-buildings. The dispute, depending on whose version of the incident was to be believed arose from insults and counter-insults. Crick seems to have come off second best. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, "the member for Mudgee was jubilant at the result of the encounter and was the hero throughout the evening [in Parliament] of a great many members and others, especially those who have a grudge against Mr Crick". The *Daily Telegraph's* account was published in the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 9 May 1893.



Illustration 46: John Haynes (on right) with J F Archibald (co-founders of the *Bulletin*)

Andrew Ross was one of two Presbyterian members in the district, the other being George Donald at Hartley. They differed in their political leanings with Donald more representative of the protestant/freetrade dynamic which, according to Nairn, developed as a “variation on the faction theme” when fiscal rather than factions began to dominate colonial politics. Specifically, Nairn suggests, the “old temperance, sectarian and other leagues and lodges” protestants and prohibitionists swung to the free traders, Catholics and publicans to the protectionists”.¹⁰⁸ In 1891 this sectarian divide was present, albeit unevenly, across the district. All seven of the professed Catholics elected, including two Labour Party members, were protectionists or had protectionist leanings but five of the remaining fourteen Protestant members were also protectionists. Four of these were Labour Party members. In addition, although the proportion of Catholics who were protectionists is high, there were no Catholic/protectionist or Protestant/freetrader strongholds. Most electorates with more than one member returned both a protectionist and a freetrade candidate.¹⁰⁹

Although some Protestant and Catholic politicians shared common ground such as on divorce law, such co-operation could be overshadowed by sectarianism spite. Malcolm Campbell suggests these tensions had moderated by 1891 and some bitterness had subsided¹¹⁰ but, according to Richard Broome, the undercurrent of sectarianism remained, particularly during

¹⁰⁸ Nairn *Civilising Capitalism*, 39, 40.

¹⁰⁹ *NSW Elections Database; 1891 Census*.

¹¹⁰ M Campbell ‘A Successful Experiment No More. The Intensification of religious bigotry in Eastern Australia 1865-1885’ in *Humanities Research* XII, no 1 (2005).

electioneering and at times of “rapid social and economic change”.¹¹¹ Cries of political partiality on the grounds of one’s professed faith were still heard. Tierney contends that sectarianism was evident in Central West politics on occasion¹¹² but this did not seem to be significant in 1891. Religious partisanship was clearly a factor in the election of prominent Methodist Joseph Cook and Presbyterian George Donald in the mining district of Hartley and of Catholics Denis Donnelly (Cowra) and George Hutchinson (Forbes) but there is no evidence of any rancour because of it. Notably the interests of labour prevailed over religion in Orange. This electorate had one of the highest Catholic populations in the district, and yet electors rejected sitting member Thomas Dalton, a papal knight, in favour of Anglican and LEL candidate, William Newman.

It was in Bathurst that strong sectarian differences emerged, both in colonial and, as discussed elsewhere, local politics. During the 1891 campaign in Crick’s West Macquarie electorate, a correspondent to the *Bathurst Free Press* deplored the tactics of some of his supporters in claiming that opposition to their candidate was sectarian based. The same issues had previously arisen during the 1889 election campaign when Bernard Wise supposedly suggested Crick was only elected because all the Catholics voted for him. Crick, of course, revelled in such goings-on. In Bathurst in 1891, Methodist William Paul at Orange Day celebrations, still smarting from his election defeat by Crick, noted that “there had been great rejoicing in the Romish press over the defeat of several Orangemen at the recent elections and he believed that the rejoicing in his case was, not that Paul the Freetrader, had been defeated, but Paul, the Orangeman, had been defeated”.¹¹³ After the election, the *Freeman’s Journal* declared that the birth of the Labour Party was “synchronous with the death of sectarianism”. It described the defeats of John Hurley in Hartley and subsequently in Molong, Henry Cooke who “was kicked back into the kennels” at Forbes, William Paul in Bathurst, and Daniel Cassin in Mudgee, as blows to the “Orange” vote. Because of the triumph of the labouring classes, it asserted, “a man’s religious profession [would] have nothing to do with his fitness for public life, and it marks a great advance on the past”.¹¹⁴

The election of labour candidates was momentous, and once in Parliament LEL members set about putting their agenda into place. The party was beset by internal disagreements. This

¹¹¹ R Broome *Treasure in earthen vessels: Protestant Christianity in New South Wales Society 1900-1914* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press 1980) 96.

¹¹² Tierney *The Churches and sectarian politics*.

¹¹³ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 July 1891.

¹¹⁴ The newspaper also included Jacob Garrard’s defeat at Balmain, and Francis Abigail at West Sydney. *Freeman’s Journal* 4 July 1891.

seemed to be of little interest to people in the Central West. Once the excitement of the election faded, pressing concerns such as mining on private land and Central Division lease extensions re-emerged. The passage of the 1893 *Electoral Act* was welcomed. Parochial differences within electorates developed after the 1891 election and changes to electoral boundaries accompanying the new legislation sparked divisions between some townships, challenging assumptions of communities of interest. The extent to which ordinary people in the district engaged in politics is debatable. Participation in election campaigns was widespread with sizable attendances at meetings, at the hustings and the declaration of polls. The rituals associated with these activities were an important part of the egalitarian fabric of local society and an expression of the confidence in the role of the democratic process in maintaining social order. Between elections the activities of local members were occasionally of interest but overwhelmingly organisations, interest groups and individuals expected them to lobby on their behalf. Beyond this, amid the frustrations with governments' failure to deal with the macro issues which directly affected livelihoods, most people were likely to have been disinterested in political processes. Such a sentiment reflects a confidence in the status quo and thus the stability and cohesiveness of their communities.

Part 2 Labour

Eight Hours for Fair-paid Toil, and
Eight For Rest, and for the requisite elation
And its establishment this holiday
Of the mind Eight for Recreation.
This law we hold to rev'rence and obey,
And its establishment, this Holiday
Is kept to duly celebrate, that we
May demonstrate to all our Unity.
Since first the world was made — -since Work
began,
Has lived “Man's inhumanity to man”,
Which, till destroyed, that Unity will foil—
The Eight- Hour Brotherhood of Honest Toil.

A handbill featuring this poem written by the editor of the *National Advocate*, Nelson Paget Whitelocke, was distributed to spectators during the 1891 Eight-hour day demonstration in Bathurst.¹¹⁵ Locals from nearby villages such as Wattle Flat and people from surrounding areas, took advantage of special excursion trains to join the thousands that thronged the streets to witness the parade and enjoy the associated sports. The 1891 procession began at the railway station and manoeuvred through several streets. Michael Treanor with his splendid “four-in-hand-drag” led the two marshals, John Main and William Mitten “on grey chargers” and the “Eight Hours Association Banner” was carried by four men.¹¹⁶ Twelve trollys and two bands followed, and as was customary, many of the skilled workers demonstrated their crafts as the parade progressed. Shearers removed fleece from sheep, stonemasons hewed freestone and blacksmiths removed and reshod a small pony at regular intervals. The most idiosyncratic float was of newsagent Thomas Palmer which was plastered with “placards intimating the journals, periodicals, etc. for which the firm were agents”. The caravan pulled a dozen of his newsboys with copies of the most important papers in Bathurst strapped to their backs.¹¹⁷

The procession was followed by the spectators to the Showground for the afternoon sports and the day's festivities concluded with the social held at the Masonic Hall.¹¹⁸ The celebrations in 1892 and 1893 were also splendid although in each year the committees were dysfunctional

¹¹⁵ *National Advocate* 6 October 1891.

¹¹⁶ The banner was unfurled for the first time at the Town Hall in 1889 by William Paul in the presence of a large crowd. It cost £60. On one side was “United Eight Hours Society Justice to All: United for Defence, Not Defiance: Justice is Our Aim: Union is strength”. On the reverse side was “Eight Hours Demonstration established 1886: Eight Hours, United We Stand, Divided We Fall: Labour, Recreation, Rest”. Soman *The History of Bathurst*, 26. See Appendix 1 for biography of William Mitten.

¹¹⁷ “Another delivery boy was the driver who had arrogated to himself the title of ‘General Booth’ and the seat was shown off to perfection with sundry copies of the War Cry”. *National Advocate* 6 October 1891.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid* and *Bathurst Free Press* 6 October 1891.

and the antics of some of the members almost as entertaining.¹¹⁹ It is hard to discern the extent to which the Eight-hour day was observed in other parts of the district in these years. There was no mention in the *Molong Express* and the *Cowra Free Press* in 1891 and 1893 or in the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette*, in any of the three years. Peak Hill residents observed the day but at Carcoar there was grumbling that “yet another public holiday had been proclaimed”.¹²⁰

In Lithgow and its surrounds, securing shorter working hours for miners was a significant political issue and the demonstration was less a celebration than a ‘call to arms’. Lithgow miners celebrated the Eight-hour working day in February, a tradition which began with the formation of the Coal Miners’ Mutual Protective Association of the Western District. The miners marched through the main street under a banner (displayed for the first time in 1889) to the racecourse where a public meeting was held and politicians and union leaders delivered speeches “appropriate for the occasion”. In 1892 and 1893 one of the principal concerns was the regulation of coal mines but other issues were not neglected. In 1892, for example, Joseph Cook spoke of the need for arbitration and in 1893, George Donald lectured on “socialism, payment of members...stopping land speculation [and] settling the unemployed on the land”. Sports and an evening banquet followed the formal proceedings.¹²¹

The introduction of the Eight-hour day was an important issue for the labour movement although of less relevance in most communities in the district. “Eight hours to be the legal maximum working day in all occupations” was the third plank of the LEL inaugural electoral platform. Yet between 1891 and 1893 there was disagreement within the LEL on how it should be implemented. Publicly at least, all supported the principle, but some did not believe that compulsory and punitive legislation was desirable.¹²² This difference in opinion was essentially between country and city delegates as demonstrated in debates at the annual conferences and at a special meeting held in 1893. According to Hogan, while city workers were passionate in their commitment for legislating the Eight-hour day, rural workers believed that they would be disadvantaged given that their work did not fit neatly into a regular pattern. Also, as Hogan

¹¹⁹ In 1892 disputes over the hiring of bands, the allocation of printing and a festering labour dispute at the *National Advocate’s* printing office had an impact. The final meeting of the 1892 committee was held at the Town Hall and interest was such that a large audience, many who gathered expecting some “fun”, spilled out onto the veranda”. *National Advocate* 13 December, 1892 *Bathurst Free Press* 13 December 1892. The following year was less controversial though the first order of business was to dispense with an 1891 decision to build a Trades Hall with the proceeds of the demonstration. *National Advocate* 4 July 1893.

¹²⁰ £34 18s in proceeds from the Peak Hill Demonstration were donated to the miners at Broken Hill. *Barrier Miner* 13 October 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 4 October 1893, *Sydney Mail* 1 October 1892.

¹²¹ *Illawarra Mercury* 23 February 1892, *Sydney Morning Herald* 20 February 1893.

¹²² The twin planks of a Fighting Platform and a Working Platform were introduced at the special meeting in November 1893.

reflects, “many rural workers of the party were themselves occasional employers so that self-interest overrode ideology”.¹²³ At the special conference, a proposal to relegate the plank from the newly agreed “Fighting Platform” to the less immediate “Working Platform” was defeated notwithstanding the argument that the issue would continue to alienate country voters. William G Spence suggested that there should be some “discrimination” on the approach to the issue in city and country areas while Richard Sleath argued that the repeal of the *Masters and Servant Act* used against shearers and other rural workers was more pressing.¹²⁴ At a meeting of the Molong branch of the LEL, Charles Lauer the newly elected secretary,¹²⁵ explained the intention of the Eight-hour plank was “to put down 'sweating' in the towns”. He agreed that farmers had every right to object as “they had to work at all hours to get their crops in for fear of a storm” and their elected delegate would “lay the matter before the Central Committee with a view to having it altered”.¹²⁶

Given this divisiveness, it is hardly surprising that few candidates seeking election in Central West electorates in 1891 paid little more than lip service to the issue during the campaign. Reginald Black, Andrew Ross, George Donald and Joseph Cook were among those expressing support. William Paul was hesitant telling voters in Grenfell he was “in favour of the legislation but did not believe in passing an Act which would compel a man to labor for only eight hours in the day”. Arthur Fremlin was in favour provided a worker could then work longer for overtime.¹²⁷

Securing early closing or a half-day holiday, was possibly of greater concern. Throughout the district, as in other parts of the colonies, employees in small shops and large stores alike worked very long hours, many up to seventy hours per week from Monday to Saturday, with most hours being worked on Saturday. In some areas workers had the benefit of a weekly half-day holiday but even then, working hours were excessive. In Molong, for example, shop assistants enjoyed a half-day holiday but could still work a prohibitive sixty-six plus hours a week during the summer months.¹²⁸

An attempt to legislate these working hours in April 1892 was thwarted by the Legislative Council which rejected the *Early Closing Bill* passed by the Assembly in December 1891. The

¹²³ Hogan *Labor Pains*, 6.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 67.

¹²⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Lauer.

¹²⁶ *Molong Express* 1 August 1891.

¹²⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 and 6 June 1891, *Bathurst Free Press* 11 June 1891.

¹²⁸ *Molong Express* 9 August 1890. This included a weekly half-day holiday. There were half-holidays in Grenfell, Molong and Cowra. Efforts in Condobolin led by Henry Nancarrow, Thomas Quirk and Nicolas Hyeronimus to secure early closing were rebuffed in 1891. *National Advocate* 1 October 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Henry Nancarrow and Nicholas Hyeronimus.

Bill provided for the compulsory closing of shops at six pm but the legislation was flawed and generally seen as unworkable. It was geared to large metropolitan retailers and failed to deal with the idiosyncrasies of smaller scale retailing and family owned businesses without employees. According to the *Bathurst Free Press* governments had no business hampering “the movement of both wage-payers and wage-earners as to lessen their chances of livelihood and deprive them of that liberty to do with their own goods and their own time what they please, provided their actions do no unfairly injure others”.¹²⁹

There was considerable sympathy for the shop workers but little consensus on how to deal with the problem. A correspondent to the *Bathurst Free Press* believed the solution lay with the ladies and the Eight-hour men and their wives. Shops were kept open for their convenience the writer argued and he suggested, the working classes should change their habits to do something to aid “another class of labour”. He also urged the Bathurst LEL to take up the cause. But there appeared to be little appetite for the labour movement to become seriously involved.¹³⁰ The principle of shorter hours was not part of the LEL’s platform and, according to Markey, the early-closing or half-day holiday associations which existed in many of the country towns in the district “sat uneasily with the labour movement”. They acted, he suggests, as “political pressure groups” focusing “exclusively over hours”. Markey also suggests that the “shabby gentility’ pre-disposed shop assistants against unions and help[ed] them gain bourgeois patronage”.¹³¹

“Bourgeois patronage” was apparent in the campaign for shorter hours in Forbes. A Shop Assistants’ Club had been formed in 1890 with storeowners George Hart as president and Charles McLean as secretary. Details on vice-president William Rogerson, an employee of Prows’ store, are sketchy but Patrick Clara, employed at Bergers’ Store, had a labour background. Committeeman Thomas Scott McDade was associated with Wigglesworth’s store but it is not known in what capacity. McDade, as the son of a Wesleyan minister, had a strong association with the Methodist Church.¹³² Two clergymen were also foremost in the movement. Methodist James Lewin and Presbyterian John Craig were speakers at two public meetings. One, in October 1891, was held to inaugurate a Wednesday half-holiday and the second in August 1892, to address a threat to the six pm early-closing previously adopted by shopkeepers. The agreement of all shopkeepers was essential to the introduction of shorter working hours and although there was overwhelming support for the Wednesday half-holiday

¹²⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 December 1891.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 1 July 1891.

¹³¹ Markey *The Making of the Labor Party*, 223.

¹³² *Forbes Times* 5 June 1914, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 9 January 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 29 May 1893, *Town and Country Journal* 18 February 1892.

(thirteen signified their agreement), James Fraser of Fraser Brothers would only give conditional agreement. The employees did “not care to accept the position” at a subsequent meeting to discuss the matter with the proceedings terminating “very abruptly”. There was at least some support from the labour movement with labour activist Hector Greville speaking in support of a motion by Craig calling on the community to boycott Daniel Berger’s store when he announced his intention to extend the opening hours to nine pm.¹³³

The 1891 election campaign was as much about labour versus capital in the Central West as elsewhere in the country districts evidenced by the return of six labour candidates. Yet overall unionisation of the workforce was limited. Other than railway workers, miners and shearers’ unions, there were branches of the Typographical Association, the Journeyman Tailors’ Association, Amalgamated New South Wales Boot Trade Union, District Carriers Union and the Lithgow Potters in various locations.¹³⁴ After the 1890 strife and with the deepening depression, disputes in the district were sporadic, generally site specific in both location and dispute.¹³⁵ Employers, emboldened by the unions’ defeat, were able to take advantage of deteriorating economic conditions and increasing unemployment. There was no scarcity of labour and strikes were ineffectual when employers could obtain workers from elsewhere in the district or the metropolis. This was the case when roustabouts struck at Thomas Edols’ Burrawang station.¹³⁶ The Pastoralists’ Union despatched 38 men from Sydney, with free railway passes provided by the Labour Bureau, to replace the workers. The Sydney men were accompanied by police from the Forbes railway station and the strike was quickly broken. The strikers were largely unskilled and easily replaced at relatively little inconvenience to their employers.

¹³³ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 9 and 16 October 1891, 5 August 1892. Daniel Berger also extended the opening hours of his store in Bourke. In response, the secretary of the Bourke Wednesday Half-Holiday and Early Closing Association scathing in his criticism of Berger urging unionists not to patronise a “black-listed store”. Somewhat contradictorily, Berger expressed his support for the striking Broken Hill miners with £5 cheque enclosed “in a long letter” read at a public meeting in 1892. *Western Herald* 10 August 1892, *Barrier Miner* 27 September 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Craig, Patrick Clara, Thomas McDade, George and Annie Wigglesworth and Daniel Berger.

¹³⁴ *National Advocate* 8 December 1891, *Sydney Morning Herald* 3 January 1891, *Sydney Mail* 27 February 1892.

¹³⁵ In addition to the disputes discussed below, there was a lock-out at the offices of *The National Advocate*. The dispute over wages and workers behaviour occurred in May 1892 and was fulsomely and dutifully reported by the *Bathurst Free Press* (multiple reports May 1892). There was also a short-lived strike by half a dozen hands at E Webb and Co’s boot factory. *Evening News* 9 May 1891, *National Advocate* 12 May 1891.

¹³⁶ The general labourers and pickers-up refused to accept the wages offered and a condition that they be required to find their own work in wet weather, contrary to previous practice. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 22 August 1893.

Managers of some stations sought redress in the courts.¹³⁷ John Brewer of Kiacatoo Station near Condobolin charged 23 shearers with a breach of agreement for stopping work in December 1891. Brewer alleged the men refused to work because the lambs' fleece was "full of grass seed".¹³⁸ But the men complained that their water was unfit to drink. In dismissing the case, magistrate commented that the case should never have been brought to court in the first place.¹³⁹ The men agreed to return to work if they were provided with clean water but they "were paid off [leaving] eighteen thousand lambs" unshorn.¹⁴⁰ In October 1893 Robert Earle Rawlins, manager of Norman A Gatenby's Jemalong station, unsuccessfully prosecuted eighteen shearers for refusing to shear wet sheep suggesting their objection to shearing the sheep was more to do with wanting to "spin" out their time.¹⁴¹ At around the same time, the owner of Borambil station near Condobolin, Richard Whitehead, "summoned the whole board of 35 shearers for refusing to shear on Saturday afternoons". The Police Magistrate in dismissing the charges referred to the 'Hebden' ruling. He commented that "it seemed to be generally admitted that shearers were entitled to Saturday afternoons and he for one would be sorry to see them deprived of it (much applause in Court which was promptly suppressed)".¹⁴²

¹³⁷ There were similar strikes at stations in the other districts including Canoble (near Hay), Yanko (near Jerilderie), Milong (near Young) and Corella (Bourke). *Evening News* 18 August 1893, 2 September 1893, *Freeman's Journal* 26 August 1893.

¹³⁸ *Brisbane Courier* 7 December 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Brewer and Norman Gatenby.

¹³⁹ "It was alleged that the water was near a black's camp and the refuse from the sheds found its way into the tank, which dogs suffering from mange repeatedly frequented. Cattle and sheep also fouled the water making it totally unfit for consumption. Men had suffered greatly from dysentery in consequence. *Australian Workman* 5 December 1891.

¹⁴⁰ *Sydney Mail* 12 December 1891.

¹⁴¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 28 October 1893. The charges were essentially dismissed on a technicality. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Robert Rawlins and Ernest A L Sharpe.

¹⁴² The hearing comprised of charges against the shed representative, Henry Bailey, with the Police Magistrate suggesting that as the charges were the same for all other defendants. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 10 October 1893. The Hebden case involved Charles Hebden of Wanaaring Station near Burke. Hebden summoned a shearer named Buxton for refusing to shear on Saturday afternoon to make up for time lost due to wet weather. The magistrate rejected his claim. Hebden's appeal was dismissed. *Freeman's Journal* 30 September 1893. See Appendix for biography of Richard Whitehead.

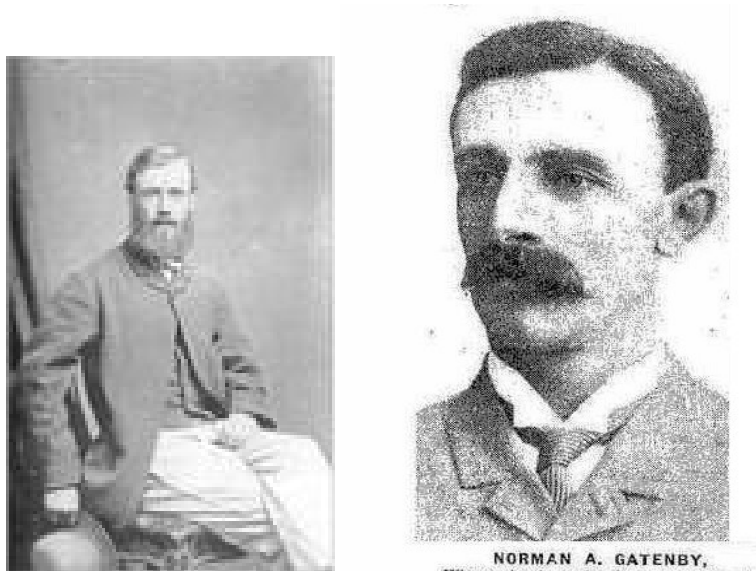


Illustration 47: John Brewer Norman A Gatenby

Generally, the Pastoralists Union (PU) had the upper hand during the shearing seasons in the district and shearers had little alternative but to work under the pastoralists' rules. Most of the district's prominent station owners were members of the union. At a meeting in Bathurst Carcoar pastoralist and member of the union' council, Francis Rawdon Hopkins, asserted that the PU was

not fighting the unionists. They were only offering a passive resistance. That they had no political platform and had no desire to influence a change of Government. They had no paid agitators travelling the country, but they, claimed the protection of the law of the land which they had made their home.¹⁴³

The reality was the PU wanted no truck with the ASU. The secretary Whitely King travelled throughout the Central West with people such as Chesney Hopkins establishing branches. Letters from William E Abbott, the most vocal of the pastoralists, persistently appeared in the local press arguing the case for 'freedom of contract'.¹⁴⁴ Spence, an equally prolific correspondent, visited county centres pleading the shearers' cause and that of 'new unionism'. In 1891 James Toomey, embarked on a tour of the district to galvanise the support of shearers and other workers. He held meetings, with mixed success, in various towns including Parkes, Orange, Cowra, Forbes, Molong, Peak Hill, Blayney, Grenfell and Cumnock as well as several smaller towns along the railway line. At Forbes, the School of Arts was crowded to the door

¹⁴³ *Bathurst Free Press* 9 May 1891. See *Australian Dictionary for Biography* for biography of Francis Rawdon Chesney Hopkins.

¹⁴⁴ See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of William Edward (Wingen) Abbott.

but at Orange and Cowra there was little interest, reflecting the different cohort of shearers.¹⁴⁵ In Molong, Toomey ran afoul of local workers when, in breach of union rules, he stayed at a hotel which employed a Chinese cook. Some intemperate remarks on his part and aggression on that of his audience, led to “an unfortunate contretemps at the close” necessitating Toomey to leave the building by the back door to avoid a large number of unionists stationed at the front.¹⁴⁶

There was relatively little industrial unrest in the mining industry. Mining co-operatives, tributors and similar working arrangements limited the number of ‘wages men’ (other than coal mining) meaning the industry was not conducive to unionisation. Also, between 1891 and 1893, mines opened, closed and reopened regularly dispersing the workforce. Mine owners repeatedly sought exemptions from the labour requirements of their leases, while those engaged in some speculative ventures did not operate at all. Fluctuating commodity prices led owners to institute cost cutting measures, and inevitably it was the miners who bore the brunt of these. Employers also took advantage of rising unemployment to try to suppress unions such as at the Peak Hill Proprietary gold mine where, in August 1893, miners were given an ultimatum to accept a pay cut within two weeks and threatened with instant dismissal.¹⁴⁷ Members of the Sunny Corner Smelters and Surface Employees Union struggled to maintain acceptable working conditions in the face of repetitive opening and closing of the mines and changes in mine ownership.¹⁴⁸ At a meeting in May 1891 union officials expressed their frustration urging their fellow workers to “follow the example of workers throughout the world and unite for their own welfare”.¹⁴⁹ This proved fruitless when, in March 1892, management locked out eighty workers over a relatively minor issue of “wheeling of rubbish”. The representative of the miners, William Palmer, sought the assistance of the TLC which organised an ineffectual deputation to the owners. The lockout dragged on for some months. In the meantime, the company changed hands and the new owners refused to employ

¹⁴⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 1 May 1891, *Sydney Morning Herald* 29 April 1891, *Cowra Free Press* 15 May 1891.

¹⁴⁶ The attendance at the meeting was relatively small though according to Toomey this was possible because there was relatively little friction between workers and “sheep-owners”. *Molong Free Press* 2 May 1891.

¹⁴⁷ *National Advocate* 8 August 1893.

¹⁴⁸ The union was formed in January 1891 and the secretary (William Palmer) wrote to the Trades and Labour Council seeking affiliation and assistance in “thoroughly organising the union.” *The Australian Workman* 24 January 1891. The Sunny Corner silver mines first commenced operations in 1884 and while the yield was considerably less than that of Broken Hill, the output was significant. The management of the mines was erratic with many “blunders” and much “extravagance” many fortunes were won and lost for the lack of owners with the “knowledge and aptitude to carry on their operations...with the common sense of men of business [and]...scientific and practical knowledge”. *Evening News* 9 April 1891.

¹⁴⁹ *The Australian Workman* 30 May 1891.

unionists. By July, Palmer advised the TLC that the affair was effectively over with most miners finding work elsewhere. "Things were at a standstill" he stated, "80 men were receiving aid from the societies and any man who wanted a job would have to be members of the [Methodist] church".¹⁵⁰

Unionists in the shale mine at Hartley Vale and in the collieries at Lithgow also had little success. In November 1891 miners at the shale mine sought the introduction of a cavil. According to the secretary of the union, Thomas Burke, the cavil "was one of the most vital points of a miners' union".¹⁵¹ Initially the mine owners half-heartedly agreed but the system that was introduced was flawed and inequitable, possibly intentionally. The company abandoned the cavil and approximately 100 miners went on strike to fight for their "unionistic life". In response, the owners introduced new and onerous rules, prohibited union membership and threatened the eviction of union members from company-owned cottages. The strike ended when, according to the *Evening News*, the company "considerably modified...the new rules...apparently to the satisfaction of the miners". The *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* reported that the mine manager, William Hall, purportedly "told them they might have forty unions if they wished, and promised that all contracts should be publicly notified, as well as the prices obtained". But the miners returned to work the next day "on the masters terms" with no cavil and less favourable working conditions than they previously had.¹⁵² While the Hartley Vale action could be described as ill-advised, the dispute between miners and colliery owners that arose when the latter reduced hewing rates was a bid by the miners to preserve their "scanty livelihoods". An attempt to negotiate with the owners through the media of John Curley¹⁵³ and Joseph Cook was to no avail. With the ensuing strike action threatening to be drawn out, many of the "coal hewers", several of who were "penniless", left for the Burra Burra gold fields. Two weeks later, after pressure had been brought to bear on those who could not afford to be out of work for an

¹⁵⁰ *Evening News* 2 July 1892. The Methodist church was strong in Sunny Corner.

¹⁵¹ *Katoomba Times* 4 October 1890. The union that had only been formed in October 1890.

¹⁵² According to Thomas Burke "a cavil is simply a shake of the hat, or a lottery, into which all the working places of a mine are thrown, and each man's particular location is determined for the quarter by his chance in the drawing of the places. By this means every man has an equal chance, and no injustice is possible in the distribution of the work". *Bathurst Free Press* 23 November 1891, *Illawarra Mercury* 24 November 1891, *Evening News* 27 November 1891, *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* 30 November 1891, *Sydney Morning Herald* 30 November 1891, *National Advocate* 28 November 1891.

¹⁵³ John Curley (1846-1913) secretary of the Colliery Employees' Federation, MLA for Newcastle 1889-1891. A W Martin and P Wardle *Members of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales 1856-1901* (Canberra: Australian National University 1959) 50.

extended period, the strike ended with an undertaking from the owners that the miners could have their old places back at the reduced rate.¹⁵⁴

Thus, between 1891 and 1893, union militarism in the district was repressed. Across the colony the onset of depression and the collapse of industrial action in the 1890s weakened the capacity and sapped the will of workers to challenge employers over reduced wages and working conditions. Most of the disputes between employers and unions in the district left workers worse off than when the dispute began. Conciliation and arbitration was either non-existent or ineffectual although the challenge to the shearers' working conditions was arbitrated in their favour by the courts. Relationships between shop owners and their employees were tested in wrangles over shorter working hours but the labour movement had little interest in these 'bourgeois' campaigns. The formation of the Labour Party and the election of its candidates in 1891 heartened the labour movement and unsettled capitalists but the latter had the ascendancy. Any middle-class anxiety about the deleterious impact of strikes on law and order was muted supporting the view that at no time was there a threat to underlying societal values and social order.

¹⁵⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* 5 June 1893, *National Advocate* 7 June 1893 and *Bathurst Post* 15 June 1893.

Chapter 5 Law and Order

Predictably the pamphlet prepared by Greville Tregarthen on the *Progress and Resources of New South Wales* for distribution at the Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893 makes only a fleeting reference to the colony's penal origin while Edward Dowling describes the first settlement as providing "an arena for philanthropic experiments in criminal reformation".¹ Memories of the 'convict stain' had all but been erased by the end of the nineteenth century and NSW was seen as a mature law-abiding society which compared favourably to its North American contemporaries. In the early years of the colony's history, the imperial government, early administrators and colonists set about establishing a society, according to John Hirst, to replicate the "social order of the mother country".² This included a system of justice which from its infancy was, necessarily, adapted to local needs and conditions and intended to establish a rule of law equal to the task of creating and protecting an orderly and prosperous society such as existed in the Central West between 1891 and 1893.

The administration of justice can be viewed in different ways. A perusal of Cleggs' index to legislation in force in NSW at the beginning of 1892 illustrates the extent to which the colony's laws controlled the lives of ordinary people in the Central West.³ Criminal, civil and municipal laws, through their administration and application, influenced almost all daily activities and an analysis of how these operated provides an insight into the society of the region. But as important as the laws were, an understanding of how law and order was perceived, interpreted, debated and defended provides a more enlightening perspective. Exploring what Holloway, Bronitt and Williams describe as "common law culture [being] the values that shape the belief systems of the individuals (litigants, public officials, lawyers and judges) participating in the colonial justice system"⁴ adds a further dimension.

I have argued previously that during time under consideration, the Central West was a form of *gemeinschaft* community. In this chapter I enlarge on this theme and discuss how, above all else, the rationale of the prevailing system of justice was to safeguard a community defined in

¹ Tregarthen *Progress and Resources*, 1.

² Hirst 'The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy', 208.

³ T B Clegg *The Statutes of NSW Convenient Index to the public general acts of the legislature of NSW in force on January 1st 1892 showing the effect of legislation since the publication of 'Oliver's Statutes'* (Sydney Maxwell Hayes Bros 1892). Clegg's list includes hundreds of local and some imperial statutes in force in the colony.

⁴ Holloway, Bronitt and Williams 'Rhetoric, Reason, and the Rule of Law'.

this way.⁵ Respectability, cohesiveness and preservation of the existing social hierarchy underpinned the stability of society in the colony and in the Central West. Such a society can be undermined even by feelings of insecurity. Between 1891 and 1893 a growing unease was creeping into the psyche of colonists faced with deteriorating economic conditions as well as lingering disquiet from past and present divisive strikes. The colony's perilous financial situation was manifested in the ever-increasing number of unemployed, particularly in Sydney. The daily massing of the jobless around Queen Victoria's statue and the Domain listening to inflammatory speeches caused uneasiness in some local communities as did the ominous vicissitudes of the Broken Hill strike.

The anarchic doctrine being preached to the "Domainiacs" or to the "Statue Crowd"⁶ did not appear to be particularly unnerving in the country districts. Some local newspapers expressed sympathy for those "idle, homeless destitute[s]" that were "hungry and unclothed".⁷ The *Bathurst Free Press* on the other hand, was often vitriolic in its criticism of the "common vagrants" lounging there although it begrudgingly acknowledged the "legitimate" unemployed as needing assistance.⁸ All the Central West newspapers were in accord with other colonial newspapers in their condemnation of the "unkempt agitators"⁹ who daily harangued their audiences with "inflammatory speeches...who, to gain their own ends, are absolutely prostituting every good endeavour to relieve distress by their blatant and insulting utterances".¹⁰ The *Orange Leader* described the words of the speakers as "laughed at by society". Yet it cautioned that these words have "meaning for the starving destitute [whose] "character is no use to him, his sense of right is destroyed...impelled on by the cravings of a hungry stomach." The newspaper warned the government that dark days were looming if something was not done.¹¹ The "real menace to society" though, according to the *Lithgow Mercury*:

was not from the starving unemployed breathing threats of revolution and anarchy
but from the lawmakers who have built a vantage ground for privilege and from the

⁵ R Hogg and K Carrington *Policing the Rural Crisis* (Leichardt Federation Press 2006) 30. Also see R Hogg and K Carrington 'Violence, Spatiality and Other Rurals' *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 36, no 3 (2003): 296.

⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 27 August 1892 and 23 July 1892.

⁷ *Orange Leader* 3 August 1892 and *Grenfell Vedette* 30 July 1892.

⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 23 February 1892.

⁹ Fred Flowers, vice-President of the Trades and Labour Council and labour activist was one of those who regularly addressed mass meetings at the Domain or Statue with inflammatory speeches unappreciated by even sympathetic observers such as the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* which was unimpressed with his statements that the tyranny of the government was the same as would be expected in Russia. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 30 September 1892.

¹⁰ *Grenfell Vedette* 30 July 1892.

¹¹ *Orange Leader* 30 July 1892.

stolid conservatism of the average man whose voice is always to deify law and order and whose role is always cast for the maintenance of things as they are.¹²

There was a passing interest in the activities of anarchists overseas. Throughout 1892, for example, most of the region's newspapers included in their 'telegraph' sections short items on the outrages committed by anarchists throughout the world. They were generally not inclined to see similar serious threats in the colony although the *Bathurst Free Press* warned readers that there were home grown revolutionaries, in the form of labour members of Parliament, prepared to undermine good order. While not being prepared to take lives by bombs as Ravachol and his ilk,¹³ the newspaper declared, they were intent on reconstructing society based on anarchistic principles by following the ideas of Tucker and "Bakounine".¹⁴ The local radicals, apparently not content to maintain the *Lithgow Mercury's* menacing status quo, were enabled by the electoral power of the manipulated masses which were insufficiently educated on the responsibilities of "self-respecting citizenship".¹⁵

The National Association of NSW had been disseminating similar views in a colony-wide publicity blitz.¹⁶ In February 1892 at its first general meeting chairman Thomas Kelly¹⁷, warned that the "frequent and disastrous strikes, accompanied by violence and intimidation, the spread of socialistic and anarchical doctrines" would be the downfall of the colony. The aims of the association, he stated, "were to counteract, by every lawful means, the schemes of socialists, anarchists and professional agitators, to maintain personal freedom to uphold the credit of the colony and to assist in maintaining the law".¹⁸ The means of achieving this, by "purifying" the electoral rolls, was too much even for the *Bathurst Free Press*, which declared it to be a "class" organisation and was inclined to support the Association's critics who declared that "its own purity and saintliness will burst it into smithereens".¹⁹

¹² *Lithgow Mercury* 22 July 1892.

¹³ Ravachol (François Claudius Koenigstein (1859–1892) a French anarchist executed in 1892.

¹⁴ Russian Mikhail Alexandrovich Bakunin (1814-1876) viewed as one of the "fathers" of anarchy and American Benjamin Ricketson Tucker (1854-1939) contemporary proponent of "individualist" ideas .

¹⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 30 April 1892.

¹⁶ The National Association of NSW was established in 1891 following the formation of the Victorian association. According to Rickard "the national associations were created as a direct and immediate response to the birth of the labor parties. Ostensibly they sought to educate the electorate concerning the dangers of socialism and class legislation. In fact, they aimed to prevent or oppose legislation injurious to the interests of employers and property owners." Rickard, *Class and Politics*, 59.

¹⁷ Thomas Hussey Kelly (1830-1901) Wool broker, mining speculator and businessman See *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

¹⁸ National Association of New South Wales *Working Platform: Report of the first general meeting of members held in Sydney on Wednesday February 24th 1892* (Sydney: National Association of NSW 1892).

¹⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 14 May 1892.

The possibility that the good order of the colony could be overthrown by revolution of the socialist kind touted by the National Association was not widely contemplated. The simmering hostilities during the miners' strike at Broken Hill were the greater concern.²⁰ An examination of the strike contributes to an understanding of various aspects of Central West society. These include the ongoing struggle between capital and labour, the failure of the recently enacted conciliation and arbitration legislation and the early impact of the economic depression. Some of these are considered elsewhere but it is the administration of justice, specifically the role of the government and the judiciary in suppressing the strikers' activities that is of interest here.

The strike arose from the mine owners' repudiation of their existing agreement with the union in a bid to lower costs by reducing wages and introducing contracts. The owners would not enter into negotiations and rejected attempts to have the matter arbitrated before the newly established Council of Conciliation and Arbitration. With little other redress, the miners began strike action on 3 July 1892. From this time onwards until after the strike was over, the spectre of the break-down of law and order in the colony was ever-present with newspaper reports on the progress of the strike appearing daily in most newspapers across the colony. In the region, over the four-month duration of the strike, the miners were variously supported, pitied and ostracised. The *Grenfell Record* accused the union leaders of resorting to "brute force and mob laws" and noted that even though the employers were occasionally morally worse than the workers they acted within the law and "did not violate social order".²¹

In some towns, such as the labour stronghold of Forbes, there was greater support for the strikers. In July the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* published a letter sent to prominent citizen and auctioneer John Fullerton Armstrong by his son. John jnr, a Broken Hill resident, wrote that "a more law-abiding and orderly body of men could not exist". He dismissed reports in the metropolitan press that the miners were "a gang of armed ruffians and blood-seeking brutes". Although he conceded that there was some initial merry-making, amounting to "little more than larrikinism of the less serious type". Still, he cautioned there could be trouble if there was an attempt to re-open the mines using non-union labour with the backing of the "military".²² In September, the newspaper reported on a public meeting in support of the strikers held in Forbes.²³ It is difficult to identify the attendees at this meeting but several of those who spoke seconded motions or sent donations were involved in Forbes' half-holiday movement. They included, Messrs W Anderson, Patrick Clara and Kingsborough who were shop assistants while

²⁰ Broken Hill is located approximately 750 kilometres west from Lake Cargelligo and over 950 kilometres from Bathurst.

²¹ *Grenfell Record* 30 July 1892.

²² *Forbes Gazette and Parkes Gazette* 22 July 1892.

²³ *Ibid*, 27 September 1892.

J Hart and Daniel Berger owned stores. Auctioneer and secretary of the Forbes LEL John Atkinson, and miner Hector Greville were also present.²⁴ The tone of the meeting was decidedly anti-Government and anti-capital, with the railway contractors, Baxter and Saddler, accused of engaging local men to send to Broken Hill.

There was support in other parts of the district. The Lithgow Miners Association sent £50 in July and in August a meeting was held at Orange. In reporting on the upcoming meeting, the *National Advocate's* Orange correspondent suggested that many people who were "by no means unionists, are of the opinion that the men are in the right of it", and predicted that a "good subscription" would be raised.²⁵ However, at Cowra, only a modest amount of £3 7s was collected at a public meeting chaired by local MLA Denis Donnelly.²⁶

As time passed, it was inevitable there would be violent incidents given there were thousands of miners and their families in the town, many of whom were destitute. But the hysteria whipped up in the press warning that the colony was on the verge of anarchy was hardly supported by events. The government was variously condemned or commended for its actions, in particular the despatch of large numbers of police, the alleged partiality of the stipendiary magistrate, Whittingdale Johnson and favouritism for the mine owners.²⁷ When the owners attempted to re-open the mines on 25 August, there was trouble.²⁸ The government convened a crisis cabinet meeting and a contingent of "fifteen troopers armed with sabres and revolvers and fifty foot police armed with rifles with fixed bayonets" were put on standby.²⁹ The arrest and subsequent gaoling of six union officials on conspiracy charges brought matters to a head.³⁰ On 21 September, John Cann moved a motion to censure the Government on its handling of the issue.³¹

²⁴ William Anderson was one of the attendees at a half-holiday meeting, as was Patrick Clara. It is probable that another shop assistant was John Watsford Kingsborough who, in bankruptcy proceedings, was described a "draper's assistant". *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 6 October 1892. J Hart was probably the son of storeowner George Hart. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Atkinson.

²⁵ *Evening News* 30 July 1892, *National Advocate* 11 August 1892.

²⁶ *Cowra Free Press* 12 August 1892.

²⁷ Johnson Whittingdale died 1898 aged 68 was sent from Sydney to hear the cases. Previously he had been commissioner of the western goldfield 1862-1874. He was then a lands' commissioner until 1884 when he was appointed a stipendiary magistrate for the Sydney district. *National Advocate* 19 November 1898.

²⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 25 August 1892. The *Bathurst Free Press* reported rowdy scenes including that women with sticks set upon the "timber 'boss'; the mobbing of a clerk who was "hit about the head"; the National Bank manager being stopped from going to work; and, there was a good deal of "cheering and jeering".

²⁹ *National Advocate* 26 August 1892.

³⁰ On 15 September Richard Sleath together with William John Ferguson were arrested with 5 other union leaders (RA Hewitt, H Heberle, EP Polkinghorne, J Bennetts and G Hurn). *Town and Country and*

Only four local members Albert Gardiner, George Hutchinson, John Haynes and Joseph Cook, supported Cann's amendment. Hutchinson acknowledged there had been some "wild, foolish and tempestuous speeches" but they were harmless and it was the Government that had acted "foolishly and in a fit of frantic zeal".³² Paddy Crick was among those who opposed the motion declaring, rather disingenuously, that it was these types of speeches that were "likely to lead to serious results".³³ James Torpy took a "strong line on law and order"³⁴ as did William Wall who suggested that the "greatest safeguard" for the industrial classes "was the proper observance and application of the law".³⁵ Cann's amendment was comprehensively defeated as were the miners.³⁶ The strike ended on 6 November leaving thousands of men out of work. In all likelihood, the mixed reactions of the district's politicians reflected community feeling but regardless of whether or not people sympathised with the workers, many would have been relieved that the dispute had ended, the menacing newspaper headlines had disappeared and social order, a tenet of *gemeinschaft*, had been restored.

The gaoling of the union officials at the end of October was the final act of the saga. Although the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* had observed early on in the dispute that the authorities had more reason to be concerned with the ferment at Sydney than Broken Hill,³⁷ after the sentences were imposed it declared that "if ever anything has wakened up the masses it is the sentences passed upon the Broken Hill leaders".³⁸ Still the masses did not rise up in the Central West or elsewhere and the strike passed amid expressions of regret for the futility of it all and the dire straits of the defeated miners. While there was some sympathy for the union leaders, it was tempered with a belief that they had sealed their own fate.³⁹ By mid-November, interest had waned and the status quo preserved.

Journal 5 November 1892. All other than Hurn were found guilty of various offences. Sentences for most ranged from three to eighteen months but Sleath and Ferguson were each sentenced to two years hard labour. Both Sleath and Ferguson later were elected to the parliament.

³¹ The motion was piggy-backed onto an Opposition move condemning George Dibbs' expenditure of £1000, without Parliamentary approval, on his trip to the United Kingdom. Moved by John Henry Cann, the Labor member for Broken Hill, it called on the House "to express its strong disapproval of the way the Government has administered the law at Broken Hill".

³² *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 11 October 1892.

³³ *Sydney Morning Herald* 22 September 1892.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 28 September 1892.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 23 September 1892.

³⁶ Of the seventeen members of parliament for the region, only five voted for the motion. These were Hutchinson, Gardiner, Haynes, Cook and his fellow member for Lithgow, Reginald Black. They all voted for Reid's general censure motion as did Charles Jeanerette the member for Carcoar. See Appendix 1 for biography of William Wall.

³⁷ *Forbes Gazette and Parkes Gazette* 18 October 1892.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 15 November 1892.

³⁹ People in Parkes were said to have considered the sentences on "the side of severity". *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 8 October 1892.

Early colonial administrators were not concerned with the lawlessness of anarchy and strikes but with taming of the uncivilised interior of the colony. Successive governors had attempted to contain settlement through regulation but once this extended beyond the 'Limits of Location' and as squatters began to establish and consolidate vast runs, officials had to focus on how to preserve the rule of law.⁴⁰ The establishment of a yeomanry was viewed as essential and as discussed previously, successive governors and governments implemented a host of policies to foster this. Police, who also acted as magistrates, were sent throughout the burgeoning colony to enforce the law. As settlement progressed, their duties in the country districts as magistrates were supplemented, then, often replaced by unpaid justices appointed from the upper echelons of society. But by 1891, police magistrates, particularly in the larger country centres such as Bathurst, Cowra and Forbes, had primary responsibility for the administration of justice while in smaller towns, there were often calls for more appointments to address difficulties associated with unpaid magistrates.

The means of administering the law in the Central West was consistent with settlement patterns. By 1891, 44 Courts of Petty Sessions had been established. Bathurst, which was the first in the district to be proclaimed, was also among the first courts in the colony.⁴¹ Courts were set up in the towns as they developed and court houses became important symbols of permanency and respectability of a community although the establishment of a court and the building of a court house did not necessarily expedite the administration of justice.

Illustration 48: Forbes Court House



⁴⁰ Hogg and Carrington 'Violence, Spatiality and Other Rurals', 296.

⁴¹ Bathurst was proclaimed on 3 October 1832 under the *Summary Jurisdiction Act 1832* "which defined the powers of Courts of Petty Sessions". A L Barnett and R Evans 'Courts of Petty Sessions' in Golder A *High and Responsible Office*, 228. A full listing of the gazetted courts in the Central West is at Appendix 15 A B & C.

Until 1862 unpaid magistrates had significant power within the community. This was diminished when their control of the local police ceased with the enactment of the *Police Regulation Act*, introduced to deal with the bushranger menace.⁴² The magistrates' authority was still considerable and, as Hirst suggests, they were effectively the agent of central government and able to meddle in most aspects of community life, often involving their own affairs.⁴³ Gradually with the appointment of paid officials who assumed responsibility for many administrative matters and the appointment of more police magistrates, their authority was weakened, although their status in the community remained substantial. They continued to sit in judgement on their fellow citizens in the magistrates' courts.⁴⁴ This, the Under-Secretary for Justice Archibald C Fraser, clearly thought undesirable stating "the less unpaid Justices of the Peace have to do with the administration of justice, except for trivial matters, the better."⁴⁵

Hilary Golder suggests the colony's justice system did not evolve as a "simulacrum of the eighteenth-century English [legal] system" due to the idiosyncratic nature of the colony's settlement. Yet it could be argued its hallmark as "an amateur magistracy, with the county justice as the lynchpin of local law, order and administration"⁴⁶ drew heavily upon the "common law culture". Some magistrates cast themselves in the pivotal role of keeper of law and order in their communities. Such was the case of John Thomas West who had a reputation of being "exacting and inexorable". From the time of his appointment in 1877

⁴² This Act brought all police under the direct control of an Inspector-General of Police. Local magistrates no longer had any power to appoint or direct police in their duties. By 1891 fascination and mythmaking had almost replaced the fear of bushrangers who had operated in the Central West, principally between 1860 and 1870. Ben Hall and his gang were the most notorious in the district. Many people who had had encounters with them were still living and shared their stories. One of the gang, Johnny Vane lived in Cowra and died in 1906. Charles White wrote an expansive history which was serialised in newspapers throughout the colonies. The stories were later published in book form. See Charles White *History of Australian bushranging* in 4 volumes (Sydney Angus & Robertson 1910-1914). Also see Susan West *Bushranging and the Policing of Rural Banditry in New South Wales 1860-1880* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing 2010) for a recent analysis of bushranging in the colony, including the Central West. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Charles and John Charles Storey White.

⁴³ Hirst 'The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy', 416. Even after the introduction of the *Police Act*, they adjudicated, not just on serious criminal matters (assaults, theft- including stock) but liquor licencing, master and servant actions, electoral role registrations and municipal disputes such as the impounding of stock, trespass.

⁴⁴ The jurisdiction in these courts (petty sessions) was limited to "offences involving a penalty of six months imprisonment, and under, although the magistrates have power to enforce cumulative sentences up to the maximum limit on prisoners convicted on more than one charge." Coghlan *Wealth and Progress 1892*, 409.

⁴⁵ *Evidence to the Civil Service Inquiry Commission 1894* quoted by H Golder *A High and Responsible Office* (North Melbourne Sydney University Press in association with Oxford University Press 1991) 30.

⁴⁶ Golder *A High and Responsible Office*, 95.

he made it a practice to walk to Cowra [from his property at Back Creek] every Monday morning and take his seat upon the Bench; in fact, for several years he practically assumed the functions of Police Magistrate here and apparently regarded the chairmanship of the local Bench as his sole right. Being virtually a recluse he devoted much of his leisure time to a study of law and thus acquired a fair knowledge of Police Court procedure and the Colonial statutes.⁴⁷

Perhaps not all were as zealous as West but there is no doubt that much of the amateur magistracy in the district saw themselves and were seen, as holding a premier position in their local communities. Their role steeped in authority and respectability, required a primacy in the social hierarchy and this is generally reflected in their social and economic status in the towns and surrounding districts. Moreover as suggested by Julie Kimber, magistrates through their participation in civic organisations such as school boards and municipal councils “developed a proprietorial ownership of the town”.⁴⁸

Assembling a comprehensive profile of JPs in the district is difficult other than for those localities where court proceedings were reported or perhaps where the incumbents were prominent in community affairs. A significant number of those ‘on the books’ were pastoralists or graziers. Others were auctioneers, storeowners or town businessmen, including some hoteliers. Local members of parliament, William Redfern Watt, Andrew Ross and Denis Donnelly, were also active JPs.

Occasionally one who did not fit the mould was appointed as was the case of Richard J Phillips who was gazetted as a justice in 1892. Phillips was a prominent citizen of Alectown. He had mining interests and was the first president of the Parkes branch of the LEL. According to the Parkes’ *Western Champion*, although his name was added to the list of JPs in the colony, “he was averse to forcing himself upon the public in that capacity and was never actually sworn in”.⁴⁹ This would have disappointed those who shared Phillips’ political leanings. The LEL’s frustration with magistrates’ decisions on disputes between workers and employers, something reinforced by Whittington Johnson actions in Broken Hill, led to the inclusion of a provision in its 1891 platform that there should be an elected magistracy.

The pending appointment of a new batch of magistrates in late 1892 attracted considerable interest in the district with townships lobbying local members and ministers. On one occasion

⁴⁷ *Cowra Free Press* 31 October 1914. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Thomas West.

⁴⁸ J Kimber “‘A nuisance to the community’: policing the vagrant woman’ *Journal of Australian Studies* 34:3 (2010): 279.

⁴⁹ See Appendix 1 for biography of Richard J Phillips.

in the build-up to the announcement the acting Colonial Secretary, Francis Suttor, commented that, given the number of recommendations and applications made, “the day was not far distant when instead of gazetting a list of Justices of the Peace it would be more economical and less laborious to gazette the names of those who do not hold the position”.⁵⁰ When the list was eventually published in October, it contained some 600 names (the “Noble 600”)⁵¹, including 52 notables from the Central West, and brought the number of magistrates in the colony to 4,800.

John C Neild, MLA for Paddington, was unimpressed with some of the inclusions. He pursued the government in parliament on the appointments. Acting, he said, “not from a sense of any personal unfriendliness to any man in the colony”, he felt it his duty to raise his concerns over some of the appointees, given that “no higher function could devolve upon any citizen than to be empowered to deal with the property, the liberty and to some extent even with the lives of the people”. He was not prepared to name names but asserted that among those appointed were a number of shady characters involved in dubious financial transactions, a jewellery smuggler, a cattle stealer, a tote operator, a seller of sly-grog and a jockey.⁵² He also complained that “in a certain small town in the West, four persons have been appointed, viz, the local publican, the pound keeper, a stranger recently arrived, and a person 14 months dead”.⁵³ In the latter case, he could just as easily have been referring to Canowindra, although there were only two appointees for the town. One of these Thomas Clyburn who was a businessman and had hotel interests, died in 1891, and the other John Boyd, was a hotelier.⁵⁴ Neild had particular objections to publicans, particularly in the country, where he declared, erroneously, they may be called upon to deal with *Licensing Act* breaches.⁵⁵ Neild need not have been too concerned about most of the new appointees whose occupations were consistent with the traditional cohort. In the Central West, although four publicans were named, pastoralists, graziers or stock breeders comprised the largest occupation (38%) while 13% were farmers. Others imbued with middle-class values, included builders, auctioneers, storeowners and newspaper proprietors or editors.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 July 1892.

⁵¹ As described by the *Bathurst Free Press*. A throw-back to the 600 magistrates appointed under the patronage of Henry Parkes in 1887. Hirst *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy*, 424.

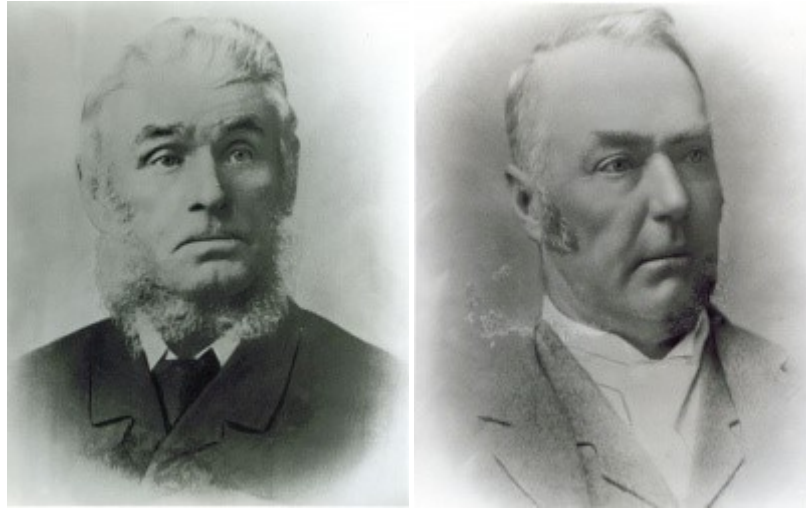
⁵² *Evening News* 14 October 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 15 October 1892.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 15 October 1892.

⁵⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Thomas Clyburn, Patrick Kenna and Augustus Coulson.

⁵⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 19 October *Evening News* 28 October 1892.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 16 for a list of the appointees.



**Illustration 49: Hotelier Patrick Kenna and Stock and Station Agent Augustus Coulson
New appointed Magistrates**

Enthusiasm for sitting on the bench waxed and waned in many jurisdictions. The *Bathurst Free Press* complained about the delays in court proceedings due to a lack of a quorum.⁵⁷ In Orange the need for the Clerk of Petty Sessions, Stephen Murphy,⁵⁸ to frequently act as a magistrate in spite of directions not to do so, earned him an official reprimand. A gathering of no less than fourteen magistrates, presumably the ones who could not be found when needed, met and decried the actions of the Minister for Justice in censoring Murphy.⁵⁹ The non-appearance of many JPs could simply be due to time constraints but no doubt many treated the position as an honorary one bestowing status, potential political benefits or payment for political services rendered.

A hallmark of a *gemeinschaft* community was a shared moral code which dictated acceptable values and behaviour. Magistrates were responsible for enforcing these standards but not all individuals treated the office with respect. In one instance, no less than eight magistrates came to hear an assault case involving Michael O'Halloran, editor and proprietor of the *Wellington Times and Australian Industrial Liberator*.⁶⁰ An ongoing squabble between a magistrate and a business rival in Condobolin attracted the ire of the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette's* Condobolin correspondent who commented that while the wrangling between the magistrate, the complainant and his solicitor was "fun for the crowd who collect in anticipation

⁵⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 17 May and 17 August 1892.

⁵⁸ Murphy was a staunch Methodist. His daughter Elsie was a member of the church choir. *The Methodist* 31 March 1894.

⁵⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 June 1892.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 17 June 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Michael O'Halloran.

when the parties are to meet” it made a mockery of the court.⁶¹ Another Condobolin writer was scathing in his description of the local magistrates. In his letter he takes umbrage with the magistrates “all storekeepers to a man”. He complained that they were conflicted in having to make judgements on spats between potential customers, seemingly reluctant to convict others for fear of giving offence leading to some frustration on the part of the police and were often not reliable in their attendance.⁶² He implied, of course, that magistrates should more appropriately be drawn from citizenry such as pastoralists or other ‘landed gentry’ who presumably would be untainted by commercial dealings.

Political rivalry and personal ill-feeling could spill over onto the bench. In a case at Molong, magistrates Andrew Ross and William Couch differed over the sentence of the council clerk and embezzler, Charles Evans .⁶³ Ross and Couch had strongly opposing political views and the prosecuting attorney, Patrick Kinna, had political disagreements with Ross.⁶⁴ Heated arguments between the parties ended with Ross prevailing and a lighter sentence than may otherwise have been expected imposed which, according to the Molong correspondent for *Orange Leader* “has caused considerable comment in town and has been the occasion of severe remarks” .⁶⁵

The public concern over the Evans case was not unusual, with the whiff of partiality on the part of Ross evident. The administration of justice in other jurisdictions also attracted unfavourable attention. Some in the Cowra community were appalled by magistrate John T West’s and his fellow justice, Henry H S Francis’, conviction of Alfred Atkinson on drunkenness and indecent exposure charges. Atkinson, who was penniless, was described as “an old man of respectable appearance”. He was unable to pay the fine of £2 and faced imprisonment for one month. He begged for leniency as he needed to look after his wife who was blind. West’s response of “you should have considered this before” elicited the sympathy of “several charitably disposed

⁶¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 11 November 1892. There were several storekeepers in Condobolin at this time; at least two of whom, Thomas Watson and Matthew Boulton were magistrates. Indeed, W J Grey Innes who was the Police Magistrate and the “elder statesman” of the town, had also been a storekeeper at one time. The matter referred to most likely would have related to small debts as storekeepers often sued people for payment of goods supplied. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Thomas Watson and Matthew Boulton.

⁶² *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 13 September 1892.

⁶³ The *NSW Police Gazette 1892* states “Charles Henry Evans, late Council Clerk, at Molong, charged with embezzling the sum of £3 4s. 5d., the property of the Molong Municipal Council, has been arrested by Senior-constable Atkinson, Molong Police; sentenced to two months’ imprisonment, Orange Gaol. Further charged with embezzling the sum of £2 8s. 9d.; sentenced to two months. Further charged with embezzling the sum of £2 3s. 4d.; sentenced to one month. And further charged with embezzling the sum of £1 6s. 10d., the property of the Molong Municipal Council sentenced to one months’ imprisonment, Orange Gaol. Sentences cumulative.” 256

⁶⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Henry Couch and Patrick Kinna.

⁶⁵ *Orange Leader* 3 August 1892.

citizens” who paid Atkinson’s fine.⁶⁶ Other townsfolk made unsuccessful appeals to the Governor to remit part of the harsh sentence (three months gaol, hard labour) imposed by West on vagrant William Hill.⁶⁷

The chance of an appeal on this case being successful was remote particularly when the concerted efforts of three communities failed to have the conviction of a Blayney railway station-master overturned. William Lenehan was convicted of the embezzlement of £15 at the Bathurst Circuit Court. The sentence was viewed as overly severe, even by the presiding judge Mathew Stephen.⁶⁸ Lenehan’s case prompted public meetings at Bathurst, Carcoar, Lithgow and Blayney, petitions, deputations, an appeal to the Governor and to Lady Jersey by Lenehan’s wife. Eleven leading citizens of the district, led by Meagher, met with the Minister to plead Lenehan’s case. At Bathurst, £88 was raised via a subscription list including the Mayor, alderman, four magistrates and both bishops.⁶⁹ Despite the public dismay expressed over Lenehan’s conviction, speakers at the Bathurst meeting were at pains not to criticise the jury, hence not undermining those indispensable elements, of which many at the meeting were representative, of the administration of justice in the local community. No blame was directed to either police magistrate Nathaniel Connolly who had reluctantly ruled at the Blayney court that a *prima facie* case had been established or to Judge Stephen.⁷⁰

The respect for Stephen did not always extend to Judge Ernest Docker who usually presided in the higher courts throughout the district.⁷¹ Docker regularly insulted local juries, on one occasion accusing a jury in an assault case of “violating” their oath.⁷² His continual indiscretions prompted Mudgee MLA William Wall to complain in parliament⁷³ and Paddy Crick described him as an “ignorant lump of humanity”.⁷⁴ The *Mudgee Guardian* was equally scathing when it referred to comments he made when hearing a cattle-duffing case near Dubbo. When Docker

⁶⁶ *Cowra Free Press* 4 April 1892.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 5 November 1892.

⁶⁸ Stephen was bound by mandatory regulations on offences relating to offences by railway employees. Justice Matthew Henry Stephen (1828-1920) Circuit judge Supreme Court from 1887, one time MLA Mudgee. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

⁶⁹ *National Advocate* 1 September 1891. All the papers associated with the Lenehan case were tabled in *Parliament. NSW V&Ps 1891*, 2, 907. Paddy Crick tried to make some political mileage out of the case during the 1891 election campaign when he criticised opponent Charles Boyd who was a member of the jury who convicted Lenehan. Barker *A History of Bathurst*, 151. Eventually, some nine months after Lenehan’s conviction, the Governor approved a sentence reduction of two years. *Bathurst Free Press* 14 January 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Boyd.

⁷⁰ See Appendix 1 for biography of Nathaniel Connolly.

⁷¹ Ernest Broughton Docker (1842-1923). See *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

⁷² When the jury brought in a verdict of not guilty, he asked “What not at all?” *National Advocate* 2 February and 3 February 1891.

⁷³ Wall complained that Docker admonished a defendant “not to do it again” after the latter was acquitted by a jury. *Bathurst Free Press* 6 August 1891, 12 August 1891.

⁷⁴ *National Advocate* 15 August 1891.

suggested, albeit in jest, that selectors might “often go short, even of mutton, unless there was a squatter’s run adjacent”, the newspaper described him as “the most insolent, presuming, arrogant piece of humanity”.⁷⁵ The *Bathurst Free Press* found fault with another justice, Judge William Windeyer who locked up a jury for forty hours in an attempt to force a guilty plea against seventy year-old Eliza Bailey charged with arson. The newspaper suggested Windeyer’s action was “repugnant to every principle of justice”.⁷⁶ Yet regardless of community unease and even hostility towards the actions of some judicial officers or the shortcomings of the law, public confidence in the system remained intact. After all the rule of law was essential if the shared moral code of a *gemeinschaft community* which dictated acceptable values and behaviour, was to be maintained.


⁷⁵ *Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative* 12 May 1890.

⁷⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 19 April 1892. Eliza was charged with attempting to burn down a hut where her estranged husband Frank was living. She was tried three times. The first trial was abandoned because of the illness of a juror and the second because the jury could not agree on a verdict. She was eventually found guilty and sentenced to five years in gaol. Eliza was not stranger to the justice system having multiple convictions for disorderly conduct and obscene language. State Records of New South Wales *Bathurst Gaol NRS 1998 Bathurst Gaol Photographic Description Book 1874-1930*.

NOTICE.—This form to be carefully folded in six parts that the Photo. may not be defaced.

No. 743 Name Eliza Bailey
Bathurst Date when Portrait was taken, 26.3.1892

Native place Ireland Where and when tried Orange Q. Sess.
 Year of birth 1835 14th June 1892
 Arrived in } Ship Lismine Offence Setting fire to a dwelling
 Colony } Year 1890 Setting fire to a dwelling
 Trade or occupation previous to conviction } Married Sentence 5 years L.L.
 Religion Roman Catholic Remarks:— Bathurst Jail
 Education, degree of Nil in bail for trial at Orange Q.S.
 Height 5 feet 3 inches
 Weight } On committal
 in lbs. } On discharge
 Colour of hair Dark Brn Grey
 Colour of eyes Blue
 Marks or special features:—
Nil



PARTICULARS of CONVICTION and PRISON HISTORY of Eliza Bailey
 a prisoner in Bathurst Gaol, petitioning for remission of sentence.

Name of Prisoner Eliza Bailey
 Born { Where Ireland
 When 1835
 Convicted { Where Orange Q. Sess.
 When 14th June 1892
 Offence Maliciously setting fire to a dwelling
 Sentence 5 Years L.L. Bathurst.
 Judge..... Doaker
 Recommendation or Remarks

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS.

Where.	When.	Offence.	Sentence.
<u>Blayney FO</u>	<u>24th Nov. 1874</u>	<u>Larceny</u>	<u>Fined for 7 days p.t.</u>
	<u>21st Jan'y 1878</u>	<u>Obscene language</u>	<u>25th or 4 days paid.</u>
	<u>13th June 1878</u>	<u>Drunk & disorderly</u>	<u>4 or 24 hours paid</u>
	<u>17th Dec^r 1879</u>	<u>Assault</u>	<u>4 or 1 month paid</u>
	<u>17th July 1883</u>	<u>Maliciously killing geese</u>	<u>39 or 21 days paid</u>
	<u>17th Aug 1883</u>	<u>Maliciously destroying goods</u>	<u>30 or 1 month paid</u>
	<u>18th Mar 1884</u>	<u>Obscene language</u>	<u>15 or 2 months paid</u>
	<u>12th Aug 1884</u>	<u>Drunk in a public place</u>	<u>10 or 24 hours paid</u>
	<u>29th Sept 1891</u>	<u>Abusive language</u>	<u>10 or 7 days paid</u>
	<u>27th Oct. 1891</u>	<u>Drunk & disorderly</u>	<u>10 or 24 hours paid</u>

Fines paid & notices entered into, except for the offence committed on the 15th March 1884 when prisoner served a portion of this sentence prior to paying the fine on 21st March 1884.

Illustration 50: Eliza Bailey

The police were at the other end of the continuum of those who upheld law and order in the community. Mark Finnane and Stephen Garton in examining the complexity of police work in Queensland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, pose the following questions: “What did police do? How did they interact with local communities? Whom did they arrest?”

What problems were solved by these arrests"?⁷⁷ Addressing these questions, including 'who were the police?' assist in uncovering the role of police in everyday life in the Central West. Finnane and Garton note that police work in the colonies in the nineteenth century "appealed particularly to male immigrants without assets." Many were Irish having had the "decided advantage of prior service in the Irish Constabulary...[viewed as] an influential model of police organisation and discipline". This was certainly true of the senior police officers located in various townships in the district.⁷⁸ Only three, two in NSW and one in Victoria, of the 23 senior police for various locations included in Moore's 1892 *Australian Almanac and Country Directory*, were native born.⁷⁹ Eleven were born in Ireland and ten were born in England. According to Police Inspector-General Edmund Walcott Fosbery there had been a "marked improvement in the character, status, and education of constables" since the introduction of the *Police Regulation Act 1862*. Police now required, he stated, "considerable intelligence and education of a far higher standard than was formerly deemed necessary" because of the greater number of functions "beyond their ordinary duties" that they were required to undertake.⁸⁰ Underlying all their roles, in the words of Finnane and Garton, was the inculcation of "habits of sobriety [sic], thrift and industriousness".⁸¹

Enforcing the law was chief among their "ordinary duties" but this went beyond the mere apprehension of law-breakers. Finnane and Garton suggest the "non-policing of crime" and managing "the social order" were also significant. For example, in praising Constable James Harvey when he left Orange for Cowra in 1891, the *Orange Advocate* declared he knew how to use "tact and judgement...petty or trumpery cases he never cared to take in hand, while the hardened criminal found in him and uncompromising antagonist".⁸² The *National Advocate* was not concerned with tact when it criticised police-superintendent Charles Sanderson for failing to deal with the lawlessness in Milltown.⁸³ The newspaper charged the police with neglecting the area by locating only one officer in the area notorious for drunkenness,

⁷⁷ M Finnane ND S Garton 'The Work of Policing? Social Relations and the Criminal Justice System in Queensland 1880-1914' Part 1 *Labour History* no 62 (May 1992): 54.

⁷⁸ See Appendix 17 for a schedule of Central West police.

⁷⁹ M Finnane 'Police' in Davison and Hirst *Oxford Companion to Australian History*, 510.

⁸⁰ These included Wardens' clerks; agents for the Curator of Intestate Estates, the Master in Lunacy, the Collector of Customs, the Aborigines Protection Board and the Board of Health; Collectors of the Electoral Lists, Collector of Statistics, of Jury Lists; Bailiffs of Crown Lands and for the Small Debts Courts; Inspectors under *Dairies Supervision Act*, the *Explosives Act*, the *Licensing Act*, the *Fisheries Act*, of Slaughter Houses, of Weights and Measures and Distilleries; Inquiry Agents for the State Children's Relief Department; Acting Gaolers and Forest Ranger; Mining Bailiffs and Registrars, Notice-servers under Land Act; Gold Receivers; Receivers and Disbursers of Moneys under the *Deserted Wives and Children Act*. *New South Wales Police Report for 1891*, 3. For biography of Edmund Walcott Fosbery see *Australian Dictionary .of Biography*

⁸¹ Finnane and Garton 'The work of policing', 58.

⁸² Reported in *Bathurst Free Press* 26 January 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of James Harvey.

⁸³ See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Sanderson.

gambling, assaults and prostitution. This officer was generally “conspicuous by his absence when the deeds of terrorism, of which complaint has been made, are practised on defenceless citizens”. Meanwhile Sanderson supposedly opted to place more resources into the respectable centre of Bathurst.⁸⁴ In other places police were accused of being overbearing. Police magistrate Ernest A L Sharpe commented that many people in Parkes believed that arrests for drunkenness, obscene language and resisting arrest were due to the “high handed proceedings of the police”⁸⁵ and, Condobolin magistrates “reprimanded” Sergeant George Muldoon and his colleagues for arresting John White on a riotous behaviour charge based on hearsay evidence. One of the justices, Robert Officer, went so far as to suggest “they depended upon other people ‘to do their dirty work’”.⁸⁶

The actions of some police in bringing the destitute before the courts charged with vagrancy to facilitate their admittance to the asylum were more benevolent. According to Susanne Davies “arrest and incarceration in a gaol or asylum provided the police and judiciary with an ad hoc means of providing food, shelter and medical care to those most in need”.⁸⁷ Although she suggests that this associated poverty with crime rather than dealing with the underlying social problems, there was sometimes little choice other than the intervention of the police. In Bathurst, for instance, Sergeant John Morris⁸⁸ brought twenty-year-old domestic servant Teresa Newman before the court on a charge of having no visible means of support. Teresa had been sleeping in the park, had no home or friends in Bathurst, was in poor health having just been released from hospital and unable to secure a situation. Sergeant Morris deposed that if she was allowed to stay in the park all night, “there was danger of an outrage.” The Police Magistrate remarked Teresa appeared to be a respectable woman but “nothing could be done with her but to send here to gaol for a week until some enquiries could be made”.⁸⁹ Seventy-five-year-old Neil Brett, who came to Bathurst from Newbridge, was destitute and without a home. He was remanded for seven days on a charge of vagrancy pending an order to

⁸⁴ *National Advocate* 4 March 1893.

⁸⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 28 October 1892.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 9 August 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies on George Muldoon and Robert Officer.

⁸⁷ S Davies ‘Ragged, Dirty...Infamous and Obscene The Vagrant in Late-Nineteenth Century Melbourne’ in D Philips and S Davies (eds) *A Nation of Rogues? Crime, Law and Punishment in Colonial Australia* (Ringwood: Melbourne University Press 1994): 194.

⁸⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography on John Morris.

⁸⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 21 December 1893. Teresa was also a victim of crime. In May 1893, she was assaulted by Hilda Geery when they worked together at Peers Hotel. Although Geery was found not guilty of “malicious wounding with intent”, Judge Docker noted that the charge should have been assault. *National Advocate* 3 August 1893. The *Bathurst Free Press* noted that “since that time the girl has been wandering about. She has recently been in the hospital having been brought from the Blayney district where she was found in the bush. *Bathurst Free Press* 21 December 1893.

be made for admittance to the Benevolent Asylum;⁹⁰ and, the *Bathurst Free Press* noted Samuel Williams who it described as “weak and feeble” and appearing much older than his fifty-two years, due to his occupation as a “copper smelter”, appearance in court on a “nominal charge of vagrancy”. Williams the newspaper opined, was “certainly a fitting subject for charity”.⁹¹

Engagement with the broader community is more difficult to uncover. According to Golder, at the end of the nineteenth century “police recruits were told that a country constable had to integrate himself into the local community. He was advised to take up ‘genial country ways and cultivate county magistrates’”.⁹² Perhaps, as suggested by Davison et al, the reality was that “propriety” required policemen “to maintain a discreet distance from the community” in the same way as bankers and clergymen.⁹³ Farewells to officers on their retirement or when posted to other townships were common but many testimonials refer to their firm and fair police work and friendships rather than their involvement in community organisations.⁹⁴

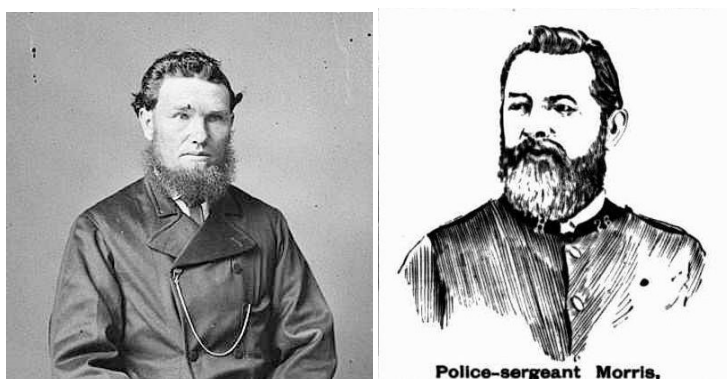


Illustration 51: John Chiplin and John Morris

The breadth of crime investigated by police in the Central West was as one would expect in any comparable country community in the colony at that time suggesting that underlying social and moral norms were not limited to the district. Statistical classifications for higher and lower courts refer to crimes against the person, property, forgery and offences against good

⁹⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 15 April 1891.

⁹¹ *National Advocate* 11 March 1892.

⁹² Golder *A High and Responsible*, 89. Golder is quoting S J Cotter *Lecturers Addressed to Police Recruits* (Sydney: Government Printer 1899) 12, 45.

⁹³ Davidson et al, *Australians 1888*, 237.

⁹⁴ Senior Sergeant McCartie was credited with founding the local Lodge of Foresters when he left Cowra. *Australian Star* 2 February 1891. Sub-inspector John Chiplin was secretary of the Masonic Lodge Wellesley and held high office in the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows as Wellington. *Wellington Times* 27 February 1902. See Appendix 1 for biographies on Denis McCartie and John Chiplin.

order. Crimes against persons encompassed some forty categories which ranged from murder to child desertion; property offences ranged from robberies, stock theft and petty theft; against good order (other than drunkenness) included riotous behaviour and without lawful means of support. Trespass and criminal libel were other offences. Serious crime was not endemic in the Central West during these years. There were causes célèbre that fascinated the people of the Central West and which attracted much attention. Some of these went beyond colonial borders, others were crimes committed within the area which attracted colony wide attention while others were more localised, firstly to the district and then just to the local vicinity.

NOTICE.—This form to be carefully folded in six parts that the Photo. may not be defaced.

No. 762 Name James Robert Cross
Bathurst Date when Portrait was taken, 29.3.1892

Native place B.C. Bathurst Where and when tried Bathurst Ct Ct
 Year of birth 1879 Offence Wilful murder
 Arrived in Ship ✓ Colony ✓ Year ✓ Sentence Acquitted
 Trade or occupation previous to conviction haberdashery Remarks 13th April 1892.
 Religion Church of England
 Education, degree of W.H.W.
 Height 4 feet 6 inches
 Weight On committal
 In lbs. On discharge
 Colour of hair Fair
 Colour of eyes Blue
 Mark or special features:—
3 small moles on left arm.

(No. of previous Portraits)




Illustration 52: Robert Cross

Between 1891 and 1893, a Cargo bank ‘stick-up’, a murder and suicide in Condobolin, the prosecution of thirteen year-old Robert Cross for the murder of his father and the killing of a bank manager (John Phillips) and a young woman (Letitia Frances Cavanagh) in Carcoar, were noteworthy.⁹⁵ The Carcoar murders particularly so, not just for the brutal violence but also

⁹⁵ In June 1893, the Cargo branch of the AJS Bank was robbed netting the thieves approximately £700. The manager Frank Parker Fawcett was seriously injured during the robbery. Brothers John Thomas Stines and James Stines were charged but despite facing three trials they were acquitted. *Bathurst Free Press* 1 August 1893, 13 October and 2 December 1893. According to the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* of “for daring impudence the robbery rivals the most famous deeds of the early bushrangers”. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 16 June 1893 In Condobolin when Alice Anderson rejected 23 year old William Ryan killed George Stone, he shot Ryan “through jealousy” and later committed suicide. All of the parties were considered to be respectable. *Town and Country Journal* 26 March 1892 The charges against Robert were dismissed but shortly after his aunt Sarah brought him back to court because she could not support him. Robert had no friends and was reliant on charity. Although the newspaper reported that Robert was anxious to go the Vernon training ship, he was left “convulsed with sobs” when his aunt left (Sarah was also upset). *National Advocate* 14, 16 and 21 April 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 14 April 1892.

because the murderer, Edwin Hubert Glasson, came from a prominent local family. Glasson's father Henry was a well-known grazier and wool grower in the Carcoar and Blayney district. According to his obituary, Henry was "upright, honest and fearless [who had] the respect and



Illustration 53: Alice Anderson, William Ryan and George Stone – Condobolin Murder

esteem of all with whom he was associated". The Glasson family was one of the oldest in the district being associated with the establishment of the Cornish settlement near Orange. The news that a member of such a prominent local family had been accused of such a heinous crime shocked the community with Thomas O'Shaunnessy noting in his diary that "a young Glasson" had been apprehended.⁹⁶

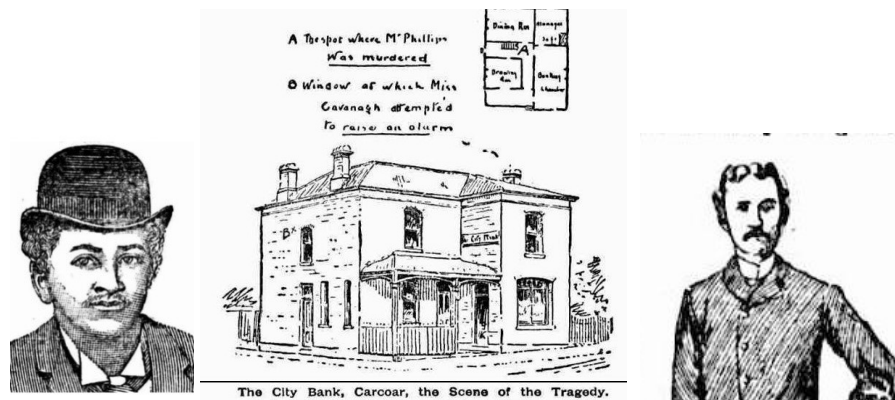
Following Glasson's arrest, colonial newspapers, particularly the local press, were full of rumours, half-truths and fabrications about the crime, the victims, Glasson's wife Annie May (née Summerbell), his mother (Annie Dorothy) and of course, Glasson himself. Considerable sympathy was expressed for the family although it was relieved of some responsibility when it was noted that Glasson had "been regarded as the black sheep of the household". It was also noted that subsequent to his arrest "he appeared to be counterfeiting madness". Even here the Glasson family name was less tarnished when his purported "madness" was attributed to his mother. Carcoar doctor William Kelty testified that "symptoms of insanity" had been detected in Annie in 1889. He also suggested that "insanity was strongly hereditary and when it was on the mother's side there was a frequent predisposition to mental disease".⁹⁷ After his

⁹⁶ John Phillips and a young woman, Letitia Frances Cavanagh who was visiting the family, were murdered. Gladys Phillips, John's wife, was badly wounded *Bathurst Free Press* 17 January 1891. John Phillips and a young woman, Letitia Frances Cavanagh who was visiting the family, were murdered. Gladys Phillips, John's wife, was badly wounded *Thomas O'Shaunnessy Diary* 2 October 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of members of the Glasson family.

⁹⁷ *Town and Country Journal* 30 September 1893 and 28 October 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of William Kelty.

Glasson's guilty conviction, the possibility of his sanity was examined by a medical board appointed by the government..⁹⁸ The government's action to review Glasson's state of mind was condemned by many, forcing Colonial Secretary George Dibbs, to assure Parliament that there had been no "undue influence exercised".⁹⁹

ILLUSTRATION 54: The Glasson Murders



Bertie Glasson Layout of the Carcoar branch of the City Bank John Phillips



Letitia Frances Cavanagh

An afterword of the affair was an allegation that Glasson was treated differently than other prisoners because of his connections. A correspondent to the *National Advocate* pointed out the less well-connected Stines brothers committed to stand trial for the Cargo bank robbery were led from the court room in irons while Glasson was not.¹⁰⁰ There were many people who could attest to Glasson's treatment in the court room. The *Molong Express* reported that "fully 2,000 people assembled in the vicinity of the Court-house" when he went on trial and a few days later "at every point along the fence of Machattie Park, on the eaves, on roofs, men and boys, and even women, were perched to get a view of the prisoner".¹⁰¹ The *Bathurst Free Press* remarked upon the behaviour of women during the court proceedings. The newspaper

⁹⁸ *Molong Express* 4 November 1893.

⁹⁹ *National Advocate* 8 November 1893.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 25 October 1893 and 3 November 1893.

¹⁰¹ *Molong Express and Western District Advertiser* 21 October and 28 October 1893.

suggested that surely the women who “crowded the Court House gallery” must have had “their fill of horrors.”¹⁰²

This fascination with violent crime was a phenomenon that extended beyond the district. During the period studied here, the heinous crimes of Frederick Deeming and the Makins were extensively covered in the newspapers across the colonies, particularly of the Deeming case, with detailed reports and illustrations.¹⁰³ Such voyeurism was common in the nineteenth century. Reading lurid accounts of dreadful crime and crowding court rooms engendered fear and loathing but also reinforced community norms of respectability and the need for vigilance to protect the framework of society.

Drunkenness, viewed as an affront to decency and respectability in Central West society, was the cause of most arrests summonses and convictions. Unfortunately, the available data specific to the region for arrests, convictions, dismissals and the like (other than drunkenness) is frustratingly inadequate. For example, there is information on the number and type of cases dealt with by magistrates in the colony overall but not at a jurisdictional level. There is data on apprehensions in each police district but not those by summons and the detail on convictions by district is not provided. Statistics on transactions at each of the District Courts have been assembled but not by classification. There is some additional information on District Court suits and drunkenness from returns tabled in parliament and surviving court records held at the NSW State Archives. It is possible, though, to gain a snapshot of crime in the region from the local newspapers. Transactions at Police Courts and District Courts were routinely reported, some in considerable detail including testimonies, comments by magistrates, exchanges with lawyers and occasionally exchanges between magistrates.

In the Western Police District, 43% (1,173) of the 3,021 people arrested during 1891 were charged with drunkenness, compared with a colony-wide rate of 49.2%.¹⁰⁴ Reconciling

¹⁰² *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* 21 October 1893.

¹⁰³ Frederick Bailey Deeming (1853-1892) was executed in May 1892 for the murder of his wife. After his arrest for Emily’s murder it was discovered he murdered (and buried) his first wife Marie and his four children in England. John Makin and his wife Sarah Jane Makin gained notoriety as ‘baby farmers’. In 1892 the bodies of thirteen infants were discovered in the backyards of eleven properties where the Makins had lived between 1890 and 1892. John Makin was hanged in 1893 for the murder of two children and Sarah was sentenced to life in prison being released in 1911. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biographies of Frederick Deeming and Sarah Makin.

¹⁰⁴ This district essentially encompassed the Central West. Total arrests in NSW 44,854. Arrests for drunkenness in NSW were 22,075. These figures are for arrests only and do not include summons proceedings for which another 1,096 occurred. The summons figures for individual districts are not available. Crime statistics were published annually in *NSW Statistical Registers* and in the *Wealth and Progress of New South Wales*.

available information, including returns for drunkenness convictions tabled in Parliament,¹⁰⁵ and making meaningful comparisons on arrests and convictions for drunkenness given the different data sets is not easy. It is clear, though, even without finessing the data, that drunkenness was the major cause of arrests in the region, as was the case with the rest of the colony. Police court proceedings without these offences were rare. On many occasions, drunkenness and associated misdemeanours such as offensive behaviour, obscene language and riotous conduct, were the only business of the court and those convicted were usually the first named in the press reports. Almost always names and penalties were mentioned and sometimes, occupations or the circumstances of the arrests.

In 1892 there were around ninety convictions for drunkenness by women in the Central West.¹⁰⁶ Many were repeat offenders such as Forbes resident, Elizabeth Allen, otherwise known as “Railway Liz”, who opted to “take it out” when fined £3 20s or three months in gaol for drunkenness and obscene language.¹⁰⁷ Marjery Pennington was also a habitual offender. When she was charged with “illegally neglecting to provide” her daughter, Maria Kathleen (aged twenty months) “with sufficient food and nourishment”, Marjery claimed she could give up the drink if she wanted to, declaring that she had done this previously when she was in gaol. The *Forbes and Parkes Gazette’s* reporting of Marjery’s case was typical of newspaper coverage of legal proceedings against women offenders. Leigh Straw suggests in her work on criminal women in Perth and Fremantle “women appearing in court...were publicly singled out for any social and gender transgressions by way of magisterial, police and public evidence presented to the court”.¹⁰⁸ In Marjery’s case the police accounts of her as being “drunk and bare-footed” or being “in an insensible condition lying on the floor” with “the child clinging to her dress” would have made compelling reading. Marjery was an affront to motherhood. She did not deny or excuse her habitual drunkenness but she strongly denied neglecting her child.

¹⁰⁵ This data was included in ‘Return of Convictions under the Drunkards and Licensing Acts at each Court of Petty Sessions within the Colony, for the year 1892.’ tabled in the Legislative Assembly in May 1893. See Appendix 18.

¹⁰⁶ This represented 15% out of approximately 600 people convicted. This is significantly less than the percentage of convictions in the colony overall where the number the incidence of the offence is, unsurprisingly, greater in the metropolitan areas. In the townships where the largest number of overall convictions was recorded (Bathurst, Orange and Forbes) there was an even 15%. There were higher percentages in Wellington (32%) and in Parkes (30%) while in many centres there were no convictions at all. This was the same percentage of convictions in Bathurst, the largest town in the district but, to gain a proper perspective, it should be noted that this represented only 0.4% of the female population.

¹⁰⁷ *Forbes Gazette* 18 November 1892.

¹⁰⁸ Straw ‘The worst female character’, 210.

The jury agreed finding her not guilty and after “being severely reprimanded” by the judge she was discharged.¹⁰⁹

Women convicted of drunkenness were often charged with other anti-social crimes, including riotous or indecent behaviour and ‘without lawful means of support’ which was generally synonymous with prostitution. As suggested by Straw, newspaper reports on these indiscretions were “slanted to educate and entertain readers”.¹¹⁰ Descriptions of the offender and the offence reinforced community revulsion of the immorality and the worst possible degradation of the women. Lurid accounts such as that of Margaret Ann Porter were exaggerated to emphasise the moral outrage and as suggested by David Taylor to underline “the physical squalor and lack of orderliness”.¹¹¹ When Margaret was arrested at Cumnock and under the headline “Mrs Porter Again”, the *Molong Express* stated

... Margaret [Ann] Porter, under remand [for vagrancy], was again charged with having no sufficient lawful visible means of support. The evidence for the prosecution was that accused was drinking at Cumnock for some days.... On one occasion, she was seen by Constable O’Neill in a state of intoxication in a mob of twenty or thirty men, one of who she was pulling about, that she had been seen repeatedly going into the bush with men and that on account of her behaviour she had been turned away from some of the hotels at Cumnock and that she had slept one night with three men in the show pavilion.¹¹²

Although Margaret admitted she had been at the show pavilion with men, she denied that she slept there. Magistrate Couch’s sentence of seven days gaol was comparatively light for a serial offender, perhaps being an acknowledgement of what was undoubtedly an exaggerated account of the circumstances.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ On 11 March, she was fined £1 or seven days in gaol. Her fine was not paid but that of her husband, William, who was convicted of using obscene language with the same penalty. On March 25 Margery was again charged with drunkenness charge and was fined £1 and 5s 6d costs. William was a prospector. He was often away from home. He insisted he provided enough money and food to support Margery and the Maria Kathleen. Margery occasionally went out washing and scrubbing. She remained a chronic alcoholic, eventually dying of alcohol poisoning. Maria Kathleen’s fate is unknown *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 19 August 1892, *Sydney Morning Herald* 18 August 1896.

¹¹⁰ Straw ‘The worst female character’, 219.

¹¹¹ D Taylor ‘Beyond the Bounds of Respectable Society: The Dangerous Classes in Victorian and Edwardian England’ in Judith Rowbotham and Kin Stevenson *Criminal Conversation: Victorian Crimes, Social Panic and Moral Outrage* (Ohio, Ohio State University Press 2005): 9.

¹¹² *Molong Express* 26 December 1891.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

The extent of prostitution in most townships is impossible to determine but some information can be garnered for Forbes, Bathurst and Molong through the local newspapers. Prostitutes loomed large in the *National Advocate's* tabloid accounts of the criminal under-class living or working in Rankin Street in Bathurst. The Rankin Street precinct encompassed the Chinese "quarters" on Howick Street and the nearby bridge over the Macquarie River, all of which were repeatedly mentioned as scenes of debauchery and criminal activity. The area accommodated a "community of interest" with prostitution, drinking and gambling in concert with opium dens to create "a hotbed of vice and infamy".¹¹⁴ Clara Whittaker was one of the most infamous residents. Unsurprisingly there are few biographical details other than she was born in 1871 or 1876 and almost certainly died in Moree in 1944.¹¹⁵ Clara, also known as Kate, kept a brothel although she asserted she lived with Un Gow in Rankin Street, took in washing for Chinese cooks, earning fourteen to fifteen shillings per week, and received money from her brother who lived in Walgett.¹¹⁶ She had previously been convicted of obscene language, vagrancy and drunkenness offences and in addition to her frequent court appearances as a defendant, she attended as a witness, was named as a bystander and even as a plaintiff or defendant in civil cases. Clara's immoral lifestyle was compounded by her association with Un Gow and the "twenty other Chinese" alleged to live on her premises. Reports of the involvement of the Chinese in prostitution were common. Elizabeth Collis defended a charge of having no visible support on the evidence of Willie War Chey¹¹⁷ and Annie Gardner who was known to frequent "Chinese brothels", left the "court in company with some Chinese" after her fine for being drunk, using obscene language and assault, was paid.¹¹⁸

Although there were brothels in Bathurst, other encounters, as suggested by Hilary Golder and Judith Allen, occurred in public places.¹¹⁹ In Cumnock, it was the bush and the show pavilion and in Bathurst, as already mentioned, Rankin and Howick streets and the nearby bridge were the focus of such activities. The *National Advocate* cautioned "otherwise" respectable youths

¹¹⁴ *National Advocate* 27 May 1893.

¹¹⁵ An attempt in the Police Court to prosecute Clara on a charge of "keeping a house, the resort of persons having no visible means of support" was unsuccessful not because it was unproven but Police Magistrate Graham determined that evidence of a more serious charge had been given and it was inappropriate for the matter to be dealt with under the *Vagrants Act* but that (in the interests of justice) should be brought before a higher court. *National Advocate* 12 December 1893. This did not occur.

¹¹⁶ *National Advocate* 1 April 1893.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 22 November 1892.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, 21 July 1892. Annie may have left Bathurst but she was still living in the district in November when she was implicated in the death of Phillip Flynn who was poisoned in an opium den in Orange *Bathurst Free Press* 19 April 1893. Annie In Wah, described as a prostitute, was charged with using obscene language (*Bathurst Free Press* 2 March 1891 later charges with being of "bad repute and behaving in a riotous manner" along with Ellen Williams "who had a very bad character". *Bathurst Free Press* 2 and 11 March 1891.

¹¹⁹ H Golder and J Allen 'Prostitution in New South Wales 1870-1930' *Refractory Girl* (December 1979): 21.

from frequenting the Rankin Street area where they would be preyed upon by “slipshod women with their hair streaming about their face, their stockingless feet slipped into broken boots, their dress ragged and disarranged”.¹²⁰ Such a description is characteristic of the newspaper’s stereotypical and exaggerated portrayal of women living in this area. Many women were likely impoverished and homeless. Lizzie Hudson, who had only just been released from prison, was a married woman. She testified that her husband was in gaol, her two children were looked after by an aunt in Balmain and as she only earned around fifteen shillings per week doing washing, she was unable to provide anything towards their support. Lizzie almost certainly worked as a prostitute for Clara Whittaker but it is probable the story of her husband and children were true. In a rare display of empathy, the *National Advocate* reported the comments of Alfred Thompson, Lizzie’s lawyer, and from the bench comprising James Graham PM and John McKay. In response to Thompson’s question “what earthly chance has she got?” one of the magistrates responded “I do not know. What is to be done? We can’t keep sending them back to gaol”. Following this exchange Lizzie was sentenced to four months gaol.¹²¹

Lizzie Hudson was part of what Bellanta describes as a “supportive female subculture” which thrived among prostitutes in the late Victorian era.¹²² Clara Whittaker, Elizabeth Collis, Annie Gardner, Ellen Donnelly, Mary Jane Farler (alias Curry)¹²³ and Ruby McAlpine (alias Ethel May) were, at the least, acquaintances. They shared the same occupation and inhabited the same space - working, socialising or scrapping. Communal interests, though, did not always override self-interest. Intent on positioning herself as the leader of the group, Clara occasionally resorted to the law. She summoned Ellen Donnelly for bad language with the latter complaining “Clara had been on her track and had been desirous of giving her a hiding since Eight Hours Day”.¹²⁴ When Clara accused Ruby McAlpine of theft, Ruby declared in court “every girl that Clara gets, she bundles out and then accuses her of stealing somethink [sic] ... I’m surprised at Clara – a woman that is no better than me, if fact, worse. She’s sworn lies against one of her own sort”.¹²⁵

In contrast to these women, the court and the newspaper could be swayed by the appearance and demeanour of a woman. When Maud Williams appeared in court with George McManus charged with the manslaughter of Philip Flynn, the Orange correspondent for the *National*

¹²⁰ *National Advocate* 27 May 1893.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 5 December 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of James Brisbane Graham.

¹²² Bellanta *Larrikins A History*, 46. See Appendix 1 for biography of Alfred Thompson.

¹²³ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 November 1892.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 12 October 1892.

¹²⁵ *National Advocate* 6 July 1893.

Advocate described her as “a sweet creature” and “pretty and petite” as nice-looking a little girl as you’d wish to see”.¹²⁶ Unlike McManus “a strapping lump of a chap, about 28 and something like a navvy in appearance” who was decidedly one of the criminal underclass. Judge Sir George Innes was equally taken with Maud. In accepting the jury’s recommendation for mercy, he sentenced her to eighteen months light labour in Bathurst goal, admonishing her with words spoken “in all kindness.”.¹²⁷

No. 835 Name Maud Williams at
Bathurst Date when Portrait was taken, 6.3.1893
 Native place Ireland Where and when tried Bathurst G.D.
 Year of birth 1873 19th April 1893
 Arrived in Colony 1886 Office Blanklaughter
 Trade or occupation previous to conviction Washmaker Sentence 18 Months L.L.
 Religion Roman Catholic Remarks convicted with George McManus
 Education, degree of 4th
 Height 5 feet 4 1/2 inches
 Weight On committal in lbs. 110
 On discharge
 Colour of hair Brown
 Colour of eyes Blue
 Marks or special features None
 (No. of previous Portraits) 1
 PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS

Where and When.	Offence.	Sentence.
<u>Water PO 29th Feb 72</u>	<u>Vagrancy</u>	<u>18 Months L.L.</u>

Illustration 55: Maud Williams

Larrikinism was another law and order issue impacting on communities in the Central West at this time although, the problem was not as serious in nature as in the colony’s metropolitan areas. The criminal activity of larrikins in Sydney and Melbourne outraged colonial society during late 1880s and early 1890s and prompted the introduction of the *Disorderly Conduct Suppression Bill* into Parliament in 1892. The scale and seriousness of larrikins’ behaviour varied considerably but the wanton violence of the Sydney ‘push’ was not the norm in the Central West.¹²⁸ Still these miscreants and their activities which were evident in Central West

¹²⁶ *National Advocate* 15 December 1892.

¹²⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 20 April 1893.

¹²⁸ The *Bulletin* described larrikins thus “idleness, destruction of property, acts of violence, obstructing the highway, bad language, the assumption of an aggressively disrespectful attitude, noise, dirt, profanity, ignorance, an unshaven aspect, a retreating forehead, a fishy eye, a braided coat, a soft black hat, bell-bottomed trousers, high-heeled boots, and a general and promiscuous cussedness of demeanour”. The *Bulletin* 10 September 1892.

towns and even villages, created the same “moral panic”¹²⁹ which, according to George Morgan, was evident in Sydney at that time. After Cohen, Morgan describes those characteristics of larrikins which engendered them as a group capable of threatening prevailing societal values. They were, he suggested, portrayed in a “stylised and stereotypical fashion...provok[ing] a fog of moral indignation from the guardians of respectability”.¹³⁰ This is certainly borne out in reports of court proceedings and indignant newspaper editorials.

Larrikinism in the Central West generally encompassed offences such as inappropriate or bad behaviour, obscene language, and property damage rather than the more serious crimes of violent assaults, rape and murder associated with the “pushes” in the metropolises. As Melissa Bellanta suggests “no one size [of offences] fits all time and place”.¹³¹ The range of activities reported in Central West communities enough, the *National Advocate* declared, to rival “Woolloomooloo in Sydney and Collingwood in Melbourne” included “expectorating about the footpaths...leering at girls...obscene language...promenading footpaths from corner to corner, holding up alignment posts...jeering at passer-by” and property damage.¹³² Disrupting entertainments, meetings of such organisations as the Good Templars or religious services, particularly those of the Salvation Army was common. In one instance, the *Sydney Evening News* reported that “three members of the Condobolin ‘local larrikin push’ were convicted of throwing a dead goat” into the Salvation Army Hall.¹³³ Often larrikinism was associated with immorality, being coupled with prostitutes and the Chinese.¹³⁴ Regardless of the severity of the incidents they were all seen, in the words of Ernest Docker as “a pernicious and contaminating influence on social life”.¹³⁵ The lack of respect for authority demonstrated by these offenders signalled a “threat from below” to social order.

¹²⁹ The concept of “moral panic” was developed by British sociologist Stanley Cohen in his study of Mods and Rockers in 1960s Britain. See S Cohen *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1980).

¹³⁰ G Morgan ‘The Bulletin and the Larrikin Moral Panic in Late Nineteenth Century Sydney’ in *Media International Australia* no 85 (November 1997):17-23.

¹³¹ Bellanta *Larrikins A History*, 85.

¹³² *National Advocate* 5 December 1892.

¹³³ *Evening News* 15 July 1893. At Milltown St Barnabas Wesleyan Church and the Presbyterian School were frequent targets. *Bathurst Free Press* 22 August 1892. A concert in the Cowra Centennial Hall was “spoilt” and a Good Templar meeting was disrupted. *Cowra Free Press* 12 November 1892. *Cowra Free Press* 29 July 1892.

¹³⁴ In Bathurst, Rose Deverill who was sent to gaol for three months for being an idle, disorderly character with no lawful fixed abode of address was always “resorting with larrikins and Chinese”. *Bathurst Free Press* 4 October 1892. Similarly, George Ryan and Bert Connors were lucky to escape with a caution for riotous behaviour outside a Chinese cook shop known for being frequented by larrikins. *Bathurst Free Press* 3 November 1892.

¹³⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 19 August 1892.

As with the metropolitan press, local newspapers urged the introduction of specific laws to deal with the problem. The harsh provisions of the proposed *Disorderly Behaviour Bill*¹³⁶ intending to deal with a large class of offenders against good order and decency were applauded by the *Bathurst Free Press*.¹³⁷ The Condobolin correspondent for the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* looked forward to the examples being made of local larrikins, not all of whom were “poor and ignorant” but included “young men from whom better conduct might be expected in good positions...church members at home and larrikins abroad”.¹³⁸ Indeed, the *National Advocate* referred to indulged “upper class” or “moneyed hoodlums” whose activities arose not from poverty but from a failure of their fathers to instil in them “respect, education and discipline”.¹³⁹ While the newspaper noted that there was a mistaken belief that these things should be left to the public-school system, the lack of schooling was often judged to be a significant cause of larrikin behaviour. Henry Parkes’ despaired of the “wild and untutored youth of this country...who were running wild in the streets indulging in insult, and indulging in aggression upon human liberty and property”.¹⁴⁰ The indignation that somehow existing laws and law enforcement was inadequate to deal with this threat to good order prompted occasionally expressed, publicly at least, sentiments that citizens should take the law into their own hands. In Condobolin, it was suggested people should use “horsewhips and canes if need be” and in Bathurst a Vigilance Committee to deal with troublemakers in Machattie Park was mooted.¹⁴¹

The proceedings of the Petty Sessions and District Courts dealing with civil matters were also reported in the press. Returns on the numbers and particulars of suits commenced in the District Courts were reported to parliament for the first time in 1893. In the Central West District Courts most matters, by a significant margin, related to goods sold, followed by dishonoured promissory notes and claims for wages. This is in accord with most other country jurisdictions. In Forbes, claims for wages were proportionally higher perhaps reflecting greater conflict between employers and employees though there is no way to substantiate this. As

¹³⁶ Provisions such as the “Back and Stomach Treatment” were intended to make life in prison as uncomfortable as possible with a low diet (without injuring the prisoner) and a “plank bed”. The most controversial provision (and the one that ensured it would not be passed by the Legislative Council) was to allow the flogging of the perpetrators of the most brutal crimes. *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 October 1892.

¹³⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 August 1892.

¹³⁸ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 21 and 26 October 1892.

¹³⁹ *National Advocate* 7 May 1892, *National Advocate* 19 July 1892.

¹⁴⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 9 September 1892.

¹⁴¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 26 August 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 26 January 1892. An incident in Machattie Park escalated when the gardener was provoked by a “push” and he resorted to shooting at their dog. *Bathurst Free Press* 16 March 1891.

discussed there were also prosecutions under the *Masters and Servants Act* described by WG Spence as an “unfair fossil of a statute”.¹⁴²

There are no consolidated returns for Courts of Petty Sessions but reports in local newspapers generally match those of the District Court. Cases included stock trespass or sales and occasionally minor disputes between neighbours were aired. In one instance brouhaha between aldermen of the Parkes Council was played out in court.¹⁴³ Sometimes there were high profile cases such as that of magistrate Paul Ormsby Gore. Gore managed Neila Station near Cowra for Sydney based businessman James Ewan and he sued Ewan for £400 for wrongful dismissal and for non-payment of various goods and services. The case was reported in full in the *Bathurst Free Press* as well as a special report on the proceedings being issued to the subscribers of the *Cowra Free Press* when the verdict was given. Gore lost the case and it was his ruination.¹⁴⁴ Cases occasionally attracted particular note when proceedings were idiosyncratic or when the litigants and/or respondents occupied a special position within the community. The business of the civil courts reflected the ebb and flow of everyday life, exposing injustices but fairness was not always an outcome for plaintiffs and defendants alike. Still it was a mechanism of recourse available to most people and in that way, helped maintain the cohesiveness of local society.

The above analysis of the administration of justice in the Central West reveals much about the nature of its society during the time considered here. There was anxiety that events outside the domain of the local community could undermine the safety and security that underpinned ordinary lives. There was some comfort that generally the law and those who sat in judgement could deal effectively with those transgressors from the immoral and criminal underclass and that the accepted social hierarchy was enforced. Yet there was frustration when respectability was challenged by its inadequacies and uneasiness and agitation when justice was seen to be unfair, impotent and inequitable. Notwithstanding the *Lithgow Mercury's* lament that society was being undermined by those who defied law and order and “whose role is always cast for the maintenance of things as they are”, the nature of Central West society was dependent upon these very things.

¹⁴² This return is similar to adjacent Dubbo and some towns further west such as Gundagai and Warren. Spence *Australia's Awakening* Section XIV Law and its Administration.

¹⁴³ The aggrieved councillor (Edward McGee) subpoenaed nearly every magistrate residing in Parkes so that the case was only adjudicated by the Police Magistrate George Washington Seaborn. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 18 October 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Edward McGee and George Seaborn.

¹⁴⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 20 and 21 October 1892. Gore was declared bankrupt in 1893. *Sydney Morning Herald* 25 February 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Paul Gore Ormsby.

Chapter 6 Education

On 9 June 1891 Robert Mackrell (publican and storekeeper), James Dunn (sawmill manager), William Emmerston (blacksmith), Edward Wilcockson and William Hargreaves (both carpenters) applied to the Department of Public Instruction for a school to be established in their rural settlement at Wollongough. Marsden, some forty miles away and Lake Cudgellico (42 miles) were the nearest schools.¹ Twenty children from the applicants' families and one other were expected to attend. Two weeks later the Department's Under-secretary Edwin Johnson approved the establishment of a provisional school, to be known as Ungarie,² which would be located in Mackrell's hotel pending the construction of a school room.³ Inspector George Thomas considered the house was so well run that the first teacher, eighteen-year-old Ethel Green⁴, could be accommodated there. The school room was ready for pupils by January 1892 and Ethel remained at the school until December 1892 when she was replaced by Josiah Horatio Shield from Cudal. The establishment of the school was an important milestone in the development of the small settlement. Although Wollongough, or Ungarie, had not yet been gazetted as a village, the nucleus of a small community had been formed and prospects for its future were optimistic.

Ungarie School, its young teachers, pupils and parents, were part of what the Minister for Public Instruction, Francis B Suttor, described as a "wise, efficient and far-seeing system of education".⁵ In this chapter I examine this system and other issues pertinent to schooling in the Central West between 1891 and 1893. This provides the context for my exploration of the experiences of ordinary people, the institutions, the rituals and conventions to determine the extent educational experiences connect with the broader historical context. Education, public and private, recreational and compulsory, was a fundamental aspect of everyday life and a hallmark of progress and stability. As with Wollongough, school openings reflected the maturing of a community and their sustainability was a sign of the intensification and permanency of settlement. They also reinforced *gemeinschaft* values of contributing to the stability and cohesiveness of communities. But education had the broader purpose of preparing the young to take their place as citizens able to vouchsafe the colony's future prosperity.

¹ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Robert Mackrell and William Hargreaves.

² The name of the post office at Wollongough was changed to Ungarie in 1889 due to confusion with Wollongong. J H Orr *Humbug Forever: a light-hearted history and memories of Ungarie Central School* (Ungarie Parents and Citizens Association 1991) 2.

³ See Appendix 1 for biography of George Thomas.

⁴ Ethel had previously been employed at Forbes when she was fifteen. She was approximately eighteen years of age when she was appointed to Ungarie Orr *Humbug Forever*, 26.

⁵ *National Advocate* 25 January 1892.

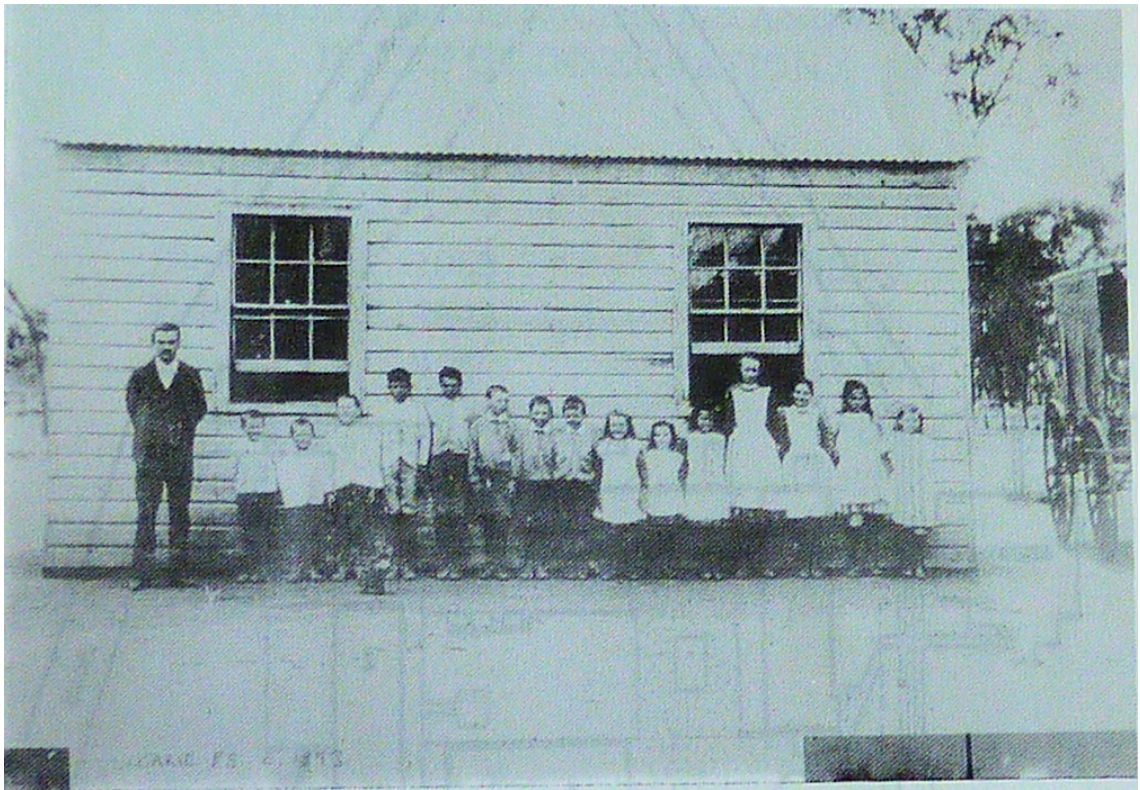


Illustration 56: Ungarie Provisional School 1893

Mass schooling was the means by which this was to be achieved. With the introduction of the compulsory schooling in 1880 with the *Public Instruction Act* (“1880 Act”)⁶ the government established the Department of Public Instruction (“the Department”) which by the end of the decade had evolved into a large and, often, unyielding bureaucracy controlling a myriad of schools spread throughout the colony. Edward Dowling declared this public-school system to be “perfection itself”,⁷ but others described it as a machine, “stifling the life, and stunting the growth of true education.”⁸

In 1892, there was a colony-wide network of 2,502 schools of various categories, approximately 810 of which were in the Central West. The *1880 Act* provided for five school types, elementary public schools, superior schools, evening public schools, boys’ and girls’ high schools and a host of public school sub-categories.⁹ In the district, as elsewhere in the colony,

⁶ The schools were governed by the *1880s Act* which had remained substantially unaltered since its introduction. *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction 1893*, 1. See Appendix 19 for a list of public schools and enrolments. Public schools in the district are shown on Map 10.

⁷ Dowling *Australia and America*, 58.

⁸ F Anderson *The Public School System of New South Wales* ‘An address delivered at the Annual Conference of the Public School Teachers of New South Wales held in the Sydney Town Hall, June 26th, 1901’ (Sydney: Angus and Robertson 1901): 14.

⁹ There were ten classes of primary schools with average enrolment requirements ranging from more than 600 for a first-class school to enrolments of above twenty for the first-class; provisional schools for which there were three classes with average enrolments ranging from twelve to twenty; half time

the elementary school hierarchy reflected the nature and extent of settlement. Not surprisingly, given the high density of settlement, in the eastern and central portion of the district most were primary schools (245), followed by half-time (81), provisional (59) and house-to-house schools (forty) although the type of schools could fluctuate substantially.¹⁰ For example, Capertee Provisional School was closed in 1890 because “there is nothing to support a local population” but reopened in 1892 while Tong Bong Provisional School was downgraded when the nearby coal mine closed. Occasionally in the absence of a public-school parents set up their own such as George Stanford and his wife Ellen who settled at Trewilga near Peak Hill in early 1886. There were ten children in their family, with the youngest, Albert, born in 1892. George and Ellen were obviously concerned about the lack of education for the children because George bought a slab-hut which he “re-built half-way between Jersey Flat and Ten Mile Ridges” for use as a school. He also paid the salary of the first teacher, James Bryant, before a provisional school opened there in 1892.¹¹



Illustration 57: George Ellen (née Crisp) Stanford

schools which required an average of twelve; and, house-to-house which provided for children in sparsely settled areas.

¹⁰ Some schools such as Lower Turon lasted just a few months while others had been open for many years prior to 1892. The fortunes of the school at Burnt Yards reflected the changing fortunes of the town. Between 1882 and mid-1893 it operated (sequentially) as a provisional school, a public school and a half-time school. A full listing of schools in the Central West in 1893 is at Appendix 19..

¹¹ C Chappel (ed) *A History of Peak Hill* (Peak Hill: Centenary Book Committee 1989) 275. *NSW Government schools online data base*.

http://www.governmentschools.det.nsw.edu.au/main_pages/school_details.aspx?schoolID=7788 . See Appendix 1 for biographies of Ellen and George Stanford.

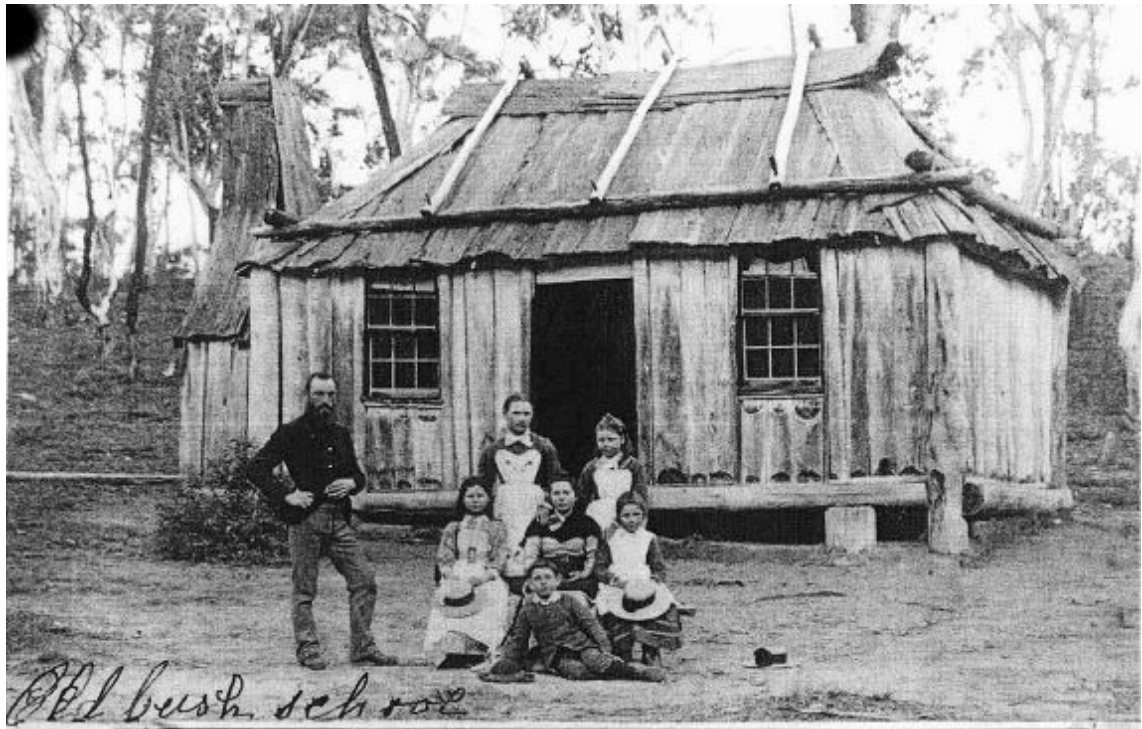


Illustration 58: “An Old Bush School”

The house-to-house schools were the most tenuous.¹² One of these, located near Parkes, was shared by three families at Broilgan, Blow Clear and Wilga when it opened in 1888. Thomas Hamilton, a free selector at Blow Clear had six children, while John Bell whose free selection was near the Wilgas station, had four children of school age and Cornelius O’Brien who was caretaker of a large Government tank, Broilgan, had three children. When O’Brien left the area following the closure of the tank, the school was able to continue only when the Sturgess family of Stonehenge joined in 1892.¹³ These schools were important because there was no other option but according to the Munawaddera Farmers' Union, they were inadequate and most parents would “prefer to send their children twice as far to a half-time school”.¹⁴ Moreover, as Mittagong delegate W Walshe declared at the 1891 meeting of farmers at Wagga Wagga, while the minimum distance requirements for compulsory attendance “may suit in large towns and cities it does not give satisfaction to the country people who desire to give their children a good education”. Walshe and others were not just concerned with the city versus country divide but with community obligations. He called on “negligent parents” to send their children to school. This would “assist their neighbors” because an increase in numbers would raise the school’s classification, not only benefiting their own children but “all

¹² These schools were only established if sufficient parents were willing or able to participate and if they agreed to provide suitable facilities and accommodation for the teacher. Thereupon the Department would provide an itinerant teacher who would share her or his time between the families.

¹³ *NSW School Archives Blow Clear*. See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Sturgess.

¹⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 13 November 1891.

attending it".¹⁵ Such co-operation would strengthen societal cohesiveness preserving *gemeinschaft*.



Illustration 59: House-to-House School: Broglan Tank, Blow Clear and Wilga

In addition to the introduction of compulsory schooling the *1880 Act* abolished funding for denominational schools. This did not particularly concern most Protestants whose denominational schools had been steadily declining. By 1891 protestant schools (other than collegiate) ceased to be players in the provision of elementary and secondary education.¹⁶ Most Protestant students attended public schools and provision in the legislation which ensured religious instruction and visits by clergymen allayed their concerns. Bathurst Anglican Dean John Marriott¹⁷, though, was not so placated. When the department refused his request to provide pupils of the Bathurst girls' high school religious instruction, he declared that the "Church viewed with alarm" what it viewed as an "attempt to entirely secularise an important section of our educational system".¹⁸

According to Greg Sherington and Craig Campbell the public school system was founded on a "colonial liberal middle class Protestant agenda" and the Catholic Church had built its own

¹⁵ *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* 1 September 1891. There was an exemption to compulsory attendance where children lived more than two miles from a school. The meeting called for a minimum of four miles.

¹⁶ P D Davis 'Bishop Barker and the Decline of Denominationalism' in C Turney (ed) *Pioneers of Australian Education* (Sydney: Sydney University Press 1969):148, 152. In relation to declining numbers, as Davis points out, there "on the part of the three non-Roman Catholic denominations... there was very little difference between the public school and the certified denominational school."

¹⁷ See Appendix 1 for biography of John Thomas Marriott.

¹⁸ *NSW School Bathurst High School*. The refusal was a technical one with the Attorney-General determining in 1889 that high schools were not covered by the provisions of the *1880 Act* for the purposes of religious instruction.

schools “to uphold the faith against the threat of the secular state”.¹⁹ The cessation of state aid was not unexpected by the Church but it triggered sectarian bitterness that prevailed during the 1880s.²⁰ By 1891, although the sectarian divide continued to fester, the Catholic hierarchy put most of its energy into advocating Catholic education and lamenting the lack of state support.²¹ At the Bathurst Convent of Mercy high school’s annual prize-giving in December 1891, for example, Bishop Joseph Byrne called on the government to recognise the excellent standard of education in Catholic schools by sending government inspectors to examine the students’ work.²² Nothing had changed two years later when he attended the St Joseph’s primary and infants’ school end-of-year celebrations. On this occasion, he commented on the injustice of the possible introduction of free education in public schools and appealed for “a portion of the taxes paid into the Educational Fund” to be given to Catholic Schools. Nonetheless, he asserted, despite the continual refusal of the government to send in their inspectors, “they could do without the state”.²³

The number of Catholic schools expanded significantly from 1880. By 1892 there were 53 in the Bathurst diocese. These comprised 43 primary schools accommodating 3,225 children, one college (65 pupils) and nine superior schools with 247 pupils staffed primarily by religious from four orders. Byrne depended on religious orders to run these schools. Sister Mary Joachim O’Brien was one of the Sisters of Mercy located in the larger population centres of Bathurst, Carcoar, Forbes, Mudgee, Orange and Wellington.²⁴ The Vincentian Fathers had charge of St Stanislaus College and the Brothers of Saint Patrick taught at the Bathurst boys’ high school. These were overseas orders as were most of their members. The Sisters of St Joseph was

¹⁹ Sherington and Campbell ‘Australian Liberalism’, 62.

²⁰ Catholic Church authorities saw secularisation of schools in the colony was inevitable and, as Alan Barcan suggests, “precipitated the issue” when Archbishop Bede Vaughan released an inflammatory Joint Pastoral Letter in July 1879. The Pastoral was preached throughout the Central West, part of which described public schools as “seed-plots of future immorality, infidelity, and lawlessness” *Sydney Morning Herald* 24 July 1879, *Town and Country Journal* 26 July 1879. Barcan *Two Centuries of Education*, 139.

²¹ At a prize giving ceremony at St Joseph’s School Bathurst, Byrne stated that they “had lost the battle” although they had “strongly opposed the system of secular education on the public platform, the hustings and every way possible”. He declared that the Church would continue their own path in setting up new schools, not to compete with the state schools “but with the object of handing down to the children the faith which they themselves so much prized.” *Bathurst Free Press* 21 December 1889.

²² See Appendix 1 for biography of Joseph Byrne.

²³ *National Advocate* 12 December 1891, *Bathurst Free Press* 22 December 1893. See Appendix 20 for a list of Catholic schools in the district.

²⁴ See Appendix 1 for biography of Sister M Joachim O’Brien (Mary).

founded in South Australia and these nuns, including Sister M Pius Breen, taught in primary schools, particularly those located in small and more remote communities.²⁵

The state and the churches provided higher education. Provision was made in the 1880 Act for the establishment of a small number of public high schools for both boys and girls in Bathurst. However the boys' high school only operated between 1883 and 1887 and the Bathurst girls' high school was the only public high school in the Central West between 1891 and 1893. The establishment of high schools lagged behind primary and superior primary schools. The latter offered an important opportunity for children in country areas to obtain a higher level of education than offered in the elementary schools but their presence placed the high schools, already having to compete with collegiate schools, under considerable pressure. Lower fees at the primary schools (3d per week versus 2 guineas a quarter) were an additional problem, but the Department appeared to have little interest in the high schools. At a prize-giving ceremony at the Bathurst girls' high school in June 1891, James Rutherford bluntly suggested the establishment of the superior school was deliberately set up to undermine the now defunct boys school.²⁶ Arthur Jose, a visiting master at the girls' high school, described the closure of the boys' school as "largely due to the retention of boys by the then Headmaster of the Public School".²⁷ He cautioned that the same tactics were being deployed against the girls' school noting that in December 1891 only two of the 21 children sent for high school entrance examinations were girls.²⁸

Sarah Hatley-Boyd was the principal of the girls' high school.²⁹ She and her husband Fielding had come from South Africa in 1883 where they conducted a private boys' school. Sarah was appointed principal in 1884 after a short stint at Orange public school, while Fielding taught at the Bathurst superior school. The struggling high school progressed under Sarah's leadership but her tenure was not a smooth one. Her relationships with the principals of Bathurst superior school, John Dettman and his successor David Ferguson³⁰ were far from cordial and Departmental officials usually sided with the men consistent with, as suggested by Josephine

²⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of Sister M Pius Breen (Annie Agnes). According to Marie Crowley the order's "traditional religious structure was adapted to accommodate local environment and needs", ministering and living among thinly scattered and often very poor population. M Crowley *Women of the Vale Perthville Josephites 1872-1972* (Richmond: Spectrum Publications Pty Ltd 2002) 15.

²⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 23 June 1891.

²⁷ See Appendix 1 for biography of Arthur Wilberforce Jose.

²⁸ *NSW School Archives Bathurst High School*.

²⁹ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Sarah Christina and Fielding Hatley-Boyd.

³⁰ Ferguson relocated from Goulburn Superior School to Bathurst Superior School in 1887. *Goulburn Penny Post* 25 September 1886. Kyle *Her Natural Destiny*, 115. Also see Dunlop 'The Public High Schools of New South Wales', 67. For a time around 1885, the high schools in Bathurst and Goulburn were placed under the control of the principal of the superior schools. Barcan *Two Centuries of Education*, 154. See Appendix 1 for biography of David Ferguson.

May, the “patriarchal culture” within the administration and society generally”.³¹ According to Noeline Kyle, Ferguson was antagonistic towards the high schools, seeing them as “an incursion upon his teaching role in the state department” so it is no surprise that there were disagreements. In one instance, Sarah complained about the purported unbecoming conduct of girls from the public school who attended the high school for cookery classes.³² District Inspector McCredie³³ took Ferguson’s part and reported that it was incidents such as these that “mitigate against the success” of the high school which, he said, was dependent upon pupils being sent from the primary school. In any case, he suggested, the pupils didn’t like Hatley-Boyd.³⁴

The Department didn’t seem to like her either. Chief Inspector John Maynard³⁵ was displeased by her representations to obtain examination concessions for her students and others, advising Under-secretary Edwin Johnson, that Sarah was pandering to “parents for social reasons”. He suggested the parents would not send their girls to the superior public school but they would be able to send them to the high school if they could get in.³⁶ He reported that, with an assistant, “she has actually kept a small preparatory school going, in order to prevent some of these children from going to the public or to the private schools”.³⁷ Sarah made no attempt to disguise her aspirations to attract girls from higher class families or to have the school recognised as a refined place for their education. She accommodated boarders at her home and offered classes ‘genteel’ subjects including “flower painting, instrumental music and drawing”.³⁸

The Fieldings cultivated good relationships with influential people in the community drawing, according to May, “on the powerful colonial discipline discourse regarding respectability, especially for married women”.³⁹ May also suggests that Sarah “won the support of the local

³¹ J May “Leading Women” in T Fitzgerald and J May *Portraying Lives*, 40.

³² *NSW School Archives Bathurst Girl High School*. The propensity of the public-school children to linger in front of the high school gates, blocking the footpath and being ill-mannered annoyed Hatley-Boyd. She wanted the girls escorted in an orderly fashion from the public school. Ferguson maintained that there would be no problem if she just opened the gate.

³³ See Appendix 1 for biography of James McCredie.

³⁴ *NSW School Archives Bathurst Girl High School*.

³⁵ John Charles Maynard (c. 1835-1906) was Chief Inspector of Schools from 1884 to 1893 when he became the Under-Secretary to the Department. *Sydney Morning Herald* 30 October 1906

³⁶ One of these may have been Henry Mugridge a timber merchant who among others petitioned the Department on the examination issue *Bathurst High School Archives*. His daughter Edith evidently did not attend the school as she was listed among the prize-winners at the Canargroo Boarding School for young ladies. *Bathurst Free Press* on 18 December 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Henry Mugridge.

³⁷ *Bathurst High School Archives*.

³⁸ Kyle *Her Natural Destiny*, 115.

³⁹ J May ‘Circles of Relationships’ in Fitzgerald and May *Portraying Lives*, 59.

middle-class families by styling her school in the mold of a girls' private school".⁴⁰ She had strong support from board members, Alfred G Thompson and James Rutherford, the latter lauding her success and lamenting there was not "a Mrs Boyd in the shape of a gentlemen to take the management" of a boys' high school.⁴¹ On the other hand, she had little support from Dean John Marriott who described her as "practically nothing though nominally a Romanist" in a letter to the Minister for Public Instruction.⁴²

St Stanislaus' and All Saints' colleges at Bathurst and Coerwull Academy at Bowenfels were the district's collegiate schools.⁴³ As discussed by Campbell and Sherington, these institutions intended to "emulate the reformed English public schools for boys", had a dominant influence on middle class education in New South Wales with an "emphasis on character building and organized games".⁴⁴ Unsurprisingly they were out of reach of most boys from ordinary families unless, like Bertie Atkins, they obtained a scholarship or bursary.⁴⁵ End of year speech days, both celebratory and didactic in tone, were comprehensively reported in the Bathurst newspapers and occasionally appeared as news items in the Sydney press. Sporting fixtures between the collegiates, the technical school and premier town teams were regularly reported. Participation and success in these team sports were considered almost as important as academic achievement. Indeed, at the All Saints' speech day in December 1891, the principal Frederick Tracey, stated that "character was as much formed on the playground as any other place".⁴⁶ But of course, the aim of the students according to St Stanislaus' headmaster Rev Patrick Dowling should be "to become good men and true citizens".⁴⁷ Bishop Camidge, at the All Saints' speech day told the pupils it was "for the advancement, not of themselves so much as for the good and blessing of their country".⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Ibid, 66.

⁴¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 23 June 1891. This reference would probably have been irksome to Fielding Hatley-Boyd who had been assistant headmaster at the boys' high school at the time it was closed after which he was dismissed from the service. According to Dunlop, he eventually left the colony for England taking their only son with him. Dunlop 'Public High Schools of NSW', 70. See also May 'Circles of Relationships'.

⁴² *Bathurst Girls' High School Archives*.

⁴³ St Stanislaus was a Catholic college, All Saints Anglican and Coerwull Academy was a Presbyterian college.

⁴⁴ C Campbell and G Sherington *The Comprehensive Public School Historical Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2006) 18.

⁴⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of Bertie Atkins. Some families did not opt to send their children to the local collegiate schools. Peter Rheinberger's son Gus attended a college at Hunter's Hill Sydney NSW (probably St Joseph's Catholic College).

⁴⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 18 December 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Frederick Tracey.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 9 December 1892.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 18 December 1891.

There were no collegiate schools in the Central West for girls, although the Catholic Church conducted a high school for girls in Bathurst as well as superior primary schools in Carcoar, Forbes, Mudgee, Orange and Wellington. As with the boys' colleges, the end-of-year ceremonies of the Convent of Mercy high-school in Bathurst were fulsomely reported, with the names of prize-winners listed. Good conduct and religious studies were rewarded and there were awards for the fine arts such as needlework, drawing, and painting. But Bishop Byrne extolled academic achievement encouraging the girls to set their academic goals higher.⁴⁹ With the absence of government inspectors at Catholic schools, success at the university examinations was particularly important for Byrne as it demonstrated Catholic education compared favourably to state schools.

There were other private schools in the district such as Thomas Richards' Weymouth school at Orange and J N Shipton's grammar school in Mudgee.⁵⁰ When Weymouth opened in 1887, boys were guaranteed a "thorough English Education" and in 1891, Shipton advertised that he prepared boarding and day pupils for university examinations and that the school was regularly inspected by a "board of inspectors".⁵¹ Private venture schools such as these were not unusual but their numbers had diminished considerably from mid-century with the strengthening of the public school system. The operators of these schools, in the words of Sherington and Campbell, were "market aware, sensitive to the social class and the respectability aspirations of their client families".⁵² This was also the case for 'ladies' colleges'. For instance Mrs Coates Wilson conducted 'Bleak House' which catered for the "better class of young ladies in Mudgee"⁵³ and Miss MacArthur's "Queen's College" was a private school for upper class girls at Bathurst.⁵⁴ Sarah Keyes' Pixie College in Bathurst was one of the oldest of its kind in the district.⁵⁵ It opened in January 1882 and in 1896 she stated that she had had 123

⁴⁹ *National Advocate* 19 December 1893.

⁵⁰ Shipton was previously an assistant master at Brisbane Commercial School and operated Labrador College in Southport *Brisbane Courier* 29 October 1890. He took over a school conducted by a Mr McKay. An item in *Sydney Mail* noted that McKay had "a fairly large number of pupils all of whom will continue their studies" under Shipton. 6 June 1891. Richards established his school in 1886. The named changed to Wolaroi College when it relocated to Wolaroi mansion.

⁵¹ *Western Post* 30 August 1892. Boarding fees were 10 guineas and tuition fees were 2 and 3 guineas per quarter.

⁵² Sherington and Campbell *History of Australian Schooling*, 89.

⁵³ *Mudgee Guardian* 12 August 1892 *Town and Country Journal* 29 April 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Coates Wilson.

⁵⁴ *National Advocate* 25 November 1892. Miss MacArthur opened her school in January 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 16 January 1892; Miss Sweet conducted a school named 'Bleak House' in Orange. *Western Advocate* 23 January 1892; J W O'Keefe had a grammar school in Forbes. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 23 May 1893. John J Isherwood also had a grammar school in Wellington. *Dubbo Despatch and Wellington Independent* 15 April 1892.

⁵⁵ The Anglican Church took it over in 1926. Sarah was the subject of a feature article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 8 November 1930.

pupils and they had won 125 prizes and certificates for music, drawing and artwork at external exhibitions during that time.⁵⁶

The longevity of Sarah Keyes' school and her association with the Methodist church kept her in the public eye but there is generally very little information on the people, particularly women, who ran these institutions. This is also the case for women, such as Forbes resident Miss McKee, who offered tuition in their own homes, those of their pupils or occasionally, in commercial premises.



Illustration 60: Sara Keyes

Governesses remain largely anonymous. According to Kyle by the 1880s and 1890s, they were only in demand “up country”⁵⁷ but this is not entirely accurate. Thomas O’Shaughnessy’s daughters Kate and Grace worked as governesses. Thomas noted in his diary in July 1891 that Grace travelled by train to Bendick Murrell to meet Mr Kearins who was to take her to his place in Murringo to work as a governess.⁵⁸ In 1893 Thomas drove Kate to Mount McDonald where she was engaged to work for the local storekeeper.⁵⁹ Similarly an item in the *Burrowa News* points to more widespread employment. The newspaper noted that when “families of the middle rank” fell on hard times, girls of these families turn to teaching “to lighten the burden of poverty”.⁶⁰ In addition, it commented that “needy girls possessed of average education” were particularly predisposed to the post of governess but this something that is

⁵⁶ *National Advocate* 26 September 1896. See Appendix 1 for biography of Sarah Keyes.

⁵⁷ Kyle *Her Natural Destiny*, 168.

⁵⁸ Murringo is approximately 63kms south of Cowra and is just outside the study area. Grace (1871-1903), Kate (1868-1911) married Robert McDonnell. Grace (1871-1903).

⁵⁹ Thomas O’Shaughnessy *Diary* 6 July 1891, 21 January 1893. Mr Kearins is probably Patrick Kearins (1843-1931) who was a grazier at Murringo. He and his wife Mary (née Lanane) had thirteen children. Mary was born in 1852 and they married in 1871 at Murringo.

https://www.myheritage.com/names/patrick_kearins

⁶⁰ *Burrowa News* 4 August 1893.

impossible to substantiate. Indeed it is difficult to uncover much at all about governesses, tutors and the women who ran ladies' schools in the district or elsewhere, noting that they formed part of, in Marjorie Theobold's words, "the hidden history of women's work".⁶¹

With over 2,200 of the 4,500 teachers working in the colony's public education system, women had greater visibility than their colleagues in the private realm. Although there were less females than males overall, predictably they were over-represented in the lower classifications of assistant and pupil teachers.⁶² Information on some of these women is more accessible because of the plethora of Departmental files. Teachers, male and female, were carefully monitored by a large and often inflexible bureaucracy. According to Richard Selleck this surveillance was to ensure the teachers "walked the narrow path of social and cultural propriety".⁶³ They were expected to provide an example to the pupils in "habits of personal neatness and cleanliness to not to give offence to "any section of the community ... abstain from participation in ... any gatherings on party, political or sectarian topics".⁶⁴

Conditions in many bush schools were challenging. In a letter to the *National Advocate* a "Back Block" teacher complained he and his colleagues did not have the same opportunities, accommodation or equipment as their "town brothers".⁶⁵ Accommodation was often inadequate. At Eglington, for example, John Halstead was forced to make his own alterations to the residence that had four rooms and a kitchen to accommodate his family of ten.⁶⁶ When the Department asked Peak Hill teacher Albert Mitchell if he could accommodate a female teacher, he agreed that they could "*temporarily* [his italics] accommodate a young woman until suitable accommodation" was found.⁶⁷ Mitchell optimistically suggested the residence be extended but the Department made other arrangements.⁶⁸ Henry Tennant-Donaldson also drew attention to the inequities in the school system between the "metropolis and the more important towns of the colony" and the small country schools, noting that people see

⁶¹ Theobold *Knowing Women*, 48.

⁶² The complexity of school classification was matched by the system and pay-scales with teachers paid according to gender, classification and sub-classifications, marital status. *Sydney Morning Herald* 14 January 1892. Pupil teachers were paid a pittance. All teachers suffered a 5% pay cut in 1893 as part of the government's retrenchment measures. In 1892 approximately 4500 teachers (including pupil teachers) worked in public schools, 48% of these were male, excluding pupil teachers 58% were men. 65% of the 1282 pupil teachers were women. *Minister for Public Instruction Annual Report 1892*, 29-30.

⁶³ R Selleck 'State Education and Culture' in Goldberg and Smith *Australian Cultural History*, 8.

⁶⁴ *Minister for Public Instruction Annual Report 1893*, 234, 237, 238.

⁶⁵ *National Advocate* 30 October 1891.

⁶⁶ *NSW School Archives Eglington* Mitchell reminded the Department that there were only two bedrooms and that his wife Margaret, who had recently given birth, was "compelled to keep a 'help' as she is not strong and has a young baby to attend to."

⁶⁷ *NSW School Archives Peak Hill*. See Appendix 1 for biography of Albert Mitchell.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

expensively built public schools, superior public schools and high schools each with its staff of teachers' assistants and pupil teachers, as well as visiting teachers for special subjects, such as drawing, singing, drill callisthenics, French, sewing, etc. Casual visitors leave duly impressed with the apparent comprehensive teaching and showy results. But let them visit a small village public school.⁶⁹

Andrew Ross expressed similar concerns on a visit to the Canowindra public school. In describing the unsuitable and almost intolerable conditions for children attending the school during the summer months he criticised the neglect of the authorities, but noted “bush people as a rule have to grin and bear the hard and often neglected lot of a country life compared with the lavish expenditure that is shovelled out in handfuls about Sydney and the suburbs”.⁷⁰

Aside from working in taxing surroundings teachers found it hard to make ends meet. Annie Kersley’s salary barely covered the cost of her board and lodging at Tong Bong near Mudgee. With the closure of the coal mine in the area and a consequent fall off in enrolments, the Department noted there was unlikely to be an upgrade in the school’s classification and hence Annie could not expect an increase in salary.⁷¹ Lesley Hicks, an assistant teacher at Peak Hill, applied for an increase in salary, stating he was unable to “hold up [his] present position and obtain the usual comforts of life such as can be procured in older and more established places”. A short time later he sought a placement closer to Sydney where he would have a better opportunity to study. In support of his assistant, head teacher Albert Mitchell stated that Hicks had “no chance “of “improving himself to any great extent intellectually or morally” in the town.⁷² The “Back Block Teacher” made similar complaints arguing he was “banished from all congenial society, being planted in a soil where nothing but ' bullock,' ' horse,' or 'sheep' will flourish, and where the topics of the day are confined to these three subjects’”.⁷³ On the whole pupil teachers experienced the greatest hardships. According to Kyle these mostly inexperienced young people whose behaviour was closely scrutinised by officials, were “easily exploitable”.⁷⁴ Some faced considerable pressures. In a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* “An English Lady” described the long hours her daughter spent studying for her exams

⁶⁹ *National Advocate* 6 August 1891. The primary purpose of Tennant-Donaldson’s letter was to criticise the teacher of Yetholme School, Eliza Boyd (née Maccabee) with whom he (and his family) had an ongoing feud. He states that his daughter (Rosa) had been forced to open a school because many parents would not send their children to the public school. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Henry Tennant-Donaldson and Eliza Boyd.

⁷⁰ *Australian Star* 24 March 1891.

⁷¹ *NSW School Archives Tong Bong*.

⁷² *NSW School Archives Peak Hill*.

⁷³ *National Advocate* 30 October 1891.

⁷⁴ Kyle *Her Natural Destiny*, 137.

only to fail one subject, even though she taught it at the school, and hence had to wait a whole year for a “trifling increase of salary”. The correspondent noted that her daughter did not participate in “amusements” which a girl of her age could expect. She also wondered whether her daughter would be better off working as a “general servant for 18s per week with board and lodging”.⁷⁵ Seventeen-year-old Ada Sherringham at Condobolin couldn’t manage her studies because of home troubles and subsequently resigned.⁷⁶ But Minnie Ross (daughter of Andrew Ross) had an easier time of it in Molong. She was very popular in the town with the local newspaper often noting her attendance at social or sporting events.⁷⁷



Illustration 61: Ada Sherringham

The public persona of teachers can be determined to some extent through their portrayal in the local newspapers. Reports ranged from notices of promotions to accounts of mishaps such as the ordeal suffered by Yeoval teacher Lizzie Kelly after she fell from her horse and was lost in the bush for several days. The *Standard of Freedom's* account in which it described Lizzie as “well-made, tall, handsome young lady but not of a very robust constitution” was typical of others, particularly involving women, with a melodramatic touch – the incident, the fragility of the teacher and the harsh environment in which they laboured, central to the story.⁷⁸ Some attracted unwelcome attention. The misdemeanours of Cargo teacher William Quick and the

⁷⁵ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 28 January 1891.

⁷⁶ *NSW School Archives Cumnock*. In the event, Ada was not able to sustain her employment and she resigned in November 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Ada Sherringham.

⁷⁷ When Minnie (b 1876) left Molong in 1900 she was described as “the most popular and well-beloved young lady of Molong...an excellent organiser of public entertainments, a good pianist and vocalist, a splendid exponent of the athletic lawn tennis and a first class-cyclist. *Molong Express* 20 January 1900.

⁷⁸ *Standard of Freedom* report quoted in *Molong Express and Western District Advertiser* 12 September 1891.

feud between Eliza Boyd and Tennant-Donaldson besmirched their reputations and cast doubt on their respectability and fitness for their posts.⁷⁹

More frequently teachers, such as Cowra headmaster Charles Snodgrass and Mudgee teacher Pierce Morrissey who was commended on the success of Kate O'Brien in the high school entrance examination, were praised for the scholastic achievements of individual pupils and pupil teachers.⁸⁰ They were also complimented for their labours with the school children generally. Orange teacher William Bax, for example, was hailed as an "ideal school master" who "can do anything with his boys, and takes no end of pains to make them proficient in all sorts of things outside their scholastic duties".⁸¹ Celebratory picnics and concerts, particularly at the end of the school year, were occasions when teachers were singled out. These events connected teachers to the broader community, not only engendering a sense of pride but demonstrating their usefulness and social worth. They reinforced state and community expectations of the education system. Such public occasions also contributed to the cohesion of communities as noted by the Hill End correspondent for the *Bathurst Free Press*. He judged the 1892 Arbor Day celebrations a success primarily due to the children and teachers, including George Langlands of Tambaroora, who brought to mind, the "good old days ... when all worked with a will to help or assist a neighbor or friend in need".⁸²

Members of school boards were uppermost at these occasions. These boards were empowered to inspect schools, suspend teachers for misconduct, induce parents to send their children to school and report them if they didn't. They comprised up to seven members all of whom were appointed by the government.⁸³ Would be members were entrusted to uphold the principles of public education and thus needed to be to be "gentlemen of repute and position".⁸⁴ They were often the same "leading citizens" who were members of the other civic institutions. For instance Henry Grey Innes, of the Condobolin School Board, was also the mayor, a magistrate, coroner, chairman of the pastoral, agricultural society and the jockey-club.⁸⁵ Across the district, members came from a broad range of occupations. In Bathurst, the

⁷⁹ The Department investigated three complaints made against William Quick. The complaints which were made by someone who lived outside the village were motivated by spite. Still Quick had been indiscrete, at best, and despite objections from local residents he was demoted and transferred. *NSW School Archives Cargo*.

⁸⁰ *Mudgee Independent* 30 July 1892, *Cowra Free Press* 29 January 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Charles Snodgrass and Pierce Morrissey.

⁸¹ *National Advocate* 22 December 1892 See Appendix 1 for biography of William Bax.

⁸² *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* 24 August 1892, H Hodge *The Hill End Story A History of the Hill End and Tambaroora Goldfield Book 1* (Hill End Hill End Publications Hill End 1966) 182.

⁸³ *Public Instruction Act* 1880 Section 19.

⁸⁴ *Australian Handbook 1892*, 148.

⁸⁵ Condobolin Family History Group *Where the Lachlan Flows*, 21.

board included three doctors and the postmaster. The Mudgee board had three storeowners and a newspaper proprietor. Pastoralist Stephen Goldsborough Alford filled the role at Cowra as did farmer Aubrey de Vere Hunt at Evans Plains.⁸⁶

The extent to which boards in the region's school districts exercised their powers under the *1880 Act* is uncertain though boards often made representations to the Department regarding the standard of buildings and equipment. It is possible that some boards kept a close eye on teachers' conduct and performance adding to the pressure they faced. Equally they could be protective of teachers such as Amaroo teacher William E Stanford who was persistently attacked by Andrew Ross. Although Ross was chairman of the school board he misused his position as a parliamentarian to persecute Sanford to the chagrin of other board members who came to the teacher's defence.⁸⁷ The men on these boards were the guardians of future citizens and a reminder that education was the key to future success, wealth and status. Their influence in the community was recognised by the labour movement when the LEL added an additional plank to its platform providing for the election of public school boards "by the people on the basis of one man one vote principle".⁸⁸



Illustration 62: Aubrey and Charity (née Short) De Vere Hunt

⁸⁶ Drs Machattie, Spencer, Kirkland and postmaster William Thompson were members of the Bathurst Board. Storeowners Daniel Cassin, Kellett and Meares were on the Mudgee Board. Aubrey de Vere Hunt was a farmer at Evans Plains. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Hugh Kirkland, Daniel Cassin, Charles D Meares, Aubrey De Vere Hunt, William Thompson and Stephen G Alford.

⁸⁷ Ross raised fifteen allegations against Stanford in Parliament. They ranged from restricting which door the children could enter the school from, keeping flowers in the toilet and having too many chickens. An inquiry found all the allegations unsubstantiated. Parent and members of the School Board, who were outraged at not being consulted by Ross, fully supported Stanford. *Molong Express* 14 June 1890. Stanford was transferred to Manildra in 1891.

⁸⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald* 8 Feb 1892.

One of the most stressful tasks teachers faced was the collection of school fees. Public school education was not free despite the efforts of reformers and some politicians such as Ninian Melville. When he unsuccessfully sought to amend the *1880 Act* to abolish fees he won the support of the *Bathurst Free Press*.⁸⁹ The government's arguments that the colony could not afford to give up the fees, that they were minimal ("a miserable threepence a week") and could be waived in cases of hardship, were rejected by the newspaper.⁹⁰ It argued that the shortfall in revenue would not be significant and in any case, if education was compulsory, then it should also be free declaring

it is not right that poor persons should be exposed on the one hand to the risk of prosecution, and on the other hand to the humiliation of publishing their poverty, yet if they do not apply to the authorities for exemption from payment on the ground of poverty they are brought before the court for neglecting to send their children to school.⁹¹

The recovery of arrears was onerous and time-consuming made more difficult with the changing economic conditions. In 1892 according to Inspector McCredie because of "a general depression in business and scarcity of work, especially in mining centres, the amount of school fees in arrears, and the number of free pupils, were higher than in 1891".⁹² Teachers or attendance officers such as Patrick J Cusack, sent messages or interviewed parents, often repeatedly.⁹³ A review of teacher recommendations demonstrates this but also reveals the difficult circumstances that many parents faced in trying to pay even the "minimal" amounts.⁹⁴ Teachers were required to submit a pro-forma report setting out the debtor's personal circumstances, the number of children, the details of the debt and the debtor's reason for non-payment. Generally, their recommendations were supported by the Department.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ Ninian Melville was the member for Northumberland. He attempted, again unsuccessfully, to introduce a similar amendment in November 1893. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Ninian Melville.

⁹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 23 December 1892. In 1892 weekly fees were not to exceed threepence for each child, up to four children in one family, one shilling being the maximum for any family *Australian Handbook 1892*, 148.

⁹¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 27 November 1891.

⁹² *Report Minister for Public Instruction 1892, District Inspector McCredie's report*, 24.

⁹³ See Appendix 1 for biography of Patrick Cusack.

⁹⁴ See Appendix 21 for applications made by teachers in schools in the Central West during the study period.

⁹⁵ Penalties for non-payment of fees were 5 shillings for the first offence, and 20 shillings or seven days imprisonment for each succeeding offence *Australian Handbook 1892*, 148. In the cases set out in the schedule, the maximum penalty for second offences was not applied.

Some families were in dire circumstances, poor, indigent or near destitute because of unemployment, illness or being recently widowed and there was no prospect of the fees being paid At Eskbank where mining was the most common occupation, head teacher Archibald McNaught recommended that the arrears of eight miners be waived. They were supporting families with five or six children and were unable to pay because there was little work. Thomas Owen, who owed sixteen shillings and sixpence, told the Department he “was only working 2 days a week and earning about one pound”. Similarly, Thomas Rickards advised “I am unable to pay work is so scarce I am barely able to get the necessities of life for my family of 8, with 6 depending directly on me. I have not worked more than three days this past fortnight and 4 days the fortnight before”.⁹⁶ There was less sympathy for others. McNaught believed that miner William Corney’s circumstances to be fair and that he was “careless and able to pay”⁹⁷ Some debtors offered excuses such as “want of change “or waiting for a contract payment. In Thomas Edwards’ case it was alleged that when he received money, it was generally spent on drink. Others such as butcher George Casey simply denied the debt. Casey refused to pay for fees two shillings and nine pence but had to pay up following a successful prosecution.⁹⁸

Teachers were also responsible for keeping track of student attendance to ensure parents were meeting mandatory requirements. Compulsory school attendance was one of the important reforms introduced by the *1880 Act*. Parents or guardians were obliged to send their children aged between six and fourteen years old, to school for at least seventy days every six months.⁹⁹ The sanctions for non-compliance were fines or even jail in default.¹⁰⁰ Most contemporary observers, and many officials agreed not only were the measures inadequate but they were poorly administered or, in fact, a “dead letter”.¹⁰¹ Even Dowling acknowledged the need for better enforcement.¹⁰²

The deficiencies of the legislation were reiterated in successive annual reports of the Minister and the 1892 report was no different. Much needed reforms listed in the report included effective measures to deal with those adults and children “evading the law” and prohibition on employing children of school age unless they were up to standard.¹⁰³ As suggested by Maree

⁹⁶ *NSW School Archives Eskbank.*

⁹⁷ *NSW School Archives Eskbank, Peak Hill, Blayney, Milltown and Blayney.*

⁹⁸ In the Bathurst District, only seven persons were sued for the recovery of school fees in arrears, and in each case a verdict for the full amount claimed was obtained. *Annual Report for the Minister for Public Instruction 1892 District Inspector McCredie’s report, 24.*

⁹⁹ Exemptions included children being appropriately schooled elsewhere, sickness, no school within 2 miles and that the child has reached the requisite standard.

¹⁰⁰ *Public Instruction Act 1880.*

¹⁰¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 20 February 1891.

¹⁰² Dowling *Australia and America*, 59.

¹⁰³ *Report of the Minister for Public Instruction 1892*, 8.

Murray, although the *1880 Act* was intended by the government to ensure children throughout the colony had access to a good elementary education, it was as much about the state wanting to exercise more control over children with an eye on their status as future citizens. She argues there was a greater focus on school attendance in urban areas because children's labour was more visible in undesirable environments such as factories. In addition, labour organisations were concerned to remove children as cheap competition for their members. Nonetheless Murray notes the provisions in the legislation were "pragmatic and realistic", transitional and "an acknowledgment of the value of children's labour, both to their households and in the wider economy".¹⁰⁴ The government realised the "great, perhaps crucial, value of children's work to the rural sector and chose not to interfere with this pattern".¹⁰⁵ The *Bathurst Free Press* commented on the value of children's labour when reporting on the farmers' conference at Wagga. One resolution of the conference was to seek improvements to schools in country districts and provide more assistance to parents. Applauding the conference's proposal, the editor observed that it was not too far in the past that some parents saw the absence of a school in their neighbourhood as a "blessing rather than a disadvantage, because it enabled them to make full use of their children on their farms or small sheep walks".¹⁰⁶

The impact of farm labour on children's attendance was also noted by Inspector George Thomas. Thomas' territory was diverse. He reported that many children in several places in his district did not attend school regularly "as farming pursuits, shearing, &c., absorb a great deal of juvenile labour".¹⁰⁷ The proceedings of the police court where parents were charged with breaches of the legislation for failing to send their children attended school support Thomas' claims. According to Thomas Perris' eldest brother, Thomas did not attend school because his father took him to work.¹⁰⁸ One of William Martin's sons did not go to school because "the boy was in the habit of working for Mr H Suttor during shearing time". Martin had nineteen children, all of whom he claimed were schooled at home by his wife, so doubtless the boy's income was indispensable for the household.¹⁰⁹ Edward Seaman was fined 5/- for failing to send his children to school the requisite number of days because, according to the teacher, the boys were being kept home to "drive a milk truck". Despite his plea that "one boy suffered

¹⁰⁴ Murray *Working Children*, 246.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 355.

¹⁰⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 13 November 1891.

¹⁰⁷ *Report of the Minister for Public Instruction 1892*, 98.

¹⁰⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 7 March 1891, 7 March 1892.

¹⁰⁹ The police magistrate agreed the children could be school at home provided they were "educated to the standard required by the Act" but he advised Martin "to obtain a certificate as to their proficiency from a schoolmaster." He was fined 1s 6d in one case only. *National Advocate* 28 February 1893.

from sunstroke and had the influenza and the other was delicate”, the police magistrate was unmoved observing that he had heard the “sunstroke” story before and warned Seaman that if he had to deal with him again, he would “inflict the heaviest fine”.¹¹⁰ It was possible that the children had been ill, but there is little doubt that they had to drive the milk cart.

The most frequent complaint about poorly enforced school attendance was that it fostered larrikinism although Thomas believed that the lack of discipline in some homes “neutralised” the teachers’ efforts to instil discipline. Hence the school system was unfairly blamed “for contributing to the spread of the prevalent larrikinism”.¹¹¹ While he lamented the poor enforcement of compulsory education, Dowling does not link this to larrikinism. His comments on larrikins were aimed at Sydney youths but could equally apply to the Central West. Instead of lounging about the streets, he stated, these youths (implicitly male) upon leaving primary school, should be made to attend free evening schools, preferably to pursue a technical education.¹¹²

Schools were often the focus of community events and celebrations. They provided opportunities for the district’s ‘notables’ to draw attention to their positions in the community. One such occasion was the visit of the Governor and Lady Jersey to Mudgee in 1892. This was the most important civic occasion in the town in that year. When the vice-regal couple visited the public school, school board members as well as the school inspector John Rooney were on hand to greet them.¹¹³ Board members in several communities also attended Arbor Day activities.¹¹⁴ The objective of the day was to beautify school grounds and plant trees for posterity. In 1892, Director-General of Forestry John Ednie Brown, arranged for approximately 80,000 trees to be despatched to schools throughout the colony. Not only were the trees to be planted but the children were required to sing of sunshine, merriment, flowers and trees as depicted in a cantata written specially for the occasion by Lady Jersey.¹¹⁵

The day was marked in many localities in the Central West. Inspector McCredie in commenting on the care taken by some teachers with the support of parents and pupils noted the “great

¹¹⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 8 March 1892.

¹¹¹ *Report of the Minister for Public Instruction 1893*, 150.

¹¹² Dowling *Australia and America*, 58, 140.

¹¹³ See Appendix 1 for biography of John Rooney.

¹¹⁴ The first “official” Arbor Day in New South Wales occurred in August 1891. *Sydney Morning Herald* 22 August 1891, *Sydney Mail* 29 August 1891. It was introduced by the Minister for Public Instruction, J H Carruthers MLA, following a suggestion by the Director-General of Forestry, John Ednie Brown. He established the first Arbor Day in South Australia in 1889. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of John Ednie Brown.

¹¹⁵ *Cantata Arbor Day* written and composed for the Children of the Public Schools in New South Wales, words by the Countess of Jersey, Music by Hugo Alpen, (1842-1917) (George Stephen Chapman, Acting Government Printer 1891).

interest...in the celebration of Arbor Day". He specially mentioned Milltown, Blayney and Kelso.¹¹⁶ At Blayney, MLA Charles Jeanneret, the mayor and chairman of the board Dr Ernest Woodward, Presbyterian minister James Adam and Methodist minister, Rev Daniel A Gilseman all addressed attendees.¹¹⁷ At Cowra, Charles Snodgrass, took pains to ensure the day went as it should, with the *Cowra Free Press* commenting on the "well-regulated" proceedings. In keeping with the Department's edict, only those scholars who had "won distinction by good behaviour and attention to their studies" were allowed to plant the trees.¹¹⁸ In some locations, large crowds assembled. At Kelso, for instance, approximately 690 people reportedly attended at the village which had a population of 150. William Kite "the genial and popular...squire of the village" presided over the proceedings and most of the leading citizens were present.¹¹⁹ Some of these had an important role in the tree planting as at Kirkconnell, where it was the "leading ladies of the locality", not the children who planted the trees.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ *Annual Report of the Minister for Public Instruction 1892 Report Bathurst District Inspector J McCredie*, 93. Arbor Day was also celebrated at Coota Creek, Rylstone, Cowra, Bathurst, Hill End, Walli, Kelso, Kirkconnell, Durama and Cowra *Sydney Morning Herald* 22, 23 and 27 August 1892

¹¹⁷ After expenses were defrayed around £2 was available for the piano and library fund. *NSW School Archives Blayney*. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Ernest Woodward and James Adam.

¹¹⁸ *Cowra Free Press* 26 August 1892.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 20 and 22 August 1892.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 22 August 1892.

TERRI CAREFULLY EXTRACTED and STOPPED by W. A. TRAIT,
Manager: BLAYNEY DRUG CO., Adelaide-street.

A HEARTY WELCOME GIVEN TO ALL.

PUBLIC SCHOOL

Arbor Day Celebration

—IN THE—
TOWN HALL, BLAYNEY,
—ON—
FRIDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 1892.

PART I.—MORNING PROGRAMME.
Commence at 10 15 a.m.

1.	CHRISTIAN: (a) "Happy Hearts"	School Pupils
	(b) "Hail to our Beautiful Queen"	Miss Cowell
2.	ADDRESS— "I Come, I Conquer"—(Allies)	E. A. Woodward, Esq., M.R.C.S., Etc.
3.	PAER SONGS—"Now We Greet You, Since Dear"—(Allies)	School Pupils
4.	SONS AND CHORUS—"The Mighty Pen"—(Patriots)	Miss Cowell
5.	CALLISTHENICS—Free Exercises and Marching	School Girls
6.	ADDRESS	Rev. J. Adams, M.A.
7.	PAER SONGS—"Cold the Frost May Blow"—(Masses)	School Pupils
8.	SONS AND CHORUS—"Frendly the Steadfast of England"—(Allies)	Miss Cowell
9.	LETTER CHILDREN'S SONGS AND WAITS—"The Heather Belle"—(Allies)	School Pupils
10.	CALLISTHENICS—Pole Exercises and Marching	School Girls
11.	ADDRESS	The Mayor (W. Whitaker, Esq.)
12.	DRUM—"List to the Cornet Bells"—(Blackby)	Misses Cowell and Maitson
13.	PAER SONGS—"The Bird Carol"—(Allies)	School Pupils
14.	ACROBATIC SONG—"The Japanese Fan"—(Ovalby)	School Girls
15.	ADDRESS	Rev. D. A. Gillespie
16.	PAER SONGS—"Gathered Once More"—(Allies)	School Pupils
17.	CALLISTHENICS—Ring and Drum-bell Exercises	School Girls
18.	CONCLUDING CHORUS	School Pupils

LUNCH PROVIDED FOR PUPILS, PARENTS AND FRIENDS.

PART II.—AFTERNOON PROGRAMME.
Commence at 2 30 p.m.
IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.

19.	CALLISTHENICS: (a) Marching	School Girls
	(b) Pole, Ring and Drum-bell Exercises	Under the supervision of Miss Yelvin.
20.	DRILL: (a) Manual and Firing Exercises	Cadet
	(b) Company Movements	
	(c) Skirmishing	Directed by Staff Officer Sergeant Gemway, of Orange.
21.	TREE PLANTING	School Pupils and Friends

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

CHAIRMAN	E. A. WOODWARD, Esq.; M.R.C.S., Etc.
ACCOMPANIST	MRS. MORAN.

Admission Free. A Cordial Invitation given to all.

E. A. WOODWARD, Esq., M.R.C.S., Etc.,
Chairman of School Board.
M. MORAN, Praeger.

A. E. MORAN, General Printer, Adelaide-street, Blayney.

PRATT'S CHILBLAIN CURE, a Wonderful Remedy for this Distressing Complaint.
NEVER FAILS. Is. per Bottle. TRY IT

15 NOV. 92

Illustration 63: Arbor Day Program Blayney Primary School

But Arbor Day was not universally applauded. The *Town and Country Journal* described it as an “educational ‘fad’ which if abandoned would be missed as much as the temporary enforced retirement from public life of certain directors and managers of building societies”.

Disparaging the “fuss and foolery, the feasting and junketing”, it ridiculed the horticultural “smothered in weeds and dying from lack of attention”.¹²¹ The ‘Back Block Teacher’ also called Arbor Day a fad which would fade long before work of “the honest hard-working teacher”.¹²²

¹²¹ *Town and Country Journal* 14 May 1892.

¹²² *National Advocate* 30 October 1891.

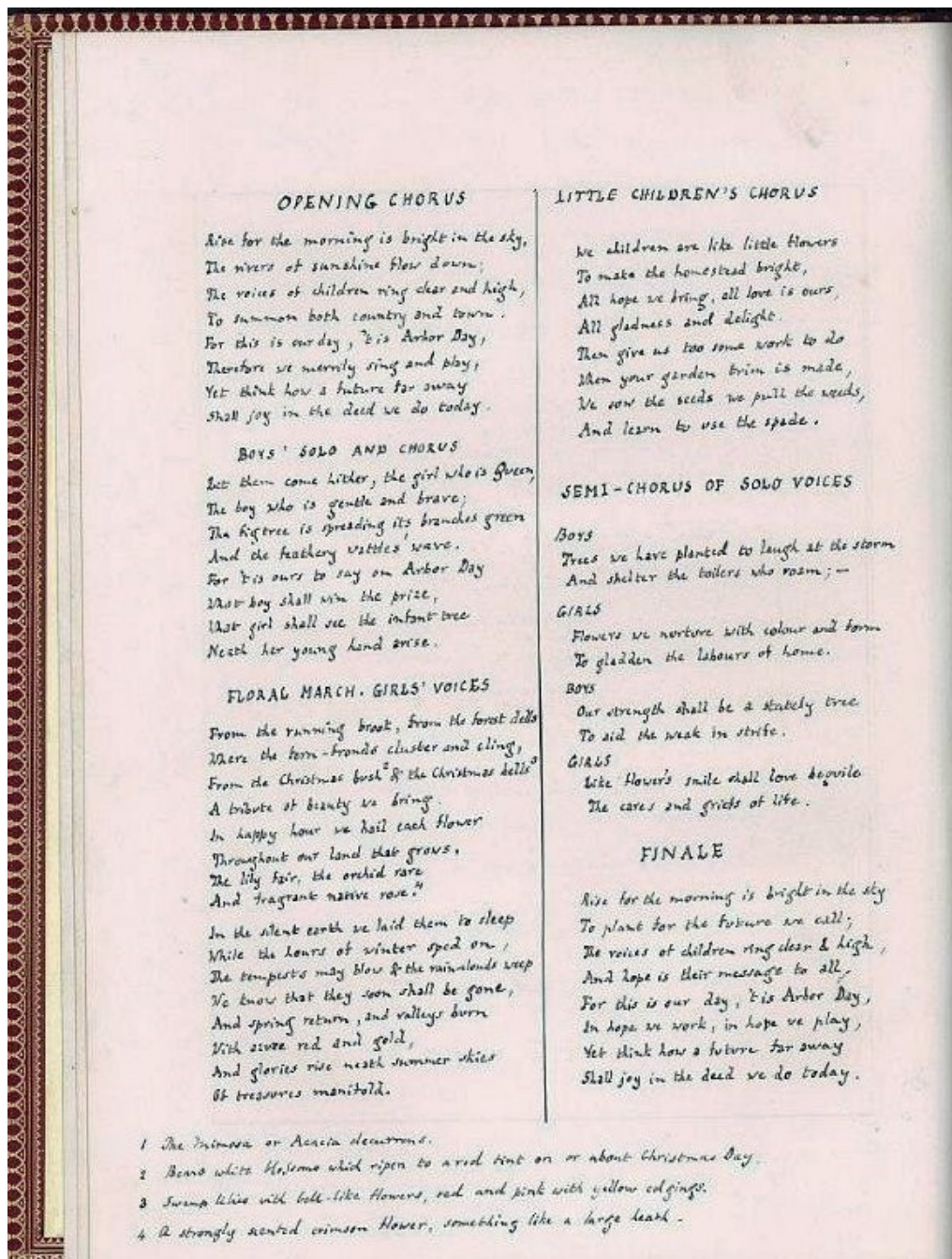


Illustration 64: Lady Jersey's Arbor Day Cantata

Technical education was another aspect of the education system in the late nineteenth century. Notwithstanding the issues associated with managing technical training from the mid-to-late 1880s, the stated objectives of the defunct Board of Technical Education remained a goal of the government between 1891 and 1893.¹²³ One of these was to establish "the best way of ensuring that people in the country areas had the same access [as city youth] to a ready

¹²³ The Board of Technical Education was extant between 1886 and 1889. See L A Mandelson 'Norman Selfe (Sydney: Sydney University Press Sydney 1972).

means of improving themselves in the working of their various [industrial] pursuits".¹²⁴ By 1891 some observers believed there was a need to pay greater attention to manual training with the education system producing too many lawyers, clerks and even teachers. Moreover "professional" young people who had no practical skills to fall back on and no inclination to follow the "lower occupations" were swelling the ranks of the unemployed.¹²⁵ Technical education was seen as the panacea with Dowling suggesting that "it should be the means of removing much prejudice against manual labour amongst many young men".¹²⁶ Despite the government's commitment to expanding the manual arts, by the beginning of 1893, it cut spending which according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "if it doesn't altogether abolish, greatly narrows the institution". Aside from retrenchment, competition with primary education and private instructors in subjects such as French, typewriting, cookery and dressmaking was given as the main reasons for the government's action which the newspaper suggested, had been under consideration for some time.¹²⁷

But these were not the only concerns. At a prize-giving ceremony at the Bathurst Technical College in 1892, guest speaker Frederick Bridges spoke of the poor attendance of classes, something also lamented by Edward Coombes.¹²⁸ The occasion was an important one with chairman James Rutherford as President of the School of Arts, joined on the podium by the Mayor James Cripps and prize-presenter Edmund Webb.¹²⁹ Rutherford expressed disappointment at the poor attendance at the meeting and supported Cripps' motion calling for the people of Bathurst to give "increased support to the Technical School".¹³⁰ This did not seem to be a problem in Orange with a correspondent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* noting that in addition to the three classes operating in the town, four more in cookery, carpentry, sewing and assaying and mineralogy, were proposed. Furthermore, it was noted that there was a push to establish a technical college there.¹³¹ As it turned out, all classes in Orange and in Eskbank, the only other town in the Central West, where technical classes were conducted, were cancelled in 1893.¹³²

¹²⁴ *Town and Country Journal* 16 June 1893.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 12 March 1892, *Sydney Morning Herald* 6 February 1892 and 11 June 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 4 June 1892.

¹²⁶ Dowling *Australia and America*, 63.

¹²⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 16 January 1893.

¹²⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 15 April 1891 See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biographies of Frederick Bridges (Superintendent of Technical Education) and Edward Coombes (President of the Board of Technical Education from 1883 to 1889).

¹²⁹ Rutherford also donated prizes.

¹³⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 4 June 1892.

¹³¹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 26 August 1892.

¹³² There were ten other branch schools closed *Annual Report Minister for Public Instruction 1893*, 32.

Hence the objective of ensuring working men in country areas had the opportunity to better themselves was diminished. Although poor attendance of classes in the country was the reason cited for their discontinuance, it seems the department was reluctant to proceed even where there was interest. In March 1893, it rejected an application to establish an evening school at New Vale, Eskbank, sceptical of the good intentions of those who said they would attend.¹³³ Of the 25 men who signed up, twelve were miners, two were fettlers and there were also an engine driver, a night officer and an overseer. They ranged in age from fifteen to 45 with most in their twenties. Inspector John Kevin had no confidence in the men. Aside from the doubt about the capacity of the 21 year-old inexperienced teacher, Herbert Bayliss, to manage “the miners and young men of that class” (a not unreasonable concern) Kevin advised that the character of the applicants was such that the “affair would quickly develop into a smoke club” and they would more likely go to the nearby brewery than the school. He also commented that “the face of them is never seen inside” the close-by and “well-conducted School of Arts in Lithgow”.¹³⁴ Nonetheless it is noteworthy that in an area where school fees were being waived by the department due to hardship from lack of work, there was so little interest in providing opportunities for miners and others to learn new skills.

Although Bridges cautioned that technical education was not the “panacea for all evils [and] would not cure crime and poverty,¹³⁵ it was seen as a means of combating the fecklessness of youths in country towns. James Cripps, for example, suggested that the young men in Bathurst were “wasting their time loafing about the town and standing at the street corners” and should be attending classes for “their own advancement”.¹³⁶ A similar view was expressed about the failure of youths to take advantage of the opportunities for self-improvement offered through Schools of Arts, the *Molong Express*, for example, lamenting that the “rising generation” showed little interest in “self-improvement or intellectual pursuits”.¹³⁷ Such opportunities were not limited to the young with lectures from local intellectuals and visiting experts on a broad range of subjects regularly offered not only in the Schools of Art but at other venues. For instance, during the period under study, John Milne-Curran’s practical lectures on geology, particular gold, were well attended such as at Mount McDonald when

¹³³ Among the signatories were Ralph Turnbull, William Casper Witt (night officer), James Dickson, Edward Noon (fettler), several members of the Corney family (miners) and Andrew Kirkwood (overseer). J Boylond, and M McPherson *A History of the Zig-Zag Public School: a centenary history* (Lithgow Zig-Zag Public School 1991) 12. It is probable Andrew Kirkwood was a founding member of the Hartley District Miners’ Mutual Protection Society. Christison *A Light in the Vale*, 37.

¹³⁴ Christison *A Light in the Vale*, 12, 13, 14. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Kevin.

¹³⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 4 June 1892.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 4 June 1892.

¹³⁷ *Molong Express* 21 March 1891.

“several men knocked off their regular work” to hear his talk on “Gold and Our Goldfields”.¹³⁸ In another example Henry Anderson, the Director of Agriculture, attracted farmers from across the district, “a good gathering of young men” including students from Stanislaus College and “representative citizens” to hear the merits of analysing soil.¹³⁹ At different times there were lectures on butter and cheese making and wheat and sheep farming from agricultural department staff, though with varying degrees of success.

In this chapter I have reviewed how education was manifested in Central West communities between 1891 and 1893. Many of the themes I have examined are consistent with those found throughout this study and, as I have done elsewhere, I have explored these utilising individuals as historical agents. The efforts of Trewilga parents George and Ellen Stanford and Robert Mackrell and other Wollongough residents to secure schools in their newly settled districts demonstrates a commitment to the education of their children but also optimism in the future progress and stability of their communities. These newly established schools were part of a public school system devised to ensure the same security and advancement of the colony at large. School inspector James McCredie, teacher Albert Mitchell and pupil teacher Ada Sherringham worked within the constraints of a school bureaucracy that demanded compliance with a multitude of rules and regulations, as well as social and cultural propriety. Importantly they were tasked with instilling into their pupils the “necessity for orderly behaviour...honesty, respect and truthfulness”.¹⁴⁰ These middle class values permeated the education system. High school principal Sarah Hatley-Boyd and ladies’ academy owner Sarah Keyes personified these as did the principals of the collegiate schools and school board members. Bishop Joseph Byrne depended on Sister M Joachim O’Brien and her peers to reinforce traditional Catholic values and beliefs but also to show that Catholic schools were the equal of their public counterparts.

These stories and others illustrate the importance of education in maintaining the stability of Central West communities. Not all people prioritised schooling for their children whether from indifference or necessity. Still most recognised that education, at least elementary, was the key to societal order and future prosperity.

¹³⁸ *Freeman’s Journal* 5 September 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Milne-Curran.

¹³⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 6 December 1892.

¹⁴⁰ *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction 1893*, 234, 237, 238.

Chapter 7 - Religion

In January 1891, seven members of the Orange Salvation Army were brought before Police Magistrate John T Lane charged under the *Towns Police Act*¹ with “interrupt[ing] the free passage of carriages and persons” by misbehaviour.² Inspector Mark Ford testified that they “had formed a circle, had lighted torches and were singing and praying”, making it impossible for people to pass. He had asked them several times to move on but they refused. The magistrate commented when finding the offence proved, that “everyone who watched the movements of the Army could not help admiring their earnestness but they should exercise more discrimination in carrying out their religious ordinance”. Lane offered not to proceed against nineteen others, all women, for an earlier offence if they “promised not to obstruct” in future. The Salvationists refused to pay but “promised not to obstruct pending an appeal to the Supreme Court”.³ Major John Dean in the *War Cry* declared the charges to be “trumped up” and “the mere fact that an officious policeman may take it into his head that there is an obstruction is not sufficient ground to convict people on”. Moreover, he said, “Salvation women are not so easily affrighted and a promise of keeping off the street was not to be extorted by the offer of withdrawal of the charge”.⁴ The appeal was successful and prompted a procession down Summer Street with the Salvationists carrying a “fatted calf” cooked in Salvationist and pastry cook William Braybrook’s oven.⁵

Although many people in the district’s towns and villages did not approve of the Salvationists practicing their “religious ordinance”, the Army had been making such inroads into the district that in 1891 it had more adherents than Baptists and Congregationalists. Still the Army’s percentage of the Christian population in the district remained very small (approximately 1.6%).⁶ Around 97% of the population in the district claimed to be Christians. Although most of the population were not church-goers, religion had a significant impact on the lives of ordinary people.⁷ It would appear that many who identified as Christians gave little thought to their spiritual lives. Some such as Thomas O’Shaunnessy openly professed their Christianity but did not regularly participate in church devotions. Catholics Peter and Aboline Rheinberger and

¹ *Towns Police Act* (2 Vic. no 2 NSW).

² See Appendix 1 for biographies of John T Lane and Mark Edward Ford.

³ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 7 January 1891.

⁴ The *War Cry* quoted in O Griffin *The Story of the Orange and District Salvation Army* (Orange: Salvation Army 1988) 4, 5. See Appendix 1 for biography of William Braybrook.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ See Appendix 22 for an analysis of religion adherence in the district.

⁷ *Ibid.* This figure which comprises the municipalities located in the district compares with the colony wide percentage of 97% and total country district percentage of 96%.

Wesleyans Arthur and Eliza Amos⁸ were prominent lay members of congregations supporting the clergy and other religious responsible for ministering to the masses. This chapter searches out these men and women and explores the various denominations extant in the district. The major contemporary moral issues of Sabbath observance and divorce reform and the impact of sectarianism on everyday life are also discussed. Throughout the chapter I demonstrate the permanence of religion within communities and its fundamental strength in sustaining and cultivating social order and hence maintaining the structure *gemeinschaft*.

The arrest and conviction of the Salvationists in Orange provides a useful introduction to this analysis. The beliefs and practice of mainstream Christian religion were well understood but this was not the case for the Army. A contemporary view was that the Army was “a congregation of Christians in the habit of conducting Divine Service wherever they might happen to meet”.⁹ In practice this meant street meetings, band performances and parades, services in halls or specifically built barracks and, whilst undertaking philanthropic work. But the Salvationists’ religious activities were viewed by some as barely respectable. Religion reinforced society’s moral authority and court appearances as occurred in Orange threatened this.¹⁰ Deleteriously associating religious worship with law and order was uncommon. In this case Ford’s hostility combined with Lane’s bias, noting Dean’s assertion the two were “observed repeatedly speaking to each during the hearing of the case in undertones”,¹¹ gave voice to those who found the Army’s way of worship scarcely legitimate. Even an opportunity for redemption was rebuffed by the Salvationists when Lane’s offer not to proceed with the conviction was rejected and the almost pagan-like procession that followed the successful appeal could have been viewed as yet another transgression against society’s norms. Their appropriation of public and secular places for prayer accompanied by sometimes cacophonous music attracted raucous and disruptive individuals to locations where otherwise they would not be found and the uniforms and military-style preaching were often viewed with distaste and ridicule.

⁸ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Arthur and Eliza Amos.

⁹ This was determined jointly by Supreme Court Judge Alfred McFarland and Lieutenant Sarah McGrath in a Parramatta court case. *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* 5 September 1891. Sarah had been recently relocated from Bathurst. *National Advocate* 11 May 1891.

¹⁰ See discussions by P O’Farrell ‘The Cultural Ambivalence of Australian Religion’ in Golberg and Smith *Australian Cultural History* and Ely *Unto God and Caesar*.

¹¹ Griffin *The Story of the Orange and District Salvation Army*, 4.

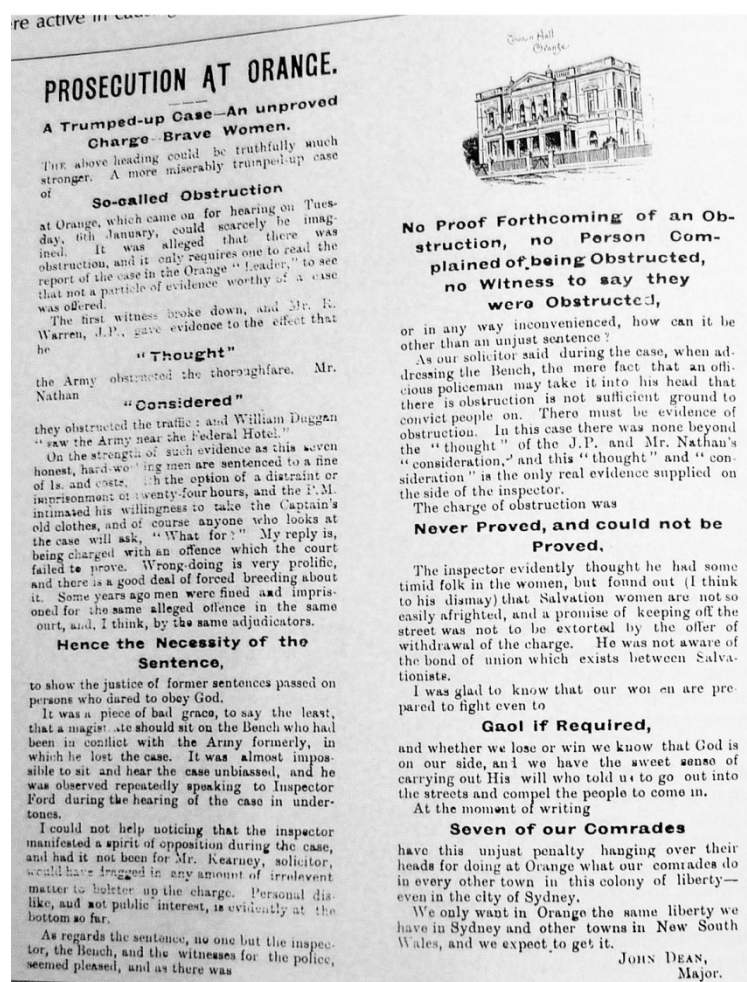


Illustration 65: "Prosecution at Orange"

Not everyone was offended by the activities of the Army and their charitable work was acknowledged and generally welcomed. It was accepted as a Christian organisation and as with other organisations, disseminated the principles that underpinned colonial society. The association of "religion and good order" was a priority of the British Colonial Office from early settlement with its enforcement principally through the Church of England.¹² Christianity became firmly ensconced throughout the colony and by 1891 Anglicans, Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Salvationists were located throughout the district. Some denominations were sparsely distributed while others were congregated in small groups. As Ruth Teale suggests, "the religious allegiance of any one town [or district] depended largely on the accident of its early settlement".¹³

¹² Governor Phillip's Instructions 25 April 1787 *Historical Records of New South Wales* 1 pt 2 (Sydney: Charles Potter Government Printer 1892) 90.

¹³ R Teale 'A Brave New World in the Australian Bush: The Anglican Diocese of Bathurst and its first Bishop, Samuel Edward Marsden' *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 53 (June 1967): 142.

Early settlers in the district were overwhelmingly Protestant, dominated by Anglicans and in the Wallerawang district, by Presbyterians. As settlement intensified in the eastern and central portions of the district, other protestant denominations slowly emerged although few threatened the supremacy of the Church of England. The first Anglican parishes were formed under the patronage of large landowning families such as the Coxes and Suttors likely, as suggested by Ken Fry, using religion to “support the Protestant ascendancy and to protect property”.¹⁴ Similarly, landowners Andrew Brown, James Walker and others oversaw the establishment of the Presbyterian Church.

Farmers of more modest means from Cornwall including “Parson” William Tom, John Glasson, George Hawke and William Lane founded the first Wesleyan Methodists at Byng. Primitive Methodists had small beginnings spreading from South Australia in the 1850s with a steadfast congregation comprising mostly miners in and around Lithgow. The first Baptist presence came in the early 1860s with settler farmers including Daniel Seaton, Thomas Worboys and George Griffiths¹⁵ establishing congregations in Spring Hill and Garra. The first Congregationalists appeared at Bathurst in 1871 and William Braybrook, coach-builder Alexander Sherlock and farmer William Smee held the first meetings of the Salvation Army in the district at Orange in 1885.¹⁶

In contrast to the other major denominations, the early presence of the Catholic Church in the district was principally driven by clergy. Joseph Therry, one of the first two official Catholic chaplains in the colony, travelled extensively throughout the colony in the 1820s providing pastoral care to his far-flung flock. Prominent Catholics such as John Grant, an ex-convict who amassed significant land holdings in the Lachlan district¹⁷, supported Therry and provided him with sustenance on his journeys. By 1891 Bishop Joseph Byrne presided over nineteen parishes, sixteen of which were in the Central West. Although considerably outnumbered by Protestants collectively, approximately 30% of people living in the district declared themselves to be Catholics in the 1891 census.¹⁸ There were strongholds in the counties of Westmoreland

¹⁴ K Fry *Beyond the Barrier Class Formation in a Pastoral Society Bathurst 1818-1848* (Bathurst: Crawford House Press 1993) 23. See Appendix 1 for biography of James Walker.

¹⁵ Byng was initially known as “Cornish Settlement. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Tom, George Hawke, Thomas Worboys and George Griffiths.

¹⁶ Other centres included Molong established in 1888, Mudgee 1885, Forbes 1888, Condobolin 1893 and Peak Hill 1894. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Smee Mary and Daniel Seaton.

¹⁷ See Appendix 1 for biography of John Grant Snr and Jnr. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Joseph Therry.

¹⁸ Compared to 24% in the country municipalities districts generally and 25% in the colony overall.

(42%) and Forbes (40%) while Carcoar (40%), Cowra and Orange (both 36%)¹⁹ had the highest populations among the municipalities. There were Catholic enclaves in some areas. In the 1880s several Irish families including Lawrence Delaney and other members of his family settled in the Waterhole Creek-Galwary Creek area near Eugowra.²⁰ Tight knit Irish communities could also be found around Oberon, where many settlers were descendants of emancipated convicts²¹, at Cooyal ('Little Ireland') and at Wollar near Mudgee where Irish farmer Roger Gleeson and others selected land in the 1860s.²²



Illustration 66: Daniel and Mary (née Crouch) Seaton

Although it cannot be substantiated through census data, it is likely most Catholics in the Central West were of Irish descent. Phillips cites Malony's research that shows 70% of the colony's Catholics living in the colonies before 1910, were born in Ireland and most native-born Catholics had Irish heritage.²³ The preponderance of Irish names among the region's

¹⁹ It should be noted that the immediately adjacent local government area of East Orange (albeit with much lower population) was only 19% Catholic. Orange also had had a high number of Methodists and a very active group of Salvationists. Lithgow and Hill End had the least number with 13%.

²⁰ Banham notes that many of these farmers failed. Their farms were too small and severe drought and rabbit plagues ravaged what little land they had. Banham *Eugowra*, 20, 21, 86. See Appendix 1 for biography of Lawrence Delaney.

²¹ According to Gemmell-Smith, the Catholic heritage arose in part from connections to emancipists William Davis and Edward Redmond who became successful businessmen. They were granted land of 1000 acres each in the district although they never lived on their properties. P Gemmell-Smith *A Thematic History of Oberon Shire* (Oberon: Oberon Council 2004) 24, 25, 26. Gemmell-Smith also states that Duckamoloi where the Hogan family settled in the 1870s was also known as Irish Corner.

²² R Maher *Mudgee Catholic Centenary* (Mudgee: Catholic Centenary Committee 1952) 78. See Appendix 1 for biography of Roger Gleeson.

²³ J Molony *The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church 1846-1878* (M.A. Thesis Australian National University 1967) 75 cited by W W Phillips 'Christianity and its defence in NSW circa 1880-1890' PhD Thesis (Australian National University 1969) 16. Phillips also states that in Goulburn to the south of the region 91% of the Catholics were born in Ireland or had Irish parents.

Catholics provides anecdotal support for this. According to Walter Phillips, most Catholics were working class and engaged in unskilled work. Many worked in road or railway construction and in the rural districts the highest proportions were engaged in agriculture and pastoral pursuits, most likely as shepherds and shearers. Several worked in hotels or boarding houses as owners or employees particularly women such as Mary McSorley (Bathurst) Catherine McAtamney (Wattle Flat) and Ann Hogan at Duckmaloi.²⁴

By 1891 Catholics in the district could be found in the higher strata of society. According to Patrick O'Farrell, the "upper echelons of colonial Catholic society were professional men, large graziers [and] wealthier members of the commercial classes".²⁵ The Daltons, one of the most powerful Catholic families in the colony, headed the Catholic hierarchy with the very high percentage of Catholics in the Orange municipality due to this family's influence. John Meagher of Bathurst, was one of the most prominent Catholics in the Central West. Graziers John Grant in the Cowra district and John Fagan (Carcoar) had significant land holdings but there few rivalled the wealth and influence of the Anglican and Presbyterian station owners.²⁶

Pastoralists, George Lee and William Henry Suttor (Condobolin parish), George Henry Cox (Mudgee) and Edward Standish Cox (Rylstone), John Smith (Molong) and Richard Rouse of Gulgong, all attendees at the 1892 Church of England Bathurst Synod, were among the 46% of the population in the district who aligned themselves with the Church of England. The highest percentages of Anglicans were in the municipalities of Condobolin (58%) and Cudgelgong (51%) while the lowest were in the Catholic dominated areas around Carcoar and Cowra.²⁷ The bishop of the Bathurst diocese, Charles Camidge,²⁸ presided over 33 parishes, 23 of which were in the Central West, most of these (eight) were in the county of Bathurst.²⁹

The members of the Church across the district came from a wide variety of backgrounds. According to Phillips, overall, Anglicans were "the largest group within any occupation and were therefore well represented in every calling".³⁰ For instance, other attendees at the 1892

²⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Mary McSorley, Catherine McAtamney and Ann Hogan.

²⁵ P O'Farrell *The Catholic Church and Community An Australian History* (Kensington: University of New South Wales Press 1992) 239.

²⁶ Phillips 'Christianity and its defence', 21. See Appendix 1 for biography of John Fagan.

²⁷ Cudal had the highest percentage with 64% but the municipality only had a population of 447.

²⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Camidge.

²⁹ The diocese extended to areas outside the district to Warren and Narromine. The Central West parishes were Bathurst, Bathurst South, Blayney, Carcoar, Condobolin Cowra, Cudal, Forbes, George's Plains, Grenfell, Gulgong, Guyong, Hill End, Kelso, Molong, Mudgee, Orange, O'Connell, Parkes, Rylstone, Sofala, Rockley and Wellington. *Minutes of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Bathurst 1892* and Teale 'A Brave New World', 139. Lake Cudgelgong and Lithgow were outside the diocese.

³⁰ Phillips 'Christianity and its defence', 14.

Synod included storeowner Angelos Pholeros, land agent J Howard Louche, builder John Henry Gain auctioneer William B Howell and entrepreneur James Rutherford.³¹

According to the 1891 Census, 10% of people living in the district were Presbyterians and these were spread across fourteen Presbyterian parishes in the district.³² There were no Presbyterian strongholds among the district's counties but some municipalities had significant populations.³³ Carcoar was one of these where 23% of the population were adherents and others were Grenfell (16%) and Lithgow (14%).³⁴ The strength of the church in the Carcoar district owed much to the energies of its incumbent minister James Adam but there was, according to Robert Willson, "social unity" and "complex family relationships" of families in the area which were undoubtedly factors. Arthur Ranken, Hugh Hamilton, Charles Stoddart and Patrick Boswell all came from the same district in Scotland. Ranken's overseer, James Sloan who accompanied him from Scotland, later acquired North Logan Station near Cowra and his heir, Ivie James, was an elder of the Church in 1891.³⁵

³¹ Others included Thomas Marks, William Howell, George Henry Woolley and Henry S M Betts. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Angelos Pholeros, Thomas Marks, J Howard Louche, William Howell, George Henry Woolley and Henry S M Betts.

³² There were three presbyteries which encompassed the district. In the Bathurst Presbytery there were parishes at Bathurst, Blayney, Bowenfels, Cowra, Blayney, Eskbank, Lithgow, Gulgong, Mudgee, Orange and Rylstone. Forbes and Parkes parishes were in the Presbytery of the Lachlan and Grenfell was in the Young Presbytery. J Cameron *Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson 1905).

³³ None of the counties exceeding averages either for the colony and country municipalities or the aggregate district county and municipality averages. Overall Presbyterians comprised between 9% and 10% of the population. In the Central West counties, the range was between 7% and 10%.

³⁴ Grenfell (16%), Cowra and Forbes (both 15%) also had high percentages. In these areas (other than Lithgow) there were higher than average Catholic populations and the increase in Presbyterian congregations was at the expense of other protestant denominations. Conversely those municipalities where the church's presence was below average (Cudal, Cudgegong and East Orange - 5%) had larger Anglican populations.

³⁵ These included Arthur Ranken (brother of George), Hamilton Hugh (died Scotland in 1900 age 77 formerly of Tomabil Station on the Lachlan *Sydney Morning Herald* 28 March 1900). Charles Stoddart and Patrick Boswell all came from the same district in Scotland. Ranken's overseer, James Sloan accompanied him from Scotland. He later acquired North Logan Station near Cowra and his heir, Ivie James was an elder of the Church during the study period. R J Willson *The Apostle of the Saddle. The life of the Reverend James Adam, M.A and The foundation of the Presbyterian Church in the Central West of New South Wales in the 19th century.* (1975) 12. This district was Old Cumnock in Ayrshire. Ivie Sloan was born in 1848 and died in 1939. Sloan gave evidence to the Standing Committee on Public Works that he held 27,000 acres, 181.



Illustration 67: James Adam James and Bessie Adam with their daughter Margaret at the Manse in Blayney

Carcoar and Grenfell municipalities and Cook county cohorts are consistent with Phillips' analysis that a sizeable number of Presbyterians were pastoralists. They were likely to work in areas such law and order, education, property, finance, banking and among hardware merchants and skilled trades.³⁶ Among the fifteen men who are listed in *Aldine* (there are none in *Men of Mark*) are pastoralists, farmers, storekeepers or merchants, blacksmiths, builders and millers. Many of these men were people of significant influence. Some were members of town councils including some mayors. Andrew Ross (Molong) and George Donald (Lithgow) were sitting members of parliament and David Ferguson (Wellington) and George McKay (Orange) had been previous members. Andrew Taylor Kerr (Orange) was a member of the Legislative Council.³⁷

Bathurst residents and politicians William Paul and Edmund Thomas Webb were two of the most prominent Wesleyan Methodists citizens in the district.³⁸ Phillips suggests that the strength of the Wesleyan Methodists was in the lower middle classes, farmers, shopkeepers and skilled tradesmen.³⁹ While the occupations of Paul (saddler) and Webb (storeowner) would imply they were part of this cohort, they were wealthy businessmen and were more accurately described as upper middle class. Certainly, the farmers at Byng and Spring Hill were typical, as were the Lithgow miners for Primitive Methodists. The Lithgow miners were as close-knit as the Wesleyan farmers. William Rickard, Samuel Penna and lay preacher Joseph

³⁶ Phillips 'Christianity and its defence', 28, 29.

³⁷ See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Whitney, David Ferguson and Andrew Taylor Kerr.

³⁸ 7% of the district's population are recorded as Wesleyan Methodists. Almost 50% of the population of the county of Westmoreland which had a very strong Wesleyan presence were engaged in agricultural pursuits.

³⁹ Phillips 'Christianity and its defence', 31-33.

Cook were devout Methodists but their political activism was somewhat at odds with Phillips' suggestion that Primitive Methodists were less likely to have political ambitions.⁴⁰

Other Christian denominations⁴¹ included Baptists and Congregationalists and their public persona represented by the clergy, for example Ebenezer Price (Baptist) and Richard F Becher (Congregationalist). Baptist lay preacher and farmer Thomas Worboys and James Dunstan Page were active within their communities while William John Clunies Ross⁴² was one of the better-known Congregationalists.⁴³ Bricklayer Thomas Atkins and James Schoe who was the "jobbing" hand of the *Bathurst Times* were other lay members.⁴⁴

The Salvation Army had a stronger presence in East Orange than elsewhere.⁴⁵ There does not seem to be any reason for this other than the leadership of Braybrook, Linus Bungate and others.⁴⁶ Bungate who was a member of the Orange LEL was one of the most prominent Salvationists and was well-known for his idiosyncratic electioneering style during the 1891 election campaign.⁴⁷ Despite their public appearances, identifying other Salvationists is not easy. The *War Cry* is little help as contributors generally used pseudonyms and when names are used they were rank and surname only. Chapple records the names of several participants in early Salvation activities. They included Messrs Poignand (the blacksmith) and his sons Alfred and Arthur, Peter Dogger (the tent maker) and his son, William and Elizabeth Treverrow. William was a miner as was John Sedgwick who was a "prominent member of the local Mining Union".⁴⁸ During a court case against John Rooney who was charged with disturbing a Salvation Army service in Molong, several members present at the service were called as witnesses. Captain Rose Young and Lieutenant Matilda Naysmith, were supported by labourer

⁴⁰ Ibid, 32.

⁴¹ Some others include Lutherans, Bible Christians and the Church of Christ. The latter had just four members in New South Wales in 1851 and it was always unlikely that there would be any significant presence beyond the metropolis even by the end of the 1880s, though missionary Charles Watt toured through country districts to do just that. J T Brown *Historical Biographic and Pictorial History of Churches of Christ United States, Australasia, England and Canada* (Louisville: John Burgess and Co 1904) http://archive.org/stream/churchesofchrist00brow/churchesofchrist00brow_djvu.retrieved 8 February 2015.

⁴² See Appendix 1 for biographies of Ebenezer Price, Richard Fane Becher and William Clunies Ross.

⁴³ *National Advocate* 30 May 1891, 18 September 1891, 21 September 1891, 23 November 1891, 1 February 1892; *Bathurst Free Press* 11 February 1891.

⁴⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Thomas Atkins and James Schoe.

⁴⁵ Almost 1% of the population (in comparison to 1% in the colony overall and 1½% in country municipalities) were adherents but their distribution was uneven. No Salvationists lived in Cunningham and the greatest concentrations were in the municipalities of East Orange (6%) and Molong (4%). Hill End (4%) and Gulgong (3%) also had high populations consistent with Phillips' analysis that a relatively high percentage were miners. Phillips 'Christianity and its defence', 40.

⁴⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 18 November 1893.

⁴⁷ *National Advocate* 29 September 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Linus Bungate.

⁴⁸ Chappel *A History of Peak Hill*, 177. *Australian Star* 6 June 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Treverrow, John Sedgwick and John Robards.

(and “Hallelujah drummer”) John Anthony Robards, Garra farmers John Thomas Johnson and Henry Oldham Johnson, West End engine driver Ernest Bennett and tailor Alexander Smyth.⁴⁹

Illustration 68.



Most of the individuals mentioned here were active members of their denominations and presumably held firm religious beliefs. It is likely they were regular church-goers unlike most of the Christian population. Phillips states that in 1890 approximately 27% of the total population attended church services although this varied across denominations.⁵⁰ Anglicans accounted for 45% of the Christian faithful, but they comprised only 28% of total attendees while 32% of Catholics were regular church goers. Nonconformists, though, were considerably stronger in church attendance compared to their overall following.⁵¹ This lack of commitment, apparent

⁴⁹ Rooney was acquitted by a jury and was accorded “quite an ovation at the railway station” when he returned to Molong. *Molong Express* 21 February 1891. Some months later in a censorious article the *Molong Express* reported that a less savoury member of the Army “told Rooney that although he had slipped through their fingers once they would have him yet”. *Molong Express* 12 September 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Henry Oldham Johnson.

⁵⁰ Phillips ‘Christianity and its defence’, 41.

⁵¹ Church of England – 28% of total attendance (16% of adherents); Presbyterian 11% of total attendance (30% of adherents); All Methodists – 18% of total attendance (49% of adherence); Congregationalists – 4% of total attendance (54% of adherence); Baptists – 2% of all total attendance (35% of adherents); and Catholics – 32% of total attendance (34% of adherents) *ibid* p 446.

apathy and indifference frustrated church authorities, particularly the Catholic Church.⁵² Father Michael Phelan writing in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* in 1892, lamented that the “emotional piety” and “blind devotion” initially typified by Irish Catholic immigrants had “withered” in an “atmosphere of flippant scepticism and infidelity”.⁵³ Not only would their fickle disciples have exasperated the churches of all denominations, they would also be concerned with the even lower number of “communicants or church members” which according to Phillips, was a “better guide to religious commitment or devotion”⁵⁴. Still, there was what Phillips describes as “occasional conformity” at Christmas and Easter celebrations and baptisms, funerals and weddings.⁵⁵ Beyond this, Winsome Roberts suggests, it was the “communal and festive aspects of religion and the civic zeal that its morality implied rather than piety that appealed to the colonist”.⁵⁶ For Catholics, according to O’Farrell, the church “was not only the road to salvation, it was their social centre, their defiant profession of a separate identity, their claim to recognition and status, and their avenue to self-esteem – in *this world*”.⁵⁷

Religion was an integral part of the social fabric of society. Communities comprising all denominations held social events throughout the district. Catholics gathered for balls and entertainments often associated with the local school and convent. Anglicans assembled for similar events such as socials, concerts and picnics. Some of these occasions such as St Patrick’s Day celebrations and Easter sports were attended by the broader community but other more intimate gatherings were clearly associated with the churches. This was particularly the case with the non-conformists amongst whom tea meetings, concerts and Sunday school picnics were common. “Identity and loyalty” were evident at many of these occasions. An example of this is the picnic held by the Wesleyan Methodists at Rockley on St Patrick’s Day in March 1892. This small church community eschewed the public and secular celebrations of a Catholic saint but took advantage of a public holiday, for an intimate picnic

⁵² Phillips ‘Christianity and its defence’, 61.

⁵³ *Freeman’s Journal* 5 August 1893. Father Michael Phelan (1854-1931) was in Australia for 13 years and was at one-time associated with St Patrick’s Cathedral at Goulburn. He left Australia in 1893 and joined the Jesuits. He was a well-known writer and contributor to periodicals and reviews.

⁵⁴ Phillips ‘Christianity and its defence’, 53. Church of England 28% (p 54) 29% Presbyterians 20% total Methodists were members, 33 Congregationalists 31 Baptists Catholics 79% of attendants at Mass .Ibid p 56.

⁵⁵ Estimates are that 75% to 85% of children were baptised and 93% of people were married by the clergy. There is no information on funerals but secular funerals were common. Phillips ‘Christianity and its defence’, 59, 60.

⁵⁶ Roberts ‘The Churches Role’, 59.

⁵⁷ P O’Farrell ‘The Irish in Australia and New Zealand 1870-1890’ in W E Vaughan (ed) *A New History of Ireland: Ireland Under the Union 1870-1921* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996): 111.

with religious addresses and recitals by a “well-trained choir”.⁵⁸ An evening of singing and recitations at the Molong Social Wesleyan Church was less insular. Pastor Frederick Roberts told those assembled that the “gathering was to breakdown the unsociableness which in the present day is so prevalent in all sections of the Christian Church”. He also believed that the most successful churches were those that were “the most sociable” and thus he had “thought it a good idea to meet together” to spend a “pleasant social evening” and at the same time welcome some “new Wesleyan farmers” who had recently come to the town.⁵⁹

Unity was a priority for Bishop Camidge who urged parishioners to “enter into the work of the church in an enthusiastic spirit” thereby showing that they were “in every sense of the word pillars of the church” .⁶⁰ However, unity among some pillars of the church, particularly in Bathurst, could be elusive. Camidge alluded to this at the 1892 Synod stating that his predecessor supposedly said that “no Bishop could get on in this diocese”.⁶¹ Camidge expressed gratitude for the loyalty of clergy and laity alike but warned “if anyone attempts to disturb the peace of the diocese or any arrangements in it, he will quickly find his intentions frustrated and himself regarded as a common foe both by clergy and laity”.⁶²

Churchgoing was principally the purview of women. In a sermon in December 1893 John Alldis pastor of St John’s Church of England Molong, attributed men’s non-attendance to various reasons including the “failure to see duty or necessity”. Women, he considered, were more “credulous” and more “likely to find comfort and relief in the worship and teaching of the church”. He also noted that women were the best attendants, friends and supporters of the church”.⁶³ Alldis’ view supports Patricia Grimshaw’s description of women and the church in Victoria at this time. She notes that

women were extremely valuable. They undertook the bulk of the ordinary church work. They were not only the majority in the pews, with their children alongside, but they played the organs and sang in choirs; they cleaned church buildings and decorated them; they taught Sunday School classes and visited the poor and the sick; they organised celebrations of special days and refreshments for festivals. Above all,

⁵⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 March 1892.

⁵⁹ *Molong Express* 3 October 1891.

⁶⁰ *Cowra Free Press* 19 November 1892.

⁶¹ In the early 1880s Marsden had a tense relationship with the Reverend Thomas Smith, who was the incumbent of All Saints parish in Bathurst which embroiled some of the leading townsmen including James Rutherford and George Hulks (for Smith) and W H Suttor (for the bishop). Marsden encountered further difficulties with Smith’s replacement and Marriott over constitutional issues. See Barker *History of Bathurst*, 218-245.

⁶² *Bathurst Free Press* 7 May 1892.

⁶³ *Molong Express* 16 December 1893.

without women's fund-raising activities, many small churches would barely have survived.⁶⁴

O'Brien also suggests that "virtuous" women, "as guardians of the home ...were the churches' traditional allies...in their battle against vice" and "essential for the reproduction of wholesome society" provided they stayed within their domestic sphere.⁶⁵ Who then were these women? In newspaper reports on church activities women are often footnotes where their contribution to the organising or catering for events is briefly acknowledged. If specifically mentioned their first names are rarely used. Typically some can be traced through local, family and church histories and occasionally obituaries. Mary Chilvers, wife of bootmaker John, is remembered as member of the Church choir, a Sunday school teacher and secretary of the Ladies Guild at St Mark's Anglican Church at Millthorpe. Annie Draper had been the organist of Garra's St Andrew's Church for nine years. When she moved to Molong with her mother and siblings, John Alldis spoke of "her diligent, patient, and persevering energy and zeal, her eminent qualities, and exemplary conduct for the good of the church in the community, which had been favoured with her influence and graced by her presence". Elizabeth Giffin, who with her husband Alexander, was a pioneer of the Manildra Anglican Church, was always ready "in the cause of charity... to go to the assistance of the sick and needy" and Carcoar Catholic Ottilia Links' life-long motto was "hard work, honesty, clean living and a love for God". In Cowra, Ellen the wife of MLA Denis Donnelly and her sister Margaret Cummings were prominent Catholics. Mrs W Parker who was married to the local police constable at Mount McDonald was also a Catholic responsible for gathering donations for "much of the beautiful furniture and fittings of the [Catholic] church [and] the organ over which she presided was her own present".⁶⁶

These women were highly visible at church-related public activities including bazaars, fetes or fancy fairs. Bazaars, which were elaborate affairs were popular fund-raising events in the nineteenth century. They were community rituals in the context of gender, class and status. According to O'Farrell "the social dimension of women's involvement in the church and its activities introduced into religion, concepts such as social snobbery and competition".⁶⁷ But as

⁶⁴ Grimshaw 'In pursuit of true Anglican Womanhood, 336.

⁶⁵ O'Brien *God's Willing Workers*, 35.

⁶⁶ Ellen and Margaret were daughters of a former MLA for East Macquarie William Cummings (died 1878) and his wife Mary Ducey. Reference for Mrs Parker *Freeman's Journal* 16 July 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Elizabeth Giffin, Ottilia Links and Emily and George Lee.

⁶⁷ O'Farrell *Catholic Church and Community*, 259. Not all considered bazaars commendable. When praising the Wesleyan community at Oberon for raising funds by planting "a hundred acres of oats" which when harvested would be property of the Church, the *Molong Express* described bazaars as "semi-begging and semi-swindling." *Molong Express* 10 September 1893.

Annette Shiell argues, such events empowered women enabling them to participate in “commerce, the market place and public life within safe and socially acceptable confines”.⁶⁸ In addition, according to O’Brien, they also enabled “fund-raising women” to exercise power over other women.⁶⁹ The women who organised the events and those who operated the stalls were as much a part of the hierarchical structure within the churches and the community as men.

Women’s influence in the church and the community was also apparent in voluntary and charitable organisations. In Bathurst, such philanthropy was evident in the City Mission and the associated Chinese Mission.⁷⁰ Methodist William Paul described the City Mission “as one of the most important works relating to the Christian church ever established in Bathurst” although being primarily left to the clergy and women suggests that support for the fallen and the conversion of the Chinese were lower priorities than other religious activities. In 1890 Sydney Webb when chairing the annual meeting, stated that part of its success was “its non-sectarian character”.⁷¹ Harriet Stewart was president of the mission’s committee. She and her husband, James Horne Stewart were among the most visible and active Presbyterians in Bathurst. Harriett was also engaged in other philanthropic works including the establishment of the Boy’s Social Club and the Poor Relief Society. Other committee members of the mission included Selina Webb, Lucy Webb, Agnes Busby and Elizabeth Palmer, all from families prominent in Presbyterian, Methodist or Baptist affairs.



Illustration 69: Selina Webb and Harriet Stewart

⁶⁸ Shiell *Fundraising Flirtation*, 8.

⁶⁹ O’Brien ‘Faith, Fetes and Domesticity’, 728.

⁷⁰ Both of these organisations were established in 1889. Barker *A History of Bathurst*, 299; Sloman *The History of Bathurst*, 112.

⁷¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 October 1889 and 17 December 1890. These were Protestant organisations.

Andrew Eason suggests that philanthropic work offered an opportunity for a woman to “expand her horizons” but such public roles were “largely consistent with service and piety while men continued to fill positions of leadership and authority”.⁷² For example, although Harriett Stewart was president of the City Mission committee, she was not seated on the platform at the 1892 annual meeting and took no active part in the formal proceedings.⁷³ The Salvation Army was an exception to this, as women assumed a very public and seemingly equal role in the organisation’s activities and challenged the prevailing view that only males preached.⁷⁴

Through their activities within and outside of the church community secular women had an indispensable role in ensuring religious belief influenced daily life even in the face of apathy. They promoted respectability and morality, the hallmarks of *gemeinschaft* communities. Catholic nuns were yet another group of women, according to O’Brien, who had a profound impact on “society and culture”.⁷⁵ As previously mentioned there were two orders of nuns in the diocese.⁷⁶ According to Beverley Zimmerman in her study of the Maitland diocese, the Sisters of Mercy (‘Mercy nuns’) taught “the children of the upwardly mobile families of Maitland’s established towns [while] the Sisters of St Joseph (‘Josephites’) were the foot soldiers who moved into small, remote settlements to continue the fight and to advance the cause of Catholicism”.⁷⁷ Whether the Mercy nuns taught “upwardly mobile” children in the district is difficult to determine but the Josephites were undeniably spread throughout the rural areas and it is highly likely that Zimmerman’s assertion that they were “mainly from rural areas [and] predominantly farming and labouring families” is accurate. Given that postulants were not required to pay a dowry the Josephites’ order was more accessible for poorer women and girls. Zimmerman also notes that Mercy nuns were more likely to be “daughters of shopkeepers and contractors”.⁷⁸ Within many small rural communities, particularly among

⁷² A Eason *Women in God’s Army: Gender and Equality in the Early Salvation Army* (Wilfred Laurier University Press Proquest eLibrary 2003) 39, 40.

⁷³ *Bathurst Free Press* 26 April 1892.

⁷⁴ Eason argues that there were issues of gender equality in the Salvation Army hierarchy in England. This is quite likely to have been the situation in Australia but for the purposes of this study and the perception of the role of women in the Army in the Central West this is largely irrelevant Eason *Women in God’s Army*, 153.

⁷⁵ O’Brien *God’s Willing Workers*, 198.

⁷⁶ The Sisters of Mercy’s presence in Bathurst began in 1866 with seven Irish nuns recruited by Bishop Quinn. They were led by Mother Ignatius Croke, Mother Agnes McSweeney, Mother Mary Stanislaus Duffy, Mother Gertrude Sheedy, Mother Mary Evangelist and 2 novices, Sister Mary Joseph Murphy and Sister de Paul.

⁷⁷ B Zimmerman “She Came From a Fine Catholic Family’: Religious Sisterhoods of the Maitland Diocese, 1867–1909’ *Australian Historical Studies*, 31:115 (2000): 272.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 264.

Irish families, “the choice to become a nun carried considerable status”,⁷⁹ not just for the postulant but also for the families. In October 1892 Peter Rheinberger recorded that his sister Katy “took the white veil today” in a ceremony attended by all her friends. This was a joyous occasion and of such importance in the community that it was reported in the *Freeman’s Journal*.⁸⁰

For most of these nuns, particularly the Josephites, life was hard particularly in some of the out-of-the way places. Living conditions could be primitive, with the women often experiencing poor health, mostly tuberculous. Yet, although their way of living was arduous, Zimmerman suggests that “once a woman was a vowed member of a community she was provided with shelter, food, clothing and care until death”. Much was made of their vow of poverty by the church hierarchy, lay and clergy. Thomas Dalton, on the occasion of celebrating the order’s silver jubilee, observed that they were “the poorest of the poor, and notwithstanding this they were able to accomplish things which made people wonder”. He declared he would not want to see their circumstances change in any way.⁸¹ For Moran, nuns were “the brightest ornaments of the Church beneath the Southern Cross”⁸² and at the silver jubilee celebrations he eulogised that they “were untiring in every work of charity and benevolence which appealed to their tender sympathy and were most self-sacrificing in their devoted labours.” And doubtless he considered that the Church had the benefit of a “flexible, dedicated, organised and inexpensive labour force.”⁸³ He also reflected on the respect people of all denominations had for the sisters. In O’Brien’s words, “while at certain times and places they could engender distrust, on the whole their work and the way they were represented softened sectarian hostility”.⁸⁴ Newspaper reports of events such as Catholic school end-of-year celebrations, rarely named any of the nuns who were present or indeed even mentioned them at all. One exception is the *National Advocate’s* lengthy article on the celebration of the golden jubilee of Sister of Mercy Mary Agnes Renshaw’s religious life.⁸⁵ This was a momentous occasion as few nuns in the colony had achieved this milestone. The *Freeman’s Journal* also covered the event. The *National Advocate’s* article provided some biographical information

⁷⁹ O’Brien *God’s Willing Workers*, 174.

⁸⁰ *Peter Rheinberger Diary* 20 October 1892. *Freeman’s Journal* 29 October 1892. Unfortunately less than six months later Katy had to leave the convent. Peter notes that the “Revd Mother told me that Sister Katy would have to come home again as the doctor said the convent would not agree with her health” *Peter Rheinberger Diary* 11 February 1893.

⁸¹ *Freeman’s Journal* 19 December 1891.

⁸² O’Brien *God’s Willing Workers*, 202.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of Mother Mary Agnes Renshaw.

but concentrated on Sister Mary Agnes' humility, virtue and self-sacrifice and the solemn rituals of the ceremony.

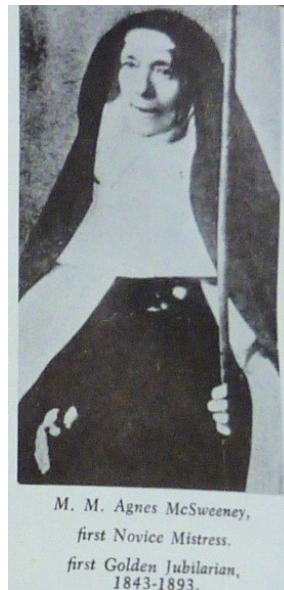


Illustration 70: Mother Mary Agnes McSweeney

Male clergy, who were the persona of religious denominations in the community, were regularly acclaimed, particularly when they were leaving a township or locality. They were highly visible in the community, not least because of their clerical attire, but in attending social events. The protestant ministers were often prominent at civic occasions. Predictably, the activities of the Catholic and Anglican bishops had the highest profile. Their pilgrimages throughout their dioceses, their activities and proclivities were regularly reported in the local newspapers and in the metropolitan press by their country correspondents. The faithful welcomed Camidge and Byrne on their intermittent visits to their parishes with pomp befitting the bishops' standing. When Byrne came to Cowra to bless a new presbytery, for example, he was met at Holmwood Railway station some three miles out and escorted to the town by a "large procession of buggies and horsemen".⁸⁶ Such welcomes were not unusual, but as noted by Matthew Quinn some years before "if religion and solid piety consisted in giving a hearty welcome to a bishop, I think our Australian people would be the best people in the world, but unfortunately these very same persons who make such an outward show, neglect their religious duties and think little about their souls".⁸⁷

⁸⁶ *Freemans Journal* 21 February 1891.

⁸⁷ O'Farrell *The Catholic Church and Community*, 206. *Freeman's Journal* 24 January 1885. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Matthew Quinn.

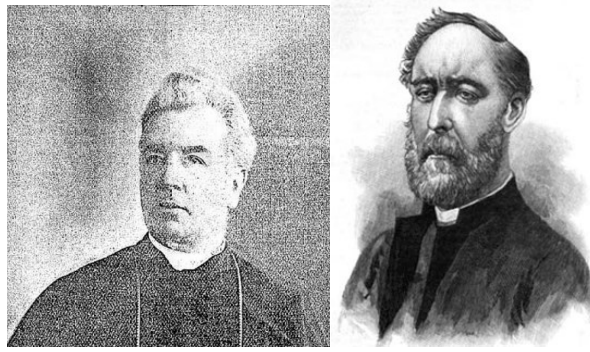


Illustration 71: Joseph Byrne and Charles Camidge

Rituals were an important part of the lives of the denominational communities. The bishops came to consecrate churches, lay foundation stones and in Byrne's case, open schools. Although regular church attendance might not have been high, confirmation for Catholics and Anglicans was a religious milestone sought by many. The conferring of sacraments in towns and villages throughout the district was considered newsworthy with local, and some metropolitan, newspapers almost invariably reporting that churches were "crowded to the door".⁸⁸ The openings of new or refurbished churches were particularly important occasions. According to Marc Askew, "the church-as-artefact was the most obvious symbol of religion's role in the life of a community"⁸⁹ but the insistence of small communities on erecting substantial buildings beyond their means frustrated Byrne who applauded Catholics at Forest Reefs for choosing a less "imposing building" than some would have liked.⁹⁰

These country visits occupied much of the bishops' time and could be arduous. In 1892 Camidge travelled some 14,000 miles by train and buggy.⁹¹ One such pastoral visit was to Cowra where the incumbent George Geer, like others before him, faced considerable rivalry from the Catholics. In praising Geer, Camidge described his ideal priest as "a good man...fitted for the position...with tact...the ability to say the right thing in the right place...a strong believer in the low-church [and] one who would not quarrel with other churches" or (he probably could

⁸⁸ In March 1892, the *Cowra Free Press* reported that on his visit to Canowindra in March 1892, Byrne confirmed 69 and 124 received Holy Communion. *Bathurst Free Press* 29 March 1892. In Eugowra, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported Camidge's confirmation of twenty-two candidates in St Matthew's Church which was "thronged to the door". *Sydney Morning Herald* 1 October 1892.

⁸⁹ M Askew 'Praying, Paying and Obeying' in V Burgmann and J Lee *Constructing a Culture A People's History of Australia since 1788* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble/ Penguin Books 1988): 173.

⁹⁰ Byrne declared that he had "definitely made up his mind to one thing and that was that he would not give his consent to the erection of any new country church in the diocese of Bathurst until at least half the money it would cost was in hand." *Bathurst Free Press* 13 December 1892.

⁹¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 7 May 1893. His tour of the Molong parish was typical where, over six days, he visited stations at Burrawong, Gamboola, Tullundry, Coombah, Beri and Nandillyan and preached at Cumnock, Tullundry and Molong *Evening News* 10 February 1893.

have added) with him.⁹² It appears Camidge's clergy conducted themselves respectably though it is unlikely that all 49 clergy under his charge emulated Geer. He was not quite the average Anglican minister under Camidge's charge. He was almost ten years older than the average minister and had spent three years longer in the district than the average of seven years. Hans Bentzen had been there for approximately nineteen years, long enough to make influential personal connections, William Howell was the only one born and raised in the district. A quite distinct group of eight (including the headmaster and master of All Saints College) were those associated with the Cathedral. Six of these were born overseas (five in England and one in Ireland), six were university educated and four were in the diocese for a relatively short period of time. The duties of Anglican ministers were mostly pastoral - conducting church services and Sunday schools and attending tea meetings and concerts to support the parish and the church buildings and fixtures. They participated in community events and civic functions. Many like William Howell who was chaplain to the local Carrington Lodge and president of the Blayney School of Arts were members of masonic lodges and cultural societies.

The thirteen Presbyterian clergy located in the district were similarly situated. Bathurst minister Archibald Constable Geikie, the best known of these, played an active and prominent role in the Presbyterian General Assemblies. Geikie, though, was not typical of his fellow ministers. At sixty years of age he was much older and had been living in the district for a lengthy period whereas the other thirteen Presbyterian ministers, apart from James Adam, were younger and had only been in the district for averaged four years tenure.⁹³

Illustration 72



The Late Dr. Geikie.

⁹² See Appendix 1 for biography of George and Davinia Geer. See Appendix 23 for details of Anglican clergy.

⁹³ There are few personal details available so the "average" Presbyterian minister. By 1893 most had only been in the district for an average of four years, five had an average age of 37 and at least half of them had higher than usual qualifications. Many had past associations with the other Presbyterian Churches and some came from other churches, including the Baptist and Primitive Methodists. See Appendix 1 for biography of Archibald Constable Geikie. See Appendix 24 for details of Presbyterian clergy.

Charles Stead⁹⁴ was the most prominent Wesleyan Methodist minister in the district at the time. He had spent more time at Bathurst and other district stations than the other eighteen local clergy⁹⁵ who moved regularly because of the itinerancy rule.⁹⁶ This policy made life difficult for the ministers to gain traction with their dispersed congregations. At a district meeting in 1891 Joseph Woodhouse stated he had to ride 170 miles and drive 40 miles a week. Although he and his fellow clergymen “did not receive the £25 or £30 per week” received by Church of England curates or were “not treated to banquets”, they were “not compelled to live on dry bread and milk [and] were always able to get a good meal”.⁹⁷

Senior officials of the Salvation Army travelled throughout the district seeking converts in a host of villages and towns. Some towns were more receptive than others. According to contributors to the *War Cry*, after travelling twelve miles in the slush and mud from Manildra there was little reward at Cargo. While initially not making much leeway at Lithgow, on a subsequent visit the Salvationists were met at the railway station by “great crowd of miners” and at Parkes they were joined on the platform by the newly appointed Wesleyan minister who stated that he was “quite at home amidst the brass music and the volley firing”.⁹⁸

With only two Congregational churches in the district, there were few clergy. Between 1891 and 1893, there were only three. Richard Fane Becher who came to Bathurst in January 1892 was one of these.⁹⁹ There were few Baptist clergy with Bathurst minister, Ebenezer Price, the incumbent since 1882, the best known. Becher and Price played significant roles in the district, considerably out of proportion to the size of their flocks. Both joined other protestant ministers at public gatherings and were active in several quasi-religious organisations and many community organisations. Price was a more significant public figure than Becher. He often shared the podium or was prominent in important events such as the visit of Lord Jersey to Bathurst in April 1892. Price was also controversial. In addition to his other civic positions,

⁹⁴ See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Stead.

⁹⁵ This policy only allowed ministers to spend only three years in one station. By 1891 there was some momentum to change the policy but Stead had declared himself in favour of it at the 1891 meeting. See Appendix 25 and 26 for details of Methodist clergy.

⁹⁶ The others were the Reverend Sergeant and James Beckenham who were stationed at Orange. The church had been left without a minister when Daniel Jackson left his post to be “cordially accepted” into the Bathurst Presbyterian Church. *Bathurst Free Press* 15 January 1891. When Becher arrived in Bathurst the church was in a perilous financial position and Becher’s stipend of £130 was met by the “liberality of its friends.”

⁹⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 20 November 1891.

⁹⁸ *War Cry* 11 September 1891, 7 May 1892, 14 May 1892, 21 May 1892, 28 May 1892, 11 June 1892, 28 July 1892, 19 September 1892.

⁹⁹ The Primitive Methodists formed only a small proportion of Methodist worshippers overall and were very thinly spread throughout the district. Lithgow was one area where there were significant numbers of worshippers. Bernard Kenny and William Pearson were the incumbent ministers between 1891 and 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Bernard Kenny.

he was a very active member of the hospital committee and was prepared to speak out on issues of concern. Price also campaigned tirelessly for the temperance movement and lodged objections to liquor licence applications, not just in Bathurst.

Bishop Byrne had 28 priests in his diocese, an impressive legacy from his predecessor. The lack of priests had been a problem for Quinn so he travelled to Ireland to recruit priests then established St Charles' Seminary at Bathurst in 1875. Several of the priests in the diocese in 1892 were graduates of the seminary and all but one of these had been brought from Ireland.¹⁰⁰ In 1893, 24 priests were attached to Central West stations and had been there for an average of thirteen years. Twenty-one were born in Ireland and one in India.¹⁰¹ Only Patrick Doran was born in Australia. As with their Anglican counterparts they were relatively young, with an average age of forty. Those priests who did not attend St Charles' Seminary received their tertiary education at various ecclesiastical colleges in Ireland and in one instance, the College of St Sulpice in Paris.

With around 90% of Byrne's priests being Irish born and most ordained in Ireland, they were not quite the cohort Cardinal Moran wanted. His ideal ecclesiastical base was for priests who were of "Irish descent, partly Australian trained but with a final Roman patina".¹⁰² Throughout the 1880s, according to O'Farrell, there had been increasing concern about the "social acceptance" of the Irish priests by the upwardly mobile and native born Catholic population within the district. There is little information on the extent to which they experienced any difficulties with "absorption" in the community. Almost certainly they would have satisfied Moran's demands for "prayer, discipline and order"¹⁰³ but it would be inevitable that there would be some discord between traditionalist priests expecting piety and discipline and their more phlegmatic congregations.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps something can be gleaned from comments made by Police Magistrate Nathaniel Connolly at a farewell function for Patrick Doran. Connolly suggested that Doran had been successful and popular in Cowra, partly because he was native born and "was conversant with the habits and characteristics of those with whom he came in contact".¹⁰⁵

Catholic priests, significantly fewer in number than Anglican clergy, divided their time between the villages and townships which comprised the stations in their parishes. "Devotional

¹⁰⁰ Edward Flanagan was also born in Ireland but came to Australia at a very early age.

¹⁰¹ The birthplace of one of the priests Thomas Duran is not known. See Appendix 27 for list of Catholic nuns and Appendix 28 for details of Catholic clergy,

¹⁰² O'Farrell *The Catholic Church and Community*, 238.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p 245.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁵ *Cowra Free Press* 3 December 1892.

activities” were a priority and raising funds to build and support churches and schools, as well as reducing debts already incurred in parishes, a necessity.¹⁰⁶ School prize-givings were frequent and there were the occasional much sought after episcopal visits by Byrne to manage.

The comings and goings of clergy of all denominations was regularly reported in the press. The esteem in which some clergy were held and in some cases an acknowledgement of their fragile financial circumstances, prompted locals to present testimonials and purses of sovereigns on their departure. Doran was relieved to be able to start with a “clean sheet” and liquidate his bank overdraft with the sovereigns he had been gifted.¹⁰⁷ Anglican minister Matthew Smith left Cudal for Rockley with a “handsomely illustrated and a purse of 50 sovereigns”¹⁰⁸ and Wesleyan Joseph Beale was presented with sovereigns contributed by people from all denominations when he left Canowindra.¹⁰⁹

James Milne of Grenfell believed his role in the community extended beyond the social niceties and the spiritual.¹¹⁰ Milne was involved in a public meeting held in Grenfell in March 1893 to discuss “utter inability” of the Government to “effect useful legislation” and he successfully moved a motion calling for the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly.¹¹¹ Ebenezer Price had declared himself to be on the side of the strikers during the 1890 maritime dispute, “denouncing the churches for seeming in many cases to countenance the harshness of capitalism”.¹¹² Archibald Geikie also believed the church should involve itself in secular issues such as politics. In February 1893, he lamented the godlessness of politicians and their “brainless and immoral decision” to keep religion out of politics. He bemoaned that “year by year the number of men of culture were becoming fewer and fewer in Parliament until now they were represented to a great extent by persons who were illiterate and irresponsible”. A few days later the member for Macquarie, Patrick Crick, came close to ridiculing Geikie at a public meeting in Bathurst on the stalemate in parliament. Crick shared the platform with his fellow Catholic John Meagher who supported the sentiment of the meeting (censuring the Opposition) but took offence at Crick’s comments on local matters, specifically his attack on his “personal friend” Geikie. A correspondent to the *Bathurst Free Press* shared Crick’s opinions.

¹⁰⁶ O’Farrell *The Catholic Church and Community*, 213. In the Cowra parish (encompassing Cowra, Mount McDonald, Canowindra, Woodstock and Eugowra) for example, Reverends’ Kennedy and McGee, during a month, conducted at least nineteen masses, seven devotion and benedictions and other services on holy days. *Cowra Free Press* 1 April 1893.

¹⁰⁷ *Cowra Free Press* 3 December 1892.

¹⁰⁸ *Evening News* 4 August 1892.

¹⁰⁹ *Town and Country Journal* 16 April 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Joseph Beale.

¹¹⁰ See Appendix 1 for biography of James Milne.

¹¹¹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 March 1893.

¹¹² Phillips *Christianity and its Defence*, 248.

“Radical” was scathing of Geikie and declared his sermon expounded “doctrines not intended for the poor” but for the wealthy and was evidence that ministers were not in touch with the great bulk of the people.¹¹³

The views of Camidge, the most influential protestant cleric in the district were apparently not in the best interests of the down-trodden. At the 1892 Synod he used his opening address to state his view on the “coming industrial struggle”, possibly a dispute at the railway workshops in Bathurst. He expressed concern that class struggle which fostered “rancor, ill will and anger” was steadily “overturning...the present social system” and there was an undercurrent of anti-unionism when he lauded the freedom of “contract and breach of contract”. The *Bathurst Free Press* expressed support for Camidge stating that churches, if they were not to “exist among the people as a remote sacerdotal institution”, needed to be “awakened to the fact that they possess not merely historical and theological relations to the national life, but also political and social ones”.¹¹⁴

Public morality was decidedly seen as the business of the clergy. In July 1892 Charles Stead attended a meeting of worthy citizens in Sydney concerned “to promote public morality and to secure necessary legislation for the repression of criminal vice and immorality”.¹¹⁵ Stead would have found little support for his campaign in the Central West but not because the community was rife with “criminal vice and immorality”. Community expectations of respectable behaviour did not extend to the wowsership implicit in Stead’s motion. Also, it was doubtful that those whose vices had run them foul of the law and even some of those responsible for prosecuting them, took heed of the Queen’s Proclamation for the encouragement of piety and virtue, routinely read at the outset of Quarter Session proceedings.¹¹⁶

Sunday observance was one issue debated in the mainstream press as a threat to public morality. From the early 1880s churches were becoming alarmed about secular activity on Sundays. There was no groundswell of support to tighten regulations or more stringent

¹¹³ *Bathurst Free Press* 13 and 28 February 1893 and 1 March 1893. It was not the only occasion Geikie commented on political issues. In September 1892 Geikie had delivered a sermon on “law and order” denouncing the Broken Hill strikers, deploring mob rule and supporting the government’s actions. *Bathurst Free Press* 26 September 1892.

¹¹⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 27 and 28 April 1892.

¹¹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald* 22 July 1892. Stead moved that the meeting support a bill calling for the “regulation of dancing saloons and for the suppression of indecent literature, prints, and advertisements”.

¹¹⁶ The proclamation directed and charged judges to punish perpetrators of “excessive drinking, blasphemy, profane swearing and cursing, lewdness, profanation of the Lord’s Day” and those selling alcohol on Sunday. *Launceston Advertiser* 23 November 1837.

enforcement of existing laws, neither was there public clamour for reform. Nonetheless, the Protestant churches were anxious. At the instigation of the Presbyterians, they formed the Council of Churches in 1889 specifically to campaign against attempts to “secularize Sunday” and to suppress any “existing infringements of the Sunday laws”.¹¹⁷ The Catholic Church did not join the Council but its position on the Sabbath was unequivocal, fortified by the 1891 papal encyclical (*Rerum Novarum*) that declared Sunday to be a day “sanctioned by God’s great law” for “rest and religious observances”.¹¹⁸ However, notwithstanding the Church’s official position, the Orange Hibernian Band “played a select programme of music” in Cook Park on a Sunday in December 1891.¹¹⁹

Based on newspaper coverage, there did not appear to be widespread opposition to the secularisation of the Sabbath in the Central West but it was a divisive issue in Bathurst. For example in January 1891, the Bathurst District Band unsuccessfully applied to the Council for permission to play a sacred “concert” in Machattie Park.¹²⁰ The bandmaster, James Appleby, pointed out that bands played on Sunday, not only in Orange and Lithgow, but also in the “Old Country”, an argument also taken up by the mayor Patrick Ryan.¹²¹ For some the concert was the ‘thin edge of the wedge’ paving the way for pony races, free-thinkers and a ‘Continental Sunday’.¹²² Twelve months later the issue was once again raised during the municipal elections and voters apparently supported the view of the majority of the Council. Some alderman refused to let the matter stand and in late 1892, Edward Mullins proposed that applications not only be sought from bands to play on Sundays, but that the Council pay for their services. The motion was soundly defeated with most of the opponents of the 1891 proposition still in the Council.¹²³

Divorce reform was another moral issue although by the end of the 1880s, there is little evidence to suggest there was much opposition to the liberalisation of divorce in the colony including the Central West. According to Phillips “the churches’ campaign” against divorce law reform was “brief but intense compared with the battle against the secularization of

¹¹⁷ Phillips *Defending a Christian Country*, 188.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, 178.

¹¹⁹ *Freeman's Journal* 12 December 1891.

¹²⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 7 January 1891.

¹²¹ Ryan (Catholic) was joined in supporting the application by Pierce Fowler (denomination not known), William Rickard (Methodist), Charles Pruen (Anglican) and David Waddell (probably Anglican). See Appendix 1 for biography of William Rickard.

¹²² Those opposing the motion were John Boyd (Presbyterian), Francis Halliday (Methodist), William Tremain (Methodist), Edmund Webb (Methodist), James Simmons (Presbyterian), Francis Crago (Anglican) and Charles Pruen.

¹²³ *Bathurst Free Press* 2 February 1892, *Bathurst Free Press* 1 December 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Edward Mullins.

Sunday”.¹²⁴ At the 1891 Anglican synod, Bishop Camidge reminded clergy of the Church’s rules on the celebration of marriage and was thankful that the proposed law had not yet been passed. Any lessening of the marriage bonds so important to the “prosperity of our country and the happiness of our homes” he said, could lead to “unrest and uncertainty pervading every section of society”.¹²⁵ Proposed changes to divorce law attracted barely any attention during the 1891 election campaign from Central West candidates. Anglicans Charles Jeanneret (Carcoar), William Newman (Orange), Sydney Smith (East Macquarie) and Robert Vaughn (Grenfell) together with Presbyterian Andrew Ross (Molong) voted against the *Divorce Amendment and Extension Bill* when it was presented in parliament.¹²⁶ Catholics Denis Donnelly, John Haynes and William Wall were absent during voting on both the second and third reading of the bill, along with Anglican Albert Gardiner. The other three Catholic members, Crick, George Hutchinson and James Morgan supported the legislation.¹²⁷ The absence of the Catholic members from voting perhaps reflected Cardinal Moran’s view that it was irrelevant whether Parliament passed the law or not, stating that the State may as well decree the “abolition of the Ten Commandments”.¹²⁸

Any common ground on divorce law shared by Catholics and non-Catholic members in Parliament was, at times, overshadowed by sectarianism spite. Sectarian tensions, almost always between Catholics and Protestants, ebbed and flowed in colonial society from first settlement. Over the decades, events such as the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868, Irish Home Rule outrages, the removal of State aid for denominational schools, and a “procession of Irish agitators and politicians” enlisting financial and moral support for the cause provoked mistrust and resentment.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Phillips *Defending a Christian Country*, 93.

¹²⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 April 1891.

¹²⁶ The Bill passed with a significant majority though only 56 members of the 141 strong assembly were present.

¹²⁷ The other supporters were Anglicans Francis Suttor (Bathurst), Robert Vaughn (Grenfell) and James Tonkin (East Macquarie); both members for Hartley, Joseph Cook (Primitive Methodist) and James Donald (Presbyterian). Andrew Ross opposed the bill at its second reading but was absent when it was finally passed. See Appendix 1 for biography of Robert Vaughn.

¹²⁸ Moran’s comments were published in an article ‘Social Question in Australia. A Review by Cardinal Moran’ in *The Tablet*, a British Catholic weekly journal 28 May 1892

<http://archive.thetablet.co.uk/page/28th-may-1892/1> retrieved 20 March 2014.

¹²⁹ A tour of the Australian colonies by John and William Redmond “to represent the Irish Parliamentary Party and the National Land League in 1883” provoked particular anti-Irish indignation”. Prominent Orange Catholics, James Dalton, Patrick Bourke and Michael Casey were stripped of their positions as magistrates because of their support for the Daltons; and, this was compounded when John Redmond married Johanna Dalton (the brothers’ half-sister) in Richmond in September 1883. O’Farrell *The Irish in Australia*, 223, 226, 227. M Hogan ‘Whatever happened to Sectarianism?’ in *Journal of Religious History* 13 (1984): 59

Between 1891 and 1893 sectarianism was evident in some parts of the district during displays of Orangeism which occasionally accompanied annual Protestant celebrations of the Battle of the Boyne. People in many towns and villages participated in the festivities which were principally social occasions such as tea meetings, concerts and balls held in Parkes and Forbes.¹³⁰ In some places community events were accompanied by public meetings and services where pro-Protestant and anti-Catholic rhetoric could be fiery. At Sunny Corner Richard Lean denounced “grasping, ambitious priesthood, yoke of popery and priestly tyranny...potism choked liberty, religious rights trampled underfoot, religious freedom denied”, although at the same meeting Sydney cleric Stevens tempered his remarks by condemning “the system of Roman Catholicism more than the people”.¹³¹ In Bathurst Methodist William Paul presided over the meeting that followed the tea and concert. He reminded his audience that “Orangeism was the essence of Protestantism, and it was necessary that it should exist in activity to prevent the encroachments of the common enemy of enlightenment and liberty”.¹³² The following speaker, Wesleyan Josiah Parker disparaged the “traitors”, those “who call themselves Protestants who help the Roman Church with money, personal effort, or material...Their conduct is like that of man fighting in the ranks of one party whilst they furnish the other with arms and ammunition”.¹³³ At Lithgow which had the highest proportion of Protestants among Central West municipalities, the celebrations lacked the anti-Catholic fervour evident in Sunny Corner and Bathurst. Around 700 people attended a Sunday afternoon service conducted by Presbyterian’s Charles Willis and William Pearson and Bernard Kenny (Wesleyan Methodist). Apart from the reference to Roman Catholic doctrine contained in the reading of the “qualifications and duties of an Orangeman”, the congregation was treated to moderate sermons on morality and the importance of the bible. Indeed, Willis exhorted his listeners to rejoice in the liberties they had and “not to use their liberty as an occasion of offence to others” trusting that the “strife of other lands would never prevail” in Australia. Even Sydney based preacher William Frackleton’s¹³⁴ address on Home Rule at the Monday evening meeting was an occasion “of an ordinary ‘social’ character” that included “songs and refreshments”.¹³⁵

Most Protestants did not share the extreme views of the Orangemen but the principles of Protestantism were apparent in other ways in the community. One of these was through the

¹³⁰ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 14 July 1893 and 18 July 1893, *Sydney Morning Herald* 15 July 1891.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 18 July 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Richard Lean.

¹³² *Bathurst Free Press* 22 July 1891.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 22 July 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Josiah Parker.

¹³⁴ William Scott Frackleton (1844-1912) Presbyterian Minister for the Randwick parish from 1885, preaching at the town hall before he became the first minister at the Randwick Presbyterian Church when it was built in 1889-90. https://dictionaryofsydney.org/person/frackleton_william_scott.

¹³⁵ *Lithgow Mercury* 22 July 1892.

fraternal organisations, particularly masonic lodges, which permeated the district. Dianne Hall draws parallels between these organisations and Orangeism sharing a Protestant libertarian vision and maintains they acted as a “social glue” binding members.¹³⁶ An eclectic group of Condobolin citizens, “a police constable, a surveyor, a station manager, a business man and a postal clerk”, had formed a masonic lodge in 1889¹³⁷ when the community was mobilising to form a municipality. By establishing a lodge at the same time as such a crucial milestone in the township’s development, these men made a statement about their own identity and place in society. Although the primary function of these organisations was philanthropic, Daniel Weinbren and Bob James argue that they “were part of a widespread, highly ceremonial, lodge-based fraternal movement, hierarchical in structure and focused on members’ duties and obligations”.¹³⁸ There were often fine lines between religion, fraternal and charitable objectives. Bishop Camidge was a prominent freemason and had no qualms discharging his duties as bishop and undertaking his role as masonic chaplain while on pastoral visits. On the day he ordained William Roberts in Forbes he attended a masonic service preceded by forty masons marching in full regalia from the Masonic Lodge at the Town Hall to St John’s Church.¹³⁹ At Cowra, some thirty Masons from the surrounding district came to hear the bishop preach on the goals of freemasonry in instilling “qualities desirable in a man – a determination to stand fast in good principles and a truthful adherence to that which is right and lawful”.¹⁴⁰ A correspondent to the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* cast doubt on the purpose of Camidge’s visit to the town in September 1892. “Did he come to save souls, uplift the spirits of the congregation...cheer the “desolate and oppressed... sustain the sick” or did he come as “a champion and special pleader in the interests of the Masonic Body”. Not only did the writer condemn the bishop for delivering a sermon in which he eulogised Masonic principles but he criticised the bishop’s participation in the street procession, where he led the masons “with all their ribbons and emblems on” to lay the foundation stone for the proposed new hall.¹⁴¹

While some people were hesitant to become directly involved in religious affairs, they were prepared to take prominent roles in the management of the societies, particularly the Lodges. Aedeon Cremin finds it noteworthy, in respect of the twenty Lithgow men whose biographies

¹³⁶ D Hall ‘Defending the Faith: Orangeism and Ulster Protestant Communities in Colonial New South Wales’ in *Journal of Religious History* (2014): 5.

¹³⁷ The first office holders were “John Caban, a policeman, W F Busby, the Government Surveyor, R Whitehead manager of Borambil Station, D H Tasker, a business man and E Vial a postal clerk”. *Condobolin where the Lachlan flows*, 128.

¹³⁸ D Weinbren and R James ‘Getting a Grip: the Roles of Friendly Societies in Australia and Britain Reappraised’ *Labour History* 88 (2005): 101.

¹³⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 27 September 1892.

¹⁴⁰ *Cowra Free Press* 14 January 1893.

¹⁴¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 27 September 1892.

appear in the *Aldine History*, that they “are keen to claim membership of the Masons, the Good Templars, the GUOOF, the RAOB, the IOOF, MU, UAOD, and, always, the Jockey Club [but] only one of the twenty worthies list church affiliations”.¹⁴²

The precepts of some other essentially protestant organisations or friendly societies¹⁴³ such as the Oddfellows, promoted ‘brotherly feeling’ more than a belief in God. Nonetheless they followed similar rituals such as marching in formation in full regalia and under banners at funerals as well as other civic occasions. The organisations permeated most towns and many villages having been founded during the formative stage of communities. Heinemann and James suggest that not only were members seeking financial support should they be in dire circumstances but their participation in the organisation gave them “an important aspect of security and identity”.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, according to Arthur Downing, they formed “a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition”.¹⁴⁵ This was the case in Harley Vale in 1892 where shopkeeper John Kirkwood who was elected a committee member of the newly established Lilly of the Vale Lodge set about “working up a big connection amongst the miners and outlying residents”.¹⁴⁶ These connections were fostered through ‘wholesome’ social events such as the athletics sports held in Cudal¹⁴⁷, although Downing suggests the nature of the societies changed in the latter part of the 19th century with a move away from “sociability and conviviality to insurance provision”.¹⁴⁸

Catholics had their own self-help societies - the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society (‘Hibernian Society’) and the Australasian Holy Catholic Guild (‘Guild’). The Hibernian Society was the larger of the two with approximately 11,000 members in the Australian colonies in 1892.¹⁴⁹ There were no instalments or investitures in the Catholic societies and they were

¹⁴² A Cremin ‘The Growth of an Industrial Valley: Lithgow, New South Wales’ *Australian Historical Archaeology*, 7 (1989), 38. This was Catholic John Connell, the owner of Tattersalls Hotel, who indicated that he was the treasurer of St Patrick’s Church. The abbreviations stand for: GUOOF Grand United Order of Oddfellows; IOOF Independent Order of Oddfellows, UAOD United Ancient Order of Druids, MU Manchester Unity, RAOB Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

¹⁴³ These societies existed for the mutual benefit of members. In return for their subscriptions, members could receive “relief maintenance” weekly payments of £1 per week (in 1892), in the event of illness, accident or old age, funeral costs and payments to the widow and children upon the death of a member.

¹⁴⁴ Heinemann and James ‘Getting a Grip’, 93.

¹⁴⁵ Downing ‘A Social Capital in Decline’, 3.

¹⁴⁶ *Evening News* 19 April 1892, *Town and Country Journal* 11 March 1893.

¹⁴⁷ *Molong Express* 18 November 1893.

¹⁴⁸ Downing ‘A Social Capital in Decline’, 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 22 April 1892. Polding (during his struggle with the Irish Bishops for control of the Catholic Church) described the Hibernian Society as “nothing short of Fenianism and to put it bluntly, freemasonry under another name. C Dowd *Rome in Australia: The Papacy and Catholic Conflict*

anxious to differentiate themselves from masonic lodges. In an article in the *Sydney Echo* the Guild was described as “an open society, working in the light of day, with no oaths of secrecy, no secret laws, no secret objects and no secret leaders”.¹⁵⁰ The Guild insisted that it had no political pretensions and Cardinal Moran described its membership as “equipped...with the virtues of piety...charity and fraternal affection...with patriotism quickened by religion.” At the same gathering though, Moran, loath as he was to make a ‘political statement’, lectured on the responsibility of voters.¹⁵¹ The Hibernian society was a more broadly based, grass-roots organisation with a larger and younger membership than the Guild in the Central West.¹⁵² There were branches in several towns including Bathurst, Orange, Forbes, Parkes, Mudgee, Grenfell and Cowra. As with protestant societies, office-bearers were generally townsmen, storeowners and publicans being most common.¹⁵³ Like the Protestant friendlies, members of the Catholic societies participated in public events. They marched in formation, regalia and under banners. These occasions could be solemn such as at funerals, celebratory (a school opening at Orange), motivational (the commencement of a Vincentian Temperance Mission) or sacred.¹⁵⁴

This kind of demonstration was, according to O’Farrell, a “defiant profession of a separate identity” for Catholics and indirectly, the Irish.¹⁵⁵ Other more festive parades, not necessarily involving the Guild and Hibernian members, were part of this psyche with the Saint Patrick’s Day parade the clearest example. This feast day, invariably declared a public holiday, was celebrated throughout the Central West. Whole communities participated in sports, horse races, picnics and balls despite the steps Cardinal Moran had been taking to rein-in raucous celebrations and orient them in the direction of “religion and respectability”.¹⁵⁶

It is undeniable that in the late nineteenth century religion was coupled with respectability but as Richard Ely suggests it was also seen as the “key to social happiness and material

in *the Australian Catholic Missions 1834-1884* (Boston Leiden Brill 2008) 371, 372. *Freeman’s Journal* 2 June 1888

¹⁵⁰ Re-published in *Freeman’s Journal* 21 February 1891. The Guild was established by Bishop John Polding in 1845.

¹⁵¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 23 August 1892.

¹⁵² These issues were broadly canvassed in a proposal in 1890 to amalgamate the two organisations *Freeman’s Journal* April and May 1890.

¹⁵³ In Orange, these included Francis McDermott (storekeeper), James McFadden and Michael Casey. Other members included James Fitzgerald the postmaster at Springside, blacksmith John Duke (Sunny Corner) and Farmer Michael Teefy (Cargo). See Appendix 1 for biographies of James McFadden, Michael Casey and Michael Teefy.

¹⁵⁴ *Freeman’s Journal* 12 December 1891, 11 November 1893.

¹⁵⁵ O’Farrell *The Irish in Australia*, 111.

¹⁵⁶ O’Farrell states that Moran had celebrated a High Mass at St Mary’s Cathedral in Sydney for the first time on Saint Patrick’s Day in 1885 and by 1896 had “secured control” of the Catholic celebrations of the day. O’Farrell ‘The Irish in Australia’, 232

prosperity”.¹⁵⁷ Religion in the district between 1891 and 1893 was manifested in many ways. Most of the people who identified as Christians were not churchgoers. This did not diminish the significance of Christian principles of morality, belief, obedience and values in contributing to the cohesiveness of the district’s society. Influential men, Protestant and Catholic, whether pastoralists descended from early landowners, professionals, justices of the peace or mayors at the forefront of commercial affairs, readily declared allegiance to their faith. They reinforced the connection between religion and social order but also materialism essential for the progress of society. Secular women of all denominations gave form to social conscience through fund raising and good works as did the Catholic nuns. The bishops and clergy were ever-present symbolising the authority of religious faith and its predominance in society’s norms. The prevalence of religious-related social occasions and the place of the self-help friendly societies in the community were an intrinsic part of the social fabric of the community and contributed to the trust implicit in the *gemeinschaft* society; but so too were the differences leading to disharmony and dissent.

I began this chapter with an account of clashes between members of the Salvation Army and the forces of law and order in Orange in 1891 and I conclude with an account of a visit by Bishop Camidge to Peel to reopen the local church. This event was, to some extent, the antithesis of the Salvationists’ arrest. The ceremony was well-attended although the Peel correspondent to the *Bathurst Free Press* suggested at least a quarter of the people had come from Bathurst and had come to see the ceremonial pastoral staff presented to his Lordship by his grateful parishioners and clergy in Bathurst. The correspondent commented that the attraction of the bishop’s crook rather than his sermon demonstrated that “empty ceremonial, pomp and gorgeousness are very powerful factors in inducing people to attend church”. Further, he stated “the clergy will have to come down from among the clouds and take a deeper interest in the welfare of the masses than they have done in the past”.¹⁵⁸

The *Bathurst Free Press*’ correspondent’s comments on the clergy and the pomposity of the church service and his not so subtle mockery of the Bathurst faithful coming to their village would have struck a chord with many. But the place of religion in Central Western society was more fundamental than church attendance and the tepid engagement of some clergy with the masses. Moran’s “religion and respectability” were resilient sentiments which permeated the

¹⁵⁷ Ely *Unto God and Caesar*, 6.

¹⁵⁸ Dean Marriott described the staff as “one of the most beautiful and perfect staffs that could be made. It was made of polished ebony mounted in silver, gilt and richly engraved set with 60 stones of various kinds. *Bathurst Free Press* 27 April 1892 and 13 October 1892.

district between 1891 and 1893.¹⁵⁹ The pieties were ignored by most of the population but the social cohesiveness of which religion was an essential component was an integral part of *gemeinschaft* community.

¹⁵⁹ O'Farrell 'The Irish in Australia', 232.

Chapter 8 Health

On 19 November 1891 Peter Rheinberger wrote in his diary “Mother died 10 minutes after nine o’clock in the morning”. Catherine Rheinberger was one of many people in the Mudgee area to succumb to influenza. John Tierney, teacher of the Eurunderie public school, Esther Lovejoy who was the mother of the town clerk, and railway worker Henry Fuller, his wife Mary and baby son were also victims of the severe epidemic affecting many parts of the colony.¹ In 1893 Bangaroo station labourer Dougal McGlasson’s wife Anna and their four children perished during a diphtheria epidemic in the Cowra area and in Condobolin, hotelier Charles and Mary Anne Cooney lost seven children to the disease. Between 1891 and 1893 Central West communities endured epidemic periodicity with several outbreaks of influenza, diphtheria and typhoid. Influenza was one of the leading causes of death but people were more likely to die from tuberculous and bronchial diseases and, as noted by Judith Raftery, “gastro-enteritis was the most formidable foe of infants in their first year of life”.²

My focus in this chapter is the health of people such as Catherine Rheinberger and Anna Glasson who lived in the Central West between 1891 and 1893. I examine the impact of epidemics and public health issues including the role of hospitals and those who managed and worked in them. I consider the people’s health “from below”, addressing the question of “what did people do when they felt sick?”³ I also revisit the theme of *gemeinschaft*, reflecting on how this was manifested in community health and reveal the frailties of everyday life, the self-reliance and accountability of individuals and underlying societal realities.

Death and suffering from disease of all kinds were part of everyday life but epidemics devastated communities and unsettled the social fabric. There were serious occurrences of diphtheria in Cowra and Condobolin with others of varying degrees of seriousness in several locations including Mudgee, Blayney, Carcoar, Bathurst and Molong. The Cowra diphtheria outbreak was particularly virulent with 53 deaths, mainly children, between December 1892 and May 1893.⁴ In addition to Dougal Glasson’s family, John and Mary Lyons’ two children, Josephine and Frederick, succumbed to the disease. In early 1892 the Condobolin epidemic claimed the lives of fifteen children and two adults. Five-year-old Arthur Boxall Tasker, the son of David and Ellen Boxall Tasker, was the first of five children to die within a four-day period in

¹ *Sydney Mail* 28 November 1891, *Daily Telegraph* 21 November 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Henry Fuller and Esther Lovejoy.

² J Raftery ‘Keeping Healthy in Nineteenth-Century’, 277, 278.

³ R Porter ‘The Patient’s View: Doing Medical History from below’, 187.

⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald* 5 May 1893.

February 1892.⁵ The loss of children was heartbreaking but the death of breadwinners such as John Coffey, of Garland near Carcoar, leaving his wife Mary and five children “totally unprovided for”, was disastrous and left the family dependent on the charity of relatives, neighbours or poor relief.



Illustration 73: Henry Fuller

Local press and other colonial newspapers published accounts on the severity of these epidemics. Editors castigated those in the community whose actions were believed to have contributed to the spread of the disease. The *Cowra Free Press* condemned residents at Georges Plains for the “culpably thoughtless and selfish way people affected with the disease, or carrying infection through contact with patients, mingle[d] with townspeople in business”.⁶ A correspondent to the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* complained that at Frogmore near Cowra “the friends of patients suffering from diphtheria are allowed to come straight from the bedside of the patient and do their shopping in a crowded store”.⁷ And the *National Advocate*, prompted by a spate of typhoid cases in Bathurst, was unrestrained when attacking the insanitary habits of “a certain class of people [whose] indifference as to healthy conditions [create] breeding ground[s] for infectious diseases”.⁸ This apathy was not limited to people’s

⁵ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 1 March 1892 and 26 April 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 18 March and 27 March 1893 See Appendix 1 for biographies of Ellen and Arthur Boxall Tasker and Charles and Mary Cooney.

⁶ *Cowra Free Press* 4 March 1893.

⁷ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 18 May 1893.

⁸ *National Advocate* 30 May 1893.

health but was an implicit threat to *gemeinschaft* through the disregard and ignorance of the under-class.

The newspapers decried individuals for failing to act in the interests of the community. But the management of epidemics was also a public health issue involving local and colonial authorities and hospitals. While the press monitored the habits of the population at large, it also scrutinised the management of hospitals. These institutions were the interface of public health in the community and were an important component of the social infrastructure in the larger country towns. Kingston suggests that at the end of nineteenth century hospitals catered only for the “sick poor”⁹ and government support for hospitals was predicated on the provision of care for the destitute.¹⁰ However it is difficult to corroborate Kingston’s view for all hospitals in the Central West. In December 1893 the Molong hospital committee, for example, agreed that the medical officers be able “to charge their fees to private patients who may wish to avail themselves of the advantages of the institution”.¹¹

Determining the socio-economic circumstances of hospital patients is difficult. Annual reports published in local newspapers usually only disclosed the number of patients. Of those reports that are available, only Cowra hospital provides a list of patients’ occupations. In 1892 of the 71 inmates in that hospital, 31 (44%) were labourers, eight were scholars and six were domestic servants. There were sixteen other categories.¹² Most of patients may have been working class but at least ten admittances were due to accidents requiring surgery and therefore not necessarily in this category.¹³ In any case working-class status does not necessarily equate to poverty. Hospitals provided for people from many different backgrounds during epidemics. During the Mudgee influenza outbreak, Peter Rheinberger’s brother, John, spent time in the hospital.¹⁴ In another instance 21 year-old Laura Mitchell, wife of Andrew, a local accountant for the Bank of NSW, died of typhoid fever in Mudgee hospital where she was admitted, after having been “unable to find a suitable nurse”.¹⁵ Nonetheless hospitals were

⁹ Kingston *Glad and Glorious Morning*, 122.

¹⁰ The amount of the subsidy was £1 for every like amount received by public subscription.

¹¹ *Molong Express* 9 December 1893.

¹² Other categories: cooks 4, tailors 3, domestic duties (house wives), carpenters 2, farmers 2, miners 1, publicans 1, shepherd 1, gardener 1, teacher 1, stone cutter 1, dressmaker 1, boundary rider. *Cowra Free Press* 28 January 1893.

¹³ Coghlan notes that “a large majority of accidents that occur, when not immediately fatal are treated in the hospitals.” *NSW Statistical Register 1893*, 553.

¹⁴ *Peter Rheinberger Diary* 19 and 20 November 1891.

¹⁵ *The Sydney Mail* 27 February 1892.

primarily philanthropic institutions supported by government funds but responsibility for their upkeep rested with the community and hospital committees.¹⁶

A correspondent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* attributed problems at country hospitals to their committees. The average committeeman, he stated, although “being very good in his own line [and] actuated by the most noble desires...[was] entirely ignorant of hospital management except in his own small circle”. Another writer asserted that the committees “consist chiefly of tradespeople who are each anxious to make ‘something in his line of trade’ thus not having the proper feeling towards suffering humanity that ought to exist in manly and humane minds”.¹⁷ While it is arguable that some committee members in the district’s hospitals lacked the business acumen thought necessary, there is no evidence that any committeemen benefitted in a pecuniary way from his involvement in the hospital during years under study. And although committees were occasionally dysfunctional with meetings marred by personality clashes and power plays, the suggestion that members lacked empathy for human suffering is implausible.

At Mudgee, Cowra, Bathurst, Peak Hill and Forbes, storekeepers (eleven) comprised the highest number of board members. There were also eleven agents/auctioneers, newspaper proprietors/editors, five hoteliers, two clergymen and several townsmen including chemists and flour mill and other industry owners. Members were almost entirely town based indicating that many of the rural upper propertied class, who participated in community organisations such as school boards, had little need of the hospitals and hence scant interest in their administration. Conversely, the diversity of membership would suggest a widespread recognition of the need for such institutions in the towns.

Newspapers reported on annual and monthly meetings where finance, works, and visiting sub-committees gave an account of their activities. Proceedings were generally routine but not always. Committeemen at Bathurst were engaged in repetitive and unseemly staffing disputes and even a short-lived sectarian spat and although these may have made entertaining reading they hardly bolstered the reputation of the committees. In some locations committees were not always highly regarded. In the midst of the diphtheria epidemic in Cowra, for example, solicitor Michael Phillips expressed concern that the legality of the Cowra committee “was the talk of the town”.¹⁸ And according to *Forbes and Parkes Gazette*, the Forbes hospital

¹⁶ The *Bathurst Free Press* reported on 6 January 1891 that in December 1890, four of the thirty-two admissions were paying patients.

¹⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 11 February 1892 and 16 February 1892.

¹⁸ *Cowra Free Press* 18 February 1893.

committee was lax and subscribers had lost confidence in the institution.¹⁹ At Molong, it was not the committee but community apathy that was of greater concern. Only seven subscribers attended the 1891 annual meeting and in the annual report, the president expressed regret “that the inhabitants and the general public do not take more interest in the hospital”.²⁰

As with any public institution the cost of running the hospitals was a constant and pressing problem. Fund raising events such as hospital balls and ‘Hospital Sundays’ were common and extended beyond the town where the hospital was located.²¹ During 1892 canvassers for the Bathurst hospital, including Misses Story and Fitzgerald at Wattle Flat, visited some 52 villages and surrounding rural communities seeking subscriptions.²² In a rare example of a marginalised group being commended for its community spirit, a collector at Forbes reported that he had considerable success with Chinese donors from whom he collected £10. Even more significantly he compared their actions with those of who would be expected to act in the communal good by noting the amount collected was more than that “subscribed by the entire body of farmers, free selectors, working men of the district all put together.” Moreover he stated that “in no instance among the Chinese had he to call twice for the money, while it was too often the reverse in the case of other subscribers”.²³

Unions and businesses subscribed either generally or to support their workforce. The Smelters’ Union at Sunny Corner held a ball and raised £7-8s with the secretary William Palmer, lamenting that the amount was so small.²⁴ Similarly the general manager of the New South Wales Shale and Oil Company, William J Hall, wrote to the hospital committee in December 1891 asking what amount the miners and others employed at Hartley Vale should contribute as they “are desirous of subscribing to your hospital for a bed to be allotted to their sole use”.²⁵

Large metropolitan-based employers were not so obliging. The Parkes hospital committee encountered difficulties as construction of the railway line progressed with an influx of navvies

¹⁹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 14 November 1893.

²⁰ *Molong Express* 7 November 1891.

²¹ “Hospital Sundays”, which involved in a parade of Friendly Societies, were a common and fundraiser for hospitals across the colony in the late nineteenth century. In 1892 at Mudgee “crowds thronged the sidewalks and balconies” to see the usual parade while a band of collectors circulated through the crowds. “In order to give those on balconies and at windows an opportunity of giving, a novel idea was introduced. Small boxes were fixed on the end of long light poles, and these were presented to all within reach”. £70 of much needed funds was raised. *The Sydney Mail* 19 March 1892.

²² *Bathurst Free Press* 30 January 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 29 September 1892

²³ *Forbes Times* 25 March 1893, quoted in Forbes Family History Group Inc *Early days of Forbes Taken from the ‘Forbes Times’* 7 January 1888 to 12 October 1895, section 61.

²⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 8 December 1891.

²⁵ The amount was £40. *Bathurst Free Press* 8 December 1891.

from Porcupine Gap and other places placing a strain on hospital resources. A purported arrangement where the medical officer for the line would collect subscriptions was repudiated by the contractors and the committee's suggestion that there should be a contribution from the worker's health fund went unheeded.²⁶ The Bathurst committee was equally frustrated in their efforts to obtain payment from employees of railway contractor Messrs Proudfoot and Co. President Edmund Webb stated that other contractors had made contributions of between £20 and £50 to support men who had been admitted for treatment after accidents but Proudfoots refused to be involved.²⁷ Molong hospital collectors were despatched to wait on A Baxter and JV Saddler, when the hospital encountered problems similar to Parkes. Clearly as these companies were not based in the district they did not view local community welfare as a priority.

Molong doctor Stanislaus Maguire²⁸ was also concerned with the "swamping" of the hospital with "birds of passage in the district without any stake in the town" but this was exacerbated, he claimed, by some local publicans who kept terminally ill men until they ran out of money upon which they were sent to the hospital to die and be buried at its expense. Even though some committeemen protested that there had been a lot of influenza on the line, Maguire insisted that most of the patients from there had been suffering from the effects of drink. Andrew Ross was appalled with Maguire's "uncalled for aspersions" stating "no paid officer has a right to promulgate such imputation against subscribers."²⁹

Covering the cost of itinerant workers was an ongoing problem. In late 1892 a war of words broke out between the Forbes hospital committee and James Toomey of the ASU. In response to a letter from the committee implying that subscriptions from shearers had been withheld, Toomey retorted that the only money collected was for the Hillston and Young Hospitals. The union executive had contemplated assisting other hospitals by collecting subscriptions, he stated, but because the Forbes committee had

conspired with certain pastoralists to appropriate the earnings forfeited by the employees during the strike of 1890 to charitable purposes we have abandoned the idea until matters are so regulated that all government institutions including the parliament of the country are controlled by honest straightforward, democrats.³⁰

²⁶ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 11 October 1892 and 16 December 1892.

²⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 5 May 1891.

²⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of Stanislaus Maguire.

²⁹ *Molong Express* 12 December 1891.

³⁰ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 8 September 1893.

William Prick, a travelling agent for the ASU and General Labourers' Union, weighed into the debate. He lamented that "many workers were denied access to some country hospitals" despite "the large-body of bush workers...being ever ready to stretch out a helping hand and that in no niggardly manner" to worthy causes".³¹ Later in the year this hostility had apparently abated as shearing shed subscriptions began to come in, albeit in small amounts, reflecting the effect of "the general depression ... everywhere felt".³²

A further pressure on hospital finances was the reluctance of the Director of Government Asylums, Sydney Maxted, to accept destitute, infirm and particularly aged patients from the country. In October 1891, in a report to the Medical Board, Maxted expressed his frustration with "improper admissions" from country hospitals. The *Bathurst Free Press* outraged at the suggestion that country doctors were unscrupulous, declared that if Maxted had his way he would "shut the doors of the asylums against patients from any place beyond the boundaries of the county of Cumberland". The Orange Hospital Committee which was experiencing financial difficulties, despatched circulars to other country institutions urging "concerted action" to remedy the injustice. The newspaper stated it was most unfair that country hospitals which were charitable institutions for the "indigent sick" should be "compelled to serve as asylums for the aged who cannot hope for cure, when distinctive institutions for them specially are maintained in Sydney and Parramatta solely at the public expense".³³

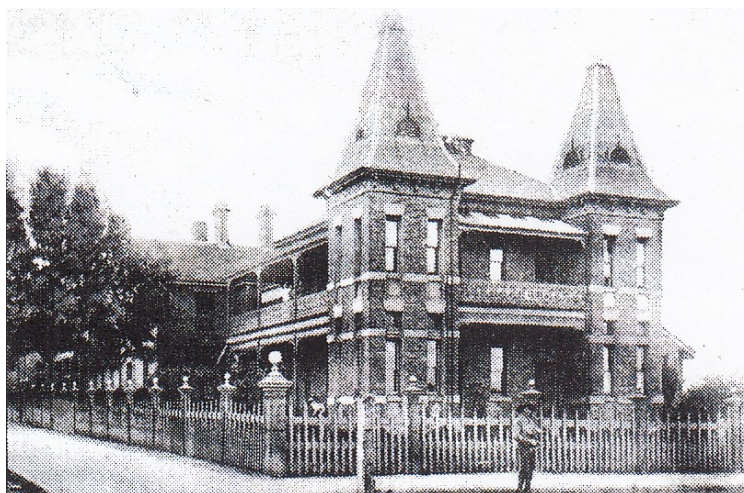


Illustration 74 Orange Hospital

Hospital committees were not the only public organisations scrutinised on matters of public health. During the Cowra diphtheria epidemic, the Department of Public Instruction was

³¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 6 October 1893.

³² *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 10 November 1893.

³³ *Bathurst Free Press* 7 October 1891.

criticised for its attitude to school closures, the insanitary state of some of the schools and the teacher's residence at Mount McDonald. The house, occupied by John Lyons whose children died during the outbreak, was "very dilapidated" with badly maintained cesspits and a contaminated water supply and water at the Cowra public school tested by the Government Analyst was judged as unfit to drink.³⁴ The Government Medical Officer, Richard Paton, reported during the Condobolin outbreak that "evil-smelling cesspits not emptied since the school was established 8 years ago", tended "to foster and enhance the disease".³⁵ While this neglect occurred over several years, the failure of the Department to respond to the closure of schools had not. For instance, the Department ignored representations from Henry W Grey Innes, chairman of the Condobolin school board, to close the school on doctor's advice. The Chief Inspector deemed it unnecessary and advised the teacher to "observe strict regulations as to the exclusion of children from infected families". Regardless parents kept their children away with only one scholar attending.³⁶ Parents responded in the same fashion when teachers at Cowra, Gooloogong, Woodstock and other small schools in the district were instructed to keep the schools open. Cowra was closed only after representations by the local school board and the MLA Denis Donnelly. The Catholic bureaucracy, however, accepted the advice of the medical board and kept convent schools closed from February to July 1893.³⁷

According to MLA John Haynes "enterprise and regard for the public health [should] be considered the highest essential of local government" and local councils were often called to account for insanitary conditions in some country towns.³⁸ In May 1893 the Board of Health wrote to the mayor of Cowra "urging the abolition of cesspits in the district and the placing of the town in a proper sanitary condition". The same issue had been raised at Condobolin twelve months earlier.³⁹ Public health also emerged as a political issue in Bathurst with aldermen, driven in part by a concern for the health of the community but also by self-interest and personality clashes, disagreed over the polluted state of two local creeks. The Council's Inspector of Nuisances reported that "no nuisance existed in the [Jordan] Creek" despite discharges from the gaol, two gasworks and a tannery among others, emptying into it. Alderman Jacob Knights disputed the finding, undertook his own inspection and produced a bottle containing creek water at the next council meeting.⁴⁰ Alderman Francis Halliday, owner

³⁴ *New South Wales School Archives Cowra 5/15551.*

³⁵ *Report of Government Medical Officer R T Paton on "causation of diphtheria" outbreak in Condobolin 10 March 1892*, transcript provided by Fay Boys Condobolin and District Historical Society.

³⁶ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 1 March 1892.

³⁷ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 1 February 1893, *Freeman's Journal* 15 July 1893.

³⁸ Haynes was encouraging councils to take account of Orange Council's installation of a public cremator. *Bathurst Free Press* 1 September 1893.

³⁹ *Report of Government Medical Officer 1892.*

⁴⁰ *National Advocate* 16 January 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Jacob Knights.

of the Railway Tannery, denounced attempts to have the matter further investigated as an attack on him.

The *Molong Express* adopted a different approach when it urged the council to act against residents who neglected their yards and outhouses, “regardless of persons”, because they transgressed the law of cleanliness.⁴¹ This precept went beyond physical health but was associated with morality and social order which, Deborah Lupton’s suggests, “bolstered hegemonic values”.⁴² Lupton’s view is partially borne out by Wesleyan minister Charles James who argued the State had rights “to purity, sobriety, cleanliness, health, competency in the individuals that made up the community”.⁴³ A combination of these factors is evident in the *Bathurst Free Press* reports on respectable young Bathurst men in the rifle corps and on the colony’s criminal youth. In October 1891, the newspaper editorialised that cadet lads who are subjected to the “regular discipline of the local corps...and that properly carried out, the habits of obedience, order, cleanliness and carriage instilled must tend to the proper moral and physical development of the boys⁴⁴. Conversely it published extracts from the report of the Comptroller-General of Prisons, George Miller, which stated that an objective of dealing with criminals under the age of sixteen is “to improve their moral and physical condition” through “enforced cleanliness and regular instruction and employment”.⁴⁵ And of course, vice, moral degradation and filth were regularly identified in court proceedings as being inextricably entwined in the activities of prostitutes and other such outcasts.

Lupton also notes that the public health movement at this time “became more concerned with maintaining the boundaries of populations, preventing contamination of those within from those without”.⁴⁶ Community attitudes towards the Chinese were the most palpable examples of this. Notwithstanding the compliments paid to Chinese hospital subscribers at Forbes, the *Molong Express* complained that “their morals are disgustingly low and the sanitary conditions under which they herd together a perpetual menace to the public health” while, during a typhoid outbreak, some Kelso residents complained that the Chinese gardens were responsible for the “spreading of germs”.⁴⁷ In September 1891, a rumoured case of leprosy caused “a thrill of horror” in Mudgee. This disease which was almost exclusively considered as an infection of

⁴¹ *Molong Express* 28 October 1893.

⁴² Lupton *The Imperative of Health*, 34. Lupton specifically refers to “theories of cleanliness”.

⁴³ *Bathurst Free Press* 6 March 1894. See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles E James.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 21 October 1891.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 13 August 1891.

⁴⁶ Lupton *The Imperative of Health*, 38.

⁴⁷ *Molong Express* 18 November 1893, *National Advocate* 31 May 1893.

the Chinese population was viewed with considerable dread.⁴⁸ When a Chinese storekeeper returning to Mudgee after a long absence in Tasmania, was found to have the disease, the police and their “lynx-eyed chief” were on the look-out for other cases. The police focussed on Dat Lee, the victim’s father. Dat Lee who had been in the district for around twenty years, owned a small “fancy goods shop” which was a “favourite resort with local market gardeners”. He also did “a big trade dispensing Chinese medicines”. He was examined by the local doctors and sent to the “Lazarette” for further tests. Meanwhile the police “cremated the contents of his room” despite the protests of his countrymen. Less than a week later Dat Lee returned to Mudgee having been cleared. The Chinese community were so aggrieved by the events that a meeting held by market gardeners at Lawson’s Creek considered a boycott of “Europeans in Mudgee, in connection with the supply of vegetables”.⁴⁹

Aborigines were also outcasts but there is little information on their health and welfare other than the reports of the Aborigines Protection Board. One incident reported was a proposal by two Cowra aldermen, John Hyams and Gustavus Frederick Oll⁵⁰, that the government be asked to move the “black’s camp” which they said was contaminating the water supply. The “blacks”, Hyams, said were “filthy in their habits and there were cases of disease amongst them”.⁵¹ Notably the council rejected the motion.

Doctors were a basic element of both private and public health care infrastructure but their circumstances and reputations across the district varied. There were 39 registered doctors practicing in towns throughout the district in 1892. Some had been long-time residents in their towns and had secure practices. Others were itinerant, moving from town to town within or close-by the district, but their movements are often hard to trace. Predictably, most doctors were in the densely populated central and eastern areas of the district. People in remote towns such as Lake Cudgellico and Barmedman relied on doctors and hospitals located in larger centres some distance away. Even so, those in small villages and rural surrounds in the more settled areas could also have difficulty accessing medical assistance. Although one would

⁴⁸ One of the four patients admitted to the asylum in 1891 and 1892 was a seventeen-year old “European” whose father was “a selector and labourer living on the Meroo (Mudgee) and has always been in comfortable circumstances”. There were Chinese working on an old gold-field and the family purchased goods from a store there which have “always been strictly limited to the purchases of tea and sugar, and occasionally such articles as boots from a store kept by them. Those who keep the store are said to have been there very long and to be very well. All other conditions seem to have been those usual in the bush.” *Report on Leprosy in New South Wales for the period ending 1 January 1892 to 31 December 1892* from the Secretary Board of Health to the Under Secretary for Finance and Trade, ordered to be printed 23 March 1893, 5.

⁴⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 September 1891, 1 and 6 October 1891, *Freeman’s Journal* 4 October 1891. There is no mention of whether the boycott occurred.

⁵⁰ See Appendix 1 for biography of Gustavus Oll.

⁵¹ *Cowra Free Press* 15 April 1893.

expect that the demand for doctors' services generated by distance would enable practitioners to make a reasonable living, this was frequently not the case with them having to compete with other forms of health care. By "money or geography",⁵² tradition or even superstition, people often opted for alternative methods such as visiting healers, patent medicines or traditional remedies.

Philippa Martyr suggests that cash-strapped doctors could be tempted to "undertake poorly-paid but 'steady' lodge work"⁵³ something, according to Lewis, that irked the NSW Branch of the British Medical Association (BMA). By the 1890s the BMA was intent on eradicating "two features of contract practice...membership for those able to afford private fees and the excessive number of patients to be serviced".⁵⁴ At the organisation's 1892 annual meeting, the outgoing president of the association Robert Scott-Skirving, expressed his concern on the "present unsatisfactory relationship between friendly societies and doctors". The "chief evil" of the friendlies, he stated, was the admission of members whose "social conditions and means" meant they were capable of paying for their medical care. The size of some of these societies made larger by amalgamation with like bodies meant they could contract doctors on unsupportable low fixed rates, the outcome of which was over-work for some doctors and under-employment for others.⁵⁵ Arthur Downing asserts that by the late 1890s, these societies had moved away from "sociability and conviviality to insurance provision".⁵⁶ In support of his argument he quotes the historian of the Court Perseverance branch of the Ancient Order of Foresters who stated in 1892 that "though philanthropy is much to be admired, we must not forget that ... we are purely a business Society or, in other words, an Assurance Society".⁵⁷ On the other hand, William Ferrier⁵⁸ suggested while campaigning for the establishment of a united societies dispensary in Bathurst, that coming together for a financial benefit in this way meant would "tend to engender a more brotherly and friendly spirit" among members of the various societies".⁵⁹

Ferrier's scheme was exactly the kind that upset the BMA. In July 1892 he was the driving force of the united dispensary proposal. In urging his fellow Forrester's to embrace a scheme which would provide full control of their doctor, better medical attendance and secure the "very best

⁵² Rafferty 'Keeping Healthy in Nineteenth Century Australia', 282.

⁵³ Martyr *Paradise of Quacks*, 133.

⁵⁴ M Lewis 'Medicine in Colonial Australia' *Medical Journal of Australia* 1 (2014): 8.

⁵⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 9 March 1892.

⁵⁶ A Downing 'Social Capital in Decline', 1.

⁵⁷ F L Plastrier "A Short History of Court Perseverance, 2727, of the Ancient Order of Foresters (Melbourne 1892) quoted by Downing 'Social Capital in Decline', 42.

⁵⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of William Ferrier.

⁵⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 13 July 1891.

drugs” for members, Ferrier offended the current Forrester’s medical officer and leading townsman Thomas Machattie who threatened libel action. Ferrier was unrepentant even though in a letter published in the newspapers he stressed he had had no idea of “libelling, injuring, or casting the slightest reflection on anyone”.⁶⁰ Machattie had little respect for his detractors. When members of the Loyal Kincora Lodge of Oddfellows presented him with an address on the eve of his departure to Britain for a holiday, he referred, in his speech, to his role as medical officer to the lodge where for ten years, “he had done his duty”. If he had “given satisfaction he was content” but he observed that “as a rule those...who were most discontented were those who were not over-burdened with brains”. Machattie dictated the terms of his lodge practice, dismissing complaints about his availability for consultations, the type of medicines he dispensed and his apparent reluctance to write medical certificates.⁶¹ Presumably he welcomed the income from the lodge work but the position of medical officer in the hospital of the largest town in the district augmented his status as one of the most prominent citizens in the township. Machattie’s attitude stands in some contrast to that of Robert Beith.⁶²



Illustration 75: William and Isabella J (née Young) Ferrier and Thomas Machattie

⁶⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 3 July 1891, *National Advocate* 13 July and 22 July 1891. A meeting to further the proposal was held in August but nothing eventuated. *Bathurst Free Press* 3 and 17 August 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Thomas Machattie.

⁶¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 12 April 1893. The Loyal Kincora Lodge was one of three (out of ten) organisations which declined to participate in the united dispensary discussions.

⁶² See Appendix 1 for biographies of Percival Garling and Robert Beith.

Beith who was the medical officer of a Foresters society at Mudgee, was described by newspaper owner Percival Garling as dispelling “the prejudices of many people that lodge patients were badly treated” noting he had been as attentive “to members of the lodge and their families in time of sickness as though he were receiving a guinea a visit”.⁶³

Many doctors especially those who were long-time residents, were part of the upper echelon of the community and held in high esteem. Andrew Ross was among these. He undertook his roles as politician and medical practitioner with equal seriousness. In Bathurst Machattie, Walter Spencer and William Bassett, were involved in many public and community organisations and Maurice Asher was “ready to step forward to contribute to any good movement” in Lithgow.⁶⁴ Doctors also came together to protect their own. In October 1892, Orange doctor, George Arbuthrot Van Someren, was sued for alleged unskilled treatment by Catherine McKeon, a widow who kept a boarding house. Five doctors, including Van Someren and the two who assisted him in his treatment of Catherine gave evidence at the trial.

Although the plaintiff was awarded £20 plus costs and the *National Advocate* considered “a great deal of sympathy” should be “felt for the doctor who is one of the best and kindest of men”, it noted the scales of justice were not “equally balanced”. The newspaper also observed that “some of the doctors were very unwilling to say anything that might tell against their brother medico” with “Dr Kelty especially having a very bad memory about some particulars”. At the conclusion of the case Judge Docker queried whether there “were any drugs for curing bad memories”.⁶⁵ There was little camaraderie among the doctors in Cowra. During the diphtheria epidemic, Felix Bartlett, the hospital’s medical officer, supported by the hospital committee, rejected newcomer William Cortis’ request to the Board of Health for tents to help cope with the crisis. Cortis was also unsuccessful in his attempts to secure the medical officer post or to have an additional position instituted battling both Bartlett and the committee.⁶⁶

Although the dispute between Bartlett and Cortis attracted considerable attention in the town there was no suggestion that they were not skilled practitioners unlike Francis Pym Flockton whose expertise was substandard at best.⁶⁷ Rafferty suggests that by the late nineteenth

⁶³ *The Kiama Independent, and Shoalhaven Advertiser* 23 July 1898.

⁶⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Bassett and Maurice Asher.

⁶⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of George Van Someren. Van Someren treated Catherine for chest pains but after a second dose of the prescribed medication McKeon became comatose. She only regained consciousness after being smeared with turpentine and then flicked with towels for over two hours which left her “black and blue”. It appeared there was a mix-up on the dosage of the medication for which Van Someren was blamed. *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 October 1892, *National Advocate* 22 October 1892.

⁶⁶ *Cowra Free Press* 25 February 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Felix Bartlett and William Cortis.

⁶⁷ Ryall *Cowra in Days Gone By*, 119-134. See Appendix 1 for a biography Francis Flockton.

century mainstream doctors such as Bartlett and Cortis, were beginning to enjoy enhanced prestige due to factors such as improved training and “advances in scientific knowledge”. They had also become more successful, she argues, “in marking out their occupational territory and restricting others to lesser ground”.⁶⁸ But proposed legislation to regulate the practice of medicine and surgery had not materialised by 1891, prompting Edward Kinglake to observe that the lack of such laws contributed to New South Wales being the “elysium of quacks”.⁶⁹ A doctor in correspondence to the *Sydney Morning Herald* described them as a

mixed group of individual persons whose knowledge of medicine is in inverse proportion to their happy confidence and cheek, persons who at best have a slight smattering of medicine and between the two extremes persons of all shades. The characteristics of the class, however, are marked by self-assertion and self-confidence and what is not evident to the enlightened public, marked ignorance of medicine and its branches⁷⁰

In April 1893, the *Bathurst Free Press* editorialised on the latest effort to enact a *Medical Practitioners Bill* suggesting that it would protect an unsuspecting public “against imposters, charlatans and ‘quacks’”.⁷¹ But a correspondent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* disputed that the legislation would simply prevent ‘quacks’ from entering into open competition with duly qualified doctors. It is the latter, he claimed, with their high level of charges “which bring into existence the ‘quack doctor’”. He argued that a married man on a limited income simply cannot afford to pay a doctor and goes to ‘quacks’ out of necessity, most likely on the recommendation of friends “who have firm faith in them”.⁷²

Non-registered practitioners operated in the district with impunity. Many people trusted them and were either unaware of, or indifferent to the lack of qualifications despite the efforts of Ludwig Bruck who published a list of unregistered practitioners in 1886.⁷³ In some cases, such as William Turner of Wallerawang and Henry Hinton of Sofala, locals possibly did not know that they were unregistered. It is probable this would not have been of any importance as these men had lived in their districts for many years and were both respected and trusted members of the community. Hinton, for example, was Sofala’s first doctor and by 1891 had

⁶⁸ Rafferty ‘Keeping Healthy’, 33, 34.

⁶⁹ E Kinglake *The Australian at Home Life at the Antipodes Including Useful Hints to Those Intending to Settle in Australia* 1891 40.

⁷⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald* 22 October 1892.

⁷¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 13 April 1892.

⁷² *Sydney Morning Herald* 15 June 1892.

⁷³ L Bruck *When doctors fail: Ludwig Bruck's List of Unregistered Practitioners* (1886) published by P Martyr in the *Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History* (Oct 1997.)

been there for 43 years.⁷⁴ There were others including John Lubienski who were in the category of those having little knowledge of medicine but abounding in “happy confidence and cheek”. Lubienski moved in and around the district during this period. At the beginning of 1891 he advertised as a “Ladies’ specialist” and despatched his “Ladies’ infallible pills” from Sydney but later in the year he resided at Peak Hill. By 1893 he was living at the Burra Burra tin mining field, after having been convicted of culpability in the death of a newborn child and maltreatment of its mother at Narromine in 1892.⁷⁵

Given the distance from Peak Hill to Trundle was sixty miles and from Trundle to Melrose Plains was forty miles, doctors in those areas were in short supply allowing imposters to inveigle their way into local communities. One of these was Trundle resident Albert Florance. In a court case unrelated to his practice, Florance deposed that he had “a knowledge of medicine and was ‘styled ‘Dr Florance’” but was not registered. He also gave evidence on his position in the community but denied under cross-examination that he described himself as “the *man* of Trundle”.⁷⁶ Julius Ziehlke, who was located in Wellington, was of a similar ilk.⁷⁷ According to Kinglake people such as Lubienski, Florance and Ziehlke could practice “according to their own sweet will”. Although qualified, he suggested, doctors enjoy “prestige and social advantage” but “the only other advantage he reaps is his liability to be cast in damages at law if a jury should decide that he had not used sufficient skill or care in the treatment of any case”.⁷⁸

‘Quack’ doctors were not the only unqualified medical practitioners to attract attention. In a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney doctor Thomas Clune called for the *Medical Bill* to be amended to deal with the “gross ignorance and malpractice of so called midwives, who for a “few shillings undertake[s] to perform the duties of accoucheuse at the peril of a valuable

⁷⁴ See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Turner and Henry Hinton.

⁷⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 November 1891, *Cootamundra Herald* 7 February 1891, *Bathurst Free Press* 24 November 1892. In a letter to the editor he wrote complaining that there was no postal service. The conviction was overturned on appeal on the basis that Lubienski had not acted maliciously. *Evening News* 13 July 1893.

⁷⁶ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 18 August 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of John Lubienski, Albert Florance and Julius Ziehlke.

⁷⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 22 October 1892. In 1892 he sued doctor Theodore Barker for a fee for services. Ziehlke had assisted Barker in two operations by administering chloroform and claimed the latter owed him £10. Although Barker did not deny that Ziehlke had assisted him he considered the fee excessive. Notwithstanding that Barker was critical of Ziehlke’s skills during the trial he still, presumably of necessity, was willing to use his services. See Appendix 1 for biography of Theodore Barker.

⁷⁸ Kinglake *The Australian at Home*, 47.

life". He lamented the loss of life and the damage caused to mother and child and contrasted them with the skill, intelligence and kindly care of trained and qualified nurses.⁷⁹

The number of mid-wives living in the district is impossible to determine. Some local histories include stories of women who travelled through their towns or rural districts delivering babies. For instance, the names of nine mid-wives are included in *The Forbes History Book*, including Ada Charlotte Morris who was a "common sight...on a sulky drawn by a horse called Bess...night or day, around Forbes and nearby areas".⁸⁰ Another was Amelia Loftus who came to Parkes with her husband, Thomas, a railway bridge builder, in the 1880s.⁸¹ And Elizabeth Ann Floyd who had ten children of her own "came to Condobolin as a young woman in 1870 and set up a lying-in cottage, as well as attending expectant mothers in their own homes".⁸² Whether Ada, Amelia or Elizabeth had formal training is immaterial. Their expertise had been built up over many years and they were respected and trusted in their local communities and were an indispensable part of the district's social fabric.⁸³

Nursing roles in the district were varied. In addition to hospital matrons and nurses, there were monthly nurses and sick nurses. As with other ordinary women in the Central West, it is difficult to identify individual nurses. Even their roles or how they went about their work can often only be discussed in generalities. By the late nineteenth century, nursing was a respectable vocation for women whose natural attributes, as common belief held, made them instinctive nurturers. An article attributed to *Sylvia's Journal* informs the reader that nurses are not born but are made (and must be trained) but then declares that

If a woman is to be made into a good nurse, her natural feelings of inaccuracy, untidiness, laziness, etc. must be got rid of and all of her good qualities, such as patience and tidiness, must be polished up...Nurses are required to be sober, honest, truthful, trustworthy, punctual, quiet, orderly, cleanly, neat, patient, kind, cheerful, and obedient to the rules of the institution.⁸⁴

By the early 1890s nurse training was important. Many gained their certificates through institutions such as the Lucy Osborn Training School in Sydney or, locally, in public hospitals such as at Bathurst. Some technical schools offered training in 'sick' nursing.⁸⁵ Nurses worked

⁷⁹ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 14 January 1892.

⁸⁰ *The Forbes History Group*, 254.

⁸¹ *Western Champion* 13 September 1928. Tindall Parkes, 163.

⁸² *Condobolin Family and History Group*, 69.

⁸³ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Amelia Loftus and Ann Floyd.

⁸⁴ Published in *The Hay Standard and Advertiser for Balranald* 1 May 1893.

⁸⁵ *Goulburn Penny Post* 7 June 1892.

in public and private hospitals and in private homes, the latter independently, with doctors or through an agency.⁸⁶ Generally the work was hard, frequently dominated by menial chores with long hours and poor remuneration. The position of a matron was different to some extent. Although she occupied a position of authority, she was often challenged by committeemen and doctors and was likely to be inadequately paid.

In Bathurst, matron Marie Herzog's authority was challenged by nurses and the hospital committee.⁸⁷ A minor issue of cleaning a sink accelerated into broader accusations of bullying and insubordination and led to the suspension of nurse Jane Sutherland.⁸⁸ Sutherland took the matter to the hospital committee which instituted an inquiry during which the other nurses complained about Herzog's bad temper and threatened to resign if the matron stayed.⁸⁹ Herzog resigned when the committee failed to support her. The *National Advocate's* support was squarely behind Jane Sutherland. In its editorial on the dispute it made a fleeting reference to "Sairy Gump"⁹⁰. Such a slight could scarcely have escaped anyone's attention. The committee, begrudgingly in some cases, decided not to accept the matron's resignation. Subsequently the nurses were sacked when the board decided that the hospital could reduce expenses by employing more probationers.⁹¹ The annual report noted "their successors are discharging their duties satisfactorily, so that order and discipline again prevail".⁹²

⁸⁶ Mesdames Thompson and Amorous separately advertised as "ladies nurses" in Bathurst. *Bathurst Free Press* 30 June 1891.

⁸⁷ See Appendix 1 for biography of Marie Herzog.

⁸⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of Jane McDonald Sutherland.

⁸⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 2 August, 11 August and 16 August 1892. One of the issues that piqued the committee is that the matron had provided an unsolicited reference for Sutherland to the Molong Hospital, presumably to help move her on. The inconsistency reflected badly on Herzog's credibility. Nellie Ford was one of the nurses at the hospital at the time. See Appendix 1 for biography of Nellie Ford.

⁹⁰ An intimidating, incompetent and often drunk nurse who appears in Charles Dickens' novel, *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

⁹¹ Herzog provided the committee with a list of between 60 and 70 applicants who could replace them and was unmoved when some called on her to appeal for reinstatement. There was no mention of the cost of nursing staff in the 1892 annual report, rather it was intimated that it was the disharmony between the matron and nurses that caused the resignation of the nurses.

⁹² *Bathurst Free Press* 11 October 1892, 14 October 1892, 9 November 1892 and 31 January 1893.



Illustration 76: Marie Herzog

Still the matter lingered. Edmund Webb and others attempted to strip her of the powers to engage and dismiss staff on the basis that “a paid official” should not have the “supreme power to dismiss and engage domestics and others” was unsuccessful”.⁹³ The matron’s authority was again challenged in 1893, this time by Anglican clergyman, Robert Livingston which ended in a public rebuke of the cleric. Although this incident was more about the rights of the clergy ministering to the spiritual health of patients than the matron’s high-handedness. The committee fully supported the matron and visiting rules for ministers were revised.⁹⁴

Marie Hertzog and her nurses are known because of the controversy at Bathurst but it is difficult to identify other such women in the district. Newspaper reports on visits of doctors to the sick or injured only mention, if at all, the attendance of a “nurse”. Where they are identified, only a surname was used. Occasionally more information on matrons is available through appointments. Camilla M Hughes⁹⁵ who had exceptional references, was appointed as matron of Molong Hospital in November 1890. She was replaced by Caroline Doggett in 1892. Twenty-seven applications were received for the matron’s position upon Doggett’s resignation. The committee noted that there were many applications from “ladies who were not trained nurses, and who had had no hospital experience, their only qualifications being

⁹³ *Bathurst Free Press* 6 December 1892.

⁹⁴ Committeeman (and mayor) James Cripps claimed that “Dean Marriott was behind Livingston who was Marriott’s curate, urging him to do the dirty work on his behalf” *Bathurst Free Press* 5 July 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Robert Livingston.

⁹⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of Camilla Hughes.

that they were good housekeepers and had had some experience in nursing the sick". They selected Eleanor Leahy whose testimonials were impressive.⁹⁶ Annie J Dovey who had been the head nurse at Bathurst Hospital for several years, was matron of the Durham Lodge, a private hospital in Bathurst,⁹⁷ until she married William Wright who was employed at the local telegraph office.⁹⁸ Harriette Keyes was matron at Forbes Hospital from 1883 to 1891.⁹⁹

One of the challenges a hospital matron faced was to keep the costs of running the institution as low as possible. Meeting the cost of health care was also a difficulty for many families. When Alfred Jones appeared in the magistrate's court for failing to send his two sons to school, he stated that they had been sick with influenza for around three months but he could "not afford to pay the doctor for a certificate".¹⁰⁰ Sickness in the family was one of the factors attributed to bankruptcies. Brickmakers Walter Reynolds (Forbes) Charles Faringdon (Cowra), Henry Ford (Cowra), William Smith a labourer from Newbridge and Sunny Corner miners James Staines and Richard Davies all cited illness as an issue.¹⁰¹ Cudal farmer and mail contractor Joseph Irvine also attributed sickness in his family for his failure to fully meet a lease payment to miller Samuel Landauer.¹⁰²

Although some doctors in the district may have experienced financial difficulties, Joseph B Durham, a correspondent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* considered doctor's fees too high and the reason for a proliferation of "quacks" in the colony. He also suggested the cost forced people to seek advice from chemists and to join friendly societies.¹⁰³ People would regularly consult chemists who were happy to proffer 'professional' advice and provide cheap drugs, either patents or their own concoctions. Indeed, as Raftery states, "their ministrations were frequently regarded as at least as effective as those of a doctor".¹⁰⁴ In response to a charge of neglecting to send her child to school, Mrs James Barrett stated the child had whooping cough. She did not go the doctor for a medical certificate but asked "what was the use of taking children to the doctor? There was not a doctor in Bathurst who could cure whooping cough

⁹⁶ They included the London Temperance Hospital, Middlesex Hospital College, London Nurses Home, Nurses' Home ' Parramatta. *Molong Express* 30 December 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Eleanor Leahy.

⁹⁷ Durham Lodge was a private surgical and medical private hospital between 1888 and 1890. Drs Spencer and Machattie were joint providers. Barker *A History of Bathurst*, 331. See Appendix 1 for biography of Annie Dodd.

⁹⁸ *National Advocate* 16 April 1892.

⁹⁹ See Appendix 1 for biography of Harriette Keyes.

¹⁰⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 7 March 1892.

¹⁰¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 29 January 1892, *Cowra Free Press* 14 October and 8 December 1892; and *National Advocate* 22 August 1891 and 31 October 1891.

¹⁰² *Joseph Irvine Letterbooks* 8 January 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Samuel Landauer.

¹⁰³ *The Sydney Morning Herald* 15 June 1892.

¹⁰⁴ Raftery 'Keeping Healthy', 283.

and sore eyes".¹⁰⁵ It was not unusual for doctors to work with chemists, as when Orange chemist H De Bacre assisted Dr Van Someren to "patch up" three young ladies who were thrown from a buggy in January 1892 and when Charles T Campbell, provided assistance to Dr Robert Broom when a young man was involved in a serious accident near Cudal.¹⁰⁶

Chemists' activities frequently went beyond dispensing of medicine. Carl Thue Von Bentzen¹⁰⁷ not only gave advice "gratis" but extracted teeth "carefully and painlessly" and always stocked a wide range of drugs for horses, cattle and other animals. According to Raftery these offerings were "real, tangible, actual and substantial....with a great deal of advice flung in ...providing quite the advantage over the medical man".¹⁰⁸ Josiah Parker and Eugene Vanzetti were prominent members of their communities and active in political affairs. They were respectable businessmen but others such as Von Bentzen and William Frederick Caunt were shady characters. In 1893 the latter sued a local dentist, Albert Euerdine, for assault occasioned when Caunt accompanied a female customer to the dentist's premises apparently to support her in a confrontation over a fee.¹⁰⁹ Local dentists, as well as doctors, competed with itinerant practitioners such as Hugo Wain¹¹⁰ who travelled around the district at regular intervals. Wain joined what Porter describes as a "gaggle of herbalists, nurses, wise women, bonesetters, ladies of the house, horse-doctors, empirics, itinerate tooth-drawers, peddlers, showmen, witches, clergymen, barbers, charlatans and so forth"¹¹¹ as alternatives to mainstream medical practice. The most colourful of these was the "Dental King", Ralph Potts. As much a showman as a dentist, he travelled throughout the country districts selling a "magic" balm and other concoctions" as well as extracting... ivories of all ranks and conditions with lightning like rapidity".¹¹² The Medical Clairvoyante and Herbalist, Mrs Mason, also a regular caller, could "diagnose disease without asking any questions".¹¹³

¹⁰⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 27 February 1893.

¹⁰⁶ *Town and Country Journal* 2 July 1892; *National Advocate* 15 January 1892; *Molong Express* 23 September 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Charles Tebbutt Campbell

¹⁰⁷ *Cowra Free Press* 14 October 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Carl Thue Von Bentzen.

¹⁰⁸ Raftery 'Keeping Healthy', 283.

¹⁰⁹ William Frederick Caunt appeared to have conducted a respectable business in Bathurst. He left the town in 1894 and was declared bankrupt in 1895. During these proceedings, he stated that he managed the business for the Australian Drug Co. In 1900 he was sentenced to 5 years in prison for his part role in an abortion case. *The Truth* 15 April 1900.

¹¹⁰ Hugo Wain (1865-1908) travelled throughout the Central West and Western districts. *The Grenfell Record* notes that he died at Kenmore (lunatic asylum) in January 1908 after having been sent there from Grenfell. *Grenfell Record* 11 January 1908.

¹¹¹ Porter 'The Patient's View', 188.

¹¹² *Queanbeyan Age* 24 January 1891; *Singleton Argus* 13 August 1892. By 1895 Potts had moved to Western Australia where he remained until his death in 1944 aged 80. *The Daily News* 14 March 1944.

¹¹³ *Molong Express* 14 March 1891.

Some patent medicines were not much better than Potts, Mason and their peers but were far more accessible, generally more affordable and more widely used. Jennifer Hagger notes that many of the estimated 80,000 American patented drugs by the end of the nineteenth century were sold in Australia.¹¹⁴ Every local newspaper in the Chicago Collection contained advertisements for these drugs. Advertising frequently took the form of 'advertorials' and included a host of testimonials. Not all the claims made or evidence offered were fanciful. Colemane and Sons Eucalyptus Oil, and other eucalyptus based products known to have some therapeutic efficacy, was manufactured in Cootamundra. Colemane's claim that his product had the patronage of Lord Jersey was likely genuine as was the testimony of James C Ryall, editor of the *Cowra Free Press*. The latter would have been quick to renounce any such false declaration.¹¹⁵

The popularity of patents was established in the colony at the time when there were no doctors of any kind in many areas. According to Lynette Finch, some drugs had some success in treating ailments and thus were widely used. One of these was opium which was believed to relieve infant diarrhoea. This disease had a tragically high death rate, partially due, Finch argues, to a combination of "parental complacency" and exploitation by the drug companies. These companies "poured money into advertising which insisted there was no danger".¹¹⁶ But some products were not only unsafe, they were deadly. One example was that of Violet Ann Smith who died in Forbes from the effects of morphia "accidentally administered in a soothing powder". Violet was one of thousands of children who were given "soothing syrups", the most popular being Mrs Winslow's Soothing Syrup and Atkinson's Royal Infants' Preservative and Stedman's Soothing powders. It was the latter that Violet's mother Martha, purchased from Charles Cabot's general store in Forbes and the coroner's conclusion that "it was unsafe to give morphia to children under twelve months' old" would not have provided Martha with much comfort.¹¹⁷ Although, Finch maintains, while deaths such as Violet's gave impetus to the efforts of those campaigning for greater regulation of these drugs, there is no evidence, if sales are any indication, that consumers were alarmed.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Hagger *Australian Colonial Medicine*, 171.

¹¹⁵ Cootamundra is located south of the Central West district, approximately 70 miles from Cowra. Colemane and Sons Eucalyptus Oil was manufactured by Alfred William Colemane (1837-1912) who established a factory there in the 1870s. *Cootamundra Herald* 28 May 1912. In an advertisement in the *Mudgee Guardian* (12 August 1892) Coleman published the contents of a letter he purportedly received from the Governor in which he stated, after having received a sample of the oil, he was "happy to give his patronage as requested as he considers the Eucalyptus are very valuable for many purposes. Ryall testimonial *Lithgow Mercury* 22 July 1892.

¹¹⁶ Finch 'Soothing Syrups and Teething Powders', 92.

¹¹⁷ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 15 March 1892.

¹¹⁸ Finch 'Soothing Syrups', 93.

OPERATIONS DISPENSED WITH.

To Messrs. Colman and Sons, Cootamundra.—Dear Sirs,—I have used the Eucalypte Extract which I got from you, and am now quite out of it. Almost every possible complaint I use it for, including burns, scalds, cuts, bruises, sore throats, colds, chilblains, neuralgia, toothache, &c., and I do not believe there is any complaint it will not cure if persevered with. In ulcerated sore throat or inflamed throat it is invaluable, having had personal experience of the fact very recently. Where children or even adults are badly affected I usually erect a kind of small tent near a fireplace, place a kettle on the fire, and when the water reaches boiling point I pour a quantity of the Eucalypte Extract into the kettle, and attach a long tube to the spout of the kettle, and make the steam play about the patient in the tent. The steam, owing to the distance which it has to travel, when it reaches the patient is thus in a cool form and is not enervating like hot steam. The whole atmosphere in the tent in this manner becomes impregnated with the volatile properties of the Extract, and the patient is not only relieved but stimulated. I have by this means saved the life of one of my children when the medical attendants said that the only means of saving the child's life would be by performing the operation of tracheotomy. In diphtheria I would adopt similar treatment with the addition of swabbing the tonsils and globis frequently with the Extract on a camel's hair brush or feather. Nearly everyone here now uses it.—Faithfully yours, J. C. RYALL, Editor *Cowra Free Press*. Cowra, Aug. 16, 1888.

Illustration 77: Advertisement for Coleman and Sons' Eucalypte Extract

Aside from the use of patents, what most people did when they got sick was to use “domestic medicine”.¹¹⁹ People relied on their own resources and others in the community such as Susan Budd in Parkes. Susan “was noted for her home remedies and herbal ointments, all made from natural ingredients”¹²⁰ and Ann Hogan, a hotel owner at Duckmaloi, was well known as a midwife and being able to “skilfully set a broken bone”.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Martyr *Paradise of Quacks*, 163.

¹²⁰ <https://goldconvictsgrocers.wordpress.com/budd-family/>. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Robert Budd and Susan Budd (née Beck).

¹²¹ *Lithgow Mercury* 29 March 1901.



Illustration 78: Susan Budd (née Beck) and Robert Budd

Whether from comfort and trust in tradition, self-sufficiency, convenience, suspicion of doctors and their medicines, or necessity, home cures were the first option for most. Thomas O’Shaunnessy, for example, used eucalyptus oil to treat his sore ear but he wrote “it drove him mad for about four hours” because “he put too much in”.¹²² Hagger lists multiple treatments, often simple common sense, used mainly by women in the nineteenth century. Families often had a ‘medicine chest’ containing ingredients to prepare domestic remedies handed down from their elders or contained in self-help books, such as *Mrs Beeton’s Book of Household Management*.¹²³ Many newspapers had women’s pages or columns that included articles or hints on most aspects of homemaking. Women were offered advice on personal care and comfort, so that they remained healthy and able to look after their children, and were reminded of their familial duties. Newspapers, particularly during epidemics, frequently published items on how to avoid disease or cure maladies. In 1891, the *Town and Country Journal* ran a series of articles titled ‘Before the Doctor comes’. The first part offered advice on general care of children, fresh care, diet sleep etc., and cautioned that one should not be complacent about a child’s health and a doctor called if necessary. Domestic remedies included using brimstone and treacle as excellent medicine for symptoms such as “hot dry skins, constant thirsts, restlessness at nights and peevishness”. The same approach was adopted in ten subsequent articles on ailments ranging from worms to typhoid.¹²⁴

¹²² *Thomas O’Shaunnessy Diary* 16 January 1892.

¹²³ John R and Alfred Jones’ Book and Stationery Warehouse in Bathurst stocked the new edition of “Mrs Beeton’s” suitable it says “for the mistress, the householder, cook, kitchen maid, butler, footman, coachman, valet, parlor maid, housemaid, lady’s maid, general servant, laundry maid, nursemaid, monthly and sick nurse, or governess. Mrs Beeton’s book is simply invaluable by the addition of legal and medical memoranda, a history of things connected with house life and comforts.” *National Advocate* 18 September 1890. Another example is H P Wicken *The Australian Home: A Handbook of Domestic Economy* (Sydney, Brisbane and London Edwards, Dunlop and Co Limited 1891).

¹²⁴ *Town and Country Journal* August to October 1891. At least two of these articles were also published in the *Bathurst Free Press*.

Women were guardians of the physical well-being of their families, a role that extended outside the home. Matrons, nurses within and outside of hospitals, mid-wives and healers of friends and neighbours were indispensable in safeguarding community health. These include Marie Hertzog and Susan Beck who are among the few women whose individual lives I have been able to uncover. Still their experiences shed some light on the multi-dimensional aspects of the health of ordinary people in the Central West between 1891 and 1893. Other protagonists included respected but proprietorial doctor Felix Bartlett, Julius Ziehkle who preyed on unsuspecting communities and, William Ferrier, an advocate of friendly societies. Members of hospital committees and aldermen of the municipal councils all had responsibilities, which one or two met more than others. Charles Cabot was among the many chemists who sold proprietary medicines, some of which were beneficial, some innocuous but others, such as that which contributed to Violet Ann Smith's death, lethal. The neglect or indifference of the education department compounded the tragedy of a diphtheria epidemic which took the lives of five-year old Josephine Lyons and her brother Frederick. The threat posed to the community through ignorance or unconcern by individuals was widely understood. Not only were these immediate menaces fostering the spread of deadly diseases, such attitudes harboured the belief that good hygiene and cleanliness were elemental to a strong and prosperous society. Thus, this examination of the public and private experiences of everyday people exposes the extent to which good health was essential for a community imbued with the shared values of *gemeinschaft*.

Chapter 9 Recreation

Popular cultural experiences were an intrinsic part of everyday life in late nineteenth century colonial NSW and equally so in the Central West. These experiences encompassed a broad range of activities including large public events such as pastoral and agricultural shows and horse races to intimate musical evenings in private homes. In this chapter I examine the place of popular culture in the fabric of Central West society between 1891 and 1893. In doing this, I follow Richard Waterhouse's strategy for his history of Australian popular culture. Waterhouse states that he was influenced by anthropologist Clifford Geertz's noted description of culture as a "web of significance".¹ Specifically, he set out to "construct the whole "by identifying the threads that held [the web] together".² In the paragraphs that follow I reveal the threads that comprised the cultural "web of significance" in the Central West. These were similar to those in other country districts of the colony at the time. Participating in wholesome sports, parades and banding as well as partaking in less reputable pastimes of gambling, drinking and cards were widespread. I focus on ordinary people and their interaction with these and other amusements within and outside their communities. I also explore institutions such as Schools of Arts and hotels which were often the focus of entertainment and other cultural experiences. As we will see, some forms of entertainment challenged accepted community standards and values but by and large, many recreational and cultural pursuits engendered pride in local achievements and fostered communal belonging.

Sport was one of those pastimes which contributed to the cohesiveness of local communities. In Brian Stoddard's words, sport "raised, formed and preserved social expectations, attitudes, behaviours and codes."³ During the time studied here, all kinds of sport were an indispensable part of colonial society. Indeed, according to Edward Dowling "enjoying life among all classes of society by means of outdoor sports was one of the three achievements Australians had pride in, the others being "colonising the greater part of the Australian Continent and adjacent Pacific Islands" and "solving several important political problems before other countries".⁴ In 1893 the *Town and Country Journal* deemed cricket, athletics (particularly foot racing and pedestrianism), football, shooting and horse racing, to be among the most popular in the colonies and all these were prevalent in the Central West.⁵

¹ Geertz 'Thick Description', 5.

² Waterhouse *Private Pleasures*, ix.

³ Stoddard 'The Hidden Influence of Sport', 35.

⁴ Dowling *Australia and America*, v.

⁵ *Town and Country Journal* 16 December 1893. Rugby Union was the football code.

Horse racing was widespread in the district with jockey clubs and race courses, albeit rudimentary at times, located in many towns. The establishment of these facilities, according to John O'Hara, often occurred in the early stages of a town's development to enhance a "district's self-image". As observed by the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* in an editorial critical of the management of the Forbes Jockey Club, it was "too absurd to be contemplated" that the town should be without a club.⁶ O'Hara also notes that squatters wanted to be part of "an institution which traditionally conferred social standing and political influence."⁷ But races were popular among all classes evidenced by the Canowindra races held in March 1893. Robert Rice, described by the *Cowra Free Press* as the "lord of the manor", provided a portion of his Glastonbury estate for the annual races, "fashionably attired ladies in well-appointed vehicles and on horseback" attended, businesses closed and prominent citizens, John Grant, Eugene and John Finn, officiated. On the other hand the local police were on hand to deal with the troublemakers and metallicians "who figured in full force roaring out the odds with leathern lungs in that energetic manner characteristic of those peculiar gentry".⁸

Clearly these were important occasions for local communities and, as Waterhouse suggests, country races had a "wider social purpose" bringing together people from a range of backgrounds to a "shared public culture".⁹ Race meetings throughout the district were often held at festive times including Easter, St Patrick's Day and Boxing Day attracting people from far and wide. In many towns the races took place over three or four days with people from the surrounding rural areas and other towns filling up hotel accommodation.¹⁰ In 1891, visitors swelled the crowd of 4,400 people who attended the Parkes' Jockey Club three-day meet at Easter and at Back Creek near Cowra, many out-of-towners were among the 400 people who celebrated St Patrick's Day at the races.¹¹

Attracting big crowds was a problem when events were scheduled for the same day in other towns. The *National Advocate* reported that races were scheduled at Lithgow, Molong, Carcoar, Sofala, Wellington and Dubbo on Boxing Day. The newspaper pronounced this state of affairs to be unsatisfactory and suggested that Western District clubs conduct a ballot for

⁶ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 24 April 1892.

⁷ O'Hara 'The Jockey Club', 212, 214.

⁸ *Cowra Free Press* 18 March 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Robert Rice, Robert Chivers, Eugene and John Finn.

⁹ Waterhouse *The Vision Splendid*, 139.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 133.

¹¹ O'Shaunnessy diary records races at Chivers' hotel Boxing Day 1891 and 1892 and St Patrick's Day 17 March 1893, *Cowra Free Press* 1 May 1891. O'Shaunnessy notes a performance by the Japanese circus in the evening. following the Morongla Creek Races Diary 25 April 1891.

the “most attractive days” .¹² This proposal provided an opportunity to develop a district identity for mutual benefit but this did not occur and in any case, it was unlikely to supplant the stronger bonds of local community traditions.

From October to April, cricket was the most popular sport in towns and villages across the district and as discussed by Clive Forster, it was an “important element in the life of the community”. In identifying phases in the development of the game in country areas in South Australia, he notes that the game evolved from purely social outings to competitions where winning was more important, engendering greater disputes and prompting the formation of associations, which in Central West was the Western Districts Cricket Association.¹³ Between 1891 and 1893 matches played in the district varied in purpose and participants represented differing communities of interest. The classlessness of the game is evident in some informal matches that occurred in the district. Shearers from Jemalong, Warroo and Burrawang stations competed as did North Condobolin station employees and Condobolin cricketers. Teams from Molong and railway engineers working on the Molong to Parkes railway extension, Orange Land Office employees and bank officials, Cowra clerks and ‘all-comers’ and ‘married and singles’ at Wattle Flat participated in games as did Molong bank officers and all-comers who defeated the town’s civil servants in a match in December 1893. The latter team included police officers, Horace Talkes, Jonathon Atkinson and William Justinius, teacher Albert Bridekirk, post and telegraph master Jim Say, land office employee Jim Keenan and the Clerk of Petty Sessions Henry Chippindall. The victors were more ‘all-comers’ than bankers with Benjamin J Bowler (butcher), Alexander Beveridge (draper and alderman), Daniel Gilsenan (clergyman) and George H Tempest (bank manager). Local government was not left out with the Parkes Council inviting the Forbes Council to a friendly match. Even the choir of All Saints Cathedral in Bathurst formed a club but there is no report on any matches they may have played.¹⁴

More regular fixtures occurred between villages and towns. John C Ryall, editor of the *Cowra Free Press*, wrote “that cricket matches are arranged between towns for the purpose of

¹² *National Advocate* 12 December 1891.

¹³ C Forster ‘Sport, Society and Space: The Changing Geography of Country Cricket in South Australia 1836-1914’ *Sporting Traditions* 2 no 2 (1986): 24, 43. The Western Districts Cricket Association encompassed a number of Central West clubs.

¹⁴ *Town and Country Journal* 11 April 1891, 29 October 1892. *Bathurst Free Press* 23 May 1893; *National Advocate* 29 October 1892, 5 January 1893, 17 March 1893, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 3 October 1893, 10 October 1893, *Molong Express* 2 December 1893; *Cowra Free Pres*, 3 April 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Horace Talkes, Jonathon Atkinson, William Justinius, Albert Bridekirk, Jim Say, James Keenan, Henry Chippinall, Benjamin Bowler, Alexander Beveridge, Daniel Gilsenan and George Tempest.

advancing the sport and for no other motives beyond friendly games with neighbours".¹⁵ Ryall was criticising the Blayney cricket team, which disputed several decisions in a match against Cowra in 1892. This friendly spirit though, was lacking in Ryall's report on the match between Cowra and Carcoar. The latter won the match but only by engaging in "contemptible dodgery to avert defeat".¹⁶ Although some nastiness was evident in these games, newspaper reports generally focussed on the match, the prowess or the inadequacies of the players and a ball-by-ball description of the play. Women often provided refreshments particularly luncheon which in some towns, could be lavish affairs. Multiple toasts and salutations, including to the ladies, were important rituals appearing, at times, to be almost as important as the match itself.

No sooner had the cricket season ended than football kicked off. According to Peter Horton, there were no class restrictions on participation.¹⁷ Fixtures also reflected communities of interest. Collegiate school communities, Saint Stanislaus and All Saints Colleges and Coerwull Academy (and the Technical College) played regularly between 1891 and 1893; and, teams from Orange and Bathurst competed in a Senior Badge competition. A union of Western District clubs was formed to select representative sides to play against other districts or other colonies like the game played against a New Zealand side in front of 3,000 spectators from outlying districts.¹⁸ It is difficult to determine how many women attended football matches. The niceties that accompanied hospitality at cricket matches were not followed here, with after-match celebrations held at hotels. But women attended the New Zealand match with the *National Advocate* reporting that there was seating available in the grandstand for any ladies who wanted it and they were among a crowd of 700 who attended a game between Bathurst and Orange, notwithstanding the appalling weather.¹⁹

Women were active participants in some sports, particularly tennis. By the end of the 1880s, according to according to Ray Crawford, tennis opened the way for women to enter a much wider sporting world and participate in a physical and social environment where there was less prohibition."²⁰ Tennis clubs were located in townships across the district. Women were generally 'associate' members although this was not the case in Forbes where a ladies' lawn

¹⁵ *Cowra Free Press* 24 December 1892.

¹⁶ *Cowra Free Press* 23 January 1892.

¹⁷ P Horton 'Rugby Union Football in the Land of the Wallabies, 1874-1949: same game, different ethos' *The International Journal for the History of Sport* 26:11 (2009).

¹⁸ *National Advocate* 27 July 1893.

¹⁹ One of the more curious aspects of feminine involvement in this game is the description of the ball as "she" in the newspaper report resulting in a somewhat tasteless narrative. *Bathurst Free Press* 17 July 1893.

²⁰ R Crawford 'Moral and Manly: Girls and Games in Earlier Twentieth Century Melbourne 1901-1925' in S A Mangan and R J Park *From Fair Sex to Feminism: Sport and the Socialization of Women in the Industrial and Post-industrial Era* (Oxon: Routledge Abington 2004) 185.

tennis club with a foundation membership of approximately twenty women was formed in April in 1892. Lillie Vanzetti and Annie Kingsmill whose husband Luke was the local postmaster, were office-holders.²¹ Minnie Ross and Anna Velvin were among the teachers who played in a competition between Molong and Orange Primary schools²² and in Mudgee where tennis was particularly popular, the women's tennis matches were as fulsomely reported in the newspapers as the men's. The players were from both the upper echelons of the town's society and the town's middle class. Fanny Kellett (daughter of storeowner William Kellett) and Florence Minnie Cox (daughter of pastoralist George Henry Cox), for instance, were both regular players.²³ Hence, as Waterhouse suggests and noting the participation of the public school teachers, the wives of local business men and squatter's daughters, tennis promoted "both social elitism and egalitarianism".²⁴



Illustration 79: Suggested costume for lady tennis players Backhand technique

Crawford's premise applies equally to other sports. The skilled horsemanship of women was occasionally acknowledged in newspaper reports. Ladies participating in a hare drive at

²¹ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 15 April 1892.

²² The event was organised by Albert Bridekirk and Dennis Barrett, head teachers of Molong and Orange respectively. Edward Ewens from Molong was another teacher. *Molong Express and Western District Advertiser* 4 November 1893.

²³ *Sydney Morning Herald* 5 July 1893.

²⁴ Waterhouse *The Vision Splendid*, 143. Egalitarianism was clearly lacking when the Bathurst Tennis Club "black-balled" two young bank clerks who were new to the town because "they were too little known." *National Advocate* 25 April 1893.

Oberon were “deserving of great praise”²⁵ and at the Manildra “ploughing match and horse parade” where the ladies “were numerous and good”.²⁶ Women also competed in show jumping and other horse displays which were major attractions and keenly contested at annual agricultural shows. The *Cowra Free Press* declared that the “chief attraction” on the second day of the 1892 Cowra show was the “trail of ladies’ hunters”. It noted that two competitors, Miss E Watson from Grenfell and Ada Badham “are fearless intruded horsewomen and the skilful manner in which they steered their steeds over the jumps elicited hearty applause from the spectators.”²⁷

The inclusiveness experienced by some of these women did not extend to many sports. Unsurprisingly Aborigines faced greater exclusion although they participated in show-jumping as evidenced by the *Molong Express’* report on the “foolishness” of “a blackfellow” when he failed to take a horse jump at the Cumnock show.²⁸ Unfortunately the extent of Aboriginal involvement in these types of events is almost impossible to determine. Presumably the Cumnock incident was only reported because of the supposed incompetency of the rider. There is little doubt, though, about the participation of Aborigines in foot racing and pedestrianism. The latter was a serious business with races for both amateurs and professionals held throughout the district. Handicaps for the major events were published prior to the event. In Molong, for example, about forty runners from eleven towns in the district nominated for the Forester’s Grand Handicap held in January 1891.²⁹ Protests were common particularly against “cronk runners”, usually strangers who won all before them.³⁰ Some outsiders were welcome, noting that bona-fide navvies working on the construction of the railway from Molong to Parkes were invited to compete in a designated “navvies’ race” at the Molong Oddfellows’ sports.³¹ Despite concerns that locals could be disadvantaged by unscrupulous outsiders, organisers relied on entry fees to be able to stage the races at all. Local newspapers regularly published the results of the lucrative events held in Sydney (and in other colonies) where Aboriginal runners were well known competitors. Charlie Samuels, Larry and Jack Marsh and Fred Kingsmill were among Aboriginal “peds” whose names appeared

²⁵ *National Advocate* 3 August 1892.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 24 September 1892.

²⁷ *Cowra Free Press* 30 September 1892 Stella rode Mr W R Watt’s black horse, and Miss Badham rode Mr Riddle’s ‘Streaklight’. See Appendix 1 for biography of Ada Badham.

²⁸ The newspaper was critical of the rider’s attempt but noted that although he landed “on his head” and was treated by Dr Devlin for “concussion of the brain... after tea [he] was walking about, apparently none the worse for his mishap”. *Molong Express* 30 May 1891.

²⁹ *Molong Express* 17 January 1891. The towns were Molong, Bathurst, Orange, Yeoval, March, Mullion Creek, Forest Reefs, Peak Hill, Cudal and Parkes.

³⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 2 February 1893, *Molong Express* 3 January 1891.

³¹ *Molong Express* 14 November 1891.

regularly as winners.³² Most of these elite runners did not venture beyond the metropolitan area although Fred Kingsmill competed in the Boxing Day Sports in Bathurst in 1890.³³ Other Aboriginal competitors travelled through the country districts. For instance two runners, Boland and Goolagong, competed at the Anniversary Day sports at Forbes in 1892 and nominated for the Sheffield Handicap held in Eugowra in May 1893.³⁴ The prowess of Aboriginal runners was acknowledged and respected. In reporting on the oncoming Lodge of Oddfellows' sports at Cudal, the *Molong Express* quipped that "here's a chance now for some of those ' blokes' who are so fond of talking about their pace on the track, to lower Charlie Samuels' record of 14 and one-tenth seconds for 150 yards".³⁵ Also in January 1892, the *Bathurst Free Press* lamented the death of Paddy Doyle who had previously been a tracker with the Bathurst police.³⁶

The social calendars of rural communities were peppered with these 'Sports' held on special days including the Queen's Birthday and Anniversary Day. They were also part of St Patrick's Day and Easter traditions as were parades and processions. According to Andrew Brown-May and Maja Graham, parades were a potent demonstration of identity and communal belonging.³⁷ They were often lavish. The welcome parades for vice-regal visits to Mudgee and Bathurst were possibly the most extravagant in the district between 1891 and 1893. At Mudgee, Vincent Dowling³⁸ drove the Jerseys around the streets in his four-in-hand and, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "the whole place was gay with flowers and a number of triumphal arches had been erected at principal street crossings." The occasion was doubtless an opportunity for the upper echelon of Mudgee society to shine but there was also "a long procession of buggies, dogcarts and other vehicles and people on horseback". Indeed, allowing that his comments were made at an exclusive banquet, pastoralist Richard Rouse observed that the "demonstrative welcome was indicative of the 'democratic spirit'".³⁹ Perhaps a more compelling display of democracy was at Gulgong where 1,500 people witnessed shearers march in procession around the town headed by a band and banners.⁴⁰

³² Tatz 'Aborigines in Sport'. See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biographies of Jack Marsh and Charlie Samuel.

³³ *National Advocate* 27 December 1890 and 20 February 1891.

³⁴ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 23 May 1893, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 26 January 1892.

³⁵ *Molong Express* 14 October 1893.

³⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 8 January 1892.

³⁷ Brown-May and Graham 'Better than a play', 3-13.

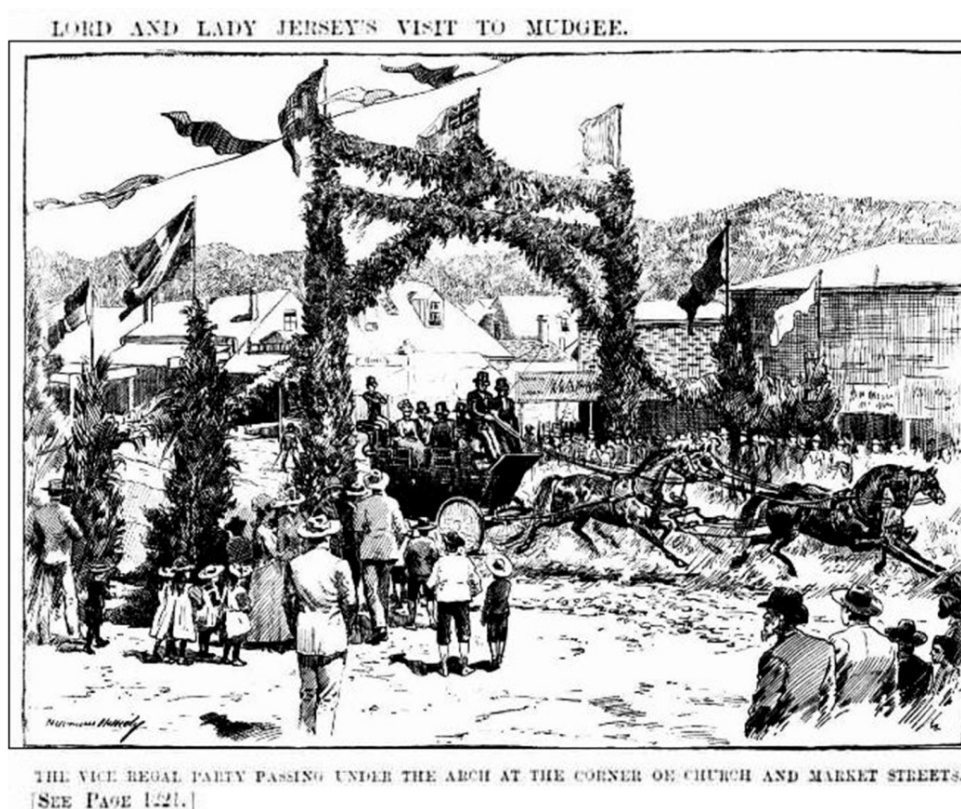
³⁸ See Appendix 1 for biography of Vincent Dowling.

³⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 and 20 May 1892.

⁴⁰ *Ibid* 2 January 1892.

More modest events included the opening of the new Oddfellows' hall at Sofala or spontaneous events like the Salvation Army procession in Orange.⁴¹

Illustration 80



Brass bands featured at these events and many others in the district throughout 1891 and 1893. During the late nineteenth century, bands in many country towns were part of the fabric of local communities providing, as suggested by Kingston, “a focus for social activity”.⁴² John Whiteoak also describes country banding as sharing “the particular social and cultural advantages of belonging to a town or regional community”.⁴³ The spectacle of smart uniforms, gleaming instruments and the regular public performances ensured they were an integral part of multiple community celebrations whether marking a special milestone such as the “public christening of Emmett and Hughes’ plant for hauling quartz” at Hill End, playing the ‘Dead March’ at the funeral of prominent Bathurst Oddfellow John Evans or entertaining visitors to the Grenfell Wildflower show.⁴⁴

⁴¹ *Bathurst Free Press* 19 January 1892.

⁴² Locations included Wellington, Parkes, Hartley Vale, Blayney, Mudgee, Lithgow, Molong, Gulgong, Grenfell, Sunny Corner, Forbes, Orange, Oberon, Peak Hill and Hill End. Kingston *Glad and Confident Morning*, 228.

⁴³ Whiteoak ‘Pity the Bandless Towns’, 301.

⁴⁴ *Bathurst Free Press* 25 January 1892, *National Advocate* 27 July 1891, *Evening News* 12 November 1891.

Duncan Bytell argues that they gave participants a sense of “conviviality and camaraderie”.⁴⁵ The Imperial Band which comprised workers from the Eskbank iron works, for example, performed at the opening of new machinery at the works playing “inspiring marches...attired in ordinary iron workers clothes”.⁴⁶ In April 1891, the same band entertained approximately 400 ironworkers and their families at a picnic given by James Rutherford at his Hereford property.⁴⁷ Sunny Corner also had a miners’ band which performed at the sixth anniversary celebrations of the Sunday school, reinforcing ties between mining and the local church community.⁴⁸

Rivalry between the larger towns to perform at important occasions was common although whether this was to the extent of brass band “tribalism” as suggested by Mark Pinner is questionable.⁴⁹ Certainly there was animosity between the Bathurst bands when the less credentialed Bathurst Independent Band was preferred over the Bathurst District Band in the awarding of tenders for the 1892 Eight-hour day demonstration. The insult was compounded with a Lithgow band also being engaged.⁵⁰ Winning tenders was not just a matter of pride but the payments were critical for a band’s survival. Sustaining a band was not easy. The *Molong Express* reported in November 1891 that the recently formed Cudal band was likely to fold as the “prime-mover” and financier had left town⁵¹ and at Bathurst, the *National Advocate* appealed to the Bathurst community to support the District Band, referring to the sacrifices made by the members, all of whom were “working men”.⁵² Of course tracing details on these working men or participants in other towns is hard but it would appear several worked at the railway workshop⁵³ They also included a railway worker, coachbuilder, funeral director, bill ringer, builder, saddler, funeral director and newspaper compositor.⁵⁴

⁴⁵ Bythell ‘The Brass Band in the Antipodes’, 230.

⁴⁶ *National Advocate* 16 January 1894.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 20 April 1891.

⁴⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 8 November 1890. There was also a Fire Brigade Band at Bathurst. *Bathurst Free Press* 2 November 1893 and a United Friendlies Societies Brass Band at Molong. *Molong Express* 31 January 1891.

⁴⁹ M Pinner *A History of Brass Bands in New South Wales 1788-1901* Master of Arts (Hons) (Sydney Macquarie University September 2004) 9.

⁵⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 17 September 1892. The Independent Band was only formed in March 1892.

⁵¹ *Molong Express* 28 November 1891.

⁵² *National Advocate* 11 July 1891.

⁵³ These could include James Pettit, J W Gilbert,, R Gilbert D Rowan, and A J Northey were among the band members who signed a testimonial to Samuel Lewins at the annual meeting of the band in 1894. *Bathurst Free Press* 12 May 1894. See Appendix 1 for biography of James Pettit.

⁵⁴ Members of various bands around the district included James Appleby, Samuel Lewins and Absalom Gartrell (Bathurst), Walter and Alfred Mead and Thomas David Oxley (Peak Hill), William Daly and William Acret (Molong), Samuel Guest (Mudgee), Owen J Howard, Jack Best, James Cock, William Keast, Robert Budd and Michael Heraghty (Parkes), *Peak Hill Times* 6 August 1892 *Mudgee Guardian* 12 October 1936, Samuel Peveril, Price Guest and Edward Henry Randolph Beech at Wellington.



The original Parkes Town Band, 1893. Left to right, those pictured included (standing) N. G. Spicer, W. Bligh, E. S. Neowhouse, A. Nash, W. H. Rogan, W. Angus, P. F. McGee, W. F. Britz, A. Webb, (sitting) W. McGuinness, C. T. Fitzgerald, M. J. Heraghty (bandmaster), W. Ritchie, J. Job, E. Bligh.

Illustration 81: Parkes Town Band 1893

Bands also played at indoor functions including concerts and balls. The latter were regularly held as fundraisers for specific causes and charities particularly hospitals. Women who were often the wives of civic leaders and businessmen usually comprised the organising committees for these benevolent occasions. Edith Beith helped co-ordinate preparations for the Mudgee Hospital Ball in 1891, Constance Ranken, wife of pastoralist William Rankin, was president of the Bathurst committee ball in 1892, Elizabeth Phillips was president of the executive committee for the Cowra event in 1892 and Annie Kingsmill was a member of the Forbes committee at Forbes.⁵⁵ Occasionally the women who undertook this work were recognised for their efforts in newspaper reports but the descriptions of the ball gowns of some of the more renowned ladies generally took precedence. These balls were public events, open to all who could afford to purchase tickets, although it is clear that only those of a particular social milieu would be expected to attend. Generally, attendees were respectable folk from towns and occasionally surrounding farms, rather than the squattocracy who often held their own events, the 'Wooyeo' Ball⁵⁶ or bachelor and spinster balls in decked-out woolsheds being examples. The latter were a favoured entertainment beyond the upper class. They were held in smaller

See Appendix 1 for biographies of Samuel Lewins, Edward Henry Randolph Beech, Absalom Gartrell, Walter and Alfred Mead, Thomas David Oxley, William Daly, William Henry Acret, Samuel Peveril Price Guest, Bill [William] Keast, and Michael Heraghty.

⁵⁵ *Town and Country Journal* 30 April 1891, *National Advocate* 28 October 1892, *Cowra Free Press* 5 August 1892.

⁵⁶ *Cootamundra Herald* 10 May 1893.

towns, villages and settlements, just for fun or for fund-raising. At Moorilda, for instance, twenty-five couples got together to raise funds “to carry the shearer boys down the Bogan”.⁵⁷

Local amateur productions and concerts as fundraisers were also commonplace throughout the district. Larger productions often included performances of popular drama and comedies. In 1891 the Forbes amateur group staged a “Musical, Dramatic and Spectacular Entertainment” featuring an overture by Professor L Guidobono”.⁵⁸ Not so far behind the metropolis in late 1892, the Cowra Amateur Club staged Don Boucicault’s “Octoroon” as a benefit for the Poor Relief Fund.⁵⁹ Generally, performances attracted and were expected to attract favourable reviews, seen as a reward for effort, recognition of service and an expression of pride in local talent. Not surprisingly then, an article in the *Molong Express* which was less than complementary of some of the performances at a fund raiser for St John’s Anglican Church, was roundly condemned. This indignation which is comparable to the denunciation of Joseph Wren for his comments on farmers reflects the resentment felt when there was a threat to communal bonds. The newspaper was unapologetic and retorted that “a notice becomes ridiculous and brings the man who wrote it into contempt when it contains nothing but praise and praise is too often bestowed where it has not been merited”.⁶⁰

There was no shortage of professional shows. According to Waterhouse, the commercialisation of theatre in late nineteenth century rural Australia was “probably the most complete and dramatic of any rural cultural institution”.⁶¹ The growth of towns and the spread of railways provided the market and the means for a “myriad of travelling companies” to tour the country districts including the Central West. He also suggests that these kind of entertainments “became important conduits for urban popular culture...allowing rural Australians access to the same values and entertainment as their urban counterparts”.⁶² Numerous dramatic and entertainment companies including the well-known Dan Barry, the Payne family of bellringers and the Montague-Turner Opera Company, regularly toured towns throughout the district. The opera company enjoyed considerable success notwithstanding the *National Advocate’s* assessment of the plebeian taste of Bathurst residents. In response to a poor attendance at an “Evening with Mendelssohn” organised by Hamilton Maynard, the newspaper declared that the evening’s entertainment “distinctly classical character [was]

⁵⁷ *National Advocate* 11 August 1893.

⁵⁸ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 27 November 1891. See Appendix 1 for a biography of Professor L Guidobono.

⁵⁹ *Cowra Free Press* 12 November 1892. The play had been performed at the Sydney’s Gaiety Theatre in 1891 *Sydney Morning Herald* 26 January 1891.

⁶⁰ *Molong Express* 7 October 1893.

⁶¹ Waterhouse *Private Pleasures*, 144.

⁶² *Ibid*, 151.

distasteful to the majority of Bathurst residents”.⁶³ Similarly, when few people attended a classical orchestral concert, the *National Advocate*’s Orange correspondent commented that “the music is too high-class for this place. People here don’t want Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Wallace. ‘Down went McGinty’ with a Jew’s harp accompaniment, to be followed by a silver-belt jig dance would probably draw a crowded house”.⁶⁴

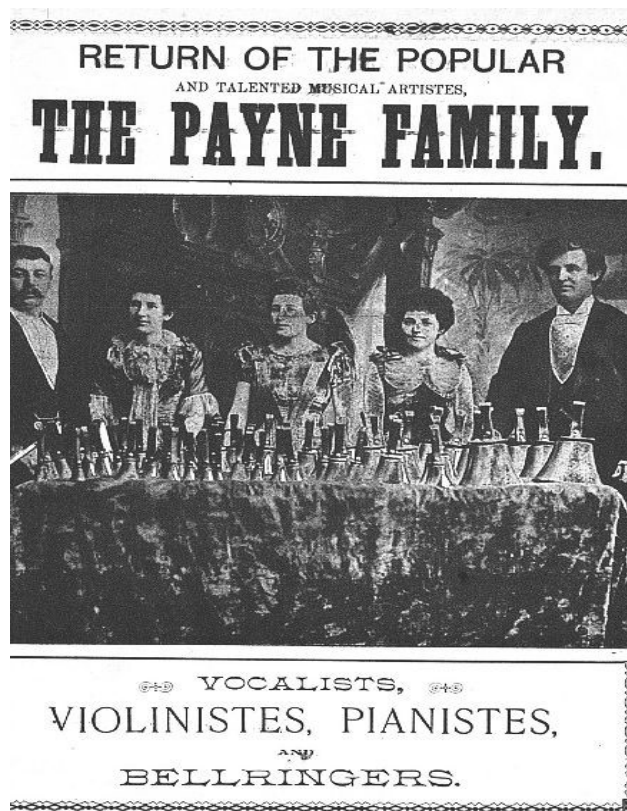


Illustration 82: Flyer for Payne Family performance in Cowra

Many leisure activities were associated with Schools of Arts or Mechanics Institutes.⁶⁵ These institutions, described by Philip Candy as “about as ubiquitous as country pubs, local churches and one-teacher schools” were an important part of popular culture.⁶⁶ Their premises provided a venue for a variety of entertainment including roller skating, travelling dramatic companies, concerts, flower shows and valedictories. Not everyone approved of the facilities being put to such uses. In Parliament during an estimates debate, Gustave Miller lamented that “young people in country districts did not appreciate schools of art” which were used, he asserted, mainly for concerts and “dancing saloons”. The Minister for Public Instruction, Francis Suttor, “thought they were very beneficial institutions, but he certainly objected to

⁶³ *Bathurst Free Press* 15 March 1893.

⁶⁴ *National Advocate* 10 March 1891.

⁶⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 March 1892.

⁶⁶ Candy ‘The Light of Heaven Itself’ 2.

having the buildings devoted to public variety entertainments and so forth.”⁶⁷ However they were often the only suitable venue in the town and revenue received from rentals was useful if not essential. Besides most communities assumed that the halls were available for a variety of purposes.



Illustration 83: Mudgee Mechanics Institute

By 1891 Schools of Arts had evolved from those established in the large cities from the 1820s onwards. These had been based on the English model and were initiated by moral reformers seeking to improve the social condition of the working classes. By the end of the nineteenth century the emphasis was less on reform, according to the *Molong Express*, than “providing the means for manual education and the exchange of ideas ...and a variety of reading to the public”.⁶⁸ In small communities, newly settled or more remote areas, the construction of a School of Arts building was an important milestone. Many of the larger towns in the district had purpose built facilities in contrast to the smaller settlements. At Rockley, subscriptions totalling approximately £164 were raised and with the £ to £ government subsidy, a new building was opened in 1891 and at Marsden “the first ever children’s concert was followed by a ball and supper with £20 raised towards” erecting a building.⁶⁹ When the Spring Hill community appealed to the government to assist in the establishment of a facility in the Temperance Hall, the Department sent maps, “books and publications [that] as are usually sent to Schools of Art”.⁷⁰ Many of the institutions struggled to attract those who were

⁶⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 March 1892. Gustave Miller was the member for Monaro.

⁶⁸ *Molong Express* 31 January 1891.

⁶⁹ *National Advocate* 28 August 1891, *Sydney Mail* 2 December 1893.

⁷⁰ Among the maps and diagrams were Maps of the World, Europe, Asia and Australia, and geological chemical and botanical diagrams as well as a Brays Diagrams of Physiology”. K Cook *A History Springs to*

intended to benefit most and they “became the stamping ground of clerks, school teachers and business men”.⁷¹ The committee of the Mudgee’s Mechanics’ Institute determined to adopt a scheme to attract young men to its reading room while Molong’s committee extended its library and reading room hours to include Saturday for “those who cannot well attend at night its library”.⁷² The secretary of the Lithgow institution despaired that

the institution during its varied life of 20 years has been looked upon and spoken of as a useless excrescence by two classes in this town and has considerably suffered from the railings on the one hand of the superciliously and painfully clever and the densely ignorant on the other. Apart from every other consideration the fact that a large number of youths find a counter attraction in the tainted air of the billiard room and the glittering fanfaronade of the public-house is a sufficient answer to both.⁷³

Annual and monthly meetings of the Schools of Arts’ committees were reported in local newspapers and were occasionally in the country sections of Sydney newspapers. Publications such as the *Australian Year Books* often listed the names of office-holders and sometimes included the number of books held in the organisations’ libraries. Annual meetings disclosed information on membership, number of books and income. For example, in early 1893, Forbes had 3,222 volumes in circulation, 150 new books, subscriptions of approximately £95, a subsidy of £72 and £68 from the use of the hall and £6 from concerts. Unfortunately, it had a decline in membership (from 98 to 90).⁷⁴ In January 1891 at Molong it was reported that there had been an increase in membership and a £50 reduction in debt notwithstanding a continuous struggle to maintain the interest of the community. The *Molong Express* was a tireless campaigner for the institute lauding the efforts of committees and censuring those who “sneered” at these efforts but were happy to “saunter” into the library and read the newspaper. This was also an issue at Forbes where the committee resolved to charge 2s 6d per quarter for those “monopolising the papers to the inconvenience of members”.⁷⁵

Candy’s suggestion that Schools of Arts had become the domain of teachers and bankers was true of committee membership across the district. Teachers included Albert S Bridekirk

Mind A History of Spring Hill together with the surrounding villages of Bloomfield, Gosling Creek, Huntley, Spring Terrace and Springside (Orange: Orange City Council 2001) 36.

⁷¹ G Davison ‘Mechanics Institutes’ in Davison (et al) *Oxford Companion History of Australian History*, 422.

⁷² *Sydney Mail* 11 February 1892, *Molong Express* 13 June 1891.

⁷³ *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 25 May 1895.

⁷⁴ *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 28 April 1893.

⁷⁵ *Molong Express* 21 March 1891, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 28 April 1893, *Sydney Mail* 4 February 1893.

(Carcoar), Thomas Howard (Cumnock) David Colleton (Canowindra) and William Bootle (Forbes). George Tempest (Molong), Joseph Derwin (Carcoar), Frederick Piddington (Cudal), James Brodribb (Mudgee) and Charles Toole (Rockley) were among the bank managers or employees. Crown land agent Robert Officer (Condobolin), solicitor Alfred Mayhew (Blayney), the Rev W Howell (Blayney), shop keeper Nicholas Osberg (Eugowra) and many other townsmen were also patrons. Occasionally aldermen and members of parliament held office, particularly in Bathurst where many were members of other civic organisations.⁷⁶

The best efforts of some committeemen to adhere to rational recreation, which remained an objective towards the end of the nineteenth century, often went unrewarded. A host of debating and improvement societies staging mock elections and ‘parliaments’, and academically oriented lectures by guest speakers on Australian literature and Charles Dickens or the like met with mixed success. Attendance at more technical talks on butter and cheese making or wheat and sheep farming from agricultural department staff fared little better, although Milne-Curran’s lectures on all geology (particularly gold) were popular throughout the district. The lack of enthusiasm prompted the *Molong Express* to lament that the “rising generation” showed little interest in self-improvement or intellectual pursuits.⁷⁷ At the other end of the scale Bathurst jeweller, Richard Wentworth Hunt, had to remind fellow committee member Reverend Archibald Geikie when the latter complained that there were too many “publications of purely a professional nature” (one of which was the *Railway Gazette*) that the organisation was a Mechanics Institute.⁷⁸

James Torpy and president of the Orange School of Arts disliked some reading material. The politician and newspaper owner sought to ban novels, to the extent of offering a prize for the best essay on the “pernicious effects of novel reading”. The Orange correspondent to the *National Advocate* was unimpressed by both Torpy’s pretensions and the lofty ideals of the School of Arts. “What a splendid thing it would be” it claimed sardonically, “if the workingman after getting up at six in the morning, and breaking stones till six at night, would then come to the School of Arts and read Stuart Mill’s ‘Political Economy’ till midnight. But, alas! The workingman will do no such thing and the other classes mostly read novels”.⁷⁹ Novels were very popular. In the Bathurst School of Arts catalogue, fiction comprised almost the same

⁷⁶ *Evening News* 2 October 1891. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Nicholas Osberg, Frederick Piddington, Alfred Mayhew, William Bootle and James Brodribb.

⁷⁷ *Molong Express* 21 March 1891.

⁷⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 3 March 1891, 9 February 1892 and 5 February 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Richard Hunt.

⁷⁹ *National Advocate* 22 November 1892 and 2 August 1892.

number of volumes as all the other categories combined.⁸⁰ Unfortunately, perusing the list of the hundreds of works of fiction in the catalogue does not help determine the most popular titles. Some indication of readership can be gleaned from the list of books being offered for sale by Jones' bookshop in a special advertising feature. Adventure tales and sentimental stories with religious overtones including Jules Verne, Grace Aguilar, Edward Payson Roe, 'Pansy' (Isabella McDonald Alden), Harriet Beecher Stowe and Maria Susanna Cummins dominated.⁸¹ Hector Lamond, editor of the *Carcoar Chronicle*, advertised that he could source any book from any advertised catalogue but he singled out "novelettes" and self-help volumes while George R Sims' "Book of Ballads" was one of a handful of new titles added to the Molong School of Arts library in 1891.⁸² For those unable or uninterested in purchasing books or using Schools of Arts' libraries, newspapers and other journals provided a broad range of reading material. As Elizabeth Morrison suggests "locally produced newspapers were arguably the most widespread and constant form of print culture available in the Australian colonies".⁸³

Many people in Central West communities had little interest in prose and poetry preferring less 'wholesome' amusements including dancing, cards and billiards. According to the *Wellington Times* cards and billiards held sway in the town due to the "absence of anything in the shape of intellectual amateur entertainment", the consequence of which, it claimed, was "debasement and demoralisation".⁸⁴ While Wesleyan clergyman John K Turner preached in Bathurst that horse-racing, cards and dancing were "three forms of pleasure which should be prohibited".⁸⁵ Often these activities took place in hotels with or without Licencing Bench consent. Bathurst hotelier William Lenehan was given permission to use his hall adjoining his Victoria hotel for musical and dancing purposes but five months later, the new owner, Patrick Power, was cautioned for "allowing music and dancing without permission".⁸⁶ The less than savoury nature of some dancing can be seen from the report on Mary Griswell's conviction for "being an idle and disorderly person" where she had been observed "in a public house with another woman dancing with six men".⁸⁷ An indication of how some young men spent their free time can be gauged through the evidence given at the trial of the Stines brothers accused of the Cargo bank robbery in June 1893. Both the accused and witnesses deposed that they

⁸⁰ C and G S White *Bathurst School of Arts Catalogue* 1886. Other categories included Voyages, Travel and Geography; Philosophy, Science and Arts; Biography; History, Chronology and Antiquities; Poetry and Drama; Miscellaneous including essays and speeches; and Works of Reference.

⁸¹ *National Advocate* 18 September 1890.

⁸² *Carcoar Chronicle* 27 February 1892 *Molong Express* 11 July 1891.

⁸³ Morrison 'Reading Victoria's Newspapers', 129.

⁸⁴ Quoted in *National Advocate* 8 January 1891.

⁸⁵ *Bathurst Free Press* 24 November 1891. Charles Stead added "Sunday newspapers" to the list during a speech at the public morality meeting mentioned previously. *National Advocate* 28 July 1892.

⁸⁶ *National Advocate* 17 November 1891.

⁸⁷ *Bathurst Free Press* 2 April 1891.

spent a great deal of time in hotels in Cargo and Eugowra, drinking, playing billiards and occasionally dominoes.⁸⁸

Drinking was undoubtedly a favoured pastime with all classes. Excess was less evident in more respectable circles because it occurred behind closed doors but drinking in hotels could lead to unsocial behaviour which would spill into the streets. Yet hotels were not all disreputable institutions. According to Claire Wright they were a “hub of community life [and] purveyed spaces for a broad range of leisure and civic pursuits, ballrooms, dance halls, billiards and bagatelle rooms, even theatres, hair salons and bath houses”.⁸⁹ Inquests, farewells, meetings, particularly of sporting clubs and the like, were often held there. Moreover, according to Waterhouse “they became residences for young men posted to country towns as bank clerks and schoolteachers and provided accommodation for commercial travellers”.⁹⁰ They also accommodated or provided refreshments and entertainment for miners in transit and shearers, labourers and navvies who would flood into towns to spend their pay cheques.

Some hoteliers such as William Grimshaw of Mudgee’s Sydney Hotel who advertised as “a penciller and sporting enthusiast” had respectable reputations and drew on their sporting backgrounds to attract clientele.⁹¹ Reputations came under scrutiny when applications for licences were heard. In Orange, there was disquiet when the licencing magistrates, John T Lane, Andrew Kerr, Josiah Parker and Patrick J Flanagan, refused the transfer of the licence of the Exchange Hotel to George Carter although the application had been “endorsed by a great many principal businessmen, clergymen and citizens”. According to the Orange correspondent for the *National Advocate* there had been moves to call a public meeting “to obtain a concentrated expression of public opinion, as it is considered a cruel wrong has been done to a worthy and clever citizen, who with his gifted wife has done much in assisting at all social events aiming at the assistance of charitable institutions”.⁹²

There was a fuss in Bathurst in February 1892 when Michael Treanor sought approval for his Grand Hotel. It was not Treanor’s character that was questioned but the need for the facility at

⁸⁸ *National Advocate* 1 August 1893, 13 October 1893.

⁸⁹ Wright *Beyond the Ladies Lounge*, 109

⁹⁰ Waterhouse *The Vision Splendid*, 130.

⁹¹ *Mudgee Guardian* 12 August 1892.

⁹² *National Advocate* 16 and 18 February 1892. The application was refused because Carter had been seen previously the worse for liquor. The Carters then set off on a holiday to Tasmania and proposed to dispose of their property on their return. The application was granted in June, Carter having become a teetotaler. *National Advocate* 22 June 1892. See Appendix 1 for biography of Patrick Flanagan.

all as well as compliance with the Local Option vote.⁹³ Treanor proposed building a hotel for first class patrons arguing that there was a lack of this kind of accommodation in the town. Licensing Inspector Richard Musgrove disagreed, noting there were already 38 hotels in the city⁹⁴. There was considerable support for and opposition to the proposal with cross-class contradictions. In addition to a petition presented by 172 residents, fifteen of Bathurst's most "notable" citizens signed a petition in opposition⁹⁵ while 578 ratepayers and residents lodged a petition of support. The solicitor for the applicant, Alfred G Thompson, agreed that the fifteen men were "of the highest respectability" but he was sure the "Bench would not be guided by these as against the signatures of the whole city [and]...the opinion of the humblest individual who had the interest of the town at heart should be considered equally with the wealthiest." Yet, he intimated that the support of Dr Walter Spencer for Treanor's hotel, "should be taken against 1000 others". The licence was eventually granted and the hotel built although as already discussed, within two years Treanor was bankrupt.⁹⁶

One of the arguments put by Treanor in support of his application was that his wife, Johanna, having been "born and raised in a hotel...thoroughly [understood] the management of one" and "would be in charge of the domestic arrangements of the house".⁹⁷ In similar terms, when John Albert advertised in the *Mudgee Guardian* that he had taken over the Imperial Hotel, he declared that his "wife [Louisa] was the *best woman* [his italics] in the west in a hotel".⁹⁸ Johanna and Louisa were among the many wives who assisted in the running of hotels but many women owned or leased premises.

Female ownership of hotels was widely accepted in the community. Wright suggests the "nuts and bolts of pub-keeping, the provision of victuals and lodging, were essentially women's work" and as thus was not "subverting the mores of orthodox femininity". In practical terms, she argues, it "facilitated economic independence, bolstered political identity and elevated

⁹³ The *Licensing Act* of 1882 provided for ratepayers to vote for or against the granting of hoteliers' licenses, or requiring the hotels to be closed for a period of time (Local Option). The *Molong Express* described the legislation as a farce noting that of the 252 ratepayers (387 votes) less than half voted in the election. *Molong Express* 14 February 1891. In 1891 a new Bill was under consideration and was a hot topic on the hustings.

⁹⁴ See Appendix 1 for biography of Richard Musgrove.

⁹⁵ William Kite, William and George Lee, Charles E Bathurst, Charles MacPhillamy, John N Gilmour, Robert Darvall Barton, Frederick Treweeke, Seymour Rothery, J Sharpe, Vaughn W Jenkins, James Rutherford, John McKinnon. The petition was initiated by Patrick Hurley of the Royal Hotel which adjoined the proposed site. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William Kite, Robert Barton, John Gilmour Frederick Treweeke, and Vaughn W Jenkins.

⁹⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 12 March 1891.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 12 March 1891, *Mudgee Guardian* 12 August 1892. Albert's italics.

their personal status”.⁹⁹ It was not economic independence but economic survival that faced Louisa Albert when she took over the Imperial Hotel in Mudgee after her husband John died in 1893.¹⁰⁰ Similarly Eliza Read became the owner of the Oxford Hotel in Bathurst when her husband Richard died in 1882 leaving her with seven children to support.¹⁰¹ Louisa and Eliza were among the many women who owned hotels in the district between 1891 and 1893. At Cargo Emily Payne kept the Royal, Johanna Williams operated the Traveller’s Rest at Toogong and Mary Ann Stollery had the Bridge View at Rylstone. Maria Roberts’ Coach and Horses Hotel was the only one at Manildra and was a frequent venue for meetings and auctions.¹⁰² And of course, Hanora Malony’s Trundle Hotel was the best-known hotel in in the township.



Illustration 84: Mary Anne Stollery and the Bridge View Hotel

Not all women in the trade were considered respectable and as Wright states one of the hazards of the industry was “moral scrutiny” most evident during hearings before the licencing bench, particularly for breaches.¹⁰³ The conduct of Bridget Power, who worked alongside her husband Patrick in various hotels in the Bathurst area, was scrutinised when Patrick sought the

⁹⁹ Wright *Beyond the Ladies Lounge*, 66.

¹⁰⁰ *Mudgee Guardian* 18 August 1902. Louisa and John had seven children, the youngest was four years old when John died.

¹⁰¹ *National Advocate* 20 April 1900. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Louisa Albert and Eliza Read.

¹⁰² *Molong Express* 30 August 1890, 14 February 1891, *Sunday Times* 19 February 1899. See Appendix 1 for biography of Johanna Williams.

¹⁰³ Wright *Beyond the Ladies Lounge*, 74.

licence of the Railway Hotel.¹⁰⁴ The police strongly objected to the application and among the reasons cited was Bridget's alleged dishonesty. She had been accused on two occasions of theft neither of which was proven.¹⁰⁵ The application was approved by the licencing bench after a lengthy hearing during which a host of supposed indiscretions were raised. Although the bench determined that the Powers' explanations were reasonable given the clientele, it is likely that the hoteliers were not totally blameless for wrongdoings at the hotel. Still, the *National Advocate* was critical of the actions of the police. By bringing up the theft allegations their conduct was unconscionable, the newspaper stated, and in direct opposition to "the cardinal principle of justice – that every person is innocent unless proven guilty".¹⁰⁶

Concern about the evils of drink was widespread with temperance organisations active in towns and villages throughout the district. Bands of Hope could be found in many towns and villages as were Good Templar lodges in Warne, Forest Reefs, Hartley Vale, Condobolin and other places.¹⁰⁷ Members of the temperance bodies met regularly with meetings often followed by concerts, recitations and parodies. Betsy Harrison Lee¹⁰⁸ and other temperance campaigners toured the countryside seeking converts. In August 1892, the *Orange Leader* reported Harrison Lee's lecture resulted in twelve new members for the local Women Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).¹⁰⁹ Harrison Lee did not limit her activities to proselytising. Accompanied by three clergymen and seven or eight ladies, she "invaded" the Orange Licensing Court to thwart the granting of a new license for Margaret Eyles' Standard Hotel.¹¹⁰ The police had no objections to the application as the hotel had been operating for 26 years and "nothing could be said against the house or the applicant". A majority of the Bench were unmoved by the objectors' claims and the license was granted.¹¹¹ Unfortunately the names of Harrison Lee's lady companions were not disclosed. It was likely that some members of the

¹⁰⁴ *National Advocate* 17 March 1893. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Bridget and Patrick Power.

¹⁰⁵ One of these was Bridget's alleged theft of a muff valued at £2 2s from Webb's Department Store and was a cause célèbre in Bathurst. The case was a convoluted one eventually coming down to Brigid's word or that of Nellie McKay, wife of a warden at Bathurst prison and former employee at the hotel. Bridget was acquitted. *Bathurst Free Press* 3 and 4 August 1892 Bridget unsuccessfully sought the licence of another hotel (the Tattersalls) in 1894 after Patrick's death.

¹⁰⁶ *National Advocate* 17 March 1893.

¹⁰⁷ *Australian Temperance World and the Good Templar Record* 27 February 1892. Populations in these towns: Forest Reefs – 117; Hartley Vale 797; Condobolin- 792.

¹⁰⁸ See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for biography of Betsy Lee.

¹⁰⁹ *Orange Leader* 8 August 1892.

¹¹⁰ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Margaret and Elijah Eyles.

¹¹¹ In any case the campaigners had no standing because they had failed to give the requisite notice of their intention to object. *Australian Star* 27 July 1892.

union were present perhaps even Mary Ardill who “was a prominent figure at all the Temperance meetings”¹¹²



Illustration 85: Elijah Eyles

Mary who was married to William Ardill, an employee at the Orange Land Office, was foremost in the movement in the town noting she was the Orange branch representative at the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) Conference in October 1892.¹¹³ Another well-known temperance crusader, Miss E M Price, represented Bathurst at the 1891 conference.¹¹⁴ In 1892, the Bathurst branch which had 97 members, was well organised. Selina Webb and Elizabeth Paul were the foremost of these but others including Sarah Hine and Martha Norwood were enthusiastic campaigners.¹¹⁵ In WCTU applauded the efforts of the Bathurst women who had built cabman’s shelter in which a “library of books” had been placed.¹¹⁶ But extension of the franchise to women and peace and arbitration and other work of the WCTU do not appear to have attracted much interest the Bathurst organisation.¹¹⁷

Gambling was almost as pernicious to these moral campaigners as alcohol but according to John O’Hara, commercial interests were also pertinent in debates on the gambling menace in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He suggests that attempts to abolish or curb gambling were a “conflict between rival middle classes”. The first being the reformers seeking

¹¹² *National Advocate* 25 October 1893. See Appendix 1 for biography of Mary Ardill.

¹¹³ *Sydney Mail* 3 September 1892. *National Advocate* 25 October 1893

¹¹⁴ Miss Price was the daughter of Baptist clergyman Ebenezer Price.

¹¹⁵ See Appendix 1 for biographies of Sarah and James Hine and Martha Norwood.

¹¹⁶ The Bathurst women also sent “parcels of literature...monthly to Bathurst, Cowra, Blayney, Mudgee, Nyngan and Bourke stations, and to a camp of fettlers 20 miles this side of Bourke- The cab and sociable drivers are also supplied regularly with books and papers, which they receive very thankfully.” *Bathurst Free Press* 8 September 1892.

¹¹⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald* 28 September 1892.

prohibition or “at least protect[ing] the working class from themselves” and the other comprising the “gambling entrepreneurs [with] lingering gentry values” reconciling “commercial profit” with working class ambitions to better their lot.¹¹⁸ Gambling, both legal and illegal in the district was much the same as elsewhere in the colony and there was widespread concern about its impact on society. Dowling wrote that “much betting [is] carried on by what are called professional ‘bookmakers’ in connection with horse-races and other sports at holiday gatherings, which have not only demoralised numbers of young men, but also greatly injured these out-door amusements”.¹¹⁹ Indeed, according to the *National Advocate*

every sport and pastime in the world is used as a means of money making by the public. Cricket, football, tennis, rowing, skating, all carry money on the issues of contests, and even the harmless, though somewhat, cruel sport of pigeon shooting leads occasionally to the investment of small sums on the chances of the gun against the bird or vice versa.¹²⁰

Sport was not the only conduit for gambling. Raffles were common fund-raisers for some religious and community organisations. In Bathurst, the Druids offered prizes to the value of £1,760 in association with its gala, in March 1891,¹²¹ “raffling was the order of business” at the Catholic Convent and Monastery Building bazaar¹²² and, in Molong Mr O’Keefe won a piano offered as the prize for the art union “originated by the Sisters of St Joseph”. According to a report in the *Molong Express* the drawing of the piano prize “was on the same principle as that adopted in drawing Tattersalls’ Consultations, and was admitted by the ticket-holders present to be perfectly fair and altogether devoid of suspicion”.¹²³ “Perfectly fair” or not, some churches did not approve of this sort of fund-raising noting the organisers of the bazaar to raise funds for the St Barnabas’ Presbyterian Church in South Bathurst were pleased to have collected £60 despite having prohibited raffling.¹²⁴ Raffling was illegal but as police magistrate, Edmund Pery¹²⁵, observed in a case against Frederick Cheeseman “for years past raffling had been tacitly allowed or winked at but since a former case people must take notice”. Cheeseman, a respected citizen and talented cricketer in Forbes, had pleaded guilty to a

¹¹⁸ O’Hara *A Mug’s Game*, 94.

¹¹⁹ Dowling *America and Australia*, 139

¹²⁰ *National Advocate* 28 May 1891.

¹²¹ *National Advocate* 23 March 1892.

¹²² *Bathurst Free Press* 16 February 1892.

¹²³ *Molong Express* 30 May 1891.

¹²⁴ *National Advocate* 3 December 1892.

¹²⁵ See Appendix 1 for biography of Edmund Pery.

charge of “disposing of goods with dice by means of a lottery” but insisted he did not know he was breaking the law.¹²⁶

Tattersall’s sweepstakes and similar consultations were other forms of legal lotteries which, if the extent of advertising in local newspapers is any indication, were very popular in the district. The appeal of sweepstakes which were accessible and affordable by the masses alarmed many who considered the gambling menace was out of control. In mid-1891 John Hurley began efforts in Parliament to have “the pernicious practice of gambling in sweeps, consultations and other games of chance” suppressed.¹²⁷ Little had changed by late 1893 but Tattersall’s and other large operators had been forced to move their business out of New South Wales to overcome the law “precluding letters addressed by sweep promoters” being sent through the post. The Postmaster-General had opposed the measure when it passed into law in August 1891, saying “it would not check gambling but would tend to increase the more objectionable practice of open betting which did more harm than consultations”.¹²⁸ For all the bluster on the evils of the sweeps, newspapers happily recounted successes or near successes. The *Bathurst Free Press*, for instance, reported that Mary Ann Harper had “yet another turn of fortune’s wheel” accruing “aggregate winnings in consultations of £150 ...[by] having drawn a horse in nearly every consultation promoted by Tattersall during the year”.¹²⁹ And the *National Advocate* enthused that a local syndicate that included hotelkeeper Thomas Cashman had drawn the favourite and sure thing, ‘Tim Swiveller’, in the 1893 Melbourne Cup and stood to win £10,000.¹³⁰

According to the *Molong Express* the gambling mania harmed the young as it instilled in them an attitude that wealth could be “attained without labour and effort” and that profiting by the losses of others was “against the spirit of true manliness”. Moreover, the newspaper suggested that “the spirit of gambling and aversion of honest toil” may well be a cause of the depression.¹³¹ In one parliamentary debate on the proposed legislation to prohibit sweepstakes, Henry Parkes remarked that “under the name and with the avowed object of

¹²⁶ *Forbes Gazette* 22 January 1892. The case involved several women at a local church flower show successfully prosecuted for having disposed of goods by a game of chance. The magistrates rejected the defence argument that if raffling at a bazaar or fancy fair in aid of a church was not contrary to the spirit of the legislation because a church was not a charitable institution. The women were fined 4/-. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 21 November 1891. See Appendix 1 for biography of Frederick Cheeseman.

¹²⁷ *New South Wales Votes and Proceedings Legislative Assembly* 26 May 1891. Hurley’s resolution also sought to have public servants dismissed if they participated in any form of gambling.

¹²⁸ *Bathurst Free Press* 21 August 1891. Boarding house proprietor, Rachael Elliott, was another winner. She gave £150 from her winnings of £3,000 to charity. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Mary Ann and Charles Harper and Rachel Elliott.

¹²⁹ *Bathurst Free Press* 20 April 1892.

¹³⁰ *National Advocate* 4 November 1893. The horse did not win.

¹³¹ *Molong Express* 2 December 1893.

horse-racing – admitting that the sport might have for its object the improvement and breeding of stock – an enormous overshadowing evil had grown up”.¹³² The reality was that gambling was a popular pastime and efforts to outlaw sweepstakes or other forms of gambling enjoyed by a significant portion of the population were futile. The remedy, according to John Gough, MLA for Young, “was to adopt some system of regulation”. John Haynes declared magistrates should strenuously enforce the existing laws stating gambling was not limited to games of chance but to speculation in mining, land and all forms of business.¹³³ Edward O’Sullivan whose concern about the “spielers and scoundrels” corrupting young men, garnered unanimous support. However his suggestion that any inquiry “should go through the racing clubs and it might be necessary to introduce a bill regulating every club” would have scandalised members from the most exclusive Sydney clubs to the small country clubs scattered throughout the Central West.

Illegal gambling was as common among Central West communities as any other country districts. In 1893 the Director of Agriculture sent a circular to all country P.A &H. Associations reminding them of the prohibition of gambling on show grounds and “intimating that in future no subsidy could be granted to any society permitting gambling in any form to be carried on”. The Cowra association responded that “no games of chance had been practised on the ground for some years”.¹³⁴ Nonetheless at the 1891 show, the usual “spieler fraternity” was present seeking “to practice their nefarious wiles upon the credulous but the police and the ground committee... [were] ever on the alert to thwart them”¹³⁵. There is no doubt that these “scoundrels” would be present at shows and race meetings at many towns but illicit gaming could be found all year round in hotels where breaches of the *Licensing Act* for permitting gambling were common. In September 1893, for instance, the police accused William Henry Duff of allowing “the throwing of die” in his Empire Hotel which they asserted was a common haunt of professional gamblers.¹³⁶ The police also opposed the transfer of a billiard licence to Sunny Corner hotelier Cornelius Walsh on the grounds it would be a gambling hall.¹³⁷ Gambling in public places was common such as the railway bridge in Peisley Street Orange where Richard Boswell, considered to be of good character, and Peter Connors caught playing “Head Em” were sent to gaol for six days.¹³⁸

¹³² *NSW Votes and Proceedings Legislative Assembly* 26 May 1891.

¹³³ *Sydney Morning Herald* 27 May 1891.

¹³⁴ *Ulladulla and Milton Times* 28 January 1893, *Cowra Free Press* 8 April 1893.

¹³⁵ *Cowra Free Press* 11 September 1891.

¹³⁶ *Bathurst Free Press* 29 September 1893.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, 12 October 1891.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, 10 April 1891.

The Chinese were associated with what was considered the most pernicious illegal gambling, fan-tan. It was viewed as especially wicked as it was associated with opium dens and often prostitution. The sensational accounts from the hearings of 1892 Royal Commission on Chinese Gambling, ensured local newspaper coverage. But although the *National Advocate* published lurid reports of the evil-doings in Howick and Ranken streets in Bathurst, Chinese gambling convictions in comparison to those of other illicit gaming were not as widespread in the district. Between 1891 and 1893 convictions were reported in Sofala and Blayney as was an unsuccessful raid in Mudgee.¹³⁹ Undoubtedly Chinese gambling dens existed in other areas but one would expect any particularly notorious examples to have attracted some publicity. The finding of the Royal Commission that “what is known as Chinese gambling is trifling in every respect when compared to the gambling practised in Sydney in consultations and betting by totalisators” was equally relevant to the Central West.¹⁴⁰

As mentioned above, professional gamblers enjoyed the easy pickings among the vulnerable or gullible people at agricultural shows. These shows held in towns of all sizes were one of those institutions were part of social and economic infrastructure. They were multifaceted and according to contemporary observer William H Bridle, they were where

the husbandman, the horticulturist, the pastoralist, the various trades, literary pursuits, the turf, the domestic industries—from the maker of the home-made loaf to the daintiest specimen of feminine art—even composition and penmanship of the modest schoolchild, each and all afford competitive material for the scrutiny of the onlookers, and test the discriminating powers of the experienced judges on whose decision to a great extent depends the success of such exhibition... [and] apart from the opportunity afforded for an outing, rendered enjoyable by social reunions and interchange of opinion, the public are enabled to see what educated intelligence can attain by earnest, practical, well-directed efforts towards the development of the various industries concerned.¹⁴¹

Bridle’s assessment, though whimsical, was mostly accurate except that judges were sometimes neither expert nor discriminating and the general public and even some of the more discerning attendees were unlikely to be much wiser about rural pursuits. For many

¹³⁹ *National Advocate* 11 December 1891, *Wellington Times and Australian Industrial Liberator* 30 July 1892, *Sydney Mail* 8 August 1891.

¹⁴⁰ *New South Wales Royal Commission on alleged “Chinese Gambling and Immorality and Charges of Bribery against Members of the Police Force”* (Sydney: Charles Potter Government Printer 1892) 20.

¹⁴¹ An extract from an awarding winning essay by Tumut commission agent William H Bridle entitled “Agricultural Societies and Shows” *Town and Country Journal* 11 April 1891.

communities show-day was the most important social event in the year. Many were held on specially set aside days while others took place on special holidays. In Cumnock, for example, the show was held on the Queen's Birthday and according to the *Molong Argus*, it was recognised throughout the district as "Cumnock's day out" when "people from all the surrounding localities invariably find their way...for the annual show".¹⁴²

The Cumnock community took great pride in their show. It was an opportunity to display the prosperity of the town and its environs, particularly pastoral, not just to visitors but to themselves. Exhibits were dominated by sheep and other stock with breeders including Mary McNevin (Cardington), James Lee (Larras's Lake), and George Bruce (Loombah) from the largest stations while the likes of John Leary and the Sherringham brothers, William, Robert and Joseph, routinely took out prizes in the smaller holdings sections.¹⁴³ In 1891 Chinese gardener Ah Wing won a prize for the best mixed vegetables assortment and there was a full range of jams, breads and other home-made goods, "ornamental" exhibits and copy books from children at Bowan Park, Molong, Cumnock and Loombah schools on display.¹⁴⁴ The *Molong Argus* attributed the success of the show to the P A & H Association keeping pace with "the growth of the town" to the extent that it threatened to rival even its parent", the Molong Association. Furthermore, the newspaper reflected on the "unity which exists at Cumnock in all questions which affect the welfare of the town."¹⁴⁵

This camaraderie probably extended to the 'friendly rivalry' of exhibitors given that there was no mention of disputes in the lengthy newspaper report. Not so at Molong where the *Molong Argus* appealed to exhibitors, "IN THE INTERESTS OF THE DISTRICT [original emphasis]... pocket their differences for the time being and go in heart and soul to make the present show a success, and then thrash out their grievances afterwards".¹⁴⁶ This was also the case in Bathurst where the show committee had to convene special meetings to hear complaints, although quarrels were also plentiful on the day.¹⁴⁷ People from other townships could be ungracious in

¹⁴² *Molong Express* 30 May 1891.

¹⁴³ In 1892, for example, there were 120 horses, 40 cattle, 200 sheep, 30 cereals, 40 dairy produce and 100 other classes. *Town and Country Journal* 4 June 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of Mary McNevin, George Bruce and John Leary.

¹⁴⁴ *Molong Express* 30 April 1891 *Town and Country Journal* 3 June 1893, *Sydney Mail* 28 May 1892. See Appendix 1 for biographies of William, Robert and Joseph Sherringham. There is little known about Ah Wing other than he was a gardener at Bell River near Molong. In 1914, he was still a regular donor of vegetables to the Molong cottage hospital. According to an 1891 court case involving a theft by an employee, he is named as "Joe Ah Wing". *Molong Express* 25 July 1891.

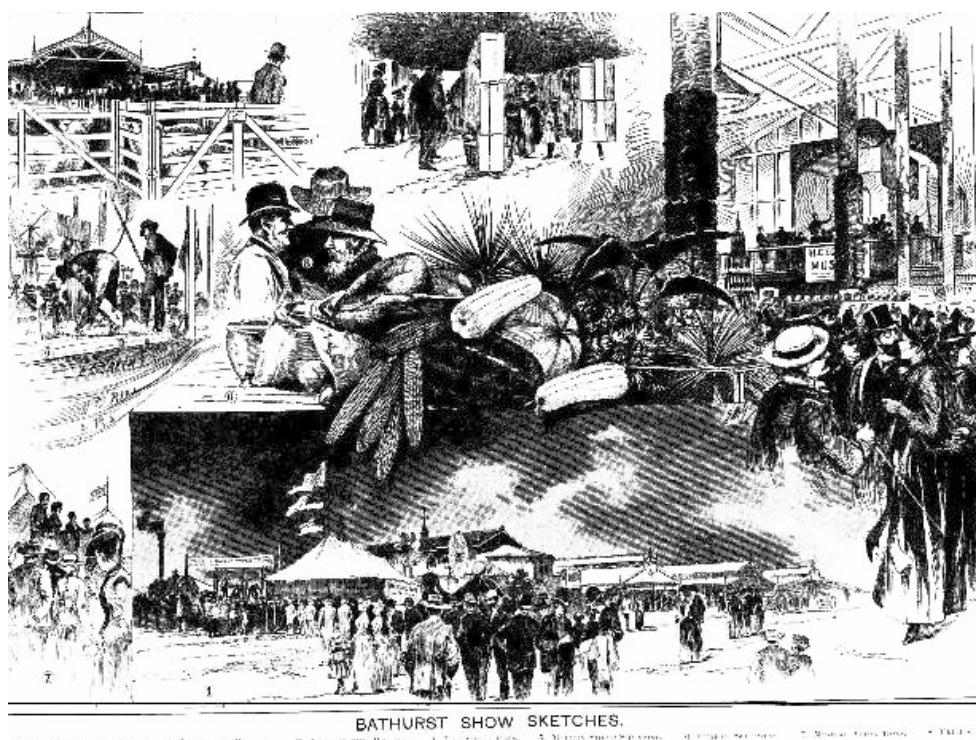
¹⁴⁵ *Molong Express* 30 May 1891.

¹⁴⁶ *Molong Argus* 25 April 1891.

¹⁴⁷ Disputes included Jonas Keffoni complaint of white versus blue peas and Webb and Co's disagreement with the judges' decision to award the special prize for boots to rival W G Stephens (also

defeat. A Garra correspondent to the *Molong Argus* grumbled that parochial Cudal judges had ignored a case of peaches from their town while at Condobolin, agriculturalists complained the timing of the show was “solely to suit the pastoral interests” and “entirely unsuitable” for displaying their produce.¹⁴⁸ Country and city interests also clashed.¹⁴⁹ The *Bathurst Free Press* declared there was nothing in the Sydney show for the “parochial public” and it was “nothing more than huge duplications of the windows and showrooms of metropolitan drapers, milliners” and such like.¹⁵⁰ In contrast, the *Sydney Morning Herald* lamented the government subsidies for shows being wasted on frivolities. The newspaper observed that “it is pleasant to find a well-dressed crowd enjoying a holiday on a showground but if the meeting is more for pleasure than for business, the various exhibits may as well be left out”. It specifically targeted the futility of horse jumping events and suggested that “instead of complimentary speeches and trite toasts” agricultural societies should “make themselves worthy of the assistance from the state” and concentrate on the progress of agriculture.¹⁵¹

Illustration 86



BATHURST SHOW SKETCHES.

one of the judges), the latter both being prominent citizens in the town. *Bathurst Free Press* 14 April 1892.

¹⁴⁸ *Condobolin Argus* 6 August 1892.

¹⁴⁹ *Molong Argus* 18 April 1892, *Condobolin Argus* 6 October 1892.

¹⁵⁰ *Bathurst Free Press* 14 January 1891.

¹⁵¹ *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 January 1893. A £ for £ subsidy was provided to show societies which had £100 subscription lists. Special annual national prizes for one large show in each of ten districts were introduced to “improve the character of shows”. In 1891, in ‘district 6’, Bathurst was awarded £350, followed by Mudgee in 1892 and Dubbo in 1893. *Town and Country Journal* 7 May 1892, 7 January 1893.

Horse-jumping was very popular with spectators cramming into grandstands, emptying exhibition halls and judging rings, once the events commenced.¹⁵² In addition to the horses, the general public spent time inspecting the exhibits and watching sheepdog trials. Many other amusements were available within the show grounds. Side-shows, bands and fireworks were common while circuses and travelling theatre companies set up in towns at show time. Local amateurs put on concerts, there were fundraisers and of course the show ball.¹⁵³

By and large, the interaction of people at public entertainments strengthened community bonds but there was also discord and parochialism. Some people whether through choice, class, gender and race divisions or economic constraints did not participate in many activities. But almost everyone would be expected to find enjoyment with their families, friends, neighbours or workmates whether it be Thomas Edols and his family entertaining guests at Burrawang homestead or labourer Frank Moreland and shearer James Glenman playing 'two-up' in a Burrawang station hut.¹⁵⁴ In November 1892 Edols entertained a writer preparing an opinion piece for the *Town and Country Journal*. In addition to describing buildings, equipment and workings of the station the writer enthused over the formal dining accoutrements. Guests and hosts dressed for dinner, men indulged in cigars after the meal and the Misses Edols entertained the company on a "Steinway and Son's upright grand pianoforte".¹⁵⁵ In contrast, itinerant workers Glenman and Moreland probably spent their leisure time reading, mending or washing their clothes and playing cards.¹⁵⁶ The latter was often played for 'stakes' which the *Worker* correspondent Fred Haynes, found objectionable, arguing that union representatives should have the power to fine those gambling in the huts during shearing. He suggested shearers' leisure hours would be better spent forming a "debating society on matters relating to the Union, the Labor problem and other matters of interest "instead of trying to rob one another by means or cards or dice".¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² In one case, even the judges abandoned the judges' ring to see the horses. *Molong Free Press* 2 May 1891.

¹⁵³ *Bathurst Free Press* 7 April 1892, At Cowra Dan Barry's Dramatic Company, the Mammoth Globe Circus, Messrs Turner, McMahan and Moreni's troupe of equestrians, gymnasts, contortionists, etc were in town and the local Catholic community held a Grand Bazaar and Fancy Fair. *Cowra Free Press* 4 February 1891.

¹⁵⁴ Moreland and another labourer William Davis had come to Burrawang at the time of the Roustabouts strike. Both were convicted of assaulting Glenman, the latter accused of calling Moreland a 'scab'. *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* 10 November 1893, *Sydney Mail* 11 November 1893, *Evening News* 8 December 1893.

¹⁵⁵ *Town and Country Journal* 26 November 1892.

¹⁵⁶ Waterhouse *The Vision Splendid*, 126.

¹⁵⁷ *Worker* 18 November 1893.



Illustration 87: "In The Men's Hut"

There was no hint of gambling in Peter and Adoline Rheinberger's home. As with many middle-class households much of their leisure time was taken up visiting neighbours or other family members. Amongst their close circle of friends were other farming families in the neighbourhood, particularly those of German descent including the Mueller, Bucholtz and Kurtz families and, as discussed elsewhere, these friendships were underpinned by mutual support for each other's livelihoods.¹⁵⁸ Between 1891 and 1893, entries noting social interaction frequently appear in Rheinberger's diary. In January 1893 daughter Annie and son John, with a cousin John Mueller, visited the Gleeson's while the "little boys" went fishing and later that month the Gleeson's visited 'until late'. The Bucholtz boys also called at the Rheinberger's "after tea and played music together". On another occasion, the Gleeson's visited and they "had music together till late". Parties and picnics featured although they were far less common. When he was not working, Rheinberger spent his Sundays attending church services and reading the *Mudgee Independent*, the *Western Post* and the *Freeman's Journal* for which he held subscriptions.

¹⁵⁸ See Appendix 1 for biographies of various members of the Bucholtz, Mueller and Kurtz families.



Illustration 88: Picnic at Mandurama

Louisa Walsh did not appear to have as much social interaction as Annie Rheinberger. She notes events in the town such as the show, circuses and races some of which were attended by her father, or brother Will. She also records other more intimate gatherings, private dances or picnics but whether she attended is unclear. Mostly Louisa visited or the household had visitors, several of whom called on station business. Unlike Peter Rheinberger who detailed the domestic chores undertaken by his family, Louisa does not mention how she occupied her time. Aside from domestic work unlikely to be as extensive as the Rheinbergers given that they owned and worked the farm, she most likely, as with others of her social class, sewed 'fancy work', painted or played the piano or some other musical instrument.

Music was important in many middle class and probably in working class homes. According to the *Dawn* it furnished

hours of pleasant occupation, not too serious for the most frivolous, not too frivolous for the most earnest character it brings the family together in agreeable inter course

during those evening hours when many outside interests and some temptations press upon the younger people.¹⁵⁹

Pianos were popular in the colony with one writer in an article in the journal *Magazines of Music* suggesting “every second house in the smallest streets has its piano”.¹⁶⁰ Advertisements in local newspapers attest that they were also popular in the district. For instance, in 1892 Mr F Hooker jnr, piano and organ tuner, repairer and representative of Sydney firm Messrs Bruce and Fassey, advertised that he visited Wellington every three months¹⁶¹ and advertisements for Palings pianos appeared on the front pages of most newspapers.

The purchase of a piano was not beyond the means of the average middle-class family. Aside from purchasing second-hand instruments, new pianos could be bought on a time-payment system. The popularity of music also provided an income for many women who offered tuition with “teachers of music...almost as plentiful as dressmakers.”¹⁶² They taught in their own homes, their pupils’ homes or in commercial premises. In Bathurst, Miss Apps received or visited pupils¹⁶³ and Miss Moore taught at her home, “Hillside”.¹⁶⁴ In Wellington Nellie Jackson, who advertised as formerly being music mistress in the Royal College at Madrid, offered lessons at Edward Barnett’s Commercial Hotel.¹⁶⁵ And, as previously mentioned, nuns tutored children ex-curriculum at Catholic schools.

¹⁵⁹ *The Dawn* 1 February 1893.

¹⁶⁰ Repeated in *Bathurst Free Press* 20 September 1893.

¹⁶¹ *Wellington Times* 30 July 1892. Hooker had previously been employed by Palings which advertised that he was no longer their representative tuner, the position now being filled by Thomas Fagan.

¹⁶² According to an article from the journal *Magazines of Music* (reprinted in the *Bathurst Free Press*) “every second house in the smallest streets has its piano.” *Bathurst Free Press* 20 September 1893.

¹⁶³ *Bathurst Free Press* 6 August 1891.

¹⁶⁴ Miss Moore advertised that she was a “Certified Pupil of Messrs H Kowalski, C Hunerbein, Madame Charbonnett-Kellerman” and that she “was desirous of obtaining a pupil”. She included testimonials in her advertisement. *National Advocate* 3 October 1891.

¹⁶⁵ *The Standard of Freedom and Wellington Gazette* 5 August 1892.

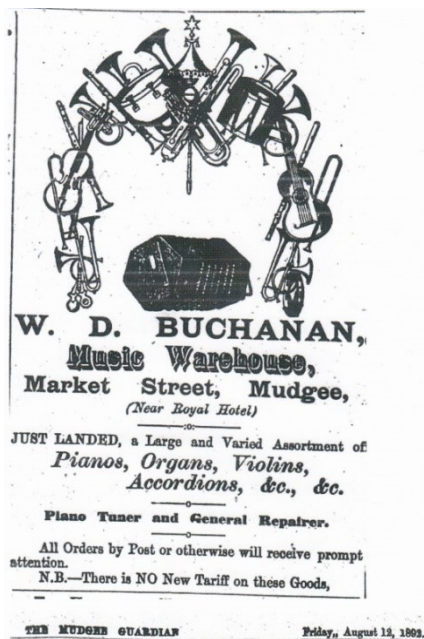


Illustration 89: Advertisement for W D Buchanan's Music Warehouse Mudgee

Reading, sport and gambling among others ranged from the functional to the celebratory and from the everyday to the exceptional. Kinship ties and close-knit circles of friends and neighbours provided cultural sustenance for domestic households. Agricultural shows and sporting events fostered a sense of community and engendered pride in achievements. Yet loyalties generated jealousies and unfriendly rivalries. Social bonds were sustained and strengthened through fund-raising ventures, local theatre and end-of year concerts and other congratulatory occasions. There were contrasts which demonstrate class differences such as between the squatters' balls and the shearers' fundraiser ball at Moorilda. These can be compared with the less savoury dances at hotel dancing salons. Also contrast legal gambling at race meetings with raffles at church bazaars and compare both with games of chance, cards under the bridge at Bathurst and fan-tan in Chinese opium dens. But agricultural shows, race meetings and similar events attracted people from all classes albeit with a broad range of personal interactions and engagement.

I have drawn these multiple threads of culture and entertainment in everyday life in the Central West between 1891 and 1893 through the stories of ordinary people including teacher William Bootle, a member of the Forbes School of Art, bell-ringer and Parkes brass bandmaster Robert Budd, Forbes cricketer Frederick Cheeseman, Ah Wing a Molong market gardener and successful show exhibitor, Tattersalls' sweep winner and Mudgee hotelier Mary Ann Harper and temperance campaigner Mary Ardill. All these give expression to the cultural miscellany of the district and demonstrate the thematic issues of communal belonging and pride, societal cohesion and order that I have explored throughout this thesis.

Conclusion

The ordinary people who lived in Central West NSW during the early years of the 1890s are the focus of this thesis. I have explored how and where they lived and identified those issues which influenced their everyday lives. I believe that the study breaks new ground in that there are no comparable studies that consider in detail the experiences of these everyday people in NSW, or other Australian colonies, during this seminal period. Through a thematic analysis I have examined some of the characteristics often attributed to the 1890s and how they were manifested in a rural district in colonial NSW. I have argued that their impact was not as marked as may have been generally supposed and that the overwhelming concern of most people in the region was to maintain a strong, cohesive and prosperous society. I have used the term *gemeinschaft*, coined in Europe at this time, to summarise these principles.

In sum, it is a multi-faceted study offered as a regional history from below. I have also adopted a slice approach, that is, I have written a history as lived rather than that viewed with hindsight. This methodology has long since fallen out of fashion and this thesis hopes to contribute to reconsideration and a “fresh perspective”¹ on the way we look at the past. Concentrating on a short time span, 1891 to 1893, has enabled a more painstaking examination of everyday life in a broader context than may otherwise have been the case.

Similarly, focussing on a specific area, as in regional history, provides an opportunity to more closely investigate wider historical themes. The choice of the Central West is a personal one but most importantly addresses a significant gap in the literature. There are no comprehensive histories of the district. Its diverse settlement pattern provides an opportunity to explore significant issues and how they impacted on ordinary people from numerous perspectives. Like the slice approach, regional history is a methodology that has been largely over-looked in recent times, but there are suggestions that a “spatial turn in history” is plausible. My study may inspire other regional histories and play a part in furthering this hypothesis.

As I have shown, some writers have suggested a confluence between regional history and history from below. The latter concentrates on ordinary people and their experiences without disregarding macro concerns. I have endeavoured to corroborate this relationship and demonstrate how it augments a fulsome consideration of everyday life at a local level.

¹ E Van Heynighen (1992) “‘Slicing’ Australian History: Some Lessons” *South African Historical Journal* 26: 225.

Biography gives a voice to many of the ordinary people living in the district at this time. I have uncovered the lives of hundreds of hitherto unknown individuals, rescuing them, in the words of E P Thompson, from the “condescension of posterity”.² These men and women emanate from all parts of the district. They come from all classes, different socio-economic backgrounds and assorted occupations. Their stories illustrate the factors that impacted on everyday life and expose the political, economic and social conditions of the Central West during the years considered here. They also give form to the influences and values that shaped the region’s society.

Newspapers have been used extensively in this study. The *Molong Express*, owned and edited by Marion Leatham, for instance, encouraged people to participate in civic organisations for the benefit of the community and was censorious when they didn’t. The *Molong Express* and the host of other newspapers circulating in the district provided connectivity between communities, fostered community spirit and moulded public opinion. They kept their readers abreast of local events and afforded a conduit between these and the wider happenings in the colony and beyond. Equally, if not more important, were their accounts of individuals and their activities. Local newspapers also carried comprehensive accounts of the lead up and aftermath of the 1891 election. They published supporter requisitions for local candidates, their speeches on the hustings and the celebrations in the aftermath of the closing of the poll.

Despite my emphasis on community - *gemeinschaft* - the district was not immune from the political turmoil with six labour members, including George Hutchinson, in Forbes, returned but the free trade/protectionist divide that dominated politics up until that time remained significant. At a different level, the publication of a small journal by Perth Mutual Improvement and Debating Society members Annie Furness, Ada Mutton and Frederick Berman is illustrative of more modest political engagement. The confrontation between Thomas Brown and Thomas Edols over a controversial land exchange at Burrawang station demonstrates conflicting views over land reform, which was a major issue for farmers and squatters alike. But the nature of settlement in the district meant that the concerns of settlers in the east of the region were different than those in the west. Equally, gold miners such as Charlotte Adams faced different challenges to the Condobolin hopefuls heading to the Burra Burra rush.

The lure of the Burra Burra goldfield for some residents of Condobolin was due in part to the worsening economic conditions in the colony. Unemployment was endemic and human suffering palpable. The district was not invulnerable as demonstrated by individual cases of

² Thompson *The Making of the English Working Class*, 41.

hardship. Lithgow miner Thomas Rickards, for example, was unable to pay school fees. He was couldn't afford to support his family because of limited mine operations and miner Patrick Gooley was bankrupted because he could not find work after the closure of the Sunny Corner mine. Local newspapers railed against the duplicitous dealings of financial institutions during the years under study but it seemed that, in general, the district was spared the worst fallout. Bank manager George Green lamented bank suspensions but there did not appear to be any significant panic among locals, although Lucknow miners put their savings in the hands of owner Henry Newman rather than the banks. This incident is indicative of trust within the local community, a characteristic inherent in a *gemeinschaft*. Economic difficulties also triggered the establishment of benevolent societies. The wives of prominent citizens, such as Cowra resident Annie Daly and Edith Beith of Mudgee, imbued with middle class values, formed these societies to help those in need, thus contributing to social order.

Policeman John Morris, magistrate John T West and solicitor Patrick Kinna were central to the maintenance of law and order. Indeed, the administration of justice, prevention and prosecution of crime and policing of anti-social behaviour were inherent in preserving orderly communities. Local newspapers reported the proceedings of police and district courts reassuring subscribers that their way of life was safe but not impregnable. Bertie Glasson's crimes shocked the district but the social infractions of prostitute Margaret Porter and others were repugnant and posed greater risks to community values. Community unease over the unrest at the Broken Hill and the actions of the unemployed in the metropolis – albeit far away - was also evident in the local papers but overall there was little challenge to the underlying precepts of the orderly society that characterised the Central West.

Vigilance was required to maintain the *gemeinschaft* values of trust, order and respectability. All of these were inherent in the education system and in the manifestation of religious belief in the district. The hallmarks of the education system were order, obedience, honesty and respect. Albert Mitchell and other teachers taught their pupils self-reliance and responsibility ensuring that the future prosperity of the colony was secure. For clergyman John Aldis and his parishioners, respectability and morality held fast the fabric of society. Safeguarding the health of communities was equally important. Individuals such as matron Marie Hertzog and hospital committee member Joseph Ryall, for example, had roles as guardians of public health particularly during epidemics where the fragility of communities were laid bare.

As we have seen, recreation was an intrinsic part of everyday life and fostered community pride and camaraderie. Class differences were evident in the divide between acceptable and undesirable pursuits. Many enjoyed cricket matches, horse racing, debating societies and balls.

Not all people subscribed to these pursuits. Brothers James and John Stines, who were accused of robbing a bank at Cargo, played dominoes and billiards at local hotels. Illegal gambling, drinking and dancing of a less genteel kind were popular amongst some of the working people and those who found themselves on the wrong side of the law. People indulged in these pastimes in public places, their work places and homes but hotels were also popular. The latter, often owned by women such as Hanora Maloney, were also the focus of entertainment of all kinds and provided much needed amenities for townsfolk and visitors alike. Louisa Walsh, Thomas O'Shaunnessy and Peter Rheinberger on the other hand provide some insight into how ordinary people mostly spent their leisure time: visiting family and friends, picnicking, playing music and reading being chiefly among these.

There is still much to be said about these diarists and other people living in the Central West during the time frame considered in this thesis. There are more stories to find and more sources to examine. I have used a confluence of historical methodologies to explore the ordinary and every day in communities throughout the district. Some or all of these can be deployed to continue this research. More use can be made of biography including collective biography, particularly in respect of individuals about whom little is known. By compiling information on shared backgrounds and characteristics we can contextualise their lives and place in their communities. It is important, though, not to lose sight of the individuals who are too often ignored in biographical dictionaries. One promising area of research among many are women hoteliers living in the district at the time. Examining these women as a cohort would enable a comparison with other studies, extant or in prospect. At the same time, there is enough information on some women for a rich biographical study of individuals. A greater use of both individual and collective biography as a method – as I have done here – suggests possible uses beyond this thesis. The slice approach also points to other opportunities. A history as lived experience of 1890, for example, could examine the tumultuous events of that year and how ordinary people experienced them as they unfolded rather than looking forward to the future consequences. Such a study would shed light not only on a range of themes but also a broader social context. As I have attempted to do in this study, focussing on a region or regions would provide yet another perspective consistent with a spatial turn. Each of these approaches – separately and in combination - has potential application within and outside Australian history. In this sense my approach is offered as a potential model for other studies in other places and times.

Ordinary people are pivotal to an analysis of everyday life and I have returned to them wherever possible. Individually or collectively, their stories give expression to wider historical

themes and expose underlying societal values and bonds. This exploration of the minutiae of the everyday between 1891 and 1893 reveals the assurances, anxieties and threats to the precepts of trust, respectability, stability and social order essential to *gemeinschaft* which characterised communities in the Central West. The extent that a better understanding of their lives points to the need to reconsider broader conclusions about life in New South Wales underscores the importance and value of giving them their say.

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